



WSU MSUAASF Special Initiative Awards
Final Report

"Campus Climate: Measurement and Analysis"

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Measuring Campus Climate

Campus climate is a difficult concept to define and measure yet is a significant factor in the retention of students. The opportunity to quantify campus climate by way of a survey was intriguing to me and was the impetus for this special project. The initial proposal was to develop an instrument and survey student perceptions of the WSU campus climate. Soon after I began the project, I discovered that the WSU Inclusive Excellence Committee was also interested in campus climate. Working with this group was very helpful, although the project expanded well beyond the original scope. The group decided to study student, faculty and staff perceptions of climate at Winona and Rochester campuses.

In the MNSCU System Strategic Plan for 2006-2010, Strategic Direction 1 is to “Increase access and opportunity.” Goal 1.1 is to “Raise Minnesota’s participation and achievement in post-secondary education by meeting the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and educational goals”. Since 1964, federal TRIO programs have been guided by a similar mission: TRIO programs have been doing, on a smaller scale, what MNSCU needs to do to increase access and opportunity in higher education. Given my role as Director of the WSU TRIO program, I understand the value in synthesizing the MNSCU strategic directions with WSU program objectives.

TRIO programs are governed by the Education Department General Administrative Regulations, one of which is to “foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of low-income and first generation college students and students with disabilities.” The Student Support Services (SSS) program, which functions on college campuses across the United States, creates objectives by which individual programs are guided. Given the “campus climate” regulation, the SSS program at WSU has had this objective in place since it was first funded in 1982. The objective is that SSS staff be proactive in improving the campus climate for disadvantaged students which is meant to result in an increase in awareness of the needs of these students.

While conceptualizing this project, I spoke with Whitney Harris, Executive Director of Diversity and Multiculturalism at MNSCU to understand how the system strategic plan will specifically affect those of us working with underrepresented students. Dr. Harris noted that there will be four strategic directions which will address recruitment, retention, programming, and mentoring (i.e. virtually every aspect of the education of underrepresented students). Most significantly, Dr. Harris stated that “each MNSCU institution will conduct campus climate

assessments every three years” because he recognizes that climate is integral to all four strategic directions.

Vincent Tinto, a leading researcher in student retention, states that “institutional success resides in the institution’s capacity to construct educational communities that actively engage students in learning.” Educational communities provide academic and social experiences which serve to integrate students into the life of the college. Campus climate is a measure of the potential for student integration and ultimately student success on a campus. Tinto notes that “Student learning best occurs in settings that integrate students into their daily life and provide social and intellectual support for their individual efforts.” The ability to measure how well WSU does these things will allow us to analyze ways that we might develop a climate that enhances student learning.

If, through this special initiative, we can gain an accurate sense of how students perceive the campus climate at WSU, we can begin to take steps to improve, which will ultimately increase retention. The benefits to WSU are increased retention, an improved sense of community within our “community of learners”, and an environment more conducive to student learning. The benefits of the project to MNSCU will ultimately be the ability to measure campus climate effectively. Identifying the best instrument to measure climate will help all campuses to fulfill the Office of the Chancellor’s request that campuses do campus climate assessments every three years.

This report is organized chronologically and explained through the timeline and data analysis sections. The process of developing and administering the survey was extensive, but enabled important group discussions about campus climate and Winona State University in particular to occur.

Completed Timeline

September 18, 2006 – My first meeting with the WSU Inclusive Excellence Committee. This group was also interested in measuring campus climate. This collaboration resulted in a much more comprehensive review of all constituencies on campus. We reviewed the “Diversity Satisfaction Survey” which was offered to WSU students on Assessment Day, February 2006. The group decided to review other surveys to find a more effective way to measure campus climate at WSU during Assessment Day 2007.

September/October, 2006 – Alex Hines, Director of the WSU Inclusion & Diversity Office, and I collected and reviewed the following instruments: 60 Campus Climate surveys, 34 Student Satisfaction surveys, 14 Intergroup Relations surveys, 12 Faculty Perception surveys, 21 Student Learning & Involvement surveys, and 12 Curriculum surveys.

October 16, 2006 – Tim Wise, a prominent anti-racist writer and activist, visited WSU. Tim noted that different people perceive campus climate very differently; he said that believing in “Minnesota Nice” can be a shield. A climate can be hostile without overt racism and whites are prone to being blind to bigotry, hatred, and intolerance. He encouraged us to continue to study our campus as objectively as possible.

October 19, 2006 – The Inclusive Excellence Committee concurred with our choice of the top three climate survey instruments; Metro State in MN, Pennsylvania Regional Consortium survey, and the University of Colorado at Boulder survey. We discussed the parameters for our definition of “diverse populations” for the purposes of the survey. The list includes race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, income, first generation college students, disability, age, urban/rural background, and religion/language/nationality. We also discussed the populations we wanted to survey at WSU: students, faculty, and staff, both in Winona and Rochester. The committee felt that extending the survey to the Winona community was too big a project for the time being.

November/December, 2006 – Alex Hines and I decided to revise the University of Colorado at Boulder Campus Climate Survey to use for WSU. This survey seemed the most appropriate to measure student perceptions of campus climate and had been successfully piloted at UC Boulder.

December 14, 2006 – We submitted the revised campus climate survey to the WSU Assessment Office to be included in the online surveys for Assessment Day 2007.

December 15, 2006 – Dr. Hatfield from the Assessment Office indicated that the survey in its present form was too large (150+ questions) to include in its entirety for each student. She said that students already complain that the Assessment Day

surveys are too long, so she would like to limit this piece to 15-20 minutes of their time.

December 15, 2006 – I reorganized the survey into four parts: Part A contains Questions 1-3 from the original survey, Part B contains Questions 5-8, Part C contains Questions 4, 9, and 10, and Part D contains Questions 11-14. All of the open-ended questions except one were eliminated from the survey. The four survey parts were sent to the Assessment Office.

December 20, 2006 – Alex Hines got permission in writing from Jeff Schiel at the University of Colorado at Boulder to revise their campus climate survey for use at WSU. This permission was forwarded to the WSU Assessment Office as requested.

January 8, 2007 – Jeff Spors from the WSU Assessment & Research Office notified me that the survey was entered into the on-line survey system and asked for my review before Assessment Day.

January 8, 2007 – Dr. Damon A. Williams presented the “Making Excellence Inclusive” colloquium at WSU. Dr. Williams is the Assistant Vice Provost for Multicultural and International Affairs at the University of Connecticut. His speech covered issues of diversity and organizational change, organizational behavior, and retention issues. He noted that campus climate work is important to help higher education institutions get started with the change process. WSU students bring little or no experience with diversity to college. If colleges can reframe diversity as excellence, we will be serving all of our students well. Campus climate is one of the four dimensions of our organization, and must be part of our competitive advantage. Dr. Williams stressed that it is important to build a climate of respect in and out of the classroom.

January 19, 2007 – I worked with Dr. Rita Rahoi-Gilchrist from the WSU Communication Studies Department to revise the student survey for faculty and staff use, as well as for Rochester campus use. We also collaborated with Joyce Walker, Director of Multicultural Learning & Outreach on Rochester campus to ensure that survey questions were appropriate for Rochester participants.

January 25, 2007 – The WSU Cultural Diversity Office sponsored a Webinar titled “Beyond White Privilege: A Professional Development Workshop for Student Services” featuring Jacob P. K. Gross of Indiana University. While “white privilege” tends to focus on individuals, “critical whiteness” is a much broader concept and theorizes that whiteness is a system existing within a social, political, and historical context. With this knowledge, we can emphasize whiteness as part of a social system, which widens the possibilities for research. Mr. Gross believes that by looking at ourselves and our self-identity, we can progress to analyzing our social structure, including campus climate.

February 13, 2007 – Assessment Day at WSU. Students began to complete the online survey, including the campus climate portion. Eventually, a total of 3963 students filled out one portion of the campus climate questionnaire.

February 14, 2007 – Our goal is to get the faculty/staff campus climate survey online for participants to complete during the last week in February. Dr. Cindy Killion solicited the endorsement from AFSCME, IFO, MAPE, and MSUAASF. All constituencies responded very positively with the exception of no response from MAPE.

February 25, 2007 - Dr. Hatfield responded that the Assessment Office won't administer surveys to faculty. She recommended a hard copy survey or another format.

February 28, 2007 – The Inclusive Excellence Committee decided to use the portal system to distribute the survey to faculty and staff. Sarah Olcott of Residence Life volunteered to help with this. She will confer with Teresa Waterbury, Director of Institutional Research.

March 13, 2007 – Dr. Cindy Killion sent an e-mail to all faculty and staff (Winona and Rochester) asking them to complete the campus climate survey. She noted that participants' anonymity would be protected as much as possible.

March 14, 2007 – Focus group meeting of Inclusive Excellence Committee with student Presidents of the cultural clubs and other interested students. Dr. Cindy Killion facilitated the meeting by first explaining the objective and what we were trying to accomplish. She loosely guided the group with three open-

ended questions. The process was very informative and we felt that students were honest and forthcoming with their experiences on WSU campus. Overall students felt that the climate was welcoming, but insisted that WSU should continue to emphasize diversity education in various forms. See Appendix for the open-ended questions.

March 23, 2007 – A report from the Assessment Office indicated that 42% of WSU students participated in Assessment Day 2007. So far, 77 faculty and staff have completed the survey on the portal.

April 11, 2007 – Preliminary data from student surveys shows a total of 3963 students completed a part of the campus climate survey. Part A = 1159, Part B = 1293, Part C = 618, and Part D = 893. This is an average of 1000 students per part. Dr. Killion reports that over 100 faculty and staff have completed the survey. In response to the survey and focus group results, the Inclusive Excellence Committee discussed goals for Academic Year 2007-08, including #5 pertaining to campus climate: Foster an environment in which all students are welcome and be more inclusive, especially student clubs and student club activities that bring all students together and are educational in nature – co-curricular. Publicize those instances and use them as a model.

April 18, 2007 – Dr. Cindy Killion and I met with Susan Hatfield and Hyesung Park to analyze results of the student campus climate surveys. Hyesung will do additional data analysis.

April 23, 2007 – Dr. Cindy Killion and I meet with Hyesung Park for final data analysis.

April 25, 2007 – Inclusive Excellence Committee final meeting this academic year. We reviewed the campus climate survey data and determined that it will require more extensive analysis. We will request assistance from Hyesung Park of the WSU Institutional Research Office and form a subcommittee to review survey data.

April 27, 2007 – Dr. Jeff Milem presented a workshop at WSU. He reviewed our campus climate data and addressed the procedure to develop short and long-term goals for the WSU Inclusive Excellence initiative. Jeff talked about external and

institutional forces which help to shape the campus climate. His observations and suggestions were extremely insightful and helpful.

October 25, 2007 – Inclusive Excellence Subcommittee met to resume data analysis of the student campus climate surveys.

November 16, 2007 – Final meeting of the Campus Climate Subcommittee to analyze data.

December 4, 2007 – Submission of the final SIA report on campus climate to ASF.

Winona State University Campus Climate Survey

Part A Results for Students N= 1159

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with WSU?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
11	41	154	475	447

2. During the current semester, how often have you felt.....

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
a. Accepted	7	38	213	606	285
b. Valued	16	82	305	543	202
c. Overwhelmed by demands on your time	7	65	345	401	329
d. Intellectually stimulated	11	45	359	571	162
e. Concerned about financial issues	45	137	289	310	370
f. Left out	205	474	357	85	27
g. Welcome at WSU (like you belong here)	23	97	314	509	204
h. Disconnected from other students	224	388	397	103	34
i. Physically threatened	940	151	46	8	2
j. Different	332	306	339	120	51
k. Supported	17	72	378	507	170

3. Below is a list of some opportunities for students. Most students don't have the interest, need, or time for all of them. We DON'T want to know which ones interest you or which ones you've done. We DO want to know how COMFORTABLE you think you would feel in each setting or activity.

- 5 = Very Comfortable
- 4 = Somewhat comfortable
- 3 = Neither comfortable or uncomfortable
- 2 = Somewhat uncomfortable
- 1 = Very uncomfortable
- 0= Don't Know

How **comfortable** would you feel.....

a. Living in a dorm or residence hall	5=271	4=32	3=135	2=142	1=118	0=158
b. Participating in ethnic/cultural activities on campus	5=171	4=275	3=320	2=157	1=45	0=177
c. Hanging out in Kryzsko Commons	5=442	4=344	3=162	2=77	1=42	0=79

d. Using WSU Fitness Center	5=362	4=327	3=144	2=124	1=78	0=103
e. Interacting with faculty/instructors during office hours or in other academic settings outside the classroom	5=296	4=435	3=194	2=124	1=43	0=42
f. Challenging others on derogatory comments toward underrepresented groups	5=131	4=232	3=291	2=198	1=105	0=184
g. Shopping or eating at restaurants in Winona	5=606	4=283	3=124	2=43	1=37	0=47
h. Looking for a place to rent in Winona	5=351	4=326	3=195	2=104	1=47	0=118
i. Hanging out on campus	5=470	4=366	3=174	2=43	1=46	0=40
j. Participating in campus social life	5=328	4=369	3=238	2=88	1=46	0=67
k. Being in classes	5=455	4=422	3=160	2=50	1=31	0=20
l. Getting counseling or support services on campus	5=130	4=228	3=297	2=208	1=82	0=196
m. Approaching faculty/instructors with a problem	5=209	4=356	3=227	2=203	1=79	0=62
n. Interacting with WSU campus security	5=190	4=272	3=317	2=149	1=78	0=135
o. Interacting with Winona police	5=142	4=199	3=273	2=191	1=137	0=200
p. Expressing an opinion in class that is controversial or different than others' views	5=184	4=296	3=209	2=263	1=114	0=71

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!

Winona State University Campus Climate Survey

Part B Results for Students N=1293

4. **Everyone is a member of many groups including but not limited to those based on age, race, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, socio-economic status, country of origin, major, job, and religion. However, for most people a few group memberships are usually most important.**

We realize that this may be a difficult question, but considering all of your group memberships, pick one that's important to you in how you are treated or interact with others when you are on campus and type it in the box below.

Now using that group identity, answer questions 6 through 8 below.

**For results of this section, see Data Analysis.

5. **For each statement below, indicate how true it has been for you during your enrollment at WSU. Group identity refers to the group membership you listed in Question 4.**

How true is this for YOU?

	Don't know/ Not Applicable	Not at all	Somewhat	Pretty Much	Very Much
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Because of my group identity.....

a. Classroom instructors expect especially high academic performance from me	N=165	N=155	N=219	N=365	N=174
b. Classroom instructors expect low academic performance from me	N=185	N=758	N=93	N=33	N=4

c. I feel isolated or left out when working on class assignments in a group	N=127	N=705	N=187	N=35	N=14
d. I am asked more often to participate in campus-related activities	N=155	N=359	N=362	N=135	N=58
e. I've been asked what my native language is	N=322	N=646	N=61	N=21	N=20
f. I've been called names by other students	N=194	N=733	N=102	N=21	N=17
g. Other students assume that I'm from a wealthy family	N=194	N=555	N=223	N=78	N=18
h. Other students assume that I'm from a poor family	N=205	N=768	N=63	N=18	N=7
i. I am contacted too much by campus offices and organizations	N=192	N=679	N=155	N=29	N=11
j. Other students assume I'm prejudiced	N=182	N=790	N=70	N=15	N=10
k. I am singled out as the "resident authority" for my particular group when issues come up in class	N=212	N=714	N=87	N=36	N=16
l. I feel pressure to show loyalty to my group	N=173	N=598	N=197	N=74	N=26
m. I feel like I can never slip up because what I do represents my group's abilities, behaviors, etc.	N=153	N=546	N=209	N=107	N=47
n. I feel a need to play down various characteristics of my identity (e.g., dress, language) to fit in	N=159	N=692	N=165	N=31	N=18
o. Others think I need assistance	N=169	N=772	N=87	N=23	N=10

6. How would you rate WSU as a place to be:

	Terrible	Poor	OK	Good	Great
a. for all students	N=4	N=22	N=261	N=687	N=316
b. for students of your identity group	N=10	N=37	N=262	N=603	N=366
c. for you	N=14	N=53	N=279	N=546	N=395
d. for you as a member of your identity group	N=7	N=39	N=274	N=587	N=362

7. Because of my group identity, I have encountered overt prejudice/discrimination from...

	Not Applicable	Not at all	A little	Some	Very Much
a. WSU faculty and classroom instructors	N=245	N=870	N=95	N=25	N=19
b. WSU administrators and staff	N=249	N=895	N=66	N=26	N=16
c. WSU students	N=230	N=769	N=193	N=35	N=21
d. Members of the Winona community	N=245	N=837	N=114	N=29	N=22

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!

Winona State University Campus Climate Survey
Part C Results for Students N=618

8. In thinking about your experiences on the WSU campus, in general, how often do you interact or have contact with.....

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Don't Know
a. Racial and ethnic minorities	N=22	N=124	N=202	N=137	N=117	N=13
b. People with disabilities	N=59	N=226	N=216	N=70	N=29	N=13
c. People with strong religious beliefs	N=23	N=111	N=200	N=136	N=109	N=30
d. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender persons	N=90	N=185	N=161	N=65	N=37	N=76
e. Non-native English speakers	N=50	N=189	N=188	N=98	N=78	N=10
f. WSU students from Minnesota	N=6	N=3	N=38	N=115	N=446	N=6
g. WSU students from states other than Minnesota	N=6	N=7	N=66	N=169	N=351	N=14

9. During the current semester, how often have you heard a student make disparaging remarks about members of the following groups:

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Constantly
a. Women	N=173	N=200	N=163	N=61	N=14
b. Men	N=190	N=211	N=160	N=42	N=7
c. Racial or ethnic minorities	N=180	N=202	N=161	N=48	N=20
d. People with disabilities	N=273	N=205	N=96	N=30	N=7
e. People with strong religious beliefs	N=228	N=209	N=129	N=35	N=9
f. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender persons	N=177	N=185	N=156	N=69	N=24
g. Whites	N=321	N=210	N=62	N=13	N=5
h. Non-native English speakers	N=218	N=195	N=145	N=42	N=11
i. WSU students from Minnesota	N=329	N=179	N=73	N=24	N=6
j. WSU students from states other than Minnesota	N=304	N=185	N=80	N=34	N=8
k. Foreign students	N=211	N=205	N=146	N=40	N=8

10. During the current semester, how often have you heard a faculty member/instructor make disparaging remarks about members of the following groups:

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Constantly
l. Women	N=454	N=98	N=46	N=9	No Data
m. Men	N=472	N=90	N=38	N=6	N=2
n. Racial or ethnic minorities	N=511	N=66	N=23	N=4	N=2
o. People with disabilities	N=534	N=55	N=12	N=4	No Data
p. People with strong religious beliefs	N=487	N=73	N=34	N=11	N=1
q. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender persons	N=518	N=65	N=17	N=4	N=2
r. Whites	N=540	N=45	N=16	N=7	No Data
s. Non-native English speakers	N=529	N=56	N=15	N=4	N=2
t. WSU students from Minnesota	N=525	N=59	N=18	N=4	N=1
u. WSU students from states other than Minnesota	N=516	N=66	N=17	N=5	N=1
v. Foreign students	N=529	N=53	N=15	N=7	N=2

11. How often do you see negative or disparaging graffiti on the WSU campus (i.e. sidewalk chalk, bathroom writing) that targets members of particular groups

Never N=418	Seldom N=150	Sometimes N=33	Often N=6	Constantly N=1
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THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!

Winona State University Campus Climate Survey
Part D Results for Students N=893

12. How likely are you as an individual to challenge others on derogatory comments or behaviors regarding....

	Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Uncertain	Somewhat likely	Very likely
a. Gender	N=192	N=77	N=174	N=294	N=150
b. Race or Ethnicity	N=180	N=75	N=167	N=284	N=179
c. Physical abilities	N=186	N=71	N=170	N=262	N=195
d. Religion	N=191	N=92	N=212	N=234	N=155
e. Sexual orientation	N=192	N=86	N=218	N=229	N=163

13. Please rate your experiences on the WSU campus, both inside and outside the classroom on the following characteristics

	IN THE CLASSROOM					OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM				
	Don't Know	Not at all	Somewhat	Pretty Much	Very Much	Don't Know	Not at all	Somewhat	Pretty Much	Very Much
a. sexist	N=100	N=555	N=209	N=18	N=5	N=162	N=418	N=257	N=31	N=7
b. friendly	N=22	N=11	N=128	N=537	N=188	N=52	N=15	N=158	N=508	N=140
c. disrespectful	N=54	N=589	N=217	N=24	N=4	N=88	N=396	N=355	N=31	N=5
d. civil	N=52	N=37	N=167	N=476	N=152	N=83	N=32	N=269	N=410	N=81
e. accessible to persons with disabilities	N=146	N=41	N=197	N=368	N=131	N=153	N=34	N=242	N=354	N=92
f. racist	N=88	N=669	N=112	N=14	N=2	N=139	N=412	N=265	N=46	N=7
g. homophobic	N=143	N=563	N=152	N=24	N=3	N=184	N=336	N=281	N=60	N=11
h. accepting of diversity	N=50	N=43	N=179	N=402	N=211	N=100	N=52	N=279	N=341	N=102

14. In your opinion, how much do these groups at WSU value diversity?

	Not at all	A little	Some	Very much
a. Faculty members and course instructors	N=18	N=109	N=414	N=339
b. Staff and administrators	N=26	N=99	N=395	N=353
c. Student government	N=28	N=98	N=434	N=313
d. Students	N=31	N=188	N=490	N=169
e. Winona community	N=62	N=249	N=459	N=104

15. In your opinion, how high of a priority should student and faculty diversity be for the university?

Not at all	Low priority	Somewhat	High priority	Highest Priority
N=21	N=81	N=393	N=357	N=29

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!

Data Analysis

This section provides analysis and comments regarding student feedback from the campus climate survey.

Data Analysis - Part A Results for Students N= 1159

Question #1 was intended to elicit students' overall satisfaction with the campus climate at WSU. For the most part, students are very satisfied (N=447) or Somewhat Satisfied (N=475). Few students are either Very Dissatisfied (N=11) or Somewhat Dissatisfied (N=41). Students who filled out Section A were: American Indian or Alaska Native N=5, Asian N=19, Black or African American N= 9, Hispanic or Latino N=8, International students N=60, Unknown N=38, and White N=910.

Question #2 asked students how they felt during the current semester. The most significant results indicated that students felt accepted (N= 891), valued (N=745) and welcome (N=713) on campus. However, some did feel left out (N=112), disconnected (N= 137), or different (N=171).

Question #3 presented a list of opportunities on campus for students. Respondents indicated how comfortable they would feel in each setting or activity. 202 students were uncomfortable with participating in ethnic/cultural activities on campus. 303 students were uncomfortable with challenging others on derogatory comments toward underrepresented groups. 328 students were uncomfortable with interacting with Winona police and 377 were uncomfortable with expressing an opinion in class that is controversial or different than others' views.

Data Analysis - Part B Results for Students N=1293

Question #4 was the only open-ended survey question. Students were asked to identify one group membership that was important for them. Subsequent questions 5, 6, and 7 were based on identity with this group. Over 300 different responses were given to this question, ranging from athlete to golfer to white to writer. The most common answers were age, female, gender, major, nursing students, and religious. Although these answers were not valuable per se, they helped students form a frame of reference to answer the next three questions.

Question #5 asked students about their experiences during their enrollment at WSU. 758 students felt that classroom instructors did not expect low academic performance from them because of their group identity. 193 felt that they were asked more often to participate in campus-related activities because of their group membership. A large number of students (N=790) felt that other students assume that they are prejudiced. 154 students agreed that “I feel like I can never slip up because what I do represents my group’s abilities, behaviors, etc.”

Question #6 asked students to rate WSU as a place to be. Students generally perceived WSU a good or great place to be for all students (N=1003), but fewer (N=941) felt it was a good or great place to be for themselves. Of the respondents, 67 felt that WSU is a terrible or poor place to be.

Question #7 asked if students have encountered overt prejudice or discrimination from other groups. 56 replied that they have experienced very much or some prejudice or discrimination from other WSU students and 51 had experienced this from the Winona community. 895 students had not experienced any prejudice or discrimination from WSU administrators and staff, 870 had not from WSU faculty and classroom instructors, 837 had not from the Winona Community, and 769 had not from WSU students.

Data Analysis - Part C Results for Students N=618

Question #8 asked students about the frequency of their interactions with other groups on campus. 254 students reported that they have contact with racial and ethnic minorities often or very often. 245 have contact with people with strong religious beliefs often or very often. Some students report that they never have contact with gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender people (N=90), with people with disabilities (N=59) or with Non-native English speakers (N=50).

Question #9 asked students to indicate how often they have heard a student make disparaging remarks about members of several groups. Most frequently, students reported hearing remarks often or constantly about gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender persons (N=93), about women (N=75), or about racial or ethnic minorities (N=68). Students reported never hearing disparaging remarks about WSU students from Minnesota (N=329) or about Whites (N=321).

Question #10 was similar, except that it asked students about the frequency of remarks made by faculty. Students reported that they heard disparaging remarks about women sometimes (N=46), but never about Whites (N=540) or about people with disabilities (N=534).

Question #11 asked how often students see negative graffiti on the WSU campus. 418 never see this, 150 seldom see this, 6 see it often, and 1 reported that they see it constantly.

Data Analysis - Part D Results for Students N=893

Question #12 asked how likely students were to challenge others on derogatory comments or behaviors. They were most likely to challenge comments on race or ethnicity (N=463), physical abilities (N=457), or gender (N=444) and not likely to challenge comments on religion (N=283) or sexual orientation (N=278).

Question #13 had students rate their experiences inside and outside the classroom. Inside the classroom, students thought the climate was very accepting of diversity (N=211), very friendly (N=188), and not at all racist (N=669). Outside the classroom, they experienced a very friendly (N=140) and accepting (N=102) climate without much sexism (N=418), racism (N=412), or disrespect (N=396).

Question #14 asked students how much various groups at WSU value diversity. They replied that staff and administrators valued diversity very much (N=353), followed by faculty (N=339), student government (N=313), students (N=169), and the Winona community (N=104).

Question #15 asked how high a priority student and faculty diversity should be for the university. Students responded that it should be the highest priority (N=29), high priority (N=357), somewhat a priority (N=393), low priority (N=81) or not at all a priority (N=21).

Conclusion

The collaboration of projects between myself (ASF special initiative project on campus climate) and the WSU Inclusive Excellence Committee (campus climate survey of all constituents) was excellent. This was the most comprehensive and enlightening campus climate survey ever done on the WSU campus. The volume of information yielded by this project will be helpful to further investigation of the actual (and evolving) climate as well as to provide a document to guide initiatives for a more inclusive campus.

The sample size of approximately 3963 is 42% of WSU students. Unfortunately the survey was not designed to correlate the race/ethnicity of respondents to specific answers. When analyzing the data, we must keep in mind that the vast majority of students completing the survey were white. This knowledge prompted the Inclusive Excellence Committee to create a focus group of diverse students. This activity was not part of the original SIA project, but it is important to note that these students feel that there is racism and discrimination on campus and that there is no such thing as "Minnesota Nice". They observe that individuals are not challenged on these remarks, which is consistent with the survey results.

Intervening when you observe harassment of one person by another is difficult, but important, notes Bernice R. Sandler, senior scholar in residence at the Women's Research and Education Institute, Washington DC. She encourages people to react with humor, surprise, direct response, pretending to not understand, private reprimands, sending a letter and copy of policy to the person, or writing a letter to the perpetrator. The student focus group also

emphasized speaking up in these difficult situations. According to Project PULSE (Student Affairs Research, Information and Systems, University of Massachusetts Amherst), even faculty fail to challenge negative remarks made by students in class. It may be difficult or impossible to change a negative climate if people do not change negative behaviors.

Several important questions for future research emerged from this study. Which of these questions could be used to track baseline data to determine if WSU is making progress towards a more inclusive campus climate? Which questions/answers indicate significant problems on campus? How do Rochester survey results differ from Winona campus results? Students feel that administrators, staff, and faculty value diversity on campus much more than students do, so how can we work to educate students about the richness of a diverse campus experience?

Jeff Milem notes that “If students are to achieve the educational benefits of diversity, leaders must attend to the broad campus climate in which diversity is occurring. This campus climate is influenced by external forces and is comprised of : 1) compositional diversity, 2) historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion, 3) psychological climate, 4) behavioral climate, and 5) organizational/structural processes”. Winona State University has the potential to shape the climate in a way that will positively affect our learning environment. Following the strategic direction of access and opportunity is a good place to start.

Appendix – Open-ended Questions for Student Focus Group

1. Think of a situation or experience on campus or in the larger Winona community this or last semester that made you uncomfortable. Please describe the situation and what made you feel uncomfortable.
2. Think of a situation or experience on campus this or last semester when someone helped to develop understanding between people of different backgrounds, lifestyles, cultures, etc. Please describe the situation or experience and how it made you feel.
3. Think of a situation or experience on campus or in the larger Winona community this or last semester where someone made discriminatory remarks or performed discriminatory actions toward another person. Please describe the situation or experience and how it made you feel.