

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: UIC CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY, OCTOBER 2002

Over half of the respondents had not heard students, faculty, or administrators make insensitive or disparaging remarks about various background characteristics.

Among students, there was a higher incidence of having frequently—10 times or more—heard insensitive or disparaging remarks about gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender (GLBT) people (10%), non-native English speakers (10%), and women (8%) than about the other groups listed. Respondents heard staff, faculty, and teaching assistants make insensitive comments about women and non-native English speakers more often than in regard to other characteristics. Administrators were more likely to make disparaging remarks about women and racial and ethnic minorities.

Twenty-four percent of the respondents indicated that they had experienced conduct that had interfered unreasonably with their ability to work or learn on campus (harassment). Of those participants that were harassed, almost half (n=115) indicated that the harassment was due to gender and 37 percent (n=88) identified race as the motivating factor.

Derogatory remarks were reported as the most common form of harassment.

Three respondents had suffered an actual physical assault or injury.

Nearly half of the harassed individuals encountered the situation while working at a college/university job.

Thirty-two percent of the respondents had observed conduct on campus that created an offensive, hostile, or intimidating working or learning environment mainly based on race (49%), gender (41%), and ethnicity (37%).

Respondents reported experiencing discriminatory hiring (less than 8%), firing (less than 4%), or promotion (less than 10%) based on any of the characteristics presented. Gender and race were the most frequently cited reasons for discriminatory hiring, firing, and promotion.

Most respondents (over 83%) believed the people in the offices they frequent were accepting of the various groups about whom they asked. People were least accepting of non-native English speakers.

More than half of the respondents have NO contact with American Indians/Alaskan Natives. Nineteen and 17 percent, respectively, report no contact with openly GLBT persons or disabled people.

Most respondents indicated they would feel comfortable being a close friend of, sharing an office with, and being a roommate with people of various backgrounds. The percentages of respondents comfortable being roommates, friends, or office partners with transgender men or women, openly lesbian or bisexual women, openly gay or bisexual men, or people with HIV/AIDS were considerably lower.

Just more than half of the respondents believed UIC thoroughly addresses issues related to disabilities (60%), racism (60%), sexism (58%), heterosexism (53%), and religious beliefs (53%).

Less than one-fifth of the respondents (19%) felt the campus' leadership visibly fosters diversity, and only 16% believed the curriculum adequately represents the contributions of people from underrepresented groups.

Only 10% felt that the classroom climate was welcoming for students from underrepresented groups and that the workplace climate was welcoming for employees from underrepresented groups.

Many respondents felt that providing more awareness/sensitivity workshops would improve the climate for people with disabilities (67%), ethnic minorities (62%), racial minorities (61%), non-native English speakers (60%), GLBT persons (59%), and people of particular religious backgrounds (57%).

Between 50 and 64 percent of the respondents felt that requiring all University students and staff to take at least one class that focuses on issues, research, and perspectives about many of the various groups will improve the campus climate for these groups.

Respondents felt the climate would potentially improve with the offering of art, music, and cultural events that recognize distinctive cultures (75%), people with disabilities (69%), and GLBT people (57%).

Sixty-seven percent thought the campus climate for diversity would improve if service that enhances the University's climate for diversity was included as a criterion for faculty and staff evaluation.