
ETHNICITY/RACE

SUMMARY: In this section of the report we explore differences in the experiences, perceptions and developmental gains of respondents based on race or ethnic background. Using the ethnic identity categories featured on the CSEQ (matched with university student records), we compared the response patterns of Asian, Caucasian, African American, Mexican American/Latino (“Hispanic”) and Native American students¹. Our analysis reveals that different racial groups participate in various aspects of campus life at different rates. For example, African American students report participating in course-learning activities, writing activities, and student acquaintances at a significantly higher rate of frequency than do other student groups. Perceptions of the campus environment also vary substantially by race. In general, African American and Native American students are significantly less likely than the average undergraduate to view the curriculum at UCSD as having personal relevance or practical value or to see the campus environment as one that facilitates an understanding and appreciation for diversity. However, we found no meaningful differences in the self-reported educational, personal, social, or career development gains of students based on their race or ethnic identity. This finding, or ‘non-finding’ so to speak, is noteworthy given substantial enrollment changes in the five-year period since the last administration of the CSEQ². While their enrollment numbers are smaller in 1999 than in 1994, African American, Mexican-American, and Native American students report investing substantially more time and effort in academic-related and co-curricular activities than did their counterparts in prior administrations of the CSEQ. And as our findings indicate, the estimated gains reported by the current sample of respondents is greater than the estimated gains reported by the 1994 sample.

I. The Academic and Co-curricular Experiences of Undergraduates by Ethnicity/Race

- ◆ In today’s educational environment, a significantly larger than average proportion of African American students report investing substantial time and effort in Course-Related (e.g., took detailed notes in class, participated in class discussions) and Writing activities (e.g., wrote a paper or essay for class). The course-related participation rate for the total survey sample is 63% compared to 73% for African Americans; the Writing activities total is 56% compared to 67% for African Americans (see Table 1B).
- ◆ Compared to their 1994 counterparts, Caucasian/Other, African American and Native American students invest significantly more time and effort in Science/Quantitative activities. The frequency with which Caucasian/Other, African American, and Native

¹ When reviewing the results presented here, the reader should keep in mind that the number of African American (n=62) and Native American (n=35) respondents represent a small portion of the total sample population (1.5% and 0.6%, respectively). Calculated percentages based on such small numbers are subject to extremes and, as such, should be interpreted with care.

² Asian American enrollments have increased by 41% since the last administration of the CSEQ (from 3,401 to 4,802). Caucasian/Other/Undeclared enrollments have increased by 8% (from 8,746 to 9,476). Enrollment declines have occurred among African American (from 355 to 257), Mexican American/Latino (from 1685 to 1576), and Native American (from 133 to 119) students. Overall, the campus has experienced a 13% increase in undergraduate enrollments since 1994 (from 14,320 in 1994 to 16,230 in 1999).

American students interact with faculty has also increased significantly since the last administration of the CSEQ.

- ◆ Compared to reports of the past, participation rates have increased substantially for all student groups in the areas of Art/Music/Theater and Campus Facilities (i.e., recreational and athletic venues).

II. Perceptions of the Campus Environment by Ethnicity/Race

- ◆ **Emphasis on the academic, personal, social and vocational development of students:** Perceptions of the campus environment vary significantly by race. In general, African American and Native American students are significantly less likely than the ‘average’ respondent to perceive the curriculum at UCSD as having personal relevance or practical value.
- ◆ In the current survey sample, Asian American students are the most likely of the subgroups to view UCSD as one that strongly emphasizes, or promotes, an appreciation for human diversity (59%); African American students are the least likely subgroup (25%) to hold this view.
- ◆ Compared to student reports of the past, perceptions of the campus environment vis-à-vis its emphasis on the personal relevance or practical value of courses, and its emphasis on the vocational and occupational competence of students have declined significantly among African American and Native American student groups.
- ◆ **Quality of Relationships between Students, Faculty, and Administrative Personnel:** There are significant differences between student groups in their reported relationships with students and faculty. We found that Asian and Caucasian students characterize their relationships with other students as being significantly more positive (i.e., “friendly” and “supportive”) than do African American or Native American students. And, while more than half of all Asian, Caucasian, Mexican American, and Native American students see faculty as being “approachable” and “helpful”, less than half (43%) of all African Americans hold this view.

III. Student Development Gains by Ethnicity/Race

- ◆ In the current survey sample, we found no significant differences in the self-reported intellectual, personal, social, or vocational development gains of students based on their race or ethnic identity. Noteworthy is the significant increase between 1994 and 1999 in the proportion of African Americans who report making “substantial” progress in the areas of Intellectual (1994=66%; 1999=77%), Science/Technology (1994=29%; 1999=44%), Personal/Social (1994=43%; 1999=61%), and Career development (1994=42%; 1999=53%).

IV. Student Satisfaction Ratings by Ethnicity/Race

- ◆ Compared to the average (81%), a significantly smaller proportion of African American (64%) and Native American (67%) students report being “satisfied” with the university in general. And, while there are no differences between subgroups on satisfaction ratings related to College or major department academic advising, College residential life, or College programs and activities, there are significant differences between subgroups with respect to their ratings of the social life on campus. Compared to other student groups (36%), significantly fewer Native American (15%) and African American (15%) students report being satisfied with the social life in general.