Appendix A: Progress in Addressing Diversity
Campus Climate A.32

CAL POLY, SAN LUIS OBISIPO

Appendix A: Progress in Addressing Diversity

Campus Climate

Rankin & Associates, Consulting

Assessment • Planning • Interventions

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Campus Climate Project Executive Summary

September 2014

Rankin & Associates, Consulting

Executive Summary

Introduction

In accordance with the Strategic Plan for California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly), President Armstrong charged the Office of University Diversity & Inclusivity (OUD&I) to examine the campus climate.[1] One of the six strategic imperatives offered in the plan mandates that Cal Poly "Foster diversity and cultural competency in a global context." OUD&I is "committed to 'Making Excellence Inclusive' by strategically working to enhance the campus climate through embedding diversity and educational equity in all aspects of the university. Cal Poly is committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse and culturally competent campus community that engages in a curricular and co-curricular learning environment that incorporates the Learn By Doing philosophy. OUD&I's areas of focus include "enhancing campus climate for all" and "research & assessment." OUD&I is charged with "guiding university-wide initiatives through collaborative relationships with departments to foster inclusion and uphold the institution's comprehensive polytechnic mission."[2]

To that end, Cal Poly contracted with Rankin & Associates Consulting (R&A) to conduct a campus-wide assessment, "Cal Poly Campus Climate Survey: Your Campus, Your Voice, Your Experience." The purpose of the survey was to gather a wide variety of data related to institutional climate, inclusion, and work-life issues so that Cal Poly is better informed about the living and working environments for students, faculty, and staff. Based on the findings, Cal Poly will develop action initiatives to build on the successes and address the challenges revealed in the assessment to improve the overall campus climate.

Project Structure and Process

The development of the survey instrument was a collaborative effort between R&A and the Campus Climate Work Group (CCWG). The CCWG was comprised of faculty, staff,

---

[1] http://strategicplanning.calpoly.edu/content/index
[2] http://www.diversity.calpoly.edu/content/mission-vision-statement

students, and administrators from across the Cal Poly community. The Cal Poly survey contained 108 questions, including several open-ended questions where respondents could provide commentary. The survey was available from February 26, 2014, through April 4, 2014, via a secure online portal. Confidential paper surveys were available to those who did not have access to an Internet-connected computer or who preferred a paper survey.

The survey data were analyzed to compare the responses of various groups. Descriptive statistics were calculated by salient group memberships (e.g., position status, gender identity, racial identity) to provide additional information regarding participant responses. Significant and meaningful findings are included in this report based on descriptive and inferential analyses. In addition to the final two open-ended survey questions, additional narrative was requested for several questions throughout the survey. Themes were developed from the open-ended questions and are presented in the full report.

Description of the Sample at Cal Poly

Cal Poly community members completed 6,366 surveys for an overall response rate of 29%. Only surveys that were at least 50% completed were included in the final data set for analyses. Response rates by constituent group varied: 25% (n = 4,641) for Undergraduate Students, 31% (n = 260) for Graduate Students, 42% (n = 531) for Faculty/Librarians, and 84% (n = 934) for Staff. Table 1 provides a summary of selected demographic characteristics of survey respondents. The percentages offered in Table 1 are based on the numbers of respondents in the sample (n) for the specific demographic characteristic.[3]

---

[3]The total n for each demographic characteristic will differ as a result of missing data.

Table 1. **Cal Poly Sample Demographics**

Characteristic	Subgroup	*n*	% of Sample
Position Status	Undergraduate Student	4,641	72.9
	Graduate Student	260	4.1
	Staff	934	14.7
	Faculty/Librarian	531	8.3
Gender Identity	Man	2,807	44.1
	Woman	3,450	54.2
	Transgender/Genderqueer/Gender Non-Conforming	19	0.3
Racial Identity	Person of Color	1,354	21.3
	White	4,022	63.2
	Multiple Race	907	14.2
Sexual Identity	LGBQ	455	7.1
	Heterosexual	5,502	86.4
	Asexual/Other	307	4.8
Citizenship Status	U.S. Citizen	5,889	92.5
	Non-U.S. Citizen	201	3.2
	Multiple Citizenships	265	4.2
Disability Status	No Disability	4,506	70.8
	Disability	1,226	19.3
Military Status	Military Service	111	1.7
	No Military Service	6,111	96.0
Religious/Spiritual Affiliation	Faith-Based Affiliation	2,644	41.5
	Spiritual	1,153	18.1
	No Affiliation	2,303	36.2
	Multiple Affiliations	165	2.6

Note: The total *n* for each selected demographic characteristic differs as a result of missing data.

Key Findings – Areas of Strength

1. **High levels of comfort with the climate at Cal Poly**

    Climate is defined as "the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of faculty, staff, administrators, and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential."[4] The level of comfort experienced by faculty, staff, and students is one indicator of campus climate.

    - 80% ($n = 5,119$) of all survey respondents were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with the climate at Cal Poly.

    - 68% ($n = 992$) of Faculty/Librarian and Staff respondents were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with the climate in their departments/work units.

    - 85% ($n = 3,929$) of Undergraduate Student respondents and 84% ($n = 217$) of Graduate Student respondents were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with the climate in their classes.

    - 78% ($n = 416$) of Faculty respondents were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with the climate in their classes.

2. **Faculty/Librarian and Staff respondents – Positive attitudes about work-life issues**

    Campus climate[5] is constituted in part by perceptions of work, sense of balance between work and home life, and opportunities for personal and professional development throughout the span of one's career. Work-life balance is one indicator of campus climate.

    - 67% ($n = 959$) of Faculty/Librarian and Staff respondents were comfortable taking leave that they were entitled to without fear that it may affect their job/careers.

    Staff Respondents

    - 79% ($n = 731$) of Staff respondents found Cal Poly supportive of their taking leave.

---

[4]Rankin & Reason, 2008, p. 264
[5]Settles, Cortina, Malley, & Stewart, 2006

- 59% (*n* = 543) of Staff respondents acknowledged that their supervisors provided ongoing feedback to help improve their performance.

- 58%, (*n* = 536) of Staff respondents felt that they had supervisors who provided them with resources to pursue educational/professional development opportunities.

- 55% (*n* = 508) of Staff respondents indicated that Cal Poly was supportive of flexible work schedules.

Faculty/Librarian Respondents

- 63% (*n* = 326) of Faculty/Librarian respondents believed that their colleagues included them in opportunities that helped their career as much as they did others in their position.

- The majority of Faculty/Librarian respondents agreed that the tenure/promotion process was clear (53%, *n* = 282) and reasonable (57%, *n* = 300).

3. **Students – Positive attitudes about academic experiences**

The way students perceive and experience their campus climate influences their performance and success in college.[6] Research supports the pedagogical value of a diverse student body and faculty for improving learning outcomes.[7] Attitudes toward academic pursuits are one indicator of campus climate.

- 90% (*n* = 4,412) of Student respondents believed that many of their courses this year have been intellectually stimulating.

- 89% (*n* = 4,321) of Student respondents reported that their academic experience has had a positive influence on their intellectual growth and interest in ideas.

- 89% (*n* = 4,311) of Student respondents were satisfied with the extent of their intellectual development since enrolling at Cal Poly.

- 88% (*n* = 4,282) of Student respondents indicated that their interest in ideas and intellectual matters has increased since coming to Cal Poly.

---

[6]Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005
[7]Hale, 2004; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Harper & Quaye, 2004

- 86% ($n = 4{,}187$) of Student respondents were satisfied with their academic experience at Cal Poly.

4. **Students – High level of satisfaction with diversity of course materials**

- A majority of Student respondents indicated that the courses offered at Cal Poly included sufficient materials, perspectives, and/or experiences of people based on a variety of personal characteristics (e.g., age, ethnicity, gender identity, marital status, racial identity, sexual identity).

Key Findings – Opportunities for Improvement

1. **Some members of the community experienced exclusionary conduct.**
   Several empirical studies reinforce the importance of the perception of non-discriminatory environments for positive learning and developmental outcomes.[8] Research also underscores the relationship between workplace discrimination and subsequent productivity.[9] The survey requested information on experiences of exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.

   - 22% ($n = 1{,}410$) of respondents believed that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.

   - Differences emerged based on various demographic characteristics including gender identity, ethnic identity, racial identity, and sexual identity. For example,
     - A higher percentage of Women respondents (44%, $n = 379$) reported experiencing exclusionary conduct based on their gender identity than did Men respondents (18%, $n = 86$).
     - A higher percentage of People of Color respondents (51%, $n = 182$) and Multiple Race respondents (29%, $n = 66$) reported experiencing this conduct based on their racial identity than did White respondents (8%, $n = 62$).

---

[8]Aguirre & Messineo, 1997; Flowers & Pascarella, 1999; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Terenzini, & Nora, 2001
[9]Silverschanz, Cortina, Konik, & Magley, 2008; Waldo, 1999

o A higher percentage of LGBQ (58%, $n = 89$) respondents reported experiencing this conduct based on their sexual identity than did Heterosexual respondents (8%, $n = 91$) and Asexual/Other respondents (15%, $n = 10$).

2. **Several constituent groups indicated that they were less comfortable with the overall campus climate, workplace climate, and classroom climate.**
   Prior research on campus climate has focused on the experiences of faculty, staff, and students associated with historically underserved social/community/affinity groups (women, people of color, people with disabilities, first-generation students, veterans, etc.).[10] Several groups indicated that they were less comfortable than their majority counterparts with the climates of the campus, workplace, and classroom.

   - By position: Staff respondents (66%, $n = 618$) were more comfortable than were Faculty/Librarian respondents (62%, $n = 328$) with the overall campus climate at Cal Poly.
   - By staff position: Administrator respondents (79%, $n = 81$) were more comfortable with the climate in their departments and work units than were Non-Exempt Staff respondents (63%, $n = 231$) and Exempt Staff respondents (70%, $n = 256$).
   - By gender: Men Faculty/Librarian and Staff respondents (73%, $n = 462$) were more comfortable in their departments/work units than were Women Faculty/Librarian and Staff respondents (62%, $n = 514$).
   - By gender: Men Faculty/Librarian and Student respondents (34%, $n = 848$) were more comfortable with the climate in their classes than were Women Faculty/Librarian and Student respondents (27%, $n = 777$).
   - By race: White respondents (83%, $n = 3,345$) and Multiple Race respondents (81%, $n = 729$) were more comfortable than People of Color respondents (74%, $n = 996$) with the overall climate at Cal Poly.

---

[10]Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hart & Fellabaum, 2008; Norris, 1992; Rankin, 2003; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Worthington, Navarro, Loewy, & Hart, 2008)

- By disability status: Respondents with Disabilities were less comfortable than were Respondents with No Disabilities with the overall climate (73%, n = 899/83%, n = 3,730), with the climate in their departments/work units (58%, n = 133/70%, n = 799), and with the climate in their classes (77%, n = 836/86%, n = 3,250).

- By sexual identity: LGBQ respondents (68%, n = 311) were less comfortable with the overall climate than were Heterosexual (82%, n = 4,485) respondents and Asexual/Other respondents (83%, n = 254).

- By sexual identity: LGBQ Faculty/Librarian and Student respondents (74%, n = 309) were less comfortable with the climate in their classes than were Heterosexual Faculty/Librarian and Student respondents (85%, n = 4,000) and Asexual/Other Faculty/Librarian and Student respondents (80%, n = 212).

- By first-generation status: First-Generation Student respondents (80%, n = 102) were less comfortable with the overall climate than were Not-First-Generation Student respondents (86%, n = 488).

- By first-generation status: First-Generation Student respondents (78%, n = 94) were less comfortable with the climate in their classes than were Not-First-Generation Student respondents (87%, n = 524).

- By socioeconomic status: Low-Income Student respondents (81%, n = 106) were less comfortable with the overall climate than were Not-Low-Income Student respondents (86%, n = 472).

- By socioeconomic status: Low-Income Student respondents (77%, n = 101) were less comfortable with the climate in their classes than were Not-Low-Income Student respondents (86%, n = 505).

3. **A small but meaningful percentage of respondents experienced unwanted sexual contact.**

    In 2014, *Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* indicates that sexual assault is a significant issue for colleges and universities nationwide, affecting the physical health, mental health, and academic success of students. The report highlights that one in five women is sexually assaulted while in college. One section of the Cal Poly survey requested information regarding sexual assault.

    - 5% ($n = 302$) of respondents believed that they had experienced unwanted sexual contact while at Cal Poly.
    - Higher percentages of Transgender/Genderqueer/Gender Non-Conforming respondents (32%, $n = 6$) and Women respondents (8%, $n = 264$), LGBQ respondents (10%, $n = 47$), respondents With Disabilities (9%, $n = 109$), Multiple Race respondents (8%, $n = 71$), Undergraduate Student respondents (6%, $n = 277$), and Graduate Student respondents (6%, $n = 15$) than other groups reported having experienced unwanted sexual contact.

Conclusion

The Cal Poly campus climate findings[11] are consistent with those found in higher education institutions across the country based on the work of R&A Consulting.[12] For example, 70% to 80% of respondents in similar reports found the campus climate to be "comfortable" or "very comfortable"; 80% of respondents in the Cal Poly survey reported that they were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with the climate at Cal Poly. Likewise, 20% to 25% in similar reports believed that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct; at Cal Poly, 22% of respondents believed that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating,

---

[11]Additional findings disaggregated by position and other selected demographic characteristics are provided in the full report.
[12]Rankin & Associates Consulting, 2014 http://www.rankin-consulting.com

offensive, and/or hostile conduct. The results also parallel the findings of other climate studies that focus on specific constituent groups.[13]

The Cal Poly climate assessment report provides baseline data on diversity and inclusion, addressing one of the strategic imperatives outlined in the university's strategic plan. While the findings in and of themselves may guide decision-making in regard to policies and practices at Cal Poly, it is important to note that the cultural fabric of an institution and unique aspects of each campus's environment must be taken into consideration when considering additional action items based on these findings. The climate assessment findings provide the Cal Poly community with an opportunity to build upon its strengths but also develop a deeper awareness of the challenges ahead. Cal Poly, with the support from senior administrators and collaborative leadership, is in a prime position to actualize its commitment to an inclusive campus and to institute organizational structures that respond to the needs of its dynamic campus community.

---

[13]Guiffrida, Gouveia, Wall, & Seward, 2008; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Harper & Quaye, 2004; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Sears, 2002; Settles et al., 2006; Silverschanz et al., 2008; Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009

References

Aguirre, A., & Messineo, M. (1997). Racially motivated incidents in higher education: What do they say about the campus climate for minority students? *Equity & Excellence in Education, 30*(2), 26–30.

Flowers, L., & Pascarella, E. (1999). Cognitive effects of college racial composition on African American students after 3 years of college. *Journal of College Student Development, 40*, 669–677.

Guiffrida, D., Gouveia, A., Wall, A., & Seward, D. (2008). Development and validation of the Need for Relatedness at College Questionnaire (*n*RC-Q). *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 1*(4), 251–261. doi: 10.1037/a0014051

Hale, F. W. (2004). What makes racial diversity work in higher education: Academic leaders present successful policies and strategies: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Harper, S., & Hurtado, S. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. *New Directions for Student Services*, no.120, p7–24.

Harper, S. R., & Quaye, S. J. (2004). Taking seriously the evidence regarding the effects of diversity on student learning in the college classroom: A call for faculty accountability. *UrbanEd, 2*(2), 43–47.

Hart, J., & Fellabaum, J. (2008). Analyzing campus climate studies: Seeking to define and understand. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 1*(4), 222–234.

Hurtado, S., & Ponjuan, L. (2005). Latino educational outcomes and the campus climate. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 4*(3), 235–251. doi: 10.1177/1538192705276548

Norris, W. P. (1992). Liberal attitudes and homophobic acts: the paradoxes of homosexual experience in a liberal institution. *Journal of Homosexuality, 22*(3), 81-120.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research* (Vol. 2). San Diego: Jossey-Bass.

Rankin & Associates Consulting. (2014, March 22). Recent Clients. Retrieved from http://www.rankin-consulting.com/clients

Rankin, S. (2003). *Campus climate for LGBT people: A national perspective.* New York: NGLTF Policy Institute.

Rankin, S., & Reason, R. (2005). Differing perceptions: How students of color and white students perceive campus climate for underrepresented groups. *Journal of Student College Development, 46*(1), 43–61.

Rankin, S., & Reason, R. (2008). Transformational tapestry model: A comprehensive approach to transforming campus climate. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 1*(4), 262–274. doi: 10.1037/a0014018

Sears, J. T. (2002). The institutional climate for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual education faculty. *Journal of Homosexuality, 43*(1), 11–37. doi: 10.1300/J082v43n01_02

Settles, I. H., Cortina, L. M., Malley, J., & Stewart, A. J. (2006). The climate for women in academic science: The good, the bad, and the changeable. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 30*(1), 47–58. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.2006.00261.x

Silverschanz, P., Cortina, L., Konik, J., & Magley, V. (2008). Slurs, snubs, and queer jokes: Incidence and impact of heterosexist harassment in academia. *Sex Roles, 58*(3–4), 179– 191. doi: 10.1007/s11199-007-9329-7

Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Tierney, W. G. (1993). *Building communities of difference: Higher education in the twenty-first century*. Westport, CT, Bergin and Garvey.

Waldo, C. (1999). Out on campus: Sexual orientation and academic climate in a university context. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 26*, 745–774. doi: 10.1023/A:1022110031745

Whitt, E. J., Edison, M. I., Pascarella, E. T., Terenzini, P. T., & Nora, A. (2001). Influences on students' openness to diversity and challenge in the second and third years of college. *The Journal of Higher Education, 72*(2), 172–204.

Worthington, R. L., Navarro, R. L., Loewy, M., & Hart, J. L. (2008). Color-blind racial attitudes, social dominance orientation, racial-ethnic group membership and college students' perceptions of campus climate. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education 1*(1), 8-19.

Yosso, T. J., Smith, W. A., Ceja, M., & Solórzano, D. G. (2009). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate for Latina/o undergraduates. *Harvard Educational Review, 79*(4), 659–690, 781, 785–786.