
*Campus Climate for Diversity:
A Study of
Undergraduate Students' Perspectives
at the
University of Hawai`i at Mānoa*

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§ Executive Summary

This institution-specific study examined undergraduate student experiences and perceptions of diversity within Kanter's (1977) theoretical framework. In contrast to the student makeup in the majority of colleges and universities, students at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) are less than 1% African American, 10% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, 25% Caucasian, and approximately 40% Asian American.¹ Unlike most institutions of higher education on the Continent², UHM is an ethnically and racially diverse campus with no ethnic or racial group comprising more than 40 percent of the student population. What makes UHM's population particularly unique is that more than one in ten students is multi-racial compared to one in forty-two people nationwide. While previous studies at other institutions of higher education have examined perceptions of diversity among undergraduate students of color, none have examined perceptions of diversity primarily among Asian and Pacific Islander students within a predominantly non-White institution of higher education.

Students from six different racial and ethnic groups—African American, Caucasian, Filipino, Japanese, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander—were asked about their personal experience with diversity on campus, their perceptions of the campus climate, their perceptions of institutional actions about diversity, and their overall satisfaction with college. Answers were obtained from 356 survey responses and 35 focus-group participants. Survey data and focus group data confirm that in general, the majority of students at UHM are comfortable with the campus climate and satisfied with their college experience. Yet a significant minority across all groups believes that the climate needs improvement. Student experience with harassment appears to vary by ethnic group. While only 14 percent of survey respondents have experienced harassment, 30 percent of African American, Caucasian, Filipino, and Native Hawaiian focus group participants reported incidents of harassment. In contrast, Japanese and Pacific Islander students have observed but not experienced harassment towards students of other underrepresented groups. Findings from this study suggest that differences among students primarily relate to ethnicity, residency, and cultural norms and that these differences influence the context, experiences, and perceptions of diversity at UHM.

¹ Asian or Asian American refers to people having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent. Asian groups include Asian Indian, Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Burmese, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Indo Chinese, Indonesian, Iwo Jiman, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Maldivian, Nepalese, Okinawan, Pakistani, Singaporean, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, Thai, and Vietnamese.

² The Continent, or the Mainland, refers to the Continental United States.

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Diversity is the variety created in any society (and within any individual) by the presence of different points of view and ways of making meaning which generally flow from the influence of different cultural and religious heritages, from the differences in how we socialize women and men, and from the differences that emerge from class, age, and developed ability.

— Association of American Colleges & Universities, 1995

§ Background and Purpose of the Study

The Campus Climate for Diversity Project began as a topic of discussion during a meeting of the Mānoa Commission on Diversity in 2001. Members of the Commission expressed the need to conduct a study to gauge student perceptions of the campus climate for diversity. Similar studies had been conducted at colleges and universities on the Continent but not at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) campus. Unlike most institutions of higher education on the Continent, UHM is an ethnically and racially diverse campus with no ethnic or racial group comprising more than 40 percent of the student population. There are few empirical studies that specifically addressed student perceptions of diversity on campus. In response to the needs identified by Commission members, a two-year project was designed to determine undergraduate student perceptions of the campus climate for diversity. This report presents the key findings from two years of research, which documented students' personal experience with diversity on campus, perceptions of the campus climate, perceptions of institutional actions about diversity, and overall satisfaction with college. The research was funded by a grant from the Diversity and Equity Initiative and by the Office of Student Equity, Excellence, and Diversity.

Two research questions guided our study:

1. *What are undergraduate student experiences with, and attitudes and actions relative to, diversity issues?*
2. *What are ways to improve the campus climate for diversity for all students?*

The questions were addressed by examining 356 student responses to a survey on the campus climate for diversity and by reviewing student feedback from 35 students participating in six racial- and ethnic-specific focus groups: African American, Caucasian, Filipino, Japanese, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander.

§ Significance of the Study

This study indicates that there are a variety of experiences within the different racial and ethnic subgroups at UHM, and that socially and culturally different people are not polarized according to race or gender. Differences among students at UHM are related to ethnicity, residency, and cultural norms. Despite student differences, however, **the majority of students across racial and ethnic groups are generally comfortable with the overall campus climate, have a high degree of contact with diverse peers, and are either satisfied or very satisfied with their college experience. However, a significant proportion of students across all ethnic groups shared negative experiences relating to the campus climate.** The findings from this study also imply that diversity that is limited to the numbers of racial and ethnic students on campus is necessary but insufficient to achieving the full benefits of diversity. In addition to representation and intergroup interaction, diversity efforts must also include attention to perceptions and attitudes between and among groups, diversity in the curriculum, and institutional commitment to diversity.

§ Theoretical Framework

Kanter's (1977) theory of proportions guided this study. As a result of her research on women in the workplace, Kanter hypothesized that proportion significantly influences group dynamics between men and women and between people of different cultures. Her concept of "tokenism" relates to environments where one group is severely underrepresented such that members of that group are often given undue attention by "dominant" members belonging to the majority group, thereby resulting in stereotypes. Underrepresented members also often feel isolated or being on the "periphery," and excluded from informal peer networks. In contrast, people who are represented in very high proportion tend to fit in more easily, be more likely to participate with others informally, form peer alliances, face less stress, and encounter fewer misperceptions regarding their identity. As proportional composition approaches 20 to 30 percent, the potential effects of tokenism are reduced because individuals become more aware of within-group differences and stereotypes of the minority group are less evident (Mullen, Rozell, & Johnson, 2000).

§ Methods

This two-year study, which took place between 2003 and 2005, consisted of two phases and employed a mixed-method approach to determine perceptions of diversity among undergraduate students. The first phase involved the implementation of a survey that utilized a Likert scale to measure students' personal experiences with diversity on campus, their actions relative to campus

climate issues, and their perceptions of institutional actions related to diversity. Items related to students' overall satisfaction with college were added to determine if diversity issues were related to students' college experience and if their experience varied by their ethnic and racial group. In the second phase, ethnic-specific focus groups were conducted to obtain qualitative feedback regarding student perceptions of diversity.

Survey Respondents

Survey participants were randomly selected from undergraduate students excluding international students. A form of stratified random sampling was used to ensure that adequate numbers of underrepresented students (e.g., African Americans, Filipinos, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders) were attained. This resulted in a sample size of 1,400. Of this number, 121 surveys were returned as undeliverable, and the sample was adjusted to 1,279. Students were given the option of completing either a web-based or hard copy format of the survey. A total of 356 surveys were returned for an overall response rate of 28 percent. See Appendix A for a demographic profile of the survey respondents.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was patterned after the instrument, "Assessment of Campus Climate for Underrepresented Groups" (Rankin, 2002), that was used in the National Campus Climate for Diversity Project (2000-2001). The original instrument was administered to ten colleges and universities on the U.S. continent participating in the project that was co-sponsored by NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) and NGLTF (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force). The instrument used in this study was revised to include additional ethnic categories, to identify diversity groups specific to UHM, and to add items relating to student satisfaction with college. Survey items encompassed the following:

1. *Personal experience of diversity* (e.g., comfort with the institutional climate, experience with harassment, and observation of harassment).
2. *Perception of the campus climate* (e.g., contact with diverse peers, classroom climate, actions relative to diversity, overall campus climate).
3. *Institutional actions* (e.g., provision of diversity workshops/programs, require students to take diversity class, require faculty/staff to participate in diversity program).
4. *Satisfaction with college* (e.g., evaluation of educational experience, attend UHM again).

Focus Groups

The focus groups examined ethnic-specific characteristics and behaviors that influenced students' perception of a campus climate for diversity. Focus group participants from six racial and ethnic categories – African American, Caucasian, Filipino, Japanese, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander – were recruited from the pool of survey respondents and from the larger campus population. Ethnic categories were chosen to reflect the diversity within the Asian (e.g., Japanese

and Filipino) and Pacific Islander (e.g., Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander) student population at UHM. Approximately six students per group were selected for a total of 35 undergraduate students. Efforts were made to stratify the focus groups such that representation of gender and level in school (e.g., freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior) were equitable. The focus group sessions were facilitated by six different people trained in focus group techniques that were of the same racial/ethnic identity as the focus-group participants. This was done so that rapport between the facilitator and the focus-group participants would be less difficult to establish.

The following five questions were addressed by each focus group:

1. *What is your definition of diversity?*
2. *What diversity groups or services are you aware of at UHM? Have you attended or participated in a class on diversity or a program or workshop related to diversity?*
3. *Have you personally experienced or observed harassment at UHM?*
4. *How much contact would you say you have with people of a different age, different ethnicity, different race, opposite gender, people with a disability, people who speak English as a second language, people of a different religion, people of different sexual orientation, or people of a different socioeconomic class?*
5. *Do you think the campus climate needs to be improved? If so, what do you think can be done? Which aspects of diversity require more awareness?*

§ Overview of Findings

African American Students

African American students have observed and experienced harassment relating to race, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation. The most common forms of harassment they experienced were racial/ethnic profiling, being stared at, and being ignored. One focus group participant felt like a “micro-minority” because he didn’t “play a sport, wasn’t in the military, and wasn’t from the West Coast.” Another remarked, “I’m like the token black guy in almost every situation...and I bring up perspectives and opinions that non-black people don’t think about.” Despite feeling like a minority, African American students were generally not offended by the stereotypes attributed to them by other students, had the highest degree of contact with diverse peers, and were the most aware of discrimination against others (e.g., students with disabilities, white students, non-heterosexual students). In addition, African American students shared that the campus climate could be improved by recruiting more African American faculty and students and by offering more classes on diversity, particularly for freshmen.

Caucasian Students

Caucasian students have observed and experienced harassment primarily related to race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Although participants agreed that the campus was more open to diversity and more tolerant of others in general when compared to other campuses, students in this group more than any other group underscored their experience of feeling like a minority, both in class and out of class. In particular, Caucasian students from the Mainland were more apt to feel like a minority than Caucasian students from Hawaii or students of mixed-race (e.g., *hapa haole*³). Students observed and experienced harassment from non-Caucasian instructors in academic settings and from non-Caucasian students in non-academic settings (e.g., residence halls). Despite their negative experiences associated with race and ethnicity, students in this group had a high degree of contact with diverse peers. They had fewer interactions with students with disabilities, non-heterosexual students, and students of a different economic class. In order to improve the campus climate for diversity, Caucasian students want more information and activities related to diversity that don't target specific groups; rather, students want UHM to emphasize open-mindedness and tolerance for difference. As one student put it, "Get people to be more open-minded...to take a more holistic approach...to teach people not be a "jerk."

Filipino Students

Filipino students have experienced harassment in the form of derogatory remarks and racial/ethnic profiling but are less aware of other forms of harassment. They are sensitive to negative stereotypes attributed to being Filipino by people outside their ethnic group. In addition, students in this group were cognizant of the differences not only within the larger "Asian" category but within their own ethnic group as well. One student said, "People of different races, primarily non-Asians, tend to stereotype Asians as the same. For example, my *haole* friends see Asians as one group, instead of different...being Japanese, Chinese, Filipino. We (Filipinos) are so different, too. We have different languages, different religions. We come from different regions in the Philippines." To improve the campus climate for diversity, Filipino students want to increase the student and faculty representation of underrepresented groups. The majority of participants acknowledged that they didn't feel like a minority on campus but they were aware of the lack of Filipino professors and administrators. Filipino students also want more emphasis on sexual orientation because they feel students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender are the most marginalized on campus.

Japanese Students

In general, Japanese students have often observed harassment related to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender but have not experienced any personally. Students agreed that the campus felt "safe" and they rarely observed or were unaware of incidents or racial discrimination. Japanese students are generally satisfied with the diversity on campus, although they felt that sexual orientation needs to be addressed more because it's a topic that people are uncomfortable discussing. They also agreed that an overemphasis on race may lead to more controversy and an

³ *Hapa haole* refers to a part-white person or of part-white blood (Pukui & Elbert, 1986).

increase in stereotypes and would prefer that “people be aware of racial/ethnic differences but not make such a big deal about it.”

Native Hawaiian Students

In their experience and observation of harassment, Native Hawaiian students were somewhat unaware of harassment of others but shared examples of being victims of racial/ethnic profiling and being the brunt of derogatory remarks. They also reported on having a high degree of contact with diverse peers. Similar to participants in other focus groups, Native Hawaiians infrequently interact with students with disabilities or students of different religions. Unlike their peers, they are very aware of socioeconomic class, particularly as it relates to financing a college education. For example, the majority of participants acknowledged the difficulty that they and many of their Native Hawaiian friends had in paying for school. For example, one student shared that “I seem to know underprivileged students, but I haven’t met any rich students.” Students in this group also pointed to the need for more Native Hawaiian and other ethnic minority students and faculty, which they agreed would improve the campus climate for diversity. They also want more emphasis on diversity related to disability and sexual orientation.

Pacific Islander Students

Interestingly, Pacific Islander students reported having no personal experiences of harassment despite being the second most underrepresented of all ethnic groups involved in the study. This may be a reflection of their very small percentage in the student body. Because of their severe under representation, they are not large enough to be a target of harassment and must interact with others. They have infrequently observed others being ignored or being the brunt of derogatory remarks, and professed feeling very comfortable on campus. The consensus among participants was that they felt the campus to be “very easy-going” and although they “expect to be a minority, most people are open to learning more about our culture.” In terms of contact with diverse peers, Pacific Islander students had the least amount of contact with students with disabilities, students of a different age, and students of a different socioeconomic class. What distinguishes the findings in this group from the findings of the other groups is that Pacific Islander students are the most likely to have diverse peers as friends. Students agreed that their circle of friends included people of different races, ethnicities, gender, religion, and sexual orientation. Similar to their peers, Pacific Islander students want UHM to publicize available diversity programs and offer more diversity-related activities, classes, and cultural events. Like their African American, Filipino, and Native Hawaiian counterparts, they would also like to see more students and faculty of color.

Summary of Results

Survey data and focus group data confirm that in general, the majority of students at UHM are comfortable with the campus climate and satisfied with their college experience. Ninety percent of survey respondents and 80 percent of focus group participants are comfortable with the climate, while 75 percent of all respondents were satisfied with their educational experience. Student experience with harassment appears to vary by ethnic group. While only 14 percent of survey respondents have experienced harassment, 30 percent of African American, Caucasian, Filipino, and Native Hawaiian focus group participants reported incidents of harassment. In contrast,

Japanese and Pacific Islander students have observed but not experienced harassment towards students of other underrepresented groups. In sum, the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses indicated several significant findings:

1. Students across all groups share a similar understanding of the meaning of diversity.

Without exception, each group described diversity in terms beyond race, ethnicity, and culture. All groups identified differences in class, age, sexual orientation, language, and ability as characteristics of diversity. Moreover, each of the groups independently concluded that diversity is more than just the presence of different people but their interaction, “mixing,” or “intermingling” as well. Students also expanded diversity to mean the valuing of different values, attitudes, and behaviors. In the words of one of the students, “diversity is really ‘what you think’ versus ‘what you are.’”

2. Student experience or observation of harassment varies by ethnic group.

Japanese students have observed the most incidents of harassment but have not experienced harassment in any form. Caucasian and African American students have observed harassment and experienced derogatory remarks (e.g., “stupid *haole*⁴”) and racial/ethnic profiling. In addition, African American students cited being ignored and being stared at by their peers. One participant in the Caucasian focus group felt that others on campus believed “racism is against everyone except White people” while a participant in the African American focus group was often thought to be on the football team.

In contrast to students in the Japanese, African American, and Caucasian focus groups, Filipino and Native Hawaiian students did not observe incidents of harassment, yet both groups experienced derogatory remarks and racial/ethnic profiling. Filipino and Native Hawaiian students mentioned being offended by derogatory remarks aimed at them by both students and faculty. Two Filipino students were offended by stereotypes of Filipinos by other students, such as being “fresh off the boat⁵” or dressing “so *buk buk*⁶.” A Native Hawaiian student reported being disturbed by a comment made by an instructor in his introductory mathematics class who described the class as being “math for Hawaiians” implying that it was for “dumb” people.

Surprisingly, Pacific Islander students stated that they had no experience with harassment and shared only two instances of observing harassment related to being ignored in class or hearing derogatory remarks about others. Two Pacific Islander students expressed irritation that others were ignorant of their ethnicity. For example, one student was tired of having to explain what Chamorro was as most people he encountered were unaware of both the term and the culture. Another was irritated at explaining the difference between being Tongan from Samoan. Despite these instances, Pacific Islander students in general felt very comfortable on campus and

⁴ The term, *haole*, is Hawaiian for white person, American, Englishman, or Caucasian. It was formerly meant to describe any foreigner or thing of foreign origin (Pukui & Elbert, 1986).

⁵ A reference to being a new immigrant from the Philippines and therefore less familiar with the culture of Hawaii.

⁶ “*Buk buk*” is a slang term for a person of Filipino background, culture and lineage that was coined on the plantations of Hawaii. It is often used in a derogatory way to describe a person’s poor fashion sense.

compared to students in the other focus groups had the least amount of negative observations and experiences with diversity.

3. The most common forms of harassment are derogatory remarks and racial/ethnic profiling.

Being ignored, derogatory remarks, and racial/ethnic profiling were the three most common types of harassment either observed or experienced by students. A common finding across the groups was that derogatory comments were often not intended to be derogatory. The consensus among focus group participants was that many comments and terms (e.g., “that’s so gay,” “*haole*,” “fresh off the boat”) are not intentionally meant to harass or be offensive. Comments and jokes depended on the source (e.g., friends, peers) and the context (e.g., social versus academic). Interestingly, although students agreed that most derogatory remarks were not meant to be derogatory, they differed as to what comments were derogatory. The term “*haole*” was not considered offensive except by Caucasian students, while “fresh of the boat” was not considered offensive except by Filipino students. All students agreed that “that’s so gay” was a common expression and not meant to offend, but the finding may have been different among participants in a focus group on sexual orientation.

4. Students across all groups have a high degree of contact with peers who are diverse in age, ethnicity, gender, language, and race.

In particular, students from all the focus groups reported having frequent interactions with racially and ethnically diverse peers and students of the opposite gender in classes, in the residence halls, and in extracurricular activities. In addition, the majority of students cited being friends and “hanging out” with racially and ethnically diverse peers. Given that no single ethnic or racial group at UHM comprises more than 40 percent of the student population, and that three out of ten of the survey respondents were multi-racial/multi-ethnic, it is not surprising that students have a high degree of contact with diverse peers and are generally comfortable with the racial climate at UHM.

5. Students’ degree of contact with peers who are diverse in religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic class varies by ethnic group.

In contrast to students’ contact with peers of different races, ethnicities, gender, language and age, students in all the groups mentioned that their degree of contact with others of a different class and religion depended on the type of contact (e.g., classmate versus friend). For example, the majority of students mentioned that class was difficult to determine because most students don’t talk about money in the course of a normal conversation, either in class or out of class. Similarly, religion is not often a topic of conversation, even among friends. In contrast to students in other groups, Pacific Islander students are very aware of the religion of their friends and reported on having friends of various religions, including Catholics, Jehovah’s Witness, Mormon, Buddhist, Protestant, and Seventh Day Adventist.

Contact with students of a different sexual orientation also varied among focus group participants. In general, students across the focus groups appeared to have some contact with students who were gay, lesbian, or bisexual. African American students believed the campus is more accepting

of homosexuality than on other campuses on the Mainland. They also agreed that the campus seemed to have “lots of gay people” and varying levels of homophobia. Interestingly, Filipino and Caucasian students admitted to the least amount of contact because the consensus in both groups was that it was difficult to determine sexual orientation. For example, students in both group said they weren’t sure if they would really know someone was gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender unless they assumed they were based on their physical appearance or mannerisms. Students in the Japanese and Filipino focus groups stated that more needs to be done to increase understanding, respect, and tolerance for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. They felt that non-heterosexual students are the most discriminated against, although the discrimination is subtle and indirect (e.g., graffiti or jokes).

6. Students across all groups have a low degree of contact with peers with a disability.

A universal finding among the groups was that students have very limited contact with people with disabilities. Although focus group participants were aware of students with a visible disability (e.g., a student with a wheelchair, a student who is blind) in classes and in the residence halls, many admitted to feeling uncomfortable being around them or interacting with them. As one student stated, “I’m not sure what to say or do. Am I supposed to ask if they need help, or am I supposed to leave them alone?” Students in every group agreed that they would like more information on disability and feel that increased interaction with people with disabilities would result in a higher degree of comfort around them and more understanding of the unique challenges students with disabilities face while attending college.

7. There is a disconnect between students across all groups and professors.

Across the board, students experience a disconnect with professors. There are three types of disconnect: racial (e.g., between Caucasian students and non-Caucasian faculty), political ideology (e.g., liberal versus conservative), and method of communication (e.g., direct versus indirect). For example, many Caucasian students have alluded to feeling marginalized by faculty in specific academic departments because of their race. One student remarked:

I feel as a ‘white American’ often times I’m treated as if I was ignorant, ungrateful, and not worthy of being here. The job of an educator is not to humiliate, or seek revenge for something our ancestors have done. It is to enlighten.

In addition to racial differences, students also shared that their participation in class is inhibited when their views are in conflict with the teacher’s views. For example, one student commented:

I have a current teacher that imposes her anti-capitalistic views on our class and says it is America’s fault that September 11th happened... when we answer her questions and we are wrong, she speaks to us in a condescending tone, therefore we don’t answer her that much anymore.

Likewise, students pointed to differences in communication styles as a factor of feeling disconnected from faculty:

I feel sometimes the climate tends to gear towards the Mainland culture and dominant race (Caucasian). Especially in the classroom where we find a majority of mainland hires sometimes I find professors may not know how to cope with or have become indifferent to the different responses and educational dispositions of the local students. Not to say that all locals are one way and all mainlanders are another and that's that. For example, sometimes local students may not talk all that much in class or present opinions. It doesn't mean that they don't have an opinion, but maybe their culture or the schools that they attended voicing that opinion was not fostered or encouraged. I heard a lot in my classes that the locals don't talk, care, or participate at all in class.

8. There is a disconnect between local and non-local students.

Another recurring theme emerging from the focus groups and survey respondents was the disconnect that many students from the Mainland have with local (Hawai'i residents) students. Students, primarily Caucasian students from the Mainland, sense an underlying tension between themselves and non-Caucasian students who call Hawai'i home. One student shared that "There is some hostility in classes from teachers and students towards white students from the Mainland, I and other I know felt." Non-Caucasian students, including Japanese, Filipino, and Native Hawaiian students, have also observed and experienced this disconnect with Caucasian students. One student commented "I sometimes feel left out when white students here tend to strike up conversations with other white students" and another mentioned, "White students in classes taught by white faculty get preferential treatment." It appears that students are polarized according to their residency (e.g., from Hawai'i versus not from Hawai'i) and also according to race (e.g., Caucasian versus non-Caucasian or biracial). For example, students from the Mainland who are part Caucasian or biracial tend to physically be taken for "local" and therefore are not seen as different at face value.

9. Students across all groups want an increase in awareness and availability of classes, programs, and activities related to diversity and culture.

It appears that students are unaware of diversity groups or services or possess only a superficial recognition of a small number of existing groups and offices. Of the multitude of groups, services, and classes available, students were either unaware of or unfamiliar with them. In general, students have had some exposure to diversity in coursework, primarily in classes offered by the Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, and Hawaiian Studies departments. Students across all groups expressed the desire for more diversity-related classes, activities and programs. They are not in favor of requiring classes on diversity or for adding credits to what was agreed was an already-overloaded core. Rather, they would welcome optional courses on diversity issues and would like to know more about existing classes that focus on specific aspects of diversity. Students cited the need for non-academic programs and activities that highlight the cultural diversity that exists in Hawai'i, and suggested that UHM should host non-academic cultural events that "celebrate diversity, that make people aware of other cultures, and that build more of a college campus pride."

10. Students' desire to increase the representation of students and faculty of color and to emphasize a culture of tolerance and respect for diversity in general varies by ethnic group.

African American, Filipino, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students identified the need to increase the student and faculty representation of underrepresented groups. In addition to increasing the number of underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities, they were also in favor of increasing the number of students and faculty exhibiting other differences (e.g., disability, sexual orientation). In contrast, Japanese and Caucasian students advocated for diversity efforts to be more holistic; rather than targeting specific differences, efforts related to improving the campus climate for diversity should address objectivity, respect and tolerance for differences in general.

§ Conclusions

There are three main conclusions that were developed from the findings of this study:

- 1) *The proportions of socially and culturally different people at UHM shape the dynamics of interaction and their perceptions differently among different groups; and*
- 2) *The majority of students across racial and ethnic groups are generally comfortable with the overall campus climate, have a high degree of contact with diverse peers, and are either satisfied or very satisfied with their college experience.*
- 3) *A significant minority of students from each racial/ethnic group feels that more needs to be done to improve the campus climate.*

In this study, differences among students were related to ethnicity, residency, and cultural norms, in addition to race or gender. The primary implication of these conclusions is that UHM must continue to admit a racially and ethnically diverse student population and must continue to improve the campus climate. Students who differ according to culture, gender, disability, sexual orientation, class, religion, and residence must also be considered by UHM as adding value to the college experience.

§ Recommendations

The results of this study may be helpful to UHM as well as to other colleges and universities that are less racially and ethnically diverse. The following recommendations are made:

- 1) *The institutional commitment to diversity should be reviewed such that educational policies (including admission policies), curriculum, programs, and activities embrace diversity in all its forms and that tolerance and respect for diversity be emphasized wherever possible. Similarly, institutional commitment should result in hiring more faculty of color; admitting more students traditionally underrepresented given their*

- race, ethnicity, class, disability, age, sexual orientation, or religion; and providing support for more courses and research addressing diversity.
- 2) UHM should scrutinize the fundamental issues that go beyond calling for greater commitment to diversity. Many of these issues compete with each other and include the following as identified by Chang (2000): maintaining educational excellence while providing equal access to underrepresented students; maintaining civility while encouraging free inquiry and discourse; imposing greater normative influence (e.g., equal-status interaction) and embracing the unique autonomy of higher education; and lastly, acknowledging UHM's self-interest and the broader public good that is specified in its mission.
 - 3) Further research should examine experiences and perspectives related to diversity of students from other underrepresented groups not addressed by this study, including racial minorities (e.g., Hispanic Americans), ethnic minorities (e.g., Southeast Asians), students with disabilities, and non-heterosexual students. Similarly, future studies could address differences in student perceptions of diversity based on residency (e.g., from Hawaii versus from the Continent) or socioeconomic status. In addition, examining the experiences and perceptions of faculty, staff, and administrators would validate the important role of all members in the higher education community in embracing the value of diversity.
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APPENDIX
 Campus Climate for Diversity
 Demographics of Survey Respondents
 (n=356)

1. Gender

Female	57.6%
Male	39.9%
Transgender	0.3%
No response	2.2%

2. Sexual Orientation

Bisexual	3.6%
Gay	2.8%
Lesbian	1.1%
Heterosexual	87.4%
Uncertain	2.5%
No response	2.5%

3. Age

22 or under	60.7%
23-32	27.5%
33-42	6.2%
43-52	3.1%
53 and over	1.4%
No response	1.1%

4. Student Status

Freshman (0-24 credits)	8.4%
Sophomore (25-54 credits)	7.9%
Junior (55-88 credits)	23.3%
Senior (89 or more credits)	53.6%
No response	6.7%

5. Disability (that substantially limits seeing, hearing, learning, or walking)

Yes	2.5%
No	94.1%
No response	3.4%

6. Race/Ethnicity (Students provided multiple responses when applicable)

African American/Black	2.9%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2.5%
Asian Indian	0.4%
Chicano/Latino/Hispanic	2.7%
Chinese	9.0%
Filipino	17.0%
Chamorro	1.6%
Japanese	22.9%
Korean	2.5%
Middle Eastern	0.2%
Native Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian	10.8%
Samoan	0.8%
Tongan	0.4%
White/Caucasian	21.1%
Other	5.1%
Multi-ethnic/multi-racial	30%