

PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CAMPUS CLIMATE ASSESSMENT REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

submitted by

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CAMPUS CLIMATE ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Pennsylvania's Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education is frequently consulted to conduct assessments of collegiate campus climates. This includes offering of a survey instrument to all campus stakeholders to assess broad issues of diversity and inclusion; the college's competency in addressing matters of harassment and discrimination; the ways in which faculty and staff respond to changing institution demographics; the extent to which the college is committed and responsive to matters of diversity and inclusion; and perceptions regarding the current campus climate as one supportive of equality and equitable outcomes for all stakeholders. In addition, and consistent with our work at other colleges and universities across the nation, we spent four days at the Cascade, Rock Creek, Southeast, Sylvania campuses of Portland Community College facilitating dozens of focus groups students, faculty, and staff whom could provide perspective on the campus climate.

STUDENT, FACULTY, AND STAFF SURVEY SUMMARY

All members of the PCC community were invited to participate in the survey. A total of 2,169 respondents initiated the survey, yielding 1,554 completed surveys and 71% completion rate. The survey contained 45 multiple choice items and 2 short-answer responses for respondents to provide descriptions and commentary related to witnessing or experiencing harassment and discrimination. The survey was designed to have respondents provide information about their personal experiences as members of the PCC community; their perceptions of the campus climate for members of their own socio-demographic and social identity group(s); and perceptions of institutional actions, including policies and procedures, and campus initiatives regarding discrimination and/or harassment on their campus.

Demographics

The demographics of the 1,554 participants completing the survey are as follows:

- 903 students, 235 faculty, and 416 administrators/staff¹
- 435 participants of color (321 students and 114 faculty/administrators/staff)²
- 811 participants with disabilities (526 students and 285 faculty/administrators/staff)³
- 344 members of the LGBTQQ community (227 students and 117 faculty/administrators/staff)⁴

¹ Possible undercounts of "Administrators" due to the selection of "Other" and write-ins of "Administrator/Administration" in responding to "My primary role at the college."

² This number does not include the number of respondents who "Preferred not to answer."

³ This includes all respondents who selected a physical, mental, or emotional disability or impairment including sensory disability (e.g., visual or hearing impairment), attention deficit or hyperactivity, learning impairment (e.g., dyslexia), condition of mental or emotional health, disability of size or stature, or a chronic health or other medical condition.

⁴ This does not include respondents who "Preferred not to answer."

- 17 participants identifying as Transgender ⁵
- 917 women (500 students and 417 faculty/administrators/staff)

KEY THEMATIC FINDINGS

Themes were revealed from a factor analysis⁶ of the quantitative data and a content analysis⁷ of the qualitative data, which included short-answer responses regarding having witnessed or experienced of harassment and discrimination.

Student Themes

Key themes emerging from student survey data include: 1) marginalization, isolation, and discrimination based on race, age, religious affiliation, disability status, and sexual orientation; 2) perceptions of an unwelcoming climate for those in the LGBTQQ community; and 3) ineffectiveness of institutional actions including administrative policies and campus initiatives regarding discrimination and harassment complaints.

Faculty/Staff Themes

Key themes emerging from the faculty/staff survey include: 1) marginalization, isolation, and discrimination based on faculty status (full-time, probationary, temporary vs. full-time, continuous); 2) discomfort and unwillingness to file discrimination complaints out of fear of retribution; and 3) ineffectiveness of administrative policies and procedures in connection with discrimination, harassment, and sexual assault prevention.

MULTI-CAMPUS FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Focus Groups and Site Visit

Table 1. Total focus group participation by campus

Cascade	Rock Creek	Southeast	Sylvania	Total
35	42	39	43	159

A team of researchers from the Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education at the University of Pennsylvania spent four days visiting each of the Portland Community College campuses. During that time, our team simultaneously facilitated dozens (n=72) of 90-minute, demographically homogenous focus groups with students, faculty, and staff. Participants (see Table 1) provided perspectives on campus-specific and college-wide climate as related to their individual and collective experiences.

⁵ This number is left in the aggregate to increase anonymity.

⁶ Factor analysis permits the reduction of a large set of variables to a smaller set of underlying patterns (Kerlinger, 1986).

⁷ Content analysis is a method of studying and analyzing communications in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner to measure variables. Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts (Kerlinger, 1986).

These groups included:

Faculty Groups

- Women Faculty and Staff
- Men Faculty and Staff
- Faculty and Staff of Color
- Faculty and Staff with Disabilities
- White Faculty and Staff
- Women Faculty and Staff of Color
- Men Faculty and Staff of Color
- Queer Faculty and Staff

Student Groups

- Veteran Students
- International Students
- Men Students
- Women Students
- Queer Students
- Men Students of Color
- Women Students of Color
- Students with Disabilities

KEY THEMATIC FINDINGS

Student Themes

Key themes emerging from focus groups with students include: 1) students of color experience exclusion through microaggressions⁸ (from peers and faculty in the classroom); 2) faculty/staff lack professional competency in supporting diverse student populations; 3) lack of support for non-traditional students; 4) limited recognition of preferred gender pronouns (PGP)⁹ for Trans*, gender queer, and gender non-conforming students; and 5) limited awareness of campus policies and procedures for and discomfort with reporting sexual assault.

Faculty/Staff Themes

Key themes emerging from focus groups with faculty/staff include: 1) discomfort and unwillingness to file discrimination complaints out of fear of retribution (especially for women faculty/staff and faculty/staff of color); 2) lack of racial/ethnic diversity among full-time faculty and senior administration; 4) managing conflict through dismissal and silence of faculty/staff of color; 5) College maintains neoliberal positions of neutrality amidst college-wide racial conflict; and 6) lack of professional equity based on employee status/rank (e.g., full-time vs. part-time and union vs. non-union).

⁸ Microaggressions are everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages often based on stereotypes and tropes of target persons identity (e.g., race).

⁹ A preferred gender pronoun is the pronoun or set of pronouns that an individual would like others to use when talking to or about that individual.