

Measuring Effectiveness of Diversity and Inclusion Policies on Campus Racial Climate

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Executive Summary:

Following federal mandates to desegregate schools in the United States, education systems at all levels began to admit and integrate students of color into Predominantly (and historically) White Institutions (PWIs). Throughout the past few decades, particularly within higher education, there have been attempts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) on college and university campuses. However, the lasting effects of this country's racist history and institutions make it difficult to move forward. Institutions that were designed to benefit white students must be reformed with race-conscious policies and solutions. In a post-Trump, pandemic-stricken, and racially divided America, and dealing with perpetuating generational and historical disparities, students of color have had to disproportionately endure many hardships. Recent research shows that students of color experience harassment at higher levels and report campuses being racist and hostile environments more often than their White counterparts.

Findings show that students of color can find solace in communal bonds with students who share similar backgrounds and cultures. There has also been an increase in the amount of student activism around campus climate seen on college campuses, occasionally resulting in positive administrative changes to the schools, such as meeting the demands of student activists and supporting students of color. However, it is important for those students to prioritize their mental and physical wellbeing, as the hardships and weight of being a student leader can become detrimental. The accountability for improving campus racial climate should fall upon school administrations, accreditors, and policymakers. By centering the voices of students of color, schools have the ability to implement campus-wide DEI and cultural events, create cultural spaces for students of color, issue statements of support, mandate diversity-related courses, and provide accessible resources for students of color who may be struggling with fatigue due to racism, activism, financial, and academic barriers to success. Accreditors can require universities to report on the status of their campus racial climate. Local, state, and federal governments should create diversity and race conscious metrics or benchmarks to improve racial climates.

Keywords: predominantly white institutions (PWIs); Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI); race-conscious policies; harassment; campus racial climate; racial fatigue; most racial; post racial; Critical Race Theory (CRT); racially toxic environments; othering; microaggression; racist nativism.

Introduction

The purpose of this campus racial climate study is to add to the body of research understanding the experiences of students of color at predominantly white institutions. We will conduct student focus groups, document and analyze findings. Using the insights from focus groups, we will develop metrics to measure campus racial climate. Possible metrics could include faculty and staff diversity, support services for students of color, availability of diverse student organizations. We will also look at state and federal policies, such as accreditation, that could mitigate student experiences. We will identify how the policies impact students'

experiences, the support services that are available to them, and hear their reactions to our initial findings. We will ensure that students and institutional representatives who are closest to the challenges are involved in shaping and vetting our recommendations, and we will engage them in subsequent advocacy activities as well.

Research Question

Our research questions for this study are “How do students of color view/experience campus racial climate at their institution?”, and “how do we hold institutions accountable for ensuring positive campus racial climates?”

Literature Review Background

After the 2008 election of President Barack Obama, many Americans were led to believe that we lived in a post-racial society where, “African Americans have achieved, or will soon achieve, racial equality in the United States despite substantial evidence to the contrary (Bobo & Dawson, 2009).” However, if events in the last decade have proved anything, it is that we are still living in a most-racial society where education, housing, wealth, health, political participation, incarceration, policing, and income are all racially stratified in the United States by anti-Black White supremacy (Tesler, 2016, p. 3-6).

Black Americans are harmed by reoccurring police brutality as well as prolonged systemic disparities. Asian Americans have experienced racialized hate crimes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Latinx community continue to face xenophobia fueled by former President Donald Trump’s anti-immigration rhetoric. In fact, there is evidence suggesting that Donald Trump’s rhetoric fueled a prevalence of school bullying, harassment, and racial targeting

(Horton, 2021, p. 7). As a response to these instances of hate, there have been widespread movements, such as the Black Lives Matter movement, to expose the continuation of the socio-political isolation, discrimination, and systemic racism communities of color face in the United States. As state legislatures across the country attempt to enshrine discrimination into education policy, it is important now more than ever that educational institutions do their best to foster anti-racist and positive campus climates.

While measuring campus racial climate has been an important consideration for educational institutions for the past few decades, it is crucial to continually reevaluate the effectiveness of campus initiatives to ensure the success of all students as social events occur both on- and off-campus that directly impact students of color. Campus racial climate is informed by “the current beliefs, judgments, and outlooks within an academic society about race, ethnicity, and diversity” (McClain & Perry, 2017, p. 2). It can be understood as consisting of five distinct dimensions: Historical Legacy of Inclusion/Exclusion, Organizational/structural, Compositional Diversity, Behavioral, and Psychological (Milem et al., 2005, p.18).

As subsequent generations of college students become increasingly diverse, it has become increasingly relevant and important for colleges and universities to ensure that not only are students of all backgrounds being immersed into campus culture, but that they feel safe in their own identities. Unfortunately, many students of color who are historically underrepresented are being admitted into institutions that have racist environments (Franklin, 2019, p. 219). College students face many hardships, especially in a racially divided country in the midst of a pandemic, but racial discrimination can be discouraged and prevented by academic institutions to ensure that all students feel safe and respected so that they may thrive.

This literature review seeks to analyze past academic research on campus racial climate in order to determine common themes on othering, harassment, and overall racism on college campuses. Additionally, we are interested in examples from past, current, and future policies at the local, state, federal, and university level that seek to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion on school campuses.

Experiences with Othering, Harassment, and Violence

This section describes how harassment and violence on predominantly white institution school campuses can cause feelings of being othered for students of color. Black, Latinx, and Asian American students have similar and varying experiences when it comes to othering and the impact of being a student of color within a generally homogenous student body population and Predominantly White Institutions (PWI).

When students of color attending a PWI experience a small microaggression or a disgraceful hate crime, they can feel a sense of isolation (Mwangi et al., 2018, p. 4). The effects of the racialized power hierarchy on campuses that cause isolation can be explained by the sociological idea of othering. According to Canales (2000), “Exclusionary Othering often utilizes the power within relationships for domination and subordination” (p. 16). In the case of campus racial climate, society, school administrations, and students from privileged backgrounds consciously or unconsciously utilize their power to exclude people of color from feeling welcomed in those spaces. Students in these environments may feel a sense of onliness where there is a psycho-emotional burden of having to navigate a racialized space that is occupied by few people of similar racial or ethnic group (Harper, 2013, p. 189). Prior research found that

being a student of color in a White space can feel like being “guests in someone else’s house (Adams & McBrayer, 2020, p.735).”

When students of color exist in a space that offers challenges, such as being othered based on racial identity, they may struggle to figure out where they fit in. Research has shown that, “students of color experience harassment at higher rates than Caucasian students... Further, students of color perceived the climate as more racist and less accepting than did White students, even though White students recognized racial harassment at similar rates as students of color” (Rankin & Reason, 2005, p. 43). Harassment in these cases can be, “defined as any offensive, hostile, or intimidating behavior that interferes with learning” (Rankin & Reason, 2005, p. 43).

This past decade has seen racist ideologies become widely broadcasted and supported by some policymakers and elected officials. In a time of uncertainty surrounding personal safety, people of color are made hyper-aware of their status as a person of color. While anyone residing in the U.S. can be victims of random acts of violence, people of color are frequently targets of these attacks based on their race. Statista reports that in 2020, there were 11,472 victims of hate crimes. 6,880 of those hate crime attacks were motivated by race, ethnicity, or ancestry with the majority (2,871) of race based attacks targeted Black Americans (Statista, 2021). The amount of hate groups in the United States nearly doubled from 457 in 1999 to 838 in 2020 with 2018 being a 20 year all time high of 1,020 hate groups (Statista, 2021).

Since the United States was formulated with predominantly serving White Americans often at the expense of people of color, nativism and a sense of entitlement amongst White Americans became prominent as Trump’s rhetoric became widely accepted amongst conservative populations (Stokes, 2021, p. 8). Racist nativism is when the “complex history of the U.S. systemically defin[es] what it means to be American through discriminatory policies

and exclusionary immigration law... continues to shape who is ‘deportable,’ ‘desirable,’ or ‘worthy’ of legal status” (Stokes, 2021, p. 2). Combining student experiences with harassment and violence on campus, racially motivated hate crime attacks throughout the United States, and racist rhetoric becoming popularized, several variables may negatively affect campus racial climates for students of color. The sections below describe how events in society have seeped into campus culture and have adversely affected Black, Latinx, and Asian American students.

Black Students

The United States has an entrenched history of legal systemic discrimination, racism, segregation towards Black people, and “Black students have negative perceptions of their campus climate due to racial/ethnic hostility, inequitable treatment, microaggressions, isolation, tokenization, lack of representation, and overt racism” (Mwangi et al., 2018, p. 5). For Black students, “Isolation and sense of belonging are two of the most prevalent issues discussed when addressing campus climate” (Mwangi et al., 2018, p.5). Outside of worrying about academic performance and racism, Black students may also have a consistent fear of being racially profiled or losing their own life because of their race (Lewis & Shah, 2021, p. 189). To mitigate these circumstances, Black students have organized on campuses to demand their institutions to improve things such as policing and public safety. Following major police brutality, the Black Lives Matter movement spread throughout the country, including on college campuses. As a result, protests have been organized all across the United States (Boudreau et al., 2022, p. 497-498). Unfortunately, some students have found that their demands have not yet been met (Taylor, 2020).

Latino Students

Similarly, Latino students have been historically isolated from White America, creating “a very different post-secondary experience than their White peers” (Franklin, 2019, p. 603). One of the predominant campaign issues for former President Donald Trump was his harsh stance on immigration. His policy decisions were founded on racist beliefs towards immigrants, particularly about Latino and Muslim people. Trump’s main, and largely unfulfilled, campaign promise was to build a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border to deter people from Central and South America from entering the country. Those ideas exacerbated the racist treatment of Latino people within the U.S.. Logan (2017) found that some Latino students felt that “the election unveiled some White students’ racism, which made the campus ‘more abrasive’ therefore driving him to more ‘radical’ activist roots... the campus [is] increasingly hostile after Donald Trump’s election as president ” (Logan et al., 2017, p. 263). With anti-Latino racism increasingly overt on college campuses, “the Trump presidency presented significant and contextually nuanced consequences for Latino students’ sense of belonging (Stokes, 2021, p. 4).” For those who are undocumented or were DACA students, they face “excessive exposure to racist nativist microaggressions; feelings of isolation, invisibility, and alienation at their institutions; and institutional negligence from faculty and administrators who were ignorant to the socioemotional and sociopolitical factors” (Stokes, 2021, p. 4). There is growing evidence that the racial discrimination that Latinx face increases their risk of poor mental health (Pichardo, 2021, p. 87). Such hostility negatively influences Latino students’ success in higher education.

Asian American Students

Similar to Latinx students, Asian American students face racist nativism, which has been especially heightened due to Trump’s racialization of the Covid-19 virus. This prejudice has been deeply rooted in American history where Asian Americans are depicted “as perpetual foreigners

to be feared. This racist nativism, an intersection of racism and nativism, continues to manifest in Asian American lives today; these experiences, in turn, lead to unfavorable psychological outcomes” (Tausen, 2020, p. 368). Since the COVID-19 pandemic, “3.4 percent of [all] reported incidents [of harassment] were occurring on school sites and 2.5 percent on university sites” (Tausen, 2020, p. 369). Beyond “documented in-person incidents, academic institutions and world leaders have perpetuated and normalized racism and xenophobia” (Tausen, 2020, p. 367). Furthermore, Asian American students are placed in a racial bind through the “model minority” myth, which portrays them as “self-sufficient minority success” (Poon et al., 2016, p. 474). While being recognized as a successful minority group may seem positive on the surface, it can contribute to misrepresenting and overlooking race-related issues Asian American students may face on campus.

Areas Requiring Further Exploration

Through writing this literature review, it has been difficult to find a wealth of literature and research on the effects of campus racial climate on Indigenous students, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students, multicultural students, and students affected by racialized Islamophobia, such as Southwest Asian/North African students and South Asian Students. This exposes a research area that can be expanded upon.

Relevant Policies

Having identified the multitude of issues that students of color face on campus as a result of negative campus racial climate such as harassment, violence, and othering, it is important to identify relevant policy solutions aimed to mitigate those issues. This following section outlines

examples of past, current, and future policies intended to measure and improve campus racial climate at the university, state, and federal level.

Institution Policies

In recent years, universities have shown interest in improving campus racial climate, particularly at PWIs, to make their campus more equitable for students of color. A study by the American Council on Education found that, “over 55% of college presidents stated that racial climate has become more of a priority than it was 3 years previously and 75% believed that high-profile events, such as #BlackLivesMatter, increased campus dialogue” (Mwangi et al., 2018, p. 4). The university and educational institutions should bear the responsibility of shaping the tone of campus racial climate. They have the power to implement policies and programs to improve the experience of students of color on college campuses. In the past, “institutional policy interventions on campuses have generally not considered the racial health of students. Instead, policies directed toward People of Color have focused on access” (Franklin, 2019, p. 605). While it is important that campus admissions are diverse and accessible, it is crucial that once students are on campus, that there is a commitment to making it a safe and inclusive space for them.

One of the best ways to improve campus racial climate, especially for students of color attending PWIs, is to create a space for them to create a sense of community and belonging amongst those who may not share the same cultural, racial, and ethnic background. Museus et al. (2018) found that environments significantly influence belonging in college. Positive campus racial climate, cross-racial relationships, faculty interactions, and resident hall experiences all contribute to a sense of belonging for students of color (Museus et al., 2018, p. 468). Other

research has shown that for students of color, “peer and familial support are key factors to remaining in college” (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005, p. 245). Not only is it important for students of color to have a sense of belonging amongst students who have different backgrounds than them, but there is additional evidence proving that there are added benefits to also having cultural spaces on campus solely for students of color who they can relate with culturally (Linley, 2018, p. 25). With access to “[Cultural spaces] on college campuses [that] often serve as safe havens for students of color” (McClain & Perry, 2017, p. 8), students of color may benefit from improved educational outcomes like increased retention and better academic achievement and overall experiences for those students. These kinds of communities often sprout programs that can foster more connections and support for struggling students, such as mentoring programs. However, one barrier that multicultural centers or cultural spaces have faced is the lack of funding for their programming (McCoy, 2011, p. 144). Universities could better support students of color by adequately funding student services and community spaces.

In addition to creating programs and spaces for community building, it is important to show support and solidarity through race-conscious academic courses, cultural events, public acknowledgement, and listening to student activists. For a school “to achieve a strong institutional commitment to diversity, [an institution] must go beyond mission statements to include articulation of diversity as a priority, activities that evaluate and reward progress, core leadership support, and the development of a diverse student body” (Rankin & Reason, 2005, p. 46). This can be accomplished through hosting cultural events where ongoing, cross-racial interactions are encouraged.

Additionally, Rankin and Reason (2005) found that the “completion of an academic course that addresses issues of diversity was related to decreases in racial bias... [and]

encouraged students' evaluation of moral and ethical values through reflection on evidence, a higher order cognitive skill" (p. 45). With more students capable of engaging critically with issues of race and justice due to increased cultural programming, battling negative campus racial climates will not be a burden solely placed upon students of color. However, as of right now, "White students and faculty can 'opt out' of engaging and grappling with racial issues happening in broader society, which then impacts the campus climate for diversity. Thus, any resources, interventions, or programs developed for improving racial climate must ensure that White campus members are exposed to historical and contemporary racial issues" (Mwangi et al., 2018, p. 30). Attending these events and taking those courses should not be optional and can be part of university-wide race-conscious policies which are defined as "policies that explicitly address race in the design and provide higher education access, opportunity, or support to students of color and their colleges and universities serving them" (Jones & Nichols, 2020, p. 1). These university-wide race-conscious policies "can achieve racial justice in higher education" (Jones & Nichols, 2020, p. 1).

Another way to successfully show solidarity is for universities to share statements of acknowledgement and support. Universities must publicly acknowledge the racist past and present on their campuses and offer solutions to improve those circumstances. Some students of color feel that "the college was 'just covering it up' as opposed to addressing racially motivated hostility" (Logan et al., 2017, p. 256). For students of color who feel like their schools aren't doing anything, they "believed that more attention, in class and out of class, on issues of race would improve the climate on campus" (Rankin & Reason, 2005, p. 55).

Universities will need to be prepared to navigate and act quickly when a current event impacts students of color. For example, racist and xenophobic behaviors towards Asian

Americans because of racialized Covid-19 rhetoric could have been battled by the university immediately where “leaders on campus can support Asian students by: (i) addressing anti-Asian racism and xenophobia, (ii) denouncing and condemning such acts, and (iii) expressing genuine compassion and a clear commitment to support AAPI students” (Tausen et al., 2020, p. 378). Similarly, administrators can demonstrate support for Black students by “nam[ing] the role their institutions play in reifying racial inequity and racist structures (Mwangi et al., 2018, p.30).” They can do this, for example, by acknowledging the role that enslaved people played in the construction of their campuses. Students of color with negative histories connected to U.S. imperialism and racism deserve to have their universities acknowledge the past and make reparations for those wrongs.

Finally, universities need to listen to the students. Student activism has increased exponentially. The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) found that the current political climate has increased student activism by 52%. It is crucial that universities recognize that constantly fighting against racism can cause extreme fatigue (Winters, 2020, p. 8). Dedicating so much time to battling racism while university leaders are not taking action negatively impacts students. Franklin (2019) describes the toll that racism has on students of color and that “people of color are continually spent in response to preparing against everyday racial microaggressions” (Franklin, 2019, p. 592). Rather than focusing on academics, students of color may have to divert their energy to cope with the stress responses caused by racial microaggressions. In case students do need professionals to talk about their mental health with, “universities should have counselors that are trained to assist and help students, faculty, and staff that have been impacted by racism on campus” (Franklin, 2019, p. 605). These race-conscious

counselors should be made available to students in need. By listening to student activists early on, institutions may be able to decrease the toll of racism fatigue.

State and federal policies

State and federal policymakers also possess the power, politically and socially, to make widespread changes that impact campus racial climate. Data collected by agency departments like the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights just illustrate overt discrimination that students of color experience. While it is important to document overt discrimination, research has shown that students of color continue to face microaggressions, bias, and othering which significantly impacts their mental, physical, and academic wellbeing (Copeland-Linder et al., 2022, p. 263). State and federal governments can utilize parameters used to collect data on overt racism and expand it to look at some of the other forms of discrimination that students of color experience. It might be helpful if these governments take note of best practices for campus racial climate that is working well and utilized elsewhere to implement in their jurisdiction.

As of right now, Kansas, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Tennessee are the four states that incorporate measures of campus racial climate in their outcomes-based funding models (Elliott et al., 2021, p. 11). Even though they are taking that extra step in researching campus racial climate, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania only assess campus racial climate through looking at faculty diversity. For students of color, having diverse faculty and staff has shown to be helpful because those students may feel more comfortable and accepted on campus (Museus et al., 2018, p. 469). However, there are many other factors that impact campus racial climate such as historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion, organizational/structural, behavioral, or psychological

parameters (Milem et al., 2005, p.18). By only measuring faculty diversity, states are not collecting sufficient information to fully understand and measure campus racial climate.

Furthermore, of these four states, Rhode Island is the only one that has made the faculty diversity metric a requirement in its outcomes-based funding policy. Institutions located in the other three states are able to choose whether or not they would like to be assessed on their campus racial climate (Elliott et al., 2021, p. 11). As they currently stand, the outcome-based funding metrics “fail to account for the inequities baked into higher education [and] their funding formulas punish institutions that serve more students of color and students from low-income backgrounds” (Byon, 2021). Metrics such as faculty diversity are important because with an understanding of campus racial climate in conjunction with other systemic barriers students of color may face, some institutions may require extra funding to equitably mitigate stratified student success. Receiving funding based on updated measures can potentially improve campus racial climate for students of color. State governments can follow the lead of Kansas, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Tennessee in adopting campus racial climate measures. Since these metrics are so important to the success of students of color, they should be mandatory for every institution, and they can be broadened to focus on additional factors that impact campus racial climate.

Another existing method of federally mandating measuring campus racial climate is through the university accreditation process. In order to maintain accreditation, a university must meet a certain level of educational standards set forth by different accreditors the university adheres to. Without accreditation, universities are not legally allowed to participate in federal student aid programs, which are critical sources of financial assistance for many students to afford higher education.

Some accreditors, such as the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior Colleges and University Commission, have metrics written into their accreditation standards that relate to campus racial climate. The commission requires that universities regularly assess campus climate, share findings with the campus community, use the findings to inform institutional action, and ensure they have effective mechanisms for addressing bias related concerns (*see Appendix A.1*).

There have been several incidents where schools have lost their accreditation for not meeting such standards. Recently, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill's Hussman School of Journalism and Media was downgraded to provisional accreditation status by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. This followed controversy surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion after the school declined tenure to Nikole Hannah-Jones, a Pulitzer prize winning journalist who gained popularity through writing about race and politics. When the school declined her tenure, it prompted a reevaluation of campus racial climate at the school, ultimately leading to its downgrade.

More higher education accreditation commissions can incorporate standards related to campus racial climate to ensure their member institutions foster safe and inclusive campuses for students of color.

Next Steps

In order to improve campus racial climate and make college campuses feel safe, welcoming, and supportive for students of color, universities need to take charge and responsibility of implementing race-conscious policies. These policies may vary but should all attempt to educate all students on race-relations as well as facilitate inclusive spaces for students

of color. Administrators need to broadcast their solidarity with students of color by making statements acknowledging history and current events that may directly impact students of color. Those words of support should be followed by action. Specific action items can be identified by a collaboration with student activists to help best inform new policies or rules. Another great way to continue to gather student input is to conduct focus groups, interviews, and surveys to get a better idea of what actually needs to be changed. State policymakers and university accreditation commissions can implement mandatory campus racial climate metrics at every institution. These metrics should include measurements of student, faculty, and staff diversity, inclusive student organizations, student protests, etc. to get a better understanding of their campus racial climate. That information should then be utilized to support continual change on campus to improve campus racial climate for students of color.

This next section discusses how we will organize the focus groups utilizing information gathered from the literature review.

Focus Group Limitations

Due to the wide variety of aspects that we could gather from different students, we needed to narrow our focus groups into more specific groups that we could connect with prior literature and research. For those reasons, we are not including mixed race or White students. White students were not included in our study because evidence from our literature review has shown that students of color experience campus racial climate much differently than white students. Other groups of interest that we were not able to address specifically with our focus groups are students who may be differently abled, LGBTQ+, previously incarcerated, have

children, etc. All of the students selected to participate in the focus groups are students at predominantly White institutions. This was an intentional decision because we want to look at the experiences of students of color in an environment where they are the racial minority. Prior research explained that experiences that students of color have at minority serving institutions varies from the experiences of those at predominantly White institutions. We are also not including graduate students in our focus groups because those experiences could be different from undergraduates and most of the research from the literature reviews often discusses undergraduates. However, by not including these groups, we are able to make a more succinct analysis of our findings. Future research could look to include all of these groups for further information from those perspectives.

Methodology

For this project, we decided to conduct focus groups to gather information from students of interest. Focus groups allow students of similar backgrounds to discuss their experiences in an open and accepting setting which can provide opportunities for students to relate to each other. We have created six different focus groups where five are separated by racial identity: Black, Latinx, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and Indigenous Native American. The sixth focus group is for a mixture of students of different racial identities to participate in a follow-up session. All of the participants will be undergraduate students at both two and four year universities.

Focus Groups

These virtual focus groups will consist of five students each with two focus groups per demographic and will last for one hour. These sessions will incorporate polls to add an additional interactive element. Every session will be recorded to the Zoom cloud and transcribed for future analysis. *(See Appendix A.2)*

Outreach/Sampling Strategy

To gather participants, we sent out an email to partners and organizations who will then forward to potential participants (see below). These forms will be open until two and a half weeks (17 days) before the date of the focus group. We will then select participants randomly within groupings by gender and geographic region. Selected students will be sent an invitation with a zoom link and up to two reminders leading up to the focus group date. Selected students will also receive a demographic survey with more in-depth follow-up questions. Each participant is emailed an e-gift card of \$100 as a stipend within one week of the focus group.

Focus group email:

Are you an undergraduate student of color? We want to hear about your experiences on campus!

[The Education Trust](#) is a national nonprofit that works to close opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. We want to hear directly from students about how colleges can be held accountable for ensuring safe and inclusive campuses. The questions we'll ask you will address:

- *Your experiences on your campus as a student of color*
- *Resources that are currently available to you as a student of color*

- *What changes you want to see on college campuses*

If you're interested, please fill out [this google form](#), and you'll hear back from us if you're selected for a 1 hour focus group over Zoom. Participants will initially be selected at random, but we may make adjustments to ensure a balanced representation of genders and geographic regions. We'll provide you with \$100 for your participation.

GOOGLE FORM: <https://forms.gle/9JeV4Uxh3wkBcJVk6>

Recommendations for Data Analysis

Following the completion of the focus groups, we will transcribe the Zoom recordings and analyze any notes taken during the focus groups. Utilizing that data, we can highlight common themes within each focus group to help inform any conclusions. The best way to do this would be to create an Excel sheet and create a count of common words, phrases, or themes and document them in detail. Important information to include on the spreadsheet is the students' race, which focus group they were in, what the phrase or theme was, a category that this theme falls under, a direct quote, and a count of how many others had similar sentiments.

Hypotheses

Based on research from the literature review, students may recommend that their universities have serious consequences for not addressing negative campus racial climate. Some students could suggest that there needs to be more financial and social support for groups of

campus made for students of color. A few students may recommend that their school implement policies to ensure that all students are taking necessary diversity and inclusion courses.

Appendix

A.1: University Accreditation Scan

This table shows research on different campus racial climate metrics different university accreditors are utilizing.

Accreditor	Metric location	Language	Link
Higher Learning Commission	Criterion 1.C.	<p>1.C. The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.</p> <p>The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.</p> <p>The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.</p> <p>The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.</p>	https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/criteria-and-core-components.html
Higher Learning Commission	Criterion 3.C.1.	<p>The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.</p>	https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/criteria-and-core-components.html
Middle States Commission on Higher Education	Standard II Crit. 2	<p>a climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives</p>	https://www.msche.org/standards/
New England Commission on Higher Education	Standard 5: Students	<p>Consistent with its mission, the institution sets and achieves realistic goals to enroll students who are broadly representative of the population the institution wishes to serve. The institution addresses its own goals for the achievement of diversity, equity, and inclusion among its students and provides a safe environment that fosters the intellectual and personal</p>	https://www.neche.org/resources/standards-for-accreditation

		development of its students. It endeavors to ensure the success of its students, offering the resources and services that provide them the opportunity to achieve the goals of their educational program as specified in institutional publications. The institution's interactions with students and prospective students are characterized by integrity and equity.	
New England Commission on Higher Education	Standard 5.12	In providing services, in accordance with its mission and purposes, the institution adheres to both the spirit and intent of equal opportunity and its own goals for diversity, equity, and inclusion.	https://www.neche.org/resources/standards-for-accreditation
New England Commission on Higher Education	Standard 9.5	The institution adheres to non-discriminatory policies and practices in recruitment, admissions, employment, evaluation, disciplinary action, and advancement. It fosters an inclusive atmosphere within the institutional community that respects and supports people of diverse characteristics and backgrounds.	https://www.neche.org/resources/standards-for-accreditation
New England Commission on Higher Education	Standard 6.5	The institution ensures equal employment opportunity consistent with legal requirements and any other dimensions of its choosing. Compatible with its mission and purposes, it addresses its own goals for the achievement of diversity, equity, and inclusion among its faculty and academic staff and assesses the effectiveness of its efforts to achieve those goals. Hiring reflects the effectiveness of this process and results in a variety of academic and professional backgrounds, training, and experience. Each prospective hire is provided with a written agreement that states explicitly the nature and term of the initial appointment and, when applicable, institutional considerations that might preclude or limit future appointments.	https://www.neche.org/resources/standards-for-accreditation

<p>Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges</p>	<p>Section 12 intro</p>	<p>Student success is significantly affected by the learning environment. An effective institution provides appropriate academic and student support programs and services, consistent with the institution’s mission, that enhance the educational and personal development experience(s) of students at all levels; contribute to the achievement of teaching and learning outcomes; ensure student success in meeting the goals of the educational programs; and provide an appropriate range of support services and programs to students at all locations. Qualified and effective faculty and staff are essential to implementing the institution’s goals and mission and to ensuring the quality and integrity of its academic and student support programs and services. An effective institution has policies and procedures that support a stimulating and safe learning environment.</p>	<p>https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/2018PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf</p>
<p>Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges</p>	<p>Section 12, 4</p>	<p>The institution (a) publishes appropriate and clear procedures for addressing written student complaints, (b) demonstrates that it follows the procedures when resolving them, and (c) maintains a record of student complaints that can be accessed upon request by SACSCOC.</p>	<p>https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/2018PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf</p>
<p>Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities</p>	<p>2.D.2</p>	<p>The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in its management and operations, including in its dealings with the public, NWCCU, and external organizations, including the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other stakeholders and constituencies. The institution ensures that complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair, equitable, and timely manner.</p>	<p>https://nwccu.org/accreditation/standards-policies/standards/</p>
<p>Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior</p>	<p>1.4</p>	<p>Consistent with its purposes and character, the institution demonstrates appropriate attention to the increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion through its policies, its</p>	<p>https://www.wscuc.org/handbook/#standard-1--defining-institutional-purp</p>

Colleges and University Commission		educational and co-curricular programs, its hiring and admissions criteria, and its administrative and organizational practices.	oses-and-ensuring-educational-objectives
Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior Colleges and University Commission	Equity and Inclusion Policy	(includes a section on campus climate) Does the institution regularly assess perceptions of campus climate by students, staff and faculty? How are the results shared with the campus community and how do they inform institutional action? Does the institution have effective mechanisms for addressing bias-related concerns from members of its community?	https://wascsenior.app.box.com/s/rf7mtk25dqplpakxet2i
Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior Colleges and University Commission	2.10	The institution demonstrates that students make timely progress toward the completion of their degrees and that an acceptable proportion of students complete their degrees in a timely fashion, given the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs it offers. The institution collects and analyzes student data, disaggregated by appropriate demographic categories and areas of study. It tracks achievement, satisfaction, and the extent to which the campus climate supports student success. The institution regularly identifies the characteristics of its students; assesses their preparation, needs, and experiences; and uses these data to improve student achievement.	https://www.wscuc.org/handbook/#standard-2--achieving-educational-objectives-through-core-functions
Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior Colleges and University Commission	4.3	Leadership at all levels, including faculty, staff, and administration, is committed to improvement based on the results of inquiry, evidence, and evaluation. Assessment of teaching, learning, and the campus environment – in support of academic and co-curricular objectives – is undertaken, used for improvement, and incorporated into institutional planning processes.	https://www.wscuc.org/handbook/#standard-4--creating-an-organization-committed-to-quality-assurance-institutional-learning-and-improvement

Appendix A.2: Focus Group Breakdown

This table shows how we are breaking down the student focus groups

Focus group	Date(s)	Outreach	Staff assignments
Black students African American students	Session 1: Session 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Xceleader - NAACP Youth and College - Dr. Charles F Davis III - Speakers from this event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitator: - Notetaker:
Latinx/a/o students Hispanic students	Session 1: Session 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UnidosUS - Excelencia in Education - HSI contacts from MSI project - CLASP - CHCI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitator: - Notetaker:
Asian American students Asian students	Session 1: Session 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - APIA Scholars - SEARAC - NCAPA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitator: - Notetaker:
Native Hawai'ian & Pacific Islander students	Session 1: Session 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - APIA Scholars - EPIC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitator: - Notetaker:
American Indian or Alaska Native students Native American students Indigenous students	Session 1: Session 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AIHEC - NIEA - AICF - TCUs from MSI project - Center for Indian Education, ASU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitator: - Notetaker:
Follow-up groups	Session 1: 6/ Session 2: 6/		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitator: - Notetaker:

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