

# UCUES 2008

## Campus Climate: Immigration Background

**Prepared at the Request of**

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**By**

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## Executive Summary

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In May 2008, UC Davis participated in the University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES), a UC-wide census of all undergraduates at the nine general campuses. The survey included a number of items that addressed dimensions of campus climate. This report compares perceptions of campus climate at UC Davis with that at the other UCs, and examines differences in the perceptions of UC Davis students according to their immigration background.

On multiple measures of general campus climate, our undergraduates' ratings of UC Davis are near the highest ratings of campus climate among the UCs. Our campus received especially high ratings as friendly, caring, tolerant and safe. We can also take pride that students at UC Davis report the lowest frequency among the UCs of negative or stereotypical views about immigration background expressed by faculty, staff, and by other students.

However, at UC Davis, there are significant differences in perception of campus climate between groups of different immigration backgrounds.

At UC Davis...

- Students who are US-born and whose parents and grandparents are also US-born are most likely to characterize the campus as friendly, tolerant and safe.
- Foreign-born students are least likely to agree that *I feel that I belong at this campus* or *Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at this campus*.
- In contrast, foreign-born students are most likely to agree that *I feel valued as an individual on this campus* and that *This institution values students' opinions*.
- Foreign-born students are least likely to agree that *Students of my immigration background are respected on this campus*. Further, among foreign-born students, Chicano students are least likely to agree.
- Foreign-born students report the highest frequency of expression of negative or stereotypical views related to immigrant background by faculty, staff and by other students.

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## Introduction

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Campus climate is a multi-faceted concept. One definition of campus climate is:

Behaviors within a workplace or learning environment, ranging from subtle to cumulative to dramatic, that can influence whether an individual feels personally safe, listened to, valued, and treated fairly and with respect.\*

In May 2008, UC Davis participated in the University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES), a UC-wide census of all undergraduates at the nine general campuses. The survey consisted of a “Core” of questions answered by all respondents and several “modules” to which respondents were randomly assigned, each of which focused on a particular facet of the undergraduate experience. Both the survey Core and the Student Development module contained items that addressed campus climate along several dimensions, and these are the focus of this report. In particular, this report examines campus climate as it relates to student immigration background.

A total of 7,040 UC Davis students responded to the survey, for a campus response rate of 31.4%. At UC Davis, 45% of respondents were asked to complete the Student Development module; 3,063 students (30.5% of this sub-group) did so. Demographics of the survey population and the respondents for UCUES 2008 are shown in Appendix Table A1. The survey items referenced in this report and the number of students responding to each are also included in the Appendix. Detailed response frequency distributions for all UCUES survey items are available at:

<http://www.sariweb.ucdavis.edu/UCUES/dp%202008%20UCUES%20Frequencies%20.xls>

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\* <http://www.provost.wisc.edu/climate/what.html>

# Results

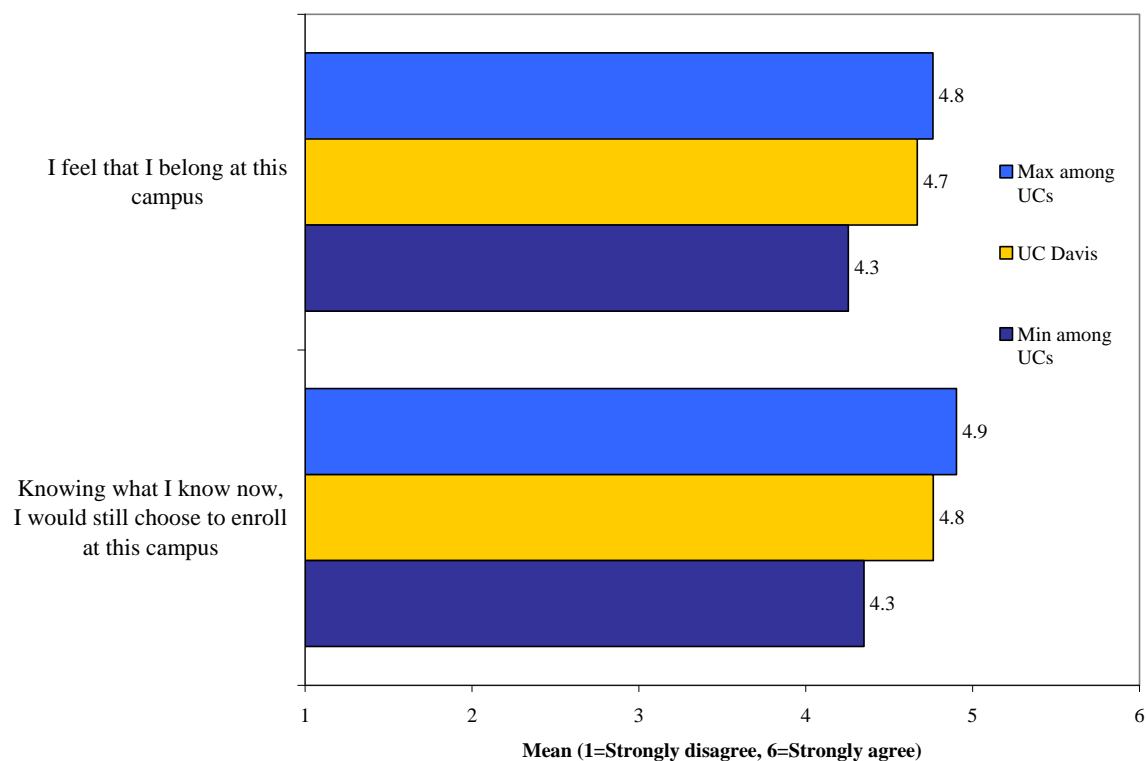
## General Campus Climate

Respondents to UCUES 2008 were asked to rate their agreement with a series of general or global statements related to campus climate on a scale from 1 to 6 where 1 = *Strongly disagree* and 6 = *Strongly agree*. The items were oriented positively, so that a high rating is desirable.

One advantage of UCUES is that it allows for comparisons between undergraduates at UC Davis and those at our sister UC campuses<sup>†</sup>, and provides context for interpretation of results. Figures 1 - 3 display the mean level of agreement with statements relating to campus climate at UC Davis compared to the highest and lowest levels among the UC campuses.<sup>‡</sup>

For most of these items, the rating for UC Davis is near the maximum among the UCs, and significantly higher than the lowest rated campus.

**Figure 1. Global Measures of Campus Climate: UC Comparisons**

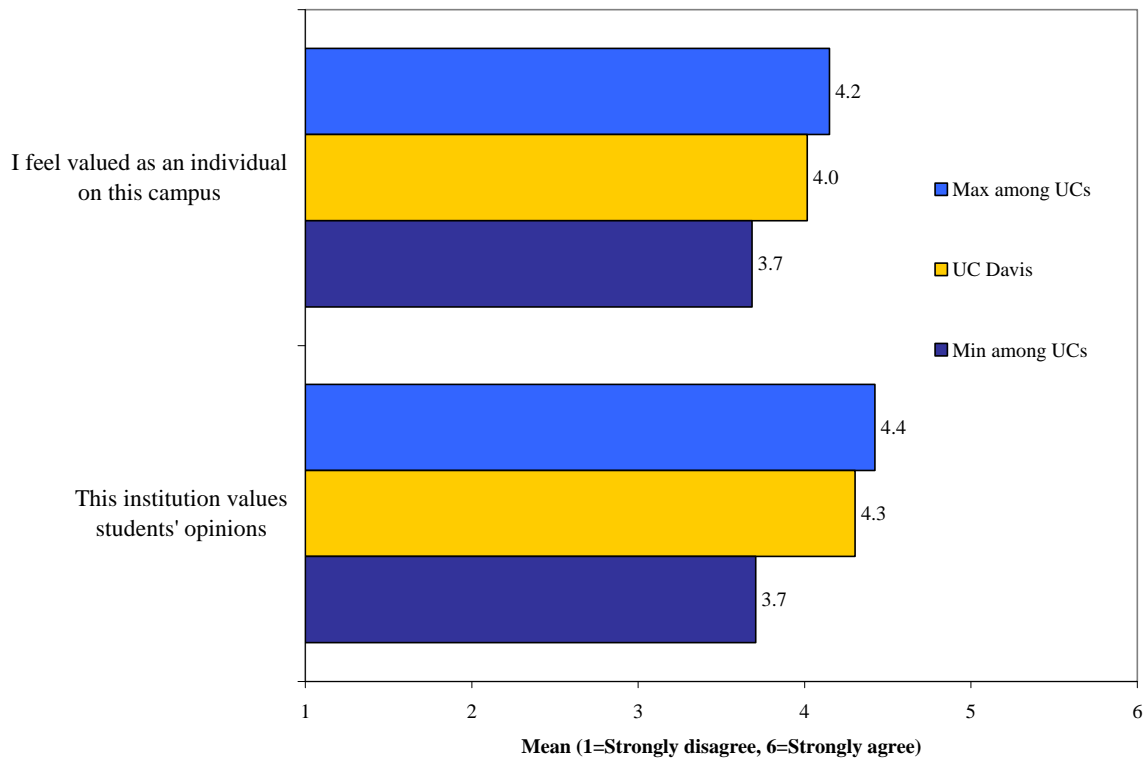


<sup>†</sup> UC Merced is excluded from all campus comparisons due to the very small number of students responding to the survey and the unique character of campus life at UC Merced.

<sup>‡</sup> A committee of UC institutional researchers agreed upon two standards for real, substantive differences between campuses: for mean ratings a difference of 0.2 or more, and for percentage values a difference of 5% or more are considered noteworthy and of practical significance.

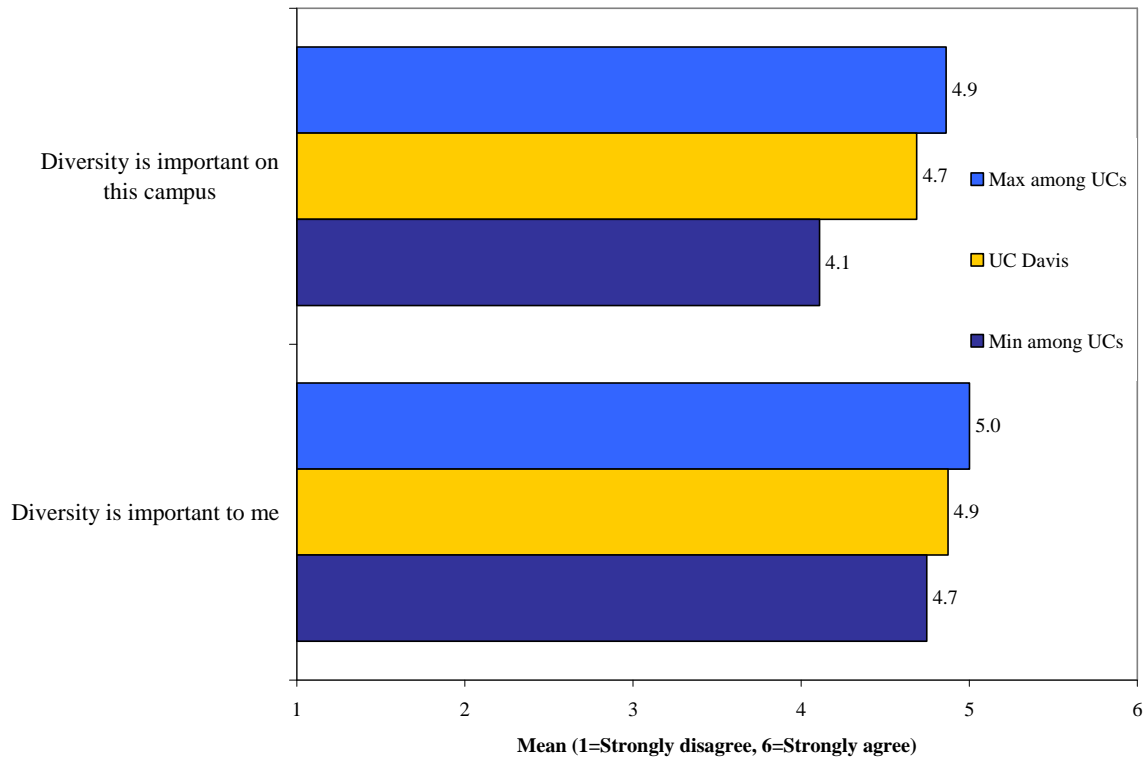
It should be noted that levels of agreement with the statement *I feel valued as an individual on this campus* are generally low across the UCs (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Sense of Personal Value: UC Comparisons**



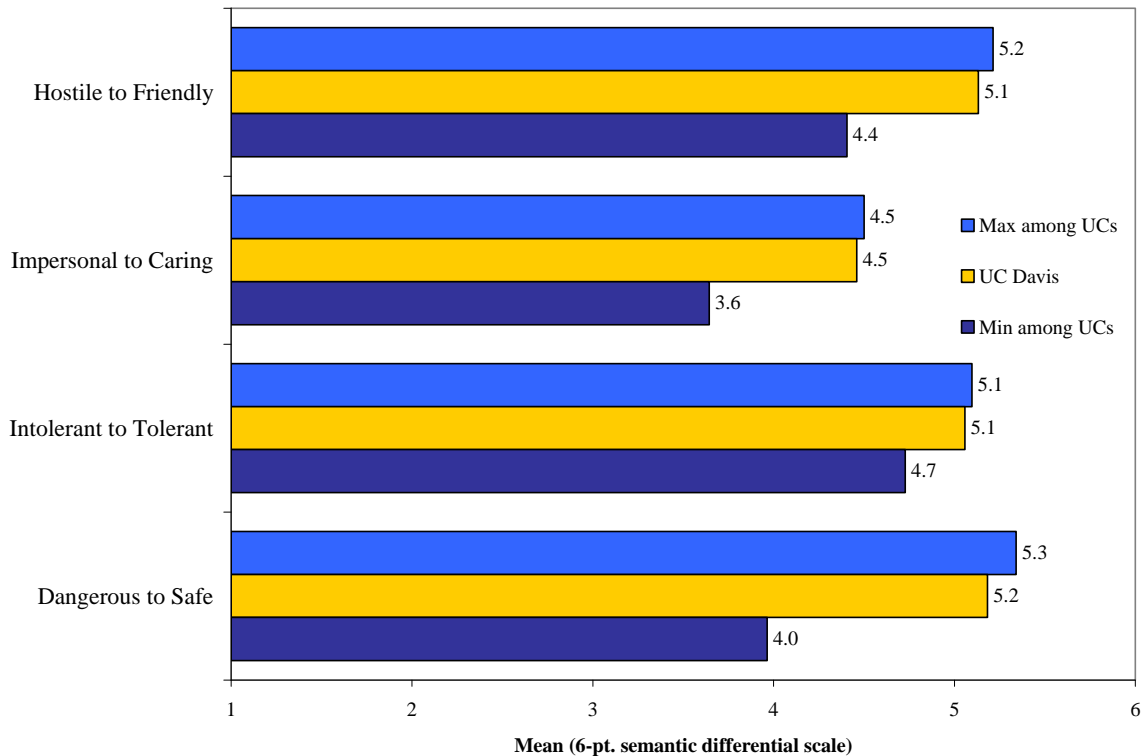
Levels of agreement with the statement *Diversity is important to me* are generally high across the campuses. For this item, the mean level of agreement at UC Davis is near the midpoint among the UCs, neither significantly higher than the lowest nor lower than the highest (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Importance of Diversity: UC Comparisons**



An additional set of four UCUES items asked students to rank the general campus climate by various descriptors. These items were each presented as a 6-point semantic differential scale with only the endpoints defined.<sup>§</sup> Campus comparisons are shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4. Perceptions of Campus Characteristics: UC Comparisons**



As with most other global ratings of campus climate at the campus level, ratings at UC Davis approach the maximum among the UCs as friendly, caring, tolerant and safe. In every case, the mean rating for UC Davis is significantly higher than that at the campus with the lowest rating, and approaches the rating of the highest-ranked campus.

Overall, on these general measures of campus climate, our undergraduate students rate UC Davis as meeting or exceeding the climate at other UC schools. While this is an admirable achievement, analysis of the campus climate as perceived by specific sub-populations allows us to identify areas where there may be room for improvement.

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<sup>§</sup> The scale for these items has been reversed from the orientation in the survey, so that a high rating is again desirable.

## Immigration Background

Perceptions of campus climate may vary substantially between sub-populations on campus; for instance perceptions of campus climate may differ for students of different races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, etc. This report compares perceptions of our campus climate by students categorized by immigration background (self-identified by survey respondents) with particular emphasis on survey items that specifically refer to immigration background. All differences in the mean responses between groups of different immigration backgrounds that are specifically noted in the text are statistically significant at the  $p < .05$  level or higher.

UCUES respondents were asked to identify which of their parents and grandparents were born in the US, as well as whether they were themselves born in the US. As an aid to analysis, these responses were collected into a summary of the student's immigration background, as shown in Table 1 below.

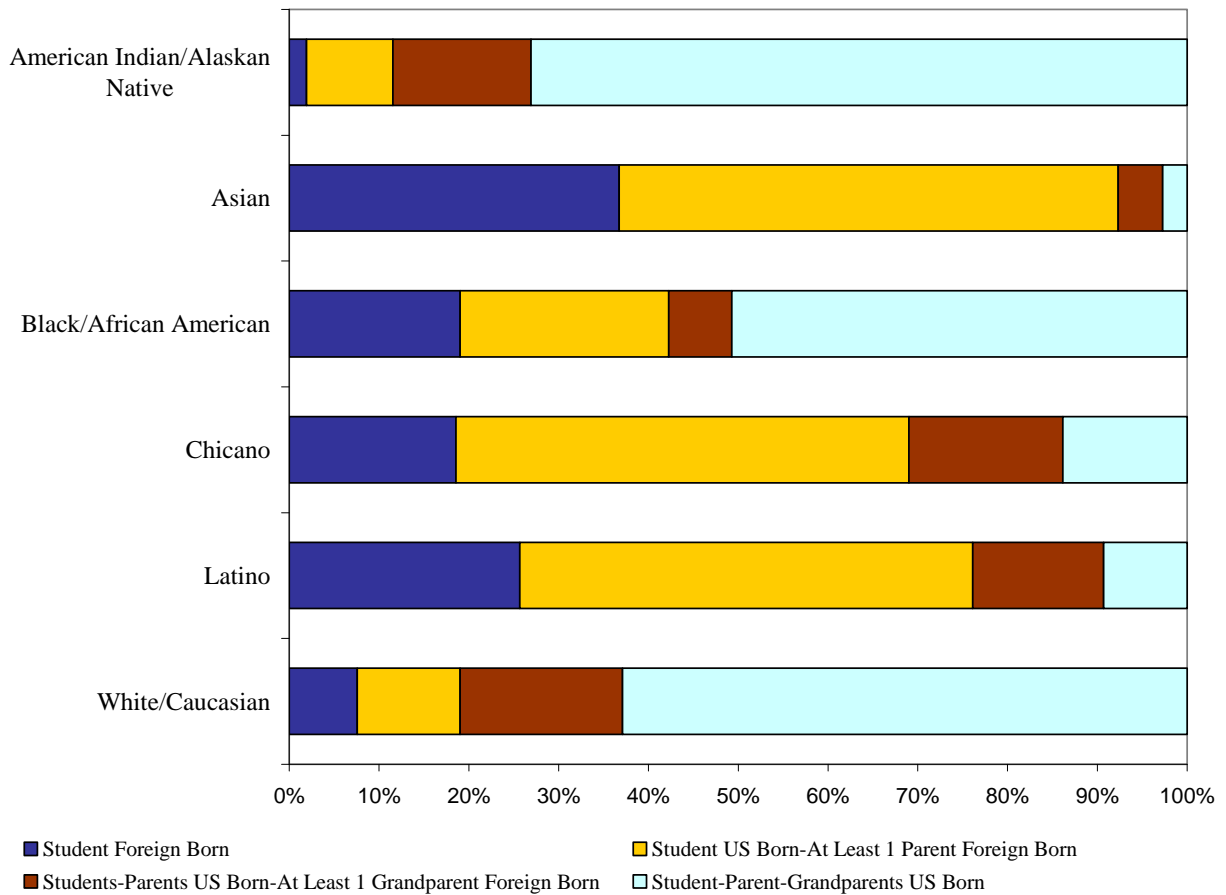
Table 1. Immigration Background of Students at UC Davis				
Immigration Background	Number and Percent of Respondents in each Immigration Background Category			
	Respondents to CORE		Respondents to Student Development Module	
	N	%	N	%
Student Foreign Born	1476	22%	626	21%
Student US Born – At Least 1 Parent Foreign Born	2380	35%	1078	36%
Student & Parents US Born – At Least 1 Grandparent Foreign Born	851	12%	357	12%
Student & Parents & Grandparents US Born	2141	31%	911	31%
Total	6848	100%	2972	100%

Table 1a shows the race/ethnicity of students *within* each immigration background category. The majority of foreign-born students and students who are US born with at least one foreign-born parent are Asian, predominantly Chinese (31% and 32%). The majority of the other two groups are White/Caucasian (57% and 79%).

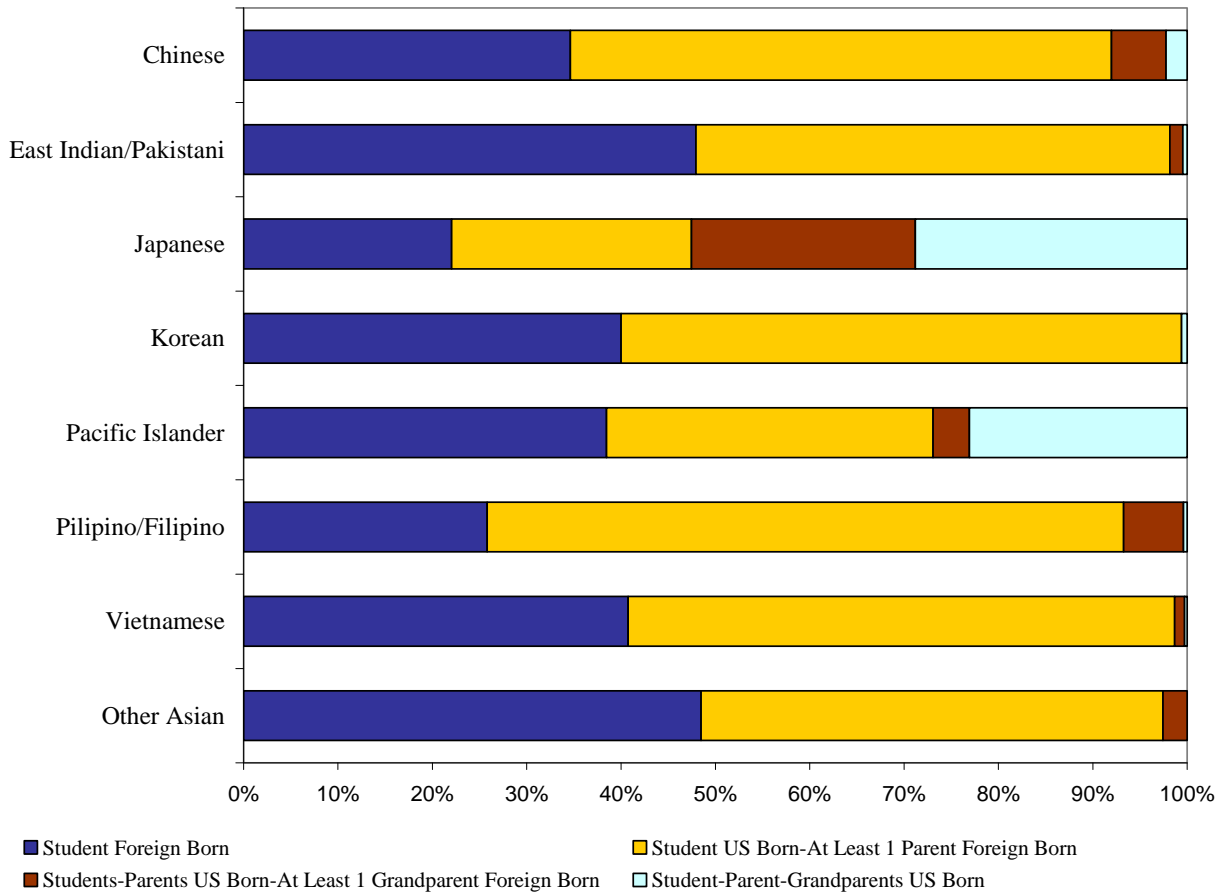
Table 1a. Race/Ethnicity of Students in each Immigration Background Category at UC Davis								
Race/Ethnicity	Number and Percent of Respondents by Race/Ethnicity within each Immigration Background Category							
	Student Foreign Born		Student US Born - At Least 1 Parent Foreign Born		Student & Parents US Born - At Least 1 Grandparent Foreign Born		Student & Parents & Grandparents US Born	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	< 1%	5	< 1%	8	1%	38	2%
Black/African American	27	2%	33	1%	10	1%	72	3%
Chicano	106	7%	288	12%	98	12%	79	4%
Chinese	462	31%	765	32%	77	9%	30	1%
East Indian/Pakistani	105	7%	110	5%	3	< 1%	1	< 1%
Japanese	26	2%	30	1%	28	3%	34	2%
Korean	66	4%	98	4%	0	0%	1	< 1%
Latino	58	4%	114	5%	33	4%	21	1%
Pacific Islander	10	1%	9	< 1%	1	< 1%	6	< 1%
Pilipino/Filipino	65	4%	170	7%	16	2%	1	< 1%
Other Asian	113	8%	114	5%	6	1%	0	0%
Vietnamese	154	10%	219	9%	4	< 1%	1	< 1%
White/Caucasian	203	14%	307	13%	485	57%	1687	79%
Other/Decline to State	80	5%	118	5%	82	10%	170	8%
Total	1476	100%	2380	100%	851	100%	2141	100%

Figures 5 and 5a show the relationship between immigration background and race/ethnicity from the opposite perspective. Figure 5 shows the percent of respondents by immigration background category, within each racial/ethnic group. Not surprisingly, most (73%) of American Indian/Alaskan Native students are US-born with US-born parents and grandparents. In contrast, 37% of Asian students are foreign-born and another 55% are US-born with at least one foreign-born parent. Figure 5a provides additional refinement for the large and diverse Asian population. Among Asians, East Indian/Pakistani and Other Asian students are most likely to be foreign-born (48% of each group).

**Figure 5. Immigration Background of Racial/Ethnic Groups at UC Davis**



**Figure 5a. Immigration Background of ASIAN Racial/Ethnic Groups at UC Davis**

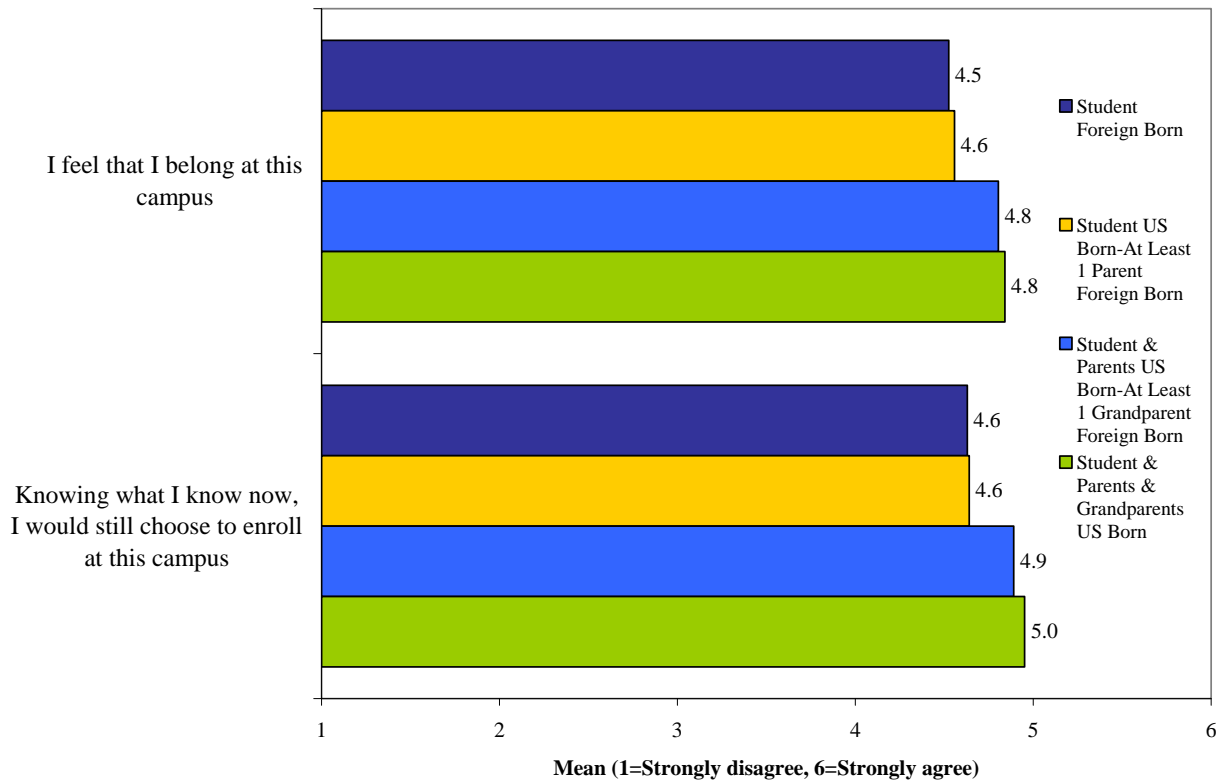


## General Campus Climate by Immigration Background

Returning to the general measures of campus climate discussed earlier, there are significant differences in perception between groups of different immigration backgrounds. Results are shown in Figures 6-8.

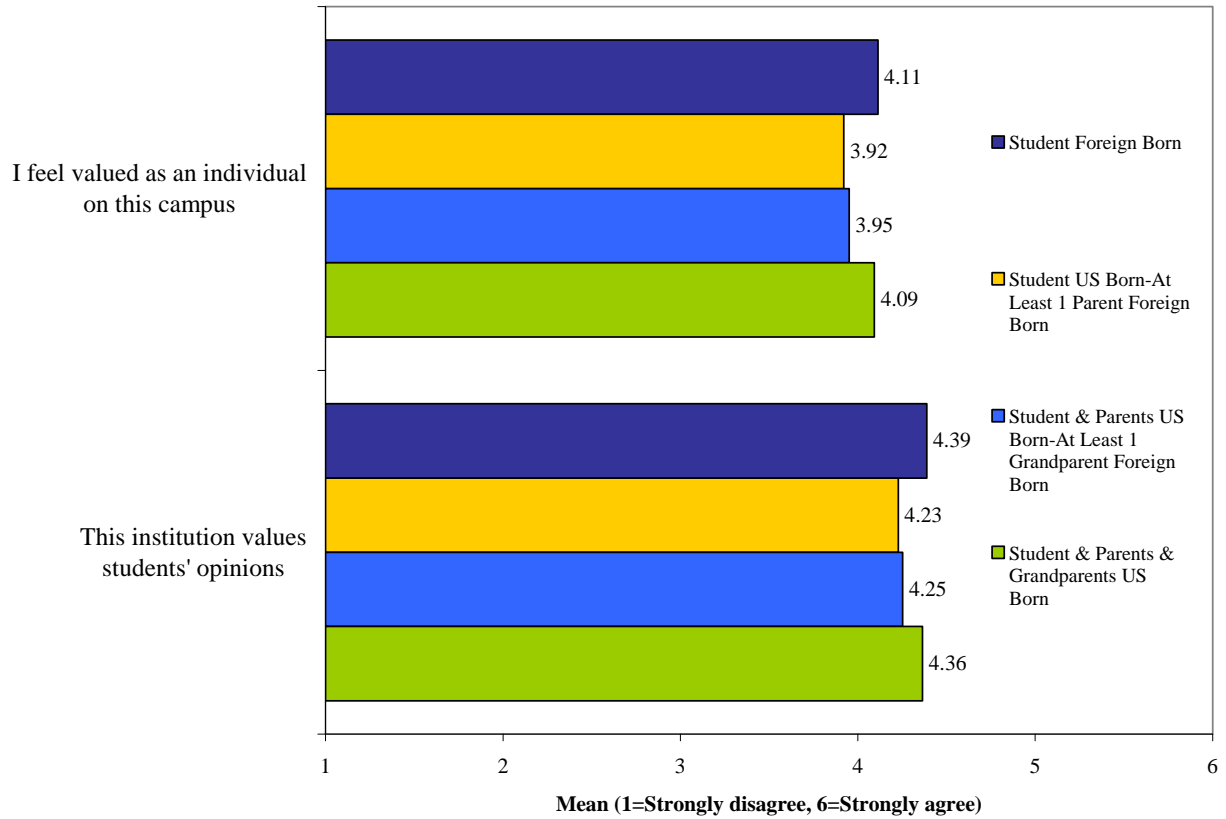
Students who are foreign-born or who have at least one foreign-born parent are significantly less likely than others to agree that *I feel that I belong at this campus* or *Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at this campus* (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. Global Measures of Campus Climate at UC Davis, by Student Immigration Background**



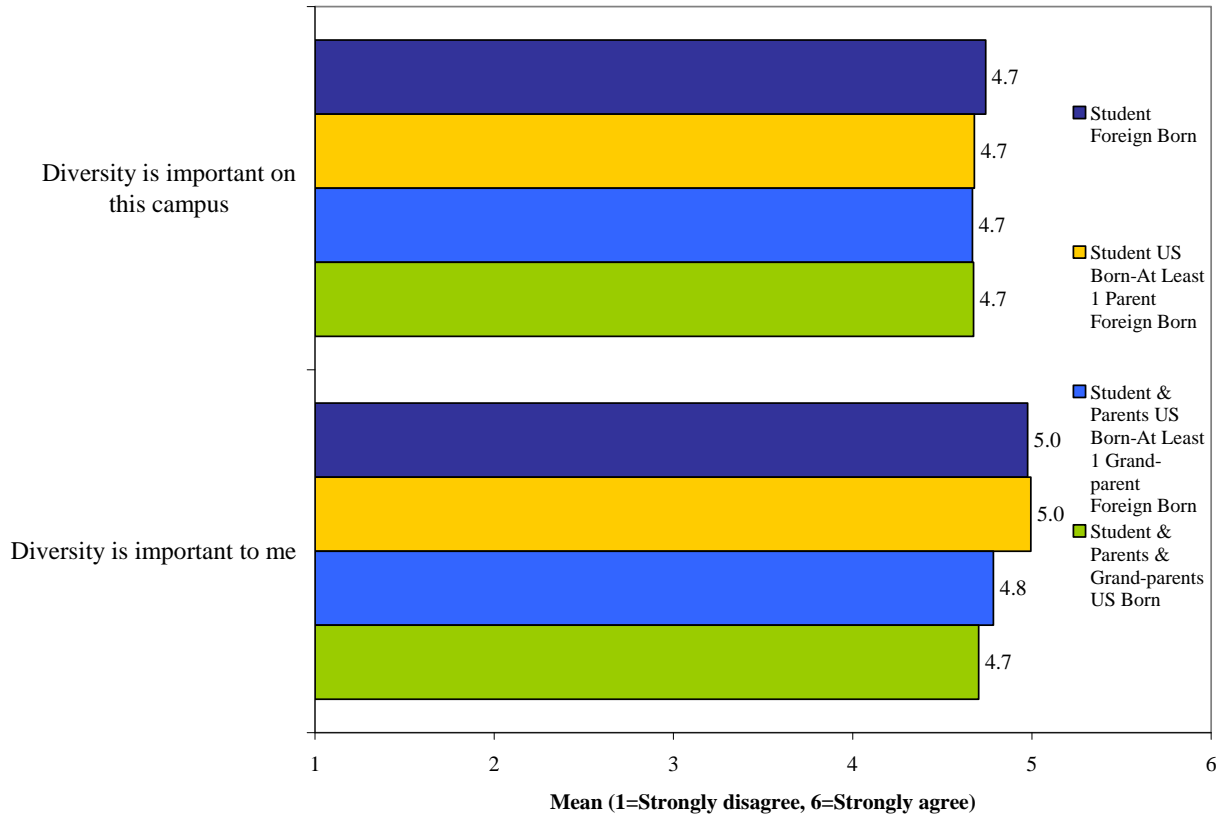
In an interesting contrast, students who are foreign-born are most likely to agree that *I feel valued as an individual on this campus* and that *This institution values students' opinions*, but between group differences are small (Figure 7).

**Figure 7. Sense of Personal Value at UC Davis, by Student Immigration Background**



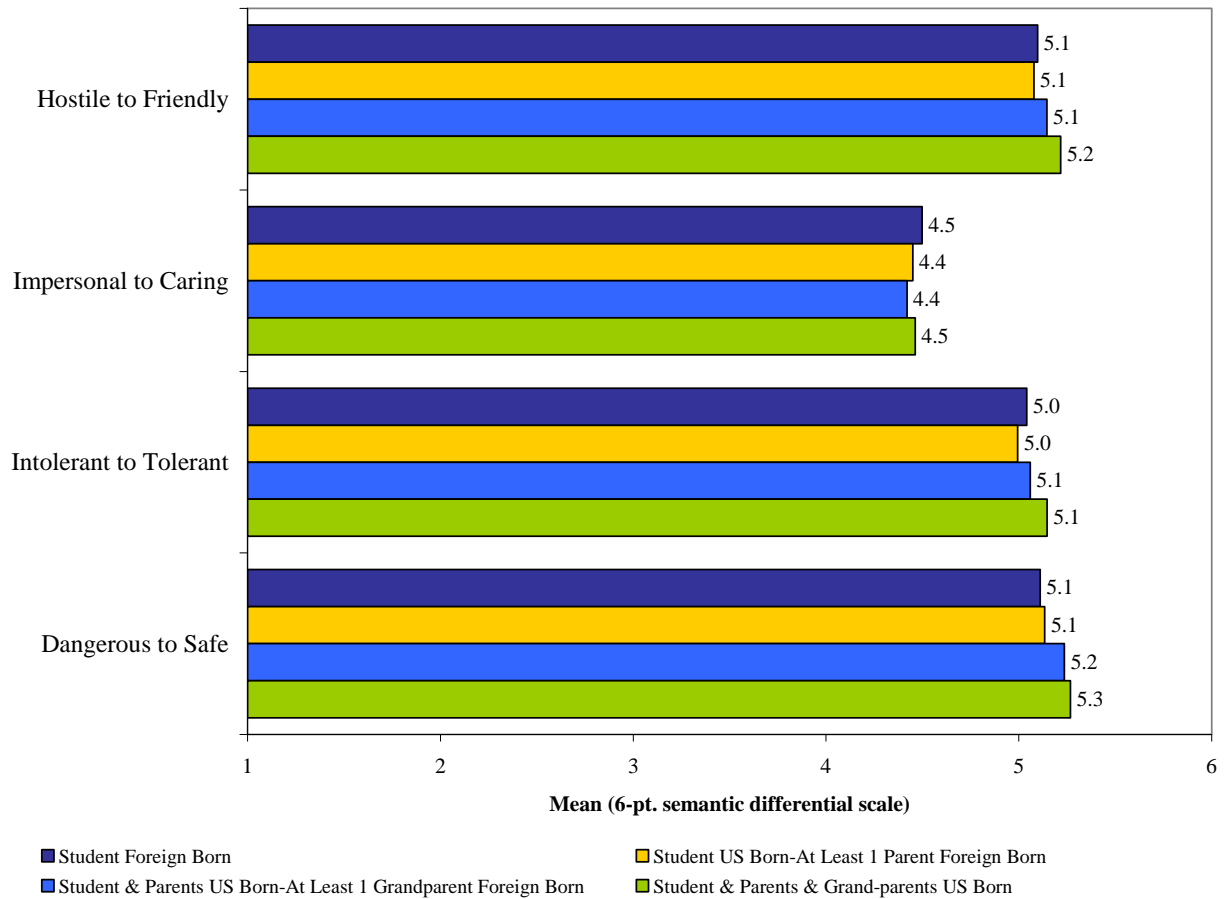
Differences are not significant for agreement that *Diversity is important on this campus*; however, students who are foreign-born or who have at least one foreign-born parent are significantly more likely than others to agree that *Diversity is important to me* (Figure 8).

**Figure 8. Importance of Diversity at UC Davis, by Student Immigration Background**



Differences in perception of UC Davis as caring are not significant between groups of different immigration backgrounds; however, students who are US-born and whose parents and grandparents are also US-born are most likely to characterize the campus as friendly, tolerant and safe (Figure 9).

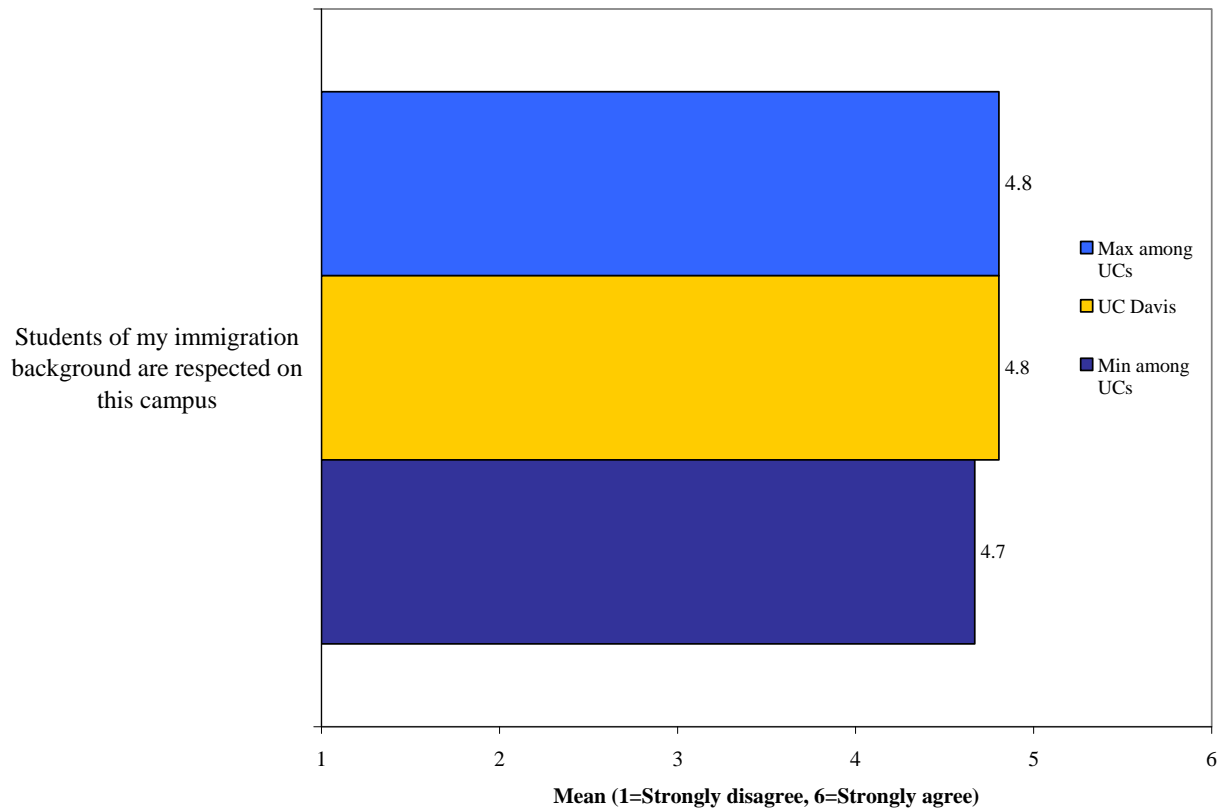
**Figure 9. Perceptions of Campus Characteristics at UC Davis, by Student Immigration Background**



## Respect Regardless of Immigration Background

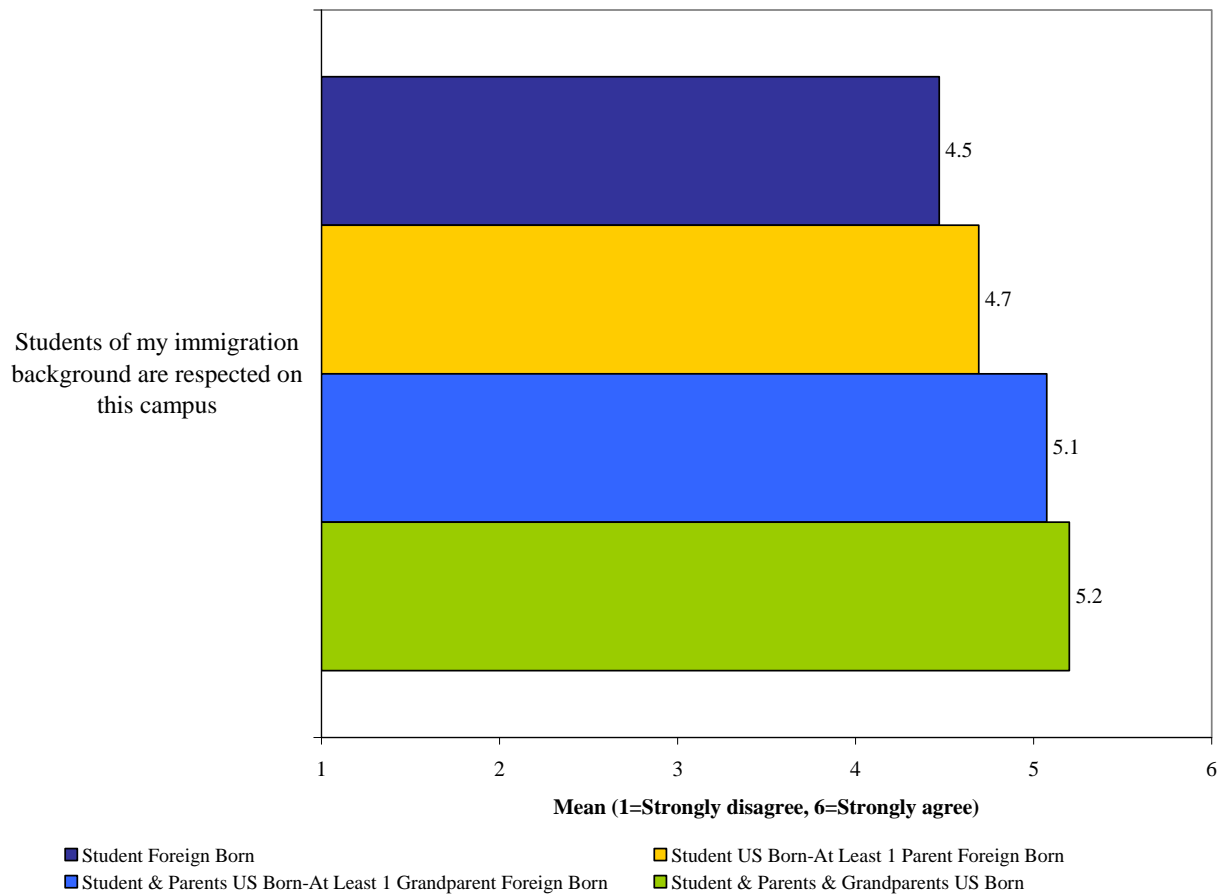
Students were asked whether they agree that *Students of my immigration background are respected on this campus* (Student Development module). Agreement at UC Davis is the highest among the UCs, although the difference between the highest and lowest levels of agreement is not significant.

**Figure 10. Respect Regardless of Immigration Background: UC Comparisons**



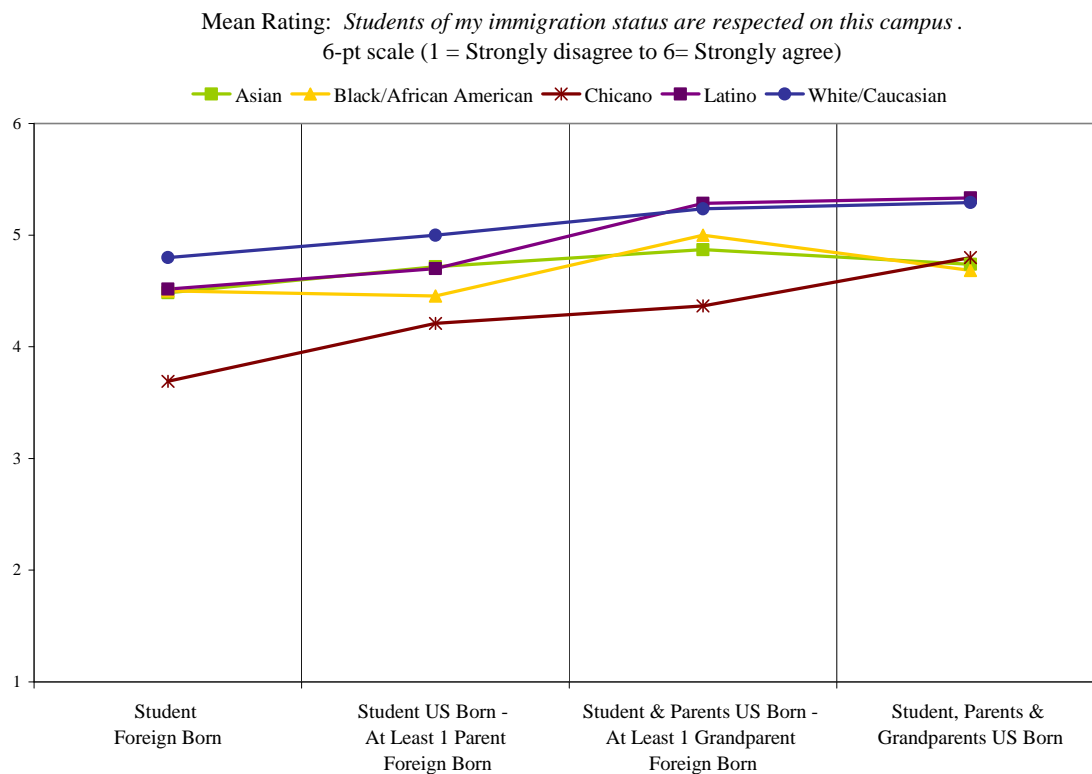
At UC Davis, students who are foreign-born are least likely to agree that *Students of my immigration background are respected on this campus* (Figure 11).

**Figure 11. Respect Regardless of Immigration Background at UC Davis**



Among foreign-born students, Chicano students are significantly less likely than White/Caucasian students to agree (mean 3.69 vs. 4.80, data not shown). In general, the perception of respect increases with increasing family background in the US. However, as seen in Figure 12, this trend varies by race/ethnicity. In particular, it does not apply to Black/African American students. \*\* Note also that Chicano students have a lower perception of respect than Latino or White students of the same immigration background and this disparity persists even for students whose families have been in the US for several generations.

**Figure 12. Relationship between Perception of Respect and Student Immigration Background, by Student Race/Ethnicity**



All of the American Indian/Alaskan Native respondents to this question were US-born with US-born parents and grandparents (n=17): their perception of respect is equal to that of White and Latino respondents of the same immigration status.

\*\* There is also a decrease in perception of respect between Asian students with at least one foreign-born grandparent and those with US-born grandparents. However, the latter category includes only about 3% of all Asian students.

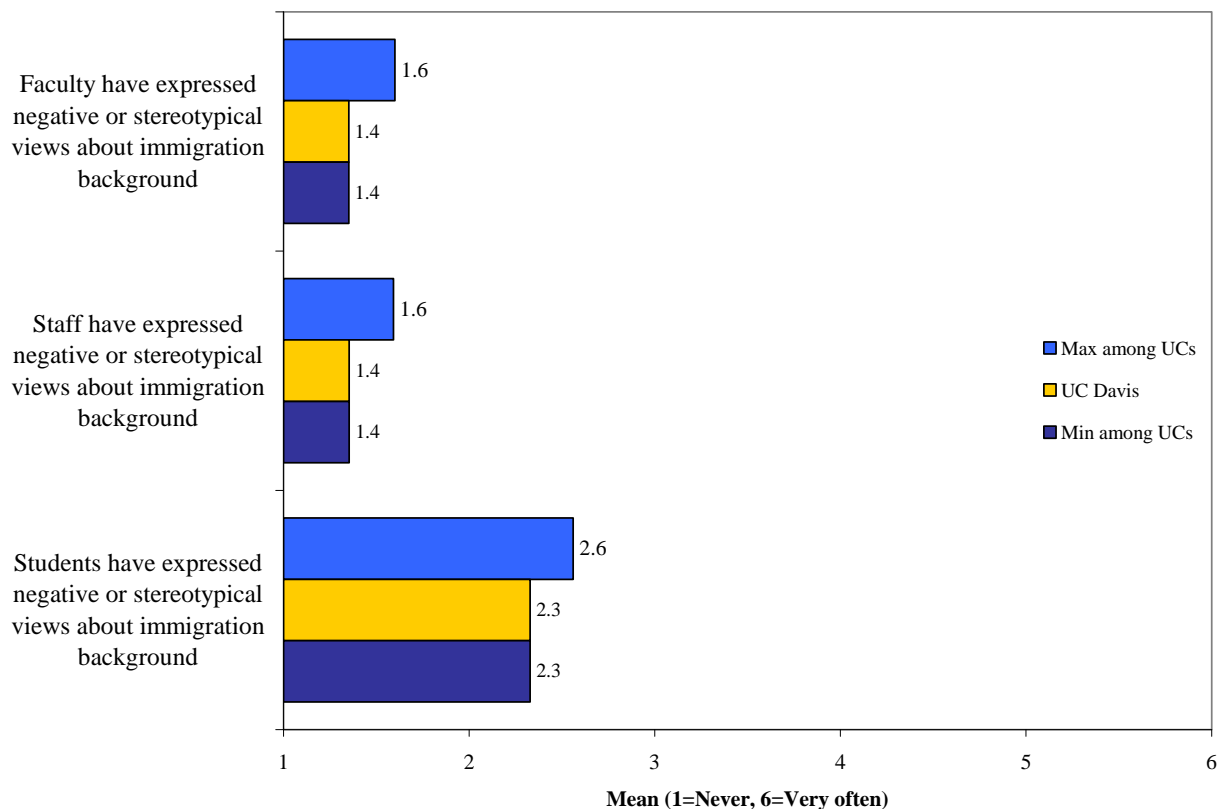
## Negative or Stereotypical Views Related to Immigration Background

Students were also asked how often they had heard negative or stereotypical views about immigration background expressed by faculty or instructors, by non-teaching staff or administrators, and by students. Responses were presented on a 6 point scale where 1 = *Never* and 6 = *Very often*. Note that, unlike most other items presented in this report, a LOW score is desirable for these three.

Students at UC Davis and the other UCs report a higher frequency of negative or stereotypical views expressed by other students than by faculty or staff. This may reflect the fact that most students spend more time interacting with other students than with faculty or staff, or perhaps faculty and staff are more aware of the fallacy and the potentially damaging impact of stereotyping.

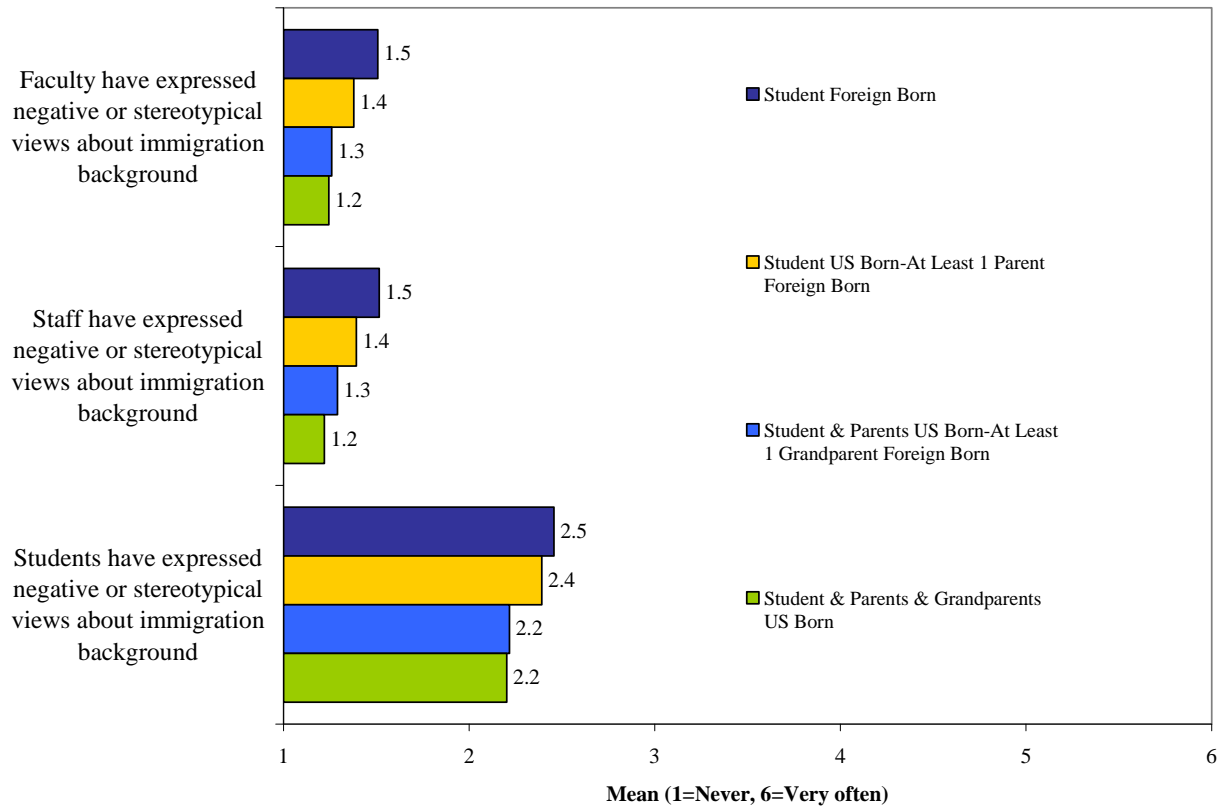
Reported frequency for such expressions by faculty, staff and by students at UC Davis is the lowest among the UCs and significantly lower than at the campus with the highest frequency for each.

**Figure 13. Frequency of Negative or Stereotypical Views: UC Comparisons**



At UC Davis, foreign-born students report the highest frequency of expression of such views by faculty, by staff and by other students (Figure 14). Within that group, there are no significant differences between students according to their race or ethnicity.

**Figure 14. Frequency of Negative or Stereotypical Views at UC Davis**



# Appendix

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## Methodology

### Data Collection

In the spring of 2008, the University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) was administered electronically with an internet-based questionnaire to all 162,259 undergraduates at the nine general campuses of the University, including 22,451 undergraduate students at UC Davis<sup>††</sup>. The response rate across the University of California was 39.2% but varied widely by campus. A total of 7,040 UC Davis students participated in the survey, for a campus response rate of 31.4%.<sup>‡‡</sup> Actual response rates varied by item. As in previous administrations of UCUES, and typical of survey research in general, female students responded to 2008 UCUES at a higher rate than males. Otherwise, UCUES respondents in 2008 were remarkably representative of the UC Davis population. Demographics of the survey population and the respondents for 2008 are shown in Table A1.

The questionnaire was modular where all respondents received a common set of “Core” questions. Respondents were randomly assigned to receive one of three “modules” each focused on a specific aspect of the student experience<sup>§§</sup>. The distribution of respondents among the modules was determined by each campus. The percentage of UC Davis students directed to each module was selected according to anticipated analytical and reporting requirements, and in keeping with campus priorities. The 2008 UCUES modules were: academic engagement (45% of population, n=3247) student development (45% of population, n=3063) and civic engagement (10% of population, n=730).

### Interpretation of Results

The committee of UC institutional researchers responsible for the design of UCUES anticipated that virtually all differences **between campuses** would be statistically significant due to the very large number of respondents. They agreed upon two standards for real, substantive differences: for mean ratings a difference of 0.2 or more, and for percentage values a difference of 5% or more are considered noteworthy and of practical significance. Note that these do not correspond to p-values for statistical significance. This convention is observed in UCUES reports prepared by SARI at UC Davis when reporting differences between campuses. Conventional statistical methods are used when reporting differences between means and percentage values for sub-populations within our own campus undergraduate population.

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<sup>††</sup> The UCUES population was limited to undergraduate students included in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week snapshot for winter quarter 2008 and who were 18 or older by April 1, 2008. Thus the size and specific characteristics of the population may differ slightly from official enrollment statistics reported elsewhere.

<sup>‡‡</sup> The lower than average response rate is attributable to the decision to actively promote the survey at UC Davis for one month only. Some other campuses continued to email reminders for two or even three months.

<sup>§§</sup> UC Merced administered only the core and the academic engagement module. Some campuses chose to include a fourth, campus-specific module, referred to as a campus “wild card” module, but UC Davis did not, preferring to concentrate responses among the common modules.

Table A1: Demographics of UC Davis 2008 UCUES Population & Respondents				
		UC Davis UCUES Population	% UC Davis UCUES Population	% UC Davis UCUES Respondents
Gender	Female	12640	56%	62%
	Male	9811	44%	38%
Ethnicity	American Indian/Alaskan Native	144	1%	1%
	Asian	9582	43%	40%
	Black/African American	655	3%	2%
	Chicano/Mexican-American	2015	9%	8%
	Latino/Other Spanish American	683	3%	3%
	White/Caucasian	7875	35%	39%
	Other/Decline to State	1497	7%	7%
Ethnicity (Asian)	Chinese/Chinese American	4406	20%	20%
	East Indian/Pakistani	883	4%	3%
	Japanese/Japanese American	408	2%	2%
	Korean	706	3%	2%
	Pacific Islander	111	< 1%	< 1%
	Pilipino/Filipino	922	4%	4%
	Vietnamese	1334	6%	6%
	Other Asian	812	4%	3%
Class Level	Freshman	4365	19%	20%
	Sophomore	4771	21%	21%
	Junior	5858	26%	26%
	Senior	7457	33%	33%
Entrance Status*	Freshman entrant	17853	80%	79%
	Transfer	4355	20%	21%

\* From UCOP records, some missing data (about 1%).

**Table A2. Percentage of UC Davis Students Responding Favorably to Campus Climate Items, by Student Immigration Background**

		Student Foreign Born	Student US Born - At Least 1 Parent Foreign Born	Student & Parents US Born - At Least 1 Grandparent Foreign Born	Student & Parents & Grandparents US Born	All UC Davis
Agree or Strongly Agree	I feel that I belong at this campus	56%	58%	68%	69%	62%
	Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at this campus	62%	62%	71%	74%	67%
	I feel valued as an individual on this campus	40%	32%	33%	40%	36%
	This institution values students opinions	53%	44%	45%	51%	48%
	Diversity is important on this campus	64%	64%	64%	65%	64%
	Diversity is important to me	71%	75%	69%	64%	70%
Agree or Strongly Agree	Students of my immigration background are respected on this campus	59%	66%	83%	89%	72%
Rarely or Never	Faculty have expressed negative or stereotypical views about immigration background	88%	92%	95%	95%	93%
	Staff have expressed negative or stereotypical views about immigration background	88%	90%	93%	96%	92%
	Students have expressed negative or stereotypical views about immigration background	58%	60%	66%	65%	62%

## UCUES Items Referenced in this Report

### CORE

Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

I feel that I belong at this campus.

(Strongly disagree to strongly agree) (n= 6899)

Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at this campus.

(Strongly disagree to strongly agree) (n= 6930)

When did you come to the United States to live?

(Born in US or calendar year) (n= 6841)

To the best of your knowledge, who among the following of your relatives was born in the U.S.?

My mother (Born in US or foreign born) (n= 6847)

My father (Born in US or foreign born) (n= 6836)

My mother's mother (Born in US or foreign born) (n= 6798)

My father's mother (Born in US or foreign born) (n= 6786)

My mother's father (Born in US or foreign born) (n= 6793)

My father's father (Born in US or foreign born) (n= 6765)

### Student Development Module

Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following:

I feel valued as an individual on this campus. (Strongly disagree to strongly agree)

(n= 2959)

This institution values students' opinions. (Strongly disagree to strongly agree) (n= 2952)

Diversity is important on this campus. (Strongly disagree to strongly agree) (n= 2947)

Diversity is important to me. (Strongly disagree to strongly agree) (n= 2957)

Based on your experience and observation, rate the general climate for students of your UC campus along the following dimensions:

Campus climate is

Hostile (1) to Friendly (6) (n= 2985)

Impersonal (1) to Caring (6) (n= 2983)

Intolerant (1) to Tolerant (6) (n= 2981)

Dangerous (1) to Safe (6) (n= 2971)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement:

Students of my immigration background are respected on this campus.

(Strongly disagree to strongly agree) (n= 2308)

In this academic year, I have heard teaching faculty or instructors express negative or stereotypical views about immigration background. (Never to very often) (n= 2950)

In this academic year, I have heard nonteaching staff or administrators express negative or stereotypical views about immigration background. (Never to very often) (n= 2942)

In this academic year, I have heard students express negative or stereotypical views about immigration background. (Never to very often) (n= 2960)