

COMMITTEE ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND DIVERSITY
Executive Summary of the 2005-2006 Diversity Climate Study

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

Background for the Climate Study

In September 2005, the Committee on Affirmative Action and Diversity (CAAD) of the Academic Senate, with the support of Chancellor Denton, initiated the process of carrying out a study and producing a document about how the UCSC community, including staff, faculty, postdoctoral researchers, graduate students, and undergraduates, understands diversity, perceives and evaluates the current climate of diversity at UCSC, and includes recommendations for improving the experiences and lives of all the campus constituents.

“Diversity” is a term that has emerged relatively recently to address political issues of inclusion and innovation. The discussion of diversity engages with a national public debate that engages in the fundamental issues of politics, access, and representation that were debated in the 1960s when civil rights activism was at its peak. The passing of Proposition 209 in 1997 significantly changed California’s relationship to Affirmative Action. This study was designed to understand how UCSC’s constituency experiences and understands diversity almost 10 years after the passing of Proposition 209.

The study follows in the wake of other diversity studies conducted by UCSC and in the entire UC system. There exists a wealth of data and recommendations regarding diversity, but the data is fragmented and difficult to access, and the sheer volume of reports makes them difficult to digest and implement. Within the UC system, UCSC is seen as a campus that has made genuine attempts to understand and implement diversity initiatives. The Climate Study was an attempt to assess the progress that has been achieved towards this goal. Towards this end, CAAD had four goals for the study:

- To allow members of the campus community to engage in a serious conversation about the meaningfulness of the principle of “diversity” and our commitment to it;
- To gather, centralize, and make uniform the collection of data relevant to assessing the campus progress towards diversity goals;
- To document already existing everyday efforts that support segments of our community and that require both greater recognition and more consistent resources;
- To expose the campus to a larger, more integrated framework for thinking about diversity in this historical moment by describing the interaction between research, teaching, learning, climate, funding, and representation.

Method and Design

In preparation for the study, CAAD gathered available data for campus analysts in various sectors and conducted a small number individual interviews and focus groups as

well as revisited its recent experience in campus matters as a committee dedicated to addressing affirmative action and diversity. This preliminary work during the spring and summer of 2005 led to the development of the two major engines for the study: Five all-campus forums that were held in November 2005 and the February 2006 launch of a web-based survey targeting the entire campus population.

The five widely publicized diversity forums were designed to create a space for focused and open exchange about the strengths and weaknesses of current practices and to gather information about everyday efforts to sustain the UCSC community. Each forum began with a power-point presentation that highlighted the result of previous surveys and reports on diversity. All forum participants were encouraged to comment and ask questions both during the presentation and afterwards. Each forum was audio taped and transcribed. The forums were well attended, and attendance increased over time as more people were informed. It was an enlightening experience being in a room with all different types of people, i.e., staff, students, faculty, and community members. The issues that were raised in the forums were used as a starting point to create the web survey.

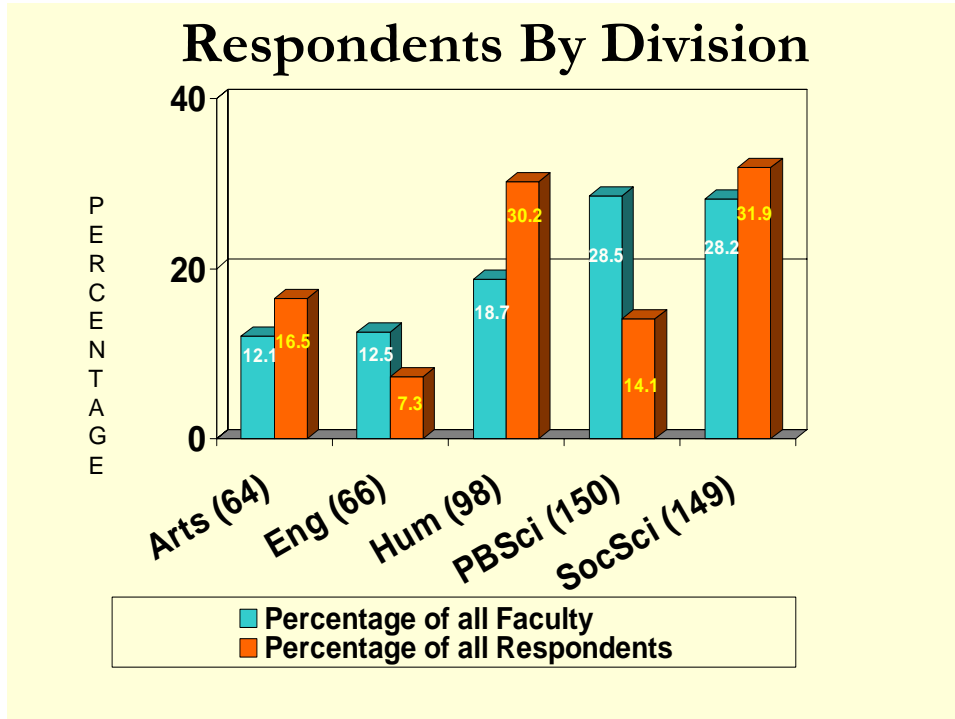
The web survey contained 241 items, most of which offered respondents one of five Likert-scale answers (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree, not sure). The survey was advertised through two e-mail announcements. The second announcement included the link to the web page and a randomly generated number for each respondent to insure anonymity. It was offered in both Spanish and English language versions; paper and pencil versions were administered to custodial and dining services staff that did not have Internet access. Closed-ended questions that assessed the demographic characteristics of the respondent and his or her rank and length of service at UCSC were included. The survey also contained five open-ended questions; approximately 1/3 of the respondents provided answers to these questions. These open-ended responses have not been analyzed systematically but were used as qualitative data in the report. When available, the source (faculty, staff, student) of the respondent was noted in this executive summary.

None of the completed surveys were analyzed individually; response data was reviewed in report form. All responses were tabulated by frequency and percentage for the closed-end questions and managed within sectors (faculty, staff, undergraduates, and graduate students).

The following table lists the number and percentage of respondents to the survey by sector and by division.

Responses to CAAD Web-Based Survey Administered in February 2005, by Sector¹

Sector	Responses	Total Codes Issued	Response Rate
Faculty	260	773	33.6%
Staff	1075	3142	34.2%
Graduate Students	390	1475	26.4%
Undergraduates	3183	13864	23%



The differential rate of survey responses by division is difficult to interpret. Although the patterns of response rates seem to suggest that certain segments of the campus community were more invested than others in the forms of diversity initiative associated with this survey than others, the reasons for the low response rates in the sciences and engineering need to be investigated further. The differences in response rates by division also need to be considered in the results, as the analyses of the close-ended responses assessed primarily the patterns between and within sectors (staff, faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students) and ethnic groups.

¹ Please note that a) the 89 postdoctoral respondents are included (by self-selection) in the four categories above; b) many more ucsc.edu email addresses exist than are reflected in the official enrollment and employment records, which partially explains low response rates. Many students do not regularly check their @ucsc.edu email accounts, and while we worked with ITS to use their most recently known active addresses, some students do not keep ITS informed of their currently preferred email address and thus would not have read their survey invitation email c) paper surveys are not included in the above data.

CAAD also welcomed and considered submission of additional materials such as reports, documents, and letters. The CAAD members and 6 graduate student researchers analyzed the data. Taken together, these data led to the assessment of resources and impediments to diversity at UCSC and the development of a set of guidelines and recommendations for the campus. This report represents our preliminary findings, guidelines, and recommendations.

Results

The Importance and Meanings of Diversity.

Respondents repeatedly underscored the importance of a diverse campus for the intellectual climate and vitality of the campus. They also acknowledged that the campus has made significant progress towards diversifying the campus; the patterns of responses suggest that efforts toward diversifying the campus community have been most successful in faculty hires. The importance of diversity for achieving excellence is illustrated by the following open-ended response:

The more diverse a background I live in, the more normal I feel with myself and my surroundings. I think that experiencing the diverse life that UCSC supplies us with is as educational to every student, staff, and faculty member as the classes themselves are, and for that I will always carry the pride I feel in being able to say that I am a “Banana Slug”. [Student respondent].

A number of student respondents already perceive the UCSC campus as a diverse, tolerant, and accepting community. Many of these respondents contrasted the greater diversity and acceptance they encountered at UCSC relative to their home community. As an undergraduate student respondent commented:

I really don't see any challenges to diversity. I love UCSC and would never change to another school. I've never felt that I was being discriminated against or judged at this school. It's quite welcoming and seems to treat everyone equally... that I know of.

Other student respondents with positive views of the campus diversity climate differentiated between their numerical representation in their departments and the departments' climate for diversity:

Everyone except me is Caucasian. I don't mind. It seems to be that the field attracts white men. I am totally happy with the professors in my department. I don't feel any racism from either faculty or students at all so that is good. [student respondent]

Several staff and faculty respondents also underscored progress towards diversity that has been achieved in their departments and divisions:

As the hiring manager for my unit, I have strived to diversify my department along lines of ethnicity, gender, culture, and enculturation to meet the vastly diverse needs of our student constituency.

Diversity is always on the table as a goal and point of discussion in all personnel matters, student recruitment, student mentoring, and departmental relationships. The

department and division are extremely sensitive of the need for a fully representative faculty and student body. We have managed to create a diverse faculty.

Despite emphasizing the progress that has been achieved in diversifying the faculty, respondents also noted that although recruitment efforts have resulted in an influx of junior faculty and staff who personally and disciplinarily bring diversity to the campus, efforts to hire diverse senior staff, faculty, and administrators are also needed to set policies and create practices that are responsive to diversity and mentor the junior hires to increase their retention.

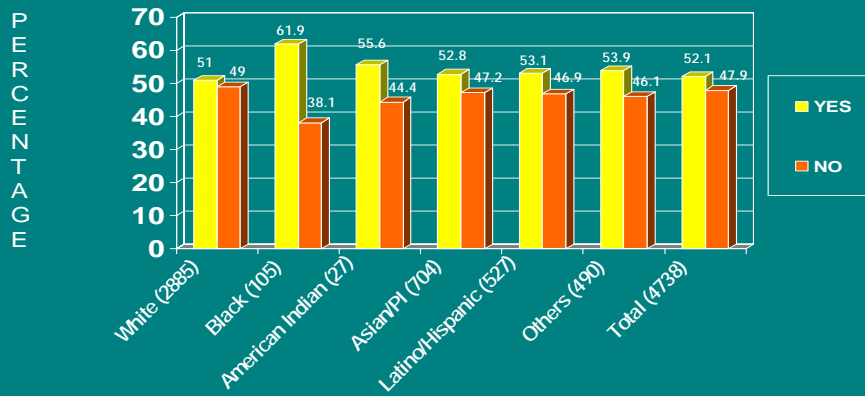
The positive opinion of the diversity climate of UCSC and the progress that has been made towards attaining diversity was not shared by large group of respondents, who noted several instances of discrimination and other challenges that they have encountered.

Being a student of color at UCSC, and in Santa Cruz in general, is an exercise in constant alienation. That, combined with the fear inducing first year of graduate school, was enough for me to strongly consider withdrawing during my first quarter here. I cannot imagine how any student from an urban environment could not be alienated by the UCSC campus, which has no central area, is difficult to navigate, and is poorly lit at night. Furthermore, the lack of diversity in the city of Santa Cruz is even more striking than on campus.

In recent years, I have found it increasingly difficult to bond with any preexisting communities or to fashion a community reflective of my history, aspirations, and needs, intellectual, scholarly, and professional. Thus, I have experienced an intense level of isolation, alienation, and anomie, which has caused me to begin seriously looking elsewhere. I no longer find this a congenial environment on any level, especially to persons of African descent [faculty respondent]

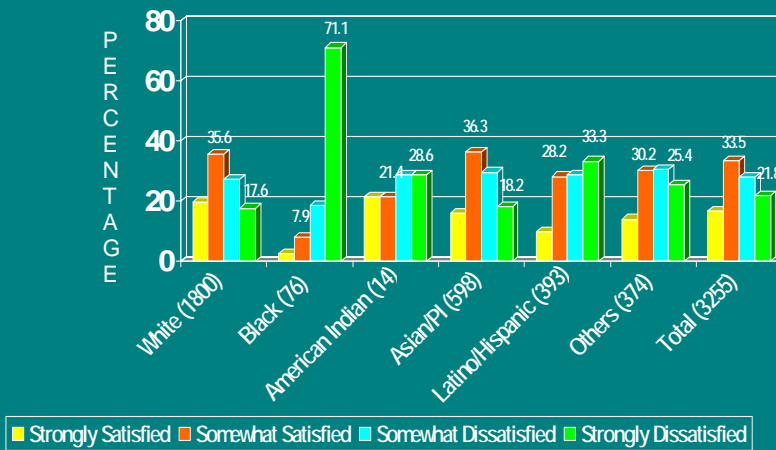
The following graphs provide further evidence that ethnic minorities are significantly less satisfied with the campus climate for diversity.

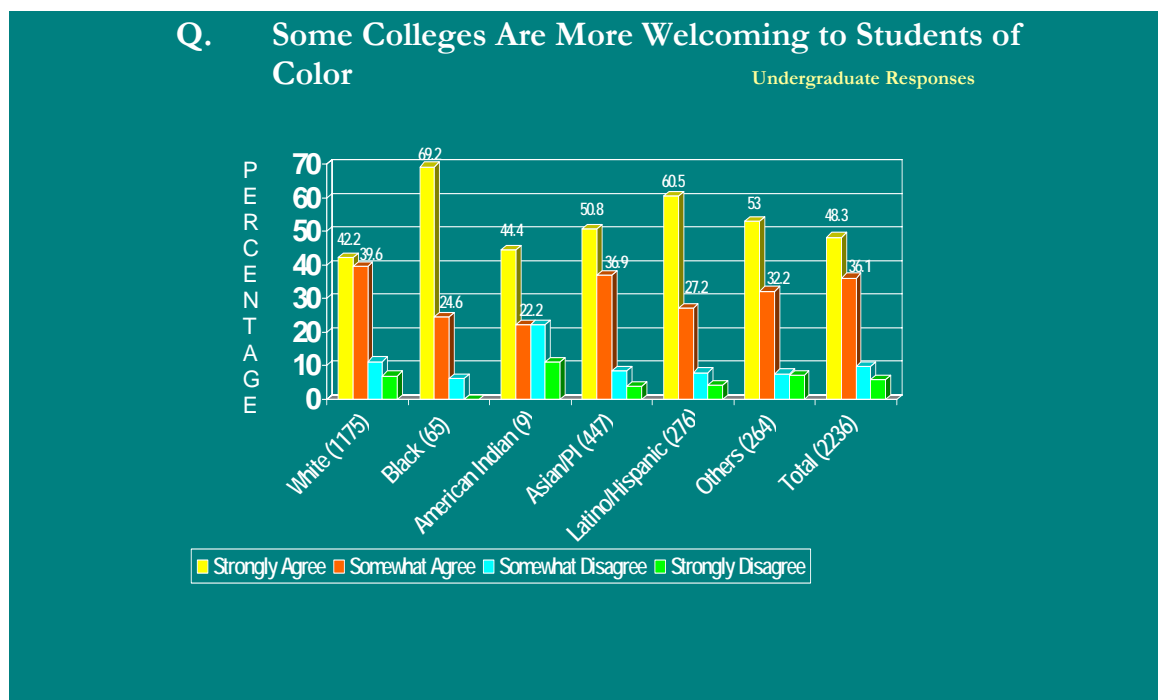
Q. Have you ever thought about leaving UCSC?



Q. Level of Satisfaction with Diversity in the Classroom

Graduate & Undergraduate





Taken together, these qualitative and quantitative results show that although the majority of the respondents found diversity meaningful and desirable, they varied significantly in their definitions and understanding of diversity and in their diversity-related life and academic experiences. The responses also underscore the need to devote efforts to retaining ethnic minority faculty, students, and staff.

Although the responses underscored the challenges experienced by ethnic minorities, faculty, staff, and student respondents repeatedly emphasized that this programmatic response to diversity needs to move beyond numerical representation to considering other forms of diversity that have not received much attention and will be more difficult to implement. As a graduate student respondent stated:

The notion of diversity remains extremely superficial and is interpreted to mean, more often than not, the incorporation of underrepresented identities into a curriculum. This means that we read a few articles or spend a week on women and minority groups. Rather, a pedagogical approach that truly addresses diversity undertakes the task of showing the underlying structures and social conditions that perpetuate certain racist, sexist, homophobic, and xenophobic perspectives and material practices, and how these structures operate at the level of political rhetoric and everyday discourse. This type of labor is more difficult than the model of incorporation.

A faculty member expressed a similar view:

I think administrators confuse diversity in representation (i.e., brown bodies as the end goal in itself) with the achievement of diversity. In contrast, I think you also have to look at research agendas, service commitments, and commitment to and evidence of mentoring students.

These responses also illustrate another key theme that emerged in the responses, the need to recognize different positions, as well as life experiences and circumstances, in developing programmatic efforts at increasing the overall climate for diversity. These differences included addressing forms of diversity that have not received much attention in the past as well as acknowledging and accepting that there are different pathways to attaining professional and academic goals.

The Interconnectedness of Different Forms of Diversity

As already illustrated by some of the preceding quotes, respondents repeatedly emphasized the need to recognize that the different categories of diversity are interrelated and thus, should not be considered in isolation. For example, the experiences of a Caucasian woman are likely to differ from the experiences of a woman of color. These interconnected aspects of diversity affect not only the daily life experiences of the different sectors of the UCSC constituency, but also the kinds of research questions and methodologies that are employed and privileged.

Respondents also emphasized the needs to consider forms of diversity that have not received much attention in overall campus discourse on intellectual diversity: social class, country of origin/citizenship, disability, religion, age of the student body.. It is also important to consider that these forms of diversity are connected to forms of diversity that are already part of ongoing dialogues concerning diversity at UCSC—race, gender, sexual orientation, and political values and beliefs.

A salient theme in many of the responses was the view that women and staff, faculty, and students of color also are most likely to experience the challenges of finding affordable housing and childcare and paying the increasing costs of tuition and parking at UC, creating problems of recruitment and retention and consequently, undermining diversity efforts at the university. Staff and faculty from these groups do not have the family resources to help them with housing purchases and students of color are significantly more likely than White students to not only work, but also have jobs that require considerable time, thus creating inequalities in the time they can devote to their studies. Women and ethnic minorities are also likely to experience family and other responsibilities that make traditional pathways to graduation, tenure, and promotion unfeasible. Taken together, these additional challenges impact the productivity and performance of students, staff, and faculty and consequently, their trajectories and retentions at UCSC.

The cost of living in SC is extremely high. This makes it difficult to recruit and retain students, staff, and faculty from ethnically-underrepresented groups, which typically are not in the upper socio-economic levels. The lack of spousal hiring, affordable family-size campus housing, decent mortgage assistance, full medical coverage, childcare facilities (for children of all ages), parking waivers, college tuition waivers for faculty children (such as is offered in places like UCLA) and other forms of financial assistance compound the financial difficulties faced by faculty of color. [faculty respondent]

During my time here as an assistant professor, I became ill and also was a caregiver for a dying relative. Despite the university's rhetoric about advancing women & minorities, I was unable to get either concrete help or practical advice on how to salvage a slowed-down research career. My suggestion for improving affirmative action (& the situation of all assistant professors): build some flexibility into the tenure track. If someone

becomes seriously ill or has an overwhelming family responsibility, it will not cost the world of scholarship much to grant an extra bit of time on the tenure track.

The Need for Greater Intellectual Diversity.

An additional issue that was raised by many respondents was the challenges experienced by students, faculty, and staff who hold unpopular or minority political and religious views. Some respondents equated this form of diversity with the tolerance for expressing fundamentalist and conservative opinions in the classroom or in social situations, while others emphasized the need to also recognize and accept diversity in forms of inquiry and expression, which included attaining equity in funding across divisions.

This is a science department, and there seem to be many faculty who feel that religious people do not have a place in science. All I ask is to keep the derogatory language out of the classroom and weekly meeting. I allow the faculty to believe whatever they want and would appreciate the same courtesy.

And, as I already mentioned, there is a qualified respect for political diversity: if you're a Marxist or anarchist, OK, but if you're a conservative or Republican, no way. [staff respondent]

UCSC claims to be very liberal and diverse, but I do not see it. The fact that many women and people of color chose the Social sciences, as opposed to the Sciences and Engineering, and that the Social Sciences are not given as much funds, seems like an attack on women and students of color—after all, we pay the same, yet we are always fighting for our classes. [student respondents]

Evaluating and Promoting a Diverse Workforce

Another recurrent theme was that there is a lack of mechanism to recognize and reward diversity in both hiring and merit and promotion practices. For faculty, publications are valued most highly, and yet, service focused on diversity, which is particularly time-consuming for faculty from backgrounds underrepresented at UCSC, is not valued, particularly for junior faculty. Several staff respondents noted that diversity is not given sufficient consideration in hires, and staff from diverse backgrounds often has burdens placed on them (e.g., translation, mentoring) over and above beyond their job responsibilities.

Recommendations

Many respondents underscored the need to implement changes that improve the diversity climate of the campus as soon as possible so that the effort put into the climate study, attending the forums, and responding to the survey are worthwhile. Our recommendations are as follows:

Recommendations for changes in the administration and organization of the campus to improve implementation and evaluation of diversity efforts.

- Signal UCSC's Commitment to Diversity in the Highest Levels of Administration.

- Create an Executive Advisory Council to the Chancellor or a Diversity Officer on diversity issues, policies, and practices.
- Inventory diversity efforts to avoid duplication of programs. Better coordination of diversity efforts will maximize the utilization of resources allocated by diversity. Studying models of successful diversity efforts, such as EOP and The Learning Center, will help improve the quality and efficiency of recruitment and retention efforts.
- Promote current campus and system-wide efforts to bring faculty and staff salaries to market/competitive levels. Support EEO/AA's compensation analysis as required by federal regulations.

A campus-wide diversity survey that is administered at regular intervals is needed to measure progress on diversity issues, policies, and initiatives. Develop procedures that allow for more sophisticated identification of diversity, including multiple racial/ethnic categories and systematic assessment and evaluation of progress along the other domains of diversity identified in the survey. The data collection methods should also aim to produce a less fragmented and more accessible picture of diversity policies, practices, and progress.

- The university needs to develop better oversight and evaluation of recruitment, hiring, supervision, and retention and promotion practices for staff and faculty to assess more accurately and systematically whether the diversity initiatives and policies of the campus are being met. This oversight should include cluster, joint departmental, spousal, Target of Excellence, and the UC Presidents' postdoctoral program. Units, departments, divisions, deans, and higher administrators need to be held accountable for achieving progress on campus-wide diversity initiatives and policies.
- The university should consider alternative pathways to tenure and promotion of staff and faculty that recognize differences in the experiences and challenges that confront its different constituencies and provide some flexibility that are responsive to life issues faced by faculty and staff.
- The university also needs to provide and support training and mentoring workshops that promote awareness of diversity issues and generate practices for supporting existing diversity initiatives and developing new initiatives that are sensitive to the diversity of the campus constituencies.
- Provide additional venues for faculty and staff to discuss concerns involving diversity issues. These venues should ensure confidentiality and provide protections against reprisals for those employees voicing concerns.
- Faculty and staff with management responsibilities should be evaluated on their progress towards diversity and affirmative action goals.

Recommendations for Improving the Physical Layout of the Campus

- The terrain of the campus makes it particularly challenging for persons with disabilities. Increase disability access to the campus as well as disability accommodations within dorms and academic buildings. Survey wheelchair-bound students, staff, and faculty about the special challenges they encounter navigating the campus.
- Improve lighting and security on campus so that students, faculty, and staff feel safe at night. These security measures should include making available parking near classrooms, the library, and other evening venues.

Recommendations for Increasing the Intellectual Climate for Diversity

- Develop policies and practices that increase diversity in the academic departments and divisions, the classroom, and administrative decision-making. Intellectually diversifying the campus should include increasing discussion and acceptance of political, social class, religious, sexual-orientation, and other forms of diversity that have not received sufficient attention in the campus discussions and programming for diversity.
- Faculty and students in the Natural Sciences and Engineering are more satisfied than the faculty and students in other divisions with the diversity level, campus support for diversity, and other diversity-related policies on the campus. Yet, these divisions are also perceived as less diverse by other campus constituencies. Productive cross-divisional dialogues and planning are needed in crafting UCSC's diversity planning and policies.
- The perceptions of diversity and support for diversity effort varied significantly between segments of the campus citizenship that are well-represented in the campus community and those who are minorities on any of the dimensions of diversity identified by the respondents. Opportunities and safe spaces for these minority opinions to be expressed and incorporated into the campus diversity planning and policies need to be created.
- Study successful approaches programs within and across divisions to develop additional efforts to serve the diverse campus constituencies and promote acceptance and intellectual diversity. Some excellent examples that are already in place are School of Engineering's eWomen graduate program and the ACE program in the science divisions.
- Provide centrally-located spaces, such as a student union, that promote faculty, students, and staff exchange.

Recommendations to improve diverse students' educational and social experiences.

- There was widespread support from faculty, staff, and especially students for the creation of ethnic studies departments that centralize and provide depth to courses already being offered on the campus and provide opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and dialogue. Support was highest among female,

ethnic minority respondents, who were also the group most likely to feel alienated and isolated in the campus. Respondents suggested that the success of LALS, The Center for Justice and Tolerance, and the Center for Cultural Studies should be used as a model to create centers that serve other ethnic groups on campus. These three programs sponsor research clusters that bring together faculty and students to create cutting-edge intellectual discourse and scholarship and also provide a sense of community and belonging to its members. The recent organizing efforts by the Coalition for Asian American/Pacific Islander Studies, calling for the institutionalization of Asian American/Pacific Islander Studies at UCSC, demonstrate the existence of effective coalition building among undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff. The successful relationships built among faculty, staff, and students from various disciplinary backgrounds shows the tremendous potential for an innovative and intellectually diverse program at UC Santa Cruz.

- The university needs to re-examine its practices and support for recruitment and mentoring of students, and particularly students from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in academia. Better coordination with student organizations, mentoring programs, and multicultural programs are needed to provide safe and comfortable places for students. Themed dorms and colleges are both resources and impediments for these goals, and thus, may provide a good starting point for these efforts.

Increase attention and effort to students who are members of groups who have not received much resources and attention, such as Native Americans.

Respectfully submitted,

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