

Issue 2 of "News from Institutional Research" is an overview of perceptions of diversity issues at Creighton using information from the 2004 HERI¹ Faculty Survey, data from Your First College Year (a HERI instrument given to second semester freshmen), and data from the College Student Survey (another HERI instrument completed by second semester seniors).

Perceptions of Diversity Issues

Undergraduate Faculty

Approximately 60% of the undergraduate faculty who completed the 2004 Fall HERI Faculty Survey agreed that enhancing students' knowledge of and appreciation for other racial/ethnic groups was a very important/essential goal of undergraduate education and helping to promote racial understanding was a very important/essential personal objective. Further, there was almost total agreement that an ethnically and racially diverse student body enhanced the educational experience of all students. Sixty-four percent of the faculty agreed that racial and ethnic diversity should be more strongly reflected in the curriculum and seventy-four percent of those faculty reported they currently included readings on racial/ethnic issues in at least some of their classes. Further, thirty-six percent of the faculty who disagree that that racial and ethnic diversity should be more strongly reflected in the curriculum report they currently include readings on racial/ethnic issues in at least some of their classes. As can be seen from the chart below, more women responded positively to these statements than men.

On the other hand, fewer women on the faculty agree there is a climate on campus which respects the expression of diverse values and beliefs and only women faculty perceive there is a lot racial conflict on our campus.

	All	Men	Women
Enhance students' knowledge of & appreciation for other racial/ethnic groups	61%	45%	81%*
Helping to promote racial understanding	59%	50%	69%
A racially/ethnically diverse student body enhances the education of all students	94%	91%	97%
Racial & ethnic diversity should be more strongly reflected in curriculum	64%	50%	81%*
In some/most/all of my classes, I use readings on racial and ethnic issues	60%	47%	76%*
There is a respect for the expression of diverse values and beliefs	37%	44%	28%
There is a lot of racial conflict here	5%	0%	10%

Fall 2004 Creighton Freshmen

Of the 672 freshmen who completed Your First College Year, only 14% were ethnic minorities. For that reason, I thought it important for the reader to see the pattern of responses by ethnic group, even though the number of ethnic minority students in each category is too small to be used to draw conclusions.

The vast majority of Caucasian freshmen grew up in white or mostly white neighborhoods and went to white or mostly white high schools. The friends they socialize with, the clubs to which they belong, and their informal study groups here at Creighton are also mainly Caucasian. Less than half report they socialize or eat with students from different ethnic groups.

	White	Black	Native	Asian	Hispanic
Number	578	10	7	62	15
Neighborhood where you grew up was mostly/nearly all/all white	93%	33%	57%	39%	69%
High School was mostly/nearly all/all white	87%	0%	86%	34%	75%
Friends you socialize with in college are mostly/nearly all/all white	86%	33%	57%	29%	69%
Clubs/organizations to which you belong are mostly/nearly all/all white	77%	56%	43%	28%	50%
Your informal study groups are mostly/nearly all/all white	75%	50%	57%	40%	56%
Often/very often: Socialized or partied with students...	40%	70%	43%	60%	56%
Often/very often: Dined with students from a different racial/ethnic group	39%	80%	29%	79%	63%

¹ Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles

* denotes a statistically significant difference between men and women faculty at the .01 level

Perceptions of Diversity Issues (continued)

Fall 2004 Creighton Freshmen

Less than 30% of the Caucasian freshmen indicated they studied with or had meaningful or honest discussions about race relations with students from different ethnic/racial backgrounds during their first year. Less than 15% had attended an event sponsored by other ethnic groups.

The data indicate that African American students are most likely to report they have heard faculty express stereotypes in class, have been singled out, or that there is racial tension on campus. However, when asked if they see themselves as part of the Creighton community, a member of their college or if they would enroll, the response by African American students is very positive.

	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Native</u>	<u>Asian</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
Number	578	10	7	62	15
Studied or prepared for class with students from other ethnic groups	26%	66%	43%	70%	38%
Had meaningful/honest discussions about race/ethnic relations	22%	60%	14%	43%	38%
Attended events sponsored by other ethnic groups	13%	50%	29%	32%	38%
I have heard faculty express stereotypes about racial/ethnic groups in class	14%	70%	29%	36%	33%
I have been singled out because my race/ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation	5%	60%	29%	39%	20%
There is a lot of racial tension on this campus	7%	40%	29%	10%	33%
I see myself as part of the campus community	88%	80%	86%	77%	80%
I feel I am a member of this college	94%	78%	57%	93%	100%
I would re-enroll	82%	80%	72%	83%	94%

The seven Native American freshmen as well as the ten African American freshmen were most likely to indicate they were unsuccessful^a understanding what their professors expected academically, developing effective study skills, and utilizing available campus services. These Native American students were also the least likely of the ethnic groups to be satisfied with the social activities, contact with faculty, sense of community and their overall first-year experience.

	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Native</u>	<u>Asian</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
Unsuccessful: Understanding what your professors expect of you academically	1%	10%	29%	3%	0%
Unsuccessful: Developing effective study skills	9%	30%	29%	10%	13%
Unsuccessful: Utilizing campus services available to students	7%	20%	14%	7%	0%
Satisfied/very satisfied: Campus social activities	66%	60%	29%	51%	81%
Satisfied/very satisfied: Amount of contact with faculty	68%	70%	43%	62%	69%
Satisfied/very satisfied: Overall sense of community	74%	70%	29%	64%	81%
Satisfied/very satisfied: Overall college experience	80%	80%	42%	75%	94%

As can be seen, the majority of the incoming freshmen have very little experience with other ethnic groups before coming to Creighton and do not go out of their way during their freshmen year to meet others different from themselves. It is incumbent on the faculty, then, to help educate this majority population so they understand the importance of enhancing their knowledge of and appreciation for other racial/ethnic groups. The challenge lies in the fact that less than forty percent of these majority students believe it is even important to help promote racial understanding and only 54% want to improve their understanding of other countries and cultures.

	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Native</u>	<u>Asian</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
Helping to promote racial understanding	36%	80%	100%	56%	63%
Improving my understanding of other countries & cultures	54%	90%	72%	60%	63%

Issue 3 of "New from Institutional Research" will follow-up on this topic by looking at the seniors who graduated last spring at three points in time—as entering students, at the end of their freshmen year, and at the end of their senior year to see how their attitudes and values may have changed. The next issue will also look at what Creighton alumni report of their experience regarding diversity.

^a Choices were unsuccessful, somewhat successful, completely successful