

# Appendix H



**Spring 2015 Sierra College Campus Climate Survey Analysis**  
**Sierra College Office of Planning, Research and Resource Development**

## **Introduction**

The Sierra College Office of Planning, Research and Resource Development conducted an online campus climate survey which canvassed the entire spring 2015 student body from March through July. The goal of the survey was to help capture student perceptions of the general atmosphere within the Sierra Community College District and its surrounding communities in order to better understand how students experience Sierra College.

SurveyMonkey and MailChimp were employed to reach all students. The survey was emailed to 19,765 students. 985 students opened the email and 621 of them opened the survey link. In all, the survey received 525 responses which produced a 2.6% response rate. At the 95% confidence level, the confidence interval associated with this sample was 4.22. Therefore, 95% of the time we can presume that entire student population would provide the same responses ( $\pm 4.22\%$ ) to survey questions as the 525 students who participated in the survey.

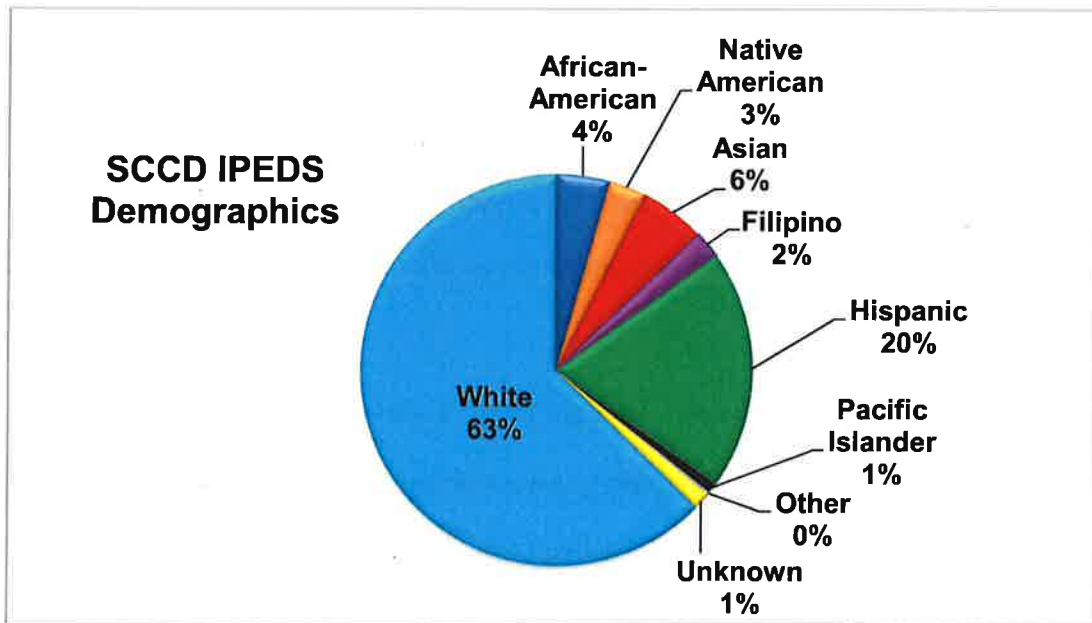
## **Data Analysis**

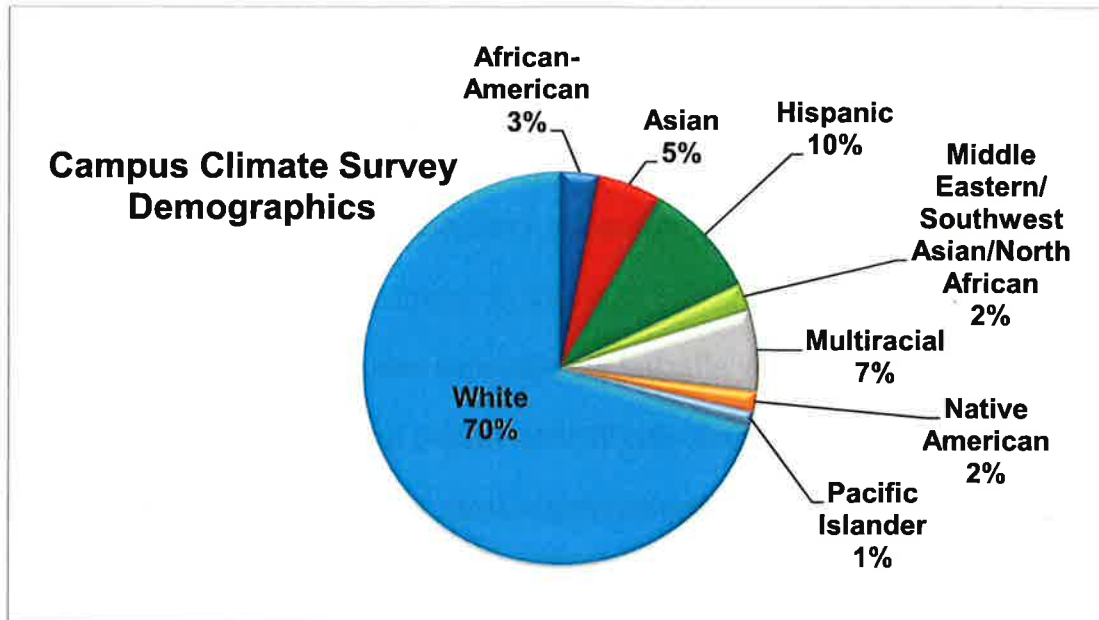
The largest factors likely affecting the campus climate survey response rate was the timing and length of survey. The survey included 63 questions, but many of these questions included multiple sub-questions. Branching was employed to help alleviate irrelevant questioning and information collection, but most students still required 15-20 minutes to complete the survey. Just 1% of respondents started skipping questions at the beginning of the survey while up to 12% of respondents were skipping questions by the end of the survey. Therefore, the respondent fatigue rate associated with this survey was approximately 11% for those who started the survey with fidelity, but gave up or lost interest toward the end. "Respondent fatigue is a well-documented

phenomenon that occurs when survey participants become tired of the survey task and the quality of the data they provide begins to deteriorate” (Lavrakas, 2008, p.742).

Over the past couple years, Sierra College has been heavily engaged in student surveys and data collection as part of the institution’s Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), equity planning processes, institutional accreditation and other programmatic survey sampling. The multitude of recent institutional student survey requests could have adversely affected the response rate to the 2014-2015 Campus Climate Survey. Porter, Whitcomb and Weitzer (2004) argue that the number of previous surveys can negatively impact respondents’ willingness to engage in additional surveys.

Survey respondents were somewhat representative of the campus population when comparing demographics between the survey sample with Sierra’s Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) demographic data. Based on IPEDS data, the only racial/ethnic group that appeared significantly underrepresented was Hispanic/Latino students.





Some discrepancies in these data can be attributed to the methodology imposed during data collection. The IPEDS methodology includes a primary question, “Are you of Hispanic or Latino descent?” After all applicants answer “yes” or “no” this question they are then directed to a secondary question, “What is your race or ethnicity?” This methodology places primacy on the Hispanic/Latino headcount as anyone answering “yes” to the primary question is classified as Hispanic/Latino whether or not they identify as Hispanic/Latino. The Sierra College Campus Climate survey did not employ this methodology and therefore did not place primacy on the Hispanic/Latino demographic option. This could be one factor that contributed to the low Hispanic/Latino headcount in the campus climate survey.

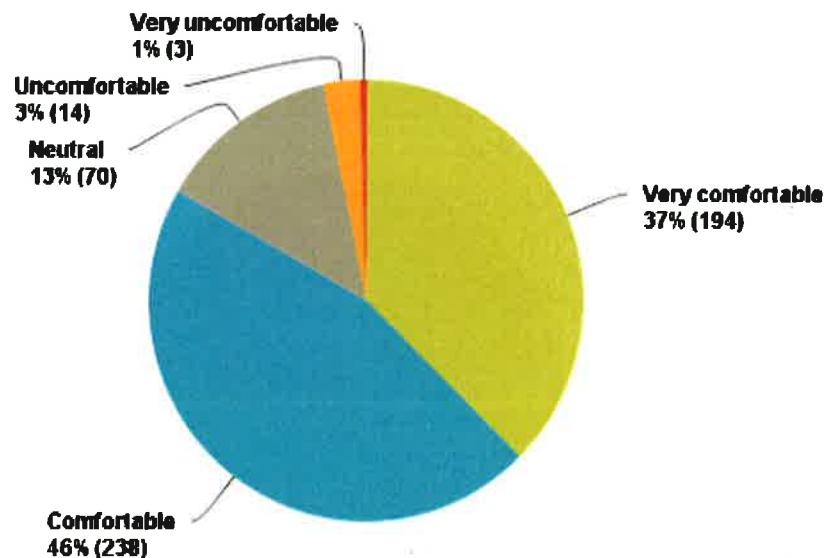
Other discrepancies between institutional data and the campus climate respondent sample were apparent in the gender demographic. Institutional data reflects female students accounting for 53% of Sierra College enrollments while male students account for 46%. In contrast, 63% of campus climate survey respondents identified as

female and 37% were male. Fulltime versus part-time enrollment status was the final glaring dissimilarity. While institutional data for fall 2014 reflects approximately 78% of students enrolled as part-time versus 22% enrolled fulltime, 58% of climate survey respondents indicated fulltime enrollment with just 42% enrolled part-time.

Most of the campus climate information collected from respondents reflected positively on the institution. In general, students felt comfortable on campus and in their classes at Sierra. When questioned about whether or not students have considered leaving Sierra, only a small proportion of responses were linked to dissatisfaction or challenges that Sierra College could directly influence.

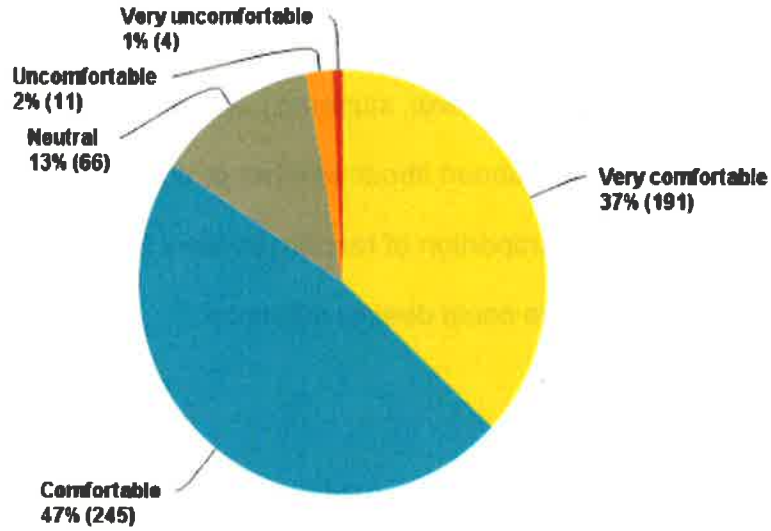
## Q2 Overall, how comfortable are you with the campus climate at Sierra College?

Answered: 519 Skipped: 6



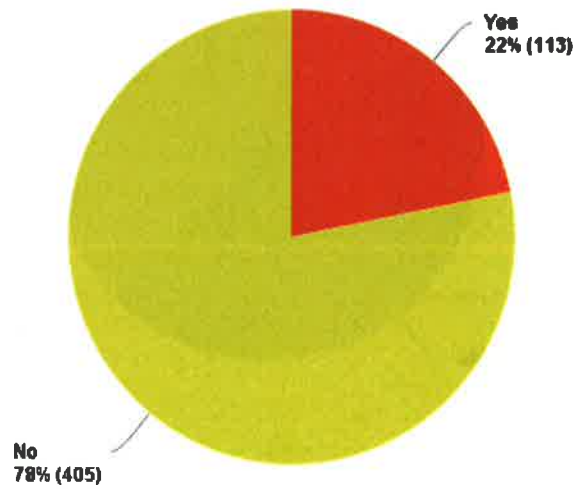
**Q3 Overall, how comfortable are you with the atmosphere in your classes at Sierra College?**

Answered: 517 Skipped: 8



**Q4 In the past year, have you considered leaving Sierra College?**

Answered: 518 Skipped: 7





105 of the 113 students who considered leaving Sierra College in the past year provided reasons why. These qualitative data were organized into thematic patterns for analysis purposes. The themes are organized below in descending order based on frequency.

<b>Reasons to Consider Leaving Sierra College</b>	<b>Total Number of Responses</b>
Transfer	31
Personal reasons beyond institutional control	24
Course or program limitation	19
Issues associated with faculty on campus	11
General dissatisfaction	8
Campus climate	6
Feelings of isolation on campus	6
Impacted classes	4
Course registration policy(s)	3
Issues associated with counseling on campus	3
Discrimination	3
Degree completion	3

Though most respondents generally indicated positive experiences at Sierra there are still some areas for concern.

In particular, data from Question 8 revealed that 20% of student respondents had personally experienced hostile, offensive, intimidating and/or discriminatory behavior at Sierra College. When results were filtered by the various subgroups represented on campus, some disturbing patterns became apparent. It is important to note that filtering by each subgroup drastically reduced the number of responses included for each analysis; thus making these findings less generalizable. These data are provided in descending order on the following page.

<b>Question 8: Within the past year, have you personally experienced any hostile, offensive, intimidating and/or discriminatory behavior at Sierra College?</b>		
<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Percentage indicating "Yes"</b>	<b>Total Headcount</b>
Native American	62%	5 of 8
African-American	40%	6 of 15
Former-Foster Youth	36%	4 of 11
Middle Eastern/Southwest Asian/North African	33%	3 of 9
Asian	24%	6 of 25
Low-income	20%	53 of 269
Hispanic/Latino	10%	5 of 47
Female	19%	59 of 306
Male	18%	31 of 179
White	18%	60 of 345
Pacific Islander	17%	1 of 5
LGBTIQ	16%	9 of 59
Veteran	10%	2 of 19

Question 9 asked respondents which personal factors contributed to the hostility and discriminatory behavior and how frequency students experienced this conduct. Each answer option included four choices that were assigned a weighted average for comparison purposes. "Never" was assigned a value of 1, "seldom" was assigned a value of 2, "sometimes" was assigned a value of 3 and "often" was assigned a value of 4. Therefore, higher weighted averages indicate greater frequencies of hostility and discriminatory behavior for each answer option. Responses have been ranked in descending order based on their relative strength.

<b>Question 9: Which personal factors listed below do you believe contributed to the hostile, offensive, intimidating and/or discriminatory behavior you experienced at Sierra College; and how often have you experienced it?</b>		
<b>Contributing Factor</b>	<b>Weighted Average</b>	<b>Percentage Indicating "Often"</b>
Classroom learning environment	2.04	5%
Age	2.03	12%
Political views	1.91	11%
Religious/spiritual views	1.91	13%
Ethnicity	1.80	11%
Philosophical views	1.79	8%

<b>Question 10: How did you experience this hostile, offensive, intimidating and/or discriminatory behavior?</b>	<b>Percentage Indicating</b>
I felt isolated or left out.	46%
I felt intimidated or bullied.	45%
I felt deliberately ignored or excluded.	44%
I observed others staring at me.	29%
I feared getting a poor grade because of a hostile classroom environment.	27%
Other	26%
I was the target of hostile verbal remarks.	20%
I feared for my physical safety.	15%
I was singled out as the spokesperson for my identity group.	13%
I was the target of racial/ethnic profiling.	11%

<b>Question 11: Where did this conduct occur?</b>	<b>Percentage Indicating</b>
In a class/lab.	60%
In a public space at Sierra College.	35%
While walking on campus.	31%
At a Sierra College event.	13%
In a Sierra College office.	11%
In a Sierra College dining facility.	10%
During a group meeting on campus.	10%

<b>Question 12: Who/what group was the source of this conduct?</b>	<b>Percentage Indicating</b>
Student	61%
Faculty member	20%
Stranger	20%
Sierra College staff	16%
Student staff (e.g., residence hall assistant, peer counselor, etc.)	10%
Campus visitors/community members	9%
Sierra College organizations or groups	8%
Campus administrator/manager	7%

Question 49 was similar in nature to Question 8, but focused on exclusionary, intimidating, offensive and/or hostile conduct or communications directed toward other people or groups on campus. Coincidentally, Question 8 and Question 49 had similar data trends when analyzed by subgroup. Responses have been ranked in descending order based on their relative strength.

**Question 49: Within the past year, have you observed any conduct or communications directed toward a person or group of people at Sierra College that you believe has created an exclusionary, intimidating, offensive and/or hostile working or learning environment?**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Percentage indicating "Yes"</b>	<b>Total Headcount</b>
Native American	50%	4 of 8
African-American	27%	4 of 15
LGBTIQ	22%	13 of 58
Asian	22%	5 of 23
Middle Eastern/Southwest Asian/North African	20%	2 of 10
Pacific Islander	17%	1 of 6
Female	14%	43 of 298
Low-income	13%	35 of 268
White	12%	39 of 329
Male	12%	20 of 169
Hispanic/Latino	12%	5 of 43
Former-Foster Youth	9%	1 of 11
Veteran	6%	1 of 18

<b>Question 50: Who/what groups were the targets of this conduct?</b>	<b>Percentage Indicating</b>
Student(s)	79%
Didn't know the target(s)	24%
Friend(s)	17%
Faculty member(s)	10%
Staff member(s)	6%

<b>Question 51: Who/what group was the source of this behavior?</b>	<b>Percentage Indicating</b>
Student(s)	62%
Didn't know the source(s)	21%
Staff member(s)	19%
Faculty member(s)	16%
Off campus community member(s)	8%

<b>Question 52: What do you believe was the reason(s) for this conduct?</b>	<b>Percentage Indicating</b>
Ethnicity	24%
Religious/spiritual views	24%
Race	20%
Age	19%
Physical characteristics	15%
Philosophical views	15%
Political views	15%
Sexual orientation	15%
Gender identity	14%
Gender expression	14%
Other	14%
Educational level	12%
Position on campus	12%
Learning disability	10%
Physical disability	10%

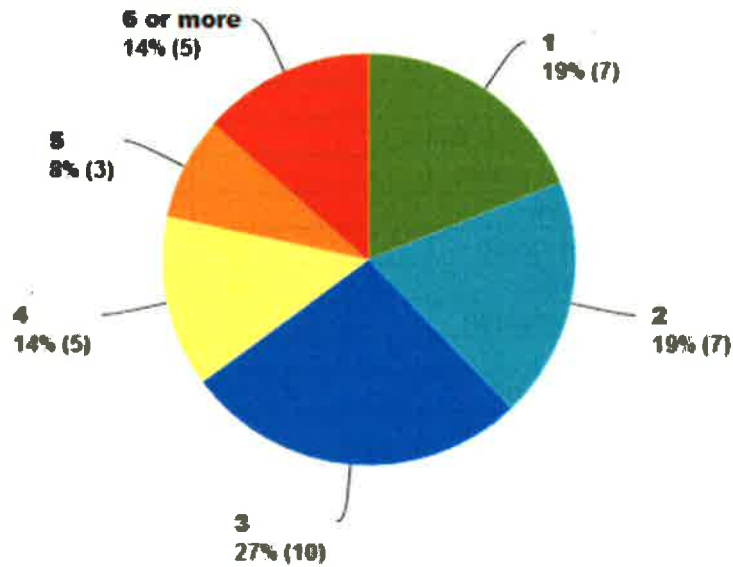
<b>Question 53: What forms of behavior have you observed at Sierra College or personally been made aware of?</b>	<b>Percentage Indicating</b>
Negative/offensive remarks	67%
Deliberate exclusion	38%
Intimidation or bullying	29%
Racial/ethnic profiling	29%
Someone feared for their physical safety	22%
Isolation or exclusion from group work or assignments	20%
Negative/offensive written comments	16%
Negative/offensive e-mails, text messages or social media posts	15%
Receipt of a poor grade because of hostile classroom behavior	15%
Graffiti/vandalism	13%
Assumption that someone was hired/promoted based on their identity	11%
Isolation and exclusion around campus	11%
Someone was singled out as the spokesperson for their group/identity	11%
Threats of physical violence	9%

Question 54 offered a unique glimpse into the different in frequencies of exposure to hostile behaviors at Sierra. The following data suggest that White students experienced aggressions with much less frequency than minority respondents.

## How many times have you observed this type of conduct?

**White Students**

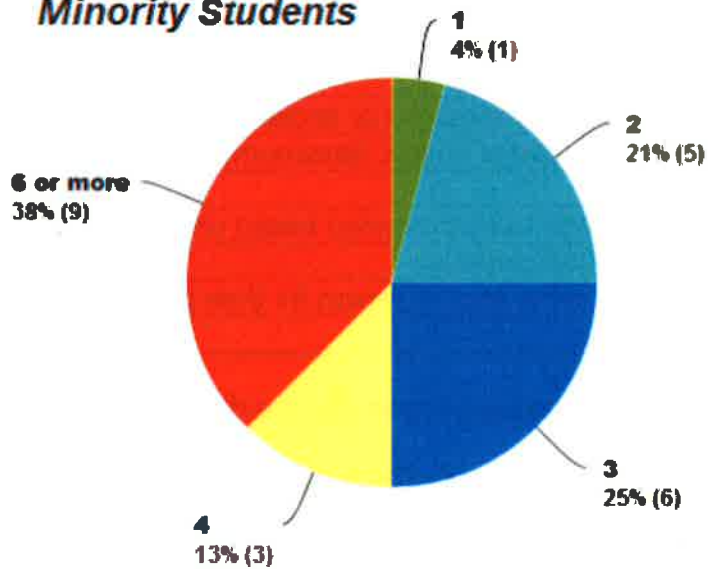
Answered: 37 Skipped: 308



## How many times have you observed this type of conduct?

Answered: 24 Skipped: 122

**Minority Students**



## Discussion

Aggregated data from the 2014-2015 Sierra College Campus Climate Survey seem to suggest that the vast majority of student experiences are positive. However, when the data is disaggregated into subgroups the narrative appears to change. Minority groups seem to experience SCCD from a different context than the majority student population.

- Minorities appear to witness hostilities with much greater frequency than their White peers.
- Race and ethnicity rank as two of the top three reasons for exclusionary or aggressive behavior.
- Students were the victims in almost 80% of reported incidences, while also being tagged as the aggressors more than half the time.
- Labs and classrooms were overwhelmingly mentioned as the areas most likely to host discriminatory activities.

Therefore, how might the campus community come together to help transform our learning spaces into incubators of dialog, understanding and acceptance?

