UCUES 2008
Campus Climate: Gender Identity

Prepared at the Request of
Fred Wood, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs

By
Gillian Butler, SARI

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Executive Summary

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 primarily addresses perceptions of our campus climate by students categorized by their self-selections on a gender identity item also included in the survey.

On multiple measures of global campus climate, our undergraduates’ ratings of UC Davis meet or exceed the ratings of campus climate at most other UC campuses. Respondents rated our campus as more friendly, caring and safe than most other UCs.

Students were asked to rate whether students are respected here regardless of their gender and also whether students of my gender/sexual identity are respected on this campus. Overall, students at UC Davis gave our campus ratings similar to those of students at other UC campuses on these dimensions of campus climate.

Within the population of students at UC Davis however, ratings on these items varied between students of differing gender identities. Males were more likely than each of the other gender identity categories to feel that students are respected regardless of their gender, while those whose identity falls in the other gender identities category were less likely than both males and females to agree with this statement.

Differences were even more pronounced for perceptions of respect regardless of the individual student’s gender identity. Those whose gender identity were categorized among other gender identities and those who decline to state a gender/sexual identity were significantly less likely to agree with this statement.

Female students rated the campus climate higher than male students on five of the global campus climate items: they were more likely to agree that they would re-enroll here, that students’ opinions are valued, that diversity is important on this campus, that diversity is important to them, and that the campus is caring. Males, however, agreed more strongly than both females and those who decline to state that the campus is safe.

The small number of students whose gender identities were aggregated into other gender identities or who decline to state a gender identity limited the statistical power to discern significant differences in the perceptions of these groups. It is likely that a larger response from these students would have yielded an even higher number of differences.
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Introduction

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 race and ethnicity.

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. Female students responded at a higher rate than males, both to the core survey and to the Student Development module. Otherwise, 2008 UCUES respondents were remarkably representative of our undergraduate population. Demographics of the survey population and the respondents for 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:
Results

Global Measures of Campus Climate

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.¹

Perceptions of campus climate may vary for various sub-populations on campus; for instance perceptions of campus climate may vary for students of different races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, etc. The severity of these variations may best be evaluated within a larger context. One advantage of the UCUES survey is that it allows for comparisons between undergraduates at UC Davis and those at all other UC campuses.²

Students were asked to rate their agreement with a series of items relevant to campus climate on a scale from 1 to 6 where 1 = Strongly disagree and 6 = Strongly agree. 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.³

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.

¹ http://www.provost.wisc.edu/climate/what.html
² 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.
³ 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.
Figure 1. Global Measures of Campus Climate: UC Comparisons

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. The scale for these items has been reversed from the orientation in the survey, so that a high rating is again desirable.
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 most other UC campuses. 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.

**Gender Identification**

The survey contained an item asking students to select from the following gender identity categories: *female, male, transgender, genderqueer, decline to state*, and *other*. Data on gender (male, female) was available from the Student Information System.

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5 UCUES 2008 included two new items that asked students to indicate their sexual orientation and gender/sexual identity. These questions were included specifically to allow analysis of the impact of these characteristics on student perceptions of campus climate. To insure that these very personal questions were phrased both correctly and respectfully, the UCUES Work Group sought guidance from UC experts in student sexual orientation and sexual identity (generally directors of individual campus LGBT centers). Although these consultants were not in perfect agreement, the survey items represent a general consensus or when necessary a majority opinion.
Since females responded disproportionately to the survey, the raw frequencies of responses to these questions do not provide an accurate estimate of the distribution of our students by gender identity. The proportions of UC Davis respondents defining themselves as transgender (.1%), genderqueer (.2%), decline to state (1.4%), or other (.1%) were too small to support analysis by these individual categories.

A cross tabulation of data for gender and gender identity produced the result displayed in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Transgender</th>
<th>Genderqueer</th>
<th>Decline to state</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>97.9%</td>
<td>.4%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
<td>.2%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=4,287)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.6%</td>
<td>97.3%</td>
<td>.2%</td>
<td>.1%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=2,570)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the purposes of analysis in this report, gender identification is aggregated into four categories: female (gender and gender identity correspond), male (gender and gender identity correspond), other gender identities (gender/sexual identity does not correspond to gender, transgender, genderqueer and other), and decline to state.\(^6\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Identity</th>
<th>Respondents CORE</th>
<th>Respondents Student Development Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4198</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2501</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other gender identities</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline to state</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All differences in the mean responses between gender identity groups specifically noted in the text are statistically significant at the p< .05 level or higher.

**Respect by Gender/Sexual Identity**

\(^6\) The terms gender, gender identity, and sexual identity were not used consistently among UCUES survey items. This report displays questionnaire items as they were implemented.
Students were asked to rate whether *students are respected here regardless of their gender* and also whether *students of my gender/sexual identity are respected on this campus*. Overall, students at UC Davis gave our campus the highest mean ratings for UC campuses on these dimensions of campus climate, but differences among campuses were small.

**Figure 5. Perceptions of Respect In Regard to Gender Identification: Campus Comparisons**

![Graph showing perceptions of respect](image)
Within the population of students at UC Davis, however, ratings on these items varied between students by gender identity.

Figure 6. Perceptions of Respect by Gender Identity

Males were more likely than each of the other gender identity categories to feel that students are respected regardless of their gender while those whose identity falls in the other gender identities category were less likely than both males and females to agree with this statement. Differences in perceptions were even more pronounced for perceptions of respect regardless of the individual student’s gender identity. Females and males did not differ significantly on this item, but those whose gender identity was categorized as other and those who decline to state and were significantly less likely to agree with this statement.

Students were also asked how often they had heard negative or stereotypical views about gender or sexual identity by faculty or instructors, nonteaching staff or administrators, and students, on a 6 pt. scale where 1 = Never and 6 = Very Often.
Students of all gender or sexual identities report a higher frequency of negative or stereotypical views expressed by other students: given that most students spend more time interacting with students than with faculty or staff, this is not particularly surprising. The differences in reported frequencies of negative expressions by faculty, staff, or students do not vary by gender or sexual identity, ranking at the mid-point of never to rarely for faculty and staff and rising to levels closer to occasionally for negative expressions by other students. However, the small numbers of respondents identifying as other gender identities (n = 28) and decline to state (n = 36) limits our ability to discern statistical differences.

**Gains in Understanding of Gender and Sexual Orientation**

Students were asked to rate their level of understanding of gender and sexual orientation differences/issues when they started at this campus and currently on a 6 pt. scale where 1 = Very poor and 6 = Excellent. Our students rated their level of understanding on arrival at 3.8 and their current level of understanding at 4.4, a mean difference that is comparable to that for the UC system as a whole. The mean gain in understanding is slightly higher for students whose sexual identity is other (.9 vs. .6 for the total population), but the difference does not reach statistical significance.
Global Campus Climate by Gender/Sexual Identity

Do students of different gender/sexual identities rate aspects of global campus climate differently? Table 3 summarizes mean ratings by our four categories of this dimension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global Climate Items</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Male &amp; Female differ</th>
<th>Other Gender Identities</th>
<th>Other differs from Male &amp; Female</th>
<th>Decline to State</th>
<th>DS differs from Male &amp; Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel that I belong at this campus</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at this campus</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel valued as an individual on this campus</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This institution values students opinions</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity is important on this campus</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity is important to me</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile to Friendly</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal to Caring</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intolerant of diversity to Tolerant of diversity</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangerous to Safe</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.9 Differs from Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Females rate the campus climate higher than males on five of these items: they are more likely to agree that they would re-enroll here, that students’ opinions are valued, that diversity is important on this campus, that diversity is important to them, and that the campus is caring. Males, however, agree more strongly than both females and those who decline to state that the campus is safe.

Those whose gender identity is categorized as other or decline to state felt less strongly than male- or female-identified students that they belong on this campus or that they would choose to re-enroll here. It is worth noting that both of these items were in the Core, which was administered and responded to by a larger number of students than the Student Development module. The smaller numbers of respondents identifying as other (n = 28) and decline to state (n = 36) in the module limits the ability to discern statistical differences in the remainder of these items.
Appendix

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. 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%. 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 1.

The questionnaire was delivered using a modular approach by which all respondents received a common set of “core” questions. Respondents were then randomly assigned to receive one of three survey “modules” each of which focused on a specific aspect of the student experience. The percentage of UC Davis students who were directed to each module was selected according to anticipated analytical and reporting requirements. The 2008 UCUES modules were: academic engagement (45% of population, 3247 responses) student development (45% of population, 3063 responses) and civic engagement (10% of population, 730 responses).

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.

‡‡ The UCUES population was limited to undergraduate students included in the 3rd 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.
§§ 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.
*** 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.
| Table A1: Demographics of UC Davis 2008 UCUES Population and Respondents |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Gender**                                     | UC Davis UCUES Population | % UC Davis UCUES Population | % UC Davis UCUES Respondents |
| 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%).
UCUES Items Referenced in this Report

CORE
6 pt Scale  1=Strongly disagree to 6=Strongly Agree
Do you agree or disagree with these statements?
I feel that I belong at this campus (n=6899)
Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at this campus (n=6930)

6 pt Scale  1=Strongly disagree to 6=Strongly Agree
Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.
Students are respected here regardless of their gender (n=6954)

6 pt Scale  1=Female to 6=Other Bisexual to7= Other
With what gender do you identify? (n=6857)

Student Life and Development
6 pt Scale  1=Strongly disagree to 6=Strongly Agree
What is your level of agreement with the following:
I feel valued as an individual on this campus (n=2959)
This institution values students’ opinions (n=2952)
Diversity is important on this campus (n=2947)
Diversity is important to me (n=2957)

6pt Scale  1=Friendly to 6=Hostile, 1=Caring to 6=Impersonal, etc.
Based on your experience and observation, rate the general climate for students of your UC campus along the following dimensions:
Campus climate is:
Friendly to Hostile (n=2985)
Caring to Impersonal (n=2983)
Tolerant of diversity to Intolerant of diversity (n=2981)
Safe to Dangerous (n=2971)

7 pt Scale  0=Not applicable, 1=Strongly disagree to 6=Strongly Agree
Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.
Students of my gender/sexual identity are respected on this campus (n=2895)

6 pt Scale  1=Never to 6=Very often
In this academic year, I have heard teaching faculty or instructors express negative or stereotypical views about:
Gender or sexual identity  (n=2962)
In this academic year I have heard nonteaching staff or administrators express negative or stereotypical views about:
   Gender or sexual identity  (n=2946)

In this academic year, I have heard students express negative or stereotypical views about:
   Gender or sexual identity  (n=2959)

5 pt Scale  1=Very poor to 5=Excellent
Please rate your awareness and understanding of the following issues when you started at this campus and now.
   Gender and sexual orientation differences/issues  (n=3063)