

Our 2009 student respondents said:

Each spring, the Assessing Campus Experiences Subgroup (ACES) administers the University of Maryland Student Survey (UMSS) to juniors and seniors. The 2009 UMSS was administered in Professional Writing classes in Spring 2009. Of about 2,560 students enrolled in Professional Writing, 1,996 (78%) completed the survey, yielding 1,654 usable responses. Use caution when generalizing.

I AM CULTURALLY AWARE. UM SUPPORTS DIVERSITY. BUT, WHAT ABOUT OUR SOCIETY?

Diversity & Me

Respondents were confident in their ability to interact with diverse people and perceived themselves as culturally aware.

Diversity & UM

Respondents generally perceived that UM is supportive of diverse students and perspectives, but 15% perceived discrimination is still a problem at UM.

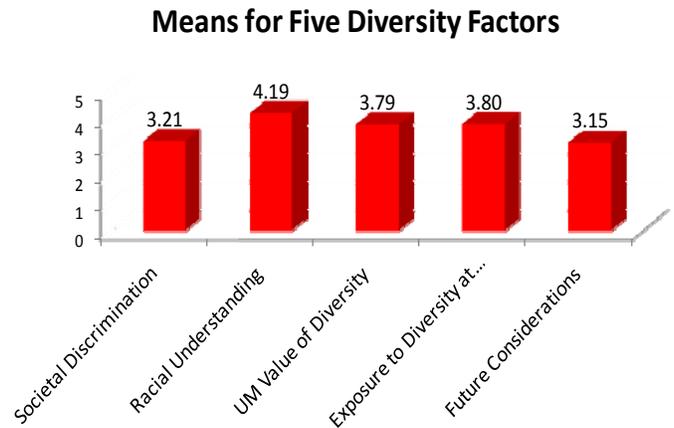
Diversity & Society

Respondents were mixed in their beliefs about racial/ethnic discrimination in our society. Neutral responses for these items below ranged from 14-35%.

Most respondents perceived themselves as culturally aware.	Most respondents perceived that UM is supportive of diversity.	Respondents had mixed opinions about diversity in society.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ 94% indicated they are tolerant of others with different beliefs. ⇒ 95% indicated they interact with students with different racial/ethnic backgrounds. ⇒ 88% indicated they are racially/culturally aware. ⇒ 84% indicated they work in ethnically diverse groups with other students in class. ⇒ 73% indicated they are knowledgeable about cultural backgrounds of others. ⇒ 67% indicated they engage in discussions about racial/ethnic issues in class. ⇒ 43% indicated they participate in organizations that promote cultural diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ 77% indicated UM actively promotes appreciation for diversity through clubs and university-wide events. ⇒ 74% indicated UM values different perspectives from students of diverse backgrounds. ⇒ 63% indicated students are encouraged to discuss a range of ideas and explore diverse perspectives in courses. ⇒ 62% indicated students are treated fairly here regardless of their racial/ethnic background. ⇒ 15% indicated discrimination is a problem at this university. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ 79% indicated racial or ethnic discrimination is still a problem in the U.S. ⇒ 26% indicated our society has done enough to promote the welfare of different racial/ethnic groups. <p>But...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ 17% indicated that the system prevents people of color from getting their fair share of jobs and pay. ⇒ 33% indicated that a person's racial background interferes with achieving everything he or she wants in our society.

**I AM CULTURALLY AWARE. UM SUPPORTS DIVERSITY.
BUT, WHAT ABOUT OUR SOCIETY?** (CONT. FROM P. 1)

Respondents rated 25 items pertaining to diversity on a 5-point scale. 5 = “strongly agree”; 1 = “strongly disagree.” Items corresponded to five factors. Higher factor scores indicate more agreement. Items were intended to measure perceptions related to racial/ethnic diversity, but some items refer to “diversity,” which could have been interpreted more broadly by respondents. Foreign and Native American students were excluded for consistency with analyses on page 3.



Five Diversity Factors

Societal Discrimination	Perception that discrimination exists and our society has a responsibility to address it. Example item: “Do you believe that state hate crime laws are needed to protect people from harassment based on race, gender, or sexual orientation?”
Racial Understanding / Knowledge	Self-perception of cultural awareness. Example item: “I am knowledgeable about the cultural backgrounds of others.”
UM Value of Diversity	Perception that UM values and actively promotes appreciation for diversity. Example item: “The different perspectives that students from diverse backgrounds bring to the campus are valued at this university.”
Exposure to Diversity at UM	Participation in discussion or activities about diversity (e.g., class activities, campus organizations). Example item: “At this university, I have engaged in discussions about racial/ethnic issues in class.”
Future Considerations	Desire to consider diversity in future decisions (career, school). Example item: “Diversity will be one of the important considerations for me when choosing future schools or employment.”

Questions to consider:

- ⇒ Why were respondents mixed about their attitudes on societal discrimination?
- ⇒ Are respondents as culturally aware as they perceive they are?
- ⇒ 15% indicated discrimination is a problem at UM. What do you make of this finding?
- ⇒ 74% believed UM values different perspectives from students with diverse backgrounds. Are we on the right track or should this number be higher?

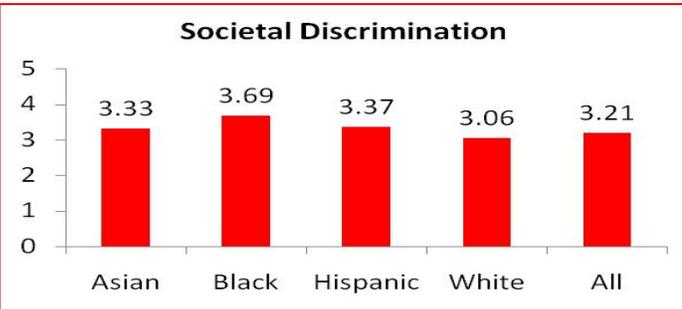
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IN UPCOMING ISSUES:

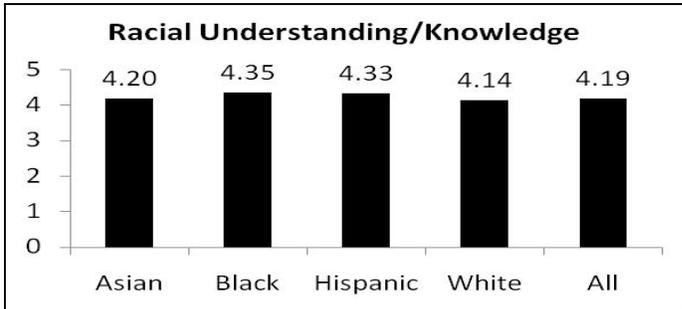
- Sustainability
- Mentoring
- PhD Student Experiences

DO PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY DIFFER BY RACE AND GENDER?

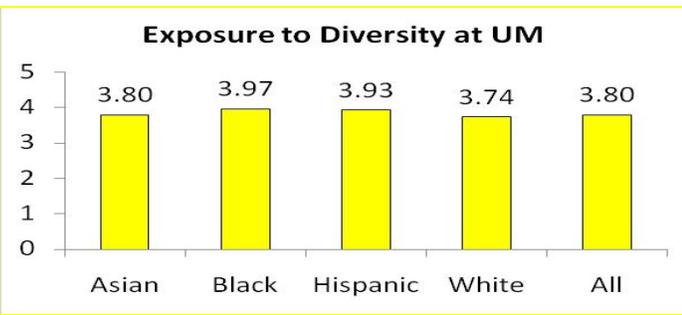
Various differences by race and gender emerged in each of the five factors. Significant differences are noted below in text (not in graphs). Foreign and Native American students were excluded due to low sample size.



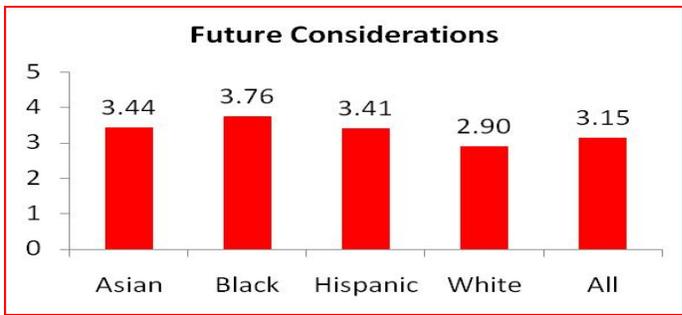
Societal Discrimination: Black respondents were more likely than all three other groups to agree that societal discrimination exists and society has a responsibility to address it. White respondents were less likely to agree than all three other groups. Women were more likely than men to perceive societal discrimination.



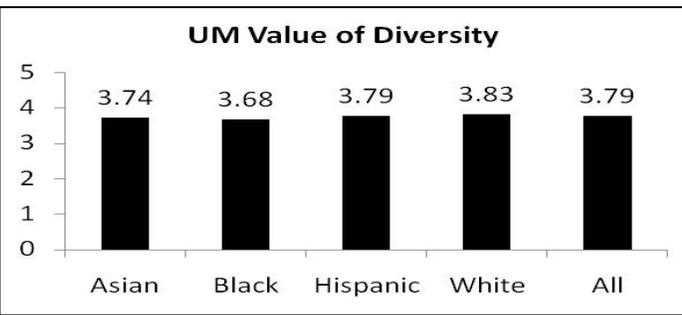
Racial Understanding/Knowledge: Black and Hispanic respondents were more likely than White respondents to agree that they were culturally aware. Black respondents were also more likely to agree than Asian respondents. Women indicated a higher self-perception of racial understanding than men.



Exposure to Diversity at UM: Black respondents were more likely than Asian and White respondents to agree that they participated in diversity activities at UM. Hispanic respondents were more likely than White respondents to agree that they participated in diversity activities at UM. Women were more likely than men to indicate they had exposure to diversity at UM.



Future Considerations: Black respondents were more likely than all three other groups to indicate that they would consider diversity in their future employment/education. By contrast, White respondents were less likely than all three other groups. Women were more likely than men to agree that they would consider diversity in their future plans.



UM Value of Diversity: White respondents' degree of agreement on UM's value of diversity was higher than Black and Asian respondents'. No gender differences emerged for this scale.

Questions to consider:

- ⇒ There seem to be patterns for Black, White, and women respondents. What do you make of these patterns?
- ⇒ What meaning do you make of these differences?