

Summary Findings

The University as a Welcoming Environment: Comparisons by Race/Ethnicity

KEY FINDING: African American students find The Ohio State University environment significantly less welcoming than do White/Caucasian students and in most cases less welcoming than American Indian/Alaskan Native students, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic/Latino(a) students.

When students were asked how they felt they were *personally* treated compared to other students on campus, in their classes, and in the Columbus community:

- African American students rated their treatment as being significantly worse in all three settings compared to students of other racial/ethnic groups. These findings were most acute for how African American students replied to questions about treatment on campus and in the Columbus community.
- Except for African American students, all other racial/ethnic groups had average scores indicating that they felt they are treated at least “about the same” as other students, if not slightly better on the OSU campus, in their classes, and in the Columbus community.

When students were asked how they felt students of their racial/ethnic *group* were treated relative to all other students on campus:

- Almost 60% of African American students responded that they felt students of their racial/ethnic group are treated “much worse” or “worse” compared to other students on campus. It is important to note however, that when African American students rated how they are personally treated compared to other students on campus only 23% indicated that they are treated either “much worse” or “worse.”

When students were asked to comment on the amount of effort OSU is making to improve relations and understanding among people of different racial/ethnic backgrounds:

- Responses varied with a majority of White/Caucasian students (60.9%) indicating that efforts are “about right.” In contrast 64% of African American students; 45.6% of American Indian/Alaskan Native students; 24.1% of Asian American/Pacific Islander students; and 44.7% of Hispanic/Latino(a) students reported “too little” is being done.

Diversity and interaction with others:

- Almost 30% of African American students; 19% of American Indian/Alaskan Native students; 38% of Asian American/Pacific Islander students; 37% of Hispanic/Latino(a) students; and 21% of White/Caucasian students were attracted to OSU because of its diversity.

- Over 70% of all Asian American/Pacific Islander students; Hispanic/Latino(a) students, American Indian/Alaskan Native students, and White/Caucasian students believed that OSU promotes respect for diversity. In contrast only 51% of African American students agreed that OSU promotes respect for diversity.
- Compared to all other students African American students agreed at a significantly higher rate (44.3%) that, at OSU, students are resentful of others whose race is different from their own.

Institutional practices concerning discriminatory behavior:

- Asian American/Pacific Islander students were more likely to express agreement regarding the awareness of grievance procedures, campus responsiveness to complaints, and the trustworthiness of outcomes of cases than were all other groups. African American students were significantly less likely to agree that there are clear procedures with almost 32% “strongly disagreeing” with the statement.
- As for confidence in the university’s handling of such cases over 40% of African American students and almost 37% of American Indian/Alaskan Native students did not trust the outcomes of the grievance procedures for discriminatory or harassing behavior.
- Students in general expressed a lack of awareness of the grievance procedures for addressing instances of discrimination based on race and ethnicity.

Institutional leadership for fostering campus diversity:

- Students most strongly agreed that staff in the residence halls provide visible leadership for fostering campus diversity.
- In general, African American and Hispanic/Latino(a) students were significantly less likely to agree that faculty, staff (other than residence life), the president and other OSU administrators, student government leaders, and academic advisors provide visible leadership for fostering diversity than were White/Caucasian students.
- Students’ responses varied when asked who is the least likely to provide visible leadership for fostering campus diversity--African American students identified faculty; American Indian/Alaskan Native students cited staff (other than residence life), Asian American/Pacific Islander students and Hispanic/Latino(a) students listed the president and other OSU administrators; while White/Caucasian students pointed out student government leaders.