



STUDENT PERCEPTION OF CAMPUS CULTURAL CLIMATE at TC3

In the Spring of 2013, 227 students completed the web-based campus climate survey.

Submitted by: DEAC and Multicultural Services

PULSE REPORT

STUDENT PERCEPTION OF CAMPUS CULTURAL CLIMATE
AT
TOMPKINS CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SURVEY OVERVIEW

In February of 2013, 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.

Overall, 253 students initiated the web-based campus climate survey. It must be noted that not all students completed all questions. Out of the 253 student respondents that initiated the survey, 227 student respondents completed the survey. However, six respondents elected not to identify their sexual orientation. This response is a decrease in the number of students completing the instrument in 2010. In comparison, 283 students responded in 2010. 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, their comfort level, diversity programming, their experiences, facilities and TC3's overall commitment to diversity.

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RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

STUDENT EXPERIENCES AT TC3

- 53.3% of students *agree* or *strongly agree* that their experiences since coming to TC3 have led them to become more understanding of racial/ethnic differences. 37.2% reported a *neutral* experience.
- 61.3% of respondents *agree* or *strongly agree* that getting to know people from different racial/ethnic backgrounds has been easy at TC3. 23.7% reported a *neutral* experience.

DIVERSITY PROGRAMMING AT TC3

- 37.5% of students *agreed* that attending diversity programs helps build community. 15.4.1% *strongly agreed* that attending diversity programs helps build community. 34.6% reported a *neutral* perception in the role that diversity programming has in supporting community building.

CONFLICT AT TC3

- 51.1% of student respondents believe there is *little to none* or *some*, of racial conflict on campus. 30.1% reported there is *some racial* conflict on campus, and 18.3% responded that there is *Quite a bit* or *A great Deal of racial* conflict on Campus.

COMFORT LEVEL AT TC3

- 46.2% of students feel *comfortable* being around people of ethnic groups other than their own. 15.8% reported a *neutral* level of comfort in response to the statement.
- 38% of students feel *comfortable* being the only person in a group where they are the only one of their ethnic group. 26.5% reported a *neutral* level of comfort in response to the statement.

ENVIRONMENT AT TC3

- 44.1% of students *agree* or *strongly agree* TC3 has done a good job providing programs and activities that promote multicultural understanding. 23% reported a *neutral* perception in response to the statement.

Underrepresented Student Response Highlights

STUDENT EXPERIENCES AT TC3

- 48.4% of under-represented students (26:48) responded *agree* or *strongly agree* that their experiences since coming to TC3 have led them to become more understanding of racial/ethnic differences. 37.5% of students reported a neutral experience.
- 68.8% of under-represented students (33:48) agreed that getting to know people from different racial/ethnic backgrounds has been easy at TC3. 25.8% reported a neutral experience.

DIVERSITY PROGRAMING AT TC3

- 35.2% of under-represented students (22:48) agreed that attending diversity programs help build community. 21.0% of students (13:48) strongly agreed that attending diversity programs helps build community. 22.6% of students reported a neutral perception in the role that diversity programming has in supporting community building.

CONFLICT AT TC3

- 90.3% of under-represented students (56:62) believe there is little to none, some, or unaware of racial conflict on campus.

COMFORT LEVEL AT TC3

- 78.5% of under-represented students (47:62) feel comfortable being around people of ethnic groups other than their own. 16.1% reported a neutral level of comfort in response to the statement.
- 56.4% of under-represented students (35:62) feel comfortable being the only person in a group where they are the only one of their ethnic group. 24.2% reported a neutral level of comfort in response to the statement.

ENVIRONMENT AT TC3

- 46.8% of under-represented students (29:62) believe TC3 has done a good job providing programs and activities that promote multicultural understanding. 38.7% reported a neutral perception in response to the statement.

Racial and Ethnic Climate at TC3

Responses varied according to their identity

Under-represented Students = ethnicity other than White / European Heritage

Majority Students = Ethnicity White / European Heritage

PERCENT/NUMBER OF STUDENTS 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	54.2	26	37.5	18	53.6	96	37.4	67
At TC3 getting to know people with racial/ethnic backgrounds different from my own has been easy.	68.8	33	18.8	9	59.2	106	25.1	45
My social interactions on this campus are largely confined to students of my race/ethnicity	31.2	15	20.8	10	29	52	25.7	46
At TC3 I feel there are positive expectations about my academic performance because of my race/ethnicity.	31.3	15	33.3	16	26.9	48	41.9	75
At TC3 I feel are negative expectations about my academic performance because of my race/ethnicity	27.1	13	18.8	9	4	7	23.5	42
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	22.9	11	25.1	12	10.6	19	8.9	16
My experiences since coming to TC3 have strengthened my own sense of ethnic identity.	64.6	31	31.3	15	58.7	105	34.6	62

COMFORT LEVELS AT TC3

Responses varied according to their identity

Under-represented Students = ethnicity other than White / European Heritage

Majority Students = Ethnicity White / European Heritage

PERCENT/NUMBER OF STUDENTS 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.	70.4	34	25	12	74.9	134	21.2	38
Participating in class.	83.4	40	16.7	8	78.2	140	15.1	27
Going to see a faculty member of a different race/ethnicity than my own.	72.9	30	25	12	83.2	149	14	25
Being in situations where I am the only person of my racial/ethnic group	58.4	28	25	12	53.6	96	27.4	49
Going to see a faculty member of my own race/ethnicity.	62.5	35	35.4	17	83.8	150	12.8	23
Saying what I think about racial/ethnic issues.	58.4	28	29.2	14	49.7	89	34.6	62
Being with people whose racial /ethnic backgrounds are different from my own.	81.2	39	16.7	8	83.2	150	14	25
Being with people whose racial ethnic backgrounds are the same as my own.	73	35	20.8	10	84.4	151	13.4	24

TREATMENT OF STUDENTS AT TC3

Responses varied according to their identity

Under-represented Students = ethnicity other than White / European Heritage

Majority Students = Ethnicity White / European Heritage

PERCENT/NUMBER OF STUDENTS 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	62.5	30	25	12	55.9	100	40.2	72
Residence Hall Personnel*	54.1	26	35.4	17	38.5	69	57	102
Faculty	97.9	47	2.1	1	98.9	177	0	0
Staff	89.6	43	4.2	2	97.2	174	1.7	3
Students	91.7	45	2.1	1	95.6	171	0	0

* Disparity between students who had contact with residence hall personnel

Comparative Responses 2010 v 2013

UNDERSTANDING OF RACIAL/ETHNIC DIFFERENCES

In 2010, 50.8% of student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their experiences since coming to TC3 has led them to become more *understanding of racial/ethnic differences*; 37.1% reported a neutral experience. Increasing slightly, in 2013, 53.3% of student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their experiences since coming to TC3 has led them to become more *understanding of racial/ethnic differences*; while 37.2% reported a neutral experience.

GETTING TO KNOW PEOPLE

In 2010, 59% of student respondents agreed or strongly that *getting to know people from different racial/ethnic* backgrounds has been easy at TC3; while 31% reported a neutral experience. Increasing slightly, in 2013, 61% of student respondents agreed or strongly agreed *that getting to know people from different racial/ethnic* backgrounds has been easy at TC3; while 24% reported a neutral experience.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

In 2010 and 2013 student respondents, “Describe the atmosphere at TC3 for people of differing sexual orientation (Bisexual, Gay, Heterosexual, lesbian, Transgender)”. Each year’s responses indicated that the atmosphere was most challenging for persons that identify as transgender. Respondents describe that the atmosphere was more hostile, socially separated, and uncomfortable for person who identified as being Transgender.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

In 2010, 61% of students believe TC3 has done a good job providing *programs and activities* that promote multicultural understanding. 35% reported a neutral perception in response to the statement. In 2013, the positive perception of the *programs and activities* provided by TC3 modestly increased to 64%.

COMFORT LEVEL

In 2010, 80% of under-represented students feel *comfortable or very comfortable* participating in class; 78% of majority students feel comfortable to very comfortable. In 2013, 83% of under-represented students feel *comfortable to very comfortable* while; 78% of majority students feel comfortable to very comfortable.

DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSEMENT

In 2010, 14% of students anonymously surveyed reported that they have encountered *discrimination or harassment* at TC3. In 2013, a slight decrease is noted, as 11%, students anonymously surveyed reported that they have encountered *discrimination or harassment* at TC3.

COMMENTS OR CONCERNS

- I don't see racial differences as a problem at TC3. I'm not sure if it's because I don't choose to pay attention to it or if discrimination doesn't occur as much as people think it does.
- I think this school has a great deal of racial diversity and I feel comfortable being on campus no matter what time of day it is. However, I believe that because a great deal of the students come from New York City or around this area, racial segregation happens naturally because people are either friends or know other students because of the similar area they are from or because these students tend to group themselves together because that is how it is like in the city. I also believe that students from the upstate region are more sheltered in that they are not open to experiencing all different types of people as are the students from around the NYC area, so when they see groups of people from this area they tend to be a lot more judgmental.
- I feel like the discrimination is not that high from what I have experienced and seen since coming to TC3. I feel like for the most part everyone seems to respect each other
- The Residence Halls are very culturally segregated and there is nothing being done about it.
- I'd encourage more clubs/activities that educate the community about diversity.
- A lot of the separation stems from the regional identities of students, and to a lesser degree their racial identity. City and country doesn't mix as well as two different races from the same background.

- I tend to believe that there is a great community feeling here at TC3 and once in a while there can be differences among people and it can get hostile, but it's not an everyday thing due to race/ethnicity. I really love TC3 and I didn't come here because it was diverse, I came because of the program and the distance but I have become to love the diversity and it has taught me SO many things about other people/races/genders/orientations that I didn't know before. The faculty/staff are all AMAZING and I have only had one incident with a faculty member that I wasn't impressed with, other than that TC3 gets 10 out of 10 from me!
- TC3 fosters a very welcoming atmosphere to people from all walks of life.
- TC3 does a good job pushing for successful diversification, not all students reciprocate though. Some of my best friends here are gay, or black, or Spanish. The diverse body is pretty good, but some a lot of students just don't care and it makes intense rifts in population.
- TC3 is a melting pot. Great diversity and awesome people!
- The diversity in the Communications department was a drastic increase from other programs of previous study at TC3. The faculty is extremely sensitive and very inclusive when it comes to ethnicity and sexual orientation. Their curriculum covers many aspects of diversity. It is truly impressive.
- Being a part of the GSA at TC3, I have heard some stories about homosexual discrimination within the classroom where usually the teachers does nothing. However, other than the few stories, I do believe that the cultural attitudes at TC3 are welcoming. I also went to the International Woman's Day Conference and it was excellent! I hope there are more programs similar to that one.

- I have noticed more division based on geographical homes being different i.e. city vs country
- It seems to me that you are looking too hard into an issue that does not exist. I understand that there is a level of political correctness that must be maintained, and on that level the school does fine. However, forcing groups that don't normally interact to interact does not work. Individuals associate with others that they can identify with. This is not a bad thing, it is simply human nature. On a personal level I do not have a problem with any other ethnic group. I can get along with blacks, whites, Hispanics, and people of different sexual orientation. If I don't like someone it is for a reason other than that, but I am never mean or put down that person for any reason. I keep my feelings to myself and I have never seen any students or staff members act inappropriately to a student (or anyone) for any reason, let alone because of the group that they "belong to".
- It's 2013 and for some asinine reason racism is still alive and well.
- Diversity related courses should be required for all students.
- TC3 has such a welcoming atmosphere. This is a school where educators truly care about students and it is reflected in every aspect of the college.