

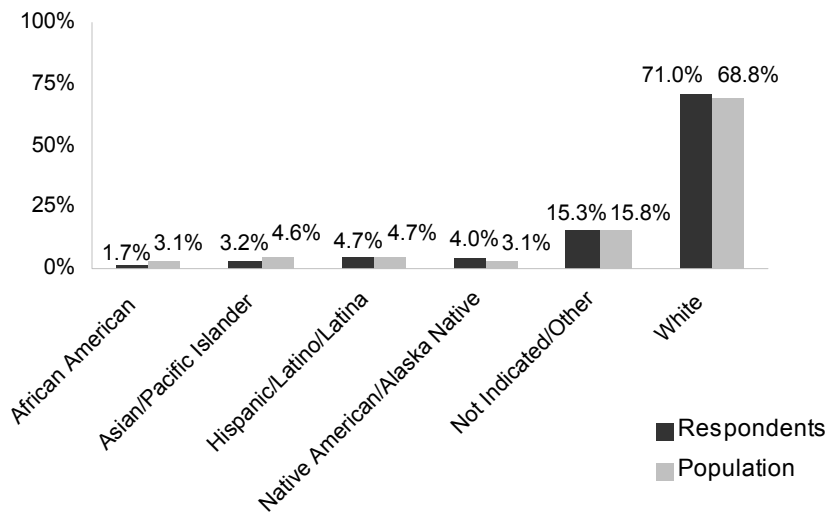
An Analysis of Differences in Responses Between Racial/Ethnic Subgroups on the Evergreen Student Experience Survey

This report summarizes an analysis of Evergreen students' perceptions of the Olympia campus learning environment, comparing the responses of students of color on the Evergreen Student Experience Survey to the responses of white students and students for whom race/ethnicity was not indicated. The Evergreen Student Experience Survey was administered in Spring 2004.

Race/ethnicity information was obtained from the BANNER student information system; students had self-identified their race/ethnicity at the time of admissions to Evergreen. Students of color were defined as students who identified themselves as African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino/Latina, and/or Native American/Alaska Native.

There were a total of 567 responses to the Evergreen Student Experience Survey. The analysis was performed using the responses of 528 students whose primary location of study was at the Olympia campus. Of the Olympia campus students' responses, 72 of the respondents were students of color or 13.6% of the Olympia respondents. A total of 375 respondents had identified their race/ethnicity as white, or 71.0% of the Olympia respondents. A total of 81 responses or 15.3% of the Olympia campus respondents were respondents who did not indicate their race/ethnicity. The table below shows more detail on respondents by race/ethnicity compared to the population of undergraduates on the Olympia campus.

Survey Respondents Compared to Olympia Campus Undergraduate Population



The table above shows a slightly smaller percentage of students of color among survey respondents (13.6%) compared to the population of students of color on the Olympia campus as a whole (15.5%). There was a smaller percentage of African American and Asian/Pacific Islander students among survey respondents than the population as a whole. The percentage of Hispanic/Latino/Latina respondents matched the population as whole. There was a slightly higher percentage of Native American/Alaska Native students and white students than the population as whole. There were no students who identified their race/ethnicity as "other" among survey respondents.

Responses to the following survey questions were analyzed:

- To what extent do you feel connected with other students in your program and/or course(s)?
- To what extent do you feel connected to the Evergreen community?
- Question set #7 - How have the following aspects of education at Evergreen affected your learning? This question set Included the following items:
 - Interdisciplinary approach to course content;
 - Group projects and other peer collaborations;
 - Narrative evaluations by faculty instead of grades;
 - Self evaluations;
 - Seminars (as a way of learning);
 - Seminars (as a way of social interaction);
 - Defining your own standards for success;
 - Relationships with faculty;
 - Relationship with other students as members of a learning community;
 - Taking responsibility for your own learning;
 - Your living situation; and social and other community activities.
- Question set #8 - How satisfied are you with...? This question set included the following items:
 - The overall quality of instruction;
 - Academic advice from faculty,
 - The timeliness of faculty feedback on your work,
 - Lectures and other presentations by faculty;
 - Amount of contact time with faculty outside of class;
 - Learning interaction with other students; academic assignments;
 - Amount of time that you are able to devote to your academic work;
 - Opportunities for advanced academic work at Evergreen;
 - Team teaching by faculty;
 - Your own progress in achieving your educational goals;
 - Opportunities for community service or volunteer work;
 - Your social experiences at Evergreen;
 - Variety of campus activities;
 - Timing and availability of campus activities;
 - The amount of diversity at Evergreen.
- How important do you think diversity on campus was to your learning?
- How much respect do you think there is for different backgrounds, perspectives, and lifestyles on campus?

Methodology

The responses were determined to be largely non-normal in terms of distribution. In other words, responses tended to be skewed in one direction rather than following a bell-shaped distribution. Therefore, the Mann Whitney U test (the nonparametric equivalent of the t-test) was used to test for differences between the responses of students of color and white students.¹

For items where there was a statistically significant difference, the same test was run to see if there were differences between students of color and students for whom race/ethnicity was

¹ T-tests were also performed to see if they yielded different results. The same items appeared to be statistically significant, whether run through the parametric or nonparametric tests.

not indicated and between white students and students from whom race/ethnicity was not indicated.

This report refers to “p-values.” P-values represent the likelihood that differences are something other than chance. The smaller the p-value the less likely it is that the difference is a random effect or due to chance. The threshold for significance used in this analysis is $p < 0.05$; in other words, items were deemed statistically significant if there was less than a 5% chance that the difference was due to chance.

Results for Connectedness Questions

There were no significant differences between students of color and white students on the questions, “To what extent do you feel connected with other students in your program and/or courses?” and “To what extent do you feel connected to the Evergreen community? Both of these items were on a scale of 0 to 6 (0 = Not at All Connected, 3 = Moderately Connected, 6 = Very Connected).

There were also no statistically significant differences between students of color and students who had not indicated a race/ethnicity on either of the connectedness questions. However, there was a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.043$) between white students and students for whom race/ethnicity was not indicated on the question, “To what extent do you feel connected with other students in your program and/or courses?” Students whose race/ethnicity was not indicated had a significantly lower mean than white students. The mean for students of color was in between that of the students for whom race/ethnicity was not indicated and the mean for white students.

To what extent do you feel connected with other students in your program and/or courses?

	Mean	Not at All Connected 0	1	2	Moderately Connected 3	4	5	Very Connected 6	Missing (N)
Students of Color (N=72)	3.07	8.3%	8.3%	9.7%	36.1%	22.2%	9.7%	5.6%	0
White Students (N=375)	3.26	5.4%	6.5%	15.1%	33.3%	18.8%	11.6%	9.4%	4
Students - Race/Ethnicity not Indicated (N=81)	2.85	10.0%	10.0%	15.0%	35.0%	15.0%	10.0%	5.0%	0

Results for Effects and Satisfaction with Learning Environment Questions

All of the items from question series #7 and #8 were tested for significant differences between responses of students of color and those of white students. Students were asked how aspects of an Evergreen education had affected their learning. Students responded on a scale of very negatively to very positively. Students were also asked how satisfied they were with other aspects of an Evergreen education. The question sets had questions related to relationships with faculty, pedagogy, social experiences, and campus activities, among other items.

There were no statistically significant differences on question set #7. There was one item on question set #8 for which a statistically significant difference at $p < 0.05$ could be found. This was satisfaction with academic assignments.

About sixty-eight percent of the student of color reported being satisfied or very satisfied with academic assignments compared to 78.7% of white students. There were more students of color who reported being neutral in terms of satisfaction with academic assignments than white students. A total of 5.6% of students of color reported being very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with academic assignments compared to 4.0% of the white students.

How satisfied are you with...?

Academic Assignments

	Mean	Very Dissatisfied (-2)	Dissatisfied (-1)	Neutral (0)	Satisfied (1)	Very Satisfied (2)	Missing (N)
Students of Color (N=72)	0.74	1.4%	4.2%	26.4%	55.6%	12.5%	0
White Students (N=375)	0.94	1.1%	2.9%	17.3%	58.2%	20.5%	0
Students - Race/Ethnicity not Indicated (N=81)	0.59	2.5%	7.6%	27.8%	51.9%	10.1%	1

Students with race/ethnicity not indicated had the lowest mean score on this item and appeared to be the least satisfied with academic assignments. There was no statistically significant difference between the responses of students of color and students for whom race/ethnicity was not indicated. However, there was a significant difference ($p = 0.001$) between the responses of students for whom race/ethnicity was not indicated and white students.

Results for Diversity and Respect Questions

There were statistically significant differences between the responses of students of color and white students to questions regarding the importance of diversity to learning and the amount of respect for different backgrounds, perspectives, and lifestyles on campus.

A total of 40.8% of the students of color reported that diversity was very important to their learning compared to 22.2% of the white students and 32.5% of the students for whom race/ethnicity was not indicated. The difference between the responses of student of color and white students on the importance of diversity to learning was significant ($p = 0.002$).

There were no statistically significant differences between students for whom race/ethnicity are not indicated and either students of color or white students.

How important do you think diversity was to your learning?

	Mean	Not at All Important (0)	1	2	Somewhat Important (3)	4	5	Very Important (6)	Missing (N)
Students of Color (N=72)	4.45	5.6%	2.8%	2.8%	16.9%	14.1%	16.9%	40.8%	1
White Students (N=375)	3.82	6.8%	3.8%	7.6%	23.8%	20.9%	14.9%	22.2%	7
Students - Race/Ethnicity not Indicated (N=81)	3.94	6.5%	6.5%	10.4%	19.5%	10.4%	14.3%	32.5%	3

On the question, “How much respect do you think there is for different backgrounds, perspectives, and lifestyles on campus?” A total of 60.2% of the white students responded with 4 (above some respect on the scale) to 6 (A Lot of Respect). A total of 45.9% of the students of color and 46.1% of the students for whom race/ethnicity is not indicated marked between 4 and 6 on the scale. The differences between the responses of students of color and white students on the amount of respect for different backgrounds, perspectives, and lifestyles on campus was statistically significant at $p = 0.037$.

There was no statistically significant difference in responses between students for whom race/ethnicity is not indicated and students of color. However, there was a statistically significant difference between students for whom race/ethnicity is not indicated and white students.

How much respect do you think there is for different backgrounds, perspectives, and lifestyles on campus?

	Mean	No Respect (0)	1	2	Some Respect (3)	4	5	A Lot of Respect (6)
Students of Color (N=72)	3.53	2.8%	9.7%	8.3%	33.3%	16.7%	15.3%	13.9%
White Students (N=375)	3.94	1.1%	5.3%	8.0%	25.4%	22.2%	19.8%	18.2%
Students - Race/Ethnicity not Indicated (N=81)	3.50	0.0%	7.7%	19.2%	26.9%	19.2%	15.4%	11.5%

Conclusions

- There were no significant differences between students of color and white students on the amount of connectedness students felt with other students or the Evergreen community as a whole.
- There was a statistically significant difference between the responses of white students and those of students for whom race/ethnicity is not indicated on a question regarding connectedness with other students in a program and/or course(s).
- There were no significant differences on question set #7 pertaining to how Evergreen has affected students' learning.
- There was a statistically significant difference between students of color and white students on question set #8, pertaining to satisfaction with various aspects of an Evergreen education. This difference was on satisfaction with academic assignments. More students of color reported that they were neutral in terms of satisfaction with assignments, and a smaller percentage of students of color than white students reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with academic assignments.
- More students of color reported that diversity was very important to their learning than either white students or students whose ethnicity/race were not indicated. A total of 40.8% of students of color responded that diversity was very important compared to 22.2% of white respondents.
- White students generally responded that there was more respect for different backgrounds, perspectives, and lifestyles on campus than did either students of color or students whose race/ethnicity were not indicated.