Aggie R-r-ring Survey Program
Campus Climate Study
2002-2004

Produced by the Department of Student Life Studies
In collaboration with the Department of Multicultural Services, the Division of Student Affairs, and the Division of Student Affairs Assessment Team
Executive Summary
The Campus Climate Study was initiated in September 2002 to assess students’ perception of racial and ethnic diversity at Texas A&M University. A similar study was conducted during the 1997-1998 school year by an independent team from the University of Michigan and was used as a foundation for this study. There were three parts to the study including a telephone survey, focus groups with original telephone survey participants, and a web-based qualitative follow-up survey with original telephone survey participants.

This study validated previous research across the country concerning Non-White students on predominantly White college campuses (Woodard and Sims, 2000; Eimers, 2001; Loo and Rolison, 1986; Bennett and Okinaka, 1990; Radloff and Evans, 2003). Texas A&M was similar to other institutions in how White and Non-White students perceived the campus environment as it related to issues of diversity and racism. Non-White students at Texas A&M University reported feelings of discomfort and isolation, mainly in the social environment. Furthermore, they were more likely than White students to say racism is a problem on campus and mention feeling uncomfortable in class because they are one of the few (or only) minorities in the room. Senior Non-White students reported racism as a problem on campus more than sophomore Non-White students, and White students did not report direct experience with racism.

When the telephone survey results were reviewed, several findings seemed contradictory within the Non-White student population. For instance, while 99% of Non-White students agreed they were “glad” to be at Texas A&M, 43% agreed that racism was a problem. Differences also were revealed between specific groups of Non-White students. For instance, on the racism question, 62% of African American students agreed that racism was a problem at Texas A&M compared to 37% of Hispanic students and 34% of Asian American students.

Based on the contradictory nature of some responses and the differences between White and Non-White students, a qualitative study was conducted to discover how students defined phrases from the original survey and what experiences they had that shaped their opinions of diversity issues. Several major themes emerged from additional feedback.

First, Non-White students defined “respect,” “accepted,” and “welcomed” as the absence of negative circumstances such as discriminatory acts rather than being recognized for their individual differences in a positive manner. They preferred terms such as “politeness,” “common courtesy,” and “tolerance” to define how they were treated on campus. A Hispanic senior said: “I felt like I’d have to adjust my likes in order to hang out with my buddies…We would pretty much just go to the Hall [a local country-western dance club] or do something like that. Me personally, I would rather go to a salsa merengue club or go Tejano dancing. That’s what I would have loved to have done but they’re not gonna all conform for me since I was the minority…only about 4 of us were Hispanic, and we were not able to say ‘no, we’re going to this place.’”

Second, students did not fully understand the construct of racism. Some students reported incidents they had observed happening to their group of friends or to themselves but did not seem to perceive the incidents as discriminatory in nature. The same student cited above went on to describe an additional experience: “…like my buddies would just kind of play around with us and be like yeah, yeah, Spic-this and what’s up, Spic, and you know, look-Spic just go here…I never really thought bad of it because they were my friends and I knew they loved me because, I mean, they did so many things for me, and you know, we did so many things together.”
Third, the percentage of Non-White students who agreed that racism was a problem at A&M increased with each classification: 33% of sophomores, 43% of juniors, and 50% of seniors agreed that racism is a problem. The same trend was not observed for White students: 24% of sophomores, 25% of juniors and 34% of seniors agreed. The Non-White respondents in the focus groups and follow-up web survey revealed a variety of reasons for the increased agreement that racism was a problem at Texas A&M such a greater personal awareness of the issues, smaller class sizes in the upper level courses, and more interaction with the same students.

Fourth, the presence of cultural encapsulation, which is the practice of defining reality according to one set of assumptions and stereotypes, was detected within some of the White students’ comments (Pedersen, 1994). In this study, White students mostly focused on the commonalities within the campus culture, such as traditions and athletic events, and embraced the viewpoint that all students should feel like they belong to the community because everyone shares the culture. Most White students did not mention a need to look beyond what the campus culture offers for new ideas and experiences nor did they understand what they could gain from increased diversity on campus. In fact, some students equated racial and ethnic diversity with language barriers they encountered in classes with international instructors. Because they perceived that their academic performance was negatively impacted by a language barrier, they responded negatively to the suggestion of racially diversifying the campus, possibly reinforcing the idea that other viewpoints do not need to be explored.

A fifth and final theme suggested that diversity issues have to be dealt with on the student-to-student level. The majority of negative experiences cited by students centered on social interactions, or lack thereof, with fellow students rather than with faculty, staff, or administrators. For example, an Asian American student had this experience on campus: “When the spy plane went down in China, [a friend] and I were walking around campus. He’s Asian. So, we’re walking down and these people are reading the article in the Battalion that said the spy plane went down in China...As we walked by we hear them say, ‘You know, I wish they’d just go home.’ So [my friend] and I turned around and were like, ‘From North Carolina? ‘cause that’s where I’m from’...I mean, what are you talking about ‘go home?’” The social environment within the academic classroom also impacted students as an African American underclassman explained: “sometimes you will sit in a class of 400 and no one will speak to you.”

The results from this study are divided into two major chapters within the full report. The first chapter, “The Academic Experience and the Overall A&M Environment,” highlights topics such as student perceptions of Texas A&M, reasons they would recommend Texas A&M to others, racism, and their opinions of the faculty and staff. The second chapter, “Individuals, the Campus Culture, and Student-to-Student Interactions,” highlights topics such as individual development, definitions of community, the role of student organizations in student relations, and diversity priorities. The qualitative responses from students are interwoven with the quantitative results from the original phone survey in order to provide additional understanding of student responses.
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Introduction

In 1979, Hoopes identified an intercultural learning process to describe how individuals view their own and other cultures. The first stage of the learning process, “ethnocentrism,” described how individuals view their own culture as the best and may be intolerant toward other cultures. The second stage, “awareness,” involved acknowledgement of other cultures while the third stage, “understanding,” delved into acquiring knowledge about other cultures. Once awareness and understanding have been achieved, individuals move into a fourth stage of “acceptance and respect” in which other cultures are tolerated. The fifth stage, “appreciating and valuing,” had individuals separating out positive and negative aspects of a specific culture while the sixth stage, “selective adoption,” involved the individual emulating the attitudes and behaviors of a culture s/he found to be most desirable. The seventh and final stage, “multiculturalism,” described a process in which individuals can communicate effectively and feel comfortable interacting with people from other cultures (Hoopes, 1979).

Building on Hoopes’ intercultural learning processes, the “Cycle of Socialization” explains how cultural messages received in early childhood are reinforced through a variety of influences and institutions such as the media and schools. In addition, personal experiences such as discrimination can be combined with the messages reinforced in the maturation process and result in self-hatred. On the other hand, personal experiences and messages associated with privilege can result in the interpretation of racism as non-existent since it has not been directly experienced. Breaking the cycle of socialization involves education, awareness, and continued dialogue directed toward the development of the individual (Harro, 1982).

Subsequent research on cultural identity revealed specific areas of interest to higher education. According to Woodard and Sims (2000), “the level of comfort a student feels is critical to satisfaction with college life” (p. 540). Furthermore, “while a comfortable campus climate is important for all students, it may be even more crucial to the success of [Non-White students]” (p. 548). When Non-White students do not feel they are fully part of the campus community, “feelings of discrimination and alienation were more common” and “usually resulted in lower achievement” (p. 540).

As Tatum (1992) described, the introduction of diversity issues into conversations “often generates powerful emotional responses in students that range from guilt and shame to anger and despair. If not addressed, these emotional responses can result in student resistance to oppression-related content areas. Such resistance can ultimately interfere with the cognitive understanding and mastery of the material. This resistance and potential interference is particularly common when specifically addressing issues of race and racism” (p. 2). Resistance can take the form of avoiding the topic of race, adopting the idea that the United States is a just society and racism is isolated, or denying individual prejudices and failing to recognize the impact of those prejudices (p. 5).

In describing how White and Non-White students approach the topic of race, Tatum (1992) said that “White students in particular may question the accuracy or currency of statistical information regarding the prevalence of discrimination (housing, employment, access to health care, and so on). More qualitative data, such as autobiographical accounts of experiences with racism, may be challenged on the basis of their subjectivity” (p. 6). Non-White students “often enter a discussion of racism with some awareness of the issue, based on personal experiences. However, even these students find that they did not have a full understanding of the widespread impact of racism in our society. For students who are targeted by racism, an increased awareness of the impact in and on their lives is painful, and often generates anger” (p. 7).
As researchers have focused attention on the issue of race and ethnic differences and how college students react to these differences, the findings suggest that the experiences of White and Non-White students vary widely. The following points seem to be validated by this study and suggest that Texas A&M is consistent with other pre-dominantly White institutions:

- Non-White students are more likely to perceive racial and ethnic discrimination as a problem and report being uncomfortable in class than White students. (Woodard & Sims, 2000)
- Non-White students report higher levels of prejudice than White students. (Eimers, 2001)
- Non-White students express more feelings of isolation than White students. (Loo & Rolison, 1986)
- The longer some Non-White students are on campus, the more dissatisfied they are with their college experience. (Bennett & Okinaka, 1990)
- White students assume racism exists but have no personal experiences with it or believe that all ethnic groups discriminate against each other. (Radloff & Evans, 2003)

As Echols, Hwang, and Nobles (2002) found, “The manner in which universities create an environment for racial and cultural understanding can hinder or stimulate students’ attitudes about diversity. White and ethnic minority students hold vastly different views about how the university supports ethnic minority students” (p. 171). For this reason, it was important to assess the campus climate at Texas A&M to discover how students of all ethnicities view the environment, especially in the area of diversity.

The Campus Climate Study was initiated in September 2002 to assess students’ perception of the Texas A&M University environment. A similar study was conducted during the 1997-1998 school year by an independent team from the University of Michigan [the Executive Summary of this report can be found by visiting: http://studentaffairs.tamu.edu/documents/ExecSummary/ExecSummary.asp] and was used as a foundation for 2002 study. However, due to changes in methodology and slight changes in the wording of survey questions, the results of this study were not directly compared to the results from the 1998 study. [For further discussion of the 1998 results, please read the “Additional Research” section of this report.]

As Tatum’s (1992) work suggested, racial and ethnic differences are difficult for students to discuss. The same holds true for this project which contains only the voices of students who wished to provide comments. Only a small proportion of the students contacted provided additional feedback on the topic when asked for clarification of their original responses; therefore, the comments provided throughout this report are based only on those students who wished to share their thoughts and experiences and cannot be considered representative of the entire campus.

### Sample

The population for the survey was undergraduate students with sophomore or higher classification who had attended Texas A&M University for at least one year. A stratified sampling design was used in order to allow for comparisons across racial and ethnic groups on campus. International students were not included in the sample.

Sample sizes were calculated separately for each ethnic group using Henry’s (1990) formula for efficient sample size and then adjusted for an expected 40% non-response rate. The non-responses were expected to be a combination of wrong numbers, refusals to participate and no answers.
Table 1 represents the Fall 2002 campus population for sophomores, juniors, and seniors, along with the telephone survey sample information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Fall 2002 Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Population</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Sample Size (Adjusted for wrong numbers)</th>
<th>Responses Obtained</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1,599</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>14,425</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17,538</td>
<td>2,001</td>
<td>1,331</td>
<td>1,085</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Population and samples for the 2002 Campus Climate telephone survey

The samples were drawn at random from their respective populations. All of the samples were then combined and shuffled into a random order of calling. The “Other” ethnicity category included individuals of multiple races as well as individuals who identified with a category not provided in the standardized database utilized by Texas A&M University (example: “Egyptian”).

**Methodology**

Callers, trained and supervised by the Department of Measurement and Research Services (MARS) at Texas A&M University, conducted telephone interviews using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. Calls were conducted from September 15 through October 9, 2002, between the hours of 12:00pm to 9:30pm, Monday through Thursday and 12:00pm to 5:00pm on Friday. Students not at home were returned to the sample list for a later attempt.

Contact was attempted with a total of 2,001 undergraduate students. Thirty-four percent (34%) were wrong numbers. Of the sample members actually contacted, 18% declined to participate. Eighty-two percent (82%), or 1085 students, agreed to participate in the survey. Margin of error for the telephone survey was ± 2.44% based on a 95% confidence interval. [See Appendix A for the Telephone Survey questions.]

Once the telephone survey was completed, preliminary results were shared with a variety of constituents including the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Student Affairs Council, the President’s office, representatives from the Faculty Senate, and University Relations. Feedback from these groups and individuals led to the decision to gather additional information from the original survey participants. The additional information included asking the original participants to speculate as to why students responded the way they did and asking them to share specific experiences they have had with diversity issues. For these reasons, focus groups were organized from the original participant pool in the spring of 2003. Each major ethnic group (African American, Asian American, Hispanic, and White) was further divided into seniors and underclassmen (sophomores and juniors) to create eight focus groups. Only two of the eight scheduled focus groups occurred, mainly due to low levels of attendance (a total of seven students participated in the groups).
Due to the limited participation in the focus groups, a follow-up web-based survey was conducted in the summer of 2003 to help reach more of the original participants. Letters were sent via postal mail to students who had updated and complete permanent addresses (approximate 800 of the original 1085 students). Email messages also were sent to their campus accounts. Students who had graduated since the implementation of the original telephone survey were encouraged to participate. The web survey consisted of open-ended questions specific to the student’s ethnicity and classification and were the same as those designed for the focus groups [See Appendices B and C for focus group and web-survey questions]. A total of eighty students responded to the web survey.

The results of the web survey and focus groups were analyzed using a formal content analysis designed to minimize researcher bias. During the qualitative analysis, two specific staff members from the Department of Student Life Studies participated in each step of the process for continuity purposes. Furthermore, additional staff members from the Department of Student Life Studies participated in the process on a rotating basis. The Department of Multicultural Services also provided staff assistance at various times during the analysis. Student comments developed into themes that can be observed throughout this report.

Numerous comments made by students were difficult to interpret based on grammar, spelling, and/or lack of context and therefore were not selected for inclusion in the report. Comments chosen by the primary writer for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. [Note: All qualitative data is available for review in the Department of Student Life Studies.]

During the writing of the report, language proved to be a complicated issue. After several discussions with the research team and a consultation with staff members in the Department of Multicultural Services, it became clear that there was not a shared terminology to use when discussing race and ethnicity. For instance, while some individuals resonated with terms such as “majority” and “minority,” others found them to evoke negative feelings. For ease of discussion, “White” and “Non-White” were selected as the descriptive terms used to report differences between the two main groups. Specific ethnic group differences were also highlighted throughout the report.

**Demographics**

Fifty-five percent (55%) of the sample were females and 45% were males. The 2002 Texas A&M non-freshman, undergraduate demographics were 49% female and 51% male.

For classification, 31% were sophomores, 27% juniors, and 42% were seniors. The 2002 campus non-freshman, undergraduate breakdown in 2002 was 27% sophomores, 33% juniors, and 40% seniors.

Racial and ethnic groups on campus were over-represented to allow for statistical comparisons across groups. For this reason, 29% of the sample was White, 25% Hispanic, 17% Asian or Pacific Islander, 17% African American, 8% Other, and 4% Native American. The 2002 campus non-freshman, undergraduate population consisted of 82% White, 9% Hispanic, 3% Asian or Pacific Islander, 2% African American, 2% other, and less than 1% Native American.

For the follow-up focus groups, participants were selected randomly based on their ethnicity and classification. No other demographic information was collected. Four students participated in an Asian American senior focus group and three students participated in a Hispanic senior focus group.
For the web survey, information was sent to participants based on their ethnicity and classification. No other demographic information was collected. Seventeen of the participants were White seniors, fourteen White underclassmen, eight Hispanic seniors, eleven Hispanic underclassmen, eight African American seniors, nine African American underclassmen, eight Asian American seniors, and five Asian American underclassmen.

**Limitations of this Study**

There were several limitations of this study. First, the 2002 telephone survey was based on questions from the 1998 Campus Climate Study that focused on racial and ethnic diversity. During the course of the 2002 survey, the research team determined that questions lacked common definitions. For instance, questions arose concerning how students were defining phrases such as “member of the community,” “accepted and welcomed,” and “respected.” The variations in responses between White and Non-White students prompted several focus group and web survey questions regarding the definitions of these and other phrases. The differences in definitions students used could have impacted how they responded to the quantitative survey.

Second, the length of time between the different components of the study could have had an impact on the qualitative responses. Students originally participated in the telephone survey in September 2002. Focus groups did not occur until April 2003 and the web survey was not implemented until June 2003. The qualitative questions all referred back to the telephone survey responses and asked students to explain why they responded the way they did many months prior. The students’ perception might have changed during that time and could have differed from their original responses. In addition, some students who held senior classification during the telephone survey graduated prior to the qualitative components of the study. Their post-college experiences could have impacted their original views.

Third, the questions for the 2002 study were adapted from the 1998 Campus Climate Study so trend data could be obtained. However, after the 1998 study, the University community did not specify outcomes based on those results. The absence of outcomes did not allow for clear goals to be set for this study outside of assessing the campus climate after a five-year span of time. When the 2002 telephone survey results were reviewed, it became clear that more information was needed in order to accurately interpret students’ responses. The goals of the study had to be developed to include more in-depth qualitative information from students to discover how specific groups of students defined terms and what experiences they had with diversity within the campus culture.

Fourth, confidentiality and anonymity issues may have impacted the results of this study. The telephone methodology utilized for the quantitative survey could have influenced students because they were answering questions to a caller who knew their name and contact information. The assurance of anonymity might have been diminished, possibly resulting in more positive responses. In addition, because the follow-up web survey was anonymous, the information participants provided could have been more reflective of their true opinions.

Fifth, the topic of diversity can be controversial and the responses obtained through this study may only be reflective of students who had a point of view they wanted to share rather than students as a whole. Additional opinions and experiences may still exist that are not covered through this study.
Results

Results are reported as percentages. The data tables for the telephone survey, including the number of students responding to each question, means, and standard deviations, can be found in Appendix D. The body of the report is divided into two major chapters, which are then separated into the following sections:

Chapter 1: The Academic Experience and the Overall A&M Environment
   Section A: Overall View of and Academic Experiences at Texas A&M
   Section B: Faculty and Staff

Chapter 2: Individuals, the Campus Culture, and Student-to-Student Interactions
   Section A: Individual Development and Perceptions about Peers
   Section B: Feelings of Community
   Section C: Student Organizations
   Section D: Achieving Campus Diversity
Chapter 1: The Academic Experience and the Overall A&M Environment

A number of questions from both the quantitative and qualitative studies covered the overall environment and how it impacts students at Texas A&M. This chapter addresses students’ opinions of the institution as a whole, their academic experiences, and the faculty and staff at Texas A&M.

Section A: Overall View of and Academic Experiences at Texas A&M

Students were asked to indicate if they were glad they came to Texas A&M, if they would complete their degree, and if they would recommend Texas A&M to others using the scale: 4=Agree Strongly, 3=Agree Somewhat, 2=Disagree Somewhat, and 1=Disagree Strongly. As observed in Table 2, depicting only the “Agree Strongly” and “Agree Somewhat” responses, almost all students, regardless of ethnicity, were positive about their experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (Agree Strongly and Agree Somewhat)</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am glad I attended Texas A&amp;M.</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will complete my degree at A&amp;M.</td>
<td>99.4</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>99.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If asked, I would recommend coming to Texas A&amp;M to others.</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: QUESTION: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following.

Students also were asked to indicate their level of agreement with several statements concerning cultural awareness and issues of racism and fairness using the scale: 4=Agree Strongly, 3=Agree Somewhat, 2=Disagree Somewhat, and 1=Disagree Strongly. As observed in Table 3, illustrating the “Agree Strongly” and “Agree Somewhat” responses, Non-White and White students differed in their opinions. The statements marked with a “*” are statistically significant (p<.001) between White and Non-White students. In addition, differences occurring with the separate Non-White groups can be observed.
### Table 3: QUESTION: Below are some statements about Texas A&M. Indicate to what extent you agree or disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are treated fairly here regardless of their racial or ethnic background.*</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>African-American: 69.9 Hispanic: 79.5 Native American: 86.8 Asian &amp; Pacific Islander: 85.1 Other: 91.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People here treat each other with respect.</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>Hispanic: 87.3 Native American: 94.3 Asian &amp; Pacific Islander: 92.0 Other: 97.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism is a problem at Texas A&amp;M.*</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>African-American: 62.2 Hispanic: 37.3 Native American: 23.7 Asian &amp; Pacific Islander: 34.3 Other: 48.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of Non-White students who agreed that racism is a problem at A&M increased with each classification: 33% of sophomores, 43% of juniors, and 50% of seniors agreed that racism is a problem. White students stayed the same for their sophomore year (23%) and their junior year (25%) but agreed more in their senior year (34%).

Some seeming contradictions were observed within the quantitative data. Non-White students did not agree as much as White students that they were treated fairly regardless of their ethnic background and indicated that racism was a problem on campus more than White students. However, they also agreed that they were glad they attended Texas A&M, they would complete their degree, and that they would recommend it to others. In order to clarify their responses, focus group and web survey questions addressed the topic of racism, why students would recommend Texas A&M to others, and how students felt about the campus climate in general. Direct quotes from students can be found in the following pages.

**Racism at Texas A&M University--The Overall Environment**

All students were asked the question: *In the survey, students were asked if they thought racism was a problem at Texas A&M University. Regardless if you agreed or disagreed that racism is a problem at Texas A&M University, what have been your experiences here that have led you to your opinion on this issue?*” The major themes that emerged from their responses were:

1. Issues with the campus environment;
2. Incidents students had heard about, observed, or experienced; and
3. Individual and societal contributions to racism.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.
Theme 1: Issues with the Campus Environment

The students’ comments on racism within the campus environment covered a wide range of issues including the definition of racism, explanations of why racism does or does not exist, the problem with ignorance, variations in student backgrounds, dealing with differences, and the concept of the “Aggie Family.” Out of 63 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American student
- “I have not had any experiences at Texas A&M that dealt with racism.”--African American underclassman

Asian American students
- “Racism is definitely a problem only because many students at A&M are not accustomed to seeing minorities; and minorities are not accustomed to being surrounded by mostly white people.”--Asian American underclassman
- “Many students from A&M come from small towns, where mainly the population is Anglo-American, so when they see diversity, they are not quite used to it and may sometimes not know how to react.”--Asian American senior
- “I haven’t myself seen blatant racism on campus since I moved to Texas A&M. Therefore, I don’t think it is an immediate problem that needs to be dealt with. However, ignorance about other cultures is extremely apparent on campus. Nobody has learned much about different cultures and religions. This is a problem that needs to be dealt with.”--Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students
- “My experiences have brought me to believe that although at times there might be a few who do discriminate for the most part the environment is calm.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “I think racism at A&M isn’t caused by the A&M atmosphere, but by the bigotry that many Aggies grow up with.”--Hispanic senior
- “I believe that as one grows in the Aggie Family, one becomes much less likely to add to the problem of racism.”--Hispanic senior
- “Everyone has treated me respectfully and welcomed me.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “I’ve never felt that sting of racism here at this university, so I don’t think it is a problem.”--Hispanic underclassman

White students
- “I do not believe racism is a big problem. I personally haven’t seen much, but I’m sure some is there.”--White underclassman
- “Almost all of my experiences have shown that all racial groups mingle and mix just as well as, if not better than, other colleges.”--White underclassman
- “Minorities have the same opportunities as everyone else and are treated with the same amount of respect.”--White senior
- “I know some people that are very racist, but they don’t act like it around other people of different races. They act completely normal, so I haven’t seen a problem.”--White senior
- “Yes, racism is here at A&M. It is getting better.”--White senior
- “I do not feel like racism is a problem, but I feel like dealing with difference is a problem at A&M.”--White underclassman
Summary of Theme 1 - Issues with Campus Environment: Students’ comments on racism in the campus environment reflected various perceptions of what constitutes an “incident of racism,” explanations of why racism does or does not exist, the attitudes of students on campus, and the concept of the “Aggie Family.”

Theme 2: Incidents of Racism Students Have Heard About, Observed, or Experienced

Students shared a number of incidents of racism they had heard about, observed, or experienced while at Texas A&M. The incidents covered issues such as September 11th occurrences, articles in the campus newspaper, activities students participated in, slurs and stereotypes, intra-cultural conflicts, and an uneasy feeling on campus. Several students also cited experiences with issues outside of race and ethnicity that contributed to a negative perception of the campus environment. Out of 111 total comments, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students
- “My friend lived in Walton Hall, where I was passing by another student’s room and I heard them saying racial jokes. [They] call it ‘Nigger Jokes.’” --African American underclassman
- “I met this one guy at the MSC reservation desk who would never say one word to me. He’d just do the task I asked him to and shoved the money in my face.” --African American senior
- “Majority of the students at the university talk, act, and wear racial things.” --African American underclassman
- “I went to the local night club called ‘Salty Dog’ where the manager said that he was trying to limit the amount of ghetto people (meaning minority) from entering the club by having [a] dress code. Meaning that you could not wear any name brand that was designed by African American designers like FUBU, Sean John, Roca Wear, and etc.” --African American underclassman
- “Females (bleached blond, fake tan, all spoke in the same annoying manner) who felt that I should give up my seat, in a classroom that seated over 500 so that they could all sit together (amazing, since I overheard them saying they rarely attended class and the fact that the room was half empty when they approached me).” --African American senior

Asian American students
- “After 9/11, I heard many stories of people who looked Muslim being shunned or treated poorly simply because of their skin color.” --Asian American underclassman
- “I’ve been quite fortunate not to have been a target of racist acts however I have heard from people and from the Battalion [the campus newspaper] many instances of such acts.” --Asian American senior
- “An establishment wouldn’t serve my Columbian friend and was told to ‘go back where he came from.’” --Asian American senior
- “After the Sept. 11th tragedy, I was sitting on a bus across from an Eastern Asian, not exactly a Muslim, mind you. I noticed that no one was sitting next to him, and in fact there were people standing, regardless of the empty seats and their clear path to those seats.” --Asian American senior
- “A student approached me and commented on…the GLBTA [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Aggies] booth next to ours and said, ‘They should be shot and killed so they cannot procreate.’” --Asian American senior
- [Regarding a popular name brand shirt that was derogatory towards Asians] “We had a protest and the most disturbing thing about it was a lot of people agreed that yes, it was offensive, but only Asians protested.” --Asian American senior
“I believe that some people here, especially the white males, are racist. Their immaturity and name calling proves this. I have had a couple of experiences where a white male would make fun of me or ignore me because of my race.”--Asian American senior

“I’ve had people who have called me a gook before and I’d correct them. I’m like, if you’re going to be ignorant, be correct. I’m a Chink. And then they feel really stupid. I’m like, you are even more ignorant for being ignorant about being ignorant.”--Asian American senior

“I got here and the first time I met somebody from East Texas he had never ever met an Asian person before. I was the first Asian person that he had ever met face to face. Like prior to me, he only read about us in books. That’s weird! I mean that’s like me reading about deep sea fish and never seeing one before in my life and then when I see one I am fascinated. When he saw me he was like, ‘I am fascinated.’”--Asian American senior

**Hispanic students**

“Two employees at the Rec [Student Recreation Center] referred to rap/hip-hop music as ‘black s***’. The fact that there is labeling, the fact that there are assumptions being made about certain people simply by the color of their skin is something I would consider racism.”--Hispanic underclassman

“The way student organizations, namely Greek organizations, take a respected cultural tradition or holiday and turn it into the theme of a date party, i.e., Cinco do Chi-O where the theme was to dress like a Mexican.”--Hispanic underclassman

“Talking with other minorities, I have found that they are often picked out of the crowd based on color/race/ethnicity just as I have experienced. Though I rarely hear of negative situations, there is still an uneasy feeling that comes with being pointed out because of color/race/ethnicity.”--Hispanic underclassman

“In the Corps… like my buddies would just kind of play around with us and be like yeah, yeah, Spic-this and what’s up, Spic, and you know, look-Spic just go here…I never really thought bad of it because they were my friends and I knew they loved me because, I mean, they did so many things for me, and you know, we did so many things together.”--Hispanic senior

“A roommate and an employer of mine would make comments about ‘Mexicans.’ Whenever we would drive by a house with an ill-kempt yard my employer would say ‘those are probably Mexicans.’ My roommate once came home and tried to initiate a conversation about how there were too many ‘Mexicans’ at A&M.”--Hispanic senior

“After 9-11, I lived with somebody, my roommate, she was scared to walk anywhere alone for fear that somebody was going to injure her because of her skin color because she was so dark, because somebody could mistake her as like Muslim, and she’s not…Nobody should have any fear because of how they look or because of their culture, how people are going to react to them.”--Hispanic senior

From a Hispanic senior focus group:

- Student #1: “What does that [Spic] mean?”
- Student #2: “Spic, Hispanic – Like a negative connotation. You hadn’t heard it before, right?”
- Student #1: “No, I haven’t.”
- Student #2: “I hadn’t heard it before I got here either.”

“I hate the fact that everyone judges you on what you drive…I used to drive a full-size econoline van because my dad, that’s all he bought..It got egged one time when I left it next to sorority row, next to one of my friend’s houses..and then, like, I had somebody kick it when I was like at the stoplight at Northgate.”--Hispanic senior
White students

- “I know people have said that after 9/11 they were harassed, but I never observed it, so I don’t really think there is a problem here.”--White senior
- “When history majors think the Jews killed Jesus…yeah, I would say those experiences create an environment of racism.”--White senior
- “I have not witnessed students being blatantly mean to students of other races. They are just not as quick to be nice and offer overtures of friendship to these individuals.”--White senior
- “When you see a person walking around with a cross strapped to their back, [when] people like Tom Short come to school and tell everyone they are going to hell…yeah, I would say those experiences create an environment of racism.”--White senior
- “Not to be too stereotypical, but there are some students who have confederate flag stickers on their trucks and listen to music that talks about African Americans while using the 'n' word, ‘red necks’ if you will. I think these people are ignorant and disrespectful.”--White senior
- “The only experience that I have had here with racism would be one of reverse racism. I served on a committee as an undergraduate representative and one of my professors (who is a woman from another country) on the committee pretty much flat-out said that she thought we should hire a foreign man mostly because of his ethnicity and not his qualifications.”--White senior

Summary of Theme 2 - Incidents of Racism Students Have Heard About, Observed, or Experienced:

Students shared a number of incidents of racism they had heard about, observed, or experienced while at Texas A&M. In addition to issues outside of race and ethnicity, incidents such as September 11th occurrences, articles in the campus newspaper, activities students participated in, slurs and stereotypes, intra-cultural conflicts, and an uneasy feeling on campus contributed to a negative perception of the campus environment.

Theme 3: Individual and Societal Contributions to Racism

Comments addressing individual and societal contributions to racism covered areas such as individual effort in relationship building, a handful of individuals causing most of the problems, individual ideas of diversity, societal norms, and issues outside of race and ethnicity that contribute to a negative environment. Out of 47 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American student

- “No where on earth is there a perfect place.”--African American underclassman

Asian American students

- “You have to be accepting of ignorance and you have to be accepting of people being foolish and being stupid. That is just the fact of the matter.”--Asian American senior
- “[Racism] does go both ways. I was at another Greek activity, and I was called a chink, not by a white person, but by a black person. So it’s racism that goes all around. It’s shared.”—Asian American senior
- “Like if we took any one of our white people here and took them deep into Chiang Hi [sic]. They would be so lost…Everybody there, all the businessmen trying to sell their stuff on the street, everybody would rip them to shreds.”--Asian American senior
Hispanic students

- “I believe that each student has to take an active role in the community and get involved. An organization can reach out so much then it is up to the individual.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “There are people out there that are racists, but they’d rather not show it because it has serious implications to their continuing their education here.” --Hispanic senior
- “I have never experienced racism. Let me give you an example which may violate anonymity of the survey but it is necessary for explanation. I am a Hispanic woman and an active member in [a politically conservative student organization]. Need I say more…” --Hispanic underclassman
- “Racism is everywhere. Just because I hear the occasional racial slur I wouldn’t say that racism is a problem.” --Hispanic senior

White students

- “If you are going to whine about it and not stand up for yourself then you deserved to be called [names].” --White senior
- “I personally have no tolerance for those who are [racist].” --White senior
- “I see no problem with racism on this campus because of my own personal interactions with students of many different ethnicities.” --White underclassman
- “When you have such a large place such as Aggieland, people are going to clash.” --White senior
- “I do not think that Texas A&M is worse off than any other place in the United States.” --White senior
- “Religious intolerance is a bigger problem than race.” --White senior

Summary of Theme 3 - Individual and Societal Contributions to Racism: In order to explain individual and societal contributions to racism at Texas A&M, respondents presented a variety of issues ranging from individual effort in relationship building to the idea that a handful of individuals can cause most of the problems on campus. Individual ideas of diversity, societal norms, and issues outside of race and ethnicity contribute to a negative environment.

Racism at Texas A&M University--The African American Perspective

Because African American students agreed that racism was problem at Texas A&M more frequently than other ethnic groups, they were asked the following question: “A majority of African American students surveyed believed both that racism is a problem and that they have a sense of belonging to this community. What would make students respond in this fashion?” Their responses mainly addressed how African American students deal with racism on campus and develop a sense of belonging from their circle of friends despite the racism they encounter. Out of 23 total comments made, a selection of quotes is provided below. Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

- “I think what’s really being said here is that they feel that racism is a problem, but that they may not have experienced it first hand, which allows them to have a sense of belonging to the community.” --African American senior
- “African Americans deal with racism and ignorance on a daily basis. We’re accustomed to making ourselves feel alright in the midst of hate.” --African American senior
- “Things are always good and you always belong until someone hurts you, then opinions and feelings change drastically.” --African American senior
“That despite a large amount of horrible racist incidents, that there are some people that are not like that.” --African American senior

“The sense of community that [African Americans] feel is likely a sense of belonging to a community they have created for themselves.” --African American senior

“They may feel they belong because they have found a group of people to interact with that they are comfortable with.” --African American senior

“It’s possible that they have found that sense of belonging within our own ethnic group, not necessarily at the university as a whole.” --African American underclassman

Summary of Racism at Texas A&M University -The African American Perspective: African American students at Texas A&M consistently expressed feeling that while racism is a problem on campus, they found a sense of belonging when they developed their own “comfort zones.” Furthermore, African American students tended to explain racist incidents as part of society and part of life, not simply a problem they faced at A&M.

Racism at Texas A&M University--The Classification Effect

When classification was compared with the agreement levels of Non-White students to the statement “Racism is a problem at Texas A&M,” agreement increased with each classification. In order to gather more information on this observation, Non-White seniors were asked the following question: “The percentage of minority students who feel that racism is a problem here increases from sophomore to senior year. What experiences do seniors have that would make them differ from sophomores?”

Their responses addressed personal experiences, events that are more common for seniors than sophomores, and individual growth and development. Out of 57 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below. Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

African American seniors

- “As a sophomore you’re still relatively new to the school. You may not have made as many friends or joined as many groups.” --African American senior
- “I think that as we get older we’re exposed to new ideas and thoughts, we tend to see things differently and understand things differently.” --African American senior
- “Maybe initially students are just happy they are accepted to TAMU and then are later exposed to undesirable situations.” --African American senior
- “Sophomore students probably aren’t leaving their comfort zone of their circle of friends as much as juniors and seniors. For example, the sophomore student may only be involved in clubs that revolve around their culture whereas a junior or senior is more likely to join MSC Film Society or the off road club.” --African American senior

Asian American seniors

- “Seniors have been here longer and as they progress, their classes get smaller, and they encounter the same people, some of whom may have racist tendencies, and seniors will feel that more.” --Asian American senior
- “Maybe they’re less naïve to different situations and understand the nature of racism more as a passive thought in someone else’s understanding rather than an active action of racism.” --Asian American senior
“As a senior, you are 21 and over and you are allowed to go to places you couldn’t go before, so the more exposure you get in places like that, the more likely people are to see you and form opinions.” --Asian American senior

**Hispanic seniors**

- “When I started getting to where I was a junior, I started being in leadership positions and I started observing how different people react to one another and I started observing how different things happen on campus.” --Hispanic senior
- “[Referring to Fish Camp, a freshman orientation camp that occurs before school begins] It almost fosters a little bit of naiveté in freshmen, that A&M is a perfect world and you’re going to love it here and there’s nothing wrong with it.” --Hispanic senior
- “I was in the Corps and I was kind of naïve to all these things that were going on because really I was trying to concentrate on my grades and the Corps. You know, those were the only two things that were on my mind…” --Hispanic senior
- “I’ve seen behind the scenes how things work a little more and I realize how things work and what influences the way things work and it is very much about stepping outside of that bubble, about growing to the point where you can pop the bubble and you’re still comfortable.” --Hispanic senior
- “You can talk about the history of a school and you can talk about all the politics and all the cultural things that have gone on at that school and being able to remember back three years influences my perceptions whereas somebody who is a freshman or sophomore here hasn’t seen those things that I’ve seen. And so they’re not going to think the same way.” --Hispanic senior
- “We are forced to acknowledge racism as a threat because we are constantly bombarded with material that brings racism into the spotlight, just when we think it is about to fade away.” --Hispanic senior
- “Essentially, these experiences accumulated over time and led to an almost pessimistic view of the state of racial relations at this campus. So it is easy to see why a younger person is not affected early-on, but an older student has seen more and feels differently.” --Hispanic senior
- “I think that when you are a sophomore or junior you tend to ‘hang out’ with people of your similar background because you’re still a little sheltered or not as confident, but once you’re a senior you tend to take more risks and be more outgoing and you meet more people so the likelihood of having more experiences of racism increase and that is really depressing because that is when you’re suppose to enjoy being an aggie, especially at Texas A&M, where they stress seniority so much.” --Hispanic senior
- “When a person first arrives they themselves place little importance on their cultural stamp. When it becomes more important to them they realize that this culture does not encourage cultural pride.” --Hispanic senior

**Summary of Racism at Texas A&M University - The Classification Effect:** Students explained the increased perception of racism by sharing personal experiences that they had observed, shared, or heard about on campus. Furthermore, they explained that over their years at A&M, they developed a more sophisticated awareness of the campus environment.

**Recommending Texas A&M to Others**

While Non-White students did not feel they were treated fairly on campus and that racism was a problem, they also were glad to be on campus and agreed they would recommend Texas A&M to others despite the problems they reported. In order to find out the reasons behind their willingness to
recommend the institution to others, all students were asked the following question: “In the survey, students were very positive they would recommend Texas A&M University to others. Why would you recommend Texas A&M University to others?” The major themes that emerged from their responses were:

1. Academics;
2. Student Body and Campus Culture;
3. Community Environment;
4. Opportunities; and
5. Would Not Recommend.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

Theme 1: Academics

The students’ comments on academics at Texas A&M covered the general academic environment, that some students attend A&M just for degree they will obtain, and the faculty. Out of 59 comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students
- “I would recommend Texas A&M to others because of the variety of majors available. Given the size of Texas A&M and the numerous departments available, one can find just about any major that one desires, even majors that a potential student probably were not aware existed. Because of this, students that are uncertain about their interest, or would like to investigate other interests have ample opportunity/chances to do so. Opportunities that might not be available at smaller institutions because of a smaller selection of majors to choose from.”--African American senior
- “I think that the education I received tops the charts.”--African American senior
- “I feel that Texas A&M presents a very excellent quality of education.”--African American underclassman

Asian American students
- “I would recommend A&M because [it] provides a warm and challenging environment for students to learn in.”--Asian American senior
- “It has a rich tradition and plenty of research opportunities.”--Asian American senior
- “It’s the fact that we come here as a means to an end. This is a facility for, to us, to a lot of Asians. You come here to get a degree.”--Asian American senior

Hispanic students
- “I would recommend Texas A&M to others because it is a great place to get your education.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “It is a great school and it makes every learning experience an enjoyable one.”--Hispanic underclassman
**White students**

- “The variety of classes for any interest.”--White senior
- “I feel that I took something important away from each class that I took at A&M.”--White senior
- “Academically A&M can offer students so much more than most colleges.”--White underclassman
- “I feel like the professors challenge you.”--White underclassman

**Summary of Theme 1 - Academics:** The students’ comments on academics at Texas A&M covered the general academic environment. Students expressed that some students attend A&M because they value the degree and the quality of the faculty.

**Theme 2: Student Body and Campus Culture**

The students’ comments on the student body and campus culture at Texas A&M covered a wide variety of topics including the demographics of the campus, the supportive environment, the reputation, traditions, Aggie Spirit, the Aggie network, student organizations, and the issue of individual fit to the campus. Out of 74 comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**

- “I would recommend TAMU to minority students who are secure in their identity and self.”--African American senior
- “You can’t just decline to look at a school because it does not cater to your diverse issues.”--African American senior
- “Great reputation of producing leaders and people with integrity.”--African American underclassman
- “A&M offers many opportunities that other universities don’t have.”--African American underclassman
- “Football games”--African American senior
- “Powerful and helpful alumni”--African American senior
- “A&M has 700+ student organizations.”--African American senior

**Asian American students**

- “My younger sister is going to UT [University of Texas] right now. And one of the main reasons she just didn’t want to come here...she was like ‘There’s just not enough Asians there.’ And it’s just one of those...situations where Asians don’t come here because there are not enough Asians but there’s never going to be enough Asians here if Asians never come here.”--Asian American senior
- “I would recommend A&M to others if I felt that they would be happy at this school.”--Asian American senior
- “It molds your character and ability to connect with others, which is further propelled by the Aggie Spirit.”--Asian American underclassman
- “The campus and the University offers many opportunities for everyone to fit in and find hobbies and extracurricular activities that are right for them.”--Asian American underclassman
Hispanic students
- “It depends because there are some people for which I would recommend who I believe would fit well and there [are] other people who I might not recommend A&M to. It really depends on the person. I think universities are a very personal fit in that way.”--Hispanic senior
- “For somebody who has always been a little sheltered and is not necessarily comfortable in new situations but needs to be exposed to those, I would say that A&M is an excellent place to go for that because there’s a sense of kind of a bubble around the university but at the same time people are working to expand that.”--Hispanic senior
- “It was founded on being a military school. And I think that started it out on a good foot because with that being put into place and with the Corps being the oldest organization on campus, it just radiates some kind of aura about the school.”--Hispanic senior
- “The traditions are amazing and help students get involved and become a real part of the community.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “The spirit that lingers on campus is something that is beyond amazing.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “There’s an organization for everyone, really. And I think that’s a really good reason to look at a school. Anything that you’re interested in, there’s a club or something for you to get involved in here.”--Hispanic senior

White students
- “I would recommend Texas A&M only to individuals that fit the mold of the campus. I mean this in no racially biased way but if I were a different race other than white I would feel very isolated.”--White senior
- “I was originally drawn to Texas A&M because of the traditions, which are extremely unique and only Aggies understand.”--White senior
- “Our athletic games involve a lot of crowd participation.”--White underclassman
- “The Aggie community and network sees that those who truly seek a job after graduation finds one.”--White underclassman
- “My involvement in student organizations has helped me to grow so much as a person.”--White senior
- “I strongly believe that no other school could match the involvement in student organizations and the range of student organizations that can be found at A&M.”--White underclassman

Summary Theme 2 - Student Body and Campus Culture: The students’ comments on the student body and campus culture at Texas A&M covered a wide variety of topics including the demographics of the campus, the supportive environment, the reputation, traditions, Aggie Spirit, the Aggie network, student organizations, and the issue of individual fit to the campus.

Theme 3: Community Environment

The students’ comments on the community environment addressed issues such as the location and size of the town, the facilities on campus, the people within the environment, and religion. Out of 88 comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students
- “I feel as though Texas A&M is a great place for a college student, reason being that it is not so much a party town so you can study but it is not far away from towns where you can party or have a good time.”--African American underclassman
- “Student Health Center Pharmacy” and the “Cushing Library”--African American senior
“I feel that Texas A&M presents an administration that would like to do bigger and better things to change while maintain the pride and tradition that is Texas A&M.”--African American underclassman

**Asian American students**
- “Personally I like the small town atmosphere of this whole area...It’s like the campus almost extends all the way into Bryan. Because it’s like I can go anywhere and see students everywhere and I like that. So, it’s like the small town atmosphere.”--Asian American student
- “I find it to be a friendly campus.”--Asian American senior
- “Texas A&M is a wholesome institution with a great sense of family and aggie pride.”--Asian American underclassman

**Hispanic students**
- “It’s close to home.”--Hispanic senior
- “Great facilities (campus, buildings, rec center).”--Hispanic underclassman
- “The student body itself is still one of the friendliest around and I think incoming freshman would really enjoy the time that could be had living on campus.”--Hispanic senior
- “Although it is not greatly diverse, there is still that sense of acceptance from [the] student body.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “It is a close family environment unlike any other in the nation.”--Hispanic underclassman

**White students**
- “I loved the size of the campus.”--White senior
- “We have one of the best recreational centers.”--White underclassman
- “We are always ready and willing to pull together to form what I now lovingly call the ‘Aggie family.’”--White underclassman
- “The people at A&M are always polite.”--White senior
- “I would recommend A&M because of the Christian community here. It has been a huge blessing to me!”--White underclassman

*Summary of Theme 3 - Community Environment:* The students’ comments on the community environment addressed issues such as the location and size of the town, the facilities on campus, the people within the environment, and religion.

**Theme 4: Opportunities**

The students’ comments on the opportunities available at Texas A&M covered topics such as the variety of experiences for students, individual growth, and career development. Out of 30 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**
- “It is a great place for minorities to learn to navigate White corporate America, but only those who have a sense of self and pride in their heritage. Otherwise they will be beat down mentally.”--African American senior
- “I think that it is a growing experience for all people regardless of race or other issues.”--African American senior
- “It’s an outstanding school that would afford any student some valuable opportunities for personal growth.”--African American underclassman
- “The campus is in need of great leaders and for someone who wants to be a leader, there are many opportunities for them.”--African American underclassman

Asian American students
- “The only reason why I came here is because I got a full scholarship. If it wasn’t for that I would not be here.”--Asian American senior
- “To be honest, Texas A&M is the prototype of the real world, at least in America. It is predominantly populated with Caucasians. And the only way to make a name [for] yourself as a minority is to work hard. So A&M can provide a real-life experience.”--Asian American senior

Hispanic students
- “It offers many opportunities to all students.”--Hispanic senior
- “It helped me to both grow socially as well as academically.”--Hispanic senior
- “It has resources for students needing jobs after graduation.”--Hispanic senior

White students
- “It is a school that provides a great number of opportunities.”--White senior
- “Being here has helped me to mature.”--White senior
- “Our two main schools, engineering and business, have big firms looking for graduates as well as current students for summer internships that carry over to full-time jobs.”--White underclassman

Summary of Theme 4 – Opportunities: The students’ comments on the opportunities available at Texas A&M covered topics such as the variety of experiences for students, individual growth, and career development.

Theme 5: Would Not Recommend

Some students stated they would not recommend Texas A&M to others. Out of 18 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students
- “I would not recommend the university to minorities because of the atmosphere of blissful ignorance and complete lack of an accepting culture.”--African American senior
- “For students that are very sure of their interest already and do not need to explore other potential majors, I probably could not recommend Texas A&M whole-heartedly because other schools probably exist that are as strong or stronger in that particular major, say Accounting and Baylor for example.”--African American senior

Asian American student
- “I wouldn’t recommend Texas A&M University, especially as a minority, especially as an Asian American student. Just because we don’t have, we don’t even teach Chinese as a foreign language here, we don’t have an Asian life studies, we don’t have Asian history...We’re talking about education. I don’t think you’re exposed to a lot of things you would, probably, at other universities.”--Asian American senior
Hispanic student
- “Anybody who was really in your face on certain issues. Perhaps somebody who was ultra-liberal and ultra concerned with making sure everybody knew that and pushing that upon others, I wouldn’t recommend A&M to.” --Hispanic senior

White student
- “Texas A&M is a discriminating over-priced institution of higher learning. I could receive an equal education at a place that doesn’t advertise promoting diversity through means of un-equal representation of both the minority and majority for far less expenditure than here.” --White underclassman

Summary of Theme 5 - Would Not Recommend: Students disclosed that they would not recommend Texas A&M to others because of the following reasons: lack of minorities, lack of diversity in the curriculum, and cost.

Thoughts on the Texas A&M Campus Climate

At the conclusion of the focus groups and web survey, students were asked “What do you want to tell us about the issue of campus climate that was not asked?” Numerous responses addressed the academic experience and overall environment on campus. Two major themes emerged from the responses:

1. Admissions, the A&M Profile, and the Campus Culture; and
2. Diversity and the Continuum of Racism.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

Theme 1: Admissions, the A&M Profile, and the Campus Culture

The students’ comments in this area covered subjects such as campus demographics, the institution’s reputation, experience with other schools, conformity on campus, and admissions policies. Out of the 43 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students
- “Our reputation is full of racist incidents. It hurts the quality of the university and is not fair to students.” --African American senior
- “Texas A&M overwhelming promotes a sense of conformity where individuality is frowned upon.” --African American senior
- “Below are possible consequences of the Affirmative Action policy and the Diversity plan, and they worry me: 1. Both are basically screaming a minority student was accepted into A&M because they are a minority, ignoring intelligence and other achievements. 2. The majority is going to develop a ‘mob mentality’ about the statement above and resentment will grow. Leading to more separation between races.” --African American senior

Asian American students
- “I do know two people that left because of the climate here, but they suffered a lot of things and one wasn’t foreign and he was a minority.” --Asian American senior
“This issue is really a problem in residence halls, because the Resident Advisors and Hall Directors are not effectively trained in promoting diversity.”--Asian American senior

From an Asian American senior focus group:
- Student #1: “When I came here I was shocked because they considered Chinese, which is like the most spoken language on the planet, you know, because of a billion Chinese people, but it was a classic language. They put it, it was Latin and Chinese. Like, how can Latin and Chinese be possibly in the same category? But it was...My freshman year was the last semester they taught it. Or they ended it just then. They ran out of money.”
- Student #2: “I think that’s something that definitely should change, just because, but they teach Japanese and Russian here, I mean like seriously, not to sound mean, but seriously, how useful is, what kind of utility can you get out of Russian? Where as opposed, like a lot of businesses are doing transactions with, you know, the Asian countries and stuff. That would seem like an asset to have here.”

“I do see ways it can be improved if Admissions just admits a larger number of diverse students. UT-Austin has a good diversity rate, as well as many other schools. This shouldn’t be an issue for A&M.”--Asian American senior

Hispanic students
- “A lot of people feel comfortable where they feel like they look like they fit in. And a campus that’s more multi-ethnic, more multi-racial, you feel less like an out group because there’s people of all colors and types. You don’t feel like somebody sees you and is immediately aware that you’re Hispanic or immediately aware that you’re so-and-so and a campus that is mostly White, you do tend to think more that way. Oh, I’m an out group. If you go to a more multi-racial campus or multi-racial city or anything you feel less like an out group, less on the periphery.”--Hispanic senior
- “Ask any majority student to spend not five years but a semester in A&M-Prairie View or some other school where minorities are the majority of the school. I assure you that it will be quick before you change your ways or simply run from there! It’s not that much different than being a minority student in College Station.”--Hispanic senior
- “If asked, I would be a little sorry to say it, but I would recommend UT [University of Texas] over A&M. The campus just feels so much warmer and friendlier.”--Hispanic senior
- Referring to the University of North Texas, another student said: “They’re not as conservative...and you saw a lot more minorities over there...I quickly made friends with strangers and that made me feel good but it might be the fact that I haven’t encountered that situation here at A&M.”--Hispanic senior
- “I lived in the dorms for 2 years and not once did I feel alienated. Res Life, if anything, is really promoting a welcoming living environment to all of their residents.”--Hispanic senior

White students
- “I think that A&M has a bunch of stereotypes placed on it that highly exaggerate it as being unfriendly to other cultures.”--White senior
- “I think in reality Texas A&M is just as friendly as any other school and is a great place and great experience for anyone to attend college.”--White senior
- “[Students] feel that standards should not be lowered just to make the campus more diverse. They feel that there must be better solutions to creating a diverse campus.”--White senior
- “Let’s get the best students and faculty in this university that we can and not pay attention to what race is on their driver’s license.”--White senior
Summary of Theme 1 - Admissions, the A&M Profile, and the Campus Culture: The students’ comments in this area covered subjects such as the campus demographics, the institution’s reputation, experience with other schools, conformity on campus, and admissions policies.

Theme 2: Diversity and the Continuum of Racism

The students’ comments on the topic of diversity and the continuum of racism covered a wide variety of issues including defining diversity, cultural identity, covert racism, ignorance, and the problem of racism on campus. Out of 60 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**
- “The racist incidents are evidence of the pervasive issue at hand: ignorance=prejudice=low enrollment=poor university.”--African American senior
- “They need to be more open minded to minorities and less [conservative] as their parents were.”--African American underclassman

**Asian American students**
- “I think it depends on how you want to define a problem. Like, it’s not a problem in the sense that well, we’re not run out yet. We’re here and it’s not like we’re high every night. We are happy for the most part. We’re successful. We get on to our goals. You know, the means to our ends. But, if you’re talking about are we completely contented here, if we feel like this is the place where we want to retire, you know, like just come back and subscribe to the **Battalion** [the campus newspaper] all the time and come back here for all the stuff on campus, probably not. So, I just think it could be made better, but it’s obviously not such a dire problem that people are leaving.”--Asian American senior
- “We tend to feel like there needs to be almost like a huge deal done to take care of, to make it seem like we need to be multicultural. Like, it needs to be an Asian Studies week. It has to be a Black History month, which is ridiculous. There doesn’t need to be a black history month. It needs to be completely integrated with everything else. It needs to be saying that if there was a point in time where black scientists took care of something, don’t wait for Black History month to discuss this person, just do it right then and there. There needs to be ‘I Week’, International Week. There needs to be a festival to celebrate our culture. In order to eliminate this whole segregation feeling, it needs to be treated like nothing. You know, I’ve never been more Chinese than being at A&M.”--Asian American senior
- “Part of the reason I feel that there is racism here is because everyone is trying to treat us so special.”--Asian American senior
- “I was talking about how there’s racial slurs and everything. And the only reason it has any effect is because we choose to let it happen. I mean, it cracks me up when ignorance strikes. If you choose to just let it roll off your shoulder without saying anything back then it doesn’t matter. I mean, I could call you a name right now and if I just made up the word it wouldn’t hurt your feelings until you might have realized what it meant.”--Asian American senior
- From an Asian American senior focus group:
  - Student #1: “I finally just realized that I’m different than you all because I think that everything’s good and I follow along. Everything’s good but you make a, there’s a lot of good points I’m hearing here...Like you probably discuss these issues more than I do...To me I just don’t really think about it.”
  - Student #2: “You have to be constantly reminded because otherwise it’ll just sink in the back of us pretty much because it doesn’t bother us on an everyday level.”
Hispanic students

- “Many people of any specific background find it easier to be friends with those of their same race. This limits them to the possibility of meeting more and different people. Talking to a mirror never helps so why should talking to someone whose only attribute is to be your same skin tone help?” -- Hispanic underclassman
- “We are in a university not only to get our degree but to learn basic things such as communication with others and learning about other individuals and their beliefs. To ignore this only hurts that person.” -- Hispanic underclassman
- “I’ve never been exposed to racial discrimination or anything involving my race in a negative fashion before--San Antonio has many Hispanics so this is not an issue in my hometown. On attending A&M, I have since had my race pointed out numerous times in social settings, repeatedly, though I was never made to feel inferior for it, it made me feel uneasy and uncomfortable to have this pointed out. It scared me that people could be exposed so little to other cultures that they are quick to point out others who are different from themselves.” -- Hispanic underclassman
- “I think you may find the stereotypes that African Americans or Hispanics are less intelligent, Whites are average intelligence and Asians are more intelligent. You find that completely wrong on so many levels and it can offend at many levels. Just because you have a Hispanic that’s really smart doesn’t mean anything different. They’re Hispanic, yes, they’re smart, yes. It’s not contradictory. You may have an Asian that’s not at the top of the class. That’s okay. That’s not wrong, either.” -- Hispanic senior
- “It’s interesting the stereotypes and the preconceptions that you’ll find and you may view the stereotype that Asians are smart as a positive thing for Asians but for that one Asian who feels like they don’t fit because that’s the stereotype and they don’t match it, it’s not positive.” -- Hispanic senior
- “Why isn’t there as much support for cultural minority events from the majority students? That question would have to be answered by the majority.” -- Hispanic senior

White students

- “This university is losing their focus on their traditions and academic values and qualities just to have a colorful palette of students. I find it ridiculous and the wrong approach completely.” -- White senior
- “I do not think the problem resides in the faculty. The problem is within the student body and how students deal with differences.” -- White underclassman
- “It is going to take action from Dr. Gates and Graves to set an example and allow people from different cultures to lead A&M in such positions as Vice Presidents and Deans.” -- White senior
- “College is about getting to sit down and talk about differences with others and come to a point where you could work well with anyone. But, it seems like at A&M this discussion has turned into a one-sided conversation coming from the white, religious students who dominate the population.” -- White underclassman
- “Yes, there is a white majority, but it hasn’t seemed to hurt the school much. But, from a student’s standpoint, racial issues are not on the forefront.” -- White underclassman
- “It is diversity of the mind and intellect that will improve this university.” -- White senior

Summary of Theme 2 - Diversity and the Continuum of Racism: The students’ comments on the topic of diversity and the continuum of racism covered a wide variety of issues including defining diversity, cultural identity, covert racism, ignorance, and the problem of racism on campus.
Section B: Faculty and Staff

Students were asked to indicate how difficult specific academic and staff experiences were during their first year at Texas A&M using the scale: 4=Very Difficult, 3=Somewhat Difficult, 2=Somewhat Easy, and 1=Very Easy. Table 4 illustrates all of the responses in the “Very Difficult” and “Somewhat Difficult” categories. White and Non-White students reported similar difficulty for all experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Amount of school work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level of difficulty of school work</td>
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<td>80.0</td>
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<td>Communicating with A&amp;M Staff</td>
<td>31.2</td>
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<td>28.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicating with instructors</td>
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<td>39.8</td>
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Table 4: QUESTION: How difficult were the following during your FIRST YEAR at Texas A&M?

Students were asked to indicate how often they experienced a set of activities or incidents with faculty since enrolling at Texas A&M or during the past year using the scale: 3=Frequently, 2=Occasionally, and 1=Never. The “Frequently” and “Occasionally” categories were collapsed in order to determine how many students had any experience with the listed events. Table 5 illustrates the responses. Overall, students have had similar experiences with faculty members with the most common occurrence being communication with faculty outside of class during the past year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
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<td>Asian &amp; Pacific Islander</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Talked with faculty outside of class (during the past year)</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>97.5</td>
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<td>91.7</td>
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<td>93.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Were a guest at a professor's home (during the past year)</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>22.7</td>
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<td>21.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heard faculty make inappropriate remarks about minorities (since enrolling)</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>29.3</td>
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<td>22.1</td>
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<td>16.2</td>
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</table>

Table 5: QUESTION: Please indicate how often you experienced the following since enrolling at Texas A&M; QUESTION: For the activities listed below, please indicate how often you engaged in each during the past year.
Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with specific statements concerning their experiences with faculty members using the scale: 4=Agree Strongly, 3=Agree Somewhat, 2=Disagree Somewhat, and 1=Disagree Strongly. Table 6, on the following page, illustrates the responses each group had for the “Agree Strongly” and “Agree Somewhat” categories. The only statistically significant difference (p<.001) observed between White and Non-White students was for the statement “Most faculty are sensitive to the issues of minorities.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (Agree Strongly and Agree Somewhat)</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty are interested in the students' personal problems.</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most faculty are sensitive to the issues of minorities.</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty here are strongly interested in the academic problems of individuals.</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty here are good teachers.</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>93.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is very little contact between faculty and students outside the classroom.</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most faculty members here are sensitive to student interests, needs, and aspirations.</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one faculty member has had a strong influence on my intellectual development.</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easy to develop close relationships with faculty members on campus.</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: QUESTION: The following statements have to do with your interactions with faculty members. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.
When classification was isolated for the statement regarding faculty sensitivity to minority issues, White sophomores agreed at the same level as White seniors (96.6% versus 94.5%) while Non-White students dropped in their agreement levels through each classification: 81.9% of sophomores, 75.8% of juniors, and 70.4% of seniors agreed. African American students disagreed more than other students.

Students were provided a list of activities that could be implemented on campus to help achieve diversity and were asked to assign a priority level to each activity using the scale: 4=Highest Priority, 3=Strong Priority, 2=Moderate Priority, and 1=No Priority. Table 7 highlights responses for the “Highest Priority” and “Strong Priority” categories that related specifically to faculty and staff issues. All three statements had statistically significant differences between White and Non-White students at the p<.001 level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (Highest and Strong Priority)</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>African-American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more diversity training for faculty and staff</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>68.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage faculty to incorporate the perspectives of racial/ethnic minorities in the classroom</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: QUESTION: In your opinion, how would you prioritize each of the following recommendations regarding the climate for diversity at Texas A&M?

The most dramatic difference was between White and African American students on the topic of hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators. While African American students rated this as their top priority, White students rated it as their lowest. In order to discover why Non-White students, and specifically African American students, did not feel faculty were sensitive to the issues of minorities, and why White and African American students diverged so dramatically in regards to hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators, a series of follow-up questions were asked in the focus groups and the web survey to help explain their responses.

**Faculty Sensitivity to Minority Issues--Overall View**

All students were asked the question: “Our survey showed that the majority of students agreed that faculty were sensitive to the issues of minorities. What have you observed that supported or did not support that response from students?” The major themes that emerged from their responses were:

1. Faculty Members Are Sensitive;
2. Faculty Members Are Not Sensitive; and
3. No Observation.
Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

Theme 1: Faculty Members Are Sensitive

The majority of students who offered comments thought that faculty members were sensitive to the issues of minorities. However, their reasons for this sensitivity varied. Some students thought that it was part of a faculty member’s job responsibilities to be sensitive while others described faculty as diverse individuals who were more aware of the issues than the rest of the campus population and that faculty members treat all students the same. Out of 78 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students
- “I feel that the faculty are sensitive to minorities issues, but they are getting paid to be sensitive to the students. But if it was in public, it would have (been) a completely different situation.” -- African American underclassman
- “The majority of faculty that I have encountered are generally more liberal and accepting of different people.” -- African American senior
- “Every teacher I’ve had has treated me no different than they have any other member of my class.” -- African American senior
- “I’ve never been in a situation where one of my professors has gone out of their way to make me understand that they are sensitive about my ‘issues.’ I think it would make me really uncomfortable if they did.” -- African American senior
- “I’ve met faculty that judge you on your participation and success in their class.” -- African American senior
- “Faculty listened and went out of their way and made time to meet with me and comfort me and could give me contacts with organizations or others students who could help.” -- African American senior

Asian American students
- “Some faculty members try to encourage diversity in the classroom, by going above and beyond the text. I feel that this is rare, and have only had one or two professors really teach anything about diversity.” -- Asian American senior
- “One of my professors this past semester took an avid interest in talking with me about my religion and culture and sharing that with the class. He worked very hard to make students realize that ignorance and hatred has been a problem on campus and in the world especially in this time of war.” -- Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students
- “The profs [professors] that I’ve had or that I’ve known that have been the most accepting and welcoming as opposed to just respectful have been those that are multicultural or have some kind of strong religious identity or cultural identity themselves. For example, a Jewish professor who cancelled class on Jewish holidays and always made the point that anybody who had outside experiences that they could relate during class to enhance the class, he loved that and was always welcoming of that.” -- Hispanic senior
- “I think that’s just basically because they have to be because they’re employed by the university and the university tells them that they have to go through certain workshops, etc., in
order to be diversity-trained or, you know, so they can deal with different people.” —Hispanic senior

- “Teachers that I have spoken with or known outside of the classroom seem to genuinely care about diversity and the education of all people. They treat everyone equally, but offer help to whoever needs it.” —Hispanic senior
- “I am a student who pays their tuition, just like everyone else here. That right there should be an incentive for the professor to want to help me.” —Hispanic senior
- “I would hope our faculty is more interested in making us exceptional students, than on training us to political correctness. I have never had a professor sit down and hold my hand because I am Hispanic—heaven help whoever tries.” —Hispanic underclassman
- “My accounting professor did ask me one time if I felt welcomed here at A&M. She was concerned because a white student suggested to her that we should recruit minorities because they don’t feel welcomed here. She had a conversation with me concerned that I might not feel welcomed here.” —Hispanic underclassman

White students

- “Being an engineering major, I have had more minority teachers than white teachers, so obviously they do not discriminate.” —White underclassman
- “Every prof [professor] I have ever had has been simply a good prof. I have never had a prof who made race an issue in front of me.” —White underclassman
- “I have had many great professors, and the best of them always concern themselves with their students needs first, regardless of ethnicity.” —White senior
- “In classes where race is an issue (history, sociology, etc.) my instructors have always carefully presented all sides of the topic.” —White underclassman
- “They are aware of the fact that A&M has been labeled as ‘undiversified’ and are very active in proving that wrong in the classroom.” —White underclassman
- “After 9/11, I was leaving a class and saw a prof. [professor] pull the middle eastern looking students to the side and told them that if they had any trouble from students harassing them to let him know and he would take care of it.” —White senior

**Summary of Theme 1 - Faculty Members Are Sensitive**: The majority of students who offered comments thought that faculty members were sensitive to the issues of minorities. However, their reasons for this sensitivity varied. Some students thought that it was part of a faculty member’s job responsibilities to be sensitive while others described faculty as diverse individuals who were more aware of the issues than the rest of the campus population and that faculty members treat all students the same.

**Theme 2: Faculty Are Not Sensitive**

A handful of students shared opinions and experiences that explained why they believed faculty members were not sensitive to the issues of minorities. Out of 7 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**Asian American student**

- “The English and KINE departments have been less than welcoming to the GLBT [gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender] community.” —Asian underclassman

**Hispanic students**

- “I had one professor tell me I should speak better English.” —Hispanic senior
“I was in sociology class here at Texas A&M… and we were discussing the roles that different ethnicities have on TV and my professor said that white people are usually portrayed as well off, such as doctors or lawyers and that black people were usually portrayed as gang members or lower class and that Hispanics were portrayed as workers or drug dealers and I responded by saying that I resented that. She responded by saying, ‘Yeah I was about to ask you for some drugs after class’ and she said that in the middle of class. I was both embarrassed and offended but I really couldn't do much because she was the professor. Made me feel very helpless, angry and it was very discouraging.” --Hispanic senior

**White student**

“There was a double E [electrical engineering] prof [professor] who put questions on his tests from things about the bible. That is wrong and has nothing to do with EE.” --White senior

*Summary of Theme 2 - Faculty Are Not Sensitive*: A handful of students shared opinions and experiences that explained why they believed faculty members were not sensitive to the issues of minorities.

**Theme 3: No observation**

Ten comments addressed the lack of information students had about faculty to fully answer the question. The comments came from four White students, three Asian American students, two Hispanic students and one African American student. In terms of classification, five comments came from seniors while another five came from underclassmen.

As an African American senior described: “I don’t feel I knew my faculty well enough to judge whether they were sensitive to the needs of minorities or not.” Another student, a White underclassman, said: “I observed nothing that points one way or another.”

**Faculty Sensitivity to Minority Issues—The African American Perspective**

African American seniors were asked the question: “The percentage of minority students who feel that faculty are not sensitive to the issues of minorities increases from sophomore to senior year. What experiences do seniors have that would make them differ from sophomores?” A total of ten comments were offered in response to this question. Four of the comments described how the percentage increase was due to a longer period of time on campus. One student explained: “The longer you’re here, the more experiences you have and the more things you see.” Another student said: “Sophomores…don’t really talk to their professors or interact with faculty as much as a senior would.” Another idea expressed was that the percentage increase was because the faculty do not care about students. As one student said: “I think that when you get to those higher level classes, some professors just don’t care. And it’s not about minority issues, it’s about everything. It’s like they are there to do a job. If they don’t care if you pass or fail, why would they care if you’re white or black?”

**Hiring Racial Minority Staff, Faculty, and Administrators—African American versus White Perspective**

White students were asked the question: “29% of White students felt that hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators was a strong or high priority. What in your experience would lead students to respond in this fashion?” African American students were asked the question: “In the telephone survey, the highest priority for African American students was to hire more racial
minority staff, faculty, and administrators. How will hiring more racial minority faculty help in the classroom? How will hiring more racial minority staff help out of the classroom? How will hiring more racial minority administrators help the university?” Because each group had similar themes to their responses, their comments appear together in the following categories:

1. A&M Profile and Culture;
2. Not About Race;
3. Role Models and Support; and
4. Diversification of the Campus Equated to Language Barriers.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

Theme 1: A&M Profile and Culture

The students’ comments on the campus profile and culture covered subjects such as the campus demographics, the influence of the majority, diversity of opinions, and improving the environment. Out of 39 total comments made, a selection of quotes is provided below.

African American students
- “It will show that Texas A&M is not just a University for white male students, and it could encourage more minority students to give A&M an edge in their college decision experience.”--African American underclassman
- “Our environment will look more like us.”--African American senior
- “I’ve felt that many Caucasian students at Texas A&M have not had significant interaction with African American persons and that many of their attitudes and ideas stem from media portrayed stereotypes. Hiring more minority staff, faculty, administrators, etc., would give students the opportunity to interact with an individual from a minority group in a meaningful and positive way, at least in an introductory fashion.”--African American senior
- “It can help whites because many whites don’t understand other races because they are in a box and are not exposed to it.”--African American underclassman
- “Having more people in the administration with first-hand knowledge of what racial sensitivities need to be incorporated in school policy and life.”--African American senior
- “We can hear more about the contributions of other groups.”--African American senior
- “Minority staff will be more fair and treat each student equal[ly] in the classroom.”--African American underclassman

White students
- “I can come up with no reason not to desire a more diverse group of employees.”--White senior
- “I think a lot of students feel that the University is hiring minorities simply so that they can rank higher as an institution, and to improve their standing on paper, while not considering the quality of the students’ education and the quality of teaching that the faculty would be performing.”--White senior
- “It wouldn’t hurt to, I don’t know, look at things from a different perspective.”--White senior

Summary of Theme 1 - A&M Profile and Culture: The students’ comments on the campus profile and culture covered subjects such as the campus demographics, the influence of the majority, diversity of opinions, and improving the environment.
**Theme 2: Not About Race**

The students’ comments in this theme addressed how hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators will not improve the campus. Out of 19 total comments made, a selection of quotes is provided below.

- **African American student**
  - “It doesn’t really matter who teaches.”--African American underclassman

- **White students**
  - “I don’t think having more minority staff would radically change the situation. Racism isn’t a problem at A&M outside the standard conflicts that occur all over the world due to differing opinions.”--White underclassman
  - “I think we should hire the most educated and experienced staff and not care what they look like.”--White senior
  - “I do not feel that we should put in someone just because of race or ethnicity but if their background offers A&M the edge we need them in a certain area.”--White senior
  - “While it is enriching to have people of different backgrounds, ethnicity should not be an issue in hiring.”--White senior

**Summary of Theme 2 - Not About Race:** The students’ comments in this theme addressed how hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators will not improve the campus.

**Theme 3: Role Models and Support**

African American students described how hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators would provide them with more role models and support. Out of 21 total comments made, a selection of quotes is provided below.

- “Show students that African Americans are intelligent.”--African American senior
- “Having more minorities in staff, faculty and administration lets the students know that there is someone up there, who looks like them, who has an open ear.”--African American senior
- “It’s nice to see someone like yourself in a position of authority.”--African American senior
- “It may help African American students feel that they have someone that understands where they are coming from.”--African American senior
- “It will give more people to talk and interact with who understand and relate well to us and our situations.”--African American underclassman
- “More people who can wholly empathize with the young minority student.”--African American senior

**Summary of Theme 3 – Role Models and Support:** African American students commented in this theme about how hiring more diverse staff, faculty, and administrators would help them have more people to relate to on the campus.

**Theme 4: Diversification of the Campus Equated to Language Barriers**

Some White students, when describing how hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators would not be beneficial, equated diversification with the language barriers they
encountered with international instructors. Out of 19 total comments made on this topic, a selection of their comments is provided below.

- “This is American [sic] where English is the official language. Students who attend here need to know how to speak it and professors here need to know how to teach their course speaking it. I am sick and tired of paying the amount of tuition I pay each year and ending up in a class with a heavy accented professor that speaks Arabic!” -- White underclassman
- “I think many times students associate racial minorities with some of the foreign professors they have had.” -- White senior
- “Being an engineer, many a times have I participated in conversations with other students about minority staff. The problem is always with the language barrier, never a personal attribute.” -- White underclassman
- “I wouldn’t have a problem with hiring more minority staff if the university would make sure that they were completely understandable when they speak! It is so incredibly frustrating to not be able to understand your prof [professor] or TA [teaching assistant]. That is why I disagree with hiring more minority staff.” -- White senior
- “I have had so many racial minority staff that I couldn't understand, why do I want more? If I can’t communicate with the professor, TA [teaching assistant], or other staff member how do you expect me to learn the material? I think having professors that can’t speak the native language that it will ultimately reflect poorly on the school because the students are not receiving the education they deserve” -- White senior

Summary: In this chapter, students expressed similar, positive views for the faculty and staff and mixed reactions to the overall environment. Most of the issues seemed to arise when students interacted with each other.

The next chapter will explore how students relate to each other in a variety of ways.
Chapter 2: Individuals, the Campus Culture, and Student-to-Student Interactions

This chapter addresses individual development, the campus culture, and interactions between students. In addition to the broad topics, other areas such as feelings of community, the definitions of being accepted, welcomed, and respected, and participation in student organizations are also highlighted.

Section A: Individual Development and Perceptions About Peers

Students were asked to indicate how difficult specific experiences or situations were during their first year at Texas A&M using the following scale: 4=Very Difficult, 3=Somewhat Difficult, 2=Somewhat Easy, and 1=Very Easy. Table 8 illustrates all of the responses in the “Very Difficult” and “Somewhat Difficult” categories. For social situations (making new friends, feeling comfortable in their living environments, and participating in social events), Non-White students reported more adjustment difficulty than White students at statistically significant levels (p<.01). For most questions, African American students reported higher levels of adjustment difficulties in their first year than other Non-White groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting to know your way around</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>25.5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19.3</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>21.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making new friends*</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.9</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15.1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling comfortable in your living environment*</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in social events*</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13.1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13.1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17.6</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: QUESTION: How difficult were the following during your FIRST YEAR at Texas A&M?

Students were asked to rate the amount they had changed in specific areas since entering Texas A&M using the scale: 5=Greatly Increased, 4=Increased Somewhat, 3=Stayed the Same, 2=Decreased Somewhat, and 1=Greatly Decreased. Table 9, on the following page, illustrates what students reported in the “Greatly Increased” and “Increased Somewhat” categories. Results were similar for all students.
### Table 9: QUESTION: Please rate the amount you have changed since entering Texas A&M

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get along with others</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership ability</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>85.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of other cultures</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>73.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of different cultures</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to interact in multicultural environments</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance of people with different beliefs</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were asked to indicate how often they experienced a set of activities since enrolling at Texas A&M or during the past year using the scale: 3=Frequently, 2=Occasionally, and 1=Never. In order to determine if students had ever experienced these activities or incidents, the “Frequently” and “Occasionally” categories were collapsed. Table 10, on the following page, illustrates the percentage of students who had any experience with the activities or incidents. All statements with a “**” next to them indicates statistically significant differences between White and Non-White students at the p<.001 level.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (Frequently or Occasionally)</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Went out on a date (since enrolling)</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td>77.9 86.7 97.4 81.7 87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked to pay college expenses (since enrolling)</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>60.7 70.2 67.6 55.0 68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drank wine, beer, or liquor (during the past year) *</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>61.3 77.3 78.9 57.4 77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took part in Yell Practice (since enrolling) *</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>73.0 91.1 86.8 79.3 89.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in Muster (since enrolling) *</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>35.0 60.9 71.1 57.4 70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended a program on diversity (during the past year) *</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>83.4 56.3 60.5 60.9 51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations (since enrolling) *</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>89.0 74.8 73.7 86.4 75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were insulted or threatened by another student because of your social class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religion (since enrolling) *</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>35.0 22.3 13.2 22.5 21.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: QUESTION: Please indicate how often you experienced the following since enrolling at Texas A&M

Ethnicity and gender were compared for the two statements regarding traditions. In the case of Yell Practice, a pre-athletic game rehearsal of team yells, 91.5% of White females and 95.6% of White males participated in the event compared to 83.8% of Non-White females and 83.2% of Non-White males. For Muster, an annual ceremony honoring all current and former students who have passed away in the previous year, 71.3% of White females and 70.2% of White males participated compared to 49.6% of Non-White females and 63.1% of Non-White males. African American students were the least likely group to participate in the two traditional events.

For participation in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations, Non-White students were more likely to say they frequently participated than White students (33.3% versus 8.9%). The responses were similar for attending a program on diversity: 16.1% of Non-White students said they frequently attended compared to 5.5% of White students (p<.001). When ethnicity and gender were analyzed for ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations, 41.3% of White males had never participated compared to 27.5% of White females, 22.1% of Non-White males, and 16.6% of Non-White females.
Similar results were found for “attended a program on diversity.” More than half of White males (57.2%) and half (49.7%) of White females had never attended a program on diversity. For Non-White males, 42.7% had never attended while 31.7% of Non-White females had never attended.

Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with several statements concerning cultural awareness using the scale: 4=Agree Strongly, 3=Agree Somewhat, 2=Disagree Somewhat, and 1=Disagree Strongly. Table 11 illustrates the differences between White and Non-White students in the “Agree Strongly” and “Agree Somewhat” responses. All differences between the two groups are statistically significant (p<.001).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (Agree Strongly and Agree Somewhat)</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students here have a good understanding of the traditions and values of other cultures.</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed by majority (white) students at A&amp;M.</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since coming to A&amp;M, I have learned a lot about other racial/ethnic groups and about their contributions to American Society.</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: QUESTION: Below are some statements about Texas A&M. Indicate to what extent you agree or disagree.

White students had a more positive view of the cultural awareness and education on campus than Non-White students.

**Section B: Feelings of Community**

Students were asked a variety of questions concerning respect, belonging, isolation, and feelings of community at Texas A&M University. Questions ranged from experiences during their first year of college to experiences throughout their college career.

Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with several statements concerning the A&M community using the scale: 4=Agree Strongly, 3=Agree Somewhat, 2=Disagree Somewhat, and 1=Disagree Strongly. Table 12, on the following page, illustrates the “Agree Strongly” and “Agree Somewhat” responses.
### Table 12: **QUESTION:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following.

**QUESTION:** Below are some statements about Texas A&M. Indicate to what extent you agree or disagree.

Students were asked to indicate how often they felt isolated since enrolling at Texas A&M using the scale: 3=Frequently, 2=Occasionally, and 1=Never. The “Frequently” and “Occasionally” categories were again collapsed in order to determine if students had ever experienced feelings of isolation.

Table 13 illustrates the responses from all groups. Non-White students were more likely to report feelings of isolation than White students (p<.001). When examined by ethnicity, African American students reported the highest occurrence of isolation, revealing a gap of 23% from the group reporting the next highest occurrence (Asian American students).

### Table 13: **QUESTION:** Please indicate how often you experienced the following since enrolling at Texas A&M.

In conjunction with the previous section on individual development, some contradictions were observed. Non-White students seemed to have problems adjusting to the campus culture. They reported difficulty adjusting to the social environment during their first year and seem less inclined to participate in large events such as Muster and Yell Practice than White students. They also reported feeling isolated more than White students. However, Non-White students also agreed they feel like they are a member of the community and have a sense of belonging at Texas A&M. In order to help clarify the meaning of their responses, focus groups and web survey questions asked students to define specific terms and share their experiences.

#### Definition of “Being a Member of the Community”

All students were asked the question: *The survey results indicated that over 90% of students responding—regardless of their ethnicity—agreed that they felt they were members of the Texas A&M University community. What does ‘being a member of the community’ mean to you?”* The major themes that emerged from their responses were:

1. Being Accepted and Valued;
2. Campus Culture;
3. Acknowledgement and Service; and
4. Not a Member of the Community.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

**Theme 1: Being Accepted and Valued**

The students’ comments on being accepted and valued covered a wide range of issues including being seen as an equal, belonging to a larger community, and having a campus family. Out of 72 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**
- “To feel that you are in it together.” --African American underclassman
- “Having my opinions respected.” --African American senior
- “Being able to communicate with those at Texas A&M that are of a different culture.” --African American underclassman
- “We are all trying to get to the finish line together.” --African American underclassman

**Asian American students**
- “Not being left out of any activity which others were able to participate in.” --Asian American underclassman
- “It means that, it doesn’t matter who you’re with, you always feel that you and whoever else are part of the same, and thus have an immediate bond. That being said, I do not necessarily feel that this is the case always at A&M.” --Asian American senior
- “As to feeling like an Aggie family, sometimes I feel like that’s kind of fake…I just feel like it’s like, ‘oh, well we’re suppose to have this so let’s pretend like we’re all really friendly.’” --Asian American senior

**Hispanic students**
- “To feel like you are important to other members of the group.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “To be a member of the community means to feel comfortable enough to be yourself.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “Being a member of the community means knowing that those in the community do want me there.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “To be a member of the community means to not be afraid to approach others.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “It is being able to be seen as an equal and not just as a minority.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “Being able to do all the things that the other students do and not feel as though they are different for any reason.” --Hispanic senior
- “A member of a community is simply being a member of a family so large you may not know all the members, but you feel safe and wanted.” --Hispanic underclassman

**White students**
- “It means a level of respect that I give as well as receive.” --White senior
- “That you do not have to worry about who you are or what you look like to go to A&M because we are all Aggies.” --White underclassman
“Being a member of the community at Texas A&M means that you feel you are part of the action.” --White senior

“Being a ‘member of the community’ means to me that I am part of a family.” --White senior

Summary of Theme 1 - Being Accepted and Valued: The students’ comments on being accepted and valued covered a wide range of issues including being seen as an equal, belonging to a larger community, and having a campus family.

Theme 2: Campus Culture

A number of students described community membership in terms of the campus culture. Their responses addressed friendship with other students, participating in the academic environment, attending campus events, utilizing the Aggie Network, being involved in campus life, and having school spirit. Out of 71 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students

- “Member of the community means that you have found special friends.” --African American senior
- “Simply that I live here, I have my right to be here, I [have] paid my right to be here.” --African American underclassman
- “I believe a community is a group of people that works together and cooperates together toward a goal. Within Texas A&M I believe that it is more possible to feel that sense of community within your own department or amongst your classmates, but as for the University at large, I’m not sure if I’ve ever felt that way or if its even possible.” --African American senior
- “It means that I am being looked at and seen as an Aggie.” --African American senior

Asian American students

- “I think a lot of it has to do with who your main group of friends are.” --Asian American senior
- “Being a member of this community basically comes down to the first time I felt like an Aggie…I defended the fall of Bonfire, telling people that they have no right to say anything because they’re not an Aggie and would probably never understand.” --Asian American senior
- “I actually went to my first football game in the fall…the number one ranked team or something, that was the one I went to because nobody else wanted to go and I went. And they were like ‘Oh, we’re going to lose’ and I went and we won. So that was kind of a cool experience.” --Asian American senior
- “When people see the ring, when they see when I’m wearing an Aggie shirt, without a doubt, every time I’ve been stopped once or twice or at least someone’s made a comment ‘Hey, you go to Texas A&M’…that includes me into the community.” --Asian American senior
- “I’m in multicultural organizations so I think I contribute to the community, but I choose not to partake of the Aggie community even though I think that the campus does try to include everybody in their traditions.” --Asian American senior
- “Being a member of the community entails identification with at least a part of the campus network, whether that be a small student organization or as a student as a whole.” --Asian American senior
**Hispanic students**
- “You feel welcome because, you know, you haven’t had anything bad happen to you and that’s it. No one’s broken into your car, no one’s done anything, everyone smiles, and that’s about it.” --Hispanic senior
- “It means taking part in the everyday traditions at A&M.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “Being a member of the community makes me feel like I have a connection with every other Aggie in the world.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “Wherever I go, meeting an Aggie shows that we both went through the experience of Texas A&M and it’s nice knowing you can relate to anyone.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “Being a member of the community is actually being able to participate or being involved in your community not being a spectator.” --Hispanic senior

**White students**
- “Being a member of the Texas A&M community involves going to classes on a day to day basis.” --White senior
- “It means that one of my advisors is looking out for me, regardless of how wonderful or poor my grade point ratio (gpr) is.” --White underclassman
- “Standing behind each other regardless of different beliefs all for one common purpose.” --White underclassman
- “I think that what may be more significant in contributing to the ‘community’ environment of A&M is the smaller communities that are made up of people that are very committed to that community (i.e., the Corps, religious communities, Fish Camp, etc.).” --White senior
- “Participating in traditions links every Aggie together in some way and makes them feel a part of the A&M community.” --White senior
- “Being a member of the community means seeing someone with an aggie ring and instantly having a connection.” --White senior

**Summary of Theme 2 – Campus Culture:** A number of students described community membership in terms of the campus culture. Their responses addressed friendship with other students, participating in the academic environment, attending campus events, utilizing the Aggie Network, being involved in campus life, and having school spirit.

**Theme 3: Acknowledgement and Service**

Some students defined being a member of the community as being acknowledged by others, serving their peers, and having others provide reciprocal service. Out of 37 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**
- “Being part of A&M’s community means finding where you feel most comfortable.” --African American senior
- “To me it means going anywhere you wish anytime you wish and being welcomed.” --African American senior
- “Knowing that you are in a place in which there is someone there for you.” --African American underclassman

**Asian American student**
- “Being a member of the community is being in a warm and friendly environment.” --Asian American senior
Hispanic students
- “Walking around campus and receiving smiles and howdy’s.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “Not only you giving back to the community, it’s the community helping you out as well.” --Hispanic senior
- “There is that two-fold in the sense of you feeling like you’re able to contribute and feeling like others want to contribute back to you.” --Hispanic senior
- “Feeling united with other members of Texas A&M because we understand that Aggies help each other out even if they weren’t friends before.” --Hispanic senior

White students
- “It means I’m welcomed at any Aggie event whether invited or not.” --White senior
- “It means that as soon as I become an Aggie, I no longer have to worry about acceptance or friendship.” --White underclassman
- “I feel that if I need help or need others to lean on, there are many people out there who are willing to help me out.” --White senior

Summary of Theme 3 - Acknowledgement and Service: Some students defined being a member of the community as being acknowledged by others, serving their peers, and having others provide reciprocal service.

Theme 4: Not a Member of the Community

A number of students explained why they do not feel like members of the community. Reasons ranged from not knowing about what is happening on campus to experiencing negative incidents while a student. Out of 31 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American student
- “I’ve always felt that despite the numerous gimmicks, such as ‘howdy’ and ‘synchronized cheering’ at football games, Texas A&M was really too large to create that feeling of brothership that is so emphatically professed.” --African American senior

Asian American students
- “Well its kind of hard for us to feel like this is a big part of [us], just as much as it’s foreign to…my American friends when I’m trying to explain to them stuff like Chinese New Year, you know, the Dragon Dance, and stuff like that. Quite honestly, you know, even though it is pretty, it’s kind of weird. You know, full grown adults running around the streets in full traditional garb? You know, it doesn’t make any sense, but to us it’s a bit of our childhood.” --Asian American senior
- “We don’t have that legacy aspect. So many of my friends, you know, their parents went to A&M and their parents’ parents went to A&M. I had a friend of mine who lived with me at the dorm that said to me that he was taught yells when he was like five, you know, like one of the first things he learned was yells.” --Asian American senior
- “I am considered by all stretches of the word a ‘two-percenter’ as far as A&M goes. Because I mean I went to one, one or two football games my freshman year, that’s it. I went to one yell practice. I was bored and I never went back again…I went to Bonfire, which I thought was really cool, but I got treated poorly there. That was my freshman year.” --Asian American senior
White student
- “While you might be correct about 90% of current students reporting that they ‘feel included,’ you are missing the picture. They are saying that they feel accepted by a certain group of people. While all these groups can call themselves a community, A&M is a place of many ‘communities.’ For instance, you never see Anglos interacting with international students but on a seldom basis.” --White underclassman

Summary of Theme 4 – Not a Member of the Community: A number of students explained why they do not feel like members of the community. Reasons ranged from not having parents who attended A&M to experiencing negative incidents while a student.

Difference Between Having a Sense of Belonging and Being a Member of the Community

African American and Hispanic students were asked the question: “What is the difference between feeling a sense of belonging and feeling that you are a member of the community?” They also were asked: “When African American/Hispanic students were asked if they felt a sense of belonging at Texas A&M University, they were not as positive as they were about being a member of the community. Why do you believe the results were like this?” Because of the similarity in some responses to the two questions, all of their views were grouped together in the following themes:

1. Sense of Belonging;
2. Member of the Community;
3. Campus Culture; and

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

Theme 1: Sense of Belonging

The students’ comments on having a sense of belonging to the community addressed topics such as being comfortable, being valued and respected, finding people similar to themselves, and trying to fit in on an individual basis. Out of 39 total comments made, a selection of quotes is provided below.

African American students
- “You can belong to your group of friends and not the community as a campus.” --African American underclassman
- “Belonging is when you walk into a group of people who are different from you and you feel comfortable there; you don’t wonder if they will accept you because your skin color is different. You know, instantly, that you belong—there’s not hesitation, no self consciousness.” --African American senior
- “A sense of belonging is sensing the feelings that others are happy you are here.” --African American underclassman
- “A sense of belonging is one where you feel that you are wanted and valued, that you are truly seen and respected.” --African American senior
- “Belonging is when you are accepted by your peers.” --African American underclassman
“A sense of ‘belonging’ implies a feeling that one’s personality, culture, likes, dislikes, etc., is reflected or even identical to the people and environment around them.” --African American senior

“A sense of belonging’ is taking pride in where you are.” --African American underclassman

**Hispanic students**

- “You can feel as though you belong as long as you have a small group of friends.” --Hispanic senior
- “To belong is to be welcomed and heard and understood.” --Hispanic senior
- “When [a] person is welcomed with open arms, treated with respect and especially when there is a sense of understand[ing] between two people it is safe to say that that would be considered having a sense of belonging.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “You perceive that you are wanted in the community. That people are happy that you are there.” --Hispanic senior
- “A sense of belonging is like love: inexistent if not reciprocal.” --Hispanic underclassman
- ‘Feeling [a sense of belonging] is when you are 100% comfortable with the people and places around you.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “It means that you are wanted, you are respected for everything that you feel, other people find you interesting, they want to talk to you.” --Hispanic senior
- “If you walk in a room and there’s people of all kinds of colors and types, you’re probably going to go and talk to the people who look like you because you look like them, you feel like you belong…somebody goes to somebody that they look like, you know, shares their culture. That doesn't mean that they’re racist, that they’re biased. That means that they feel more comfortable there and that's perfectly acceptable.” --Hispanic senior
- “Many Aggies don’t embrace the Aggie Spirit and they are members, but they choose personally not to belong by complaining or disliking the campus.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “Feeling a ‘sense of belonging’ more affects me in the classroom where it is painfully obvious who doesn’t appear to belong.” --Hispanic underclassman

**Summary of Theme 1 - Sense of Belonging:** The students’ comments on having a sense of belonging to the community addressed topics such as being comfortable, being valued and respected, finding people similar to themselves, and trying to fit in on an individual basis.

**Theme 2: Member of the Community**

Similar to the statements about having a sense of belonging, students described being a member of the community in terms of being comfortable, participating in the community, and knowing that other people are happy that you are around. Out of 29 total comments made, a selection of quotes is provided below.

**African American students**

- “Being a member of a community is slightly lesser than belonging; you’re here, you're seen, you're tolerated, but you may or may not feel as comfortable joining any random group because there is still that question burning in the back of you head ’what if they don't accept me.’” --African American senior
- “Being a member means you attend and pay your dues.” --African American underclassman
- “You can be welcomed into a community and people may be truly pleased to have you but, when you try to become more deeply involved in that community, you find all sorts of cultural and other sorts of differences.” --African American senior
“Feeling you are a member of the community means you feel at least some people will help you when you are in need.” --African American senior

Hispanic students

- “A community means that you don’t feel different from those around you, that you can say anything or do anything and it won’t matter.” --Hispanic senior
- “Community’s a lot about having a place. About having a niche, about fitting in somewhere.” --Hispanic senior
- “A member of a community is simply someone who is acknowledged that they are there, not liked or disliked.”--Hispanic senior
- “I feel that I am a member of the community because I attended the school.” --Hispanic senior
- “Being a member of a community is not a choice, it is a natural occurrence.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “If you live in College Station, you are a member of the community—try not paying property taxes and you will be reminded of that. This does not mean you ‘belong’ there.” --Hispanic underclassman

Summary of Theme 2 - Member of the Community: Students described being a member of the community in terms of being comfortable, participating in the community, and knowing that other people are happy that you are around.

Theme 3: A&M Culture

When commenting on the A&M Culture in terms of community membership and a sense of belonging, students explained their views of the institution’s reputation, the varying student backgrounds, involvement in traditions, conformity, and personal identity and effort. Out of 79 total comments made, a selection of quotes is provided below.

African American students

- “A&M does not foster an open and accepting culture for minorities.” --African American senior
- “In some ways I feel that I could belong more to [a cultural organization] not because it is majority African American but because I know they appreciate days like Juneteenth and understand its significance.” --African American underclassman
- “As an African American, I felt an overwhelming sense that amongst the Caucasian students, Texas A&M’s overwhelming majority population, most had never had significant interactions with an African American persons and knew only of the images portrayed by media stereotypes.” --African American underclassman
- “There is pressure on an African American student which implies that if he/she is to be accepted, he/she must make a conscious effort to mimic the culture of the majority students and suppress their own culture whether it be clothes, language, music, etc. (i.e., they just don't fit in).” --African American senior
- “I think that when a person is thrown into an atmosphere where the population is majority white (when they themselves have come from a majority black atmosphere) the change is difficult. People become more weary of their surroundings, more fearful that something they do may not fit with the norm of Aggieland.” --African American senior
- “It’s basically a culture barrier: there are things that happen in the African American community that whites have no understanding of, so it’s extremely hard to relate to one another.” --African American senior
“I felt that sometimes people would expect me to behave in a way because of my race, not because of who I was.” --African American senior

“The masses take a disregard for issues that are important to you in a direct way, like diversity on campus.” --African American underclassman

“I think that a lot of African American students forget to branch out. I think that they think that people are just going to walk up to them and they don't have to make an effort to be friendly themselves and accepting of others. I think that is the biggest problem. That is why there are so many misconceptions about this school among African Americans.” --African American senior

“Sometimes you get the feeling that you are not wanted because people tend not to want to be with you when you have group assignments.” --African American underclassman

“There is a great deal of intra-racial conflict. There are African American students that frown on any African American student that does not act, speak, dress, or think as they do.” --African American senior

“How is an African American student to feel accepted when we celebrate a slave trader and Indian killer and barely mention the contributions of the slaves who died building Old Main [a historical building on campus that burned down], the janitors who maintained it or the man who was partly instrumental in procuring the land grants?” --African American senior

Hispanic students

“Since we have such low representation on campus, it is very intimidating to walk into a classroom and be the only person who is not of Anglo descent.” --Hispanic underclassman

“Many people are quick to point out ‘brown people.’ Never in my experience has it been negative, but it has never been pointed out to me so much before in my life.” --Hispanic underclassman

“A&M’s culture and [the] way they do things at times do not make the Hispanics feel at home. Some may not feel comfortable giving their ideas or doing what they feel is natural because the majority of the students will not agree with them.” --Hispanic senior

“I believe the A&M culture does not encourage diversity.” --Hispanic senior

“A&M has a culture that encourages conformity and does not welcome these differences.” --Hispanic senior

“I think that some people might feel a little intimidated by the quite large Caucasian population. The fact that you might be the only Hispanic or ethnic in sight when you go to a club can be a little strange.” --Hispanic senior

“Hispanics suffer more of a culture shock when they arrive because the students that they mainly interact with do not have the same customs.” --Hispanic underclassman

“For Latin American students, our dress, food and music is very distinctive. Our dress, food and music is not prevalent among the popular young culture at A&M.” --Hispanic senior

“If you were to get one person that was of the majority culture here in A&M and put him/her in the Hispanic culture they would feel out of place because they would be with people that didn’t necessarily understand the music they have or the shows they watch…The worst thing would be that all the other people would be the same except them and if they don’t try to integrate, the easiest thing for the prominent culture to do would be to cast them aside.” --Hispanic senior

“Hispanic people love to be involved, love to be a part of the larger picture not just members of a group within that picture.” --Hispanic underclassman

“I feel very comfortable just because I’m involved and because I’m going out there and I’m trying to participate. I’m trying to help out as many people as I can. I’m trying. I’m trying to do a lot of things, but that’s me personally.” --Hispanic senior
“I felt like I’d have to adjust my likes in order to hang out with my buddies when I was in the Corps. We would pretty much just go to the Hall [local country-western dance club] or do something like that. Me personally, I would rather go to a salsa merengue club or go Tejano dancing. That’s what I would have loved to have done but they’re not gonna all conform for me since I was the minority in the Corps, only about 4 of us were Hispanic, and we were not able to say ‘no, we’re going to this place.’” --Hispanic senior

“A&M doesn’t say well you have to listen to country music, of course not, but it makes you kind of feel like if you don’t belong, if you don’t listen to country music or do whatever the majority says to do, you know, I mean they’re not saying do it, but you know.” --Hispanic senior

“I do not believe that I perceived anyone to be dissatisfied with me because of my race, except on very rare occasions. I should mention that these instances were not indicative of the overall mood towards me, just of one person.” --Hispanic senior

“College Station has a culture of its own and I believe that the focus is very narrow (example, more country [music] than anything). Therefore, unless a student is very open minded it is difficult to accept that other cultures can relate to our own.” --Hispanic underclassman

Summary of Theme 3 - A&M Culture: When commenting on the A&M Culture in terms of community membership and a sense of belonging, students explained their views of the institution’s reputation, the varying student backgrounds, involvement in traditions, conformity, and personal identity and effort.

Theme 4: Not Welcomed

Six comments from African American students addressed how some students do not feel like they are welcomed or included at Texas A&M. One comment was made by a senior and five came from underclassmen. A sample of their comments is provided below.

“As an African American student I feel that African American students attending Texas A&M don’t feel a sense of belonging period.” --African American underclassman

“As an African American, I felt there was a kind of stigma that followed us.” --African American senior

“We get the sense that, there are those of us here to serve a purpose (athletes), but if the rest were to leave tomorrow it would make no difference.” --African American underclassman

Difference Between “Being Accepted and Welcomed” and “Being Treated with Respect”

All students were asked the question: “Students of all ethnicities were more positive that ‘people here treat each other with respect’ than they were about students from diverse racial backgrounds being accepted and welcomed by the majority. What is the difference between being accepted and welcomed and being treated with respect?” The major themes that emerged from their responses were:

1. Similarity in Definitions and Personal Experiences;
2. Definition of Respect; and
3. Definition of Being Accepted and Welcomed.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.
Theme 1: Similarity in Definitions and Personal Experiences

The students’ comments on the differences between “respect” and “being accepted and welcomed” covered a wide range of views including no difference in the phrases, both being equated with the word “tolerance,” and descriptions of each phrase through personal experiences. Out of 25 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students
- “People must understand that not all ethnicities have had the same experiences so those who feel respected may have not received the negative aspects of the campus.”--African American underclassman
- “I think these two topics fall into the same category. To be accepted and welcomed is also to be treated with respect. If both of those things are not applied together then the person experiencing that will feel neither of them.”--African American senior
- “I don’t think that accepted is as good a word as tolerated. I think that racially diverse students are tolerated.”--African American underclassman

Asian American student
- “I do not see a difference in definitions.”--Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students
- “They (majority students) quickly blurt out in your face you are in A&M only because a quota had to be met or some other stupid reason.”--Hispanic senior
- “There are many that have grown up having a negative image of different races and because of that, find it difficult to accept people from different racial backgrounds.”--Hispanic senior

White students
- “Accepted is just tolerating their presence. Welcomed is having open arms and allowing them into the Aggie family just as they are. Being treated with respect is in the middle of those two. Others respect them for who they are but may not want to be close friends with them.”--White underclassman
- “If you have to accept or welcome someone then you are acknowledging that there is something wrong with them or that they are inferior to you because of this difference. There should be no idea of acceptance even mentioned, it should simply be that 40,000 other students go to A&M, all of which are different, and all of which are Aggies.”--White underclassman

Summary of Theme 1 - Similarity in Definitions and Personal Experiences: The students’ comments on the differences between “respect” and “being accepted and welcomed” covered a wide range of views including no difference in the phrases, both being equated with the word “tolerance,” and descriptions of each phrase through personal experiences.

Theme 2: Definition of Respect

When students were defining the term “respect” they used a variety of phrases to explain their views such as being included, being seen as an equal, being treated with common courtesy, and being tolerated. Out of 65 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.
African American students

- “Your opinion is listened to and valued. Your race is of no importance.”--African American senior
- “Being treated with respect is being treated as an equal person despite any difference that could be seen physically or mentally.”--African American underclassman
- “It’s easy to treat a person with respect, to smile at them and ask them about their day; to open doors or say ‘bless you’ after a sneeze--these are all forms of respect and are easy to do.”--African American senior
- “Treated with respect means you don’t have to care about me but you go through the motions to not be rude.”--African American senior
- “Respect does not require interaction, you can be respectful without having a conversation with someone.”--African American senior

Asian American students

- “Being treated with respect means that people respect your culture and respect you no matter what skin color you are.”--Asian American senior
- “Treating someone with respect is learning from them and their experience.”--Asian American senior
- “Respect entails a ‘politeness’ that is due to everyone--a certain way of behavior that says ‘greet others, smile, don’t take their things’, etc.--that we all have learned since children...But many times we are taught to be polite regardless of how we truly feel. It connotates [sic] ‘putting up with’ or ‘tolerating’ by putting on a ‘nice’ facade.”--Asian American senior
- “Being treated with respect usually occurs with people who will acknowledge your presence and converse with you when necessary.”--Asian American senior
- “Being treated with respect goes hand in hand with tolerance. As students of higher education, we should be able to treat everyone with much respect. However, treating someone with respect does not necessarily mean that we like and accept that person. We may treat professors we don’t necessarily like or accept with respect simply because they deserve it and that is the way we have been brought up.”--Asian American underclassman
- “Basically, the majority respects minorities by being as politically correct as possible to their faces. However, their attitudes and the fact that they feel the need to tiptoe around minorities portray that we, as minorities, aren’t exactly accepted and welcomed in everything, and are at times a burden to the majority.”--Asian American senior

Hispanic students

- “Being accepted and welcomed is different than being treated with respect because you can respect someone by not infringing on them.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “Being treated with respect is what occurs when people realize that we are doing nothing but making this school better and that we are their equal.”--Hispanic senior
- “Nothing poor about you is being said to your face and hopefully not behind your back. That’s respect.”--Hispanic senior
- “The difference is that people deserve to be treated with respect initially unless they prove otherwise through some actions or words. People are generally cordial and respectful to each other.”--Hispanic senior
- “Being treated with respect is being tolerant but keeping your distance.”--Hispanic senior
- “People may not protest against your presence, but they may make you feel uncomfortable.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “Being treated with respect to me is a given. Very few people here will blatantly disrespect an ethnic person.”--Hispanic underclassman
"An example of being treated with respect and not being welcomed is when someone is nice to you when you talk to them, but will never approach you to initiate conversation, and will never want to try to become friends." --Hispanic underclassman

White students
- "Being treated with respect, to me, means that you are a part of the group, the whole. You are included in every aspect of Texas A&M life, just as everyone else is. No one looks down on you, or belittles you. You're treated just like any other Aggie." --White senior
- "Being treated with respect simply means that you are polite and respectful to someone, that you are not rude, mean or hateful to them." --White senior
- "You may meet someone from a different background and have nothing against them. You will be polite but you wouldn't go and invite them to a party or out with your good friends. To do that would be crazy...you know--open minded." --White senior
- "Treated with respect means that there is a sense of not knowing what to do with a racially different person, and possibly a sense of timidness or unsurity. It’s a polite way to act when unsure of what to actually do." --White underclassman
- "When you welcome them and treat them with respect, you make it known to them that they are just as human as you are and you treat them as you would want them to treat you." --White senior
- "Respect involves a comfortable distance and remotely kind actions." --White senior
- "I think that a lot of people don’t talk to people from other cultures because they are not used to it. The fact that they still respect them shows that its not because they don’t like them, they may be more timid to talk to them." --White underclassman

Summary of Theme 2 - Definition of Respect: When students were defining the term “respect” they used a variety of phrases to explain their views such as being included, being seen as an equal, being treated with common courtesy, and being tolerated.

Theme 3: Definition of Being Accepted and Welcomed

Students’ definitions of “being accepted and welcomed” were similar to their definitions of “respect.” They discussed that the phrase meant being included, being seen as equals, being treated with common courtesy, and being tolerated. Out of 55 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students
- "Being accepted and welcome is that people expect good things from you and are kind and want to be your friend." --African American senior
- "Everyone would love to attend a university where you are accepted and welcomed, meaning where there are no color lines. Where all students look at each other as equals." --African American underclassman
- "When someone differs from you entirely, it’s hard to open your arms to them when you differ so much. It’s hard to find things in common. You never know what’s going to be a touchy subject, you never know if a question is going to be offensive and hurtful. Many people don’t take the risk of trying to get to know someone different from them, therefore it is easier to just hold the door open and go on with your business." --African American senior
- "Being accepted means you acknowledge my presence on campus. You look me in the eye and give me a ‘Howdy’ or ‘how’s it going.’ You show that you care about my experience on campus and in College Station." --African American senior
“Being accepted and welcomed maybe means feeling comfortable and at home with people you are in contact with.”--African American senior

Asian American students

- “Being accepted means that people accept who you are as a person, as a whole.”--Asian American senior
- “Being accepted means not excluding someone from activities in school because [of] their race or ethnicity.”--Asian American senior
- “Being accepted and welcomed usually makes me feel as though I belong. It’s a much more friendly encounter.”--Asian American senior
- “Being accepted means that you are viewed as the same. However, I also do feel that people recognize me as someone different from the ‘typical’ A&M student.”--Asian American senior
- “Being accepted and welcomed means that we want to learn about others and others want to make an effort to learn about us, which in time will eliminate ignorance and hatred.”--Asian American underclassman
- “Actually accepting and even better, actually welcoming is not something for show or for etiquette’s sake. It is WANTING, not HAVING to do something.”--Asian American senior
- “Being ‘accepted and welcomed’ suggests an active effort to include others in social or academic events.”--Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students

- “Being accepted means you don’t receive any kind of aggression.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “Accepted and welcomed goes further than being polite, which is treating someone with respect. It is actually accepting someone for who they are and their beliefs, etc.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “Welcoming someone is looking at that person for who they are and respecting them and befriending them regardless of any circumstances.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “People don’t feel accepted if they don’t have common bonds with the people around them, therefore they may not have had bad encounters with white people but they also don’t have friends that are white which makes them feel somewhat unaccepted.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “Feeling accepted or welcomed is difficult if you are inadvertently treated unlike others.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “Acceptance and welcome requires more warmth and outreach to embrace another person or persons whereas respect is a ‘surface’ response most human beings deserve.”--Hispanic senior
- “Being accepted and welcomed is a first impression, chance meeting type thing where you will say hello to people you pass in the street.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “Accepting something is acknowledging its existence.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “Being accepted and welcomed is taking time to say hello to someone [who] may not speak very good English, inviting an international student to lunch, or just spending time with them.”--Hispanic senior
- “Being accepted is that you are welcomed and they say hi.”--Hispanic senior

White students

- “Being accepted is actually being completely dissolved into the population. The racial cliques are obvious.”--White underclassman
- “When you accept someone you simply feel that no matter what your personal views towards them that they are part of the group and are rightfully included.”--White senior
- “Accepted and welcomed removes the distance and involves a degree of vulnerability as worlds (homes, mentalities) are opened to each other.”--White senior
“Accepted and welcomed means to me bringing someone in to your personal comfort zone.”--White senior

“Being accepted is the sharing of knowledge and customs with others who are willing to listen and learn about each other.”--White underclassman

“Being accepted: you are respectful, polite, help the person out, but don’t go out of your way to help the person out.”--White underclassman

“Being accepted and welcome means that they feel that they have a place at A&M. That they feel at home.”--White senior

“To be welcomed and accepted is an active inclusion of different people, rather than just treating them with respect and acting passively or at a distance.”--White underclassman

Summary of Theme 3 - Definition of Being Accepted and Welcomed: Students failed to make a distinction between “being accepted and welcomed” and “being respected.” They discussed that the phrase meant being included, being seen as equals, being treated with common courtesy, and being tolerated.

Acceptance and Welcoming of Non-White Students

All students were asked the question: “When asked if students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed by the majority (White) students at Texas A&M University, students were mixed in their responses. 92% of White students agreed while 77% of Non-White students agreed. Whether you agreed or disagreed that students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed, what are your experiences at A&M that shaped your response to this question?” The major themes that emerged were:

1. Incidents;
2. Campus Environment;
3. Individual and Societal Issues; and

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

Theme 1: Incidents

In order to describe whether or not Non-White students are accepted and welcomed at A&M, many students shared personal experiences. The incidents they experienced covered events such as stereotypes, slurs, derogatory remarks, feeling unwelcome and excluded, and general diversity issues. Out of 69 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students

“Being ignored by white students who were openly friendly to other white students.”--African American senior

“Walking to class and smiling and saying ‘hi’ to people and getting no response.”--African American underclassman

“Being stereotyped in conversations as being ‘a good dancer’ and ‘a good basketball player.’”--African American senior
“Complete disrespect by students that have no problem assuming that if my skin is black then I am not intelligent and only listen to rap and grew up in the ghetto, or that I can sing and dance as well. Completely ridiculous.”--African American senior

“Well I have received racist emails bashing the Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration.”--African American senior

“I have many friends that are of Caucasian descent. Because of that I feel accepted by them.”--African American underclassman

“Sitting in a packed class and having the seat to your left and right being empty every time.”--African American underclassman

Asian American students

“I was at a Greek activity and I’m from [a multicultural sorority on campus] and we were invited to this and upon passing, a group of white female students said, ‘Oh, look at all the little minorities!’ I’ve had many experiences like this.”--Asian American senior

“A few encounters where I felt I was being teased for my race by some immature students.”--Asian American senior

“Most of the people I have had encounters with or have made friends with have been very accepting of the fact that I am of a different race as well as a different religion. In fact, most are excited about being able to learn about another culture. I attribute much of this to living in the Honors dorm.”--Asian American senior

“When the spy plane went down in China, [a friend] and I were walking around campus. He’s Asian. So, we’re walking down and these people are reading the article in the Battalion [the campus newspaper] that said the spy plane went down in China...As we walked by we hear them say, ‘You know, I wish they’d just go home.’ So [my friend] and I turned around and were like, ‘From North Carolina? ‘cause that’s where I’m from’...I mean, what are you talking about ‘go home?’”--Asian American senior

“For example, Anthropology class, 200 plus people. We were studying China and the staple for the Chinese is rice. Everybody knows that, and the prof [professor] asked what is the staple of the Chinese. A boy in the middle of class said ‘dog’. Like all the students were laughing and I didn’t find that funny, and so when I called him on it...he said, ‘I didn’t mean anything by it.’ And so it seems that’s the excuse.”--Asian American senior

Hispanic students

“I have heard comments directed not only to me but to other people about different racial backgrounds other than the majority and sometimes that is discouraging both as a student and as a person.”--Hispanic senior

“I overheard two people talking about an African American male and how he was dressed and they openly stated that they knew that he had to go to Blinn [a local community college] because there is no way a person dressed like that would go to A&M, also making a remark that he probably couldn't have filled out the application on his own anyway.”--Hispanic underclassman

“I was readily accepted into any organization that I became involved with, and most people (whether they were lying or not-I guess I’ll never be sure) seemed to enjoy knowing me (white and non-white).”--Hispanic senior

“Personally, I have only had one negative experience while at A&M, so the other 99% of the time, I’ve felt as though I’m accepted and welcomed.”--Hispanic senior

“I disagreed that students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed because of observed experiences such as the display of confederate flags in dormitories and trucks.”--Hispanic senior
“There are those very few events when something was said about minorities and the entire class turns to look at me to see my response.”--Hispanic underclassman

White students

“At last year’s Diversity Symposium when I listened to so many foreign students saying A&M was nothing like they expected. Feeling as if they wasted a scholarship by coming to a school where they are looked down upon for being of a different race. It is hard for me as a white student to feel like A&M is a community when so many members get hurt for simply being themselves.”--White underclassman

“I live with an Asian. This has been a very good experience to get to know someone else’s culture even though we were raised within an hour of each other. I don’t care about others’ skin color, culture, or ethnicity. I just want to get to know them as a person.”--White underclassman

“I lived on-campus last year and two floors up were several students from Asia and we enjoyed hanging out with each other. My suitemate was from India and we hung out all the time. Down the hall was a friend from Nigeria and we hung out when he had time.”--White underclassman

“In engineering, I get put in groups with diverse people, and if you cannot work together you fail, so acceptance is key.”--White underclassman

“Experiences have been seeing hundreds of religious groups witnessing to students as they go to class. They feel as if they have the right to witness to everyone, yet when a Muslim wanted to share their feelings with the Christian witness, he was dismissed by the Christian saying that the Muslim student was ‘going to hell if they did not follow his view of God.’”--White underclassman

**Summary Theme 1 – Incidents:** In order to describe whether or not Non-White students are accepted and welcomed at A&M, many students shared personal experiences. The incidents they experienced covered events such as stereotypes, slurs, derogatory remarks, feeling unwelcome and excluded, and general diversity issues.

**Theme 2: Campus Environment**

A number of student comments addressed the campus environment as they shared their opinions on whether or not Non-White students are accepted and welcomed on campus. They mentioned a variety of topics such as the demographics on campus, personal identity issues, opinions on diversity, and the failure of some students to engage with others. Out of 83 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**

“It is like you can come, but all you can do is sit there and help us look like we like everyone.”--African American underclassman

“I think that they are accepted but sometimes not tolerated.”--African American underclassman

“I have had experiences of general insensitivity toward me and my race, culture, etc.”--African American underclassman

“If you read the opinion column in the Batt [The Battalion, the campus newspaper], the opinion of many majority students is clear.”--African American senior
Asian American students

- “I disagree that students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted. I feel that there are hardly any racially diverse students and they tend to stick together because they don’t feel welcome.”--Asian American senior
- “There seems to be a lot of ignorant people here at this school because of the lack of education on different cultures.”--Asian American senior
- “Sometimes I do not feel accepted or welcomed at this school because I have noticed that the majority haven’t seen any minorities in their whole entire lives.”--Asian American senior
- “The campus seems to want to recruit minority students or people with diverse backgrounds. So, from that aspect, yes, they are welcoming minorities in. But, is the student body really welcoming? I think it’s more like tolerance.”--Asian American senior
- “‘Tolerated is like if the mailman came over I wouldn’t punch him in the face but I’d be like, ‘What do you need to take care of? Are you done? Would you like me to sign my package and then please leave?’ Being welcome to me is like my friends who are always welcome at my house. If they came over I’d be like ‘Hey! What’s up? How long are you staying? Can I offer you some food?’ You know, just like very hospitable.”--Asian American senior
- “I would say the majority of people don’t feel negative towards us but at the same time they’re not saying, ‘Hey, I hear there’s that new sushi restaurant in town. Why don’t we go check it out because I’ve never had it before?’”--Asian American senior
- “My overall experience with white students has not been negative. I don’t think that it is an active thought in their heads to think that there should be less minorities on campus.”--Asian American senior
- “It’s just become these little subcultures because I guess it’s almost like either that people are tired of trying to be accepted so they just say forget it. I’m not even going to try anymore. I’m just going to be with where I am accepted...There’s a bitterness. There is an edge to us.”--Asian American senior
- “Overall, I see Aggies are very respectful people and very helpful people for that matter.”--Asian American senior

Hispanic students

- “For the past year, I have deliberately sought friends from diverse backgrounds and attempted to learn more about their culture. My roommates are Chinese, my landlord is Hungarian and my study friends are Turkish. This action has separated me from traditional A&M students and I am no longer able to identify with traditional A&M students. That is why I believe that students from diverse backgrounds are not accepted by the majority.”--Hispanic senior
- “When you are a person of the majority you don’t have to live with a minority racial background every second of every day and you don’t have to have that tension in groups in classes or in events where you are different so people look at you different.”--Hispanic senior
- “It’s easy for somebody who’s in the majority to say oh well, I accept them, I welcome them, so they must feel accepted and welcomed.”--Hispanic senior
- “From personal experience, I would have to say the majority of Aggies are open-minded and welcome anyone regardless of race. Nonetheless, a couple of ‘close-minded’ Aggies can sometimes give minority students a very, very difficult time. Subsequently, a small incident can then lead you to believe that the whole school thinks in such a fashion.”--Hispanic senior
- “It can take one bad experience to ruin that entire feeling [of being accepted and welcomed] whereas the White majority doesn’t necessarily have that experience.”--Hispanic senior
- “[I can] see prejudices and see acceptance, I can both of those things from [the] community and then I can go and hang out with my friends who share like Hispanic heritage or who share other cultural awareness.”--Hispanic senior
White students

- “I feel like the minorities are accepted because every semester I have more and more non-white students in my class. I think if they felt they were not accepted here, there would be less and less minorities. Instead it is the opposite, I feel like the white majority is becoming smaller.”—White senior
- “My response was shaped by how conservative A&M is and how they want everyone to be a white conservative Christian like them. That is the one big downside to A&M, there is little diversity to prepare you for the real world.”—White senior
- “As a student of the racial majority, I have found it very easy to welcome the more diverse students. There are always multi-national events somewhere on or off campus and everyone is more than willing to accept you there no matter what your racial background.”—White underclassman
- “I have to say that coming from a high school where the population was half, if not more, minority, it was a bit different here at Texas A&M...It seems that there are a lot of white Texas A&M students who haven’t experienced other cultures/races.”—White senior
- “Coming from a nondiverse racial background, I came to A&M because it was much like my hometown. When I visited A&M, I didn’t think that A&M was very diverse. Not that I was scared of a diverse community, it was just something that was uncommon for me.”—White senior
- “Having lived with someone of the non-majority, I saw that race was not a factor here. She was included and welcomed to everything I was, if not more!”—White senior

**Summary of Theme 2 - Campus Environment:** A number of students’ comments addressed the campus environment as they shared their opinions on whether or not Non-White students are accepted and welcomed on campus. They mentioned a variety of topics such as the demographics on campus, personal identity issues, opinions on diversity, and the failure of some students to engage with others.

**Theme 3: Individual and Societal Issues**

A handful of students described how individual effort and societal issues impact whether or not Non-White students are accepted and welcomed on campus. Out of 15 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**Asian American students**

- “Right now if we closed our eyes and said ‘American’ there is no way even a single one of us would picture anybody but a white person and that’s just, that’s the mentality that we have.”—Asian American senior
- “You make the best of what you have, meaning you have to look for the resources and experiences that you could have wherever you are.”—Asian American senior

**Hispanic student**

- “I believe that each student has to take an active role in the community and get involved.”—Hispanic underclassman

**White students**

- “No matter where you go there is going to be some group that doesn’t like another group.”—White senior
- “I have been told by individuals of other racial backgrounds that declaring yourself a minority and saying you don’t have the same opportunities is the problem with racism and inferiority. If you make yourself out to be inferior then you are the one creating a false sense of racism.”--White senior

**Summary Theme 3: Individual and Societal Issues:** A handful of students described how individual effort and societal issues impact whether or not Non-White students are accepted and welcomed on campus.

**Theme 4: Not Experienced**

Some students said they did not have enough experience to offer an opinion as to whether or not Non-White students are accepted and welcomed on campus or did not experience any negative incidents that would lead them to believe Non-White students are not accepted and welcomed. Out of 11 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American student**
- “I was embraced more by the white students, faculty, and staff than I was by the African American students and faculty. The African American staff members I’ve met treat me as if they’ve known me for years.”--African American senior

**Hispanic students**
- “People don't care where I came from or how I look. They look at what I do and who I am or act. They judge me as a person, not as a color of skin.”--Hispanic senior
- “I think for the most part I have been treated with as much respect as anyone else regardless of my ethnicity.”--Hispanic underclassman

**White student**
- “I am not sure how to answer this question because I have never seen/heard anything leading me to believe that students from diverse racial backgrounds have been treated, welcomed, and/or accepted any differently than the majority.”--White senior

**Summary of Theme 4 - Not Experienced:** Some students said they did not have enough experience to offer an opinion as to whether or not Non-White students are accepted and welcomed on campus or did not experience any negative incidents that would lead them to believe Non-White students are not accepted and welcomed.

**Experience with Being a Member of the Community**

All students were asked the question: “*What are the experiences you have had at Texas A&M University that made you feel like a member of the community?*” The major themes that emerged from their responses were:

1. A&M Campus and Community;
2. Events, Activities, and Student Organizations;
3. Academics, Faculty, and Staff; and
4. Not a Member.
Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

**Theme 1: A&M Campus and Community**

When explaining their experiences as a member of the community, students described aspects of the A&M campus and community including opportunities available to them, the Aggie network, friendly people, social interactions, living on campus, and people saying “howdy” to them. Out of 78 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**
- “I have had lots of opportunities to interact with so many people of diverse backgrounds and I didn’t feel out of place.” —African American senior
- “Students that were willing to help during my first year and during my new student conference.” —African American underclassman
- “I’m saddened to say that, in the years I’ve attended A&M, most white students were 10 times nicer to me than the vast majority of African American students.” —African American senior
- “Talking to people that are of different cultures. But the thing is that there needs to be more programs in order to get different backgrounds to come out.” —African American underclassman

**Asian American students**
- “The people at A&M treat each other like family.” —Asian American underclassman
- “I feel like a member when others volunteer their time to help me out or when I am able to assist others in various matters, academic or social.” —Asian American underclassman
- “Being ‘Howdy’ed.” —Asian American underclassman
- “This summer, many people in my dorm just knocked on my door to introduce themselves and asked me to hang out. Since then, I have made many friends.” —Asian American senior

**Hispanic students**
- “[F]inding your place in the community is very important and I’ve had the chance to try on kind of different hats.” —Hispanic senior
- “I’ve had many past graduates help me out with a lot of my studies, research that I’ve done, and they might not be here in the community itself, but the Aggie community.” —Hispanic senior
- “The simplest [thing] that I know every Aggie has experienced is the common gesture of Howdy or hello. It shows hospitality as well as [a] caring environment.” —Hispanic underclassman
- “There’s something very unique about having a campus of 45,000 people and being able to walk across and say hi to a handful of people and stop and chat. There’s something very nice about that.” —Hispanic senior
- “I have lived in a dorm for the past four years and to a certain extent part of that community. I have been to dorm activities such as baseball games and get togethers and feel welcomed and that is a really good feeling especially when being so far away from home.” —Hispanic senior

**White students**
- “No matter where I went or what I did I always felt that I belonged somewhere.” —White senior
- “Everyone is down to earth and caring.” —White senior
“Howdy is another great example of feeling like you belong. No matter who this person is walking toward you, you still just smile and say ‘Howdy’. It is a great way to feel accepted when a stranger you have never met and may never see again took time to say ‘Howdy’ to you.” --White underclassman

“I’ve cried with people I didn’t know, and met and became friends with people I would have never known if I didn’t come to A&M.” --White senior

“People from different backgrounds are not universally welcomed.” --White senior

“Being helped out during freshmen move-in week.” --White senior

Summary of Theme 1 - A&M Campus and Community: When explaining their experiences as a member of the community, students described aspects of the A&M campus and community including opportunities available to them, the Aggie network, friendly people, social interactions, living on campus, and people saying “howdy” to them.

Theme 2: Events, Activities, and Student Organizations

Students described their feelings of community in terms of events, activities, and student organizations they participated in. Some activities cited included athletic events, programs on campus, traditions, and being leaders within student organizations. Out of 127 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students

“I found organizations on campus that were active at A&M and that I love to work with.” --African American senior

“Being in the Corps and the respect my buddies gave me and inviting me to their homes.” --African American senior

Asian American students

“When students who feel the same as I come together for a cultural event.” --Asian American senior

“Being a Muslim, it was reassuring to hear from so many people of other walks of life coming up to the Muslim community and checking up on us and offering their support to us after September 11th.” --Asian American senior

“Being a president of a club definitely makes me feel like a member of the community.” --Asian American underclassman

“I have been elected as an officer in one of my organizations as well which makes me feel like an asset to the organization and the community.” --Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students

“The football games especially, midnight yell included in that, to see so many Aggies in one place, former students and students alike all cheering for our team made me feel very connected with everyone else.” --Hispanic underclassman

“Sporting events by far bring our community together. At a football game…it is amazing to see from the student section people all cheering and participating in the yells as well as looking across to the former student section and see it full! It shows that although an Aggie can move away and have their career they come back to support the Aggies, not just football but it represents the institution that made an impact on their lives.” --Hispanic underclassman

“Muster, in my opinion, is the greatest tradition at this school and I assure you that anyone who feels left out will not feel the same after attending the ceremony.” --Hispanic senior
“Being involved in different types of student organizations has made me feel more in place. I’ve played a role and I think I’ve done it well and that makes me feel very much a part.” -- Hispanic senior

**White students**

- “Last year, I was hit head-on by a drunk driver while attending A&M. With no family here, not only was I scared for the accident, I was scared about my future. My profs [professors], and peers helped me to get through everything that I was faced with. It was amazing to see the support that I got. It really made me feel that I had a ‘home away from home.’” -- White senior
- “All sports games definitely, especially football. Being in the ‘sea of maroon’ is an incredible experience.” -- White underclassman
- “Far and away I felt that the Aggie traditions were what made me feel like part of the community. It was something that I could relate to all the other students on campus about.” -- White senior
- “My most memorable experience at Texas A&M that has made me feel like a member of the community was the bonfire accident in 1999, my freshman year. I will never forget how everyone came together to comfort and help each other. It was a devastating event, but it was an awesome experience to see how Aggies can unite as one.” -- White senior

*Summary of Theme 2 - Events, Activities, and Student Organizations:* Students described their feelings of community in terms of events, activities, and student organizations they had participated in. Some of the activities they cited included athletic events, programs on campus, traditions, and being leaders within student organizations.

**Theme 3: Academics, Faculty, and Staff**

A number of students explained how academic challenges, faculty, and staff help them feel like members of the community. Out of 22 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, are provided below.

**African American students**

- “Recognition for academic success.” -- African American senior
- “Caring faculty”-- African American senior
- “Having a great advisor”-- African American underclassman

**Asian American students**

- “Working in many team projects.” -- Asian American senior
- “The honor classes (the classes are small and are better for interaction).” -- Asian American underclassman
- “When professors have taken a more personal interest in my endeavors.”-- Asian American senior

**Hispanic students**

- “Being with fellow Mechanical Engineers, because there it seems like it doesn’t matter where you come from, you understand what each other has been through and help each other out.” -- Hispanic senior
- “Talking to people sitting next to me in class.” -- Hispanic senior
White students
- “I am a Poultry Science major and being part of a small department it is like being from a small town.” --White underclassman
- “Friendly staff in departments.” --White senior

Summary of Theme 3 - Academics, Faculty, and Staff: A number of students explained how academic challenges, faculty, and staff help them feel like members of the community.

Theme 4: Not a Member

A small group of students, all Non-White, explained how they did not feel like they were members of the community. Below are all of the students’ comments, divided into specific ethnic groups.

African American student
- “All my experiences at Texas A&M [were] horrible.” --African American underclassman

Asian American student
- “I have never really felt like a member of the community at A&M.” --Asian American senior

Hispanic students
- “I don’t believe that I could pick out an instance. If I could, that would mean I was aware of the fact that people were trying to include me as a member, which would have made me feel awkward.” --Hispanic senior
- “In all honesty, I didn’t feel one way or the other about it, so I didn’t pay any attention to specific instances.” --Hispanic senior

Summary of Theme 4 – Not a Member: Students how they did not believe they were members of the community for reasons including bad experiences and not being cognizant of the issue.

The Meaning of ‘Feeling Isolated’

Non-White students were asked the question: “Our survey shows that a significant percentage of minority students feel isolated on Texas A&M University’s campus. What does ‘feeling isolated’ mean?” The major themes that emerged from their responses were:

1. Socially Unwelcome; and
2. Feeling Disconnected.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

Theme 1: Socially Unwelcome

Non-White students described “feeling isolated” as being unwelcome socially and being fearful, being excluded from community activities, and not having any other students sit next to them in class. Out of 42 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.
African American students
- “There is a lack of places, things, and activities for minority students to attend and feel welcomed. Without such activities, students feel isolated to do things with people who look like them instead of going out and joining other groups.”--African American senior
- “It means that students have a hard time enjoying the college life, going to parties, meeting new people, dating new people, etc.”--African American underclassman
- “Sometimes you will sit in a class of 400 and no one will speak to you.”--African American underclassman
- “White students do not make an effort to make relationships outside of the classroom.”--African American senior

Asian American students
- “Being a minority in America isn't easy, being a minority at A&M, well it doesn't make it any easier. I can only think you ask this type of question because you are not a minority, you have to be a minority to know what it truly means. It's not anything that can be explained, you just have to feel it.”--Asian American senior
- “Minorities often feel that we have to stick to our ‘own kind.’”--Asian American senior
- “Not being able to speak your mind freely.”--Asian American underclassman
- “Feeling like you have to hide who you really are.”--Asian American underclassman
- “It means when I sit in class, sometimes no one sits next to me, unless it’s another minority.”--Asian American senior
- “Going to yell practice and feeling left out.”--Asian American senior
- “Not understanding the traditions and not being told what they mean.”--Asian American senior

Hispanic students
- “It means that you cannot talk to just anyone or you cannot approach just anyone for the fear of having a hostile response.”--Hispanic senior
- “Not being able to find cultural ties to the community.”--Hispanic senior
- “It’s a mental thing about not embracing the Aggie traditions. If you don’t like any of the yells then football games would definitely make you feel isolated if you sat in the student section.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “It’s just you secluding yourself from everybody else.”--Hispanic senior
- “I have to wonder why anyone would feel isolated. All you have to do is smile and initiate ANY kind of conversation (with a white or non-white) and any ‘isolated’ feelings should be dispelled.”--Hispanic senior

Summary of Theme 1 - Socially Unwelcome:
Non-White students described “feeling isolated” as being unwelcome socially and being fearful, being excluded from community activities, and not having any other students sit next to them in class.

Theme 2: FeelingDisconnected

Non-White students also described “feeling isolated” as being disconnected from the community and not belonging to the majority. Out of 45 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students
- “No one wants to be your friend.”--African American senior
“There is no one to talk to when you have certain problems.” -- African American senior
“There’s only about 1,000 Black students in a sea of 44,000. You’d feel isolated too! The Hispanics and Asians may have a little more.” -- African American senior
“It’s the culture barrier again. How do you speak with someone who’s never experienced the problem you’re having? This is why several minority students choose to attend other universities, despite being accepted into A&M.” -- African American senior
“Feeling that you are alone in the world.” -- African American senior

Asian American students
“This means that these people feel as though they can’t connect or communicate with others.” -- Asian American underclassman
“An insignificant percentage in the overall population.” -- Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students
“There are very few faculty and staff that are minorities and can identify with these students.” -- Hispanic senior
“It means not belonging to a certain activity or group and being the only of your kind (whether race, sex, age, etc.)” -- Hispanic underclassman
“Being isolated is like you’re the Hispanics on campus they’re putting you into that category and they’re concentrating on you and I do feel like I’m being isolated a little bit at times like with all the financial aid, that supposedly we get more because we’re Hispanic.” -- Hispanic senior
“You don’t feel at home. You don’t feel welcomed...the ‘feeling’ that a majority student would feel if he walks into a Hispanic Barrio or a Black Ghetto. These places are really not that bad and dangerous if you are Hispanic or Black, respectively. It’s that simple feeling of knowing that you are not a part of them!” -- Hispanic senior
“Maybe it might be that you feel like an island in the middle of an ocean. It would certainly feel that way if you were in the middle of the ocean and could see no land for miles around.” -- Hispanic senior

Summary of Theme 2 - Feeling Disconnected: Students described “feeling isolated” as being disconnected from the community and not belonging to the majority.

Experience with Isolation

Non-White students were asked the question: “What experiences have you had that would lead you to feel isolated?” The major themes that emerged from their responses were:

1. Feeling Alone;
2. Demographics, Culture, and Community; and
3. No Experience.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.
Theme 1: Feeling Alone

Students described their experiences with isolation in terms of being lonely. Specifically, they mentioned unfriendly encounters with other students, not having anyone to talk to, and having different views compared to the majority of students. Out of 17 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**
- “People telling me that I’m ‘okay for a minority’...I get that SO MUCH.”--African American senior
- “Being shunned by some whites” and “being shunned by members of my own race”--African American senior

**Asian American students**
- “People at first are not as friendly as they might be with others.”--Asian American senior
- “On numerous occasions, I haven’t really had anyone to talk to about not fitting in at A&M.”--Asian American senior

**Hispanic students**
- “Any feelings of isolation have been in reference to missing home, disagreements with friends, or not receiving communication about an issue.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “I know who I am and that is a person who has views counter to the majority of the population at Texas A&M. Get the picture?”--Hispanic senior
- “Getting off a graveyard shift and finding my car has been towed.”--Hispanic underclassman

*Summary of Theme 1 - Feeling Alone:* Students described their experiences with isolation in terms of being lonely. Specifically, they mentioned unfriendly encounters with other students, not having anyone to talk to, and having different views compared to the majority of students.

Theme 2: Demographics, Culture, and Community

Other students described their experiences with isolation in terms of campus demographics, the lack of cultural opportunities within the Bryan/College Station community, and being singled out in classroom discussions. Out of 26 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**
- “You can go a week without seeing another Black person.”--African American senior
- “I am open to trying new things and sometimes I rarely notice that I may be the only person in there with dark skin--I only notice when someone else brings it up and then I tend to feel slightly isolated and awkward.”--African American senior
- “I don’t appreciate feeling that when I weigh in on an issue that my thoughts have to be representative of my race.”--African American senior
- “Being in a History class and the subject of slavery comes up and I am the only African American in the class.”--African American senior

**Hispanic students**
- “There is not a single Cuban restaurant here.”--Hispanic senior
“I feel isolated when I want to go dancing somewhere that is not ‘country-related’ but everyone around me wants nothing more than to country dance.”--Hispanic underclassman

“After spending summers and semesters away for internships, I have discovered that initially it is easy to make friends because the campus places a good amount of emphasis on nurturing incoming Aggies. After that there are little opportunities to make friends and few opportunities where it is socially acceptable to try to meet new people.”--Hispanic senior

“Most people do not try to make friends in their classes which is one of the only times I see other Aggies.”--Hispanic senior

“My freshman year, I was having trouble with biology lab and I approached the TA [teaching assistant] and told her that I was having trouble both understanding and keeping up and she told me that I should understand it that it wasn’t that hard. I had trouble communicating with her. I felt that she wasn't understanding me and I felt stupid. I felt that my accent was really thick and was really nervous when talking to her. I felt like I didn't belong here at Texas A&M. I felt lonely and that I wasn’t going to make it.”--Hispanic senior

**Summary of Theme 2 - Demographics, Culture, and Community:** Other students described their experiences with isolation in terms of campus demographics, the lack of cultural opportunities within the Bryan/College Station community, and being singled out in classroom discussions.

**Theme 3: No Experience**

Some students explained that they did not have any experience with isolation at Texas A&M. Out of 19 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American student**

“I really haven’t had any. I am a minority student, but I don’t feel isolated to one particular group.”--African American senior

**Asian American student**

“I personally have not had much trouble identifying with others and making friends. People in my dorm were all very accepting, open, honest, enthusiastic, and kind.”--Asian American underclassman

**Hispanic students**

“I have too many friends that have helped me to feel ‘welcomed’ and ‘accepted’ to feel isolated. If I had no friends, I might have had something to report.”--Hispanic senior

“Personally, I have not had any experiences at this school that have led me to feel isolated.”--Hispanic senior

**Summary of Theme 3 – No Experience:** Some students explained that they did not have any experience with isolation at Texas A&M.
Section C: Student Organizations

Students were asked whether or not student organizations promote racial and ethnic understanding at Texas A&M University using the scale: 4=Agree Strongly, 3=Agree Somewhat, 2=Disagree Somewhat, and 1=Disagree Strongly. As observed in Table 14, illustrating the “Agree Strongly” and “Agree Somewhat” responses, White and Non-White students held similar views on the topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (Agree Strongly and Agree Somewhat)</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student organizations promote racial/ethnic understanding</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>African-American: 77.9  Hispanic: 87.4  Native American: 97.3  Asian &amp; Pacific Islander: 86.9  Other: 83.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: QUESTION: Below are some statements about Texas A&M. Indicate to what extent you agree or disagree.

Role of Student Organizations

To gain a better understanding of the reasons behind students’ responses regarding student organizations and racial/ethnic understanding at Texas A&M, all students were asked: “What are your experiences in regard to student organizations and the role they play in promoting racial and ethnic understanding?” The major themes that emerged were:

1. Degrees of Promotion; and
2. Experience with Student Organizations.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

Theme 1: Degrees of Promotion

Students explained their opinions about whether or not student organizations promote racial and ethnic understanding in terms of scale. Some students thought student organizations did not promote understanding while others thought they promoted it indirectly. Other students described what role organizations filled. Out of 74 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American students

- “Student organizations are pretty inconsequential in promoting racial and ethnic understanding.”--African American senior
- “Joining a group of people with a common goal will also allow these people get to know differences and similarities within their group.”--African American senior
- “Student organizations are good but many do not have many ‘mixed’ groups. It is important that people interact in order to break down stereotypes.”--African American senior
- “The minority organizations on campus are vital to the students. They allow us the opportunities to get together as a whole on a vast campus where congregating may otherwise be difficult.”--African American underclassman
Asian American students
- “In the student organizations that I have been involved with, they have done nothing to really promote racial and ethnic understanding.”--Asian American senior
- “Student organizations are great at promoting awareness, but since the environment that we’re in, with the likelihood of getting our voices out and making a difference right away, it’s somewhat discouraging and you lose sight of your original goal of promoting understanding.”--Asian American senior
- “Students bond and make friends through student organizations.”--Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students
- “I believe that most student organizations are not concerned with racial and ethnic understanding because it is not requisite for their function.”--Hispanic senior
- “I think that student organizations play a huge role because they require teamwork and participation.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “Student organizations help bring people together and get them involved in the Aggie community.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “I think they play a huge role because they make you interact with people.”--Hispanic senior
- “Since it is hard for the administration to communicate to the students on a personal level, it is the job of student organizations to make this campus more open, understanding, and welcoming.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “I have been involved in a Hispanic organization which has help[ed] me as a support group and has given me courage not to be so quiet, it has made me much more outgoing and given me a place to feel a little more at home.”--Hispanic senior
- “There are a few organizations that I find enlightening and somewhat of a home away from home. I love them. They give me a chance to be with the same kind of people I grew up with.”--Hispanic underclassman

White students
- “I don’t think the organizations I have been a part of promote ethnic understanding.”--White senior
- “They do promote friendship and willingness to help which ultimately leads to ethnic and racial understanding.”--White senior
- “Regardless of the fact that certain students may choose not to ‘hang out’ with one another, at such events as meetings and formals, they are interacting just by attending.”--White underclassman
- “All of the activities I have attended that promote this understanding have been sponsored, at least in part, by a student organization.”--White senior
- “They are definitely a great help. Bringing all backgrounds together for meetings, for parties, or any other type of function is a great way to promote understanding of the different backgrounds.”--White underclassman

Summary of Theme 1 - Degrees of Promotion: Students explained their opinions about whether or not student organizations promote racial and ethnic understanding in terms of scale. Some students thought student organizations did not promote understanding while others thought they promoted it indirectly. Other students described what role organizations filled.
Theme 2: Experience with Student Organizations

Some students described their views of whether or not student organizations promote racial and ethnic understanding in terms of their personal experiences with organizations. Out of 35 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

African American student
- “To me, it seems as if any white organization could get what they want, but any minority group has to fight.”--African American underclassman

Asian American students
- “I work with an organization that puts on programs to increase the understanding of others about Islam and we also took part in the UniDiversity Day which taught about many different backgrounds.”--Asian American senior
- “The International Buffet and/or different banquets, charity events, or special events sponsored by student organizations that are featured in the Batt [The Battalion, the campus newspaper] greatly increase everyone’s awareness and understanding.”--Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students
- “Organizations such as Fish Camp, Howdy Ags, Traditions Council, and Hospitality are a conglomerate of people from various backgrounds. Participation in the aforementioned is not limited to people with a certain ethnic disposition, just personality type.”--Hispanic senior
- “A problem that I foresee is that the [cultural] organization is not in any way helping with the interaction of the majority.”--Hispanic senior
- “Separate but equal is inherently unequal!!! Why must there be a Hispanic Association for Basket Weavers (figuratively speaking)? What is the difference in Hispanic basket weavers and non-Hispanic basket weavers? Will a Hispanic doctor only treat Hispanics, will the Hispanic architect only design cultural building? I can’t accept organizations which contribute to separation of people.”--Hispanic underclassman
- “They [cultural organizations] promote racial and ethnic understanding to outsiders by exposing them to something new, by giving them a chance to explore something new if they choose to take that chance, and it’s by making that available and only by making that available, will somebody be able to learn. At the same time, you could have somebody inside that organization that is like I’m Mexican American but I don’t know much about my culture and I want to learn about it. So they get in that organization and that promotes personal racial and ethnic understanding.”--Hispanic senior

White students
- “I joined an all white fraternity and majority white fraternity system yet it caused me to participate in numerous multicultural activities such as being on the campus diversity initiative.”--White senior
- “I was involved with Current Issues Awareness (CIA) and we put on programs for everyone ranging on different issues including anything that was relevant to what was current and it had anything to do with minorities.”--White underclassman
- “They have the black engineering society and scholarships for Hispanics. How is this legal? If white people did this they would be called racist. I do not necessarily have a problem with it except that if they are excluding other races then they are being racist.”--White underclassman
Summary of Theme 2: Experience with Student Organizations: Some students described their views of whether or not student organizations promote racial and ethnic understanding in terms of their personal experiences with organizations.

Section D: Achieving Campus Diversity

Students were provided a list of activities that could be implemented on campus to help achieve diversity and were asked to assign a priority level to each activity using the scale: 4=Highest Priority, 3=Strong Priority, 2=Moderate Priority, and 1=No Priority. Table 15, depicting the “Highest Priority” and “Strong Priority” categories, illustrates student-directed priorities. In all areas, there were statistically significant differences between White and Non-White students (p<.001).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (Highest and Strong Priority)</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Respondents</th>
<th>Non-White Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote more programs that recognize distinctive cultural heritage or diverse lifestyles</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>74.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide awareness - sensitivity workshops or programs to help students become more aware of the needs of diverse groups.</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>66.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create more special programs or services for ethnic minorities</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: QUESTION: In your opinion, how would you prioritize each of the following recommendations regarding the climate for diversity at Texas A&M?

As observed in Table 10, in section A, 81% of Non-White and 66% of White students indicated that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when assigning priorities for diversity activities, only a moderate priority was assigned to provide “workshops or programs to help students become more aware of the needs of diverse groups.”

Prioritization of Diversity Programs

In order to discover why students would not prioritize workshops or programs after reporting their participation in such events, Asian American, Hispanic, and White students were asked the following question: “In the telephone survey, a [66% majority of White students/75% majority of Hispanic students/86% majority of Asian American students] said that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when asked about prioritizing programs and workshops to promote awareness of cultural diversity and the needs of culturally diverse students, students gave them a moderate priority. What in your experience would
lead students to respond in this fashion—participating in programs and activities but not prioritizing them as strong or high priorities?” The major themes that emerged from their responses were:

1. Why Students Do Not Prioritize Diversity Programs; and
2. Priorities for Students.

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

**Theme 1: Why Students Do Not Prioritize Diversity Programs**

Students described why they do not prioritize diversity programs in a variety of ways including not wanting to learn, being lazy, having problems with diversity programs, already being aware of cultural differences, and an explanation that issues do not always have to be about diversity. Out of 52 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**Asian American students**

- “Asians make up a low percentage as it is. Even in clubs like Asian American Association there is still a ‘glaze of laziness’ among members due to the fact that there simply aren’t enough people who care about Asian and Pacific Islander issues.” --Asian American underclassman
- “When school takes up most of your time, one of the last things you want to do is sit in a room and have to learn more.” --Asian American underclassman
- “Many join or participate to enrich their own lives—not always with the purpose of enriching others. Furthermore, many may feel that it is often those who already know about a culture or those who already have an interest—these are those that usually attend, not the people that need to attend.” --Asian American senior

**Hispanic students**

- “Programs and workshops seem like more schooling or lecturing, not something extra that students want to deal with. The last thing students want is another lecture.” --Hispanic senior
- “Some White people, they feel that they can’t really relate to any kind of culture, they’re just White and I think sometimes they might be a little bit jealous of us.” --Hispanic senior
- “If certain students want a cultural activity on campus, they can make it happen and it could be shouted from the roof tops of every building, but only the ones who are interested in the things they are offering will come.” --Hispanic underclassman
- “I think maybe that might be because some of us have already experienced a lot of the Hispanic culture and like, I don’t feel I need to go to any of this stuff but I mean, but it’s nice. It’s really nice to be able to do that.” --Hispanic senior
- “I feel that the attempt to bring about a more culturally diverse campus has failed and maybe that is why people feel that it is useless to keep trying when there is not enough support from their fellow Aggies (the majority). Sad but true.” --Hispanic senior
- “Because being an Aggie is not a racial or cross cultural thing—these sorts of activities everyone participates in are more important and make people feel more connected to the community than belonging to ethnic programs. These are also important, but at the individual level, not at the campus level, which means everyone would have to attend to feel connected.” --Hispanic underclassman
White students

- “Some people don’t see this as diversity as a problem that affects them and until they see it as a problem that affects them, they will not be committed or devoted to it.”--White senior
- “Most of the white students at A&M do not feel that the programs are a priority because they are not sensitive to the issues faced by minority students.”--White senior
- “Students are lazy. If it is there already for them, why not go for it. But actually getting up and doing something about it on their own is a very different story.”--White underclassman
- “A lot of people I know hate being required to go to workshops or classes or meetings, me included. I want it to be my choice, not something the university forces me to go to. I think that might be why people prioritized that way.”--White senior
- “It is hard for us to believe that the ethnic and cross-cultural diversity should be a high priority when we don’t see our own culture as a priority.”--White senior
- “Because we interact with people daily. If I were to go to another country I don’t expect them to cater to my ethnic needs because I’m a visitor in their land. I think if people want to learn they’ll learn on their own and it’s doubtful that most students have the time to sit on all these workshops when we’re so busy trying to manage out normal workload.”--White underclassman
- “Since most students here are all of the white culture, their culture is being expressed.”--White senior
- “Not everything needs to be about diversity.”--White senior

Summary of Theme 1 - Why Students Do Not Prioritize Diversity Programs: Students described why they do not prioritize diversity programs in a variety of ways including not wanting to learn, being lazy, having problems with diversity programs, already being aware of cultural differences, and an explanation that issues do not always have to be about diversity.

Theme 2: Priorities for Students

Some students described why they do not prioritize diversity programs by explaining the priorities they do have such as their academic courses and social activities. Out of 31 total comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

Asian American students

- “Promoting awareness of cultural diversity should definitely be a priority for the University. However, this should not be the top priority. Students cannot be forced to learn about other cultures. This method will eventually backfire. Students should want to voluntarily learn about other cultures. This is the only way ignorance can be fought. If the University pushes programs about diversity onto students, students will not gain anything except anger for the University. Overcoming ignorance should be a personal choice, not an obligation.”--Asian American underclassman
- “Most Asian Americans consider school their top priority. They came to A&M for an education and extra curriculars will usually come in second.”--Asian American senior
- “Other things have higher priorities, i.e., spiritual life.”--Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students

- “Well I see it like this. I am in A&M to receive an education and not to try to please anyone. I may have participated in various ethnic activities, but they were never my priority.”--Hispanic senior
“You’ve got to do the academics and make that a strong priority and I’m all for making a few sacrifices here and there so I can get cool experiences but at the same time academics have to be the first priority because that’s what we’re here for.”--Hispanic senior

“The Hispanic culture places work and school above extra-curricular activities. If they did not have any of these organizations or activities, it would not necessarily impact them on a high level.”--Hispanic underclassman

“Programs and workshops are boring and if someone is really interested in different cultures, the best way is to participate in actual activities.”--Hispanic senior

**White students**

“Some students do not think of cultural diversity as important, so while the activity may be fun to participate in, it does not rank high on their priorities.”--White senior

“I would assume that graduating and programs associated with their degrees would obviously take higher priority over other volunteer programs.”--White underclassman

“I feel that promoting awareness for cultural diversity through programs and workshops is a complete waste of our tuition dollars. There are better things for that money to be spent on, like scholarships for students from other countries. Then we can actually meet and live next to or with, and become friends with them instead of going to some program and talking with visitors or looking at videos of their country for a couple of hours.”--White senior

**Summary of Theme 2 - Priorities for Students:** Some students described why they do not prioritize diversity programs by explaining the priorities they do have such as their academic courses and social activities.

**Diversity On Campus**

All students were asked the question: “What do you want to tell us about the issue of campus climate that was not asked?” The responses relating to the issue of diversity on campus are presented here in these major themes:

1. Problems and Solutions;
2. Societal Issues; and

Comments chosen for inclusion were selected on the basis of being well written, easy to comprehend, and representative of the main ideas expressed by students in each identified theme. An overview of all the comments can be found in Appendix E.

**Theme 1: Problems and Solutions**

Some students identified specific problems with diversity while others provided ways to solve diversity issues. Out of 52 comments made, a selection of quotes, divided into specific ethnic groups, is provided below.

**African American students**

“How about finding out ways for all minority students to get together on a regular basis?”--African American underclassman

“I would be curious to poll incoming Caucasian students to determine just how much interaction with African Americans have they had prior to coming to Texas A&M.”--African American senior
American senior. [Note: Information on incoming freshmen and the interaction they have had with diverse students is available in the “Additional Research Findings” section of this report.]

Asian American students

- From an Asian American senior focus group:
  - Student #1: “If you want to start within rather than starting from outside, we need to have more conversations like this. There needs to be more Asian people to sit here and discuss this.”
  - Student #2: “It needs to be continuous, like once a month or something. It’s constant exposure, it’s like learning a foreign language.”
- “When I was a freshman, I wrote a proposal that everyone should be required to take a multicultural class.”--Asian American senior
- “The University should offer students who do want to learn about other cultures classes, lectures, and programs that can aid these students who may not have any other way to learn.”--Asian American underclassman
- “I’ve gone through a position where I was trying to point out my friend, I wouldn’t be like ‘yeah you know the tall guy, with the dark eyes and dark skin.’ I would be like, ‘the Filipino guy who works [on campus].’ And it’s kind of like, it would just be so much easier to just describe it...Let’s get past the label. The label doesn’t matter. If you want you call Asians whole new words. You can call them Bugaboos...we can call them numbers, colors, anything. Get past the label and let’s discuss the actual issue. The actual issue is that we know nothing.”--Asian American senior
- “This problem, over years, hopefully will fix itself. I don’t think it would be wise for the University to undertake any drastic programs and try and solve the diversity or ignorance problem unless racism on campus gets out of hand.”--Asian American underclassman

Hispanic students

- “I definitely think that a lot more co-programming between organizations on campus would be awesome for the community and A&M.”--Hispanic senior
- “I would love to see something on the A&M website that you can have really easy access to what’s going on around campus. I would love to look on there and be likely, you know, I would like to learn more about Mexican American culture for example and find some way that you go to events on campus...You are bombarded with all these events that you don’t know which one to pick because they’re so many. And I know that there’s lots of stuff that goes on around campus. It’s all about whether or not you hear about it...I would love to see a central source of information...and maybe in little categories like these are academic seminars going around campus, they are interviewing for an anthropology position or there’s a physics professor coming from out of state to talk.”--Hispanic senior
- “There was a representative from the Young Conservatives. And he made a point that a lot of people disagreed with but I have to give him credit that he made his point really, really well. He said he hated the idea of diversity. He was so opposed to it because it seemed to force somebody to accept, or it seemed to force a very specific idea that if you weren’t multiracial that you weren’t diverse or if you weren’t some really weird religion that no one knew about then you weren’t diverse.”--Hispanic senior
- “I love the fact that Dr. Gates is, it seems like he’s going to be holding his word because he said he wanted to see improvements in those four areas and diversity was one of them and he has already gotten a $50,000 scholarship fund or something like that. He’s also wanting to bring in the Vice President for Institutional Diversity which will hopefully be instituted in the fall.”--Hispanic senior
White students
  ▪ “College is about WANTING to walk around and see people who are different than yourself so you feel exposed to the world, not wanting to see 40,000 white, Christian students all similar to yourself so you feel safe from the world.”--White underclassman
  ▪ “The students as a whole have the opportunity to interact with each other on campus but there needs to be something that brings everyone together socially on campus a few times a semester that allows them to rub elbows with other cultures and eventually things will change.”--White senior
  ▪ “Everyone is provided with avenues to the same opportunities and thus less focus should be placed on the racism issue related to diversity.”--White senior

*Summary of Theme 1 - Problems and Solutions:* Students identified specific problems with diversity while others provided ways to solve diversity issues.

**Theme 2: Societal Issues**

A handful of students described the diversity issues on campus in a broader view of society. All of the comments, seven in total, were made by Asian American seniors from both focus groups and the web survey. Some of their comments are below.

  ▪ “[Referring to stereotypes in popular films] The [Asian] woman is always very submissive and the [Asian] guy is like, a bit of a loser.”
  ▪ “Race will always be an issue no matter where you are in the world, it’s just the way society functions.”
  ▪ “No matter where you go, prejudice and discrimination will not end. It will not terminate if you protest and it will not disappear if you transfer to a different environment.”

*Summary of Theme 2 - Societal Issues:* Some students described the diversity issues on campus in a broader view of society.

**Theme 3: Not Just Race**

Another group of students explained that diversity at Texas A&M does not involve just race and ethnicity. Some of the other diversity concerns they had were religious beliefs and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered students. Out of 14 total comments made, a selection of quotes is provided below.

Asian American students
  ▪ “I feel like the climate isn’t so bad for minorities actually as it is for like gays, lesbians, transgender and stuff.”--Asian American senior
  ▪ “It has to be united, you can’t segregate [someone] and say, ‘well, you’re not our type of unity.’”--Asian American senior
  ▪ “I see more GLBT [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender] insensitivity than insensitivity towards any other minority.”--Asian American underclassman
White students

- ‘I do not like the attitude toward “two-percenters”. At these times I do sometimes feel ashamed to be part of the other 98%. If people do not enjoy sports, they should not be ridiculed by other students. These are the times when we are not a family.’--White underclassman
- “I think another campus climate issue would be that of religion. I do not think that A&M is very diverse in the subject, or if we are, I don’t seem to hear about it.”--White senior

Summary of Theme 3 - Not Just Race: Students explained that diversity at Texas A&M should not be limited to race and ethnicity, but needs to include religion, sexual orientation and identity. Furthermore, respondents expressed concerns and shared experiences about observing students being insulted because of religious beliefs and sexual orientation/identity.
Additional Research Findings

During the two years in which the 2002 Campus Climate Study was conducted, two national surveys and several campus-wide surveys were implemented at Texas A&M. The results of these surveys supported the findings of the Campus Climate Study and helped to further explain how experiences of Non-White students are different from White students. The findings are highlighted here and more information on the individual studies can be obtained from the Department of Student Life Studies. In addition to these studies, the findings of the 1998 Campus Climate Study also are highlighted.

National Survey Results

Texas A&M participated in two national surveys in 2002-2003. The first, the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), was distributed to incoming freshmen students during their required campus orientation in the summer of 2002. Questions on this survey addressed high school experience and expectations for college. The second survey, Your First College Year (YFCY), was distributed to freshmen in late spring 2003 and addressed their experiences during the first year of college. Some questions were the same on both surveys in order to provide longitudinal trend data.

The 2002 CIRP highlighted the experience and opinions incoming Texas A&M freshmen had with diversity issues prior to attending college compared to the national peer group of public, highly selective institutions. In addition, the CIRP also asked students how satisfied they thought they would be with their college experience. That information, along with how White and Non-White students at A&M responded to each question, is below.

- **Experience with and expectations for socializing with someone of another racial or ethnic group**
  - 81% of incoming freshmen reported frequently socializing with someone of another racial or ethnic group during the previous year compared to 71% of students from the national peer group.
  - Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:
    - 80% White
    - 89% Non-White
  - 74% of incoming freshmen said that chances were very good that s/he would socialize with someone of another racial or ethnic group during college compared to 69% of students from the national peer group.
  - Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:
    - 72% White
    - 84% Non-White

- **Helping to promote racial understanding**
  - 21% of incoming freshmen said “helping to promote racial understanding” was an essential or very important objective compared to 30% of students from the national peer group.
  - Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:
    - 18% White
    - 47% Non-White
Improving understanding of other countries and cultures

- 39% of incoming freshmen said “improving my understanding of other countries and cultures” was an essential or very important objective compared to 46% of students from the national peer group.
  - Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:
    - 36% White
    - 57% Non-White

Opinions on diversity issues

- 31% of incoming freshmen strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement “racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America” compared to 21% of students from the national peer group.
  - Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:
    - 33% White
    - 19% Non-White
- 60% of incoming freshmen strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement “colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus” compared to 57% of students from the national peer group.
  - Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:
    - 59% White
    - 66% Non-White
- 60% of incoming freshmen strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement “affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished” compared to 54% of students from the national peer group.
  - Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:
    - 63% White
    - 44% Non-White

Expectation for being satisfied with this college

- 78% of incoming freshmen said that chances were very good that s/he will “be satisfied with your college compared to 54% of students from the national peer group.
  - Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:
    - 80% White
    - 71% Non-White

Experience with socializing with someone of another racial or ethnic group

- 59% of A&M freshmen said they frequently socialized with someone of another racial or ethnic group since entering college compared to 62% of students from the national peer group.
  - Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:
    - 54% White
    - 80% Non-White

The 2003 YFCY highlighted the experience and opinions Texas A&M freshmen had with diversity issues after their first year of college compared to the national peer group of public institutions. In addition, the YFCY also asked students their opinions of the overall sense of community among students and their overall college experience. That information, along with how White and Non-White students at A&M responded to each question, is below.
- **Helping to promote racial understanding**
  - 36% of A&M freshmen said “helping to promote racial understanding” was an essential or very important objective compared to 39% of students from the national peer group.
  - **Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:**
    - 30% White
    - 62% Non-White

- **Improving understanding of other countries and cultures**
  - 55% of A&M freshmen said “improving my understanding of other countries and cultures” was an essential or very important objective compared to 54% of students from the national peer group.
  - **Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:**
    - 53% White
    - 64% Non-White

- **College experience with diversity issues**
  - 15% of A&M freshmen said their knowledge of people from different races and cultures was “much stronger” compared with college entry. 16% of students from the national peer group said the same.
  - **Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:**
    - 15% White
    - 18% Non-White

- **Isolation from college campus life**
  - 33% of A&M freshmen said they since entering college they frequently or occasionally felt isolate from campus life. 34% of students from the national peer group said the same.
  - **Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:**
    - 30% White
    - 39% Non-White

- **Overall sense of community among students**
  - 87% of A&M freshmen said they were satisfied or very satisfied compared to 64% of the national peer group.
  - **Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:**
    - 88% White
    - 81% Non-White

- **Overall college experience**
  - 88% of A&M freshmen said they were satisfied or very satisfied compared to 79% of the national peer group.
  - **Responses by Texas A&M White and Non-White students:**
    - 89% White
    - 83% Non-White

Although A&M freshmen do not differ very much from the national peer group at the end of their first college year, some of their high school experiences and opinions are different. In addition, A&M
freshmen do not seem to be sustaining the same level of diversity awareness at the end of their first college year as they did while in high school or expected to during college. Texas A&M freshmen overall expect to be more satisfied and are more satisfied with their college than their national peers although this is different between White and Non-White students.

Campus-Wide Surveys

A November 2002 survey on campus involvement asked students who encourages them to attend activities outside the classroom. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of White students cited their friends compared to 34% of Non-White students. In addition to a lower reliance on friends, 29% of Non-White students said no one encouraged them to attend activities while only 18% of White students said the same. Both findings suggest that Non-White students do not have as much support for their involvement in campus life as White students, which supports the Campus Climate results for Non-White students feeling uncomfortable in the social environment. (Aggie R-r-ring Survey Program: Student Involvement Survey, Part I)

Another survey on involvement issues, conducted in March 2003, asked about a student’s likelihood of attending an international or ethnic event. As was found in the 2002 Campus Climate Study, more Non-White students (64%) said it was likely they would participate in the cultural events compared to White students (43%). (Aggie R-r-ring Survey Program: Student Involvement Survey, Part II)

An April 2003 survey on campus traditions asked students if they had ever participated in specific traditional events. As was the case in the Campus Climate survey, White students were more likely to participate in two major traditions, Yell Practice and Muster, than Non-White students. For Yell Practice, 94% of White students had attended compared to 83% of Non-White students. For Muster, 52% of White students had attended compared to 46% of Non-White students. The traditions survey went on to ask for students’ agreement to the statement: “I feel welcome when participating in major campus traditions at Texas A&M.” Ninety-seven percent (97%) of White students agreed compared to 80% of Non-White students. It is interesting to note that the groups did not differ on every tradition. One tradition that attracted both groups was the Aggie Ring: 99% of White students and 98% of Non-White students planned to obtain a ring before they graduated. As they explained in the 2002 Campus Climate Study, students wanted the ring so they can belong to the “Aggie Network.” (Aggie R-r-ring Survey Program: Traditions survey)

A Bias Related Incident Survey was conducted in Fall 2003 in order to benchmark the types of bias incidents that students report from their college experiences, specifically those occurring on campus or during official campus activities such as student organization meetings, athletic events, etc. The two main findings of this survey were that the bias incidents observed or experienced by students were mainly verbal incidents and Non-White students reported more incidents due to race and ethnicity than White students. Both findings are consistent with the results of the 2002 Campus Climate Study. (Bias Related Incident Survey)
1998 Campus Climate Study

During the 1997-1998 school year, a Campus Climate Study was administered at Texas A&M by researchers from the University of Michigan. Based on focus group feedback from students, staff, and faculty, a survey was constructed and distributed to over six thousand underclassman students (as well as a sample of graduate students, faculty, and staff). More than two thousand undergraduate students responded to the survey.

The major findings of the 1998 Campus Climate Study were quite similar to the findings of the 2002 project despite the differences in methodology and sampling. Below is a listing of some of the findings of the 1998 study that were replicated in the 2002 Campus Climate Study:

- Non-White students reported lower satisfaction on diversity issues than White students;
- Over half of students in all ethnicity groups rated the climate as “friendly” and “competitive”. However, students, especially Non-White students, did not agree that A&M was socially inclusive;
- Incidents of discrimination and harassment revealed a lack of civility and, at times, overt hostilities. In particular, African American students were the most likely group to report discrimination;
- The main source of discrimination for underclassmen came from other students;
- White students had relatively low levels of participation in organized diversity activities such as cross-cultural organizations or diversity awareness programs;
- Some ethnic groups wanted less focus on racial issues and expressed a desire for colorblind practices;
- All students reported high levels of overall satisfaction with the University. However, Non-White students reported lower satisfaction than White students;
- The majority of students, regardless of ethnicity, were glad they chose to attend A&M;
- More than 97% of all students said they would complete their degree at A&M.

In addition to the main findings of the 1998 study, the researchers offered several recommendations to Texas A&M to assist in the diversity efforts. Since the findings were published, a few of the recommendations have been addressed by Texas A&M. A policy of zero tolerance for acts of bigotry was established shortly after the publication of the report. In addition, Vision 2020, a plan to propel Texas A&M into the top ten public universities by the year 2020, included a section on the diversification and globalization of the A&M community. Most recently, an administrative position with the title “Vice President for Institutional Assessment and Diversity” was created in the summer of 2003 to coordinate diversity efforts across the campus. Another recent plan centers upon recruiting more under-represented students, staff, and faculty.
Discussion

Existing theoretical models such as the intercultural learning process cycle developed by Hoopes (1979) explains how individuals learn about their own and different cultures as well as how they might develop patterns of beliefs that they carry with them into adulthood. The results of this study demonstrate that students at Texas A&M are in a wide range of stages concerning cultural awareness and education. The findings also reveal that A&M students are similar to other college students studied in previous cultural projects. For instance, similar to the research of Woodard and Sims (2000), Eimers (2001), and Loo and Rolison (1986), while Non-White students at Texas A&M University were “glad” to be on campus, they also report feelings of discomfort and isolation in the social environment. They also agreed more than White students that racism is a problem on campus. In addition, senior Non-White students agreed that racism was a problem on campus more than sophomore Non-White students which supports the findings of Bennett and Okinaka (1990). Finally, similar to the findings of Radloff and Evans (2003), White students at Texas A&M did not report direct experience with racism.

This study emphasized the differences found between White and Non-White students. For example, when A&M students were asked to define several phrases about community (i.e., “being a member of the community,” “being accepted and welcomed,” and “being respected”), White and Non-White students shared similar definitions. However, the definitions were often interchangeable suggesting that students were not clear about the meaning of the concepts. Furthermore, the language used by White and Non-White students to define the phrases was different. White students expressed their definitions in language that emphasized wholeness to the community while Non-White students used language that reflected individual differences. Non-White students also introduced the word “tolerance” into their definitions and explained that they were treated with common courtesy and were not necessarily welcomed and accepted.

In their personal experiences, Non-White students mostly focused on what made them different from the White majority. Differences were observed for several reasons: the lack of previous generations who attended Texas A&M and could pass along historical and cultural knowledge of the campus, the absence of social opportunities on campus and in the community that matched their interests, incidents of mostly covert racism that accumulated over time, and the isolation they felt as a small population.

Another issue that this study highlighted for Non-White students was the struggle with the complex issues of diversity. While most Non-White students expressed a desire for more activities, programs, and discussions dealing with issues important to their specific ethnic groups, some also identified a need to have less focus on ethnicity. There seemed to be a struggle for Non-White students between the attention directed toward their background, such as when they feel they must represent their ethnicity in classroom discussions, and the recognition that additional attention to ethnicity might be necessary in order to address differences and contribute to the educational development of others.

The occurrence of racist incidents on campus was another issue that emerged from this study. Non-White students, when describing their experiences with racism on campus or in the community, cited mostly verbal incidents such as stereotypical comments, slurs, and derogatory statements made to them or about them. Other incidents included isolation in the academic classroom when no one would sit next to them and seeing confederate flags on vehicles or in windows around campus. Overall, racism seemed to be expressed in mostly subtle circumstances but had a cumulative effect over time to the point that Non-White seniors reported more agreement that racism is a problem on campus than Non-
White sophomores. In contrast, White students mainly expressed positive views about the campus environment and shared few incidents of racism they had either observed or heard about (but not experienced). The cumulative effect of racism did not seem to exist for White students.

Non-White students recommended changes that could be made to improve the campus climate including admitting more under-represented students, incorporating multicultural perspectives into classroom material, and facilitating more interactions between students of different cultures. White students generally did not support the diversification of campus because they did not understand how they would benefit from it.

The concept of cultural encapsulation (Pedersen, 1994) is illustrated throughout the results of this study, particularly with White students. Their explanations of why they were “glad” to be on campus and why they would recommend Texas A&M University to others centered on major campus activities such as traditions and athletic events. They also tended to be the group that expressed the idea of individual effort. In their view, belonging to the campus community was easy if an individual participated in the major events. Their comments rarely addressed learning about other cultures or expressing individual differences.

White and Non-White students did not differ in all areas. All students reported similar gains in personal development skills such as leadership skills and getting along with other students. In addition, students also found similar ways to belong within the campus community. Identity groups, such as close friends, student organizations, residence halls and other living environments, and academic study groups, emerged as powerful tools all students use to help them feel accepted and welcomed on campus. However, several Non-White students remarked that identity groups also could keep them from stepping out of their comfort zones and interacting with students from different backgrounds and interests. For instance, when the topic of cultural education was mentioned, Non-White students often focused on other students learning about their personal heritage rather than expressing a desire to learn about cultures outside of their experience.

Most students, regardless of ethnicity, also agreed that Texas A&M had a challenging academic environment, faculty members who treated students fairly and equally, a mostly friendly social environment, a strong network of current and former students, and the opportunities for involvement through student organizations that allowed for interaction with fellow students and building social skills. In addition, students were concerned about different aspects of diversity not directly addressed by this study but perceived to be a problem on campus such as religious differences, gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgender issues, disabilities, and the southern United States culture.

Based on the results of this study, several strategies are suggested to further explore and engage the campus community on the issue of diversity. Since the completion of data collection, some of these recommendations have been implemented in part and progress has been made in some areas. Nevertheless, persistence is needed to pursue the foundations already set.

First, it may be important for administrators, faculty, and staff to further engage students in a more direct dialogue about why increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body, faculty, staff, and administrators is an important goal. Some students do not readily see the benefits that can come from interacting with people from different backgrounds. Addressing the benefits of interacting with and learning from a variety of people could assist students in understanding the importance of diversity to them personally and to the university and community as a whole.
Second, a common language could be developed for the campus so all students, faculty, staff, and administrators are clear about the meaning of climate-related terms and what behavior expectations go along with the definitions. For instance, while the terms “accepted” and “welcomed” may be used to describe a warm environment where all individuals are recognized and embraced based on specific talents and gifts, some Non-White students clearly view the meaning of these terms as “tolerance” and “politeness.” In addition, as discovered through the writing of this report, terms used to describe ethnic groups (“White,” “Non-White,” “Majority,” “Minority,” etc.) also have different meanings for individuals. Generating a shared language could help direct future efforts to improve the campus climate.

Third, further assessment could be conducted on perceived classroom language barriers discussed by some White students. Over half of the White students participating in the web survey equated racial and ethnic diversity with language barriers they encountered in classes led by international instructors. It is interesting to note that no Non-White students raised the issue of international faculty and dealing with differences in language. It is not clear from this study whether the language barriers expressed by the White students were a result of instructors’ skills or the students’ challenge of trying to understand someone with a language different from their own. Identifying and addressing any real or perceived barriers could help White students become more open to a broader concept of increased diversity.

Fourth, the impact of identity groups and the positive view of faculty shared by most students could be combined through the formation of more learning communities or through a common first-year experience. Bringing students of all backgrounds together into small groups could greatly increase their interactions. In addition, if the communities were associated with academic studies and faculty members facilitated the groups, a synergy could be created that would allow students to experience common academic pursuits and explore their individual differences in a supportive environment.

Fifth, several strategies could be implemented to combat feelings of isolation and help all students feel like members of the campus community. For instance, several Non-White students commented on not understanding specific activities unique to Texas A&M such as campus traditions. Efforts could be made to ensure all students are introduced to the campus culture during the required new student orientation. Another issue mentioned by Non-White students was their lack of interest in activities outside of academic pursuits. Texas A&M can help combat the idea that all students participate in the campus culture by reviewing how it promotes this image to new and current students. For instance, a recent Minority Recruitment Leadership Team (MRLT) campaign for the institution called “I Am A&M” includes a website [iam.tamu.edu] that profiles several students chosen to represent the institution as “ambassadors.” All of the profiled students are undergraduates of traditional college age, have lived on campus, are involved in student organizations and have favorite traditions. While all of these students are wonderful representatives of part of the student body, many types of individuals are not included such as the mother of two who is returning to school and barely has time to study and attend class, the international graduate student who came to campus for a specific field of study and does not wish to be involved in campus life because it would take away from his research, or the undergraduate student who has to work many hours to pay her tuition and cannot be involved due to her schedule. These students are also part of the A&M community but do not find themselves represented in the campus literature. By ensuring that all types of students are represented in recruitment campaigns, the institution can send a message that all students are part of the community even if their needs and expectations do not fit the norm.

Sixth, the Aggie network of current and former students could be utilized more in recruiting Non-White students to campus. The students offered positive comments about the potential of the network
in their career development and the ability to have something in common with anyone who wears the Aggie Ring. Emphasizing and utilizing the Aggie network in recruiting could present Texas A&M in a more attractive manner to students who might not otherwise consider attending.

Seventh, staff, faculty, and administrators could review current diversity practices and determine whether or not adjustments are necessary. For instance, Texas A&M has taken pride in the amount of responsibility that is granted and/or expected of student leaders within student organizations. One of the responsibilities held by student leaders is recruiting new members into their organizations. Often times, student organizations utilize recruiting plans which have been passed down from previous leaders. These plans could unintentionally exclude groups of students who would be interested in the opportunities the organizations offer. Staff and faculty advisors could review the recruiting strategies student leaders use and suggest improvements so students from diverse backgrounds are aware of and have the opportunity to join an organization that fits their interests and needs.

Eighth, the campus climate at Texas A&M should be assessed longitudinally and any strategies that are implemented for improving campus diversity should be tracked and assessed for effectiveness. A comprehensive assessment plan for diversity—beyond the current recruitment efforts—would assist all members of the campus community in coordinating effort and sharing outcomes.

Finally, as one student, a White underclassman, explained: “The problem is within the student body and how students deal with differences.” As Tatum (1992) describes, “It has become painfully clear on many college campuses across the United States that we cannot have successfully multiracial campuses without talking about race and learning about racism. Providing a forum where this discussion can take place safely over a semester, a time period that allows personal and group development to unfold in ways that day-long or weekend programs do not, may be among the most proactive learning opportunities an institution can provide” (p. 23). This study has demonstrated that the main issue for the campus climate at Texas A&M is student-to-student interactions. Finding opportunities to facilitate continued dialogue between students could be the main focus of future diversity efforts at Texas A&M. For instance, diversity discussions could be embedded within a common first-year experience. All students would then have the same opportunity to become acquainted with one another’s backgrounds and views, continue their individual development, and build the skills necessary to function successfully in a multicultural world.
References

All demographic information was obtained from the Texas A&M University Student Information Management System (SIMS) and the Office of Institutional Studies and Planning (OISP).

Aggie R-r-ring survey projects can be found by visiting the Student Life Studies website:  
http://studentlifestudies.tamu.edu

CIRP and YFCY information can be obtained by contacting the Department of Student Life Studies.

Vision 2020 information can be accessed by visiting the Vision 2020 website:  
http://www.tamu.edu/vision2020/culture/culture.pdf


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- Sandi Osters, who assisted in the qualitative sort process and contributed to and provided guidance for the writing of the report;
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- Suzy Pryor, who ensured that all of the computers and data bases were working throughout the process.

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APPENDIX A—Telephone Survey Questions

Aggie R-r-ring Survey Program
Campus Climate Survey

Which of the following best describes your living situation THIS year?

With parents or relatives?   Yes   No
Off campus (not with parents)?  Yes  No
Fraternity/Sorority House Yes No
Residence Hall Yes No
Corps Residence Hall Yes No
Cain Hall Yes No
University Apartments Yes No
Other ________________________________________________________

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following

Agree 4   Agree somewhat 3   Disagree Somewhat 2   Disagree Strongly 1

1. I am glad I attended Texas A&M  4 3 2 1
2. I feel that I am a member of the Texas A&M University community  4 3 2 1
3. I will complete my degree at A&M  4 3 2 1
4. I feel a sense of belonging at A&M  4 3 2 1
5. If asked, I would recommend coming to Texas A&M to others  4 3 2 1

Below are some statements about Texas A&M. Indicate to what extent you agree or disagree.

Agree 4   Agree somewhat 3   Disagree Somewhat 2   Disagree Strongly 1

6. Faculty are interested in students’ personal problems  4 3 2 1
7. Most faculty are sensitive to the issues of minorities  4 3 2 1
8. People here treat each other with respect  4 3 2 1
9. Faculty here are strongly interested in the academic problems of individuals  4 3 2 1
10. Students are treated fairly here regardless of their racial or ethnic background  4 3 2 1
11. Student organizations promote racial/ethnic understanding 4 3 2 1
12. Racism is a problem at Texas A&M 4 3 2 1
13. Students here have a good understanding of the traditions And values of other cultures 4 3 2 1
14. Students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and Welcomed by majority (white) students at A&M 4 3 2 1
15. Since coming to Texas A&M I have learned a lot about the Other racial /ethnic groups and about their contributions to American Society 4 3 2 1

Please rate the amount you have changed since entering Texas A&M

Greatly Decreased 1 Decreased Somewhat 2 Stayed the same 3 Increased Somewhat 4 Greatly Increased 5
16. Ability to get along with others 1 2 3 4 5
17. Knowledge of other cultures 1 2 3 4 5
18. Acceptance of different cultures 1 2 3 4 5
19. Leadership Ability 1 2 3 4 5
20. Ability to interact in multicultural environments 1 2 3 4 5
21. Tolerance of people with different beliefs 1 2 3 4 5

The following statements have to do with your interactions with faculty members. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

Agree 4 Agree somewhat 3 Disagree Somewhat 2 Disagree Strongly 1
22. Faculty members here are good teachers 4 3 2 1
23. There is very little contact between faculty and students Outside of the classroom 4 3 2 1
24. Most faculty members here are sensitive to student interests, Needs and aspirations 4 3 2 1
25. At least one faculty member has had a strong influence on my Intellectual development 4 3 2 1
26. It is easy to develop close relationships with faculty members On campus 4 3 2 1

How difficult were the following during your FIRST YEAR at Texas A&M?

Very difficult--1 Somewhat difficult--2 Somewhat easy--3 Very Easy--4
27. Amount of school work 4 3 2 1
28. Level of difficulty of school work
4 3 2 1
29. Getting to know your way around
4 3 2 1
30. Making new friends
4 3 2 1
31. Communicating with instructors
4 3 2 1
32. Feeling comfortable in living environment
4 3 2 1
33. Participating in social events
4 3 2 1
34. Communicating with staff
4 3 2 1

Please indicate how often you experienced the following since enrolling at Texas A&M

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Heard faculty make inappropriate remarks about minorities</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Felt isolated</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Took part in Yell Practice</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Participated in Muster</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Were insulted or threatened by another student because of your social class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or religion</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>41. Dated</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Worked to pay college expenses</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For the activities listed below, please indicate how often you engaged in each during the past year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Drank wine, beer or liquor</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Tutored another student</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Attended a program on diversity</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Talked with faculty outside of class</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Was a guest at a professor’s home</td>
<td>3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your opinion, how would you prioritize each of the following recommendations regarding the climate for diversity at Texas A&M
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Priority 4</th>
<th>Strong Priority 3</th>
<th>Moderate Priority 2</th>
<th>No Priority 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48. Promote more programs that recognize distinctive cultural heritage or diverse lifestyles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Provide more awareness sensitivity workshops Or programs to help students become more Aware of the needs of diverse groups</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Provide more diversity training for faculty And staff</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Encourage faculty to incorporate the Perspectives of racial/ethnic minorities In their classrooms</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Create more special programs or services For ethnic minorities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Hire more racial minority staff, faculty and Administrators</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B—Focus Group and Web Survey Questions

1. In the Aggie R-r-ring telephone survey conducted in the fall, students were very positive that they would recommend Texas A&M to others.
   - What would be the three top reasons you would recommend Texas A&M to others?

2. Our survey indicated that over 90% of students responding—regardless of their ethnicity—agreed that they felt they were members of the Texas A&M community.
   - What does ‘being a member of the community’ mean to you?
   - What are the experiences you have had here that made you feel like a member?
   - **AFRICAN AMERICAN** and **HISPANIC** students only:
     - When (AFRICAN AMERICAN)/(HISPANIC) students responded to the question if they felt a sense of belonging at A&M, they were not as positive as they were about being a member of the community.
     - Why do you believe the results were like this?
     - What difference is there for you between feeling a sense of belonging and feeling that you are a member of the community?

3. When asked if students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed by the majority (White) students at Texas A&M, students responding to the fall survey were mixed in their responses. 92% of White students agreed while 77% of Non-White students agreed.
   - What are your experiences at A&M that shaped your response to this question—whether you agreed or disagreed that students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed by the majority (White) students here?
   - Students of all ethnicities were more positive that ‘people here treat each other with respect’ than they were about students from diverse racial background being accepted and welcome by the majority.  Help me better understand the difference between being accepted and welcomed and being treated with respect.

4. In the survey students were asked if they thought racism was a problem at Texas A&M.
   - Regardless if you agreed or disagreed that racism is a problem here, what have been your experiences here that have lead you to your opinion on this issue?
   - **AFRICAN AMERICAN**: Help me better understand why a majority of African American students surveyed believed both that racism is a problem and that they have a sense of belonging to this community.
   - **NON-WHITE SENIORS**: The percentage of minority students who feel that racism is a problem here increases from sophomore to senior year. What experiences do seniors have that would make them differ from sophomores?

**IF THERE IS TIME, ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. IF NOT, GO TO THE CLOSING QUESTION.**

5. **NON-WHITE ONLY**: Our survey shows that a significant percentage of minority students feel isolated on Texas A&M’s campus.
   - What does ‘feeling isolated’ mean?
   - What experiences have you had that would lead you to feel isolated?
6. Our survey showed that the majority of students agreed that faculty were sensitive to the issues of minorities.
   - What have you observed that supported or did not support that observation?
   - AFRICAN AMERICAN SENIORS: The percentage of minority students who feel that faculty are not sensitive to the issues of minorities increases from sophomore to senior year. What experiences do seniors have that would make them differ from sophomores?

7. What are your experiences in regard to student organizations and the role they play in promoting racial and ethnic understanding?

8. Look below for the questions per group
   - WHITE STUDENTS: In the telephone survey, a 66% majority of White students said that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when asked about prioritizing programs and workshops to promote awareness of cultural diversity and the needs of culturally diverse students, White students gave them a moderate priority.
     - What in your experience would lead students to respond in this fashion—participating in programs and activities but not prioritizing them as strong or high priorities?
     - 29% of White students felt that hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators was a strong or high priority. What in your experience would lead students to respond in this fashion?
   - AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS: In the telephone survey, the highest priority for African American students was to hire more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators.
     - Tell me more about how hiring more racial minority faculty will help in the classroom.
     - How will hiring more racial minority staff help out of the classroom?
     - How will hiring more racial minority administrators help the University?
   - HISPANIC STUDENTS: In the telephone survey, a 75% majority of Hispanic students said that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when asked about prioritizing programs and workshops to promote awareness of cultural diversity and the needs of culturally diverse students, students gave them a moderate priority.
     - What in your experience would lead to students to respond in this fashion—participating in programs and activities but not prioritizing them as strong or high priorities?
   - ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS: In the telephone survey, an 86% majority of Asian and Pacific Islander students said that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when asked about prioritizing programs and workshops to promote awareness of cultural diversity and the needs of culturally diverse students, students gave them a moderate priority.
     - What in your experience would lead to students to respond in this fashion—participating in programs and activities but not prioritizing them as strong or high priorities?
   - MIXED STUDENTS: In the telephone survey, a majority of the students interviewed—regardless of ethnicity—said that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when asked about prioritizing programs and workshops to promote awareness of cultural diversity and the needs of culturally diverse students, students gave them a moderate priority.
○ What in your experience would lead to students to respond in this fashion—participating in programs and activities but not prioritizing them as strong or high priorities?

CLOSING QUESTION
What do you want to tell me about this issue of campus climate that I have not asked?
APPENDIX C—Web Survey Questions

Campus Climate Survey
Follow-up Questions
CODE

In September 2002, you participated in an Aggie R-r-ring telephone survey regarding the campus climate at Texas A&M University. In order to better understand the information students provided, we are asking all survey participants to share their thoughts on the questions below. This follow-up survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time and your responses will help us make attending Texas A&M a more rewarding experience.

All of your answers will be anonymous and you may skip any question that makes you uncomfortable. You may also withdraw your participation in the survey at any time. If you have any questions about this survey you may contact Peggy Holzweiss at 862-5624.

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board—Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions involving subjects’ rights, the Institutional Review Board may be contacted through Dr. Michael W. Buckley, Director of Research Compliance at 979-845-8585.

1. In the survey, students were very positive they would recommend Texas A&M to others. Why would you recommend Texas A&M to others?

2. The survey results indicated that over 90% of students responding—regardless of their ethnicity—agreed that they felt they were members of the Texas A&M community. What does “being a member of the community” mean to you?

2a. What are the experiences you have had at Texas A&M that made you feel like a member of the community?

AFRICAN AMERICAN and HISPANIC students only:

2b. When (AFRICAN AMERICAN)(HISPANIC) students were asked if they felt a sense of belonging at A&M, they were not as positive as they were about being a member of the community. Why do you believe the results were like this?

2c. What is the difference between feeling a sense of belonging and feeling that you are a member of the community?

3. When asked if students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed by the majority (White) students at Texas A&M, students were mixed in their responses. 92% of White students agreed while 77% of Non-White students agreed. Whether you agreed or disagreed that students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed, what are your experiences at A&M that shaped your response to this question?
3a. Students of all ethnicities were more positive that “people here treat each other with respect” than they were about students from diverse racial background being accepted and welcome by the majority. What is the difference between being accepted and welcomed and being treated with respect?

4. In the survey students were asked if they thought racism was a problem at Texas A&M. Regardless if you agreed or disagreed that racism is a problem at Texas A&M, what have been your experiences here that have lead you to your opinion on this issue?

   4a. AFRICAN AMERICAN: A majority of African American students surveyed believed both that racism is a problem and that they have a sense of belonging to this community. What would make students respond in this fashion?

   4b. NON-WHITE SENIORS: The percentage of minority students who feel that racism is a problem here increases from sophomore to senior year. What experiences do seniors have that would make them differ from sophomores?

5. NON-WHITE STUDENTS only: Our survey shows that a significant percentage of minority students feel isolated on Texas A&M’s campus. What does “feeling isolated” mean?

   5a. What experiences have you had that would lead you to feel isolated?

6. Our survey showed that the majority of students agreed that faculty were sensitive to the issues of minorities. What have you observed that supported or did not support that response from students?

   6a. AFRICAN AMERICAN SENIORS: The percentage of minority students who feel that faculty are not sensitive to the issues of minorities increases from sophomore to senior year. What experiences do seniors have that would make them differ from sophomores?

7. What are your experiences in regard to student organizations and the role they play in promoting racial and ethnic understanding?

8. WHITE STUDENTS: In the telephone survey, a 66% majority of White students said that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when asked about prioritizing programs and workshops to promote awareness of cultural diversity and the needs of culturally diverse students, White students gave them a moderate priority. What in your experience would lead students to respond in this fashion—participating in programs and activities but not prioritizing them as strong or high priorities?

   8a. 29% of White students felt that hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators was a strong or high priority. What in your experience would lead students to respond in this fashion?

8. AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS: In the telephone survey, the highest priority for African American students was to hire more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators. How will hiring more racial minority faculty will help in the classroom?
8a. How will hiring more racial minority staff help out of the classroom?

8b. How will hiring more racial minority administrators help the University?

8. **HISPANIC STUDENTS**: In the telephone survey, a 75% majority of Hispanic students said that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when asked about prioritizing programs and workshops to promote awareness of cultural diversity and the needs of culturally diverse students, students gave them a moderate priority. What in your experience would lead to students to respond in this fashion—participating in programs and activities but not prioritizing them as strong or high priorities?

8. **ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS**: In the telephone survey, an 86% majority of Asian and Pacific Islander students said that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when asked about prioritizing programs and workshops to promote awareness of cultural diversity and the needs of culturally diverse students, students gave them a moderate priority. What in your experience would lead to students to respond in this fashion—participating in programs and activities but not prioritizing them as strong or high priorities?

9. What do you want to tell us about the issue of campus climate that was not asked?
APPENDIX D—Telephone Survey Data Tables

Campus Climate Data 2002
Total number of respondents was 1085.

Response choices: Agree Strongly (4), Agree Somewhat (3), Disagree Somewhat (2), Disagree Strongly (1)

“Agree Strongly” and “Agree Somewhat” have been combined for the “Percent” column and are reported as “Agree.”

1. I am glad I attended Texas A&M. (Agree)

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2. I feel that I am a member of the Texas A&M University community. (Agree)

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3. I will complete my degree at A&M. (Agree)

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4. I feel a sense of belonging at A&M. (Agree)

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5. If asked, I would recommend coming to Texas A&M to others. (Agree)

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6. Faculty are interested in the students’ personal problems. (Agree)

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7. Most faculty are sensitive to the issues of minorities. (Agree)

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8. People here treat each other with respect. (Agree)

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9. Faculty here are strongly interested in the academic problems of individuals. (Agree)

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10. Students are treated fairly here regardless of their racial or ethnic background. (Agree)

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11. Student organizations promote racial/ethnic understanding. (Agree)

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12. Racism is a problem at Texas A&M. (Agree)

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13. Students here have a good understanding of the traditions and values of other cultures. (Agree)

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14. Students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed by majority (White) students at A&M (Agree)

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15. Since coming to A&M, I have learned a lot about other racial/ethnic groups and about their contributions to American Society. (Agree)

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Please rate the amount you have changed since entering Texas A&M

Response choices: Greatly Increased (5), Increased Somewhat (4), Stayed the Same (3), Decreased Somewhat (2), and Greatly Decreased (1).

“Greatly Increased” and “Increased Somewhat” have been combined in the “Percent” column and are reported as “Increased.”.

16. Ability to get along with others (increased)

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17. Knowledge of other cultures (increased)

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18. Acceptance of different cultures (increased)

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19. Leadership ability (increased)

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20. Ability to interact in multicultural environments. (increased)

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21. Tolerance of people with different beliefs (increased)

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22. Faculty here are good teachers. (Agree)

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23. There is very little contact between faculty and students outside the classroom. (Agree)

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</table>

24. Most faculty members here are sensitive to student interests, needs, and aspirations. (Agree)

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<tr>
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<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>n</th>
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25. At least one faculty member has had a strong influence on my intellectual development. (Agree)

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26. It is easy to develop close relationships with faculty members on campus. (Agree)

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<td>.882</td>
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How difficult were the following during your FIRST YEAR at Texas A&M?
Response options: Very Difficult (4), Somewhat Difficult (3), Somewhat Easy (2), and Very Easy (1)

"Very Difficult" and "Somewhat Difficult" were combined for the "Percent" column and are reported as "Difficult."

27. Amount of school work (Difficult)

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### 28. Level of difficulty of school work (Difficult)

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### 29. Getting to know your way around (Difficult)

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### 30. Making new friends (Difficult)

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### 31. Communicating with instructors. (Difficult)

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<td>.817</td>
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32. Feeling comfortable in your living environment. (Difficult)

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33. Participating in social events (Difficult)

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34. Communicating with A&M Staff (Difficult)

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</table>
Please indicate how often you experienced the following since enrolling at Texas A&M.
Response options: Frequently (3), Occasionally (2), and Never (1)

“Frequently” and “Occasionally” were combined for the “Percent” column.

35. Heard faculty make inappropriate remarks about minorities (Frequently or Occasionally)

<table>
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36. Felt isolated. (Frequently or Occasionally)

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<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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</table>

37. Participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations. (Frequently or Occasionally)

<table>
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<th>Mean</th>
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<th>n</th>
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<td>75.7</td>
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38. Took part in Yell Practice (Frequently or Occasionally)

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39. Participated in Muster (Frequently or Occasionally)

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40. Were insulted or threatened by another student because of your social class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religion. (Frequently or Occasionally)

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41. Went out on a date. (Frequently or Occasionally)

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<td>2.39</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>0.694</td>
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</table>

42. Worked to pay college expenses (Frequently or Occasionally)

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<td>White</td>
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<td>0.824</td>
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For the activities listed below, please indicate how often you engaged in each during the past year
Response options: Frequently (3), Occasionally (2), and Never (1)

“Frequently” and “Occasionally” were combined for the “Percent” column.

43. Drank wine, beer, or liquor. (Frequently or Occasionally)

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<td>0.716</td>
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<td>0.720</td>
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<td>0.741</td>
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44. Tutored another student (Frequently or Occasionally)

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45. Attended a program on diversity (Frequently or Occasionally)

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<td>51.4</td>
<td>1.64</td>
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46. Talked with faculty outside of class (Frequently or Occasionally)

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47. Were a guest at a professor's home (Frequently or Occasionally)

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</table>
In your opinion, how would you prioritize each of the following recommendations regarding the climate for diversity at Texas A&M?
Response options: Highest Priority (4), Strong Priority (3), Moderate Priority (2), and No Priority (1)

“Highest Priority” and “Strong Priority” were combined for the “Percent” column.

48. Promote more programs that recognize distinctive cultural heritage or diverse lifestyles (Strong priority & Highest priority)

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Mean</th>
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49. Provide awareness/sensitivity workshops or programs to help students become more aware of the needs of diverse groups. (Strong priority & Highest priority)

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<th>Percent</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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50. Provide more diversity training for faculty and staff (Strong priority & Highest priority)

<table>
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51. Encourage faculty to incorporate the perspectives of racial/ethnic minorities in the classrooms (Strong priority & Highest priority)

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52. Create more special programs or services for ethnic minorities (Strong priority & Highest priority)

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53. Hire more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators (Strongest priority & Highest priority)

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Appendix E—Summary of All Qualitative Responses

Racism at Texas A&M University--The Overall Environment (p. 12)

Question (all students):
“In the survey, students were asked if they thought racism was a problem at Texas A&M University. Regardless if you agreed or disagreed that racism is a problem at Texas A&M University, what have been your experiences here that have led you to your opinion on this issue?”

Theme 1: Issues with the Campus Environment (p. 13)
There were sixty-three (63) total comments; twenty-six (26) comments from White students, twenty-three (23) comments from Asian American students, twelve (12) comments from Hispanic students, and two (2) comments from African American students. For classification, forty (40) comments came from seniors and twenty-three (23) comments came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Incidents Students Have Heard About, Observed, or Experienced (p. 14)
There were one hundred eleven (111) total comments; forty-five (45) comments from Asian American students, thirty-three (33) comments from Hispanic students, twenty (20) comments from African American students, and thirteen (13) comments from White students. For classification, ninety (90) comments came from seniors while twenty-one (21) comments came from underclassmen.

Theme 3: Individual and Societal Contributions to Racism (p. 16)
There were forty-seven (47) total comments; twenty-six (26) comments from Asian American students, thirteen (13) comments from White students, seven (7) comments from Hispanic students, and one (1) comment from an African American student. For classification, thirty-eight (38) comments came from seniors and nine (9) comments came from underclassmen.

Racism at Texas A&M University--The African American Perspective (p. 17)

Question (African American students):
“A majority of African American students surveyed believed both that racism is a problem and that they have a sense of belonging to this community. What would make students respond in this fashion?”

There were twenty-three (23) total comments; fifteen (15) comments came from seniors and eight (8) comments came from underclassmen.

Racism at Texas A&M University--The Classification Effect (p. 18)

Question (Non-White seniors)
“The percentage of minority students who feel that racism is a problem here increases from sophomore to senior year. What experiences do seniors have that would make them differ from sophomores?”

There were fifty-seven (57) total comments; thirty-eight (38) from Hispanic seniors, eleven (11) from African American seniors, and eight (8) from Asian American seniors.
Recommending Texas A&M to Others (p. 120)

Question (All students):
“In the survey, students were very positive they would recommend Texas A&M University to others. Why would you recommend Texas A&M University to others?”

Theme 1: Academics (p. 20)
There were fifty-nine (59) total comments; eighteen (18) comments from Hispanic students, sixteen (16) from White students, fifteen (15) comments from Asian American students, and ten (10) from African American students. For classification, thirty-eight (38) comments came from seniors and twenty-one (21) from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Student Body and Campus Culture (p. 21)
There were seventy-four (74) total comments; twenty-five (25) comments from White students, twenty-three (23) comments from Hispanic students, twelve (12) comments from African American students, and fourteen (14) comments came from Asian American students. For classification, forty-four (44) comments came from seniors and thirty (30) came from underclassmen.

Theme 3: Community Environment (p. 22)
There were a total of eighty-eight (88) comments; forty-two (42) comments from White students, twenty-three (23) from Hispanic students, twelve (12) from Asian American students, and eleven (11) from African American students. For classification, forty-eight (48) comments came from seniors and forty (40) came from underclassmen.

Theme 4: Opportunities (p. 23)
There were a total of thirty (30) comments; fourteen (14) comments from White students, eight (8) from African American students, four (4) from Hispanic students, and four (4) from Asian American students. For classification, twenty-five (25) comments came from seniors and five (5) came from underclassmen.

Theme 5: Would Not Recommend (p. 24)
There were a total of eighteen (18) comments; twelve (12) comments from African Americans and two (2) comments each from White students, Asian American students, and Hispanic students. For classification, fourteen (14) comments came from seniors and four (4) came from underclassmen.

Thoughts on the Texas A&M Campus Climate (p. 25)

Question (All students):
“What do you want to tell us about the issue of campus climate that was not asked?”

Theme 1: Admissions, the A&M Profile, and the Campus Culture (p. 25)
There were a total of forty-three (43) comments; fourteen (14) from Asian American students, fourteen (14) from Hispanic students, nine (9) from White students, and six (6) from African American students. For classification, forty (40) comments came from seniors and three (3) came from underclassmen.
**Theme 2: Diversity and the Continuum of Racism (p. 27)**
There were a total of sixty (60) comments; thirty (30) from Asian American students, fifteen (15) from Hispanic students, eight (8) from White students, and seven (7) from African-American students. For classification, forty-six (46) comments came from seniors and fourteen (14) came from underclassmen.

**Faculty Sensitivity to Minority Issues—Overall View (p. 31)**

**Question (All students):**
“Our survey showed that the majority of students agreed that faculty were sensitive to the issues of minorities. What have you observed that supported or did not support that response from students?”

**Theme 1: Faculty Members Are Sensitive (p. 32)**
There were a total of seventy-eight (78) comments; twenty-nine (29) from White students, twenty-eight (28) from Hispanic students, thirteen (13) from African American students, and eight (8) from Asian American students. For classification, forty-eight (48) comments came from seniors and thirty (30) came from underclassmen.

**Theme 2: Faculty Are Not Sensitive (p. 33)**
There were a total of seven (7) comments; five (5) from Hispanic students, one (1) from a White student, and one (1) from an Asian American student. For classification, five (5) comments came from seniors and two (2) came from underclassmen.

**Theme 3: No observation (p. 34)**
There were a total of ten (10) comments; four (4) from White students, three (3) from Asian American students, two (2) from Hispanic students, and one (1) from an African American student. For classification, five (5) comments came from seniors and five (5) came from underclassmen.

**Faculty Sensitivity to Minority Issues—The African American Perspective (p. 34)**

**Question (African American seniors):**
“The percentage of minority students who feel that faculty are not sensitive to the issues of minorities increases from sophomore to senior year. What experiences do seniors have that would make them differ from sophomores?”

There were a total of ten (10) comments.

**Hiring Racial Minority Staff, Faculty, and Administrators—African American versus White Perspective (p. 34)**

**Question (White students):**
“29% of White students felt that hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators was a strong or high priority. What in your experience would lead students to respond in this fashion?”

**Question (African American students):**
“In the telephone survey, the highest priority for African American students was to hire more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators. How will hiring more racial minority faculty help in the classroom? How will hiring more racial minority staff help out of the classroom? How will hiring more racial minority administrators help the university?”
Theme 1: A&M Profile and Culture (p. 35)
There was a total of thirty-nine (39) comments; thirty-two (32) from African American students and seven (7) from White students. For classification, twenty-two (22) comments came from seniors and seventeen (17) came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Not About Race (p. 36)
There was a total of nineteen (19) comments; seventeen (17) from White students and two (2) from African American students. For classification, fifteen (15) comments came from seniors and four (4) came from underclassmen.

Theme 3: Role Models and Support (p. 36)
African American students described how hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators would provide them with more role models and support. There were twenty-one (21) total comments made, fourteen (14) from seniors and seven (7) from underclassmen.

Theme 4: Diversification of the Campus Equated to Language Barriers (p. 36)
White students, when describing how hiring more racial minority staff, faculty, and administrators would not be beneficial, equated diversification with the language barriers they encountered with international instructors. A total of nineteen (19) comments were made, thirteen (13) from seniors and six (6) from underclassmen.

Definition of “Being a Member of the Community (p. 42)
Question (All students):
“The survey results indicated that over 90% of students responding—regardless of their ethnicity—agreed that they felt they were members of the Texas A&M University community. What does ‘being a member of the community’ mean to you?”

Theme 1: Being Accepted and Valued (p. 43)
There were a total of seventy-two (72) comments; twenty-two (22) from White students, twenty-two (22) from Hispanic students, fifteen (15) from African American students, and thirteen (13) from Asian American students. For classification, thirty-six (36) comments came from seniors and thirty-six (36) came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Campus Culture (p. 44)
There were seventy-one (71) total comments; twenty-seven (27) comments from White students, twenty (20) comments from Asian American students, thirteen (13) comments from Hispanic students, and eleven (11) comments from African American students. For classification, fifty-five (55) comments came from seniors and sixteen (16) comments came from underclassmen.

Theme 3: Acknowledgement and Service (p. 45)
There were thirty-seven (37) total comments; sixteen (16) from White students, ten (10) from Hispanic students, six (6) from Asian American students, and five (5) from African American students. For classification, twenty-four (24) comments came from seniors and thirteen (13) comments came from underclassmen.
Theme 4: Not a Member of the Community (p. 46)
There were thirty-one (31) total comments; twenty-four (24) from Asian American students, three (3) from African American students, three (3) from White students, and one (1) from a Hispanic student. For classification, twenty-nine (29) comments came from seniors and two (2) comments came from underclassmen.

Difference Between Having a Sense of Belonging and Being a Member of the Community (p. 47)

Question (African American and Hispanic students):
- “What is the difference between feeling a sense of belonging and feeling that you are a member of the community?”
- “When African American/Hispanic students were asked if they felt a sense of belonging at Texas A&M University, they were not as positive as they were about being a member of the community. Why do you believe the results were like this?”

Theme 1: Sense of Belonging (p. 47)
There were thirty-nine (39) total comments; twenty-five (25) from Hispanic students and fourteen (14) from African American students. For classification, twenty-one (21) comments came from seniors and eighteen (18) comments came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Member of the Community (p. 48)
There were twenty-nine (29) total comments; nineteen (19) from Hispanic students and ten (10) from African American students. For classification, fifteen (15) comments came from seniors and fourteen (14) comments came from underclassmen.

Theme 3: A&M Culture (p. 49)
There were seventy-nine (79) total comments; fifty-two (52) from Hispanic students and twenty-seven (27) from African American students. For classification, forty-nine (49) comments came from seniors and thirty (30) comments came from underclassmen.

Theme 4: Not Welcomed (p. 51)
There were six (6) total comments; all six (6) were from African American students. For classification, one (1) comment was made by a senior and five (5) came from underclassmen.

Difference Between “Being Accepted and Welcomed” and “Being Treated with Respect” (p. 51)

Question (All students):
“Students of all ethnicities were more positive that ‘people here treat each other with respect’ than they were about students from diverse racial backgrounds being accepted and welcomed by the majority. What is the difference between being accepted and welcomed and being treated with respect?”

Theme 1: Similarity in Definitions and Personal Experiences (p. 52)
There were twenty-five (25) total comments; ten (10) from White students, eight (8) from Hispanic students, four (4) from African American students, and three (3) from Asian American students. For classification, eighteen (18) comments came from seniors and seven (7) comments came from underclassmen.
Theme 2: Definition of Respect (p. 52)
There were sixty-five (65) total comments; twenty-three (23) from Hispanic students, twenty (20) from White students, eleven (11) from Asian American students, and eleven (11) from African American students. For classification, thirty-nine (39) comments came from seniors and twenty-six (26) came from underclassmen.

Theme 3: Definition of Being Accepted and Welcomed (p. 54)
There were fifty-five (55) total comments; twenty (20) from Hispanic students, sixteen (16) from White students, eleven (11) from Asian American students, and eight (8) from African American students. For classification, thirty-two (32) comments came from seniors and twenty-three (23) came from underclassmen.

Acceptance and Welcoming of Non-White Students (p. 56)

Question (All students):
“When asked if students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed by the majority (White) students at Texas A&M University, students were mixed in their responses. 92% of White students agreed while 77% of Non-White students agreed. Whether you agreed or disagreed that students from diverse racial backgrounds are accepted and welcomed, what are your experiences at A&M that shaped your response to this question?”

Theme 1: Incidents (p. 56)
There were sixty-nine (69) total comments; twenty-two (22) from African American students, twenty (20) from Hispanic students, sixteen (16) from Asian American students, and eleven (11) from White students. For classification, thirty-nine (39) comments came from seniors and thirty (30) came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Campus Environment (p. 58)
There were eighty-three (83) total comments; thirty-nine (39) from Asian American students, twenty-one (21) from Hispanic students, sixteen (16) from White students, and seven (7) from African American students. For classification, sixty-seven (67) comments came from seniors and sixteen (16) came from underclassmen.

Theme 3: Individual and Societal Issues (p. 60)
There were fifteen (15) total comments; six (6) from Hispanic students, five (5) from White students, and four (4) from Asian American students. For classification, twelve (12) comments came from seniors and three (3) came from underclassmen.

Theme 4: Not Experienced (p. 61)
There were eleven (11) total comments; six (6) from Hispanic students, three (3) from White students, and one (1) each from an African American student and an Asian American student. For classification, six (6) comments came from seniors and five (5) from underclassmen.

Experience with Being a Member of the Community (p. 61)

Question (All students):
“What are the experiences you have had at Texas A&M University that made you feel like a member of the community?”
Theme 1: A&M Campus And Community (p. 62)
There were seventy-eight (78) total comments; thirty-five (35) from White students, twenty-one (21) from Hispanic students, twelve (12) from African American students, and ten (10) from Asian American students. For classification, forty-eight (48) comments came from seniors while thirty (30) came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Events, Activities, and Student Organizations (p. 63)
There were one-hundred twenty-seven (127) total comments; fifty-four (54) from White students, thirty-five (35) from Hispanic students, twenty-six (26) from African American students, and twelve (12) from Asian American students. For classification, seventy-two (72) comments came from seniors and fifty-five (55) comments came from underclassmen.

Theme 3: Academics, Faculty, and Staff (p. 64)
There were twenty-two (22) total comments; seven (7) from White students, six (6) from Asian American students, six (6) from African American students, and three (3) from Hispanic students. For classification, sixteen (16) comments came from seniors and six (6) from underclassmen.

Theme 4: Not A Member (p. 65)
There were a total of four (4) comments; two (2) from Hispanic students, one (1) from an African American student, and one (1) from an Asian American student. For classification, three (3) came from seniors and one (1) came from an underclassman.

The Meaning of “Feeling Isolated” (p. 65)

Question (Non-White students):
“Our survey shows that a significant percentage of minority students feel isolated on Texas A&M University’s campus. What does ‘feeling isolated’ mean?”

Theme 1: Socially Unwelcome (p. 65)
There were forty-two (42) total comments; sixteen (16) from Asian American students, fourteen (14) from Hispanic students, and twelve (12) from African American students. For classification, twenty-five (25) comments came from seniors and seventeen (17) comments came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: FeelingDisconnected (p. 66)
There were forty-five (45) total comments; twenty-six (26) from Hispanic students, twelve (12) from African American students, and seven (7) from Asian American students. For classification, twenty-four (24) comments came from seniors and twenty-one (21) came from underclassmen.

Experience with Isolation (p. 67)

Question (Non-White students):
“What experiences have you had that would lead you to feel isolated?”

Theme 1: Feeling Alone (p. 68)
There were seventeen (17) total comments; seven (7) from Hispanic students, seven (7) from African American students, and three (3) from Asian American students. For classification, thirteen (13) comments came from seniors and four (4) comments came from underclassmen.
Theme 2: Demographics, Culture, and Community (p. 68)
There were twenty-six (26) total comments; thirteen (13) from Hispanic students, ten (10) from African American students, and three (3) from Asian American students. For classification, sixteen (16) comments came from seniors and ten (10) comments came from underclassmen.

Theme 3: No Experience (p. 69)
There were nineteen (19) total comments; ten (10) comments came from Hispanic students, seven (7) came from Asian American students, and two (2) came from African American students. For classification, seven (7) comments came from seniors and twelve (12) came from underclassmen.

Role of Student Organizations (p. 70)

Question (All students):
“What are your experiences in regard to student organizations and the role they play in promoting racial and ethnic understanding?”

Theme 1: Degrees of Promotion (p. 70)
There were seventy-four (74) total comments; twenty-five (25) from White students, twenty-five (25) from Hispanic students, fourteen (14) from African American students, and ten (10) from Asian American students. For classification, forty-three (43) comments came from seniors and thirty-one (31) came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Experience with Student Organizations (p. 72)
There were thirty-five (35) total comments; eighteen (18) from Hispanic students, eleven (11) from White students, and three (3) each from Asian American students and African American students. For classification, twenty-seven (27) comments came from seniors and eight (8) came from underclassmen.

Prioritization of Diversity Programs (p. 73)

Question (Asian American, Hispanic, and White students):
“In the telephone survey, a [66% majority of White students/75% majority of Hispanic students/86% majority of Asian American students] said that they had participated in ethnic or cross-cultural activities or organizations since enrolling at A&M. However, when asked about prioritizing programs and workshops to promote awareness of cultural diversity and the needs of culturally diverse students, students gave them a moderate priority. What in your experience would lead students to respond in this fashion—participating in programs and activities but not prioritizing them as strong or high priorities?”

Theme 1: Why Students Do Not Prioritize Diversity Programs (p. 74)
There were fifty-two (52) total comments; twenty-eight (28) from White students, nineteen (19) from Hispanic students, and five (5) from Asian American students. For classification, thirty-nine (39) comments came from seniors and thirteen (13) came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Priorities for Students (p. 75)
There were thirty-one (31) total comments; thirteen (13) from Hispanic students, twelve (12) from White students, and six (6) from Asian American students. For classification, twenty-one (21) comments came from seniors and ten (10) came from underclassmen.
Diversity On Campus (p. 76)

Question (All students):
“What do you want to tell us about the issue of campus climate that was not asked?”

Theme 1: Problems and Solutions (p. 76)
There were fifty-two (52) total comments; twenty-four (24) from Asian American students, eighteen (18) from Hispanic students, six (6) from African American students, and four (4) from White students. For classification, forty-three (43) comments came from seniors and nine (9) came from underclassmen.

Theme 2: Societal Issues (p. 78)
There were seven (7) total comments; all came from Asian American seniors.

Theme 3: Not Just Race (p. 78)
There were fourteen (14) total comments; ten (10) from Asian American students and four (4) came from White students. For classification, eleven (11) comments came from seniors and three (3) came from underclassmen.