

STUDENT PERCEPTION OF CAMPUS CULTURAL CLIMATE
AT
TOMPKINS CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
(May 2007)

Summary

SURVEY OVERVIEW

In February of 2007, the Office of Multicultural Services (in collaboration with the Diversity Equity and Action Council) completed an assessment of the campus climate for students of Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3). The study had three purposes: (1) to help college officials gain a better understanding of what it is like being a student at TC3; (2) to help college officials be proactive in identifying student concerns; and (3) to provide a benchmark for future examinations of the campus climate at TC3.

Of the 2557 invitations sent, there were 2424 viable e-mail addresses. Overall, 492 students completed the 15 minute web-based campus climate survey. Respondents were matriculated students currently enrolled full or part-time. Students were informed that participation was voluntary and that information collected would remain confidential. During this survey, students responded to questions about faculty, staff, fellow students, the learning environment, comfort level, diversity programming, their experiences, facilities and TC3's overall commitment to diversity.

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SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Of the 492 students that participated in the study				
GENDER				
	#	%		%
Women	290	63.3	Off-campus rental housing /apartment	148 32.5
Men	166	36.4		
ETHNICITY				
	#	%	College Residence Hall	98 21.5
White	369	80	Home of parents or relatives	96 21.1
Latino/ Hispanic	24	5.2	Own home	108 23.7
African American	23	5.0	Other (please specify)	6 1.3
Asian	17	3.7		
Multi-Racial	11	2.4		
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	1	0.2		
Foreign	6	1.3		
Native American	5	1.1		
AGE				
	#	%	SELF REPORTED GPA	
19 or under	137	30.0		# %
20 - 21	88	19.3	below 2.0	18 3.9
22 - 24	58	12.7	2.0 – 2.4	44 9.6
25 - 29	64	14.0	2.5 - 2.9	99 21.7
30 - 39	59	12.9	3.0 - 3.4	128 28.1
40 - 49	31	6.8	3.5 - 4.0	167 36.6
50 and over	19	4.2		

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RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

STUDENT EXPERIENCES AT TC3

- 46% of students responded that their experiences since coming to TC3 have led them to become more understanding of racial/ethnic differences”. 43% reported a neutral experience.
- 58% of respondents agreed that getting to know people from different racial/ethnic backgrounds has been easy at TC3. 28% reported a neutral experience.

DIVERSITY PROGRAMMING AT TC3

- 60% of students believed that attending diversity programs helps build community. 31% reported a neutral perception in the role that diversity programming has in supporting community building.

CONFLICT AT TC3

- 93% of student respondents believe there is little to none, some, or unaware of racial conflict on campus

COMFORT LEVEL AT TC3

- 79% of students feel comfortable being around people of other ethnic groups than their own. 15% reported a neutral level of comfort in response to the statement.
- 56% of students feel comfortable being the only person in a group where they are the only one of their ethnic group. 25% reported a neutral level of comfort in response to the statement.

ENVIRONMENT AT TC3

- 53% of students believe TC3 has done a good job providing programs and activities that promote multicultural understanding. 23% reported a neutral perception in response to the statement.

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DIFFERENT RESPONSES: Racial and Ethnic Climate at TC3

People's responses varied according to their identity

Under-represented Students = ethnicity other than white

Majority Students = ethnicity white/Caucasian

Percent who agree or strongly agree with the following statement	Under-represented Students		Neutrality of Under-represented Students		Majority Students		Neutrality of Majority Students	
	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#
My experiences since coming to TC3 have led me to become more understanding of racial/ethnic differences	41	29	43	30	46	169	44	164
At TC3 getting to know people with racial/ethnic backgrounds different from my own has been easy.	50	35	33	23	59	220	27	100
My social interactions on this campus are largely confined to students of my race/ethnicity	10	7	24	17	29	106	22	83
At TC3 I feel there are expectations about my academic performance because of my race/ethnicity.	23	16	21	15	6	25	21	78
At TC3 I feel I need to minimize various characteristics of my racial/ethnic culture (e.g. language, dress) to be able to fit in	13	9	13	9	5	17	15	55
My experiences since coming to TC3 have strengthened my own sense of ethnic identity.	26	18	46	32	25	91	55	204

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DIFFERENT RESPONSES: Comfort Levels at TC3

People's responses varied according to their identity

Under-represented Students = ethnicity other than white

Majority Students = ethnicity white/Caucasian

Percent who feel comfortable or very comfortable in the following situations at TC3	Under-represented Students		Neutrality of Under-represented Students		Majority Students		Neutrality of Majority Students	
	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#
Speaking with others about my racial/ethnic background.	73	51	24	17	74	274	21	79
Participating in class.	78	55	16	11	80	297	14	51
Going to see a faculty member of a different race/ethnicity than my own.	83	58	23	16	87	321	11	39
Being in situations where I am the only person of my racial/ethnic group	56	41	21	15	56	207	23	86
Going to see a faculty member of my own race/ethnicity.	73	51	17	12	84	311	14	52
Saying what I think about racial/ethnic issues.	61	43	13	9	57	213	25	94

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DIFFERENT RESPONSES: Treatment of Students at TC3

People's responses varied according to their identity

Under-represented Students = ethnicity other than white/Caucasian

Majority Students = ethnicity white/Caucasian

Percent who feel they have been treated fairly or very fairly by the following constituent's of the TC3 campus community	Under-represented Students		Under-represented Students had No Interaction		Majority Students		Majority Students had No Interaction	
	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#
Campus Safety Officers	56	39	34	24	56	169	52	192
Residence Hall Personnel*	48	34	46	32	30	111	67	248
Faculty	95	67	3	2	97	362	1	2
Staff	97	68	1	1	97	361	1	4
Students	93	65	1	1	97	359	1	3

* Disparity between students who had contact with residence hall personnel

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MOVING FORWARD

In the interim, the Office of Multicultural Services and the Diversity Equity and Action Council will continue to assess the “Campus Climate” through various forums, additional instruments to study the perceptions of various protected classes, the Student Advisory Board, and student focus groups as appropriate. This study has multiple avenues of potential use for the college community. It is expected that the information contained within will assist the campus community to set benchmarks, provide a varied department program and guide faculty and staff in collaborative initiatives. Most importantly, it will direct our work to ensure our students have the opportunity to succeed at TC3 and the global community in which we all belong.