Metropolitan State University

2005

Campus Climate Report

A Preliminary Analysis of Experiences and Perceptions about Racism in the University with Recommendations for Action

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# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................................................ 3

Section I: Introduction ................................................................................................................................ 4
  Purposes of this Initial Campus Climate Report
  Context and Background
  Origins of the Current Anti-Racism Initiative at Metropolitan State
  Initial Anti-Racism Leadership Team Activities to Address Racism
  Data and Methodology Used to Write this Report

Section II. Survey of Campus Climate—Analysis of Faculty/Staff Responses........................................... 8
  Perceptions about Whether or Not Racism is a Problem
  Observations and Experiences with Differential Treatment
  Perceptions about the University as a Positive Place for People of Color
  Perceptions of What Happens in the Classroom
  Perceptions about What has been Done and What Should be Done about Racism
  Differences in Perceptions Between Women and Men
  Samples of Written Comments

Section III. Survey of Campus Climate—Analysis of Student Responses............................................... 18
  Perceptions about Whether or Not Racism is a Problem
  Observations and Experiences with Differential Treatment
  Perceptions about the University as a Positive Place for People of Color
  Perceptions of What Happens in the Classroom & Advising
  Perceptions about What if Anything Should be Done about Racism
  Samples of Written Comments
  Summary and Conclusions about Students’ Responses

Section IV: Summary of Community Conversations about Racism....................................................... 28

Section V: Campus Climate Issues Raised in Ethnic Studies External Report......................................... 30

Section VI: Results of Undoing Racism Training Past Participant Survey.............................................. 32

Section VII: Conclusions and Recommendations..................................................................................... 36
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Finally, without the loving support of our families, completing this report would not have been possible.

--Robert O'Connor and Paul Spies
Section I: Introduction

Purposes of this Initial Campus Climate Report

The purpose of this initial report is to stimulate awareness, discussion, further study, and action about racism at Metropolitan State University. The full report is offered as a preliminary assessment of campus climate to inform and deepen the community-wide conversation begun last year about racism in the university. However, since dialogue without action will lead many to disillusionment and frustration without seeing real change, this report also encourages members of the university to take strategic steps toward eliminating institutional and interpersonal forms of racism. With this in mind, and as the university begins the effort to clarify its mission, the campus climate report and this summary aim to help Metropolitan State remain accountable to serving communities of color and other historically underserved groups living in the Twin Cities area. Finally, the report is intended to contribute to the continuous self-study and improvement of the university through its current Academic Quality Improvement Project (AQIP) accreditation process by helping to identify areas of improvement and establish baseline data for further study and assessment.

Context and Background

Metropolitan State University is the most diverse university in Minnesota with approximately 25% students of color, 25% full-time faculty of color, and 22% staff/administrators of color. Most members of the university community appreciate this diversity. However, as data in this report also confirm, the picture of inclusiveness covers a deeper reality of institutional racism embedded throughout the fabric of the university that limits our capacity to accomplish our mission. Metropolitan State’s currently stated mission as a comprehensive urban university is that it will

“...provide accessible, high quality liberal arts and professional education to the citizens and communities of the metropolitan area, with continued emphasis on underserved groups, including adults and communities of color.”

The university’s anti-racism initiative was created to assess the extent to which we are effectively serving this mission and to promote the most open and progressive climate within the university and in its community partnerships in service of the mission. How well we are doing—clearly—is a matter of perspective. The perspectives on the significance of institutional racism range across a wide continuum. Beneath perspectives, there is a substance to the fundamental reality that racism shapes the norms within this institution, just as it shapes the norms within society as a whole. It is there, plain to see, for those with the courage to look, and the commitment to our mission.

Veteran faculty and staff of the university who have been with Metropolitan State for at least ten years of its 34-year history will cite that much has changed in the past decade as the university has grown dramatically and become more traditional with separate departments, letter grades, and substantially less use of alternative or creative strategies to account for student learning such as credit for prior learning and theory seminars. Many veterans will note that not all the change has been for the better in terms of initiatives to address racism and diversity at the university.
For example, special appropriations from the Chancellor’s Office were once directed to the hiring of faculty and staff of color. Faculty had once established a process whereby all new courses at the university had to be approved for inclusion of multicultural content by a Multicultural Education Committee; this requirement has since been removed and the committee has been dysfunctional without substantive purpose. Faculty and staff of color used to caucus on a regular basis, and most of a much smaller faculty would engage in collaborative conversations about diversity issues related to advising and teaching.

As the university evolves, relations within and across university sub-systems also change. With the changes in infrastructure, there are also changes in personalities, in networks, and in climate across the institution. A question the university community we must keep alive, and the Anti-Racism Leadership Team should fundamentally focus upon is – as we grow as a university, are we serving the mission and our under-served communities better? This core question guides our anti-racism evaluation framework.

Origins of the Current Anti-Racism Initiative at Metropolitan State

Approximately six years ago the idea was conceived for an anti-racism initiative at Metropolitan State University by the Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity who shared her vision with then interim President Dennis Nielson. With the hiring of current President Wilson Bradshaw in the summer of 2000, the push for an anti-racism initiative was given more attention. Early in his first year at Metropolitan State, President Bradshaw had his whole cabinet participate in an “Undoing Racism” workshop conducted by the People’s Institute. The Internal Multicultural Advisory Committee (IMAC) worked with various bargaining units (IFO, MSUAASF, AFSCME, etc.) to seek applicants for an anti-racism task force in the fall of 2002.

Some two dozen faculty, staff and students responded to the call for task force members and were appointed to the university’s Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT) by their bargaining units and President Bradshaw. The group participated together in an “Undoing Racism” workshop in January 2003 facilitated by the Minnesota Collaborative Anti-Racism Initiative (MCARI) which emphasized understanding how institutionalized racism exits in society and how it could exist at a university. However, the workshop did not empower the new ARLT members with the capacity to function as a team. Thus, after their workshop, members struggled to agree on their specific purpose, what actions were most needed in the short and long terms, and what role they should and could play in relation to the President’s office and other decision making structures of the university. Nevertheless, one of the goals that the ARLT could agree upon was conducting an assessment of campus climate related to race, including a survey of students, faculty and staff. Many members of the ARLT and the university community did not need a campus climate survey to identify and verify where and how racism exists at the university. For example, different situations with administration regarding the resignation of two Ethnic Studies faculty and the implementation of policies regarding international students have raised racial tensions at the university over the past two years. President Bradshaw has issued written and oral public statements on these and other issues to the university; he has challenged all members of the university to work to combat racism and other forms of bigotry that threaten a positive campus climate for our urban university.
Initial Anti-Racism Leadership Team Activities to Address Racism at Metropolitan State

The ARLT has been involved with three main activities over the past two years despite a very slow start\(^1\). First, the ARLT has worked with the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity to see that three Undoing Racism workshops were offered to staff and faculty from the fall of 2003 through the spring of 2005. During the fall of 2004, the ARLT successfully garnered the support of each employee bargaining unit to support participation in Undoing Racism workshops. To date, approximately 35% of some 330 full-time faculty, staff and administrators have participated in an Undoing Racism training session sponsored by the university. Second, beginning in October 2004, the ARLT hosted five Community Conversations about racism at Metropolitan State which gave more than 150 people the opportunity in a variety of formats to express and listen to various views and experiences about racism on campus. Finally, the ARLT worked with the Office of Institutional Research at the university to administer the campus climate survey in April 2005 to a sampling of students and all full-time employees of the university\(^2\).

Most recently, members of the ARLT wrote a preliminary proposal in May for a Ford Foundation “Difficult Dialogues” grant seeking assistance to enhance the anti-racism initiative\(^3\). Members of the ARLT also submitted a letter of inquiry in June to university administrators about concerns that surfaced from various university members perceiving the lack of a diverse construction crew completing the renovation of Founders Hall. In short, some has been accomplished but much remains to be done in order to eradicate racism.

While these three accomplishments are modest in terms of the needs of the university—as well as the expectations of ARLT members themselves, the expectations of the President, and the expectations of many members of the university community—these efforts have nonetheless raised awareness and stimulated public dialogue about racism. Putting race and racism on the table for public dialogue should be viewed as a positive thing for an institution of higher learning given the persistence of racism in society and the general difficulty most people have in talking openly, honestly and deeply about such issues that both transcend and intersect with so many other issues in society.

Yet, unfortunately but understandably, a wide range of perceptions exist across the university about the anti-racism initiative and the Anti-Racism Leadership Team. While some people seem to be critical of the ARLT for not speaking up forcefully on specific issues and taking action to combat racism, others seem to believe that the ARLT is creating a negative campus climate and being divisive.

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\(^1\) A variety of factors contributed to the ARLT’s early struggles, including turnover of its members, inconsistently attended meetings held twice per month, lack of clarity about its specific charge and position within the university, and internal struggles with racism and team building.

\(^2\) The ARLT considers the administration of this survey an achievement because all bargaining units endorsed the survey being administered. A similar campus climate survey was aborted in the spring of 2003 because it was administered by the Chancellor’s Office through the university’s Vice President for Academic Affairs without consultation with the Inter-Faculty Organization.

\(^3\) A different preliminary proposal dealing with issues of religion was developed by faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences, and their preliminary proposal was forwarded by the President to the Ford Foundation. Since then, the grant writers were notified that the preliminary proposal was accepted and that a full proposal can be submitted.
Data and Methodology Used to Write this Report

Data used to write this report primarily come from the Survey of Campus Climate administered in April 2005 to students and employees. The survey included 35 items (see Appendix) and 33 of the items were identical for students and employees. The instruments were slightly different for students and employees because two questions only pertained to employees and two only pertained to students. The survey instruments were developed by the Anti-Racism Leadership Team in consultation with the Office of Institutional Research after the ARLT looked at a 90-item campus climate survey recently used at Minnesota State University-Moorhead (available for review at http://www.mnstate.edu/TOCAR/) and one attempted two years ago by the Chancellor’s Office.

Students in approximately 30 classes were asked to complete the survey in early April 2005. A proportionally-representative random sampling of courses from across all four colleges at the university was generated by the university’s Office of Institutional Research. Resident and community faculty instructors were contacted in March and asked if they would take approximately 10 minutes from their class time in early April to administer the survey to students. Instructors were assured that results of the survey would not be tabulated by course and no items in the survey related to their specific course. No instructors objected to administering the survey, but instructors of three of the originally-selected courses were unable to administer the survey in early April so participation was solicited from randomly selected alternate courses. Institutional Research delivered an envelope with the surveys and brief instructions to each classroom where selected classes met, and instructors were asked to leave the sealed envelope of completed surveys in their classroom for Institutional Research staff to pick up soon after the class was over.

In order to increase the likelihood that there would be a sufficient number of students of color among the respondents, the Office of Institutional Research randomly selected 50 students from each of the four major groups of color\(^4\) and mailed these students a survey with a self-addressed stamped envelope to be sent back to the Office of Institutional Research. Four hundred thirty-six (436) students completed the survey in sampled classes or through the mail, which represents 6.7% of all students (6,305) attending the university in the spring of 2005. All surveys were anonymous. At the end of the survey instrument, all respondents were asked to identify their race/ethnicity, gender and age range. Of all student respondents who identified their race/ethnicity, 61% identified as White/European American, 13% identified as Asian American/Pacific Islander, 11% as Black/African/African American, 5% as American Indian/Native American, 5% as Latino/Hispanic/Chicano, and 4% as Other.

The survey was also distributed via campus mail to all full-time faculty, staff and administrators. The response rate for full-time employees was 38% (126 of 331), and members of the Anti-Racism Leadership Team did not complete the survey. Of the employees who identified their race/ethnicity, 76% identified themselves as White/European American, 10% identified as Latino/Hispanic/Chicano, 4% as Black/African/African American, 4% as American Indian/Native American, 3% as Asian American/Pacific Islander, and 3% as Other.

The Office of Institutional Research provided the authors of this report with raw data for both surveys that was aggregated by racial group affiliation (i.e., white, non-white, and unknown) and by gender. Initial data analysis revealed various degrees of commonality and difference in

\(^4\) i.e., American Indian/Native American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Black/African/African American, Latino/Hispanic/Chicano
perceptions across racial groups, and a threshold of 10% difference between respondents of color and white respondents was established as being significant for further analysis and reporting in a way that would account for varying sample sizes. The Office of Institutional Research also provided student survey results disaggregated by particular racial/ethnic group, but consistent patterns were hard to determine and the relatively small sample sizes of each group prohibited careful conclusions from being made. While many items received approximately the same percentages of agreement or disagreement from people of color and whites, only some of these items are discussed in this report. All results are provided in the Appendix for independent review.

In addition to selected response items asking for levels of agreement or disagreement to various statements, survey participants were also asked to write responses to two questions. The Office of Institutional Research provided the authors of this report with a typed list of these written responses to the two open-ended questions. The self-identified race/ethnicity of respondents was provided in parenthesis after each comment. Written comments were analyzed for repetitive comments and themes, both of which are presented later in this report.

 Besides the Survey of Campus Climate, other data about the campus climate and the anti-racism initiative were gathered and analyzed to write different sections of this report. This additional data includes the following: 1) views and experiences shared by participants at five Community Conversations about racism Metropolitan State held between October 2004 and April 2005; 2) an external report on the status of the Ethnic Studies program the university; and 3) an April 2005 survey of all past participants in university-sponsored Undoing Racism training sessions.

**Section III. Survey of Campus Climate—Analysis of Faculty/Staff Responses**

Faculty, staff and administrator perceptions, experiences and observations of race-based treatment at Metropolitan State University were investigated through the Survey of Campus Climate administered to all full-time employees in April 2005. The following is an overview and analysis of the most salient themes identified from the survey responses. Themes have been determined to exist based upon repetition of like or similar responses or where significant differences have been noted (i.e., at least 10% differential between respondent groups).

**Perceptions about Whether or Not Racism is a Problem**

While clear majorities of faculty/staff of color (72%) and white faculty/staff (66%) agreed that racism is a problem in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, significantly smaller percentages of faculty and staff agreed that racism is a problem at Metropolitan State. Faculty/staff of color were slightly more likely to agree (52%) than white faculty/staff (46%) that unintended racism is a problem at this institution. However, the differences between racial groups of perceptions about other forms of racism in the university are significant.

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5 All raw data tables are provided for review in the Appendices of this report available at [www.metrostate.edu/eod/campusclimate](http://www.metrostate.edu/eod/campusclimate). While noticeable differences in perceptions existed among various student groups of color, consistent patterns of differences between particular racial/ethnic groups were unable to be detected. Significant differences in perceptions between female and male faculty/staff existed for one-third of the survey items, but significant differences in perceptions between female and male students only existed for two items.
When examining *interpersonal* racism, faculty and staff were asked if they believed that it was a problem here at Metropolitan State University. The results of the survey indicated that just 1 out of 10 white faculty/staff (10%) agreed that interpersonal racism was a problem, while 65% of white respondents disagreed that interpersonal racism was a problem. This is juxtaposed with 1 out of 3 faculty/staff of color (34%) who agreed that interpersonal racism was a problem on campus, and 52% who disagreed. It is noteworthy to recognize that 1 in 4 or 24% of white respondents were either neutral or did not know if interpersonal racism was a problem at the university.

When examining *institutional* racism, there was a slight increase in the recognition or agreement that this type of racism is a problem in the university, but there were wide gaps in perception between racial groups. The majority of white faculty/staff (59%) disagreed that institutional racism is a problem at this university, with nearly a third of respondents indicating that they were neutral (17.9%) or didn’t know (12%) if it was a problem. Only 12% of white/faculty staff agreed that institutional racism is a problem. In contrast, faculty/staff of color were evenly split between 38% who agreed that institutional racism was a problem versus 38% who disagreed. Twenty-four percent were either neutral (21%) or didn’t know (3%) if it was a problem.

**Observations and Experiences with Differential Treatment**

When examining the self-report responses of faculty regarding being treated badly by a student due to the race or ethnicity of the faculty member, there are significant differences. While 52% of white faculty/staff reported agreeing with this statement, 76% of faculty/staff respondents of color agreed that they had been treated badly by a student based upon their race or ethnicity. White faculty/staff were also twice as likely than faculty/staff of color to disagree with being treated badly (20% vs 10%), and twice as likely than faculty/staff of color to respond as neutral or not knowing if they had been treated negatively (28% vs 14%).

Faculty and staff observations and or experiences of students treating someone else badly due to race or ethnicity produced very significant responses from the two respondent groups. The ensuing dichotomy is reflected in the 22% differential between faculty/staff of color who agreed (41%) compared to 19% of their white peers who agreed. It is also reflected, to a lesser degree, in the level of disagreement over having witnessed a student treat someone badly due to race or ethnicity. White faculty/staff disagreed at a 68% rate compared to their peers of color who registered a disagreement rate of 45%. This appears to suggest that significantly fewer white faculty/staff have witnessed or interpreted an exchange to be negative because of race.

Faculty/staff experiences with negative differential treatment from their colleagues based upon the race of the respondent also yielded noticeably different responses. Clear majorities of faculty and staff from both groups—faculty/staff of color (65%) and their white faculty/staff (76%)—disagreed with having been treated badly by colleagues based upon their race. Yet, approximately 1 in 6 or 17% of both respondent groups agreed that they had been treated negatively by a colleague due to their race/ethnicity. In contrast, rates of faculty and staff observing someone other colleague treat another colleague badly due to race or ethnicity received noticeably higher levels of agreement. As evidence of this, 28% of white faculty/staff versus 45% of faculty/staff of color have observed a colleague patronize, embarrass or mistreat someone else and believed that it was due to that person’s race or ethnic origin. A majority (56%) of white faculty/staff tended to disagree with this statement compared to a minority of faculty/staff of color (41%) who disagreed with the statement.
In an attempt to sample perceptions about other types of bias and differential treatment, questions were asked regarding gender, sexual orientation and language or accent. Agreement to observing such differential treatment ranged from 25% to 62% depending on the type of discrimination and respondent group. Such preliminary data strongly suggests that the campus climate also needs to be improved regarding gender, sexual orientation, and language, and that people of color tend to be more aware of various forms of discrimination.

When asking if respondents had observed people being treated differently based on gender at this university, noteworthy percentages of both respondent groups agreed about having observed such bias. However, there was a significant difference between respondents of color (41%) who tended to agree more than white respondents (24%) that they had observed differential treatment of persons based upon gender at our university. Furthermore, white faculty/staff were much more likely to disagree (59%) compared to faculty/staff of color (31%), and faculty/staff of color responded neutrally at 3 times the rate of white respondents.

With respect to differential treatment based upon sexual orientation, it is alarming that clear majorities of respondents (62% of faculty/staff of color along with 55% of white faculty/staff) agreed with having observed such treatment based upon GLBT status. Approximately one-third of both respondent groups disagreed to having observed differential treatment based on sexual orientation.

When asked if they had observed people being treated differently based upon accent or the language spoken, respondents tended to disagree more than agree as they had with the item related to gender. However, almost 1 in 3 respondents agreed that they had observed differential treatment based upon language or accent.

**Perceptions about Whether or Not the University is a Positive, Respectful and Supportive Place for People of Color**

There is a significant difference between the respondent groups in their reported discomfort stating ideas with colleagues. While 64% of all respondents reported feeling comfortable stating ideas with their colleagues, faculty/staff of color were twice as likely (38%) as their white colleagues (19%) to disagree, indicating that they did not feel comfortable stating ideas with colleagues.

Responses to the questions relating to whether students and faculty/staff of color are respected at Metropolitan State University also identified significant difference in the responses based upon race. For instance, 82% of white faculty/staff respondents believed that both faculty/staff and students of color are respected at Metropolitan State University. This is contrasted with the 52% of faculty/staff of color who agreed that faculty/staff of color are respected and 53% who agreed that students of color are respected at the university. This is further contrasted by the 27% of respondents of color who disagreed that faculty/staff of color are respected at Metropolitan State University compared to just 5% of white faculty/staff who disagreed.

An additional set of responses from participants speaks to their feeling a “need to minimize various aspect of their racial/ethnic culture…and ways of interacting in order to be able to ‘fit it’ at Metropolitan State.” Within this set of data, the majority of participants from both racial groups affirmed that they need to curb their real self or are not able to bring their whole self to the university environment. There were differences by race reflected by white faculty/staff being 11% less likely than their peers of color (53% vs 64%) to report having to minimize aspects of
their culture. Faculty and staff of color were 10% more likely than their white counterparts (29% vs 19%) to disagree with having to minimize aspects of their racial/ethnic selves.

Although less than half agreed, there was a fair amount of agreement (46% vs. 47%) that the university provides adequate programs and services to help students of color; however, faculty/staff of color were twice as likely (32%) versus white faculty/staff (16%) to disagree with the notion that adequate programs and services for students of color were available. Further, 20% of white faculty/staff indicated they “don’t know” if the university provides adequate student programs and services, compared to 0% of faculty/staff of color.

When it came to assessing if the university provides adequate programs and services to help faculty/staff of color, there was a significant difference in three domains between faculty/staff of color and their white counterparts. The first domain was in the affirmative perception of white faculty/staff (51%) of the existence of adequate programs and services for faculty/staff of color compared to the reserved perception (41%) of faculty/staff of color. The second significant difference was that 33% of faculty/staff of color disagreed with the notion that there were adequate programs and services compared to just 13% of white faculty/staff. The last difference between the two groups was that white faculty/staff were 6 times more likely than their people of color counterparts to indicate that they “don’t know” about adequate services and programs for faculty/staff of color.

When faculty were asked if they would recommend Metropolitan State University to potential students of color, there were differences between the respondent groups both in the percentage that agreed that they would as well as among those who disagreed that they would make such recommendations. White faculty/staff (85%) were 24% more likely to recommend Metropolitan State University to students of color than the faculty/staff of color (61%). In addition to this disparity, faculty/staff of color were 7 times more likely than their white counterparts to not recommend Metropolitan State University to students of color. Similar data was observed when exploring whether or not current employees would recommend Metropolitan State University to potential employees.

White faculty/staff were slightly less likely to recommend Metropolitan State University as a place of employment for people of color (78%) than they would for a student of color to attend for an education. While a significantly lower percentage (65%) of faculty/staff of color would recommend Metropolitan State University as a place of employment, a significantly different percentage (21%) of faculty/staff of color disagreed that they would recommend other people of color to work at the university. Only 4% of white/faculty staff disagreed about recommending the university to people of color as a supportive environment to work.

**Perceptions of What Happens in the Classroom**

Faculty and staff perceptions of diverse participation in the classroom show significant differences based upon the racial groups of the respondent as well. As evidence of this, faculty/staff of color were more likely to disagree (42% vs 18%) that there was equitable student participation in classroom discussions and learning. Furthermore, white faculty/staff reported in greater numbers being neutral or not knowing (40%) about equitable participation in class by various students compared to 23% of faculty/staff of color.

Faculty/staff responses regarding being knowledgeable about diverse life experiences had a considerable amount of variability within racial groups as well as between the racial and ethnic groups. As faculty/staff of color were evenly split between those who agreed (31%) and those
who disagreed (31%) that faculty and staff are knowledgeable about diverse life experiences of students of color, white faculty/staff were significantly more likely (44%) to agree than disagree (22%) that faculty and staff are knowledgeable about students’ diverse life experiences.

Although the previous paragraph focuses on faculty/staff’s knowledge of students of color, this paragraph speaks to their use of that knowledge in the classroom. Seventy-three percent (73%) of white faculty/staff either didn’t know (46%) or were neutral (27%) in their knowledge of whether faculty use examples reflecting diversity in their classroom teaching. Sixty-one percent (61%) of faculty/staff of color fell into this same category. Where noteworthy differences exist between faculty/staff of color and their white colleagues is in the fact that 18% of faculty/staff of color compared to 5% of white faculty/staff disagreed that faculty use examples reflecting diversity in their classrooms.

**Perceptions about What has been Done and What Should be Done about Racism**

Data and responses in this section speak to the impressions and suggestions about what the university is doing, can do, or should do regarding racism at Metropolitan State University. A review of the data provide possible fodder for moving towards becoming an anti-racist institution.

While nearly three-fourths of all faculty/staff respondents were in agreement that they have become more understanding of racial/ethnic differences since coming to the university, faculty/staff beliefs regarding whether or not Metropolitan State is “making sufficient efforts” to improve relations and understanding between people of various racial/ethnic backgrounds were markedly different based upon race. Sixty-four percent (64%) of faculty/staff of color agreed compared to 48% of white faculty/staff who agreed that the institution is making sufficient efforts toward improving relations between people of various racial/ethnic backgrounds.

Beliefs regarding faculty, staff and administrators actively working to undo White privilege revealed that 51% of white faculty/staff agreed such work was being done while only 36% of faculty/staff of color agreed. Conversely, 39% of faculty/staff of color versus 14% of white faculty/staff disagreed that employees were actively working to undo White privilege. Thirty-six percent (36%) of white faculty/staff indicated that they were neutral or didn’t know if the university was actively working to address this issue, while 25% of faculty/staff of color were either neutral or didn’t know about employees’ efforts to actively redress this issue.

In a similar item, survey participants were queried as to their beliefs about whether Metropolitan State was taking the necessary measures to address racism at the university. Their responses were more divergent based upon racial and ethnic strata than most other items where significant differences emerged between respondent groups. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of white faculty/staff agreed that the university is taking the necessary steps to address racism whereas 59% of white faculty/staff disagreed. In stark contrast, 55% faculty/staff of color agreed that Metropolitan State is taking necessary measures to address racism versus 31% who disagreed.

As for what to do to address racism in the university, one of the highest levels of agreement between both respondent groups dealt with a question whether or not all students should be required to complete at least one course that includes multicultural/anti-racist knowledge and skills. There was a very strong showing of support by both faculty/staff of color (78%) as well as white faculty/staff (72%) for such a graduation requirement.

The last question asked of survey participants was to ascertain if faculty and staff believed that the university should strengthen its commitment and actions towards being an anti-racist
institution. Respondents tended to not be neutral on this item but instead opted for agreement or disagreement in larger and significantly different percentages. Fifty-five percent (55%) of faculty and staff of color agreed that the university should strengthen its commitment and actions compared to 39% of white faculty/staff. Meanwhile, 31% of the respondents of color disagreed compared to 44% of white respondents who disagreed that the university should increase its efforts to become an anti-racist institution.

In reviewing the data from faculty and staff, there continues to be a pervasive difference of experience, perception and or opinion regarding the existence of several forms of racism on campus and what should be done about them. Much of the data provides a snapshot in time of Metropolitan State University respondents. This data should be leveraged to formulate focus group questions that solicit additional real life examples and to clarify some of the meaning of respondents.

**Differences in Perceptions Between Women and Men**

The Office of Institutional Research also provided survey data aggregated by gender. As was the case between faculty/staff of color and white faculty/staff, responses to many survey items revealed significantly different experiences and perceptions of women and men. Such data suggest some intersection between race and gender. However, since the purpose of this report is to focus on issues of race and racism rather than gender, significantly different response rates to approximately one-third of the survey items are summarized below and readers of this report are encouraged to examine the survey data aggregated by gender for more specific information.

**Women respondents were significantly more likely than men to:**

- Agree that they are more understanding of differences since coming to Metropolitan State
- *Disagree* that various students participate equally in class
- *Disagree* that the university would respond fairly to a complaint of harassment or discrimination
- Agree that unintentional racism is a problem at the university
- Agree that they have seen a student treat someone else badly due to race/ethnicity
- *Disagree* that institutional racism is a problem at the university
- Agree that they have observed differential treatment based on gender
- Agree that they have observed differential treatment based on sexual orientation

**Men respondents were significantly more likely than women to:**

- Agree that various students participate equally in class
- Agree that faculty and staff are knowledgeable about students’ diverse life experiences
- Agree that the university provides adequate programs and services to support faculty/staff of color
- Agree that the university would respond fairly to a complaint of harassment or discrimination
- *Disagree* that faculty/staff of color are respected at the university
- *Disagree* that unintentional racism is a problem at the university
- *Disagree* that employees actively work to undo White privilege
- *Disagree* that have seen a student treat someone else badly due to race/ethnicity
• Disagree that the university is taking the necessary steps to address racism
• Disagree that they have observed differential treatment based on sexual orientation
• Disagree that the university should strengthen its commitment and actions towards being an anti-racist institution

Written Comments from Faculty and Staff

In addition to the selected response items detailed above, approximately half of faculty/staff respondents chose to write written comments to the final two items on the survey. Many faculty and staff had unique and more specific written responses describing their perceptions of racism being a problem at Metropolitan State and what, if anything, should be done to address racism. The following examples represent about half of the total comments written and help describe the problem and illuminate the ways that racism exits at the university. (All written comments from faculty and staff are offered for review in the Appendix to this report.)

Sample Comments that Racism is Not a Problem

• I feel Metropolitan State University is an extremely respectful institution regardless of gender, religion, race, sexual orientation or age. (White)
• I think there is occasional discomfort between individuals who are different than the another. But I have not observed any thing serious enough to be called on “ism” race, ethnic, sex pref , etc (White)
• I may not always be aware that I’m treating people unfairly but I try to treat everyone as a person (human being) because that is a level of existence we all share. I hold everyone to the same level of performance and apply the same rules so I’m doing my best. (White)
• I don’t see racism at Metro State (White)
• Have never viewed nor heard anything racist in my years at Metro. (Hispanic)
• I do not think it is a major problem here. I think the occasional perceived racist incident is as likely to be because the complainer is conditioned to see events that way than to be real racism. (White)
• Less racist than society in general, so not a problem. (But more sexist than society in general slightly). (White)
• I do not think it is. What I see as a problem is lack of academic resources (remedial work and language and writing) (White)

Sample Comments that Reverse Racism is the Problem

• I think reverse racism towards white males is more of a problem, and I find Question 18 borderline offensive. (White)
• The university has successfully made me racist for the first time in my life. Job well done! I hope people of color are now feeling better and the abuse lightens up. Forms like this incite more anger and resentment for both sides. I guess that’s all part of the bigger plan. (White)
• Reverse Racism-Persons of color and women are rated higher than a white male here (White)
• Recent initiations have increased racism at Metro State. Before initiatives Metro was a less racist institutions from 15 year employee. (White)
• The most racist language is anti-white. I have only seen and experienced respectful behavior, here at Metro State (White)
• Many behaviors are perceived to be racist so it is often an uncomfortable environment for white faculty and staff. (White)

• I am offended by the definition of racism in Q.25 (White)

• White staff are not valued, White students are not valued  (White)

• Multicultural content and anti-racism content are very different concepts, administrators and faculty of color use accusations or institutions of racism to undermine the contributions of others and to deflect criticism. (White)

• I don’t feel that my racial experiences are allowed to be valid in a conversation about race. (White)

Samples Comments that Racism is a Problem

• I think it is both complex and poorly understood by many white faculty and staff as well as by new immigrants of color who also face non-native speaker issues. (Other)

• Much of what I see is not overt, but demonstrates ignorance. Nevertheless it is a damaging form of discrimination because people are unaware they are being discriminatory. (White)

• I believe that unintentional racism is a problem at Metro State. There are acts of discrimination that happen and individuals are not aware cognitively of what they have said or done that showed their biased feelings. (African American)

• The biggest problem is that many people believe “we are diverse, so we have no racism, (no ageism, no sexism, etc) (White)

• Faculty, staff, students and administrators want so badly to see themselves as supportive of diversity that we often overlook/fail to see the discrimination. (White)

• Racism is a problem—administration ignores it. (Asian American)

• Cannot say, because of fear of reprisal. (Hispanic)

• Students of color are sometimes patronized by faculty who set low expectations of them and slight their intellectual capabilities. I am sure there are other problems too. You don’t ask, but I think gender discrimination is more intense than racism, because it is more unconscious and there is less acknowledgement of it as a fact. (White)

• It is a problem because the institution is set up to perpetuate racism. Perhaps it would feel less overwhelming as a problem of communities of color, communities of students, staff, faculty and administrators would commit to addressing the problems even beyond the racism conversations we’ve been having. (White)

• Some faculty give lip service but are very racist or sexist in their actions with students or other faculty. (Hispanic)

• Interpersonal racism, i.e. discrimination of white individuals by people of color is a problem at Metro State. (White)

• “White Privilege” is not understood. People become too defensive in sessions-don’t want to understand. Hold what you say about the above-against you. (African American)

• Faculty of color are clustered in specific programs—need to integrate other departments. Racism here is generally unintentional and a product of set procedures and programs that serve whites and middle class folks, in general, better than low income/working class students. (White)
- Institutional racism is a problem in that the real needs of minorities—especially poor minorities—is not being met. Look around you—We are a sterile white environment without childcare or any visual “nod” toward our diverse and overworked clientele. (White)

- Ethnic Studies Department! (Native American)

- With the President action or lack there of it with respect to Ethics Studies and for receiving awards for community involvement without hiring a person of color in a position of authority at the CLBL (White)

- Metro State should be the leader in dismantling racism in the nation—at least in this state. We are woefully apathetic. (White)

Samples of Comments about What Should Be Done

- Canvas everyone (like this survey) to find out “hidden” discrimination among non-favored, non-white groups. (Other)

- Stop sending surveys like this. Most don’t see a person’s color, but this survey makes one feel like they should. By including a question like #18 is horrible. The impression this survey and question #18 leaves me with is that the university only cares to promote an assist students of color. Is white not a color?? (Hispanic)

- Offer some seminars for both students and staff. If you recognize it report it. It should never be tolerated. (White)

- All treated fairly—as equals (White)

- The institutions is already working on the problem, with great success. (White)

- Start with advancing a campus-wide commitment to RESPECT of all Metro State community regardless of race, ethnicity, color, language, gender or union affiliation. Anti-racism activity without acknowledge respect to all is, in fact, alienating a wide swatch of Metro State (White)

- Stop seeing every thing through a racist lense and stop labeling people as racist when there is disagreement. (White)

- It will continue to be problem until white fork are allowed to explore their own attitudes about race without fear of public and/or professional shame. (White)

- Still continue to do workshops on racism on a campus wide structure 2. Still continue to communicate about issues interdepartmentally. (African American)

- We talk about it a lot. We’re overlooking class, culture, ethnicity, religion, politics, and power structure. Our emphasis should be on inclusiveness. The continuing emphasis on this horrible hatred is being used as a tool to divide us. (White)

- Link changes to incentive rewards from top to bottom. Performance review/tenure assessment, etc (African American)

- The Undoing Racism Workshop is excellent-making attendance mandatory would be good (but probably not possible). Could it be offered for credit for students? (White)

- Continue to encourage diversity as a strength—not as a “problem”. (White)

- Stick true to the university-mission. (Asian American)

- Take a hard look at structures and processes collect data—not just anecdotes in discussions. (White)

- Training, training and more training, should be required. I came during the Ford Foundation years and found those seminars to be invaluable. (White)
• Every class must address those issues.
• Keep up with policies and support mechanisms in place now, and stop beating a dead horse with surveys and “conversations” ad nauseum. (White)
• Education of faculty, staff and students re: racism. Promote a respectful climate. Continue dialogue/conversations through the Anti-Racism Task Force. (White)
• Much stronger leadership from the President and Provost. (Native American)
• We need to conduct a series of workshops or forums presented by outside persons, who can help faculty and staff look at how our past and present social environments or our patterns of socialization that caused us to overtly or covertly communicate racist feelings as well as display bias toward groups or individuals. (African American)
• The current approach labels the institution and all its employees as racist. An effective approach values the education and humanity of its members and aggressively addresses reports of racist incidents. (White)
• More education on what racism is and work together to undo it. (White)
• Have people know that they can take specific racist situations to the EEOC officer. (White)
• Some people of color should get counseling to move on from childhood hurts. Abusing whites should not be part of that counseling. Folks who speak Spanish and English should not be allowed to use Spanish in front of English speakers to be mean or say nasty things. That’s just plain rude. (White)
• Stop these biased surveys! (White)
• I don’t know. Maybe hire more faculty and staff from outside the state-really-to break down the provincial passive-aggressive culture that reinforces all forms of prejudice. (White)
• We need a variety of lectures. One thing that is essential is safe spaces where Whites as well people of color can possibly are required to discuss issues with others in their same racial/ethnic group. (Other)
• Faculty should agree. They have a problem with people of color (especially in leadership positions) administration should develop backbone in this issue. (Hispanic)
• Stronger actions need to be taken against faculty whose behavior is clearly racists or sexists. (Hispanic)
• Lets explore the difference between personal and institutional racism and begin correcting the ills of institutional racism. Personal racism is much harder to combat. (African American)
• People need to understand that it is always about race-even when it isn’t!!! (White)
• -Focus less on white privilege and more on cross ethical/cross racial coalition building. Focus on addressing specific institutional practices that perpetuate inequality based on race. (White)
• When we succeed. Invite different points of view. Encourage us to do the work ourselves and then let us do it. Please stop making us go to one class selected by an elite, hand-picked group. (White)
• Hire more full-time employees of color, especially in public services areas as visibility can improve any doubts we or others may have of racism at MSU (White)
• Always address it right a way. It’s important. (White)
Section III. Survey of Campus Climate—Analysis of Student Responses

As stated earlier in this report, the following analysis of students’ responses to the Survey Campus Climate was done with the intention of focusing on items where there were noticeable differences (at least 10%) between the percentages of white students and students of color in how they responded to particular statements. While significant differences in perceptions existed among various student groups of color on several items, consistent patterns of differences between particular racial/ethnic groups were unable to be detected and relatively small sample sizes provided caution while such data was being analyzed. Nevertheless, readers of this report are encouraged to see the Appendix for student survey responses aggregated by specific racial/ethnic groups for broader and deeper understanding of the experiences and perceptions of students. Selected data that are described below are also presented in complete table format within the Appendix.

Students’ Perceptions about Whether or Not Racism is a Problem

In order to put their perceptions about racism at Metropolitan State into context, students were asked whether they agreed or not that racism was a problem in the Twin Cities. Sixty-two (62%) percent of students of color agreed compared with just 48% of white students. Furthermore, twice as many white students disagreed that racism was a problem in the Twin Cities (15%) compared to 8% students of color who disagreed.

In different items, students were asked whether unintentional racism, interpersonal racism, and institutional racism were problems at the university. From a positive light, given students’ perceptions of racism in the Twin Cities, far fewer students of color and white students agreed that various forms of racism were problems at Metropolitan State. However, the survey revealed significant differences between the percentages of students of color and white students who agreed or disagreed that racism is a problem at Metropolitan State.

As for students of color, nearly 1 in 3 (29%) agreed that unintentional racism was a problem, nearly 1 in 8 (13%) agreed that interpersonal racism was a problem, and nearly 1 in 7 (15%) agreed that institutional racism was a problem at the university. In contrast, only 1 in 10 (10%) of white students agreed that unintentional racism was a problem, 1 in 100 (1%) agreed that interpersonal racism was a problem, and 1 in 33 (3%) agreed that institutional racism was a problem at the university. A majority (55%) of both white students and students of color responded that they were neutral or did not know whether or not unintentional racism was a problem at the university. However, the percentage of white students who disagreed that unintentional racism is a problem was two times the percentage of students of color who disagreed (35% vs. 17%). Such aggregated responses to these three items highlight part of the problem in addressing racism at Metropolitan State; namely, whites as a whole are much less aware of racism than people of color.

Both white students and students of color were more certain about whether or not interpersonal racism and institutional racism are problems at Metropolitan State, but there was a significant gap in the percentage of students of color and white students who disagreed that these forms of racism are problems. Whereas 41% of students of color disagreed that interpersonal racism is a problem, 60% of white students disagreed. Similarly, while 44% of students of color disagreed that institutional racism is a problem at the university, 59% of white students disagreed.
These differences in overall aggregated perceptions of students of color and white students exist with other types of items in the survey as well. At a minimum, such data begs discussion around the question, “Why are there such differences in perception?” Part of an answer rests with the differential experiences and observations of many students of color and white students at the university.

**Students’ Observations and Experiences with Differential Treatment**

Questions which asked students to provide their perceptions of differential treatment on campus revealed a generally positive campus climate for most but not all students. Significant percentages of students of color and white students agreed that they have observed others being treated badly or differently because of race/ethnicity, language, gender and sexual orientation. Yet, as with other survey items, a greater percentage of students of color were aware of such discrimination compared to their white peers.

Respondents of color were more likely to observe others treated badly because of their race or ethnicity than their white peers. Whereas 1 of 5 (20%) students of color have observed such treatment, only 1 in 11 (9%) white students said they had such observations. Conversely, while 44% of white students said they strongly disagreed that they have observed racial discrimination, only 29% of students of color strongly disagreed.

Different questions asked students if they had been treated badly by other students and faculty due to their race or ethnicity. One in six (16%) students of color agreed that they have been treated badly by other students compared to 1 in 25 (4%) of white students. Conversely, 57% of students of color disagreed that they had been treated badly by other students because of their race or ethnicity, while 79% of white students disagreed. Students were less likely to report that they have been treated badly by faculty or staff because of their race or ethnicity, but the percentages of students of color and white students again differed noticeably. The percentage of students of color who agreed that they have been treated badly by faculty or staff was more than double the percentage for white students (12% compared to 5%), while 73% of students of color disagreed that they had been mistreated compared to 85% of white students who disagreed that they had been individually mistreated.

When asked if they thought the university would respond fairly to a complaint of racial harassment or discrimination, white students were more confident and less uncertain than students of color. Sixty-four percent (64%) of white students agreed the university would respond fairly compared to 52% of students of color, whereas 43% of students of color responded “Neutral” or “Don’t Know” compared to just 33% of white students.

These different aggregated observations about race and ethnicity could also explain why there were different percentages of students of color and white students who said they minimized aspects of their race or culture to “fit in” at the university. While 1 in 7 (14%) of students of color said they minimized their race or culture to fit in, just 1 in 33 (3%) of white students said they minimized their race or culture to fit in at the university. Even though these are relatively small percentages of students who say they have withheld parts of themselves in order to “fit in,” the data suggest that more needs to be done to understand the causes and personal implications of these attitudes and behaviors. With this deeper and more complete understanding, actions can be taken to ensure that every student can feel comfortable to be themselves when joining the Metropolitan State community with its expressed interest in diversity.
While the purpose of the *Survey Campus Climate* was to focus on issues of race and racism, the survey also included a few items related to other forms of discrimination as a means of collecting some baseline data, comparing to perceptions of the racial climate, and beginning to look at the intersections of various forms of oppression. Thus, student respondents were also asked if they observed differential based on gender, sexual orientation, and language or accent. As with issues of race and ethnicity, there were differences in the aggregated observations of white students and students of color.

Most noticeable was that 28% of students of color agreed that they had observed differential treatment based on language while 11% of white students also agreed. As for those who have not observed such differential treatment based on language, 65% of white respondents said they had not observed such treatment compared to 43% of student of color who responded as such. While students of color were less likely to have observed differential treatment based on gender (13%) or sexual orientation (11%) than they observed racial discrimination (20%), slightly larger percentages claimed to have observed such treatment than the percentages of white students with such observations.

Interestingly, the percentages of white students who said they had not observed differential treatment based on gender (75%) nor sexual orientation (76%) was similar to the percentage of white students who had not observed racial discrimination (80%). In contrast, significantly lower percentages of students of color disagreed that they have observed differential treatment based on gender (53%) and sexual orientation (52%) as was similar to the percentage of students of color who disagreed about having observed racial discrimination (60%). In fact, students of color were twice as likely to reserve judgment about observing differential treatment based on gender and sexual orientation than white students. (Approximately 35% of students of color responded “Neutral” or “Don’t Know” in contrast to approximately 17% of white students.)

**Students’ Perceptions about Whether or Not Metropolitan State is a Positive, Respectful and Supportive Place for People of Color**

Consistent with student responses about treatment at the university, it is clear and positive that a large majority of all students felt that students of color are respected at Metropolitan State and that they would recommend this university to prospective students of color. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of students of color and 81% of white students would recommend Metropolitan State to prospective students of color. However, 87% of white students agree that students of color are respected at Metropolitan State, compared to 68% of students of color themselves who agreed. Thus, as with other items in this survey, the responses to these items illustrate an overall positive campus climate for most of Metropolitan State students, but significant gaps in perception exist among some students of color and white students regarding whether or not students of color are respected at this university.

Furthermore, students of color were twice as likely as white students (27% compared to 13%) to be neutral or say they didn’t know if students of color are respected. While 6% of students of color disagreed that students of color are respected, not even one white student of a total of 277 (0%) disagreed that students of color are respected. In comparing the responses to these two questions, it appears that as a group white students were more certain that students of color are respected at Metropolitan State and less certain that more students of color should come to the university. In contrast, students of color as a group were less certain that they are respected at Metropolitan State but more certain that more students of color should attend the university.
Similarly, no white students (0%) disagreed that adequate programs and services were available for students of color, whereas nearly 1 in 13 (8%) students of color did not agree that adequate programs and services were available to them. Given that nearly half of all students of color and white students were neutral or didn’t know if adequate programs and services for students of color were available, students’ responses suggest that there is low visibility of such university services available to support students of color. Such data is humbling for a university with a professed urban mission to serve historically underserved communities of color.

Students’ perceptions of whether or not faculty and staff of color are respected at Metropolitan State were also generally positive; but again, there is a noticeable gap in the overall perceptions of white students and students of color as groups. Whereas almost two-thirds (65%) of students of color agreed that faculty and staff of color are respected at the university, a significantly higher percentage (79%) of white students agreed. What accounts for these differences in overall perceptions is a topic for further dialogue and investigation. The implications of these perceptions about the respect afforded to faculty and staff of color should be further examined in light of classroom interactions, performance evaluations, advising, and other student services that faculty and staff of color provide to all university students.

**Students’ Perceptions of What Happens in the Classroom & Advising**

Several questions on the survey asked students about their experiences in class or with faculty and advisors. These perceptions affirm that a positive campus climate exists for a large majority of all students as they engage in learning at Metropolitan State, and why a clear majority would recommend the university to students of color. Most of the survey items in this category were perceived similarly by students of color and white students.

When asked if various students participate equally in class, 74% of all students agreed that various students do participate equally in class with no significant difference between the percentage of students of color and white students who responded affirmatively. Faculty can also feel positive that one of the most affirming responses to any item in the survey dealt with whether or not students felt comfortable stating their ideas in class discussions, but noticeably fewer students of color were comfortable (78%) compared to white students (87%). Students were similarly positive about feeling comfortable discussing their needs with their advisor. Seventy-five percent (75%) of students of color felt comfortable with their advisor compared to 9% who did not, and 78% of white students felt comfortable discussing needs with their advisor compared to 5% who did not feel comfortable.

When asked if faculty and staff were knowledgeable about diverse life experiences, 62% of all students agreed with no significant difference between the percentage of students of color and white students responding affirmatively. Similarly, white students and students of color agreed in equal percentages (approximately 61%) that faculty teaching methods include effective use of examples representative of the experiences of people of various racial/ethnic groups. However, it is sobering to note that 34% of white students and 27% of students of color either didn’t know or were neutral when asked if faculty teaching methods include effective use of examples representative of the experiences of people of various racial/ethnic groups.

**Students’ Perceptions about What if Anything Should be Done about Racism**

When asked if Metropolitan State is making sufficient efforts to improve relations and understanding between people of various racial/ethnic backgrounds, 58% of all students agreed
and only 4% disagreed with no significant difference between the percentages of students of color and white students.

Students’ responses revealed much more uncertainty about and much less agreement with two specific statements referring to the university’s actions of undoing White privilege and addressing racism. When asked if the university faculty, staff and administrators are actively working to undo White privilege, there was no significant difference between whites and students of color in their level of agreement (23% compared to 21%), or their level of disagreement (8% to 13%). However, when 68% of all students respond with neutrality or uncertainty towards this question, it suggests that either students don’t understand what White privilege is or that any actions by the university are going largely unnoticed by students. Similarly, when students were asked if Metropolitan State is taking the necessary steps to address racism, 37% of all students agreed with no significant difference between the percentages of students of color and white students. Yet, 57% of all students were neutral or didn’t know how to respond to this question; such responses again suggest that the university’s modest anti-racism initiative to date has not gained the attention of the majority of students regardless of their race.

Nevertheless, when asked if the university should strengthen its commitment and actions towards being anti-racist, students of color were much more certain than when asked if the university is taking necessary steps to address racism. Fifty-five percent (55%) of students of color agreed or strongly agreed that the university should strengthen its commitment and actions towards being anti-racist and only 9% disagreed. In contrast, white students were half as likely to agree (28%) and twice as likely to disagree (18%) than students of color that Metropolitan State should strengthen its anti-racist commitment and actions.

Furthermore, while 57% of all students agreed that a course on multiculturalism and anti-racism should be required at Metropolitan State, there were significant differences in the amount of agreement among students of color (71%) compared with white students (49%). Conversely, twice the percentage of white students (29%) disagreed that such a course should be required as compared to the percentage of students of color (14%) who disagreed. Given the overwhelming support of faculty and staff respondents for such a course requirement and the differentiated support of a majority of students surveyed, such a positive and proactive action should gain careful consideration at Metropolitan State. Implementation lessons may be learned from the recent experience of St. Cloud State University instituting a graduation requirement that at least one of the three courses students must take to satisfy General Education diversity requirements must be a course dealing with racial issues.

Students’ Comments about the Ways that Racism Is or Is Not a Problem at Metropolitan State University

Of the 436 students who completed the Campus Climate Survey, a little more than half (229) chose to write an answer to the question: “In what ways do you think racism is or is not a problem at Metropolitan State?” The table below attempts to summarize the most frequent types of comments written by students.

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6 Current Metropolitan State policy only requires students to complete one course in the area of Human Diversity in the United States and one course in the area of Global Awareness as part of their General Education/Liberal Studies (GELS) requirements. There is no guarantee that students will complete any course focused on issues of race, racism, and anti-racism.
One of the most noticeable things about these commonly written statements is how many students implied that racism only exists as a problem if they have seen or experienced it themselves. Such comments marginalize the real experiences of those who have encountered racism and they ignore the often unseen yet significant ways that institutionalized racism exists. Thus, such comments demonstrate that more awareness of interpersonal and institutional racism needs to take place with many students in order to address the problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approx Frequency</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Not seen and/or experienced racism</td>
<td>“I haven’t seen anything so far.” or “I haven’t experienced any racism.” (47 white respondents, 20 respondents of color)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Metro is a good, diverse place</td>
<td>“Metro to me seems to be very diverse and everyone that I have encountered seems to be treated fairly.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>There is reverse racism against Whites</td>
<td>“I think that white people are the ones being mistreated at Metro.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Racism is everywhere in society; Metro no exception</td>
<td>“Racism is everywhere and cannot really be controlled.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>It’s not a problem</td>
<td>“It’s not!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Samples of Comments Written about Racism as a Problem at Metropolitan State**

Many students had unique and more specific written responses describing their perceptions of racism being a problem at Metropolitan State. The following examples help describe the problem and illuminate the ways that racism exits at the university. (All written comments from students are offered for review in the Appendix to this report.)

- **Issues need to be addressed instead of always having ‘MN-nice’ conversations about what the problem is. Tired, tired.** (African American)
- **In the five years that I have attending class here at MSU, I can think of only two instances where I was in a class with another Afro-American males.** (White)
- **Personally, I have not experienced much as far as racism is concerned at Metropolitan State University. That is partially because I would say that my classes have been predominantly “white”. However, I have heard students mocking other students for their accents or saying that they can’t understand that “those kinds of people” say. I have also seen bookstore staff making fun of a man after he left, about his voice and accent back in December.** (White)
- **Well-intentioned white middle-class liberalism has reversed on itself and is unintentional sexist, racist and not open to other opinions because they keep minorities down by making them pander to their own white guilt** (Other)
- **People who have not had a course or two in ethics, multi-cultural, ethnics class who are of the “majority” and closed minded.** (Native American; Hispanic)
- **Being a middle-aged, white male, I am still astounded at the attitudes of white privilege amongst my “race”, particularly young white males. I see this as the most serious problem as regards to racism on campus.** (White)
- **Policies** (African American)
• Americans in general are always sensitive regarding their race. As an international student, I don’t really worry about race at all. All people should be treated equally. I have observed that Americans as a whole, regardless of race, are very privileged and they often complain a lot. (International)
• If there are problems at Metropolitan State University I’m not aware of them; probably because I’m white (White)
• Seems real segregated (White)
• People are discriminated against in class-room sitting (Native American)
• I never even thought about it (White)
• International students’ issue that occurred a couple of years ago (where international students were not being accepted) gave the university a bad name/image. (Asian American)
• The only problems I have noticed are homophobia (Hispanic)
• White privilege/institutional racism/mostly Western European based (thought) curriculum across the disciplines. (Native American)
• It still is. The staff have kicked off a colored patron off a community member computer even though the Caucasian sitting next to him had been there longer. (Asian American)
• It is under the radar (African American)
• ESL instructors treat their students with no respect, they think they are illiterate or stupid. I hate that since most ESL students may not be Caucasian. We need non-Caucasian instructors who understand them. (White)
• Inadvertent racism(White)
• Few Minority teachers/staff. Few main stream courses on Minority/cultures Way/style of activities based mostly on white culture. (African American)
• There isn’t enough G.L.B.T classes(White)
• There will always be racism, you can’t change what people view and think about others! (Asian American)
• I don’t-put spot for transgender! (White)
• Not a lot of diversity in my classes. Lots of diverse prof. (White)
• I personally have not encountered Any Racial Problems . However, one teacher always used my culture as an example in my class, my friend got offended, but I didn’t. (African American)
• It is a problem only that I feel it is not being addressed by the faculty administrators etc (Asian American)
• Racism may not seem to be a problem, but it is any where. It can be blatant or opposite (different forms). It is in the phrases people use towards others, even though unintentional. (Asian American)
• University administrators need to take a look at themselves and see if they are narrow-minded or close hearted. Are they in denial of their racist attitudes? (Native American)
• It is not overt, but behind peoples backs. (White)
• Big problem(White)
• In the Eths department, faculty resigned. It is a strong indicator that racism is a problem. Empowerment of students and faculty is a threat to white ideologies. (Native American; Asian American; African American; Hispanic)
• The present racism can be described as KILL ME Slowly. It is no more open as it was before, but you can feel it at some places. It would be hard to eliminated completely God Save America. (African American)

• I believe that state and faculty do their best to fight racism but the system is not set up for minorities, especially immigrants, to succeed on a socio-economic level-although working class people of all races struggle here, language barriers and indirect racism affect them more. (White)

• Institutional blockades to prevent the advancement of People of Color (African American)

• I think the most common way racism is a problem at Metropolitan State University is the assumption that because you don’t speak English well you’re therefore unintelligent. (White)

• Is a problem at times because someone has to told me to go back to my country. (Asian American)

Selected Examples of Denial and Claims by Students of Reverse Racism

Approximately seven percent of the students who wrote comments on the survey took the opportunity to express their frustration with the survey and any efforts to address racism at the university. These students identified themselves as “White” or “Other” and several of these comments that can be characterized as representing classic examples of extreme White privilege, including the denial that racism exists and that Whites are really the ones being discrimination against.

• It is not a problem-This survey is making it a problem. (White)

• I don’t believe it is-but it can easily be taken out of proportion-ex- A black male couldn’t get in class because he missed the first 2 weeks-he said everyone was racists-when in fact its school policy that you lose your seat if missing the first class-and the school let him back in very odd-and weird and yes-the class was full w/a waiting list. (White)

• I think racism is implied by simply being white. It is looked for in every possible statement or action. (White)

• For God sake I’m here to learn Not worry about color ECT...!!! (Other)

• I don’t think it is because there are tons of non-white students here; they participate in class and seem to do well; I think the student body president is from an African country (White)

• I think that white people are, the ones being mistreated at Metro (White)

• I have been in classes where a “white” student asked a question and was pounced on. I felt it could have been a learning experience, but I bet those students have bad feeling about that encounter. (Other)

• In some ways some programs and staff go out of their way to prevent racism to the point of reverse racism (White)

• It’s a problem when an ethnic person does not want to communicate with others. (White)

• Standards tend to be reduced for students from other cultures, especially if English is not their first language. This does them a disservice by failing to provide them an equal education, and it does the rest of us a disservice by devaluing our degrees. (White)

• I think students of race are graded easier by teachers because they are not as educated. (White)

• Allow People of Color more opportunities b/c Metropolitan feels it would be looked upon as racist. (White)

• I believe that the idea of “undoing white privilege” is racism in its own right (White)

• I think that there is too much concentration on gaining a wide variety of races and ethnicities. (White)
I have found in one Ethnic Studies class that my opinions and those of two other white students were ostracized disparaged and given less weight than opinions of other students who were African American. (White)

Metropolitan State University is bending over backwards to prevent. Almost to the point of being more welcoming to “minority’s” than others. (Other)

If it is a problem the problem is too many international students are being allowed to take class when they can’t even speak a word of English or capabilities to attend. Obviously just let in because there international and they’ll even admit it. (White)

Minorities are treated well, but there are not any special grants for white students (White)

Students’ Comments about How to Combat Racism at Metropolitan State

Of the 442 students who completed the Campus Climate Survey, just less than half (212) chose to write an answer to the question: “What do you think should be done to combat racism at the university?” The table below attempts to summarize the most frequent types of comments written by students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approx Frequency</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Educate faculty, staff and students</td>
<td>“Educate students about race.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Education for staff &amp; faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Increase Awareness, events, discussions</td>
<td>“More awareness of culture and ethnicity.” “Cultural events.” “Just allow people to express their opinion.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Require or offer more classes</td>
<td>“Require students to take intercultural classes.” “More diversity classes.” “More Ethnic Studies.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Investigate &amp; Punish</td>
<td>“Make it easy to report this kind of stuff. Penalize those who are found guilty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ignore it; attention to racism creates racism</td>
<td>“Stop looking at color and ethnicity because if we do then racism will happen.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Stop reverse discrimination and treat everyone equally</td>
<td>“Make things equal, including scholarships for everyone of all races not just the majority for non-white origin students.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Recruit and diversify faculty, staff, students</td>
<td>“Encourage more Students of color to enroll.” “Hire more faculty of color.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Selected Examples of What Should be Done to Combat Racism at Metropolitan State

Many students had unique and more specific written responses describing what they think should be done to combat racism at the university. Besides the most commonly received categories of comments summarized in the table above, the following examples could help inform next steps for the university in addressing racism. (All student comments to this question are provided in the Appendix of this report.)

- Fight fire with fire. Love heaps burning coals on the heads of the bad guys. So the Bible says (Other)
- Deconstruct white power (African American)
- More awareness programs put into place. I don’t believe that many of the students here believe they need to learn about others cultures or learn about tolerance. (White)
- Information gathering tools such as these with genuine follow-up action (African American)
• Provide more scholarships for minority students with good G.P.A’s, ex 3.5 or higher (Other)
• An anti-racism/multicultural class requirement would be very beneficial to the student body as well as the atmosphere at Metro. *Esp. beneficial to white students* (Hispanic)
• Faculty should be conscious about it. (Asian American)
• If one does not exist, I feel that those who feel victimized should have a staff member or hotline to contact. This person or persons would be in charge of investigating the situation and dealing with it accordingly. (White)
• Start with your arts departments, especially the theatre department and focus on the creative cultures of non-whites. (Other)
• Educate the privileged class, regarding white privilege. There should be required classes pertaining to this issue. (White)
• I feel it should be ok to ask a possible “stupid” question (Other)
• Communication and mixing ethnic cultures together in class (African American)
• Promote integration-not just a build-up of racial communities. (White)
• Educate people about it not through special classes but by integrating information in all classes (White)
• A good start would be to publicly release the results of the external evaluation that was done for the faculty of color at Metro. (Native American)
• I think it should be a requirement to take 1 ethnic studies class and discussed at new student orientation. (White)
• Ensure that the staff isn’t racist, monitor them and have a complaint box which only Metropolitan State University can access. (Asian American)
• Continued education about what racism is and how to stop it. (White)
• Speak out (African American)
• The solution to this problem would be to adopt universally high standards, but to provide effective support for English Language Learners (ELL courses, extra tutoring etc). (White)
• Provide more opportunities for fun-serious discussions have their place, however, *fun* and laughter can break down the barriers (once the serious discussions help people see the barriers)…. (White)
• I think Metropolitan State University needs to promote these anti-racist views more because I haven’t seen or heard any examples. (White)
• Make more efforts to correct the socio-economics. When students can’t afford transportation, to park, computers at home, etc., getting a student union should not be a priority. (White)
• Have material available to those who want it. (White)
• At this point nothing, but I think the policy that exits should be continually reviewed and updated. (African American)
• Counselors need to be trained, specially the ones at St. Paul campus, also all the staff in general there (Hispanic)
• Student and faculty meetings; more emphasis on a literary magazine with students writing with a racial diversity theme. (Not just on-line a hard copy version) (White)
• I think the faculty and students should take the issues more seriously and act on it quickly. (White)
• Allow Eths department to grow as other universities (U of M) with a person of color-Dean (Eths department) or provost. (Native American; Asian American; African American; Hispanic)

As with comments received by several white students who denied that racism was a problem at Metropolitan State, a few respondents provided the following suggestions about ways to combat racism that illustrate more of the problem of racism than any solutions.

• I don’t really care! People=shit (White)

• Keep sending out these types of questionnaires and keep up the “I’m a victim” mentality. How long until white students have to pay reparations? (White)

• Stop making it a issue again and again and again about this. Just teach. Finger point again. Leave the white people alone. You are only making them more mad. Finger point (Other)

• I have issues with “White Power” as a young white male I have no power or desirability in the job market (White)

• Don’t worry about it. (White)

• Stop looking at color and ethnicity because if we do then racism will happen. (White)

Summary and Conclusions about Students’ Responses to Campus Climate Survey

The survey responses detailed throughout this report highlight a pattern of significantly different aggregated perceptions between students of color and their white peers related to approximately half of the items that comprised the survey.

For example, students are generally positive about Metropolitan State but this overall perception shared by the majority of students of color and white students should not mask the fact that significant percentages of students of color could not agree that they felt respected, supported and/or treated fairly at the university. The perceptions of these students is contrasted by the absence or near absence of white students who also disagree or didn’t know if students of color are respected, supported and/or treated fairly. Further significant differences were noted in the percentages of students of color and white students who agreed and disagreed that unintentional, interpersonal and institutional racism were problems at the university. Finally, while clear majorities of white students and students of color were either neutral or unsure whether or not Metropolitan State is taking necessary steps to address racism and undo White privilege, a clear majority of students of color agreed that the university should do more to strengthen its anti-racism efforts whereas white students were clearly less agreeable.

It is beyond the scope of this report to address the reasons why such noticeably different results occurred between the percentages of Students of color and White students to many important items. These patterns of different perceptions should be the focus of continued investigation and concerted action if Metropolitan State wants to achieve its mission as a comprehensive urban university that focuses on serving historically underrepresented communities of color to a high quality higher education.
Section IV: Summary of Community Conversations about Racism at Metropolitan State

Beginning in October 2004, the ARLT hosted five Community Conversations about racism at Metropolitan State. These public forums gave more than 150 people the opportunity in a variety of formats to express and listen to various views and experiences about racism on campus. The idea to hold Community Conversations about racism at the university germinated from the awareness that participants of various university-sponsored “Undoing Racism” training sessions had not been provided an opportunity to reassemble and discuss what they learned and how the training relates to their experiences and actions at Metropolitan State. Knowing that other faculty, staff, and students are concerned about racism but have not attended a training session, the ARLT decided to create a public space for the university to talk about issues of race.

The first 90-minute Community Conversation was titled “Racism at Metropolitan State: Crisis and/or Opportunity” and the flyer announcing the event stated:

“Various challenges have arisen and President Bradshaw has recently stated his positions at the September 28 All-University Forum and in his memos addressing the future of the Ethnic Studies department as well as anti-GLBT hate mail.

Here is an opportunity to share your thoughts, concerns, questions, and/or suggestions with colleagues and peers towards making Metropolitan State an anti-racist and inclusive institution for all members of the university community.”

ARLT organizers were surprised that more than 100 people showed up and packed the large Ecolab Room at the new St. Paul campus library for the first Community Conversation. The strong showing gave clear evidence that members of the university community wanted and needed to talk about racism. Throughout the initial and four subsequent Conversations in November, January, March and April, various participants shared their experiences, observations, questions, frustrations, and recommendations regarding racism at the university. Overall, each of the five Conversations generated different ideas, emotions, and perceptions about what had occurred and what was said during the forums. People participating in the Conversations acknowledged feeling free, frustrated, excited, angry, hopeful, hopeless, heard or silenced depending on the format, focus, their individual perspective, past experience, tone and content of a particular Conversation. Not only were examples of racism described during the Conversations, but participants identified examples of racism occurring during the Conversations due to structure, content and process.

Throughout the year, efforts were made by the ARLT planning committee to be responsive to participant feedback regarding the format, questions, and timing of future Conversations. The ARLT also struggled with how to make the content of the Conversations available to the entire university community in a way that respected the voices of participants without compromising ground rules of confidentiality. For example, a participant at the fourth Conversation held in March suggested that the ideas generated by three small groups in response to four questions should be collated and posted throughout the university. These posters provided considerable discussion between the March and April Conversations as to what the posted comments meant.

In sum, the Conversations were positive because various employees and students across racial/ethnic groups contributed their insights about racism. They also contributed strategies and
solutions to take action against racism at our urban university rather than just talk about the problem. However, while the Conversations allowed for a wide variety of people to participate and the gatherings led to additional conversation and dialogue about issues of race and racism at the university, the Conversations were not an effective vehicle for deciding what changes to implement. The Conversations were time limited, they had different participants each gathering, and they were not effectively connected to the formal decision making process of the university.

Section V: Summary of Campus Climate Issues Raised in Ethnic Studies External Report

The resignation of the university’s Ethnic Studies faculty before the 2004-2005 academic year highlighted issues and allegations of racism at Metropolitan State University. Faculty, students, staff, administrators and members of the Twin Cities community have formed a variety of opinions about the causes of the departure of these two faculty and what should be done to rebuild a department that is seen by many people as key to fulfilling the urban mission of the university.

The President’s office hired Dr. Rose Brewer as a consultant for the purpose indicated in the following excerpt from President Bradshaw’s memo to the university on September 24, 2004.

“The department will have the services of a visiting consultant, funding for which is provided by the Office of the President, to facilitate the review and reflect on the future of Ethnic Studies at Metropolitan State University. The consultant is Dr. Rose Brewer, a Community Faculty member in the program and a professor in the Afro-American and African Studies Department at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Dr. Brewer plans to meet with the full range of University constituencies who have a stake in the Ethnic Studies program. All who are interested in the Ethnic Studies program and its future are encouraged to share their views and suggestions with Dr. Brewer, as part of this comprehensive and open review. Dr. Brewer expects to report to Dr. Lewis and Dean Malecki by December 1, 2004. Her findings will make a significant contribution to our discussions and help to inform the future planning for the program.”

A brief summary of the findings in the external report related to issues of racism is provided here because in many ways Dr. Brewer conducted an external review of the university’s campus climate as she focused on the status and future of Ethnic Studies at the university. Her insights came from individual and focus group interviews as well as an analysis of various documents.

In the Introduction to her report, Dr. Brewer stated, “Whether or not the department will flourish will be heavily dependent upon confronting some hard issues and making deep commitments to building the department. What is clear from the review is that from its very inception, the issue of department legitimacy has confronted the unit” (2). In reviewing the history of the Ethnic Studies Department, it is noted that previous faculty “charged institutional racism in the form of differential treatment of the department by the College of Arts and Sciences and in terms of their positions as faculty of color within the College.” This current challenge was put into historical context in describing how some faculty and departments in the College of Arts and Sciences demonstrated “resistance and hostility” when the Ethnic Studies department was founded in 1998. Dr. Brewer’s knowledge of the history of Ethnic Studies as a contested academic field beyond Metropolitan State and the information gained from people she interviewed led her to
make the following warning: “…unless a number of substantial steps are taken at multiple levels to stabilize the department in terms of faculty, curriculum, budget, and leadership, and the difficult issues of racial inequality on campus, the unit will not survive over the long haul” (3).

In the recommendations section of her report, Dr. Brewer offered 35 strategies for stabilizing the department’s curriculum, governance, visibility, outreach, and financial resources. She noted that a “culture of respect and legitimacy needs to be cultivated” at the university for the Ethnic Studies Department (16). In terms of governance, she recommended that a decision be made on “the benefits and liabilities of staying in the College of Arts and Sciences as contrasted to the benefits and liabilities of moving to First College” (17). In her final recommendations, she urged the College of Arts and Sciences or other college which houses Ethnic Studies to develop an “sorely needed” college wide committee on racism “with teeth” that would be separate from the university’s Anti-Racism Leadership Team and work to build an anti-racism environment, community and respect. She also stated that the Ethnic Studies Department needs to have autonomy and self-determination as other departments and faculty experience (22). “The unit should not have to feel that it is under siege, having to answer to every decision. The need for equity and fair treatment across departments must seriously be employed if the unit is to survive and thrive” (23).

Dr. Brewer’s conclusion clearly and emphatically challenged the university to ensure that Ethnic Studies can thrive as a department which is central to the mission of the university:

Whether or not the unit thrives over the coming years will require some delicate and systemic planning. I cannot emphasize too strongly the need for strategic leadership and support from the College and university to help the Department strengthen its capacity. This includes addressing any antagonistic, hostile dynamics within the College of Arts and Sciences and the overall university environment which prevents the growth and development of the unit. A good deal of skepticism was presented during interviews regarding the likelihood that the situation would improve for the Department if it remained in the College of Arts and Sciences. . . Clearly the situation should be monitored closely. Ethnic Studies faculty and leadership should weigh in on the location issue. The Department will certainly require the support and commitment of a number of stakeholders (24).

As this campus climate report was written, the Ethnic Studies Department is beginning the 2005-6 academic year with a chair and two new faculty (one full-time, tenure-track and one half-time, fixed-term) with searches in process for two full-time, tenure track positions. Neither the President’s Office nor the department has fully released Dr. Brewer’s external review report to the entire university community because the department is preparing an internal report to supplement the external report. The College of Arts and Sciences has held a retreat to discuss the climate in the college in relation to Ethnic Studies, but to date there has not yet been a university-wide conversation about the external report or how the university can address barriers and support the rebuilding of a strong and viable department.
Section VI: Results of “Undoing Racism” Training
Past Participant Survey

At the end of spring semester 2005, all 122 participants from the five university-sponsored “Undoing Racism” training sessions since the Fall of 2000 were asked to complete a survey about their experience. Participants have included faculty, staff, and administrators who attended a two-day training session with either of two organizations who provide such training--People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond (http://www.thepeoplesinstitute.org) or Minnesota Collaborative Anti-Racism Initiative (www.mcari.org). Thirty-five of 122 total participants completed the survey for a response rate of 29%. In order to protect anonymity, respondents were not asked to identify their racial/ethnic group, gender or position, but approximately 60% of all Undoing Racism participants have been white and approximately 40% have been persons of color.

While it was clear from the survey that some respondents had a negative experience at the training session they attended, a clear majority of respondents were decidedly positive about their experience. This survey data contradicts the perceptions of some vocal administrators, faculty, and staff that the Undoing Racism workshops have not been well received and are not having a positive impact. The survey results detailed below suggest that the voices of training critics may have been expressed and heard more than those of the “silent majority” whose views would support Metropolitan State continuing its efforts to provide and encourage all employees to participate in Undoing Racism training.

Answers to three survey questions support the assertion that Undoing Racism training has been a mostly successful component of the anti-racism initiative at Metropolitan State. For instance, when asked how they rated their Undoing Racism training at the time they experienced it, respondents answered as follows:

- 11% “Bad Experience”
- 26% “Okay Experience”
- 14% “Good Experience”
- 46% “Excellent Experience”

When asked if they would recommend the Undoing Racism training to others, responses were as follows:

- 17% “Definitely No”
- 11% “Probably Not”
- 20% “Probably Yes”
- 49% “Definitely Yes”

Furthermore, when asked if they would like a follow-up session, answers from respondents were as follows:

- 34% “No”
- 26% “Yes-1/2 day”
- 29% “Yes- 1 day”
- 11% “Yes- 2 days”

Besides these three questions which partially attempted to assess the degree to which participants had negative or positive attitudes about their participation in an Undoing Racism training session, survey respondents also were asked to assess the impact that the training has had on
their thinking and work at the university. Again, some participants were definitely negative but the clear majority (72%) of respondents felt that the training has had a positive impact on their thinking and work at the university. The table below identifies the percentages of respondents who identified most closely with each of four possible statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>“Negative effect; I’m not interested in being involved in anti-racism efforts and I think too much attention is being paid to this issue.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>“Little effect; after the training I haven’t really given racism or anti-racism much thought, and I haven’t changed my thinking much.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
<td>“Moderate effect; I can sense that I am more aware of racism and once in a while I try to do things that challenge racism or support anti-racism efforts at the university.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46%</td>
<td>“Significant effect; since the training I have been much more conscious about racism, and much more intentional about trying to undo it at Metropolitan State and elsewhere.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to these four selected-response items, survey respondents were asked two open-ended questions. At least 85 percent of respondents took the time to write answers, and what they wrote was consistent with their responses to selected-response items discussed above. One open-ended question was, “What have you told others about your Undoing Racism training experience?”

Positive Responses

- I tell them that if they want to get a strong grounding in racism and its history in the U.S., this is the workshop to attend.
- That it was valuable and that I am eager to continue building in a knowledge base and transferring it into advise with others across the university and in the wider community.
- Very positive experience. Jarring in a good sense of making me question myself and others.
- Great opportunity to continue to learn. Helpful to get to know others in the univ. you might not meet otherwise. I say it’s something everyone should experience.
- That I learned much needed facts about the perpetual motion that drives racism and until we address power + privilege issues racism will thrive.
- That it was excellent, non-threatening, respectful + asks only participants accept/“try on” a definition of racism for purposes of the workshop.
- The 3 trainers were very effective: they were clearly very experienced and thoughtful about purpose and method, I was struck by the strength of resistance to some of the concepts on the part of white folk, and I would like to work on understanding better the origins of that resistance.
- I strongly prefer the People’s Institute model over MCARI. I most recently participated in the MCARI/Crossroads model & found it to have less impact. I want everyone on campus trained in at least some model & suggest that the People’s Institute model pushes us harder & therefore potentially farther.
- The only part I was turned off by was the impression that if you had a different definition of racism than the presenters, then you were “wrong”.
- That it’s a great experience but not really connected to the University very well.
• That it is a learning experience everyone should go through. It bridges gaps and help promotes understanding.

• I told others of the experience and stated that I thought it was the best anti-racism training I ever attended.

Negative Responses

• While thought provoking, it was frustrating to feel that my experiences were not valid or important or even authentic when we put into the anti-racism context.

• Negative Experience. What took away from training is “system” Institutionalizes racism & because I am a white male, I’m racist. It was a bitch session. I never heard any discussion on how we as individuals or as a institution can grow together.

• It was deliberately divisive.

• There was much information, some of it useful. However, there were many broad generalizations and such galling assumptions made that credibility plummeted. Not all whites are racists nor did racism begin in the U.S. Racism cuts across all ethnicities. I quit talking about it.

The other open-ended question was “What do you want or need from the university to support your understanding, growth, and action related to undoing racism at Metropolitan State?” Respondents’ requests and ideas were as follows:

• I want leadership from all levels to analyze and change appropriately procedures and policies that contribute to institutional racism. This is what I expected to work on at the training.

• It is time to treat people as equals + not give preference to any group.

• A whole new administration and Racist faculty & Staff to stop walking away from the difficult work.

• What I want from the University in regards to how they can help alleviate racism is for staff (especially those in managerial or administrative positions) is to treat all employees fairly, without bias of any kind (whether it be color, gender, position, etc.). I know how difficult this is to achieve but this university has a long way to go to achieve it.

• To not offer training blatantly racist towards non People of Color.

• Resources available in addressing racism.

• Continue with the anti-racism project.

• More training for others unclear on power/privilege many whites cannot grasp the conflicts caused by P/P.

• A more comprehensive complex intellectual framework that also identifies but does not dwell on emotional issues- something more compatible w/a university’s primary educational mission.

• Unhindered release time , - Training worked hours

• A variety of organizations that do diversity work could help bring different perspectives.

• Continue diversity advantage so they are appreciated by the community. However, there are more and some more important issue for education other than racism e.g. Sex preference, ageism, sexism, capital/socialism etc...

• Feedback I’ve heard from others has not been positive.

• It is a first step for the university to acknowledge racism as a possible explanation for some occurrences within the institution. It would help us all faculty & Staff would be required to attend the 2-day undoing racism as they come in contact with students from diverse backgrounds.
• Ongoing training, conversations, ability to infuse anti-racism language, activity it to all we do-missions, curriculums, activities.

• To know what progress the university has made on undoing racism and future plans. To have a curriculum ideas to use in the classroom.

• Information needs to be disseminated outside training session. Metro employees tend to think we have it together on diversity + they don’t need training- We need to get people motivated to attend/ponder.

• I’d like to see leadership probably promote a clear definition of racism a plan of action to address it.

• We need training that clearly establishes expectations & awareness specific to this institution. Let’s identify our issues agree to resolve & move forward together.

• We should broaden the discussion to Bigotry. Blacks who are prejudice against Asians, Asians who are prejudice against Hispanics. Hispanics who are prejudice against whites etc…

• I would like to see more minorities in the university.

• Create a personal experience so they can relate. I don’t think that white people should be get reverse stereotype. And then get offended and not participate. I would however suggest reverse role play scenarios and have white people get painted black (face and hands) and go through scenarios like at the airport, grocery store, or a job interview. This way they can experience the feeling of stereotype/discrimination. I would however have everyone sign off a form that we wouldn’t get sued if they have psychological problems as a result of the reverse role.

• Our circle has been shrinking, and I think we need to use as many ways as we can think of to welcome new participants- especially students. One way would be to give student workers paid time off to attend.

• It’s important that the institution acknowledge that there is racism here. Until that happens, everything will remain the same.
Section VII: Conclusions and Recommendations

One of the primary purposes of the April 2005 Campus Climate Survey was to ascertain to what degree racism exists at the university, and in which specific ways racism creates problems for Metropolitan State students, staff, and faculty. The survey results make it clear that racism does exist in various forms at the university. For an urban university that seeks to be diverse and serve the needs of underserved communities of color, the survey illuminates a persistent yet urgent problem that calls for a thoughtful, thorough, and united response. It is positive that most students and faculty/staff perceive Metropolitan State as a good and respectful place to learn and work. Yet, while many people of color and whites claim not to see or experience racism, significant numbers do have an awareness and experience with racism in this university. Any amount or degree of racism should be a concern at an institution of higher learning that is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

The survey results also make clear the significant differences between many people of color and whites on more than half of the statements about the climate at Metropolitan State. Many survey items reveal gaps of perception that should be cause for further study and dialogue. While these divergent experiences and perceptions of campus climate are not as stark as those encountered in New Orleans and reflected in recent polling of African Americans and whites in reference to the Hurricane Katrina catastrophe, they provide the university community with both a challenge and an opportunity to bridge understandings across racial groups.

Metropolitan State must have an anti-racist campus climate: one that fosters equity, respect, and success for each individual and group in our community. The problem is racism, not individuals. To this end, and to become fully accountable to historically underserved and underrepresented communities of color, the university must build on its assets such as the diversity of its students and employees to nurture a culture of openness, good intentions, and a will to respond, change and grow. Given the historic and systemic nature of racism in our society, such accountability to communities of color requires that a focus be placed on dismantling institutional racism in and around the university rather than focusing on preventing individual acts of racism.

The following recommendations emerged from the survey data upon which this report is based, suggestions made by participants at various Community Conversations about racism held during the 2004-05 academic year, meetings of the Anti-Racism Leadership Team, and reviews of anti-racist activities at other universities. The recommendations are intended to help the university better understand and confront the problems of institutional and interpersonal racism, and to ensure that the campus climate is safe, respectful, and equitable for all its members. The authors of this report are hopeful that the university community, with all its strengths, will unite around these recommendations and act accordingly.

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7 According to a September 8, 2005 Pew Research Center poll asking if the government’s response to Hurricane Katrina would have been faster if most of the victims were White, only 17% of White respondents agreed compared to 66% of Black respondents.
Recommendations to Reduce Racism at Metropolitan State

1. **Hold annual or semi-annual Anti-Racism Strategic Planning Summits**

   Beginning with the release of this report, the university’s administrative, faculty, staff, and student leaders, past participants of Undoing Racism training sessions, and other members of the university community should gather for a full day to discuss the status of racism at the university and engage in strategic planning to undo racism.

2. **Collect More Data and Continue Further Study**

   As stated in the Introduction, this report was intended to be a preliminary, formative assessment of the campus climate at Metropolitan State regarding issues of race and racism. As a baseline for further study, it should raise as many questions as it answers for those who carefully review the data and analysis presented herein. For example, members of the university community should ask why there were such differences in perception between the percentages of whites and people of color regarding more than half of the questions on the campus climate survey. Further investigation should also take place as to where and how institutional and interpersonal racism exists at the university. The university has an opportunity through focus groups and self-reflection to go deeper and better understand the experiences and perspectives of various members of our university community regarding racism. As such, the methods used to gather and analyze this data and more complete picture should serve to improve campus climate through a participatory process that is inclusive, respectful, and directed towards action.

3. **Clarify and Affirm the Mission of the University**

   Throughout the 2004-05 academic year, it became evident at various open meetings held on campus that there was a lack of clarity and consensus regarding the mission of the university. A series of discussions need to take place in each department or unit, in various governance structures, and across the university to help clarify the mission and create a sense of buy-in. If the university is going to retain a mission focused on the urban setting and communities of color, then such a statement of purpose must be clear and shared by members of the university community. All units within the university and all employees must also be held accountable to demonstrate how they contribute to accomplishing the mission. If the university does not retain a mission focused on the urban setting and communities of color, then the university should not expect institutional and interpersonal racism to diminish.

4. **Connect and Integrate into AQIP**

   The Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) that the university is using to stay accredited is an important participatory, self-study process that has engaged a wide variety of staff, faculty and administrators from throughout the university. However, an anti-racism lens has not been intentionally included as part of this initiative even though notes from different university-wide AQIP forums held during the 2004-05 academic year reference activities conducted by the Anti-Racism Leadership Team (i.e., campus climate survey and Community Conversations). If the university is serious about implementing a continuous, quality improvement process and about creating a campus climate that rejects racism, then the AQIP and Anti-Racism initiatives should be linked more purposefully. To start, the raw data from the campus climate survey of students and staff conducted for this report and offered in the Appendix should be analyzed by the AQIP team. Furthermore, the AQIP team should include at
least one self-study question regarding race and/or racism for each of the categories being examined in the AQIP process.

5. Discuss How to Support a Strong and Viable Ethnic Studies Department

Issues about Ethnic Studies have touched many students and faculty across the university and such issues have served as a case for understanding and assessing the campus climate regarding race and racism. Put simply, a strong and viable Ethnic Studies Department will improve campus climate, but a weak and threatened department will have a negative effect on campus climate and be highlighted by many as an example of the university only paying lip service to its mission and anti-racism initiative.

Since the Ethnic Studies Department should be central to the urban mission of Metropolitan State University and anti-racism efforts on campus, there is an urgent need for a university conversation focused on ways to support the rebuilding of a strong and viable Ethnic Studies Department. President Bradshaw has publicly stated a commitment to rebuilding Ethnic Studies and soliciting ideas for such important action from the university community. Campus conversations should include the findings and recommendations of the external program review highlighted earlier in this report as well as the needs identified by the department itself. The faculty in Ethnic Studies and the faculty in the various colleges should identify for the administration “the benefits and liabilities of staying in the College of Arts and Sciences as contrasted to the benefits and liabilities of moving” (Brewer, 17). Any college faculty and dean hoping to have Ethnic Studies housed in their college in the future should provide a strong case that their college has cultivated an environment of respect, legitimacy, and equity that will help the Ethnic Studies Department survive and thrive.

6. Increase Awareness of Proactive, Positive Things the University is Doing to Combat Racism

The data from the campus climate survey shows that significant numbers of students and faculty/staff have little awareness of efforts to combat racism on campus. It is clear that a majority of students (both of color and white) as well as faculty and staff perceive Metropolitan State to be a good place to learn and work. It is also clear that significant numbers of people in our community do not share this perception. To inform both groups of people and build the capacity of the university to improve its climate, the administration along with personnel in various colleges and units and the Anti-Racism Leadership Team should each identify and communicate what they are doing to address institutional racism and create equity.

7. Develop a University Anti-Racism Policy

The university community needs a clear definition of racism and how the university will work to eradicate it. Such a policy can build upon existing university and MnSCU policies and include specific accountability measures on racism in all sectors of the university.

8. Implement a Racial Impact Statement procedure

When reviewing all existing university policies, programs and procedures and when new policies, programs, and procedures are implemented, units or individuals responsible for the policies, programs and procedures should be required to make a statement on the how the policy, program or procedure ensures equity and addresses racial disparity if such disparity exists. Such statements should be readily available for review and comment by the university community.
9. **Set and Achieve goals for the enrollment/hiring, retention and success of students and faculty/staff of color**

It is a fact that several units at the university employ no persons of color and this runs counter to the university’s mission. Data regarding student of color enrollment, retention, debt loads, and graduation rates also needs careful attention. Baseline and trend data about racial disparities should be examined related to the enrollment/hiring, retention and success of both students and faculty/staff of color. With this data, measurable goals (not quotas) should be set and affirmative actions should be made to achieve these goals and ensure equitable access, experiences and outcomes for all.

10. **Develop an Anti-Racism Budget**

If the university is serious about being an institution that does not tolerate institutional and interpersonal racism, then the university needs to institutionalize its commitment to anti-racism work by adding a permanent line to the university’s budget for anti-racism activities.

11. **Continue Undoing Racism Training**

Data strongly suggests that a clear majority of people who have participated in university-sponsored Undoing Racism workshops have had a positive experience that has had a positive impact on their work at the university. Despite a clear minority of people who did not claim to have a positive experience, the University should retain its goal of encouraging 100% of its employees to participate in such a workshop. Furthermore, consistent with best-practice in professional development, such workshops must not continue to be offered as one-time experiences; rather, the university should ensure that participants have the opportunity for follow-up sessions. Differentiated training sessions for those who have done previous anti-racism work and those who are new to the paradigm should also be considered.

12. **Continue Community Conversations**

The Anti-Racism Leadership Team should continue to create space and opportunities for members of the university community to talk openly about issues of race and racism. Such conversations are an important mechanism for raising awareness, building empathy, and gaining support from peers and colleagues. However, it is clear that the Community Conversations held during 2004-05 were or were perceived to have been divisive to many people across the university. Such perceptions are inevitable when real differences in perceptions about racism exist among various people and groups as detailed in the results of the campus climate survey. Thus, the ARLT should provide a range of opportunities for people at various stages of awareness and various perspectives about racism to enter into the dialogue with their various questions, concerns, interests, and levels of awareness.

13. **Strengthen the Anti-Racism Leadership Team**

There are a number of ways the university’s Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT) has struggled since it formed in January 2003. It has struggled with finding its identity, purpose, and own leadership. It has struggled to function like a team and it has not been immune to racism between its members. The ARLT needs a clear purpose that is shared by its members and clearly communicated to the university community. The ARLT is currently energized by its new members and it needs to further expand its membership or expand the number of people across the university community who become involved in anti-racism work. Adding students to the
ARLT will be key. Members of the ARLT need to clearly understand the expectations of being on the team, and those expectations need to include a responsibility of community organizing between ARLT meetings since the ARLT cannot function like traditional university committees if it is to be successful in leading anti-racism efforts at the university. The university needs to empower the ARLT with funding sources to deepen and expand anti-racism efforts. Such efforts take considerable time and planning. Thus, the ARLT also needs to be led by at least one person with a minimum of half-time of workload responsibility devoted to facilitating the ARLT and campus initiatives. The ARLT will also be stronger and more effective the more it is transparent and inclusive within the university community.

14. **Clarify and coordinate the charges of existing university-wide committees with related interests (i.e., IMAC, EMAC, Multicultural Education, etc.)**

In recent years, previously active committees have not been as active as in the past and there seems to be considerable ambiguity about their purposes. The President and Provost and representatives on the Internal Multicultural Advisory Council (IMAC), the External Multicultural Advisory Council (EMAC), and the IFO Multicultural Education Committee should meet to clarify and coordinate their charges in relation to the Anti-Racism Leadership Team.

15. **Find alternative ways to bring more people into the process of making the university an anti-racist institution**

Criticism of and alienation towards the anti-racism initiative at the university is notable and a barrier to improvements in campus climate. On one end of the spectrum of criticism are people who claim the anti-racism efforts to date have lacked depth and are only words that have not led to action. On the other end of continuum are people who claim the anti-racism initiative to be divisive and anti-white. To the authors of this report, claims of reverse racism against whites are usually grounded in a misunderstanding of white privilege and varied definitions of racism, especially institutional racism. However, rather than engage in a debate about the legitimacy of the criticisms, those persons and groups who have been involved with planning anti-racism activities should seek ways to bring more members of the university community into deepened dialogue and concrete action for improving the campus climate in relation to race and racism. The following ideas should be considered for getting more people involved.

16. **Implement a Racial Issues graduation requirement beginning with students admitted for Fall 2006**

One of the most positive responses by both students and faculty/staff was to the campus climate survey’s question about requiring a course for graduation that deals with issues of race. There is precedent for similar graduation requirements in Metropolitan State’s 1998-2003 GELS requirements and at St. Cloud State University where all students admitted since 2000 have been required to take at least one designated racial issues course while completing their general education, major or elective coursework. Criteria should be established for what constitutes a racial issues course and such courses should be identified from among the GELS offerings and major requirements at the university. Rather than taking an extra course, students would simply be required to complete one racial issues course that also meets a GELS, major or elective requirement. A uniformly stated rationale for such a graduation requirement should be clearly communicated in university publications and course syllabi. Furthermore, the university should develop a study to assess the impact of such a requirement over time.
17. **Provide Grants to Strengthen Curriculum across Departments**

Grants should be provided to faculty who develop new courses or who significantly revise existing courses to address issues of race, racism, and anti-racism. Team-taught, interdisciplinary courses should be encouraged and supported.

18. **Create “learning circles” and other opportunities for learning outside of the classroom**

Becoming an anti-racist institution and individuals requires knowledge and ongoing critical reflection. While Undoing Racism training sessions and Community Conversations are important spaces for people to share their experiences, these forums are not appreciated by many members of the university community and they should not be the only means by which people talk about racism and how to combat it at the university.

To build upon what universities do best, several intra- and inter-unit “learning circles,” book clubs, etc. should be created and encouraged for small groups of faculty, staff, administrators and students to dialogue around common “texts” that address issues of race and racism. Such texts could include journal articles, book chapters, entire books, films, and documentaries. Such opportunities could also include conversations that follow guest speakers and panel discussions, conferences, and civic engagement activities. For faculty, participation in such groups could easily be considered part of one’s contractual obligations to participate in continuing preparation and study.

19. **Create a Students Against Racism Organization**

Students should be encouraged and supported to begin an organization focused on combating racism within various realms of student life at the university and in the community. Such an organization could work in tandem with the Anti-Racism Leadership Team on various university initiatives.

20. **Connect with Civic Engagement Initiatives**

Connect anti-racism efforts with the efforts of the more established Civic Engagement and American Democracy Project initiatives so work with surrounding community members includes the development of creative ways to involve university neighbors into anti-racism activities. Such collaboration would strengthen the university’s capacity to achieve its mission as it becomes more accountable to serving the needs of the urban community in which it resides.

21. **Connect Anti-Racism work with the work combating other forms of oppression**

The anti-racism initiative at the university can be strengthened by coalition building with efforts to combat discrimination based on language, sexual orientation, gender, ability, religion, etc. As issues of race and racism intersect with issues regarding other forms of oppression, opportunities can be found for deeper understanding and broader involvement.
Section VIII: Appendix

The following appendices are available for review at:
www.metrostate.edu/eod/campusclimate

A. Message from President Bradshaw

B. Survey Questions and Results-at-a-Glance
   - Faculty/Staff Responses
   - Student Responses

C. "Undoing Racism" Training
   - Undoing Racism Past Participant Survey Responses

D. Complete Data Sets of Faculty/Staff Responses
   - Responses According to Gender
   - Responses of Faculty/Staff of Color and White Faculty/Staff
   - Written Responses to Question #34
     In what ways do you think racism (is/is not) a problem at Metropolitan State?
   - Written Responses to Question #35
     What do you think should be done to combat racism at the university?

E. Complete Data Sets of Student Responses
   - Responses According to Gender
   - Responses of Each Specified Ethnic Group
   - Responses of Students of Color and White Students
   - Written Responses to Question #34
     In what ways do you think racism (is/is not) a problem at Metropolitan State?
   - Written Responses to Question #35
     What do you think should be done to combat racism at the university?

F. Cultural Audits and Campus Climate Reports at Other Universities
   - Six St. Cloud State University campus climate reports are under the “Diversity Documents” heading at http://www.stcloudstate.edu/employees/documents.asp
   - Results of Minnesota State University-Moorhead surveys of faculty/staff/administration and students along with a university anti-racism plan are available at http://www.mnstate.edu/tocar/survey.htm

G. Feedback and E-Discussion

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To subscribe to a university listserv to discuss racism and anti-racism at Metropolitan State go to: http://www.metrostate.edu/eod/subscribe.html