



Student Campus Climate Assessment

Summary Report for the University at Buffalo

September 2019

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Executive Summary

This report contains the results of a campus climate survey of students conducted at the University at Buffalo in partnership with Skyfactor. The survey was topically focused to measure climate related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This assessment is part of a broader project to assess and improve campus climate at the University at Buffalo.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument used for this project was a customized version of Skyfactor's Student Campus Climate, Safety, and Sexual Assault Assessment. The national version of the assessment addresses various aspects of campus climate and safety, including but not limited to perceptions of the institution, interactions with campus populations, campus safety, campus accessibility, diversity, and knowledge of and training on resources related to sexual assault. Skyfactor worked with staff at the University at Buffalo to tailor the survey to the specific needs of the campus climate project. The student campus climate assessment used for this project included a total of 117 questions.

Survey Administration

The University at Buffalo Student Campus Climate Assessment was administered at the University at Buffalo from March 11, 2019 to April 12, 2019, using Skyfactor's online data collection software. The survey was sent to all University at Buffalo students, including undergraduate and graduate students. Invitations to participate were sent via email to 26,950 students. In total, 1,940 students responded to the survey, with a response rate of 7%.

Key Findings

Finding 1: Students rated Personal Attitudes and Behaviors, Campus Accessibility, and Visibility highest.

- More than eight out of ten respondents strongly agreed that they are comfortable interacting with students from diverse backgrounds.
- Three-quarters of respondents strongly agreed that they can easily access classrooms.
- Nearly 80% of respondents strongly agreed that University at Buffalo has students from diverse backgrounds.

Finding 2: Students rated Perceptions of the Administration, Perceptions of Peers, and Administrative Policies lowest.

- Forty-three percent of respondents strongly agreed that administrators respect what students think.
- Just under half of respondents strongly agreed that students at the University at Buffalo are willing to talk about group difference.
- About half of respondents strongly agreed that University at Buffalo is doing enough to prevent discrimination related to socioeconomic status.

Finding 3: Perceptions of campus climate varied across subpopulations.

Introduction and Background

This report contains the results of a student campus climate assessment administered by the University at Buffalo in partnership with Skyfactor. This assessment is part of a broader long-term project to assess and improve the campus climate at the University at Buffalo (UB).

Project Overview

In 2018, the University at Buffalo began a project to assess the climate for their entire campus community with a topical focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Information gathered through this project is intended to inform the University at Buffalo of not only overall strengths and weaknesses, but also how perspectives of campus climate differ across key populations, thus informing efforts to improve the overall campus climate.

The University at Buffalo partnered with Skyfactor, a Macmillan Learning company, to design and administer a campus climate assessment. Skyfactor has served higher education for over 20 years. Skyfactor's products and services empower colleges and universities to positively impact student development, learning, retention, and satisfaction through 50+ national benchmarking assessments, including offering campus climate assessments. Skyfactor has provided national assessments to over 1,600 institutions and surveyed over 42 million students.

Survey Instrument

The national version of Skyfactor's Student Campus Climate, Safety, and Sexual Assault Assessment addresses various aspects of campus climate and safety, including but not limited to: perceptions of the institution; interactions with campus populations (administrators, faculty, staff, and students); campus safety; campus accessibility; diversity; and policies, procedures, resources, and training related to sexual assault.

The national survey also contains survey factors. Factors are a set of survey questions that measure a broader construct. For instance, the factor on Overall Satisfaction contains a set of survey questions asking respondents how satisfied they were with their overall experience at the institution and whether they feel like they belong at the institution.

Skyfactor worked with staff at the University at Buffalo to customize the survey to better address the specific needs of the campus climate project. Customizations included, but were not limited to: additional questions and sections, removal of questions and sections, and minor modifications of question language to fit the University at Buffalo population and context, including a focus on sexual violence in place of sexual assault.

The University at Buffalo Student Campus Climate Assessment contained a total of 117 questions, including ten categorical questions (demographic/profile questions), four open-ended questions, and 103 scaled questions. Respondents used seven-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 - Strongly Disagree to 7 - Strongly Agree.

Survey Administration

The student climate assessment was administered at the University at Buffalo from March 11, 2019 to April 12, 2019, using Skyfactor's online data collection software. The survey was sent to all University at Buffalo students, including undergraduate and graduate students. Invitations to participate were sent via email to 26,950 students. In total, 1,940 students responded to the survey, with a response rate of 7%.

Survey Results

The following report is divided into three sections:

- **Respondent Characteristics**, which compares the distribution of survey respondents to the University at Buffalo population across categorical questions
- **Overall Findings**, which displays mean factor scores and breaks down results of individual survey questions organized by section name
- **Overall Results by Respondent Characteristics**, which compares mean factor scores of survey respondents based on responses to various categorical questions

Respondent Characteristics

This section compares the distribution of those who responded to the survey to that of all employees at the University at Buffalo (UB) across a range of personal and academic characteristics. Some demographic data on all students was provided by UB, along for

Personal Characteristics

Table 1 compares the distribution of respondents to that of all UB students across four personal characteristics: gender, race/ethnicity, age, and international student status.

There were statistically-significant differences between the distribution of respondents and all UB students for gender, race/ethnicity, and age. For example, respondents were 52.7% female, compared to 44.3% of UB students.

Table 1: Personal Demographics

	Respondents	UB Students
<i>Percentages</i>		
Gender *		
Female	52.7	44.3
Male	47.3	55.7
Race/Ethnicity *		
American Indian/Alaska Native/First Nation	0.1	0.3
Asian	15.4	16.8
Black or African American	7.2	8.7
Hispanic (regardless of race)	6.5	7.5
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.0	0.0
White	60.5	57.6
Two or more races	2.7	2.5
Race and Ethnicity Unknown	7.5	6.5
Age *		
20 years old or younger	36.1	28.4
21 to 30 years old	41.8	51.2
31 to 40 years old	12.3	13.0
41 to 50 years old	6.6	5.7
51 to 60 years old	2.1	1.2
More than 60 years old	1.0	0.5
International Student		
No	85.1	85.1
Yes	14.9	14.9

* Indicates difference between respondents and populations is statistically-significant, $p < 0.05$

Academic Characteristics

Table 2 compares the distribution of respondents to that of all UB students across academic-related characteristics.

There were statistically-significant differences between the distribution of respondents and all UB students for three items. For example, respondents were 20.6% transfer students, compared to 23% of UB students.

Table 2: Academic Characteristics

	Respondents	UB Students
	<i>Percentages</i>	
Class Standing *		
Freshman	12.4	12.2
Sophomore	23.0	15.7
Junior	16.1	17.0
Senior	18.4	24.5
Graduate/professional student	29.2	29.7
Non-degree or other	1.0	1.0
Transfer Status *		
No	79.4	77.0
Yes	20.6	23.0
Cumulative GPA *		
Below 2.00	4.7	5.3
2.00 to 2.49	7.5	9.7
2.50 to 2.99	15.8	17.6
3.00 to 3.49	23.0	25.1
3.50 or above	43.4	35.6
Unsure	5.5	6.7

* Indicates difference between respondents and populations is statistically-significant, $p < 0.05$

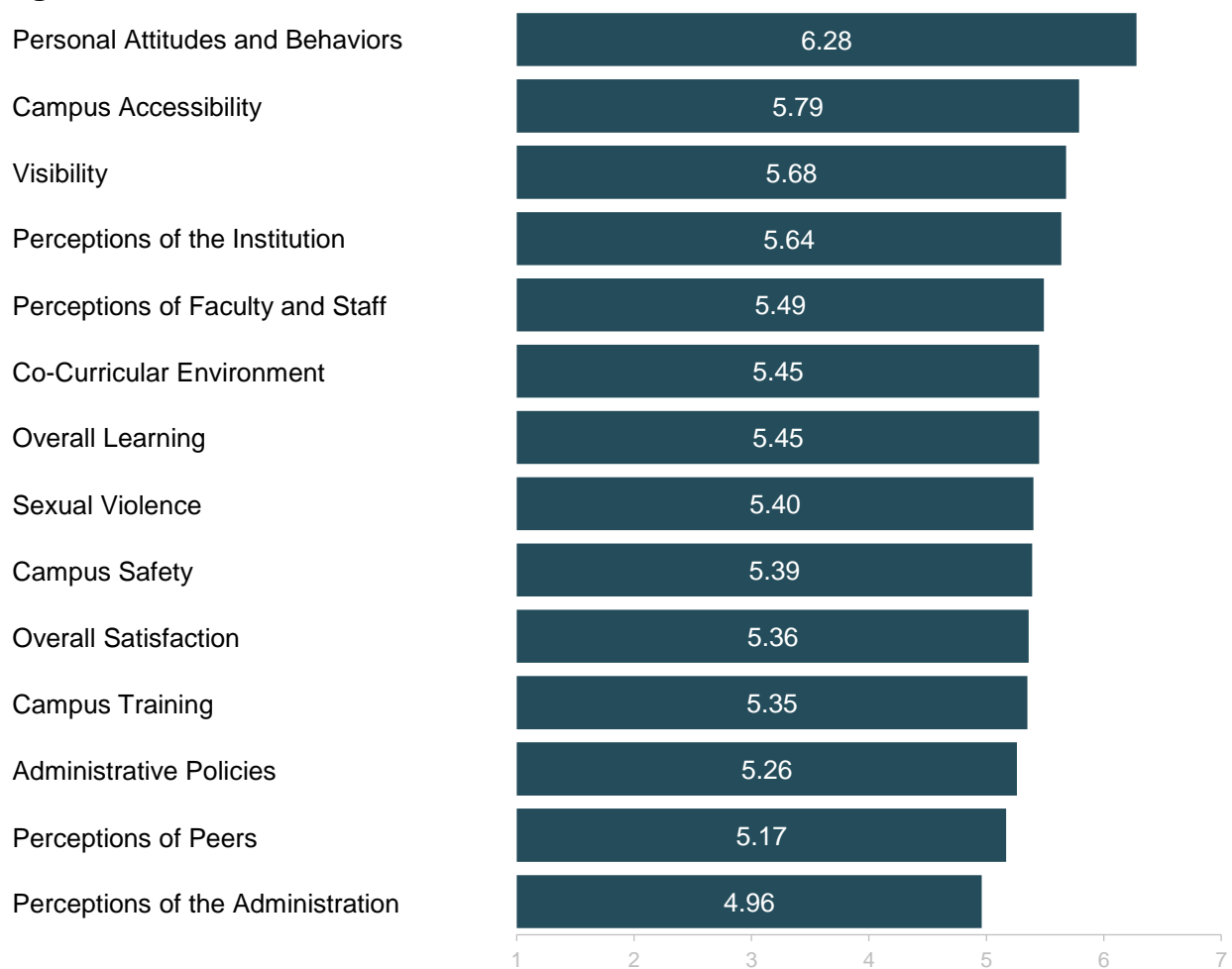
Detailed Findings

Factor Means

Factors are a set of questions that measure a broader construct. For example, the Perceptions of Peers factor has three survey questions which assess the degree to which students at UB are willing to discuss group differences, encourage free and open discussion about difficult or controversial topics, and are open-minded when it comes to sharing different ideas and beliefs.

Figure 1 displays the mean factor scores. Respondents used seven-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 -Strongly Disagree to 7-Strongly Agree. The factor with the highest mean score was Personal Attitudes and Behaviors. The factor with the lowest mean score was Perceptions of the Administration.

Figure 1: Factor Means



Question Responses

This section presents a breakdown of question responses. Responses were grouped into three categories:

- Respondents who selected 1 or 2, labeled as Strongly Disagree
- Respondents who selected 3, 4, or 5, labeled as Neutral
- Respondents who selected 6 or 7, labeled as Strongly Agree

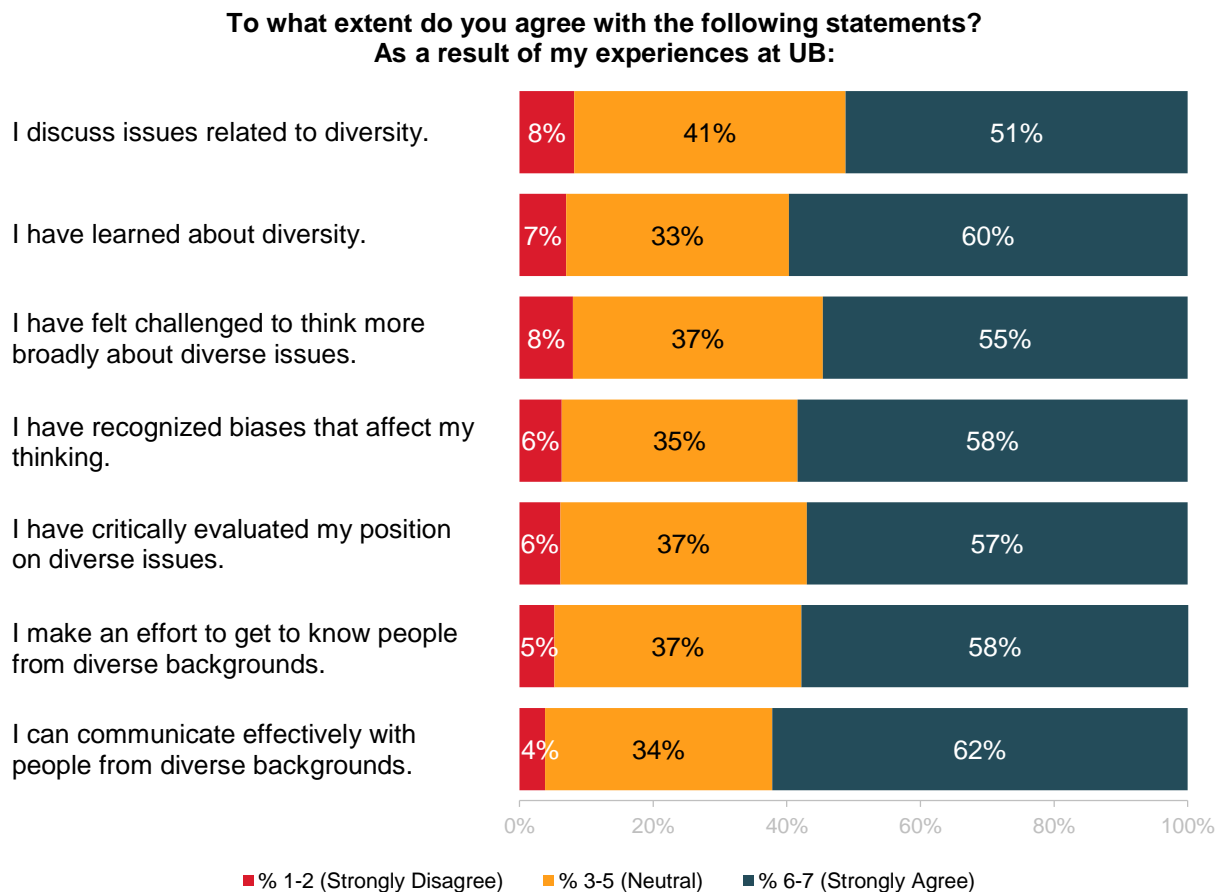
Questions within each figure are displayed in the order they appeared in the survey. The total question percentages may sum to more or less than 100% due to rounding.

Overall Learning

The Overall Learning factor contained seven questions focusing on broad learning outcomes related to diversity. The mean factor score was 5.45. Figure 2 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Sixty-two percent of respondents strongly agreed that they can communicate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Just over half of respondents strongly agreed that they discuss issues related to diversity.

Figure 2: Overall Learning

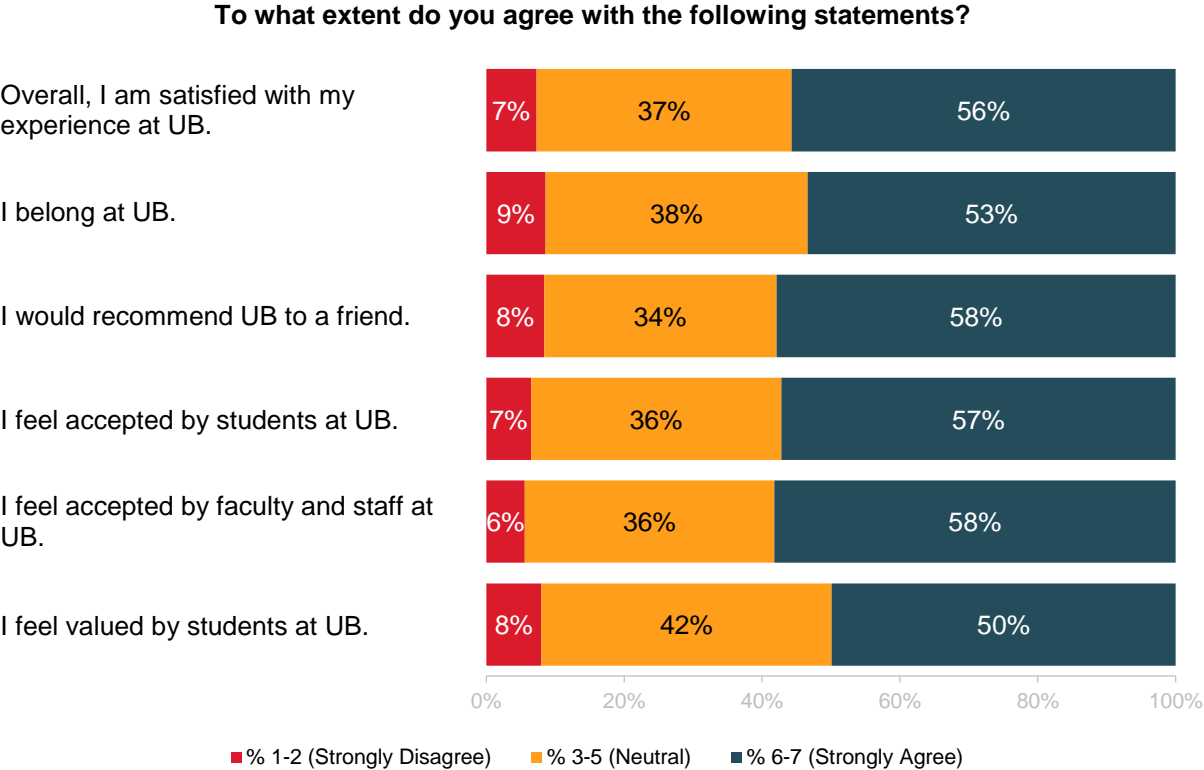


Overall Satisfaction

The Overall Satisfaction factor contained six questions focusing on student satisfaction with their overall experience at UB. The mean factor score was 5.36. Figure 3 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Fifty-eight percent of respondents strongly agreed that they would recommend UB to a friend.
- Half of respondents strongly agreed that they feel valued by students at UB.

Figure 3: Overall Satisfaction

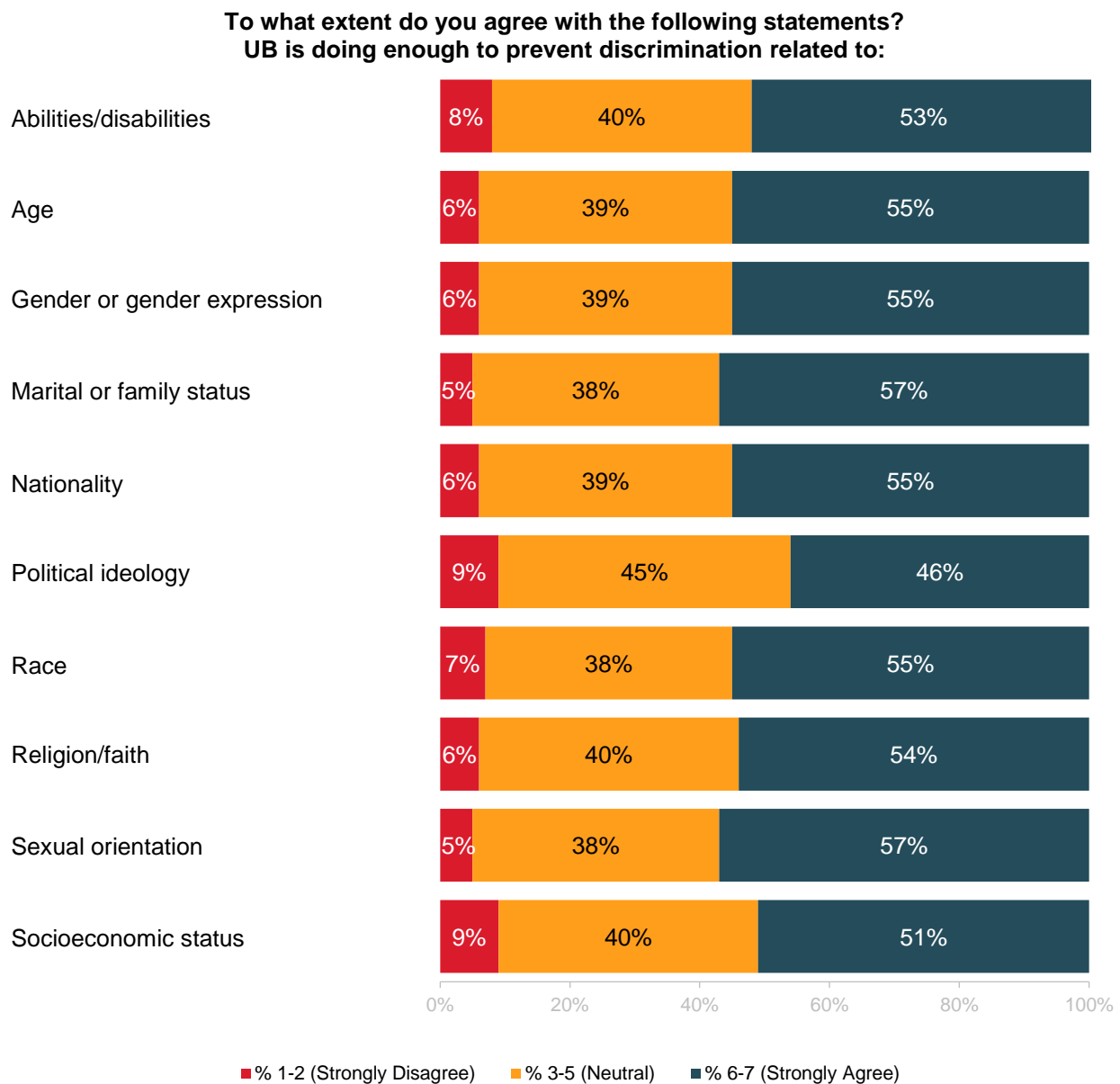


Administrative Policies

The Administrative Policies factor contained ten questions asking if UB was doing enough to prevent discrimination based on a variety of areas. The mean factor score was 5.26. Figure 4 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Fifty-seven percent of respondents strongly agreed that UB is doing enough to prevent discrimination related to sexual orientation.
- Forty-six percent of respondents strongly agreed that UB is doing enough to prevent discrimination related to political ideology.

Figure 4: Administrative Policies

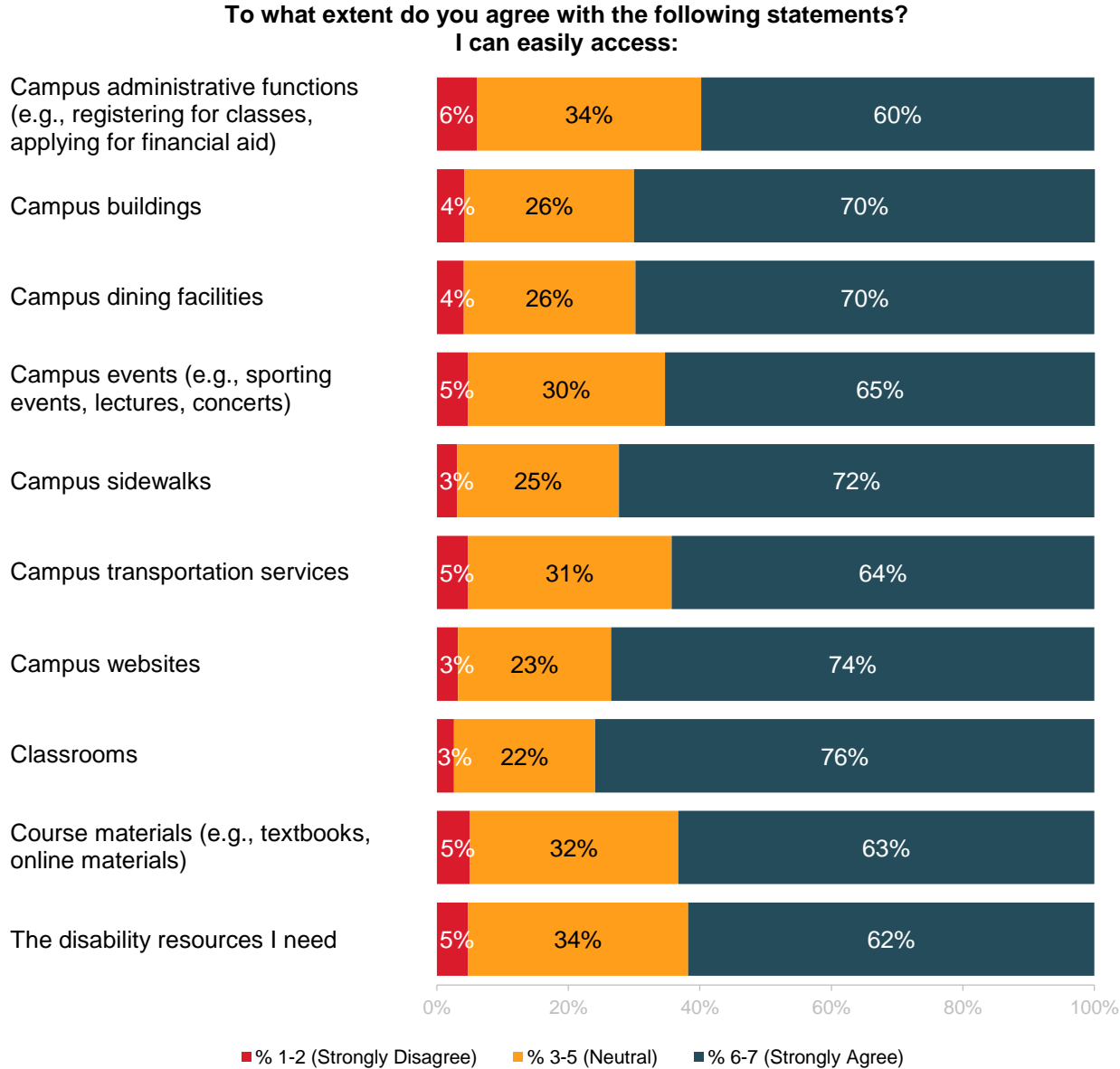


Campus Accessibility

The Campus Accessibility factor contained ten questions asking if respondents could easily access a range of spaces, facilities, and resources on campus. The mean factor score was 5.79. Figure 5 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Just over three-fourths of respondents strongly agreed that I can easily access classrooms.
- Six out of ten respondents strongly agreed that I can easily access campus administrative functions (e.g., registering for classes, applying for financial aid).

Figure 5: Campus Accessibility

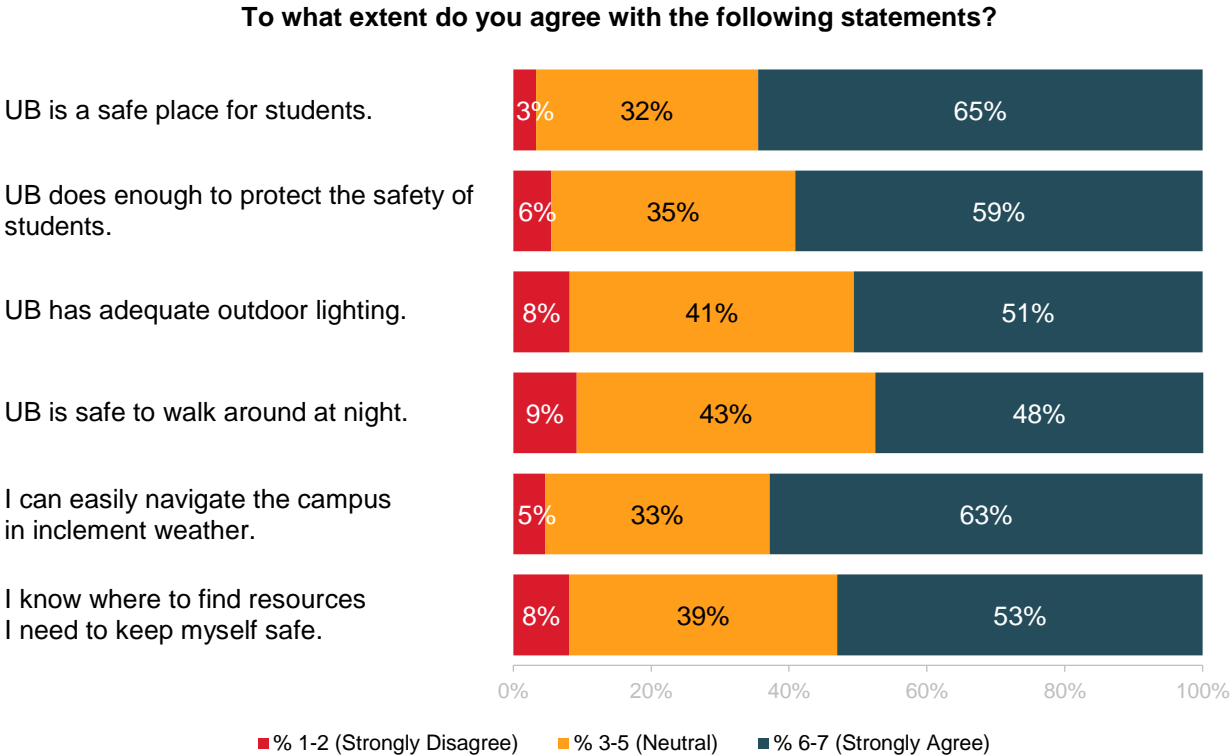


Campus Safety

The Campus Safety factor contained six questions focusing on students’ perceptions of safety on campus. The mean factor score was 5.39. Figure 6 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Nearly two-thirds of respondents strongly agreed that UB is a safe place for students.
- Just under half of respondents strongly agreed that UB is safe to walk around at night.

Figure 6: Campus Safety



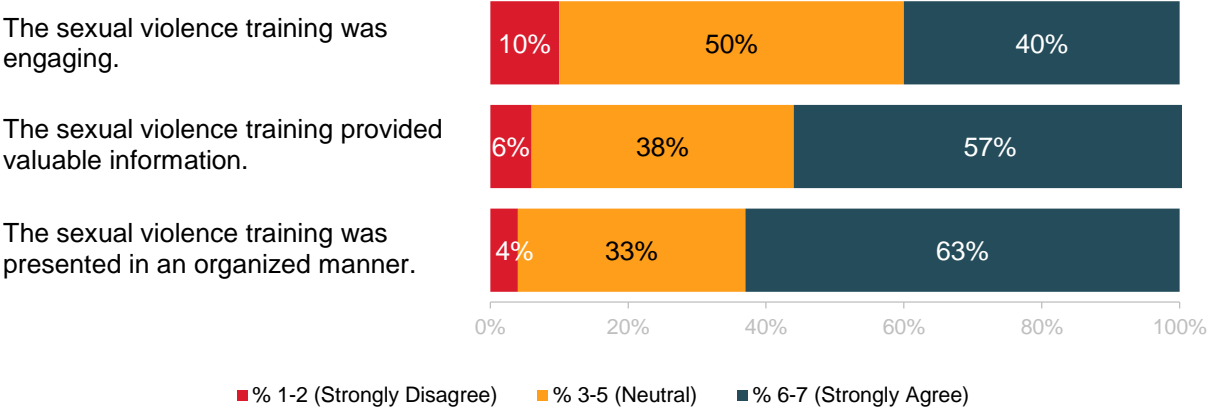
Campus Training

The Campus Training factor contained three questions focusing on perceptions of training related to awareness and prevention of sexual violence. These questions were in a branch, so only those students who indicated they participated in training answered these questions. The mean factor score was 5.35. Figure 7 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Nearly two-thirds of respondents strongly agreed that the sexual violence training was presented in an organized manner.
- Forty percent of respondents strongly agreed that the sexual violence training was engaging.

Figure 7: Campus Training

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

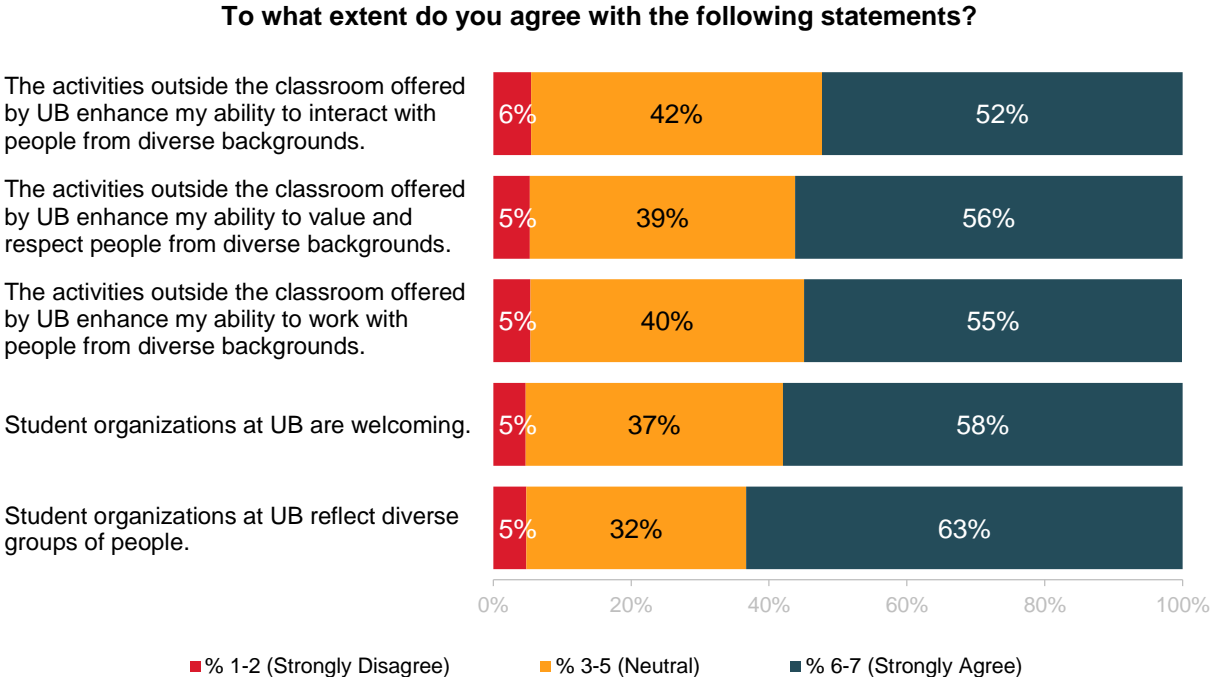


Co-Curricular Environment

The Co-Curricular Environment section contained five questions focusing on student perceptions of activities and organizations outside the classroom. The mean factor score was 5.45. Figure 8 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Sixty-three percent of respondents strongly agreed that student organizations at UB reflect diverse groups of people.
- Just over half of respondents strongly agreed that activities outside the classroom offered by UB enhance my ability to interact with people from diverse backgrounds.

Figure 8: Co-Curricular Environment

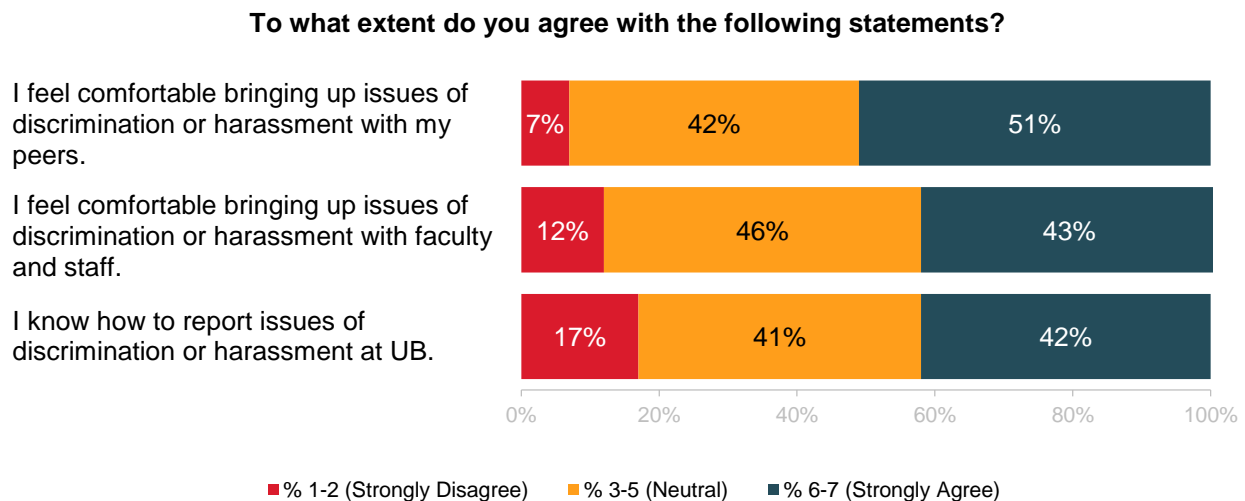


Discrimination and Harassment

The Discrimination and Harassment section contained three questions focusing on knowledge of and comfort with discussing discrimination and harassment issues. The mean score of the questions in this section was 4.94. Figure 9 displays the grouped responses to each question in this section.

- Just over half of respondents strongly agreed that they know how to report issues of discrimination or harassment at UB.
- Forty-two percent of respondents strongly agreed that they know how to report issues of discrimination or harassment at UB.

Figure 9: Discrimination and Harassment



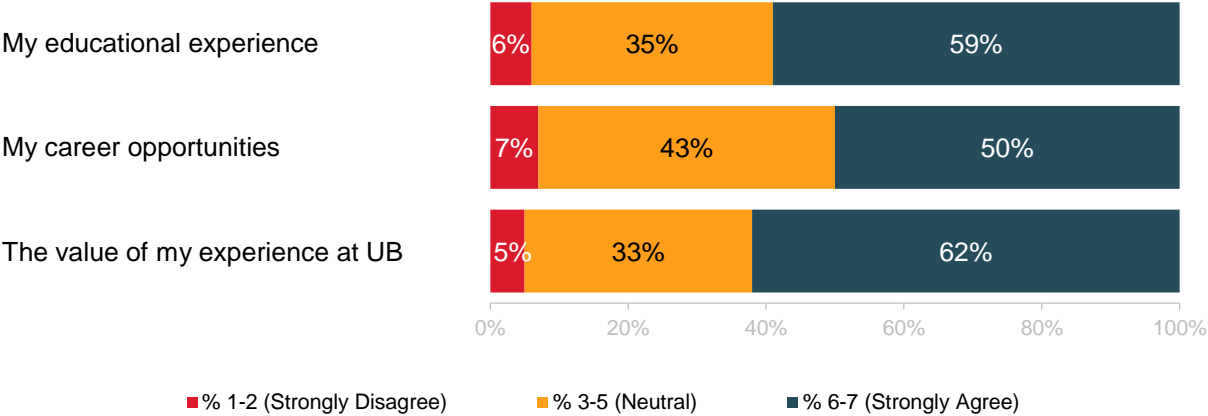
Global Diversity

The Global Diversity section consisted of three questions focusing on the value associated with diversity at UB. The mean score of the questions in this section was 5.44. Figure 10 displays the grouped responses to each question in this section.

- Sixty-two percent of respondents strongly agreed that UB’s global diversity enhances the value of their experience at UB.
- Half of respondents strongly agreed that UB’s global diversity enhances their career opportunities.

Figure 10: Global Diversity

To what extent do you agree that UB's global diversity (i.e., having students and staff from different countries or cultures) enhances:

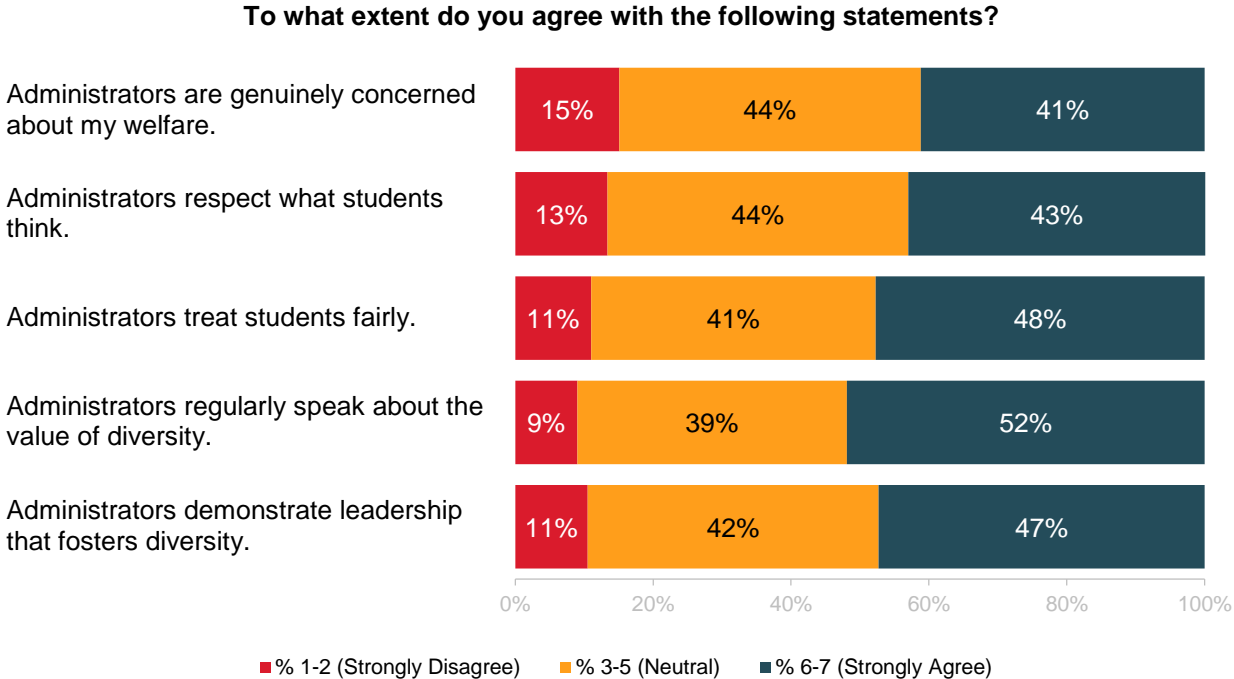


Perceptions of the Administration

The Perceptions of the Administration factor contained five questions focusing on perceptions of administrators at UB. The mean factor score was 4.96. Figure 11 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Slightly more than half of respondents strongly agreed that administrators regularly speak about the value of diversity.
- Forty-one of respondents strongly agreed that administrators are genuinely concerned about their welfare.

Figure 11: Perceptions of the Administration

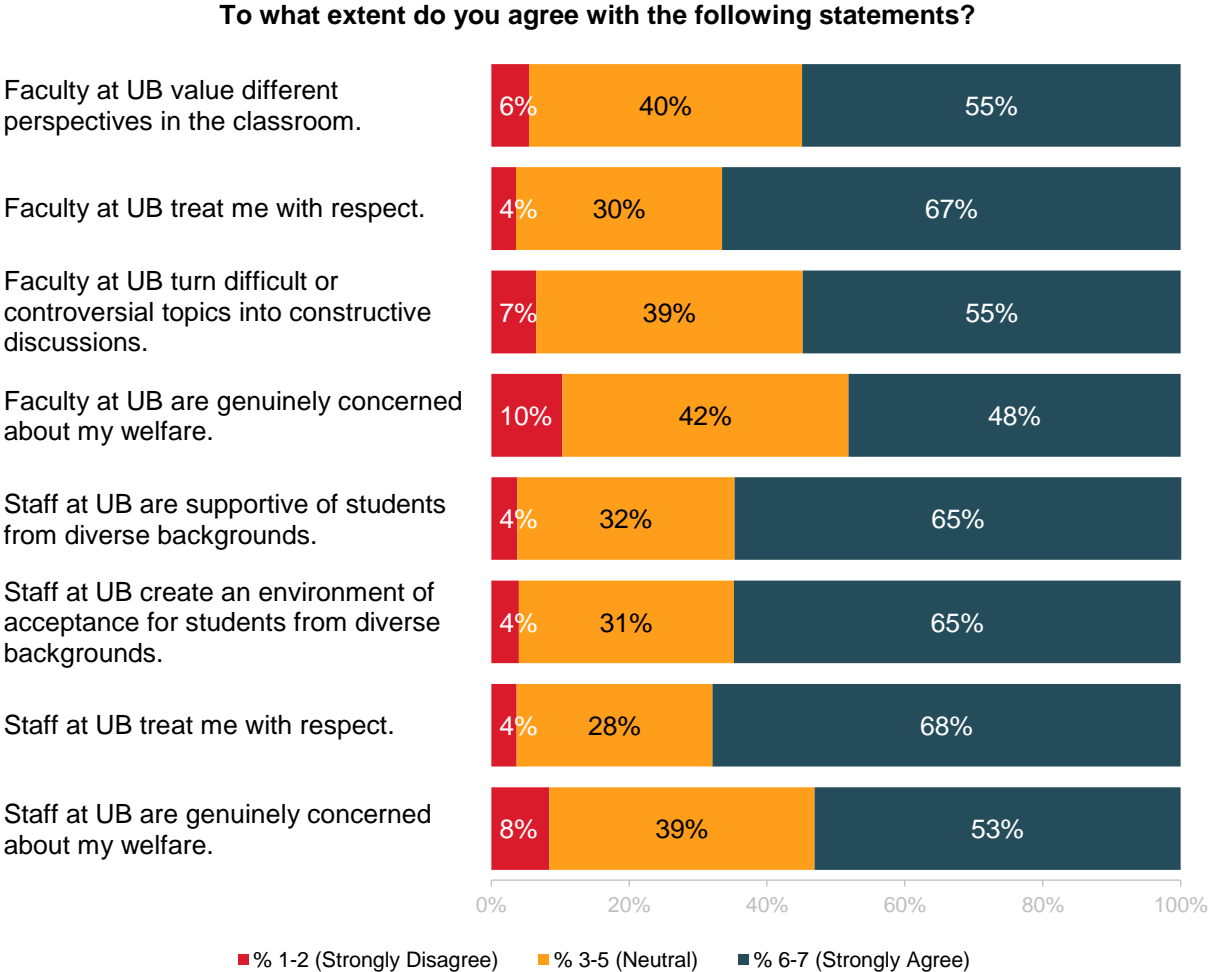


Perceptions of Faculty and Staff

The Perceptions of the Faculty and Staff factor contained eight questions focusing on general perceptions of faculty and staff at UB. The mean factor score was 5.49. Figure 12 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Nearly seven in ten respondents strongly agreed that staff at UB treat them with respect.
- Just under half of respondents strongly agreed that faculty at UB are genuinely concerned about their welfare.

Figure 12: Perceptions of Faculty and Staff

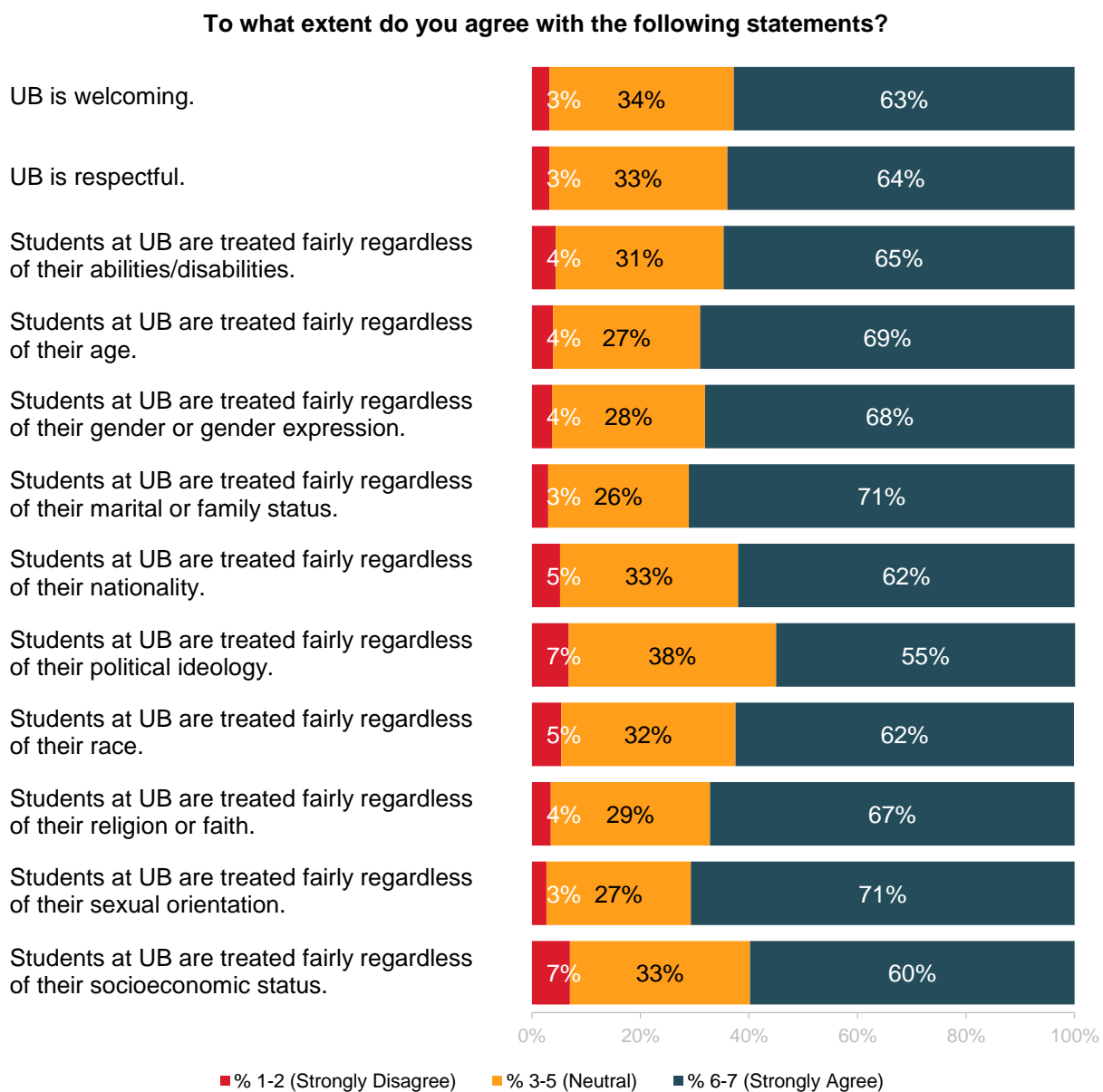


Perceptions of the Institution

The Perceptions of the Institution factor contained twelve questions focusing broadly on general perceptions of the University at Buffalo. The mean factor score was 5.64. Figure 13 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- More than seven out of ten respondents strongly agreed that students at UB are treated fairly regardless of their marital or family status.
- Fifty-five percent of respondents strongly agreed that students at UB are treated fairly regardless of their political ideology.

Figure 13: Perceptions of the Institution

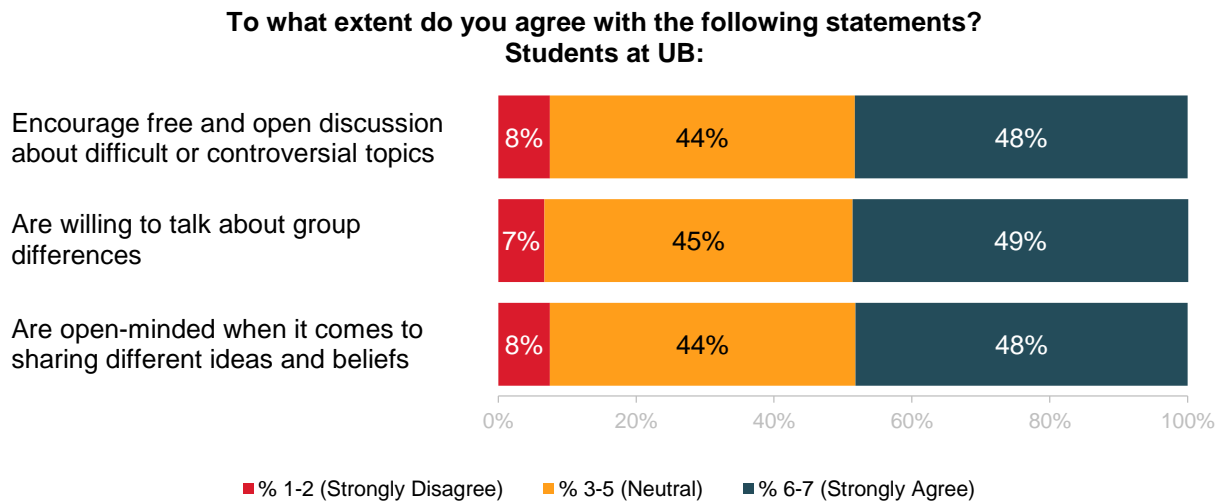


Perceptions of Peers

The Perceptions of Peers factor contained three questions focusing broadly on general perceptions of other students. The mean factor score was 5.17. Figure 14 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Forty-nine percent of respondents strongly agreed that students at UB are willing to talk about group differences.
- Forty-eight percent of respondents strongly agreed that students at UB are open-minded when it comes to sharing different ideas and beliefs.

Figure 14: Perceptions of Peers

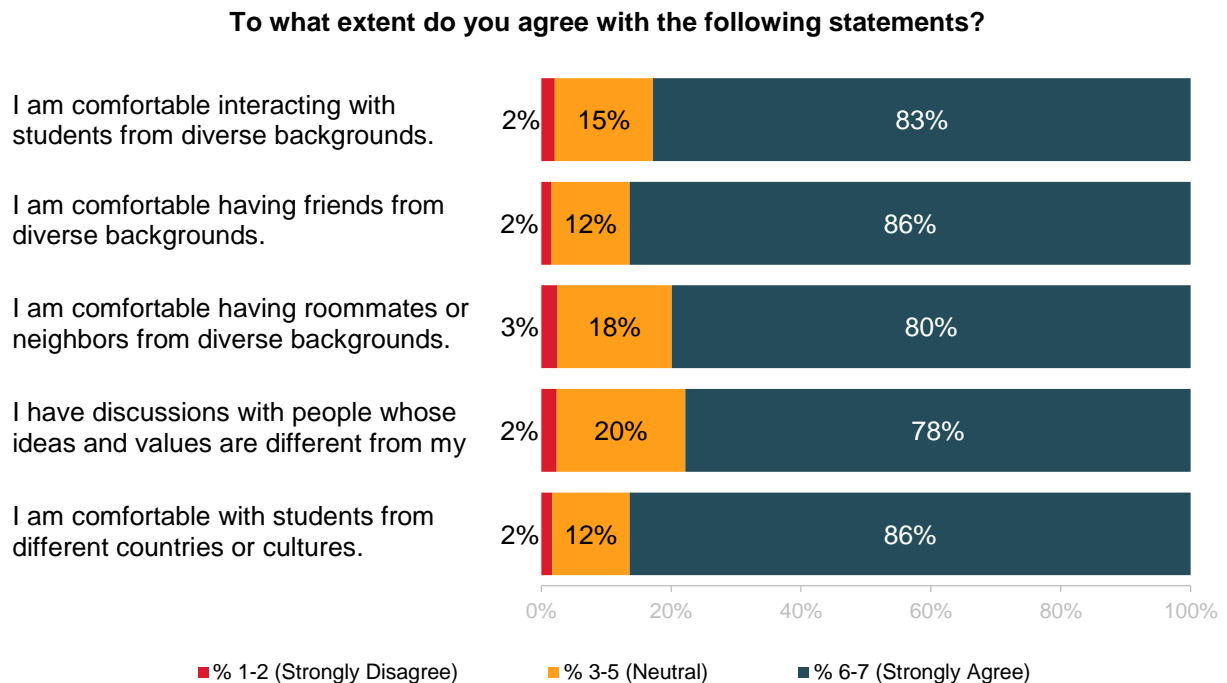


Personal Attitudes and Behaviors

The Personal Attitudes and Behaviors factor contained five questions on respondents' comfort with and engagement in interactions with individuals different from themselves. The mean factor score was 6.28. Figure 15 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Eighty-six percent of respondents strongly agreed that they are comfortable with students from different countries or cultures.
- Nearly eight out of ten respondents strongly agreed that they have discussions with people whose ideas and values are different from their own.

Figure 15: Personal Attitudes and Behaviors



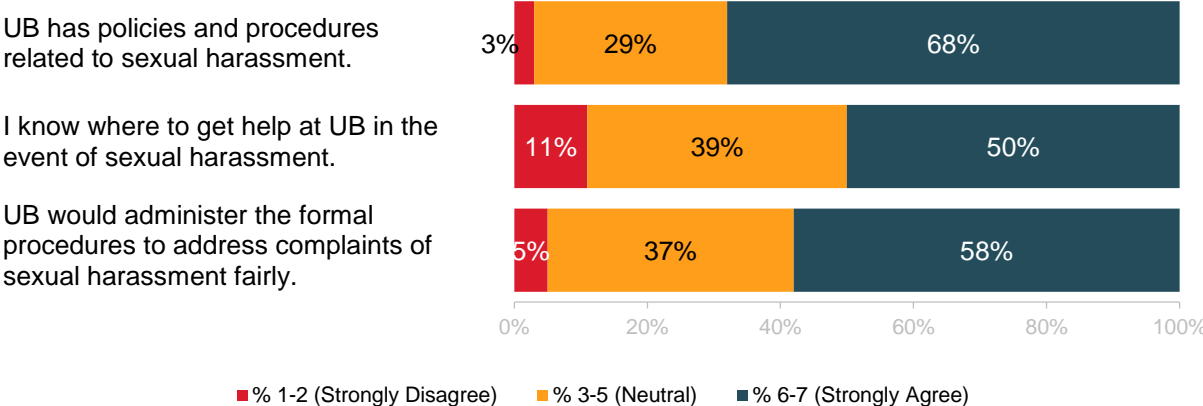
Sexual Harassment

The Sexual Harassment section contained three questions focusing on issues related to sexual harassment at UB. The opening to this section defined sexual harassment as “unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that is severe, pervasive or persistent enough to create a hostile or intimidating work or educational environment.” The mean score of the questions in this section was 5.46. Figure 16 displays the grouped responses to each question in this section.

- Sixty-eight percent of respondents strongly agreed that UB has policies and procedures related to sexual harassment.
- Half of respondents strongly agreed that they knew where to get help at UB in the event of sexual harassment.

Figure 16: Sexual Harassment

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



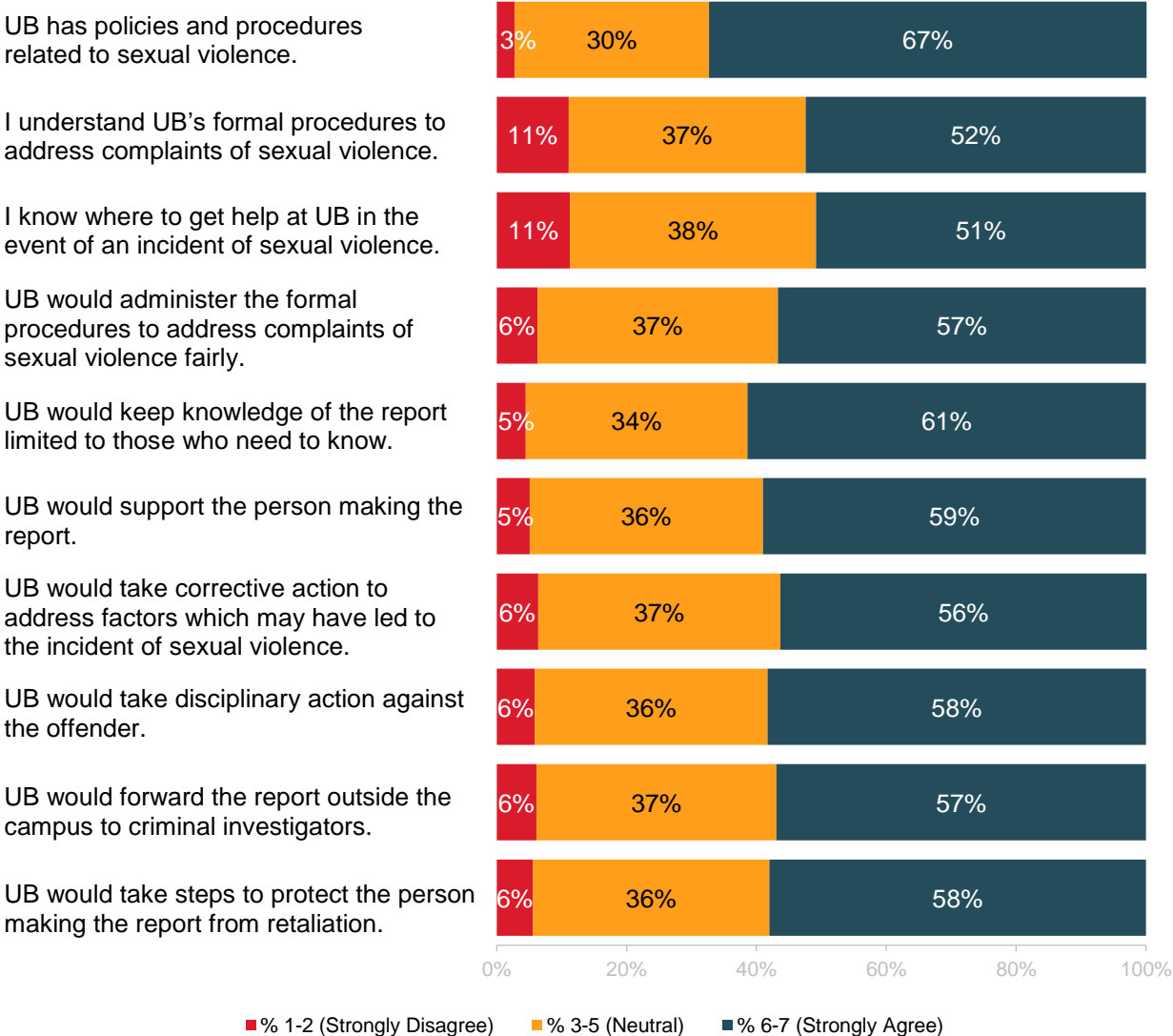
Sexual Violence

The Sexual Violence factor contained ten questions asking about students’ knowledge of resources and their perceptions of how UB would handle incidents of sexual violence. The opening of this section defined sexual violence as “physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person’s will or where a person is incapable of giving consent, including, but not limited to rape, sexual battery, and sexual coercion.” The mean factor score was 5.40. Figure 17 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Two-thirds of respondents strongly agreed that UB has policies and procedures related to sexual violence.
- Just over half of respondents strongly agreed that they know where to get help at UB in the event of an incident of sexual violence.

Figure 17: Sexual Violence

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

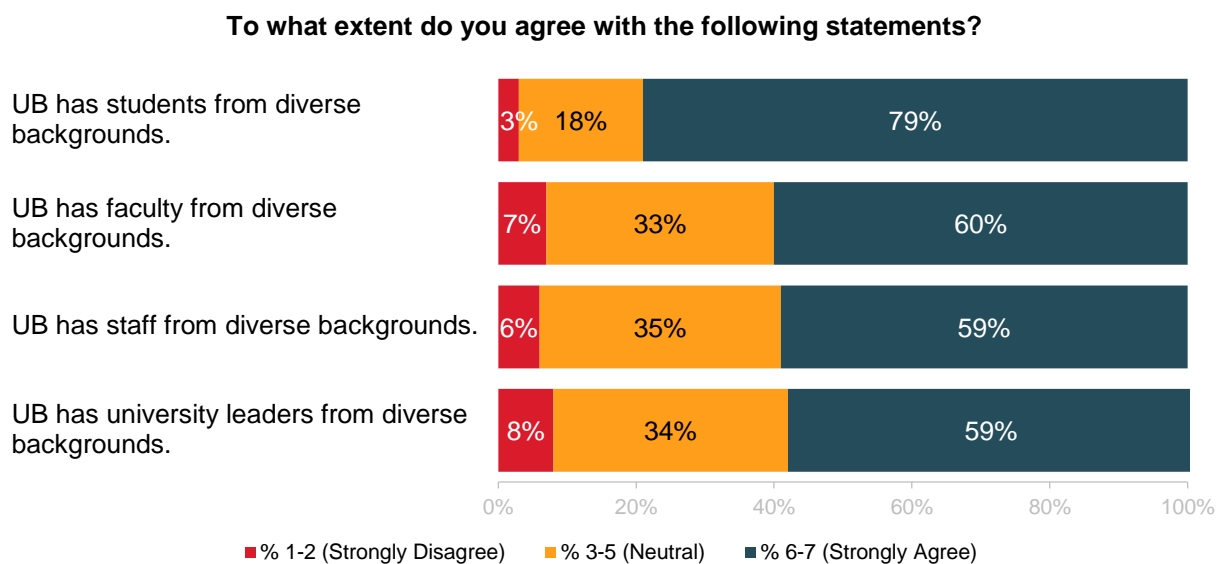


Visibility

The Visibility factor contained four questions focusing on the degree to which the UB community includes people from diverse backgrounds in various university roles. The section defined the phrase “diverse backgrounds” as “individuals who are diverse from you based on race, gender, nationality, sexuality, abilities/disabilities, or beliefs.” The mean factor score was 5.68. Figure 18 displays the grouped responses to each question in this factor.

- Nearly eight in ten respondents strongly agreed that UB has students from diverse backgrounds.
- Just under 60% of respondents strongly agreed that UB has staff from diverse backgrounds.

Figure 18: Visibility



Overall Results by Respondent Characteristics

This section compares mean factor scores of survey respondents based on the following categories:

- Class Standing
- Gender
- International Students
- Race/Ethnicity
- Residence
- Sexual Orientation

Class Standing

Table 3 compares mean factor scores based on class standing. Undergraduate students rated six factors higher than graduate students: Administrative Policies, Campus Safety, Co-Curricular Environment, Perceptions of the Administration, Perceptions of Peers, and Visibility. Graduate students rated two factors higher than undergraduate students: Overall Learning and Personal Attitudes and Behaviors.

Table 3: Mean Factor Scores by Class Standing

	Graduate	Undergraduate
	<i>N = 567</i>	<i>N = 1,354</i>
Overall Learning *	5.62	5.39
Overall Satisfaction	5.34	5.37
Administrative Policies *	5.07	5.33
Campus Accessibility	5.79	5.79
Campus Safety *	5.29	5.43
Campus Training	5.31	5.37
Co-Curricular Environment *	5.29	5.51
Perceptions of the Administration *	4.79	5.02
Perceptions of Faculty and Staff	5.50	5.49
Perceptions of the Institution	5.58	5.67
Perceptions of Peers *	5.01	5.24
Personal Attitudes and Behaviors *	6.35	6.25
Sexual Violence	5.34	5.42
Visibility *	5.42	5.79

* Indicates difference between groups is statistically-significant, $p < 0.05$

Gender

Table 4 compares mean factor scores based on gender. Males rated four factors higher than females: Administrative Policies, Campus Safety, Sexual Violence, and Visibility. Females rated three factors higher than males: Overall Learning, Personal Attitudes and Behaviors, and Perceptions of Peers.

Table 4: Mean Factor Scores by Gender

	Female	Male
	<i>N</i> = 1,023	<i>N</i> = 917
Overall Learning *	5.60	5.28
Overall Satisfaction	5.35	5.38
Administrative Policies *	5.14	5.39
Campus Accessibility	5.81	5.75
Campus Safety *	5.21	5.59
Campus Training	5.36	5.33
Co-Curricular Environment	5.49	5.39
Perceptions of the Administration	4.96	4.95
Perceptions of Faculty and Staff	5.53	5.45
Perceptions of the Institution	5.62	5.67
Perceptions of Peers *	5.26	5.06
Personal Attitudes and Behaviors *	6.36	6.18
Sexual Violence *	5.24	5.57
Visibility *	5.60	5.77

* Indicates difference between groups is statistically-significant, $p < 0.05$

International Students

Table 5 compares mean factor scores based on responses to the question “Are you an international student?” International students rated seven factors higher than students from the United States. Students from the United States rated one factor, Personal Attitudes and Behaviors, higher than international students.

Table 5: Mean Factor Scores by International Students

	International	U.S.
	<i>N</i> = 289	<i>N</i> = 1,651
Overall Learning	5.59	5.42
Overall Satisfaction	5.43	5.35
Administrative Policies *	5.53	5.21
Campus Accessibility	5.84	5.78
Campus Safety *	5.62	5.35
Campus Training *	5.65	5.29
Co-Curricular Environment	5.41	5.45
Perceptions of the Administration *	5.41	4.88
Perceptions of Faculty and Staff *	5.65	5.47
Perceptions of the Institution	5.76	5.62
Perceptions of Peers *	5.40	5.13
Personal Attitudes and Behaviors *	6.01	6.32
Sexual Violence *	5.81	5.32
Visibility	5.68	5.68

* Indicates difference between groups is statistically-significant, $p < 0.05$

Residence

Table 6 compares mean factor scores based on responses to the question “What is your place of residence?” Students living on-campus rated six factors higher than students living off-campus: Overall Satisfaction, Administrative Policies, Campus Accessibility, Perceptions of Administration, Perceptions of the Institution, and Sexual Violence.

Table 6: Mean Factor Scores by Residence

	Off-Campus	On-Campus
	<i>N = 1,141</i>	<i>N = 677</i>
Overall Learning	5.44	5.51
Overall Satisfaction *	5.32	5.47
Administrative Policies *	5.22	5.36
Campus Accessibility *	5.74	5.88
Campus Safety	5.38	5.45
Campus Training	5.34	5.45
Co-Curricular Environment	5.42	5.54
Perceptions of the Administration *	4.92	5.09
Perceptions of Faculty and Staff	5.49	5.55
Perceptions of the Institution *	5.62	5.73
Perceptions of Peers	5.16	5.25
Personal Attitudes and Behaviors	6.27	6.28
Sexual Violence *	5.36	5.49
Visibility	5.71	5.69

* Indicates difference between groups is statistically-significant, $p < 0.05$

Race/Ethnicity

Table 10 compares mean factor scores based on race/ethnicity. The category “Under-Represented Minority” includes respondents who identified as American Indian/Alaska Native/First Nation, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and Two or more races. White respondents rated Perceptions of the Institution and Visibility higher. Under-represented minority students rated Campus Training higher.

Table 7: Mean Factor Scores by Race/Ethnicity

	Under-Represented Minority	White
	<i>N = 529</i>	<i>N = 999</i>
Overall Learning	5.39	5.46
Overall Satisfaction	5.28	5.41
Administrative Policies	5.14	5.28
Campus Accessibility	5.81	5.78
Campus Safety	5.30	5.40
Campus Training *	5.46	5.21
Co-Curricular Environment	5.47	5.47
Perceptions of the Administration	4.94	4.90
Perceptions of Faculty and Staff	5.42	5.51
Perceptions of the Institution *	5.54	5.70
Perceptions of Peers	5.23	5.10
Personal Attitudes and Behaviors	6.27	6.37
Sexual Violence	5.31	5.37
Visibility *	5.30	5.92

* Indicates difference between groups is statistically-significant, $p < 0.05$

Sexual Orientation

Table 13 compares mean factor scores based on responses to the question “What is your sexual orientation?” The category LGBT includes respondents who identified as bisexual, gay or lesbian, unsure or questioning, or other. Individuals identifying as heterosexual rated six factors higher: Administrative Policies, Campus Safety, Perceptions of the Administration, Perceptions of the Institution, Sexual Violence, and Visibility. Individuals identifying as LGBT rated two factors higher: Overall Learning and Personal Attitudes and Behaviors.

Table 8: Mean Factor Scores by Sexual Orientation

	Heterosexual	LGBT
	<i>N</i> = 1,523	<i>N</i> = 294
Overall Learning *	5.43	5.70
Overall Satisfaction	5.41	5.28
Administrative Policies *	5.35	4.97
Campus Accessibility	5.82	5.71
Campus Safety *	5.44	5.26
Campus Training	5.39	5.25
Co-Curricular Environment	5.47	5.45
Perceptions of the Administration *	5.05	4.62
Perceptions of Faculty and Staff	5.51	5.54
Perceptions of the Institution *	5.70	5.53
Perceptions of Peers	5.21	5.13
Personal Attitudes and Behaviors *	6.24	6.52
Sexual Violence *	5.48	5.04
Visibility *	5.75	5.42

* Indicates difference between groups is statistically-significant, $p < 0.05$