

ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF MINORITIES IN EDUCATION

ASME
Volume 2, Number 1

PERCEPTIONS
OF
ACADEMIC CLIMATE

BY

Charles E. Morris Lilibeth Gumia Ira L. Neal

A RESEARCH PROJECT AFFILIATED WITH
THE
CENTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS THE ASME PROJECT

During the Spring of 1984, the Subcommittee on Minority Concerns of the Illinois Senate Committee on Higher Education was formed to assess the educational progress of historically disadvantaged groups in Illinois. Both committees were chaired by Senator Richard Newhouse. An early conclusion of the Subcommittee was that a concerted effort would be required on the part of all segments of the education community, state government, and business to bridge gaps caused by barriers which have limited the educational access and success of racial minority groups.

One of the recommendations of the Subcommittee was that Illinois colleges and universities should facilitate and sponsor research activities which focus on:

- (1) identifying the causes for the disproportionate (under)representation of minorities in postsecondary education; and,
- (2) identifying successful strategies and programs throughout the educational system which foster and enhance the participation and status of minorities.

During ensuing sessions of the Illinois General Assembly, legislation has been enacted--notably, Public Acts 84-726, 84-785, and 85-283 and various resolutions--setting in motion statewide, multi-dimensional efforts to enhance minority participation in education. However, the pace of progress has been slow, prompting the creation of a Joint Committee on Minority Student Access by Senate Joint Resolution No. 72 in June, 1987, and its continuation by Senate Joint Resolution No. 130 on July 1, 1988 (both sponsored by Senator Miguel del Valle). Other statewide committees--such as the Joint Committee on Minority Student Achievement and the Task Force on Minority Concerns of the Illinois Community Colleges Trustees Association--were formed to focus on the same and related issues. During the 1991 legislative session, a Subcommittee on Minorities in Education of the House Higher Education Committee was established to assess efforts launched as a result of earlier legislation.

Such legislative initiatives heightened the impetus for the completion of a proposal for developing survey instruments to be used for assessing the status of minorities in education by members of the Illinois Committee of Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE). The proposal, submitted by Dr. Charles E. Morris, was first funded by the Illinois Board of Higher Education for the period December, 1987, through August, 1988. Since the inception of the project, "Assessment of the Status of Minorities in Education" (ASME), several studies and reports have been completed; others are in progress.

The survey instruments consist of inventories for students, faculty, administrators, and for assessment of institutional services and programs. In conjunction with a workshop, the original inventories were piloted at Danville Area Community College in August, 1988.

Initially, funds were allocated only for the development of the inventories. A pilot study conducted in six private institutions in Spring, 1989, was a further effort made possible by resources and assistance provided by the participating universities, Illinois State University, the Federation of Illinois Independent Colleges and Universities, the United Campus Christian Foundation of Normal, Illinois, and the Illinois United Ministries in Higher Education.

In the Fall of 1989, the Illinois Board of Higher Education endorsed the assessment project and committed additional funds for: 1) refining and administering survey instruments on post-secondary campuses statewide, and 2) developing studies and reports. During Spring, 1990, approximately 40,000 undergraduate student surveys were disseminated for administration on 11 postsecondary campuses across the State of Illinois. The data collected from the Spring administration are currently being analyzed. Presently, a data collection effort is underway in the Illinois community college sector and should be completed by August 1992.

The ASME project is housed in the Center for Higher Education at Illinois State University. Support for the project is also provided by the Chancellor's Office of the Illinois Board of Regents. For the Spring, 1990, survey, assistance was also provided by the Illinois Board of Governors.

Individuals who made significant contributions to the development of this publication include:

Dr. Noreen Michael, ASME Advisory Council member and Assistant Professor of Educational Administration and Foundations at Illinois State University, who served as Research Coordinator from 1989 to 1991.

Dr. William Mosley, ASME Advisory Council member and, while Chairman of the Department of Special Education at Western Illinois University, coordinated logistical support for survey administration at five of the participating institutions.

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of Regents

PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC CLIMATE (CASE STUDY 2C)

Factor A: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Factor B: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Factor C: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Significant differences in perceptions were found between minority and majority students by class level for the following factors:

Factor A: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Factor B: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Significant differences in perceptions were found between minority and majority students by class level for the following factors:

Factor A: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Factor B: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Factor C: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Factor D: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Factor E: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

Significant differences in perceptions were found between minority and majority students by class level for the following factor:

Factor A: Faculty Consideration for Student Development

BACKGROUND

This is one in a series of studies prepared as a part of the project, "Assessment of the Status of Minorities in Education (ASME)," which is housed in the Center for Higher Education at Illinois State University. The ASME project is a response to issues and concerns identified in 1985 by the Illinois General Assembly's Senate Committee on Higher Education in deliberations and legislation about the educational progress of historically-underserved, especially racial minority, groups in Illinois. Given the circumstances prevailing on university and college campuses today and given the commitment of most universities to establish and to ensure diversity, a research activity which addresses the campus climate is especially important.

The dissatisfaction of students with certain aspects of their educational experiences has been documented in various research studies (e.g., Schmidt & Sedlacek, 1972). New students, in particular, seek avenues by which they are assisted by the institution, or by its staff and faculty, to "fit" themselves into their new environment. The better the fit between the student and his/her college environment, the more satisfied the student will be and the higher will be the probability of the student's persistence in college (Clarke, 1987).

Several contemporary studies examine factors which influence a student's decision either to persist in or to withdraw from college. One theoretical framework for such studies, drawn from Tinto's model of student retention, views a higher education institution as an environment which facilitates both social and academic experiences conducive to and supportive of the ultimate educational aspiration of a student--obtaining a degree.

Consistent with Tinto's theory about the environment of higher education institutions is the construct of an academic climate in which students are provided opportunities to interact within an institutional environment with the following prevailing conditions: 1) the institution embraces all of its students, irrespective of race, ethnic origin, gender, or disability; 2) the institution actively supports all students' education-related endeavors by providing support services and by encouraging staff responsiveness to students' needs; 3) all students have equal opportunities for mentoring and for academic relationships and informal interactions with faculty; and 4) all students have equal opportunities to participate in educational, cultural, social, and political activities on campus (Tinto, 1975).

Results obtained from previous studies suggest that each institution should facilitate environmental (including academic climate) research specific to its unique situation. An institution should consider the findings of such studies in its planning process for establishing and accomplishing its goals. The ASME project illustrates the importance of perceiving the environmental climate of an institution as three dimensional--academic, social, and cultural.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT INVENTORY

The instrument used in this study was a revision of the undergraduate student inventory developed during the first phase of the ASME Project. The revised inventory, consisting of 56 demographic items and 108 campus climate items, was facilitated from an assessment of academic, social, or cultural perspectives. Students were asked to describe their perceptions of the campus climate on Likert scales of 1 to 4 or 1 to 5, ranging from 1, indicating Strongly Disagree, to 4 or 5, indicating Strongly Agree.

In the Spring of 1990, approximately 14,000 undergraduate students at a public institution were randomly sampled regarding their perceptions of the climate for their matriculation at the institution. Thirty-five percent of the students returned completed surveys.

The revised version was utilized by all undergraduate students participating in this study. It consisted of 164 items divided into the six sections described as follows:

Demographic Characteristics--contains questions regarding gender, race, student status, grade point average, employment, residence, and financial aid, as well as other demographic information.

Institutional Attractiveness--consists of statements about the culture and structure of the institution.

Racial Climate--consists of items to be rated on semantic-differential scaling systems. Opposite-pair adjectives with a 7-point scale are used for the purpose of evaluating campus racial climate. The semantic-differential scale correlates well with other scales, but appears more straightforward as an approach for the rating concerns of this study. In addition, the choice of a semantic-differential scale provides greater flexibility in the selection of the items on racial climate to be evaluated.

Relationships and Interactions--consists of statements about relationships between minorities and whites.

Academic Climate--consists of statements about the level and nature of interaction between faculty and students and about student awareness of requirements for academic success.

Faculty and Classroom Behavior--consists of statements about academic endeavors and faculty interaction with students in the classroom.

The objectives of this study were: 1) to determine factors that contribute to building a supportive academic climate; and 2) to compare views of student respondents about the extent to which certain factors exist on campus, given their race, gender, and class level.

In order to measure academic climate, students were asked to indicate: 1) whether certain conditions existed on campus, and 2) that faculty behave in a particular manner. On statements relative to the institution they were attending, students were instructed to use a Likert-type scale ranging from 1, indicating Strongly Disagree, to 5, indicating Strongly Agree.

The items used to assess academic climate are shown in Table 1 which follows.

TABLE 1

INVENTORY ITEMS PERTAINING TO ACADEMIC CLIMATE

1) INDICATE YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS EXISTS ON YOUR CAMPUS, AND 2) FACULTY ACT IN A PARTICULAR MANNER.

FOR THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE, PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE:

1	=	STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)
2	=	DISAGREE (D)
3	=	DO NOT KNOW (N)
4	=	AGREE (A)
5	=	STRONGLY AGREE (SA)

AC1	-	OPPORTUNITIES FOR MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY.
AC2	-	OPPORTUNITIES FOR MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS WITH FEMALE FACULTY.
AC3	-	OPPORTUNITIES FOR MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES.
AC4	-	OPPORTUNITIES AS A STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (ATTENDING CONFERENCES, WRITING ARTICLES, GIVING PAPERS, CONDUCTING RESEARCH).
AC5	-	DEPARTMENTAL ENCOURAGEMENT OF STUDENTS REGARDLESS OF RACE/NATIONALITY TO BECOME MAJORS IN THEIR DISCIPLINES.
AC6	-	OPPORTUNITIES TO BECOME PART OF A SUPPORT ORGANIZATION AMONG PEERS.
AC7A	-	INDIVIDUALS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES HOLD MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN THE STUDENT BODY.
AC7B	-	INDIVIDUALS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES HOLD MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS ON THE FACULTY.
AC7C	-	INDIVIDUALS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES HOLD MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN THE ADMINISTRATION.
AC8	-	COURSE CONTENT AND FORUMS WHICH ATTEMPT TO REFLECT CONTRIBUTIONS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES.
AC9A	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE IN THE CLASSROOM BY MINORITY STUDENTS.
AC9B	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE IN THE CLASSROOM BY WHITE STUDENTS.
AC9C	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE IN THE CLASSROOM BY MINORITY FACULTY.
AC9D	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE IN THE CLASSROOM BY WHITE FACULTY.
AC10	-	ADMISSION OF STUDENTS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES TO ACADEMIC MAJORS ON AN EQUAL BASIS.
AC11	-	SUFFICIENT NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION TO HELP ME ADJUST TO COLLEGE LIFE.
AC12A	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY CLERICAL OR SUPPORT STAFF IN UNIVERSITY OFFICES WHO ARE WHITE.

AC12B	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY CLERICAL OR SUPPORT STAFF IN UNIVERSITY OFFICES WHO ARE MINORITY.
AC13A	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY STAFF IN BUSINESSES LOCATED ON UNIVERSITY PROPERTY WHO ARE WHITE.
AC13B	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY STAFF IN BUSINESSES LOCATED ON UNIVERSITY PROPERTY WHO ARE MINORITY.
AC14A	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY STAFF IN BUSINESSES LOCATED OFF-CAMPUS WHO ARE WHITE.
AC14B	-	RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY STAFF IN BUSINESSES LOCATED OFF-CAMPUS WHO ARE MINORITY.
FCB1	-	FACULTY EXTENDS DEADLINES.
FCB2	-	FACULTY REFERRING STUDENTS FOR COUNSELING OR TUTORIAL SERVICES.
FCB3	-	FACULTY ACCEPTING SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGES IN COURSE CONTENT OR TEACHING STYLE FROM ALL STUDENTS.
FCB4	-	FACULTY INTERACTING WELL WITH STUDENTS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES.
FCB5	-	FACULTY USING OBJECTIVE EVALUATIONS.
FCB6	-	FACULTY USING SUBJECTIVE EVALUATIONS.
FCB7	-	FACULTY SHOWING PERSONAL INTEREST (IN STUDENTS).
FCB8	-	IN CLASS, FACULTY CALLING ON STUDENTS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES.
FCB9	-	FACULTY SINGLING OUT STUDENTS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES FOR PRAISE.
FCB10	-	FACULTY SINGLING OUT STUDENTS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES FOR CENSURE.
FCB11	-	FACULTY PROVIDING A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS REQUIRED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN COURSE WORK TO ALL STUDENTS.
FCB14	-	FACULTY ADVISING STUDENTS WITHOUT REGARD TO RACE/NATIONALITY.
RI2	-	PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES IN INSTITUTION-WIDE ACTIVITIES (SUCH AS COMMITTEES, ACTIVITIES, GOVERNANCE, ETC.)
RI3	-	OPEN DISCUSSION OF RACIAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS.

NOTE: THE SECTIONS ON "RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS", "ACADEMIC CLIMATE", AND "FACULTY AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR" WERE COLLAPSED TO FORM AN OVERALL "ACADEMIC CLIMATE" SECTION.

While this report is based on responses to the Demographic, Academic Climate, Faculty and Classroom Behavior, and Relationships and Interactions sections of the undergraduate instrument, a reliability test (Cronbach's Alpha) was performed to test the internal consistency of the entire instrument. The reliability coefficients are displayed in Table 2:

TABLE 2

**ALPHA RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS OF THE NON-DEMOGRAPHIC
SECTIONS OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT INVENTORY USED IN THE SURVEY (SPRING 1990)**

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>RELIABILITY SCALE COEFFICIENT</u>
Academic Climate	.8910
Institutional Attractiveness	.9233
Racial Climate	.8455
Relationships and Interactions	.6429
Faculty and Classroom Behavior	.7369

Descriptive statistics were used to identify the representiveness and the characteristics of the sample. Additionally, factor analyses, multiple analyses of variance (MANOVAs) and analyses of variance (ANOVAs) with follow-up tests--specifically Scheffe--were performed to identify statistically significant differences among the groups' perceptions and to determine the magnitude of the differences. The computer software program SPSS-PC+ was used to perform the analyses.

The ASME undergraduate student inventory was distributed to both on-campus and off-campus undergraduate students. Selected data from the Demographics Section follow:

DEMOGRAPHICS

For this case study a total of 4,502 students (24% of the total population of students enrolled in the institution at that time) responded to the questionnaire. Selected data from the Demographics Section are shown in Table 3 below:

TABLE 3

SELECTED SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS		
<u>Item</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Race/nationality or ethnic group		
Asian/Pacific Islander	71	1.6
American Indian/Alaskan Native	16	0.4
Black (Non-Hispanic)	261	5.8
Hispanic	28	0.6
Mexican American	20	0.4
Puerto Rican	7	0.2
Other Latin/Central American	8	0.2
White (Non-Hispanic)	4,040	89.7
Other	34	0.7
No Response	17	0.4
Gender		
Male	1,501	33.3
Female	2,985	66.3
No Response	16	0.4
What is your class level?		
Freshman	1,643	36.5
Sophomore	1,350	30.0
Junior	873	19.4
Senior	606	13.5
Unclassified student	10	0.2
No Response	20	0.4
Are you presently married?		
Yes	160	3.5
No	4,267	94.8
No Response	75	1.7
Are you a full-time or part-time student?		
Full-time	4,356	96.8
Part-time	133	2.9
No Response	13	0.3

At what type of institution did you receive your most recent educational experience prior to enrolling at your current institution?

Alternative high school/night school	27	0.6
High school	3,325	73.9
Vocational/Technical school	39	0.9
2-year public postsecondary	729	16.2
2-year private postsecondary	33	0.7
4-year public postsecondary	194	4.3
4-year private postsecondary	84	1.9
Other	15	0.3
No Response	56	1.2

What is your current class attendance status?

Day classes	3,122	69.3
Evening classes	72	1.7
Both day and evening classes	1,289	28.6
No Response	19	0.4

What is your current grade point average?

3.5 to 4.0	538	12.0
3.0 to 3.49	1,177	26.1
2.5 to 2.99	1,375	30.5
2.0 to 2.49	1,013	22.5
1.5 to 1.99	271	6.0
below 1.5	84	1.9
No Response	44	1.0

Do you work during the academic year?

Off campus in a non-work-study program.	865	19.2
On campus in a work-study program.	267	5.9
On campus in a non-work-study program.	960	21.3
On and off campus.	141	3.1
Do not work during the academic year.	2,224	49.4
No Response	45	1.1

Estimate the number of hours per week you work during the school year.

None	2,110	46.9
Less than 10 hours a week	760	16.9
10-14 hours a week	687	15.2
15-19 hours a week	354	7.9
20-24 hours a week	214	4.7
25-29 hours a week	89	2.0
30 hours or more	162	3.6
No Response	126	2.8

Which of the following are sources of financial assistance for you?

Federal aid	48	1.1
State aid	21	0.5
Grants or scholarships (not Federal or State)	98	2.2
Loans (Not Federal or State)	69	1.5
Family/Parents/Spouse	1,122	24.9
Self	194	4.3
Other	40	0.9
2 or more of the above	2,850	63.3
No Response	60	1.3

Please estimate your parents'/parent's total yearly income before taxes last year?

Less than \$10,000	151	3.4
Between \$10,000 and \$19,999	308	6.8
Between \$20,000 and \$29,999	506	11.2
Between \$30,000 and \$39,999	694	15.4
Between \$40,000 and \$49,999	707	15.7
Between \$50,000 and \$59,999	588	13.1
Over \$60,000	1,027	22.8
No Response	521	11.6

Where will you be living this semester/term?

Campus housing	3,516	78.2
Fraternity/Sorority housing	121	2.7
At home with parent(s)/spouse	186	4.1
Off-campus but not with parent(s) or spouse	599	13.3
Other	47	1.0
No Response	33	0.7

Indicate the type of high school you last attended?

Public	3,842	85.3
Private	302	6.7
Parochial	305	6.8
No Response	53	1.2

Please estimate the racial composition (white/ minority) of the high school you last attended.

75 to 100% minority	223	5.0
50 to 74% minority	324	7.2
25 to 49% minority	831	18.4
Less than 25% minority	3,056	67.9
No Response	68	1.5

Which of the following best describes your father's highest formal educational attainment?

Did not graduate from high school	318	7.1
Graduated from high school	1,227	27.2
Some college	815	18.1
Holds a junior college degree	247	5.5
Holds a 4-year college degree	971	21.6
Holds a Master's, Ph.D., or other advanced degree	680	15.1
Other	129	2.9
No Response	115	2.5

Which of the following best describes your mother's highest formal educational attainment?

Did not graduate from high school	213	4.7
Graduated from high school	1,624	36.1
Some college	952	21.1
Holds a junior college degree	390	8.7
Holds a 4-year college degree	718	15.9
Holds a Master's, Ph.D., or other advanced degree	363	8.1
Other	142	3.2
No Response	100	2.2

The mean age of the sample is 21.3 years. Compared to the undergraduate enrollment in the institution, the proportion of females in the sample is higher. Other observations can be made by studying Table 4 which follows.

TABLE 4

**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE BY SELECTED VARIABLES COMPARED
TO THE TOTAL UNDERGRADUATE POPULATION**

<u>VARIABLE</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(3)</u>	<u>(4)</u>	<u>(5)</u>
Age (mean)	21.5	NA		NA	NA
Gender	20,147	100.0	4486	100.0	22.3
Female	11,041	54.8	2985	66.5	27.0
Male	9,106	45.2	1501	33.5	16.5
Race/Ethnicity	20,147	100.0	4485	100.0	22.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	272	1.4	71	1.6	26.1
American Indian/Alaskan Native	43	0.2	16	0.4	37.2
Black (Non-Hispanic)	1,118	5.6	261	5.8	23.3
Hispanic	230	1.1	28	0.6	27.4
Mexican American	--	--	20	0.4	--
Puerto Rican	--	--	7	0.1	--
Other Latin/Central American.	--	--	8	0.2	--
White (Non-Hispanic).	18,363	91.1	4040	90.1	22.0
Other	121	0.6	34	0.8	28.1
Student Status	20,147	100.0	4489	100.0	22.3
Full time	18,232	90.5	4356	97.0	23.9
Part time	1,915	9.5	133	3.0	6.9
Class Level	20,147	100.0	4482	100.0	22.2
Freshman	5,746	28.5	1643	36.7	28.6
Sophomore.	4,370	21.7	1350	30.1	30.9
Junior	4,812	23.9	873	19.5	18.1
Senior	4,792	23.8	606	13.5	12.6
Unclassified	427	2.1	10	0.2	2.3

Note: (1) = Total undergraduate enrollment of the institution. (2) = % of total undergraduate enrollment of the institution. (3) = Number of respondents in survey. (4) = % of total respondents in survey. (5) = % of respondents as a % of the total undergraduate enrollment (column 3 divided by column 1).

Of the 4,502 students sampled, 49 (1.6%) were eliminated from the study for not responding to both race and gender categories. This reduced the number in the sample to be analyzed to 4,453. Because of small cell sizes, all minority subgroups (Asian, Native American, Hispanic, and Black) were combined for analyses of some items.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The independent variables used in the analysis were the following: race (minority and white non-Hispanic groups), gender, and class level (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior). The dependent variables were the eight factors of campus academic climate derived from the 36 items based on the perceptions of student respondents. The analysis for class level did not include the unclassified students. Analyses which combined race and gender subgroups, as well as race and class level groups, were conducted. Analyses were also conducted using the original categories of race which included Asian, Native American, black, Hispanic, and white. The relationship between each independent variable and each dependent variable was analyzed.

All of the 36 items were significantly correlated with each other at the .05 level of significance; therefore, it was appropriate to proceed with a factor analysis, resulting in eight (8) factors shown in Table 5:

TABLE 5

ACADEMIC CLIMATE FACTORS

Factor A -- Racial/Cultural Sensitivity (On and Off Campus)

<u>Survey Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
AC12A	Racial sensitivity and tolerance by clerical or support staff in university offices who are white.	.747
AC12B	Racial sensitivity and tolerance by clerical or support staff in university offices who are minority.	.728
AC13A	Racial sensitivity and tolerance by staff in businesses located on university property who are white.	.783
AC13B	Racial sensitivity and tolerance by staff in businesses located on university property who are minority.	.777
AC14A	Racial sensitivity and tolerance by staff in businesses located off-campus who are white.	.755
AC14B	Racial sensitivity and tolerance by staff in businesses located off-campus who are minority.	.777
Eigen Value	= 9.46	
% of Variance	= 26.3	(table continues)

Factor B -- Student Inclusion at the Departmental Level

<u>Survey Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
AC5	Departmental encouragement of students regardless of race/nationality to become majors in their disciplines.	.406
AC10	Admission of students of all races/nationalities to academic majors on an equal basis.	.372
FCB4	Faculty interacts well with students of all races/nationalities.	.628
FCB5	Faculty uses objective evaluations.	.579
FCB7	Faculty shows personal interest towards students.	.573
FCB8	In class, faculty calls on students of all races/nationalities.	.658
FCB11	Faculty provides a clear understanding of what is required to be successful in course work to all students.	.674
FCB14	Faculty advises students without regard to race/nationality.	.643

Eigen Value = 2.98

% of Variance = 8.3

(table continues)

Factor C -- Inclusion at Upper Levels of Leadership/Management

<u>Survey Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
AC6	Opportunities to become part of a support organization among peers.	.390
AC7A	Individuals of all races/nationalities hold management or leadership positions in the student body.	.753
AC7B	Individuals of all races/nationalities hold management or leadership positions on the faculty.	.856
AC7C	Individuals of all races/nationalities hold management or leadership positions in the administration.	.844
AC8	Course content and forums which attempt to reflect contribution of all races/nationalities.	.458

Eigen Value = 2.02
 % of Variance = 5.6 (table continues)

Factor D -- Student Growth and Development

<u>Survey Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
AC1	Opportunities for mentor relationships with faculty.	.882
AC2	Opportunities for mentor relationships with female faculty.	.885
AC3	Opportunities for mentor relationships with faculty of all races/nationalities.	.853
AC4	Opportunities as a student to participate in professional activities (attending conferences, writing articles, giving papers, conducting research).	.396

Eigen Value = 1.74
 % of Variance = 4.8 (table continues)

Factor E -- Racial Sensitivity in the Classroom

<u>Survey Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
AC9A	Racial sensitivity in the classroom by minority students.	.708
AC9B	Racial sensitivity in the classroom by white students.	.766
AC9C	Racial sensitivity in the classroom by minority faculty.	.786
AC9D	Racial sensitivity in the classroom by white faculty.	.781

Eigen Value = 1.65

% of Variance = 4.6

(table continues)

Factor F -- Faculty Consideration of Students' Academic Needs

<u>Survey Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
FCB1	Faculty extends deadlines.	.709
FCB2	Faculty refers students for counseling or tutorial services.	.627
FCB3	Faculty accepts suggestions for changes in course content or teaching style from all students.	.692
FCB6	Faculty uses subjective evaluations.	.335

Eigen Value = 1.54

% of Variance = 4.3

(table continues)

Factor G -- Inclusion in Institution-Wide Activities

<u>Survey Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
RI2	Participation of students of all races/nationalities in institution-wide activities (such as committees, governance, activities, etc.).	.691
RI3	Open discussion of racial issues and concerns.	.806
AC11	Sufficient new student orientation to help adjustment to college life.	.388

Eigen Value = 1.18
% of Variance = 3.3

Factor H: Inclusion in the Classroom

<u>Survey Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
FCB9	Faculty singles out students of all races/nationalities for praise.	.885
FCB10	Faculty singles out students of all races/nationalities for censure.	.901

Eigen Value = 1.13
% of Variance = 3.1

Reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) of the eight factors identified in the study were also computed and are presented in Table 6:

TABLE 6

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS OF THE FACTORS

<u>FACTOR</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>CRONBACH'S ALPHA</u>
A	Racial/Cultural Sensitivity (On and Off Campus)	0.89
B	Student Inclusion at the Departmental Level	0.80
C	Inclusion at Upper Levels of Leadership/Management	0.82
D	Student Growth and Development	0.83
E	Racial Sensitivity in the Classroom	0.82
F	Faculty Consideration for Students' Academic Needs	0.60
G	Inclusion in Institution-Wide Activities	0.51
H	Inclusion in the Classroom	0.78

FACTORS UNDERLYING A SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ACADEMIC CLIMATE

Factor means and standard deviations for undergraduate males and females of the five race/ethnic groups represented in the sample are reported in Table 7:

TABLE 7

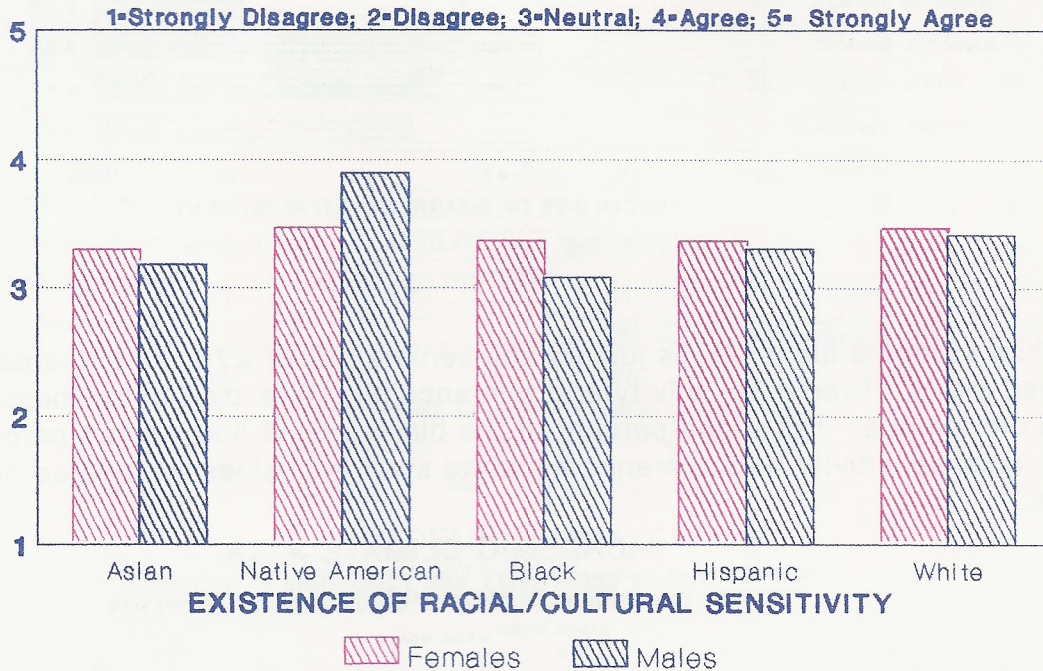
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ACADEMIC CLIMATE FACTORS BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND GENDER

Factor	Undergraduate Female						Undergraduate Male											
	Asian/ Pacific Islander		Native American		Black		Hispanic		White		Total							
	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD						
A	42	3.27	.58	9	3.44	.63	178	3.34	.66	37	3.34	.56	2556	3.44	.60	2822	3.43	.60
B	41	3.74	.61	9	3.79	.74	174	3.48	.65	40	3.59	.60	2504	3.80	.55	2768	3.78	.56
C	41	3.48	.60	9	3.56	.54	171	3.18	.86	37	3.32	.61	2537	3.63	.59	2795	3.59	.62
D	42	3.58	.66	9	3.67	.67	185	3.39	.77	37	3.43	.83	2598	3.52	.71	2871	3.51	.71
E	43	3.30	.73	9	3.75	.61	181	3.39	.67	39	3.29	.69	2587	3.53	.67	2859	3.52	.68
F	42	3.36	.79	9	3.42	.75	184	3.26	.74	40	3.34	.70	2590	3.33	.68	2865	3.33	.69
G	42	3.42	.63	9	3.52	.47	182	3.21	.81	40	3.36	.71	2552	3.50	.66	2825	3.47	.67
H	43	3.00	.93	9	3.11	.96	186	2.95	.94	40	2.65	1.01	2607	3.03	.98	2885	3.02	.97
Factor	Asian/ Pacific Islander		Native American		Black		Hispanic		White		Total							
	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD						
A	26	3.18	.69	6	3.89	.83	54	3.08	.76	20	3.30	.79	1245	3.41	.68	1351	3.39	.68
B	24	3.49	.78	7	3.91	.77	53	3.34	.69	19	3.64	.92	1219	3.71	.60	1322	3.69	.61
C	24	3.15	.98	6	3.70	.49	55	3.09	.83	19	3.35	.86	1259	3.52	.66	1363	3.50	.68
D	26	3.45	.76	7	3.18	.87	58	3.24	.62	20	3.18	.97	1299	3.43	.74	1410	3.42	.74
E	26	3.16	.89	7	3.71	.71	57	3.35	.81	20	3.49	.91	1291	3.44	.70	1401	3.43	.71
F	26	3.34	.87	7	3.43	1.18	56	3.13	.66	19	3.20	.81	1287	2.30	.69	1395	3.29	.70
G	26	3.33	.93	7	3.76	1.20	55	2.99	.86	20	3.20	.91	1280	3.38	.71	1388	3.37	.73
H	26	2.75	.89	7	2.86	1.25	58	2.79	.91	20	3.40	1.34	1307	3.03	.95	1418	3.02	.96

The students' responses to the eight factors characterizing academic climate at the institution are described in the discussions that follow about the factors.

Factor A: Racial/Cultural Sensitivity (On and Off Campus)

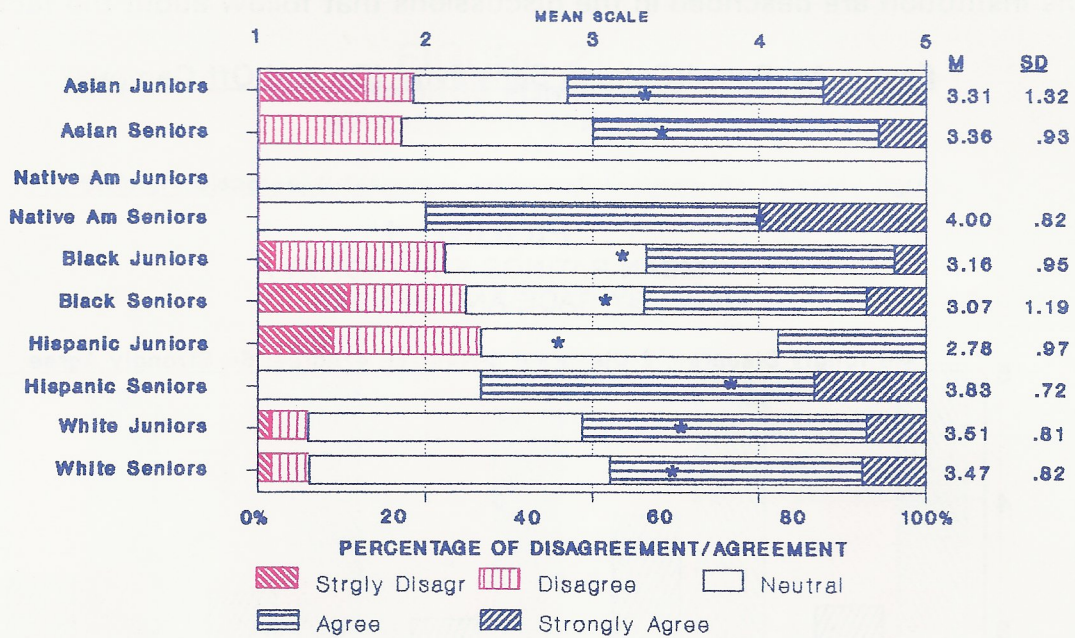
FIGURE 1
MEAN RATINGS FOR FACTOR A
BY RACE AND GENDER



An important factor in building a supportive academic climate appears to be the racial or cultural sensitivity and tolerance manifested by (1) institutional support staff who provide non-instructional services, and (2) merchants and employees in off-campus establishments.

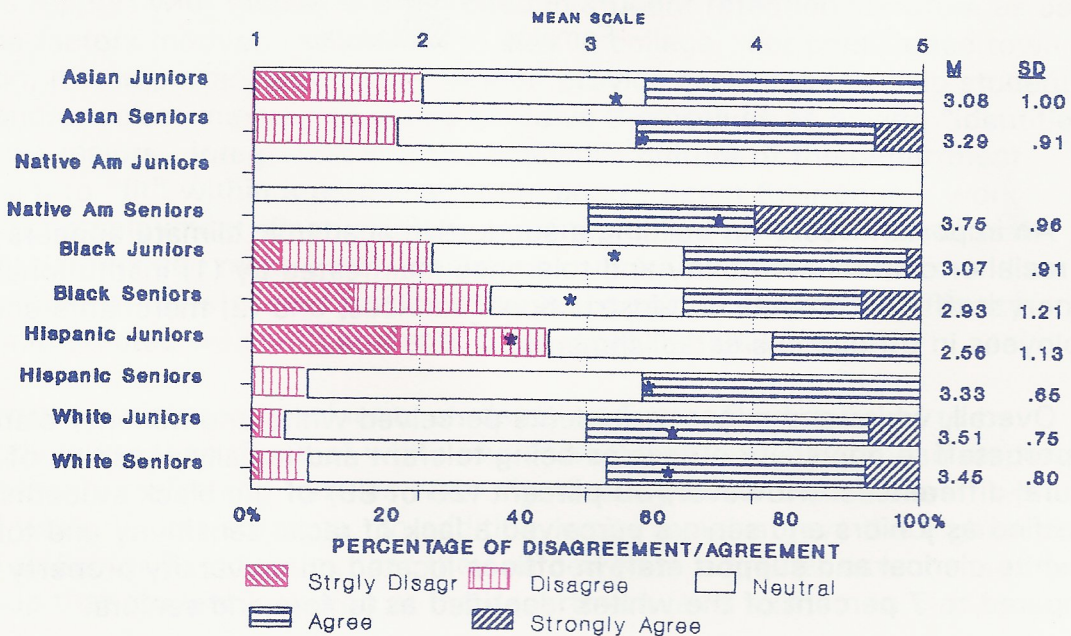
Overall, white and minority students perceived white and minority clerical and support staff in university offices as being tolerant and racially sensitive of student cultural differences. However, 30 percent (26 of 88) of the black students classified as juniors and seniors perceived a lack of racial sensitivity and tolerance by white clerical and support staff in offices located on university property as compared to 7 percent of the whites identified as juniors and seniors.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #12A
RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY WHITE
CLERICAL OR SUPPORT STAFF IN UNIVERSITY OFFICES



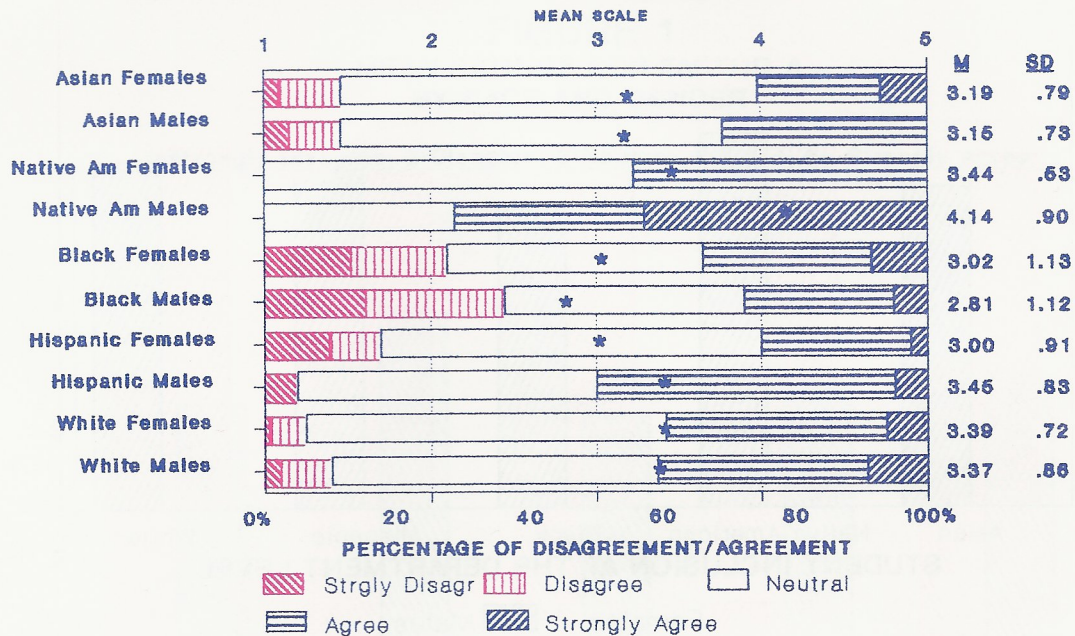
White students identified as juniors and seniors (80 of 275, or 22 percent) perceived a lack of racial sensitivity and tolerance by white staff in businesses located on campus. Thirty-one percent of the black juniors and seniors perceived a lack of racial sensitivity and tolerance by white staff in businesses located on campus.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #13A
RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY WHITE
STAFF IN BUSINESSES LOCATED ON UNIVERSITY PROPERTY

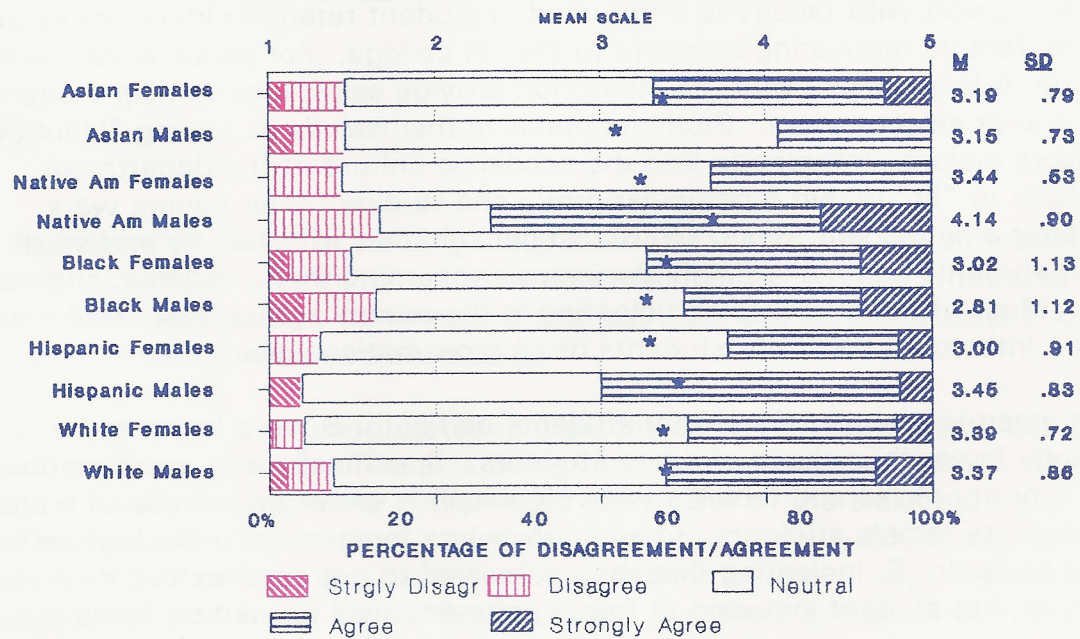


More than any other group, white males indicated the most agreement that staff members employed in businesses located off-campus were racially sensitive and tolerant of student cultural differences. Further analysis of the data revealed that there were significant differences in the mean responses of students by gender.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #14A
RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY WHITE
STAFF IN BUSINESSES LOCATED OFF-CAMPUS

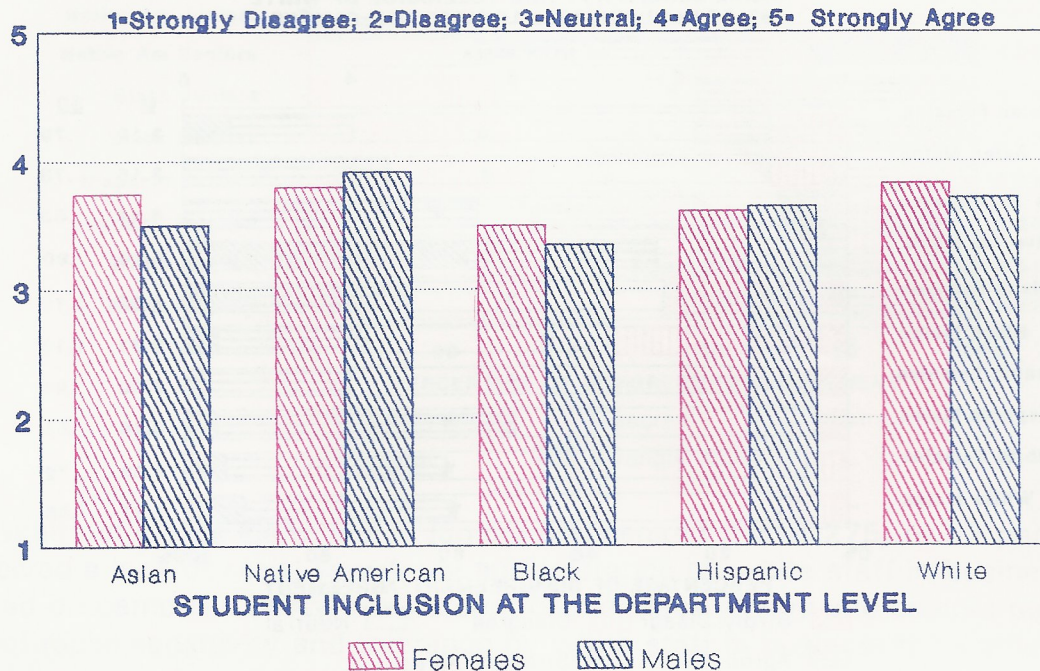


ACADEMIC CLIMATE #14B
RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE BY MINORITY
STAFF IN BUSINESSES LOCATED OFF-CAMPUS



Factor B: Student Inclusion at the Departmental Level

FIGURE 2
MEAN RATINGS FOR FACTOR B
BY RACE AND GENDER

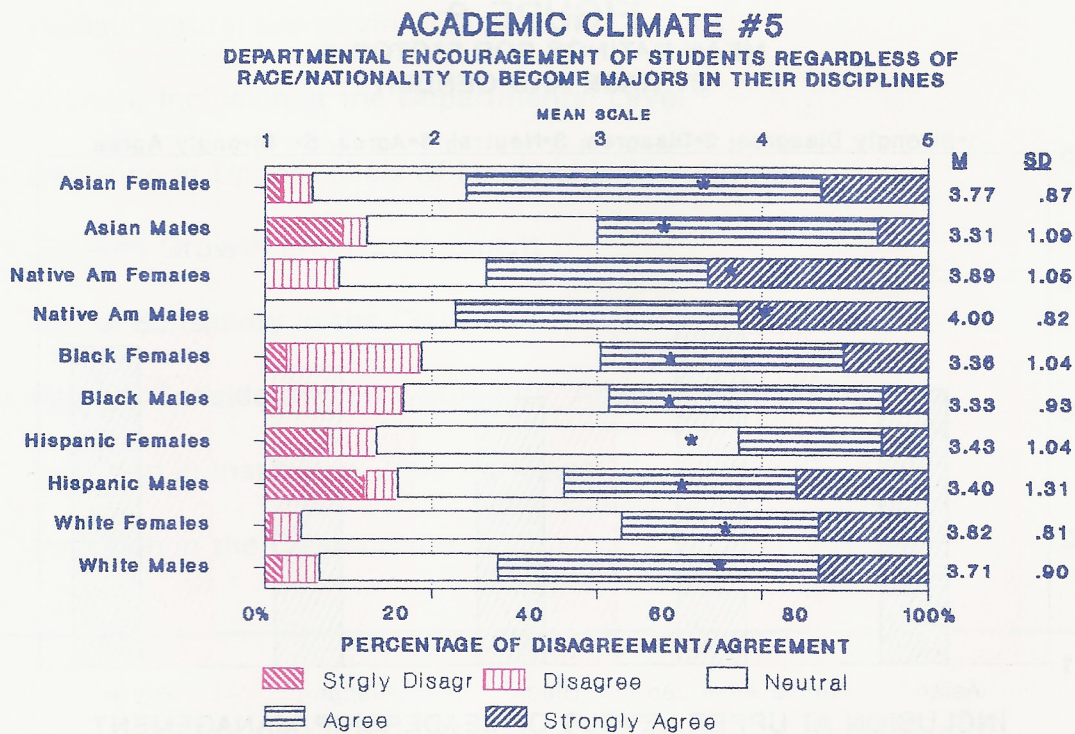


Good rapport with faculty is often cited in student retention literature as being one of the factors motivating students to stay in college. For persistence toward graduation, it is important that the institution provide assistance to help students identify and/or select majors. Students perceive themselves as having "identities" if they have majors. Integration into the academic culture of the department allows them to "fit" within a particular group and to direct their course work toward later employment (Bean, 1986). In consultation with faculty and staff advisors, students can make timely decisions concerning their academic and career choices. Most of the students participating in the survey agreed that faculty at the institution interacted well with students of all races/nationalities.

The mean responses of minority students on Factor B were found to be significantly lower than those of white students. Specifically, the mean responses of both minority males and females were significantly lower than those of white male and white female students. In addition, white females gave the highest mean response to Factor B, indicating that they perceived to a greater extent than any other group that student inclusion at the departmental level existed on campus.

Additional examination of students' responses to Factor B revealed that there were also significant differences between the mean responses of minority and white students within class levels. The mean responses of minority freshmen, sophomores, and juniors differed significantly from those of white males classified as juniors. The mean responses of minority sophomores and juniors differed significantly from those of white seniors. Further analysis showed that there was a significant difference between the mean responses of males and females to Factor B.

Seventy percent of the white females surveyed agreed that departments encouraged students of all races/nationalities to become majors in their disciplines. Black male and female students progressively (by class level) indicated disagreement that departmental encouragement of students to become majors in their disciplines occurred, regardless of race/nationality.



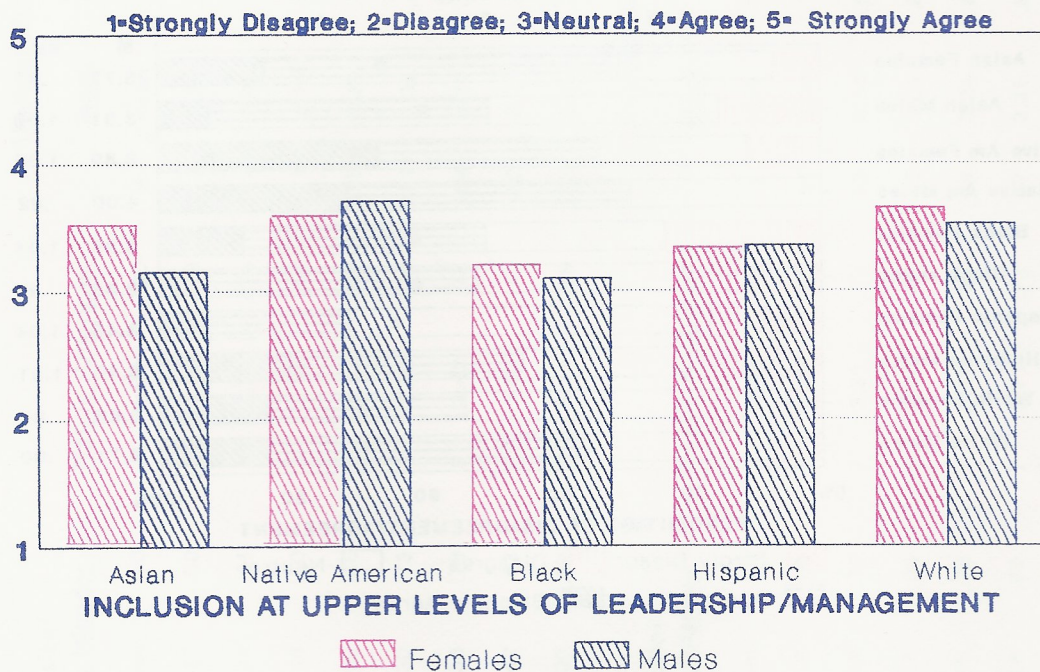
In general, all levels of white students indicated agreement that all levels of students of all races/nationalities were admitted to academic majors on an equal basis.

To a lesser extent than white students, black students perceived that student inclusion at the departmental level existed on campus. An analysis of mean responses by race and by class level resulted in the finding that there was a significant difference between the mean responses of white and black sophomore students. Black sophomores and white freshmen and sophomores indicate to a lesser extent than white juniors that student inclusion at the departmental level existed on campus.

An examination of the items in Factor B by class level alone revealed that the mean responses of freshman and sophomore students were significantly lower than those of both junior and senior students. The mean responses of minority sophomores and seniors were significantly lower than the mean responses of white freshmen, sophomores, and seniors. This indicates a less than favorable perception that acceptance and inclusion at the departmental level existed on campus.

Factor C: Inclusion at Upper Levels of Leadership/Management

FIGURE 3
MEAN RATINGS FOR FACTOR C
BY RACE AND GENDER



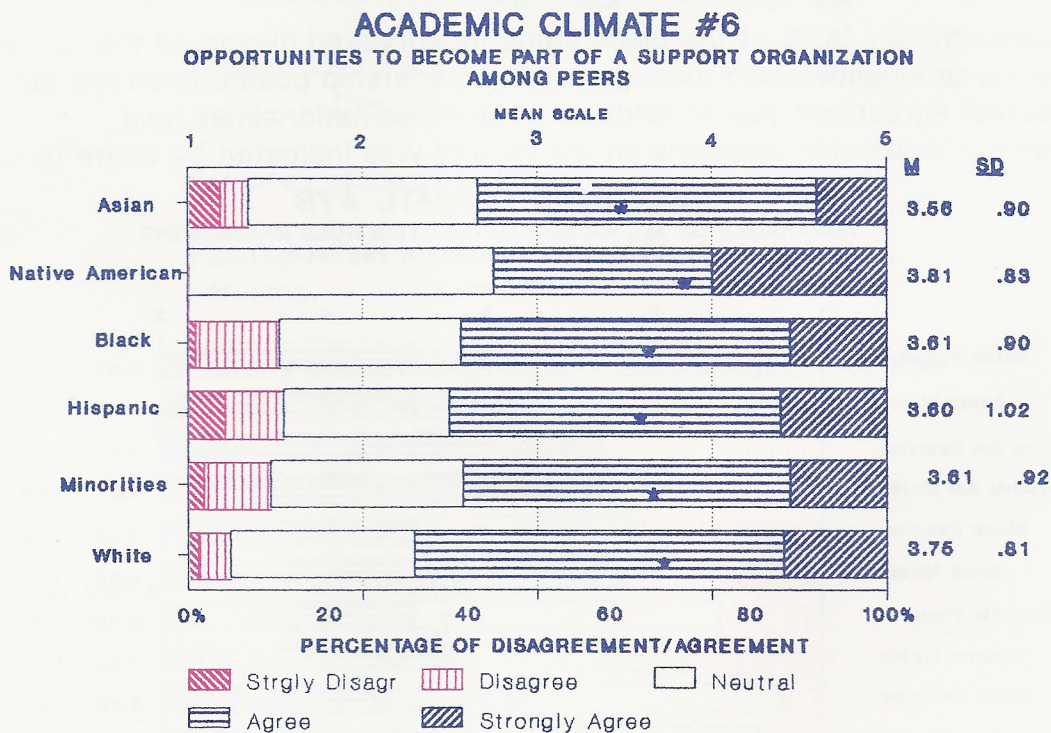
In an analysis of the perceptions of inclusion and participation at upper levels of leadership/management, the mean responses of black students were significantly lower than those of white students. Students appear to benefit from participating in decision-making about issues which directly affect them. In particular, their participation in student organizations and in leadership and/or management roles teaches them how to take risks and to make decisions. It also enhances their administrative, budgeting, bureaucratic, and programming skills.

Participation--not only by students, but also by all individuals in the university as leaders or managers--at all levels of the university's organizational hierarchy causes students to have favorable attitudes toward the institution.

The difference in the mean responses of minority and white students on Factor C were found to be statistically significant. Minority students perceived to a lesser extent than white students that inclusion and participation of all races/nationalities at upper levels of leadership and management existed on campus.

An analysis of responses by class level revealed that there were significant differences in the mean responses of freshmen and juniors. Freshman students had a lower mean response than juniors, indicating that the latter tended to perceive that inclusion and participation of all races/nationalities at upper levels of leadership and management existed on campus. A further breakdown and analysis showed that differences in the mean responses of minority and white juniors were statistically significant regarding Factor C.

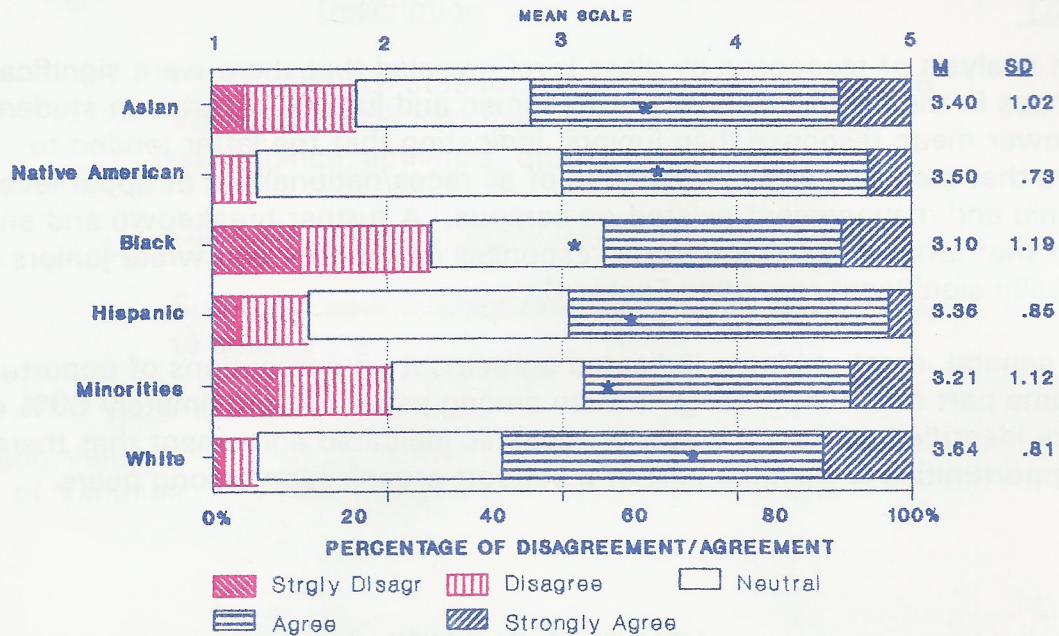
In general, most students indicated agreement on perceptions of opportunities to become part of a support organization among peers. Approximately 60% of the students identified as Asian, black, or Hispanic indicated agreement that there were opportunities to become part of a support organization among peers.



Fewer than 7% of the white students surveyed indicated disagreement that individuals of all races/nationalities held management or leadership positions in the student body as compared to 18% of the Asian/Pacific Islander students, 31% of the black students, and 18% of the Hispanic students. Overall, 26 percent of all minority students disagreed that individuals of all races/nationalities held management and leadership positions in the student body.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #7A

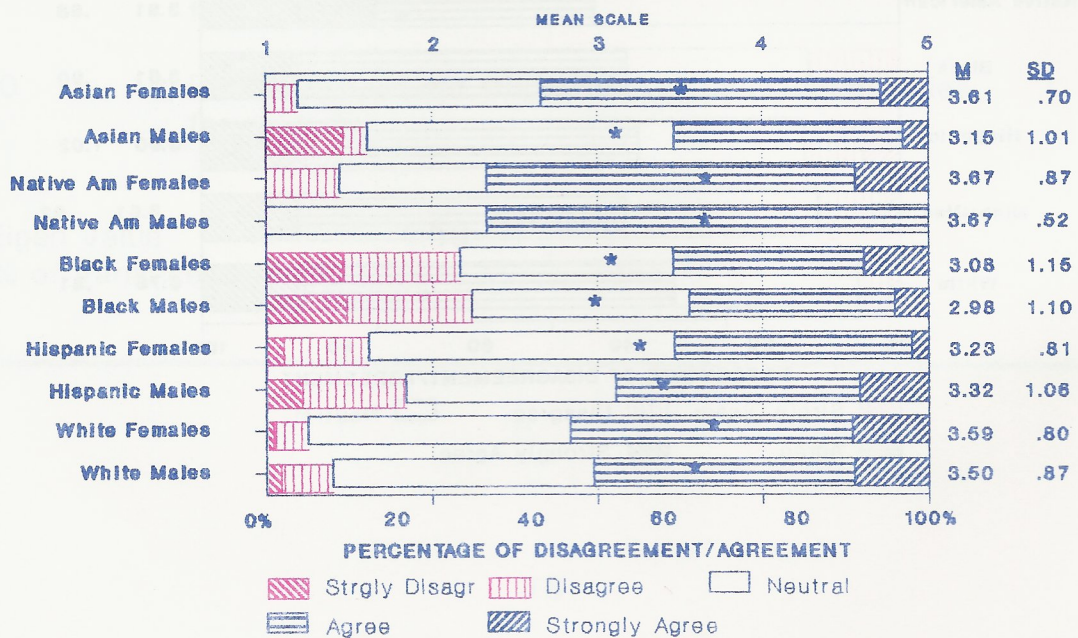
INDIVIDUALS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES HOLD MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN THE STUDENT BODY



Approximately 30% of the black students surveyed disagreed that individuals of all races/nationalities held management or leadership positions on the faculty. The greatest agreement that individuals of all races/nationalities held management/leadership positions on the faculty was indicated by white females.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #7B

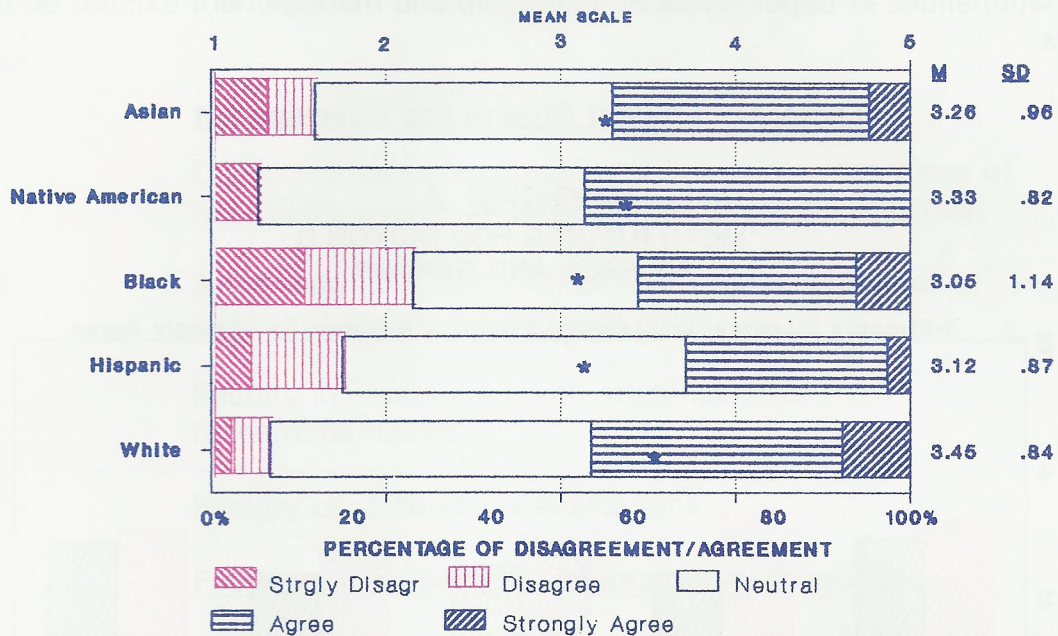
INDIVIDUALS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES HOLD MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS ON THE FACULTY



When compared to other student groups that participated in the study, black sophomores, juniors, and seniors indicated the most disagreement that individuals of all races/nationalities held management or leadership positions in the administration.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #7C

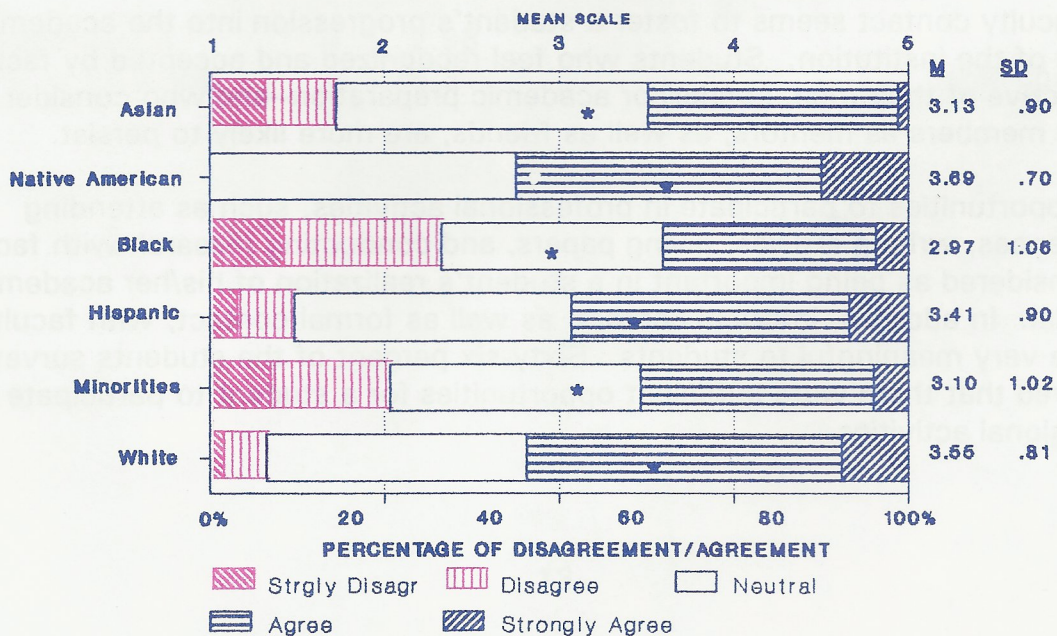
INDIVIDUALS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES HOLD MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN THE ADMINISTRATION



Fifteen percent of the Asian/Pacific Islander students, 33% of the black students, 12% of the Hispanic students, and 8% of the white students surveyed indicated disagreement that course content and forums attempted to reflect contributions of all races/nationalities. Among white students there was general agreement that course content and forums attempted to reflect contributions of all races/nationalities. For minority students, 26% disagreed that course content and forums attempted to reflect contributions of all races/nationalities.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #8

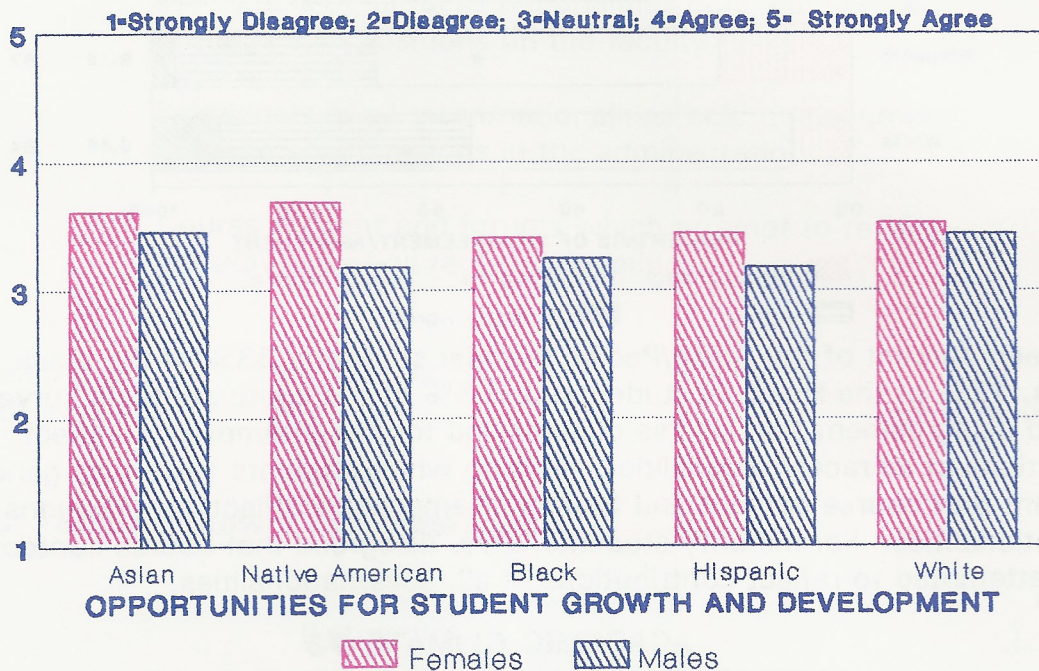
COURSE CONTENT AND FORUMS WHICH ATTEMPT TO REFLECT CONTRIBUTIONS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES



In conclusion, black students perceived to a significantly lesser extent than whites that inclusion and participation of all races/nationalities at upper levels of leadership and management existed on campus. Further analysis of the data by race and class level showed that black sophomores and seniors tended to perceive to a significantly lesser extent that inclusion and participation by all races/nationalities at upper levels of leadership and management existed on and off campus.

Factor D: Student Growth and Development

FIGURE 4
MEAN RATINGS FOR FACTOR D
BY RACE AND GENDER

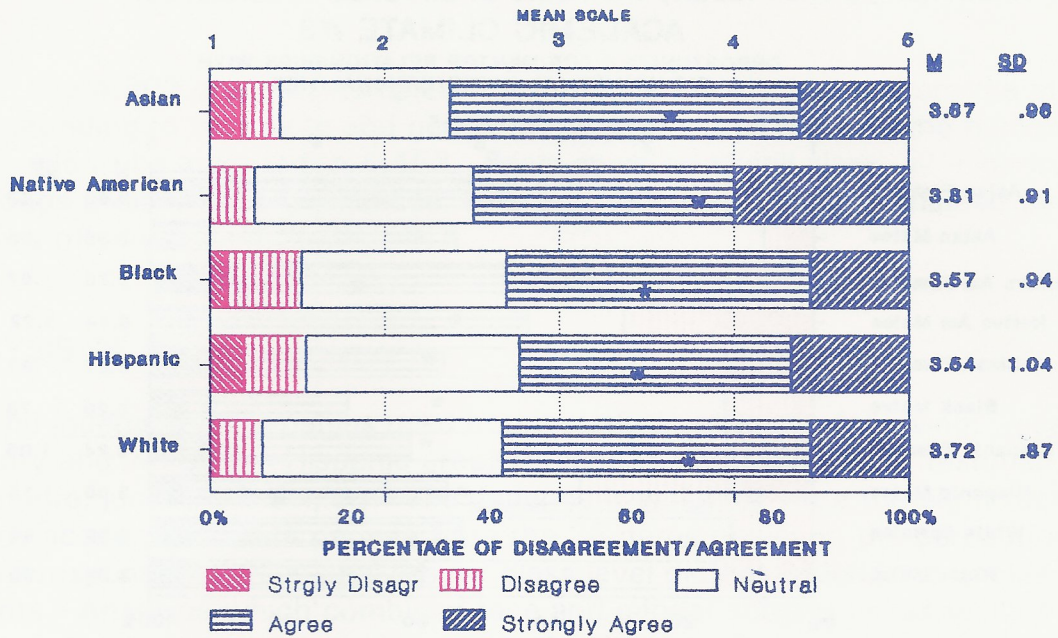


Faculty contact seems to foster a student's progression into the academic culture of the institution. Students who feel recognized and accepted by faculty--irrespective of their race, gender, or academic preparation--and who consider faculty members as mentors, as well as friends, are more likely to persist.

Opportunities to participate in professional activities, such as attending conferences, writing articles, giving papers, and conducting research with faculty, are considered as being important in a student's realization of his/her academic potential. In addition, informal contact, as well as formal contact, with faculty may be very meaningful to students. Sixty-six percent of the students surveyed perceived that there were sufficient opportunities for a student to participate in professional activities.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #4

OPPORTUNITIES AS A STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

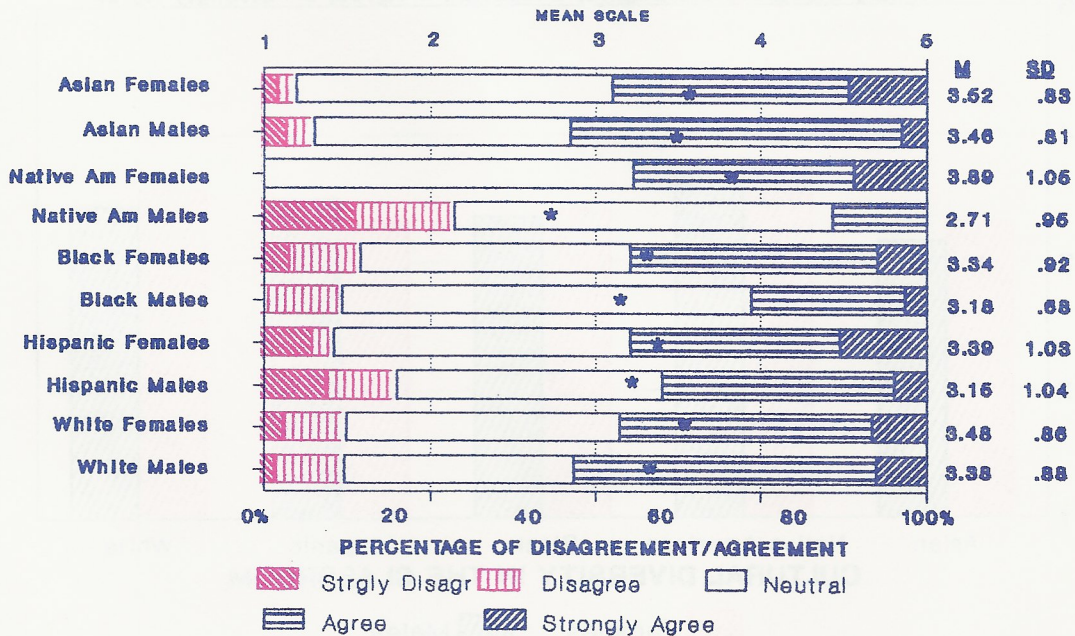


In general, male and female respondents of all races indicated that there were sufficient opportunities for mentor relationships with faculty.

Thirty percent of the Asian/Pacific Islander, 36% of the black, 29% of the Hispanic, and 33% of white students responded neutrally regarding opportunities for mentor relationships with women faculty of all races/nationalities.

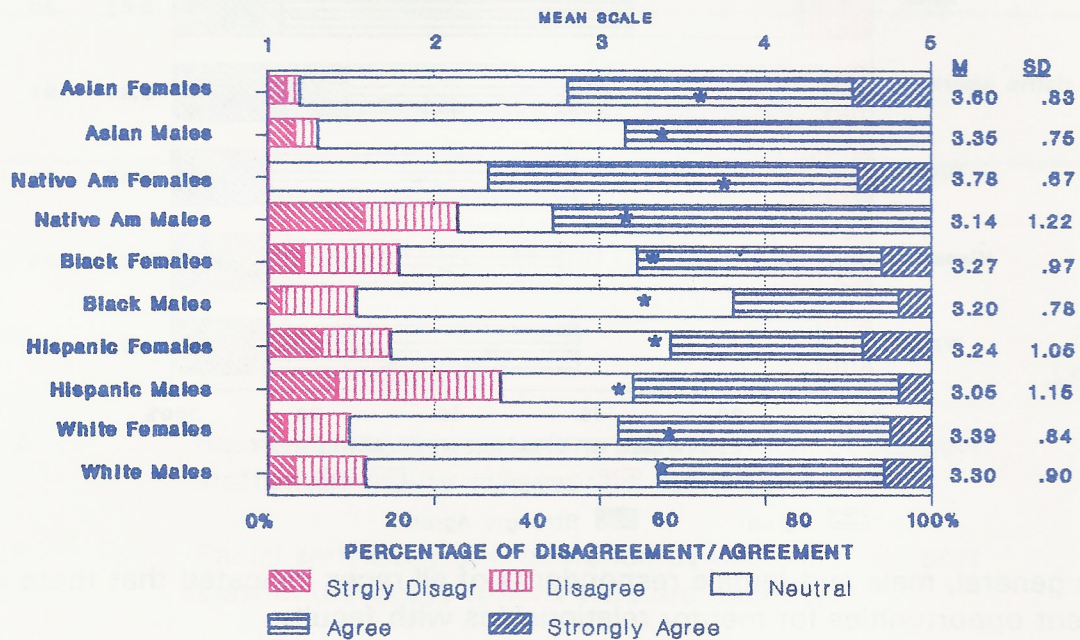
ACADEMIC CLIMATE #2

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS WITH FEMALE FACULTY



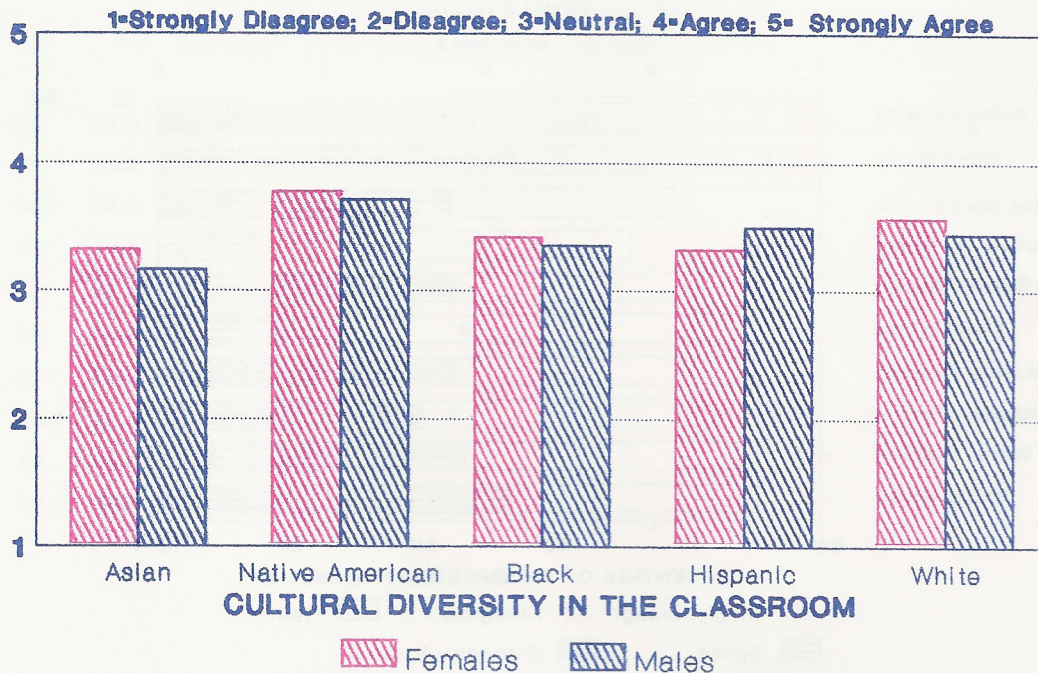
Minority males perceived to a lesser extent the existence of opportunities for mentor relationships with faculty members of all races/nationalities.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #3
OPPORTUNITIES FOR MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS WITH
FACULTY OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES



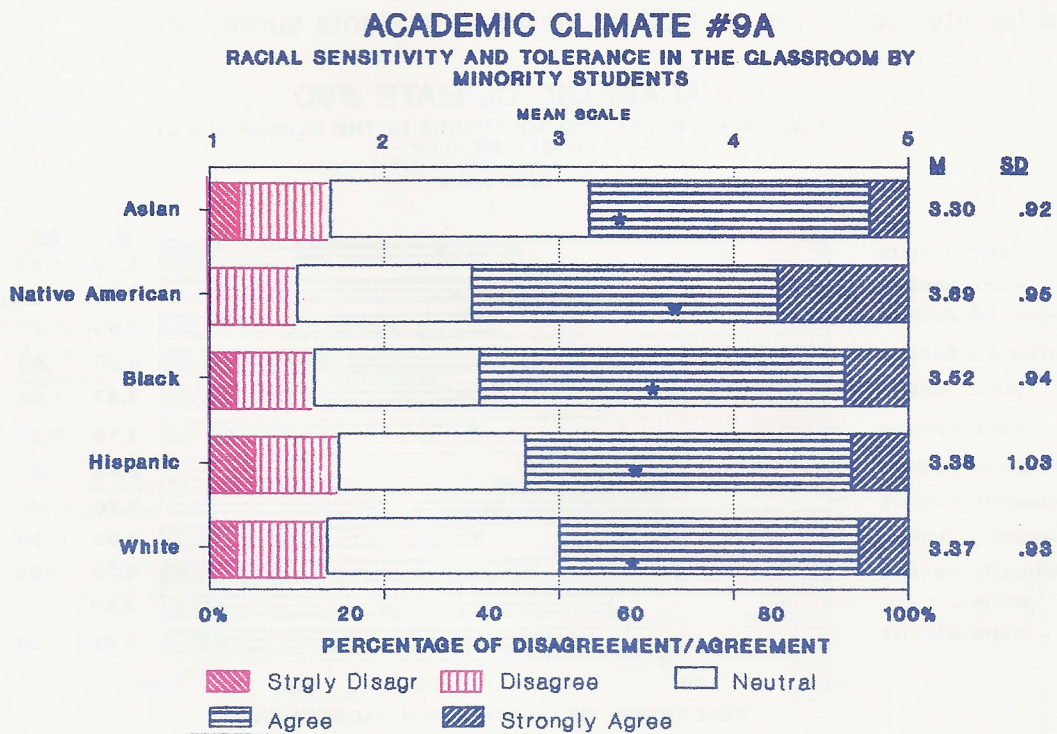
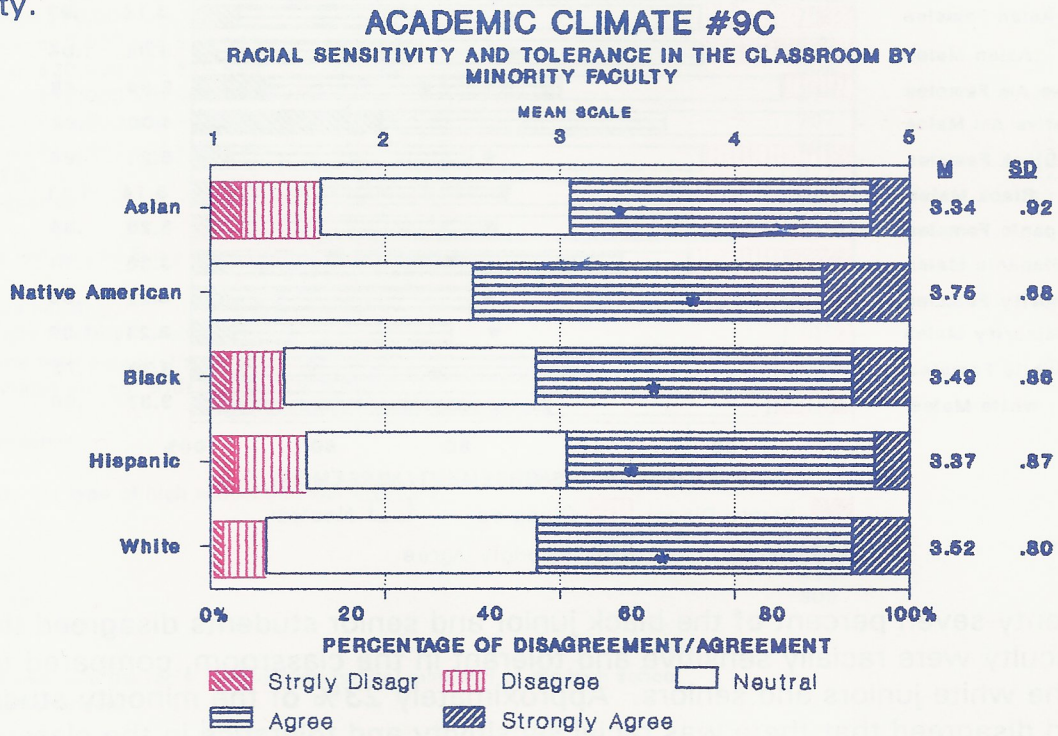
Factor E: Racial Sensitivity in the Classroom

FIGURE 5
MEAN RATINGS FOR FACTOR E
BY RACE AND GENDER



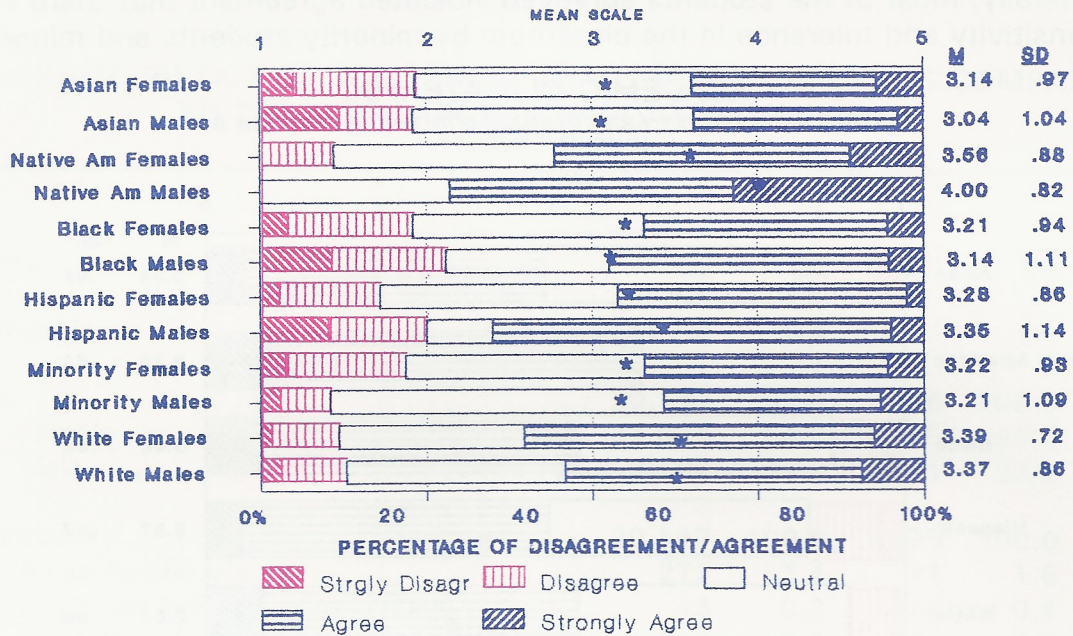
A supportive academic climate is perceived when both faculty and students respect cultural and racial differences within the campus community. Exposure of both faculty and students to the cultures of different minority groups in the classroom enhances meaningful interactions.

Generally, most of the students surveyed indicated agreement that there was racial sensitivity and tolerance in the classroom by minority students and minority faculty.



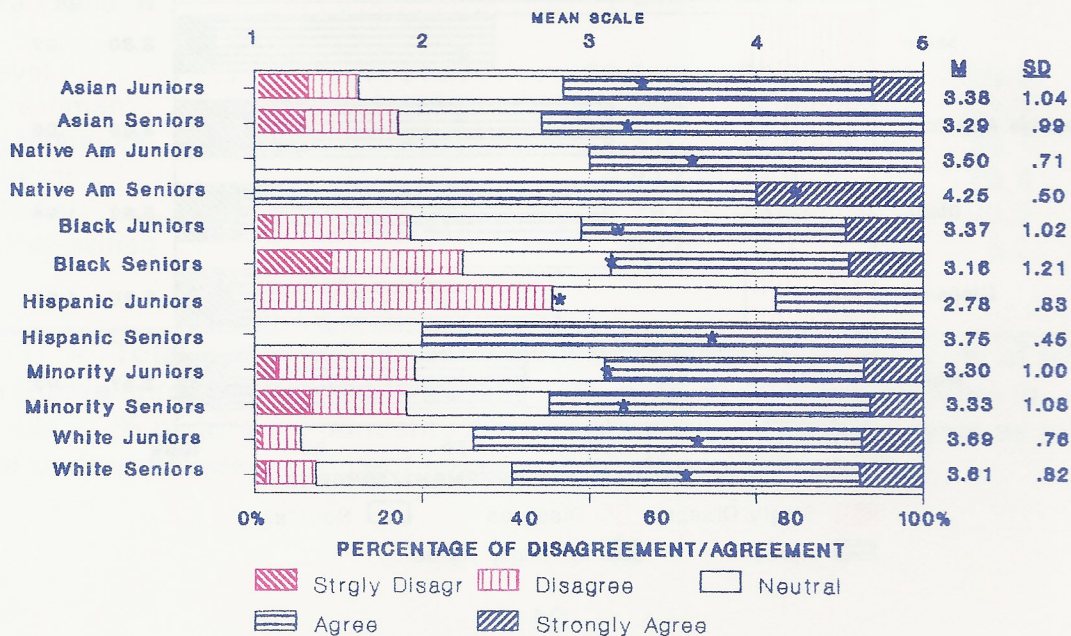
Approximately 20% of all Asians, 24% of all blacks, and 20% of all Hispanics disagreed that there was racial sensitivity and tolerance in the classroom by white students.

ACADEMIC CLIMATE #9B
RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE IN THE CLASSROOM BY WHITE STUDENTS



Twenty-seven percent of the black junior and senior students disagreed that white faculty were racially sensitive and tolerant in the classroom, compared to 5% of the white juniors and seniors. Approximately 23% of the minority students surveyed disagreed that there was racial sensitivity and tolerance in the classroom by white faculty, compared to 12% of all white students surveyed.

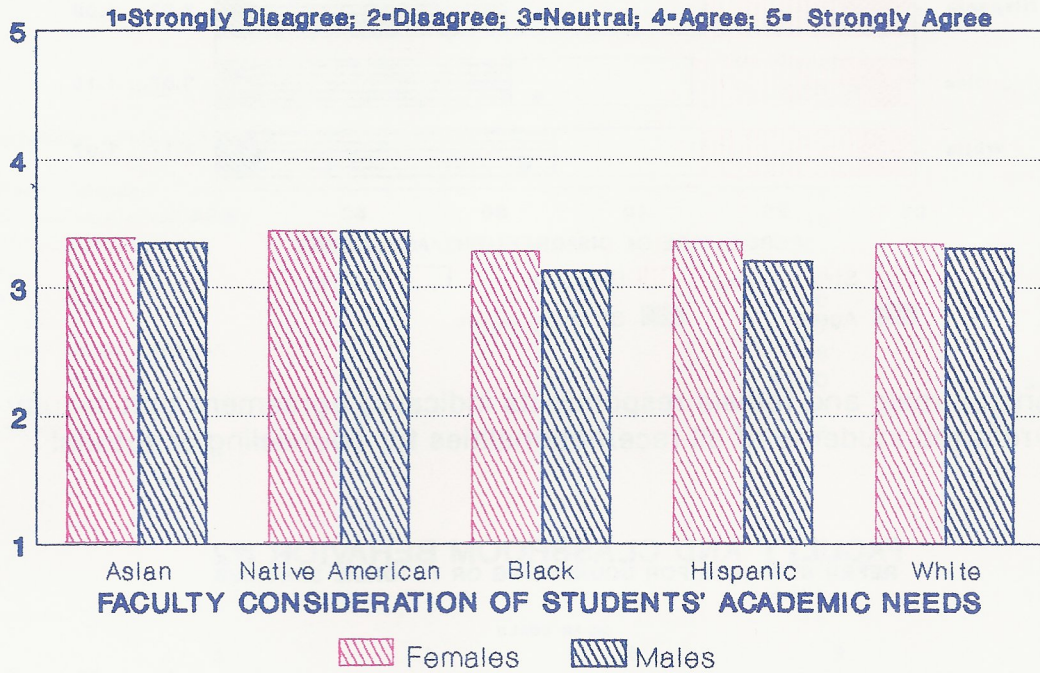
ACADEMIC CLIMATE #9D
RACIAL SENSITIVITY AND TOLERANCE IN THE CLASSROOM BY WHITE FACULTY



White females tended to perceive to a greater extent than minority females that faculty and student racial sensitivity existed in the classroom.

Factor F: Faculty Consideration for Students' Academic Needs

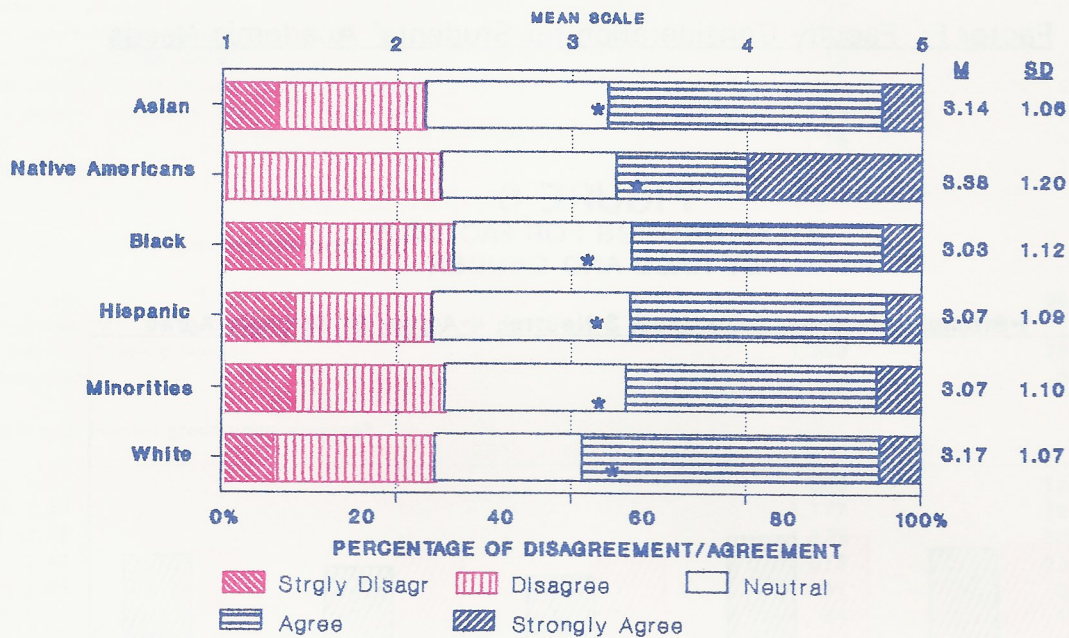
FIGURE 6
MEAN RATINGS FOR FACTOR F
BY RACE AND GENDER



Faculty members who are concerned about a student's cognitive and/or social development help in promoting positive student attitudes toward the institution (Pascarella, 1980).

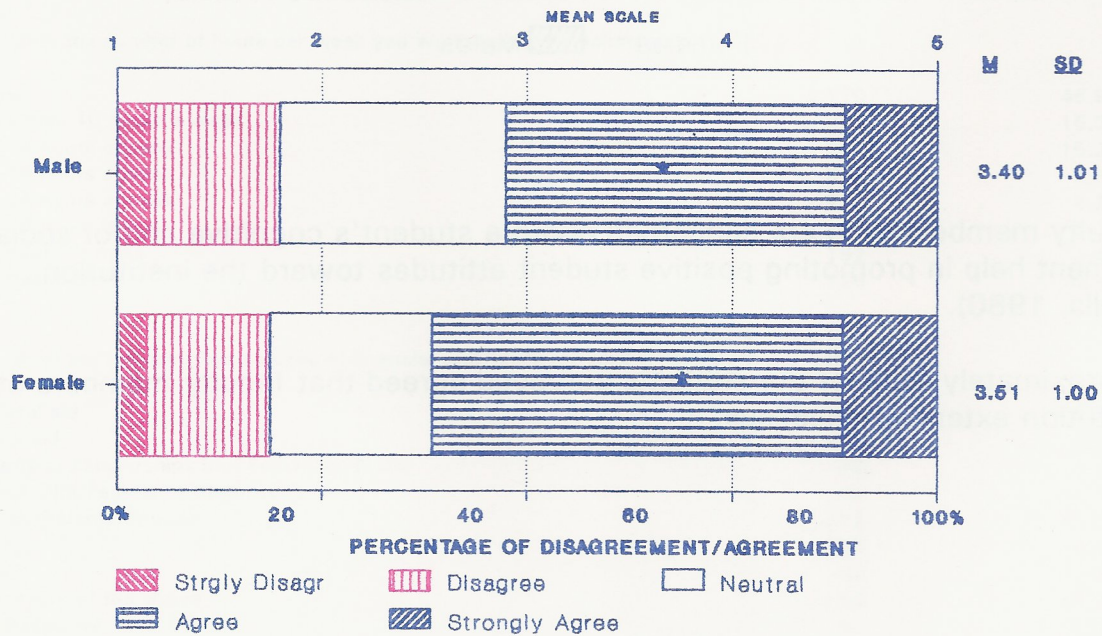
Approximately 48% of the students surveyed agreed that faculty members at the institution extended deadlines.

FACULTY AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR #1 EXTEND DEADLINES



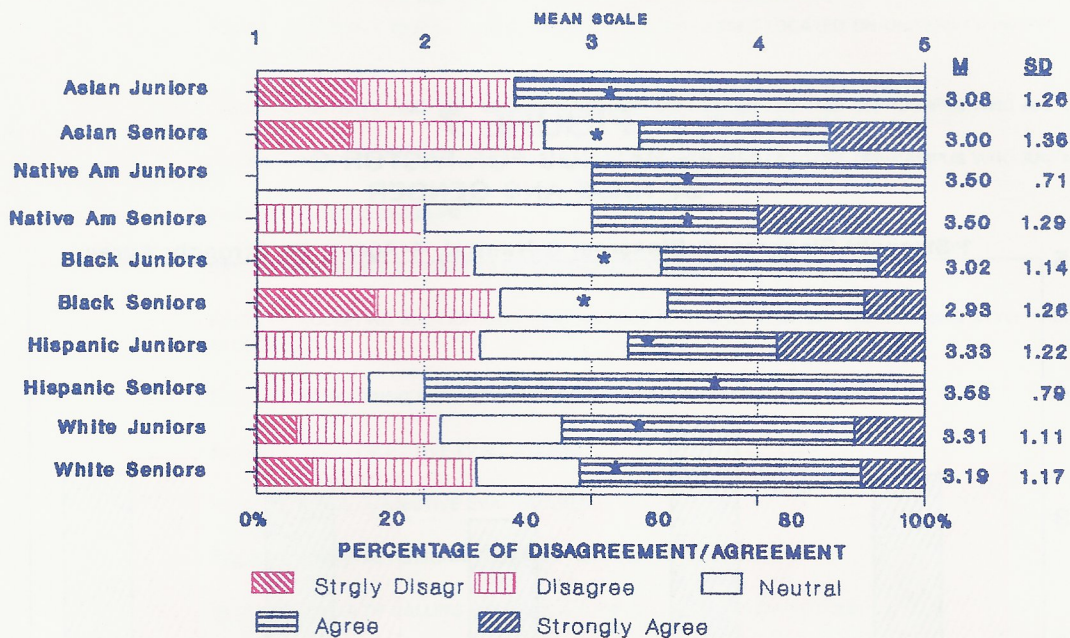
In general, male and female respondents indicated agreement that faculty members referred students of all race/nationalities for counseling or tutorial services.

FACULTY AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR #2 REFER STUDENTS FOR COUNSELING OR TUTORIAL SERVICES



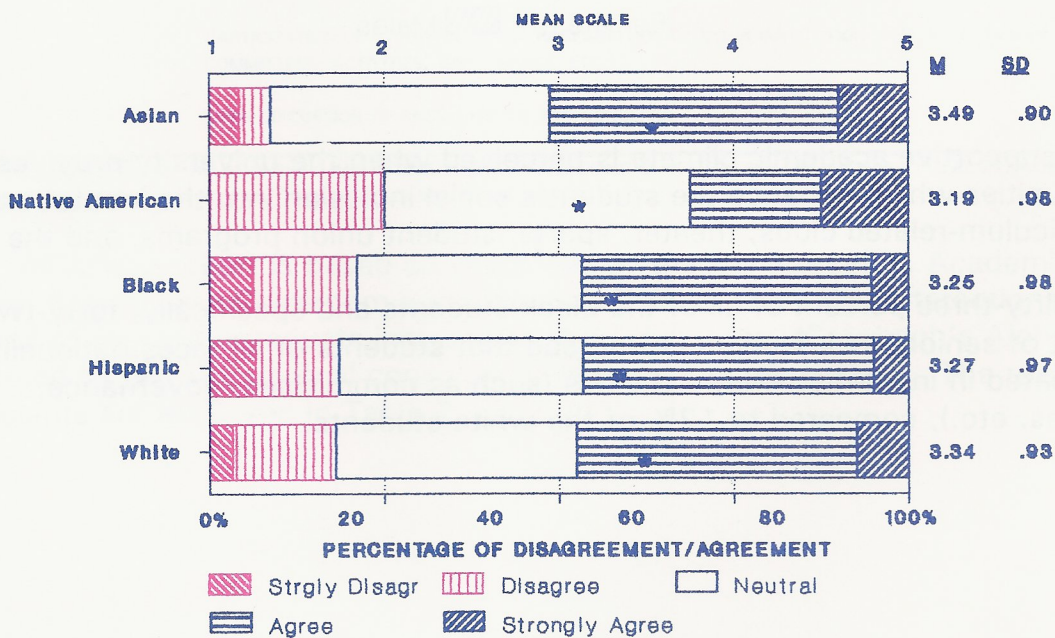
Thirty-four percent of all black juniors and seniors indicated disagreement that faculty members accepted suggestions for changes in course content. In general, 27% of the students surveyed indicated disagreement that faculty members accepted suggestions for changes in course content.

FACULTY AND CLASSROOM #3
ACCEPT SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGES IN COURSE CONTENT OR
TEACHING STYLE FROM ALL STUDENTS



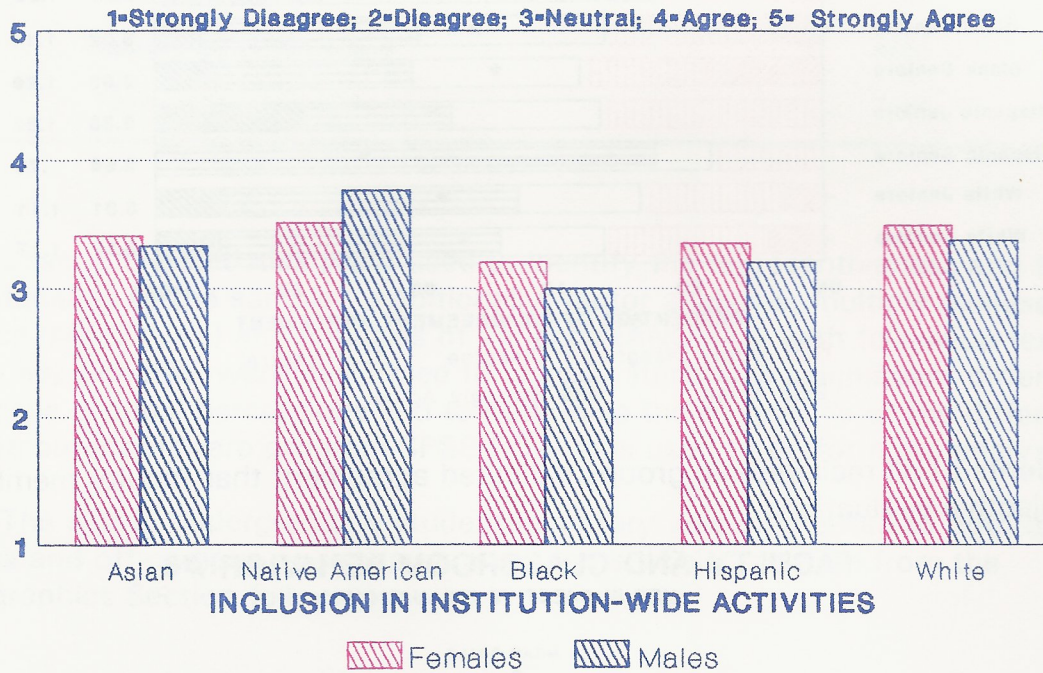
Students of all racial/ethnic groups indicated agreement that faculty members used subjective evaluations.

FACULTY AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR #6
USE SUBJECTIVE EVALUATIONS



Factor G: Inclusion in Institution-Wide Activities

FIGURE 7
MEAN RATINGS FOR FACTOR G
BY RACE AND GENDER

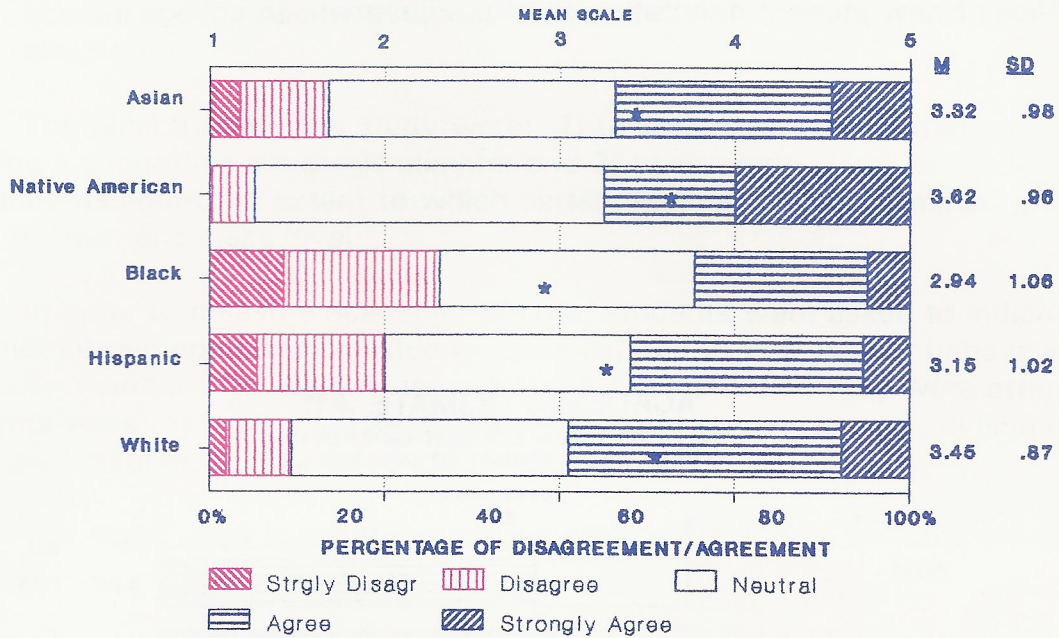


A supportive academic climate is perceived when the university provides opportunities which enhance the student's social inclusion into the institution, such as curriculum-related clubs, theater, sports, student union programs, and the like.

Thirty-three percent of all of the black students and specifically, forty-two percent of senior black students disagreed that students of all races/nationalities participated in institution-wide activities (such as committees, governance, activities, etc.), compared to 12% of the white students.

RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS #2

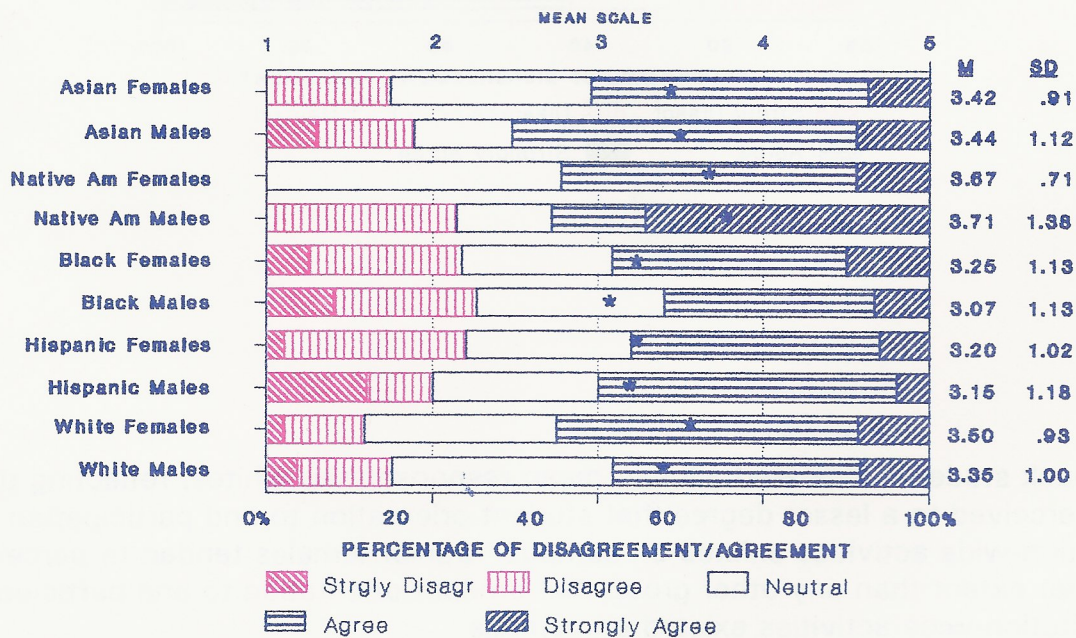
PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES
IN INSTITUTION-WIDE ACTIVITIES



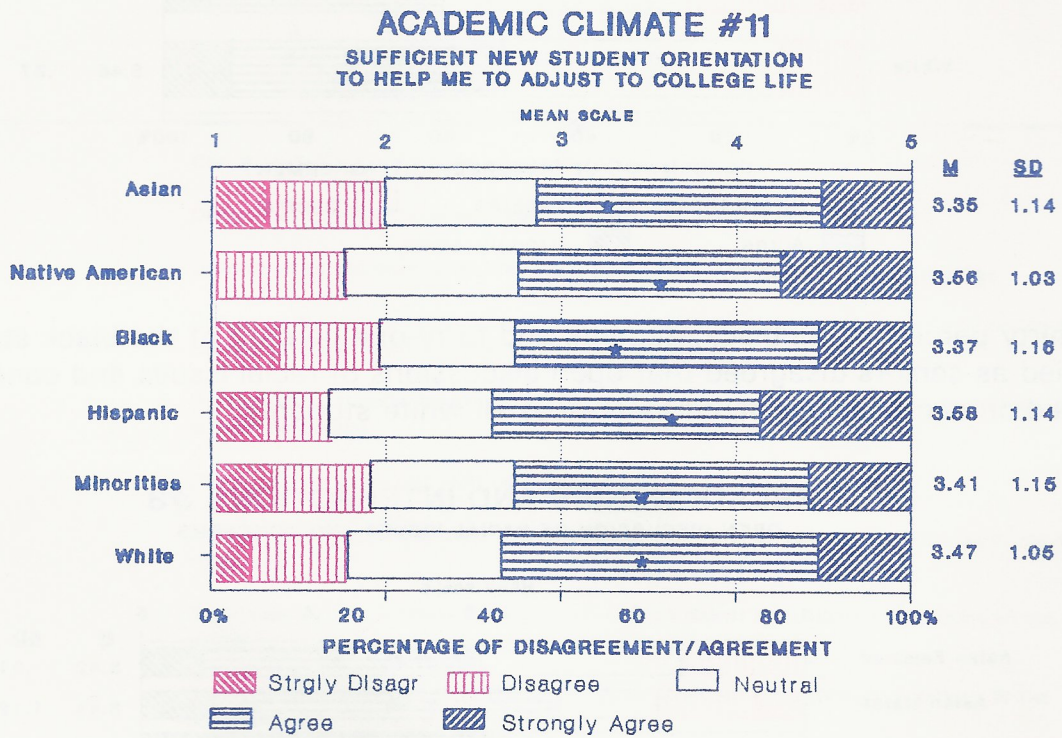
Thirty percent of all black students and forty-one percent of the black students classified as seniors disagreed that open discussions of racial issues and concerns occurred on campus, compared to 16% of all white students.

RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS #3

OPEN DISCUSSION OF RACIAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS



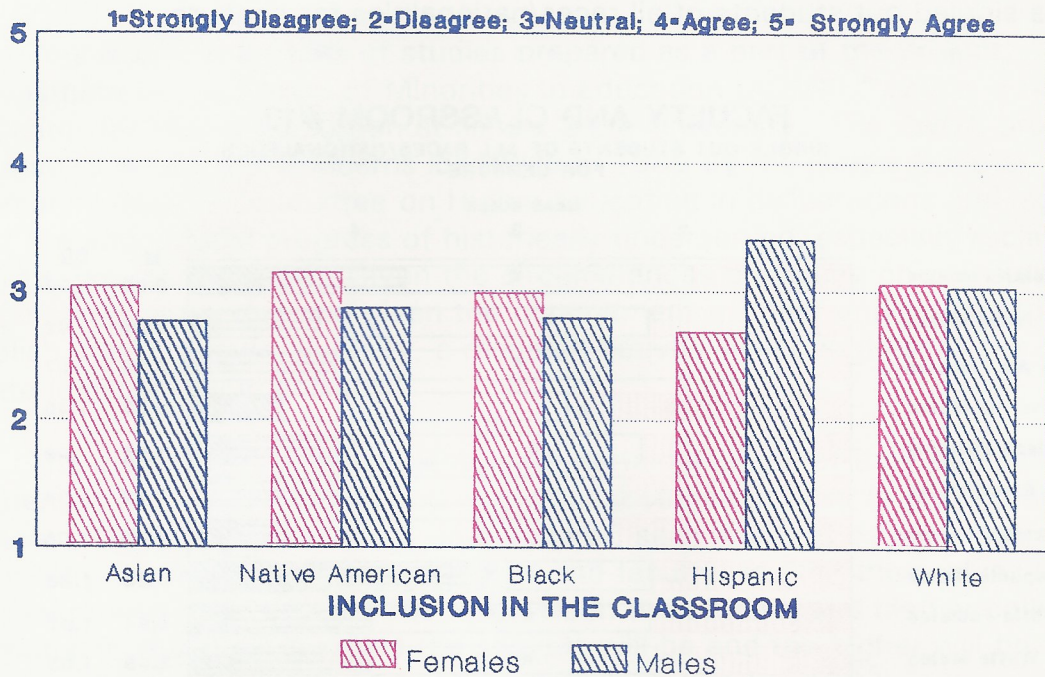
Of all minority students surveyed, 23% indicated their disagreement that there was sufficient new student orientation to help adjustment to college life.



Black students indicated a lower mean response than whites, reflecting that they perceived to a lesser degree that student orientation to and participation in institution-wide activities existed on campus. Junior females tended to perceive to a greater extent than any other group that student orientation to and participation in institution-wide activities existed on campus.

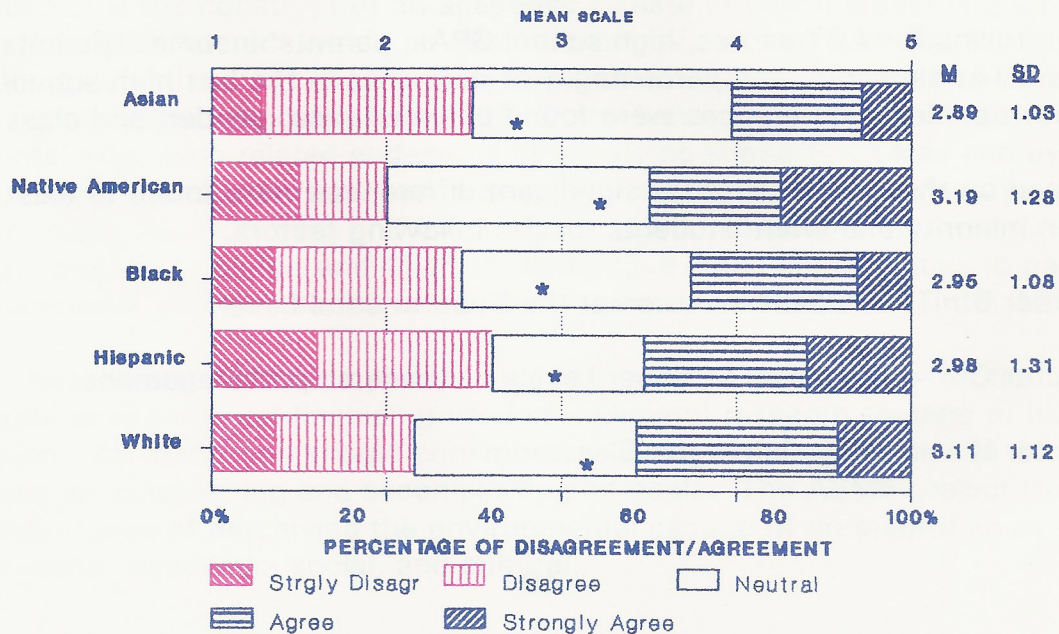
Factor H: Inclusion in the Classroom

FIGURE 8
MEAN RATINGS FOR FACTOR H
BY RACE AND GENDER

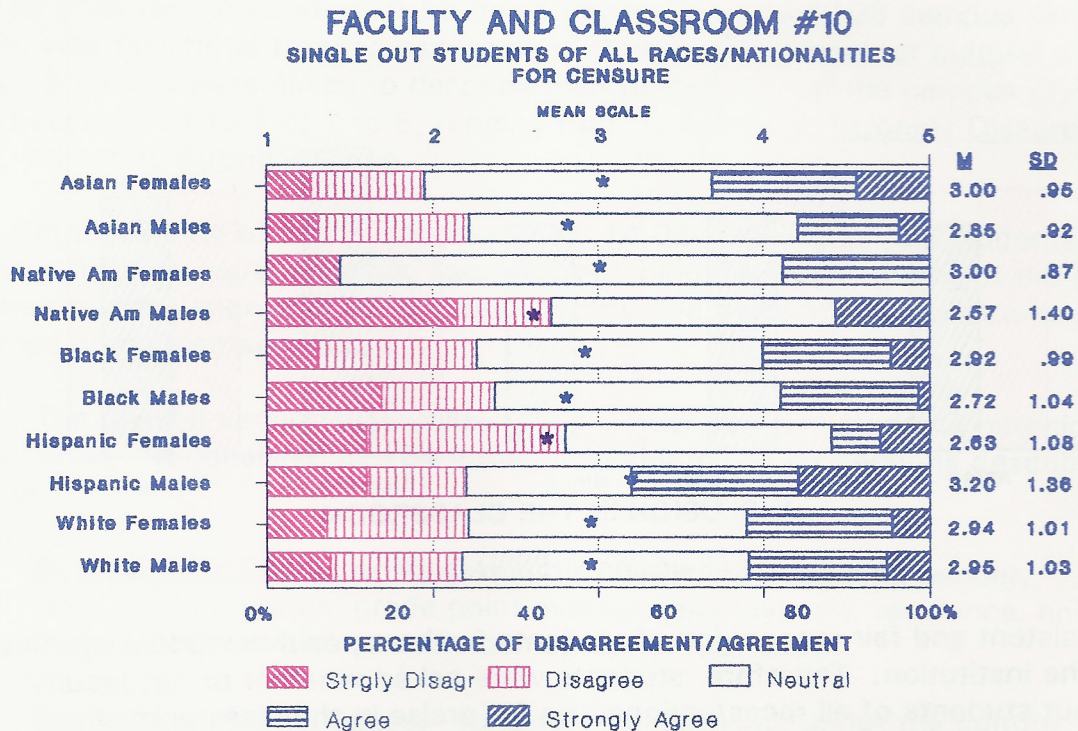


Consistent and fair recognition of students furthers positive student attitudes toward the institution. Therefore, students were asked whether or not faculty singled out students of all races/nationalities for praise in the classroom. Approximately 35% of the Asians, 36% of the blacks, 40% of the Hispanics, and 29% of the white students surveyed disagreed that faculty singled out students of all races/nationalities for praise in the classroom.

FACULTY AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR #9
SINGLE OUT STUDENTS OF ALL RACES/NATIONALITIES FOR PRAISE



Of all male respondents, 27% of the Asian, 32% of the black, 40% of the Hispanic, and 30% of the white disagreed with the statement that faculty members singled out students of all races/nationalities for censure.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Controlling for ACT scores, high school GPAs, parents' incomes, parents' educational attainments, and percentages of minorities in the last high school attended, significant differences were found between race, gender, and class level.

Based on the mean responses significant differences were found to exist between minority and white students for the following factors:

- Factor B Student Inclusion at the Departmental Level
- Factor C Inclusion at Upper Levels of Leadership/Management
- Factor H Inclusion in the Classroom

Significant differences in the mean responses were found between male and female students for the following factors:

- Factor A Racial/Cultural Sensitivity (On and Off Campus)
- Factor B Student Inclusion at the Departmental Level
- Factor C Inclusion at Upper Levels of Leadership/Management
- Factor D Student Growth and Development
- Factor E Racial Sensitivity in the Classroom
- Factor G Inclusion in Institution-Wide Activities

Significant differences in perceptions were found between minority and majority students for the following factors:

- Factor B Student Inclusion at the Departmental Level
- Factor E Racial Sensitivity in the Classrooms

Significant differences in perceptions were found between minority and majority students by class level for the following factors:

- Factor B Student Inclusion at the Departmental Level
- Factor C Inclusion at Upper Levels of Leadership Management
- Factor D Student Growth and Development
- Factor F Faculty Consideration for Students' Academic Needs
- Factor G Inclusion in Institution-Wide Activities

Significant differences in perceptions were found between minority and majority students by gender by class level for the following factor:

- Factor E Racial Sensitivity in the Classroom

White females viewed the academic climate of the institution more positively than did any other group. Minority male students felt a lack of a supportive academic climate more strongly than did any other group. [The exception is Factor H, where minority females gave the lowest mean response, (Fig. 8)].

DISCUSSION

It is important to note that minority students, specifically black students, perceived the overall academic climate to be less supportive than did white students. The diversity of perceptions, attitudes, and opinions pertaining to racial sensitivity, faculty interaction with students, and the lack of role models in upper levels of administration and management indicated that there is a need to improve efforts to recruit and to retain minorities at all levels. In addition, the responses of black students, as well as those of white female students, tended to suggest that there is a need for more programs that recognize and foster the importance of a culturally diverse campus community. One conclusion is that the community should reflect and represent the interests of all students. The results of this study strongly suggests that the participating institution should re-examine its mission, programs, and services in an attempt to reduce any ambiguity regarding its commitment to cultural diversity. Responses by students also suggest a need to emphasize activities which foster cohesiveness among students from diverse backgrounds and racial/ethnic origins.

A substantial percentage of respondents indicated "do not know" (ranging from 21% to 55%) on items centered on race relations. This can be interpreted as an indication that either there was no interaction between students, faculty, and administrators of different races at the institution, or there were too few minority students, faculty, and administrators to have a viable presence or to constitute a critical mass at the institution. The lack of minority faculty and administrators at the institution and the lack of quality interactions between students on their campus appear to be the explanations. Had the data indicated the extent of perceptions regarding race relations and interactions, it then would have been possible to assess further such endeavors to determine how they might be modified or improved.

With regard to power and leadership roles, it is evident that very few minorities on the campus are in positions which are perceived as such. The institution could better serve students through planning and goal setting that targets the recruitment and employment of minority administrators and by positively recognizing the value of diversity.

In general, student respondents perceived a supportive academic climate to be one in which (1) the institution provided adequate academic support services, and (2) both faculty and staff responded to students' needs, irrespective of the

student's race or gender. A supportive academic climate was also perceived as one in which all students are provided equal opportunities to participate actively in academic activities and one in which they see their culture, history, and interests reflected in course content and in forums. Furthermore, a supportive campus academic climate is one wherein all individuals are provided equal opportunities to hold positions of leadership/management at all levels in the university's organizational hierarchy. Awareness of and appreciation for the concerns of all individuals in the university and of the diversity of cultures were also considered to be important factors in building and maintaining a supportive academic climate. The results of this study, in part, strengthened earlier studies conducted by Astin, Korn, and Green (1987), Webb (1987), Tinto (1988), and Schmidt and Sedlacek (1972).

The statistically significant differences between perceptions by race, regarding several factors determined in this study to characterize a supportive academic climate, offered insights into the problems experienced by majority and minority students that attended the university. The statistically significant differences between male and female perceptions and by class level also raised some interesting issues.

Consistent with results obtained by Hawkins (1989), and Nettles and Johnson (1987) about minority student participation and success on predominantly white campuses, the minority students in this study perceived inadequate support from the institution's staff and faculty and insufficient opportunities for political, social, and cultural inclusion in the broader community. In particular, their perceptions of inadequate interactions with faculty may have been primary sources for their negative perceptions of the academic climate. Past research (Tinto, 1975; Astin, 1982) has shown that, irrespective of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status, a student will have a positive outlook about the campus climate if he or she enjoys favorable relationships with faculty. Indeed, studies conducted by Pascarella (1980), Pascarella and Chapman (1983), and Endo and Harpel (1983) showed that the amount of informal interaction of students with faculty outside the classroom was one factor that distinguished students who persisted in college from those students who dropped out of college.

Minority students surveyed also perceived a lack of opportunities for participation in professional and institution-wide activities. In addition, they perceived a lack of opportunities for some individuals in the university to participate in either leadership or in managerial roles at all levels in the university's organizational hierarchy. Minority males felt these inadequacies more strongly than did minority females. As shown in previous studies, white female students perceived the academic climate of the institution more positively than did white males or minority groups.

Other research studies have shown that, in general, minority students in predominantly white universities were in a more stressful situation than were white students (Gunnings, 1982). Their stressful experiences in meeting college expectations, coupled with their perception that university activities were directed more toward servicing the needs of white students, often led to feelings of isolation and frustration. In some cases, they acted out this frustration by associating themselves primarily with other minority students or by leaving the university (Hawkins, 1989).

Interestingly, among class levels, the lower division students (freshmen and sophomores) strongly felt a lack of concern by their academic departments for their pursuit of majors or fields. In general, the results of this study indicated that lower division students perceived an absence of, or a minimal amount of, interaction with faculty. Freshman and sophomore students, as new or recent entrants to the university community, seemed to expect the institution to provide them with more adequate support from both its staff and faculty. These students tended to view this type of support as critical to their smooth transition from high school to college.

The results of this study indicated that upper division students (juniors and seniors) had a more positive outlook of the campus academic climate. Some possible explanations were: since these students have stayed in the institution for a longer time, they have adapted to their academic environment; they have known more faculty; they have discovered where to find assistance; and they may have received more counseling and advice in their selection of a major field or career.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Further interpretations of the findings of this study suggested four factors which may significantly influence a student's perception of academic climate. They were:

1. racial sensitivity,
2. quality of academic services provided particularly at the departmental level,
3. extent of faculty interaction with students, and
4. academic, social, and cultural inclusion of students into the institutional culture.

The university associated with this study has a record of retaining its students which currently surpasses both state-wide and nationwide averages. An April 1990, student retention report showed that 55% of new freshmen students at the institution persisted after five years, compared with 49% and 50% average

persistence rates statewide and nationwide, respectively. However, while the overall retention rate was relatively high, retention of minority students still lagged by 30 to 35 percentage points behind the nationwide average for all new freshman students.

The perceptions of the campus academic climate, particularly those of undergraduate minority students at the university, present a challenge to the institution's commitment to the retention and graduation of all students. This challenge may be addressed by reviewing institutional policies, procedures, and programs regarding the following:

1. admission policies and procedures,
2. available academic services to minority students, such as entry, transition, and other support services,
3. formal and informal interactions between faculty and minority students, and
4. minority students' inclusion into student organizations and co-curricular activities.

Admission Policies and Procedures

An institution's admissions policies, especially as they relate to minority students, must take into account institutional and departmental standards, requirements regarding student achievement, the student's ability to cope with college life, and the overall quality of life for all students.

Academic Services

Using the service-needs assessment model developed by Leach, Lewis, and Lutz, the various services provided by the institution may be evaluated by responding to the questions under the following three categories:

1) Entry services:

- . Are there services and information which target minority students' specific interests such as assistance with assessment, advising, placement, and registration procedures?
- . Are these services conveniently accessible to them?
- . Should orientation services take place at the departmental level or institutional level?

2) Support services:

- . What is the nature/extent of personal support services available to students, such as financial aid, security, and child care?
- . Is there educational support specific to needs of minority groups, such as skills development, English for non-English speaking populations, tutoring, or co-curricular activities?

3) Transition services:

- . Is counseling available for changing academic majors, transferring to other schools, or job placement?

Faculty interaction with minority students

The quality of faculty interaction with students is another area that should be reviewed:

- . Do faculty members find time for consultation with their students?
- . Do faculty members facilitate tutoring services for students whose skill levels are low and whose English proficiency is inadequate?
- . Are there opportunities and locations available (like departmental lounges) for students and faculty to meet informally?

Student participation in co-curricular and institution-wide activities

Astin (1984) hypothesized that the "physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience is directly related to the student's likelihood to stay in the institution." Student participation in organizations, committees, and other co-curricular activities appear to provide opportunities for improving student persistence. Relevant questions are the following:

- . Are students well-informed about all institutionally sponsored activities? What percentage of minority students participate in these activities? Is their participation encouraged and/or facilitated?
- . Are there activities available that provide opportunities for leadership roles for minority students? How can residential housing policies and programs be directed toward promoting participatory or leadership opportunities?

In summary, the eight factors identified by this study as being important to a student's perception of a supportive academic climate should be considered carefully by the institution.

ASME climate inventories are being administered on many campuses with varying academic, social, and cultural environments and to a diversity of student populations. Additional campus academic climate studies will be conducted in the search for a universal set of factors.

APPENDIX

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PROJECT ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF MINORITIES IN EDUCATION

During the Spring of 1984, the Subcommittee on Minority Concerns of the Illinois Senate Committee on Higher Education was established to assess the educational progress of historically disadvantaged groups in Illinois. Both committees were chaired by Senator Richard Newhouse. An early conclusion of the Subcommittee was that a concerted effort would be required on the part of all segments of the educational community, as well as the legislative and executive branches of state government and the business community, to bridge gaps caused by barriers which have limited educational access and success for racial minorities.

One of the recommendations of the Subcommittee was that Illinois colleges and universities should facilitate and sponsor research activities which focus on:

- (1) identifying causes for the disproportionately (under) representation of minorities in postsecondary education; and
- (2) identifying successful strategies and programs throughout the educational system which foster and enhance the participation and status of minorities.

Subsequently, legislation was enacted by the Illinois General Assembly and signed by the Governor--notably, Public Acts 84-726, 84-785 and 85-283, and various resolutions--which set into motion statewide, multidimensional and collaborative efforts to enhance minority participation in education. Regrettably, the pace of progress was slow, prompting the creation of the Joint Committee on Minority Student Access by Illinois Senate Joint Resolution No. 72 in June, 1987, and its continuation by Senate Joint Resolution No. 130 on July 1, 1988. Both resolutions were sponsored by Senator Miguel del Valle. Other statewide committees, including the Joint Committee on Minority Student Achievement and the Task Force on Minority Concerns of the Illinois Community Colleges Trustees Association, were also formed to focus on the same issues.

During the 1991 session of the General Assembly, a Subcommittee on Minority Concerns in Education of the House Higher Education Committee was established by Committee Chair Representative Wyvetter Younge.

The Subcommittee, Chaired by Representative Arthur Turner, held hearings during the Summer and Fall of 1991 to review and to assess the progress since 1984 of legislative initiatives to enhance educational opportunity for underrepresented groups.

Since the late 1960s, various strategies have been initiated and intensified to address the adverse conditions that have characterized the experience of members of underrepresented groups in education. Still, many of the conditions persisted, with little progress in Illinois and nationwide. Tensions between racial groups have reignited and heightened in recent years to cause problems of growing magnitude in educational settings and to inhibit progress toward creating campus climates which are necessary for underrepresented groups to enjoy full educational benefits.

In December, 1987, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) approved a proposal, submitted by Dr. Charles E. Morris, and a grant for the development of a process and survey instruments (inventories) which could be used for assessing the educational status of minorities in Illinois. The project, "Assessment of the Status of Minorities in Education" (ASME), is housed in the Center for Higher Education at Illinois State University. A primary objective of this initiative is to provide balanced information to policy- and decision-makers, administrators and the public, thereby assisting efforts to facilitate the goals of quality and equality in postsecondary education. The initial work of the project was accomplished by a group consisting of members of the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education, a grassroots educational advocacy organization formed in 1982. The persons involved (and their roles/responsibilities at that time--January through July, 1988) in developing the survey instruments were:

Dr. Seymour Bryson, Dean of the College of Human Resources, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

Ms. Francine Clark-Jones, Graduate Assistant, Department of Educational Policy, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana

Dr. Stafford Hood, Program Evaluator, Illinois State Board of Education

Dr. Charles E. Morris, Vice President for Administrative Services, Illinois State University

Dr. William Mosley, Chairman, Department of Special Education, Western Illinois University

Mr. Ira Neal, Graduate Assistant, Department of Educational Administration and Foundation, Illinois State University

Mr. Silas Purnell, Director, Ada S. McKinley Recruitment Center, Chicago

Dr. Alvin Townsel, Educational Consultant, Illinois State Board of Education

Dr. William Trent, Associate Professor of Educational Policy, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana

Others, including Ms. Clara Fitzpatrick, a member of the Illinois Board of Regents, and Dr. Rudolfo Garcia, Associate Vice President for Research, Chicago City-Wide College, provided valuable assistance. Drs. Morris and Trent served as Co-Directors of the program.

The survey instruments consist of separate inventories for undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty and administrators, and for assessing institutional services and programs. The first use of the inventories was in conjunction with a workshop conducted by Dr. Morris at Danville Area Community College in August 1988. Since that time, supported in part by additional grants from the IBHE to the Center for Higher Education at Illinois State University in fiscal years 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92, the inventories have been continuously revised and augmented to 1) assess the educational status of all underrepresented groups--minorities, women and people with disabilities, 2) be more inclusive of questions regarding services provided by institutions, 3) present questions in a more neutral and unbiased fashion, and 4) communicate more clearly and consistently to institutions, agencies and individuals participating in the surveys.

The initial grant was sufficient only for the developmental stage of the project. Consequently, a pilot study conducted in six private Illinois baccalaureate institutions in the Spring of 1989 was a subsequent, but independent, effort made possible by resources and assistance provided by Illinois State University (ISU), the participating institutions, the Federation of Illinois Independent Colleges and Universities (FIICU), the United Campus Christian Foundation (UCCF) of Normal, Illinois, and the Illinois United Ministries in Higher Education. Donald Fouts, President of FIICU, and Rev. James Pruyne, Director of UCCF, played instrumental roles in the acquisition of these additional and sustaining resources. They, along with UCCF interns; students, faculty and staff from ISU; and others provided essential support at this stage of the initiative. Additional support from the two institutions that cooperated for the purpose of obtaining the IBHE grants--Western Illinois University and Illinois Wesleyan University-- was also crucial for project survival during this period. Dr. William Mosley of Western Illinois University, Dr. Ellen Hurwitz of Illinois Wesleyan University, Dr. Alvin Townsel of the Illinois State Board of Education and Dr. Edward Hines of Illinois State University, have provided ongoing support to the ASME initiative, as have Dr. David A. Strand, Provost of ISU and Director of the Center for Higher Education, and Mr. James Alexander, ISU Vice President for Business and Finance.

Important contributions to the ASME initiative are being made by persons who serve in the role of Research Coordinator. To date, these include Dr. Noreen Michael, Assistant Professor of Educational Administrations and Foundations (ISU), who served during the period 1989-1991, and Dr. Maria Canabal, Assistant Professor of Home Economics (ISU) who has been Research Coordinator since September, 1991.

Significant assistance to the 1989 pilot study was accomplished with the help of LeAnne Slack, as partial fulfillment of her Honor's Program Project under the supervision of Dr. Mildred Boaz, Professor of English and Director of the Honor's Program at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. Her paper, "Status of Minorities in Higher Education: A Study of Selected Independent Illinois Institutions," was the basis for the first report arising from the Assessment Project. ISU students who have made exceptional contributions are Richard Hunter, Laura Knollenberg, and Tricia Seams.

During the Spring of 1990, after further revisions, ASME inventories were administered in eight public and three private baccalaureate degree-granting Illinois institutions. Enabling assistance for this phase of the Project was provided by the Board of Regents, the Board of Governors and the participating institutions. Responses from approximately 14,000 students are being analyzed in numerous studies and reports, including Master's theses and doctoral dissertations.

Procedures and a process are under development for the administration of ASME inventories in the Illinois Community College System in the Spring of 1992. The Illinois Community College Board, the Illinois Community Colleges Trustees Association and the Council of Illinois Community College Presidents have encouraged and supported this initiative.

Members of the ASME Advisory Council and special advisory committees have been instrumental in the accomplishments of ASME surveys, studies, and reports. Since September, 1989, Dr. Charles E. Morris has served as Director and Ira L. Neal has been Assistant Director.

Volume 2, Number 1

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ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF MINORITIES IN EDUCATION

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