



Graduate and Professional Student Experience in the Research University 2021 Campus Climate

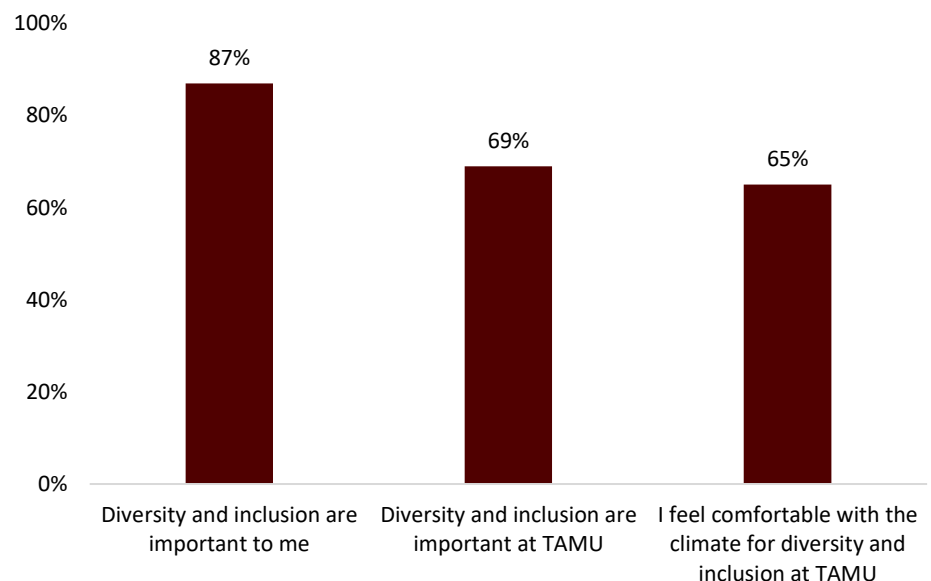
The Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) is a consortium of research institutions in the Association of American Universities that administer a common survey to generate knowledge and help further the goals of higher education in general and at the member institutions specifically. The SERU/Your Voice survey is a comprehensive survey of all graduate and professional students at Texas A&M University (TAMU) intended to give faculty, students, and administration in-depth insights into the student experience. SERU was most recently administered to TAMU graduate and professional students at all locations in spring 2021. A total of 4,080 respondents completed at least part of the survey, representing 29% of the overall graduate and professional population. This report addresses the College Station campus, over 3,200 students. Respondents were asked a variety of questions about campus climate, specifically about their perceptions and experiences.

Figure 1 indicates that most graduate and professional students value diversity, although they are less in agreement about Texas A&M valuing diversity and feeling comfortable with the climate at Texas A&M. Nearly all the Black respondents (96%) agreed or strongly agreed that diversity was important to them. Slightly more women (90%) than men (83%) agreed or strongly agreed.

Only 53% of Black respondents think diversity is important to Texas A&M, while at least three-fourths of international (78%) and Indigenous (75%) students do. Slightly more men (73%) than women (66%) think diversity is important to the university.

Only 42% of Black respondents, 58% of multi-racial, 59% of Hispanic/Latinx, and 74% of international students agreed or strongly agreed that they were comfortable with the climate. In terms of gender, 69% of men and 60% of women were comfortable with the climate for diversity and inclusion.

Figure 1: Importance of diversity and inclusion: agree and strongly agree





As seen in Figure 2, most graduate and professional students feel safe and work on their own biases and prejudices. About half confront inappropriate behaviors and think that Texas A&M is transparent in its response to discriminatory incidents. However, 14% of graduate and professional students have experienced systemic racism and discrimination. Men felt slightly safer than women (82% compared to 75%), and international and domestic students felt similarly safe. In terms of identifying their own biases, about 85% of Black and multi-racial students agreed or strongly agreed they worked on that, while 57% of international students and 64% of Asian students did. Men and women had similar responses about openly confronting behaviors, while international students were slightly less likely to (43% compared to 56%). Almost half (49%) of the White respondents thought Texas A&M was transparent in responding to incidents, while only 29% of Black students did. Nearly 40% of Black respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they have experienced racism or discrimination, compared to 19% Asian, 18% Hispanic/Latinx, and 11% of White respondents.

Figure 2: Experiences and attitudes: agree and strongly agree

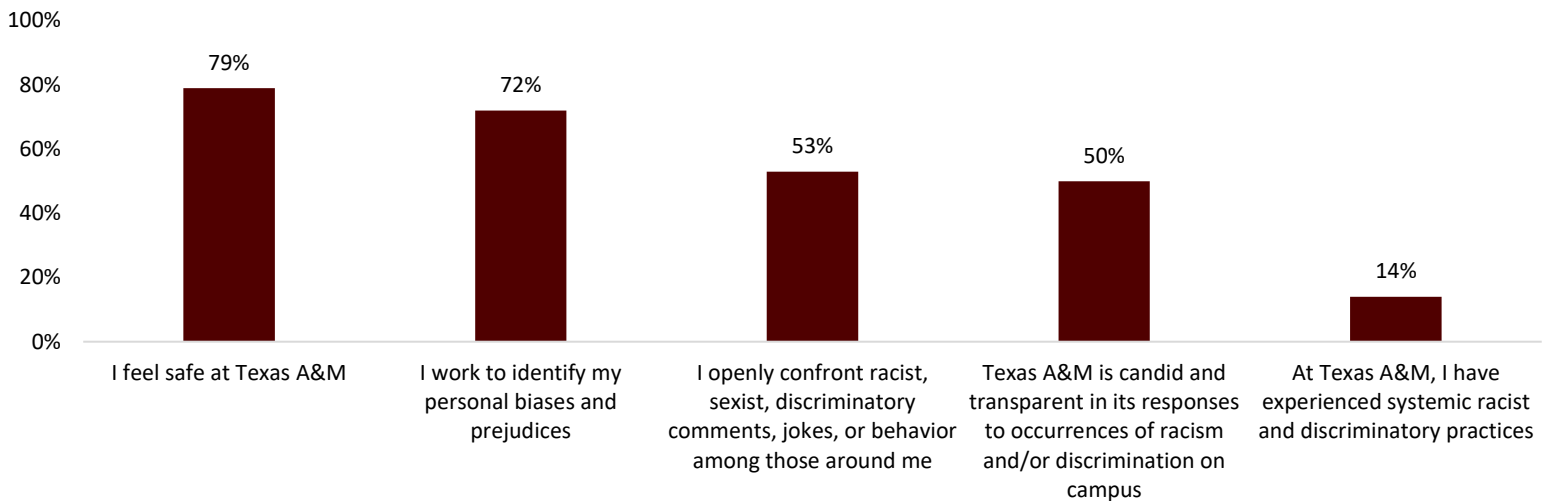


Figure 3 indicates that graduate and professional respondents think that Texas A&M campus traditions are inclusive/welcoming. ("I don't have enough information to rate" was removed from the analysis." That response was the most common.) Historically, most of those experiences have been more attended by undergraduate students.

Figure 3: The experiences are very and somewhat inclusive

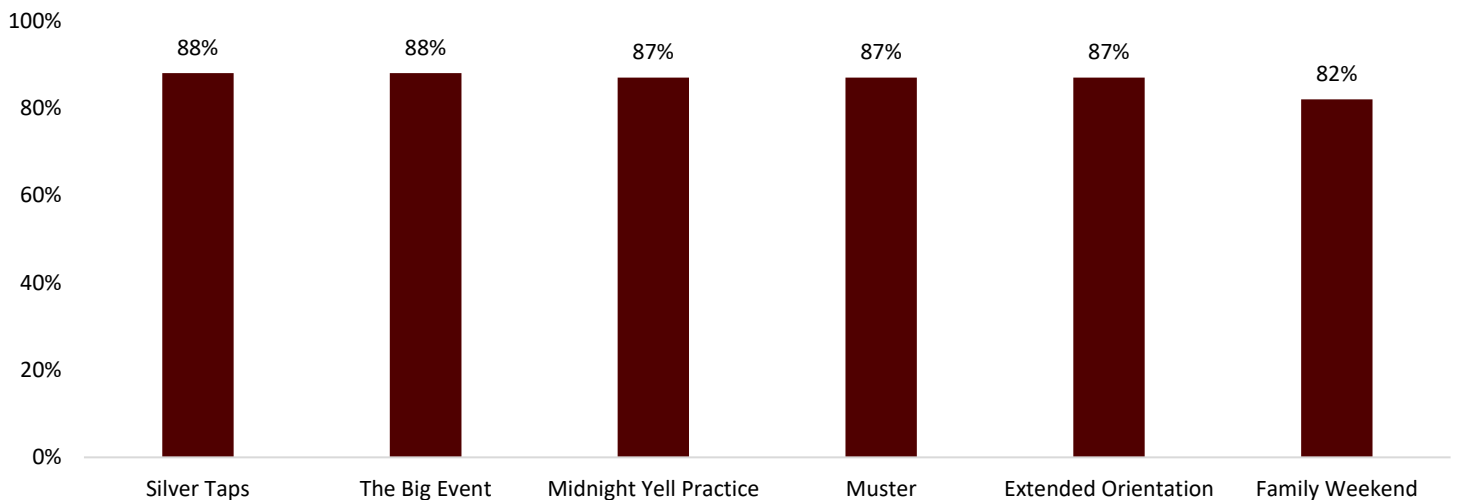
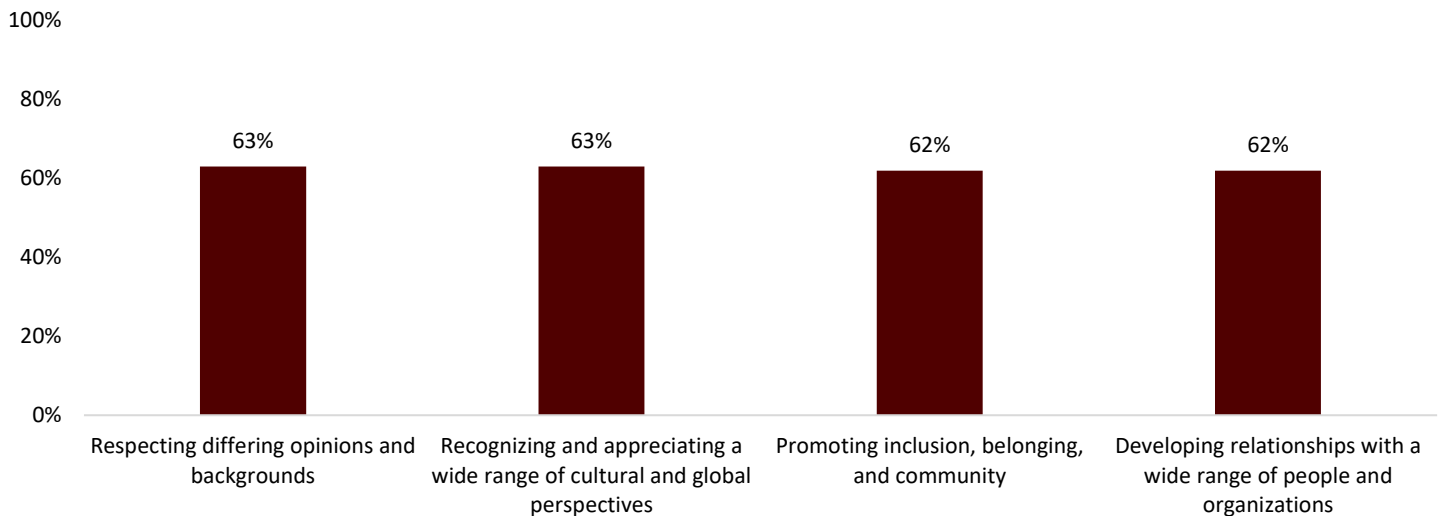




Figure 4 shows that just under two-thirds of graduate/professional respondents thought their training prepared them well or extremely well to address common diversity and inclusion experiences.

Figure 4: Current graduate/professional training prepared them for the following very or extremely well



In addition, students were asked, “To what extent has your graduate/professional training contributed to your ability to navigate various cultures within diverse communities?” Over one-third (37%) answered to a large extent or to a very large extent, while 10% answered not at all. Over 40% of multi-racial (46%), Hispanic/Latinx (41%), and international (41%) respondents answered very or extremely well.

Conclusion

While graduate and professional student respondents generally had a positive opinion about diversity and inclusion at Texas A&M University and few had personal systemic racist or discriminatory practices, there may be differences in how demographic groups experience the university environment. In addition, about half of the respondents thought the university was transparent in their response to occurrences of racism and discrimination on campus. Almost two-thirds of the respondents thought their training was preparing them very or extremely well to work in a diverse environment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



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