Diversity and Inclusion
Review and Recommendations

Recommendations of the Harris Diversity Inclusion Advisory Board (DIAB)

Fall 2019

This document discusses the DIAB's findings and recommendations to the Dean and senior administrative leadership team of the Harris School of Public Policy. These findings provide critical inputs for school leadership to develop and execute a school-wide diversity and inclusion action plan.

Background

The Harris School of Public Policy aims to foster a community that not only welcomes and respects diverse perspectives, but also engages students, faculty, staff, and alumni from a wide range of backgrounds.

The Harris Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Board (DIAB), which is comprised of faculty, students, alumni, and staff members, is charged with advising Harris School leadership on needs and opportunities to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion across all aspects of the school.

Since its initial constitution in 2015, the DIAB and Harris leadership have made progress on a range of issues, including:

- Expanding the number of underrepresented students in the school;
- Responding to current events and student concerns on diversity issues;
- Establishing a full-time diversity and inclusion officer position in the Student Affairs department and expanding the number of underrepresented staff;
- Institutionalizing search processes for having more diverse pools of faculty candidates;
- Addressing student need for a wider range of courses across disciplines and areas; and
- Setting strategic aims for diversity and inclusion.

In late 2017, Dean Katherine Baicker re-constituted the DIAB and asked it to assess the current situation and progress towards these aims, and to provide recommendations to inform future strategy and actions.[1] The DIAB conducted a 2018 Harris Climate Survey of students and held subsequent feedback sessions with Harris students, faculty, staff, and alumni to inform its work. This document discusses the DIAB's findings and recommendations to the Dean and senior administrative leadership of the Harris School of Public Policy. These findings provide critical inputs for school leadership to develop and execute a school-wide diversity and inclusion action plan.

Context from Climate Survey and Listening Sessions

During the 2017-18 academic year, the DIAB consulted with representatives from each of the major constituent groups at Harris —students, faculty, staff, and alumni—and designed and launched a climate survey. During the 2018-19 academic year, the DIAB analyzed the survey data, reported results back to the constituent groups, and held several listening sessions to get feedback on the results and potential solutions.

Students, alumni, and staff raised a number of important issues and concerns in response to the survey, with four broad themes emerging as key areas to address:

- **Lack of communication on diversity and inclusion by faculty and Harris leadership.** Students were uncertain or unaware of what the faculty or the leadership think about diversity issues, whether the faculty have a plan to address diversity concerns, what processes or constraints the faculty faces, or what progress has been made, calling into question faculty and leadership's interest in improving diversity and inclusion.

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[1] DIAB members include: Ariel Kalil (Faculty, Co-Chair); Chris Blattman (Faculty, Co-Chair); Barbara Barreno-Paschall (Alum); Gaea L Honeycutt (Alum); Jamia Jowers (Staff); Jeffrey Lew (Student); Lynn Espedido (Alum); Michelle Hoereth (Staff); Sarah Micheli (Student). Koichiro Ito served as Faculty Co-Chair in 2017.

- **Too little classroom engagement of key diversity issues.** Students reported too few opportunities to learn and discuss policy issues of significant importance and student interest, particularly, but not limited to, courses in the Core curriculum. Students expressed that the Core engages these issues of identity only briefly or not at all.

- **Instances of bias and discrimination in the classroom.** While there is a broad consensus in the school that bias and discrimination cannot be tolerated, students described problematic examples or statements in class, not all of which appear indirect or subtle. Harris had not taken sufficient measures to maintain the quality and consistency of the student experience.

- **Faces at the front of the classroom that are not representative of the student body** despite progress in increasing the number and percentage of underrepresented students and staff at Harris**.**

Recommendations with Suggested Action Steps

Drawing on this extensive information, the DIAB recommends the following steps for Dean Baicker and the school's leadership team to consider.

Senior Leadership

1) **Communicate a commitment to and a sense of urgency to address the concerns raised in this Report.**
   a) Action Step: The Harris School Dean should review and select recommendations and action steps, develop a strategic plan, and communicate that strategic plan to the Harris community by the next academic year.
   b) Action Step: Ensure that all Harris hiring include a statement of Harris' commitment to diversity.
2) **Make Harris leadership more accountable for progress under the Report's recommendations and ensure that students, faculty, staff, alumni, and other members of the Harris community have information about this progress.**
   a) Action Step: Institutionalize monitoring and assessment around diversity. Implement ongoing monitoring, assessment, communication (for example, an annual report card).
   b) Action Step: Meaningfully integrate assessments of this issue into teaching evaluations.
   c) Action Step: Improve communication about diversity - Harris' strategy, efforts, and achievements; and develop new modes of communication strategies/formats, such as annual "State of Diversity at Harris" Town Hall.

Faculty

1) **Increase diversity among our faculty—both tenure-track and non-tenure-track—who represent different genders, ethnic, racial and national backgrounds.**
   a) Action Step: Create and implement a transparent strategy for the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty for tenure-track positions. Take advantage of University-wide and outside expertise to develop this strategy and tactics.
   b) Action Step: Hire diverse (women and people of color/underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds) visiting professors, fellows, and lecturers for more electives and possibly some core classes. Be more deliberate and strategic about lecturer hiring and visiting professors and fellows.

c) <u>Action Step:</u> Encourage Harris faculty to take advantage of Provost's post-doc program
d) <u>Action Step:</u> Create and implement a transparent strategy for the recruitment and retention of diverse lecturers and other instructors.

2) **Increase diversity among our faculty with respect to academic disciplines and concentrations.**
   a) <u>Action Step:</u> Broaden course offerings outside the Core curriculum in areas of policy interest including with respect to international issues, gender, race, and inequality. Ensure that a minimum number of electives – on both domestic and international policy issues – are taught every year.
   b) <u>Action Step:</u> Create coordinating faculty responsible for monitoring and managing these offerings, and provide sufficient financial support to ensure a core stable group of faculty and other instructors. Encourage core faculty or lecturers to teach such courses.

3) **Improve faculty teaching and engagement with students.**
   a) <u>Action Step:</u> Provide support for faculty to become better teachers of professional students, such as providing individualized coaching and training. This coaching and training should include skills for effectively engaging students on diverse policy issues in the classroom, plus evidence on (and ways to be aware of) implicit biases.
   b) <u>Action Step:</u> In addition to or in concert with outside support, encourage faculty to take advantage of on-campus resources to address cultural competency and implicit bias. Encourage faculty peer-to peer learning on this issue.
   c) <u>Action Step:</u> Consider creating a Harris-wide statement of interest on faculty syllabi that speaks to diversity and inclusion.
   d) <u>Action Step:</u> Convene faculty teaching in the Core with Harris Dean of Teaching for regular review of materials (i.e., problem sets, class examples) with an eye towards ensuring diversity and minimizing bias.
   e) <u>Action Step:</u> Encourage faculty attendance at student-facing social events.

4) **Educate Harris staff and student understanding of Harris faculty hiring process, governance, expectations and criteria. Make this process more transparent and eliminate mis-information.**
   a) <u>Action Step:</u> Have a member of Harris Leadership host a lunch meeting once per quarter to share Harris high-level hiring priorities for each academic year, mid-year progress, and final hiring outcomes.
   b) <u>Action Step:</u> Consider opportunities to include Harris student government representatives in job candidate visits (e.g., meeting or meal with candidates).
   c) <u>Action Step:</u> Advertise job talks to MPP student list-serve.

Student Body

1) **Build a more diverse and inclusive student body and environment that supports the needs of all students.**
   a) <u>Action Step:</u> Offer implicit bias and cultural competency training during orientation and intergroup dialogues throughout the school year.
   b) <u>Action Step:</u> Provide more financial support to students to participate in Harris extracurricular events. Ensure that students are aware of the availability of emergency funds.
   c) <u>Action Step:</u> Conduct an assessment of student services so that all staff have a clear understanding of our student profiles and the continuum of services provided from the point of admission to completion.

2) **Ensure that prospective students have a clear understanding of "Harris approach" to teaching and instructional content.**

a) Action Step: Revamp messaging and optics about "who Harris is" to better align with messaging to prospective students.
3) **Commitment to engage in diversity in content outside of the classroom.**
   a) Action Step: Broaden and institutionalize speakers and extracurricular activities to complement what is happening in the classroom (in cooperation with Harris student organizations).

Staff

1) **Foster an inclusive and collaborative environment across Harris departments**
   b) Action Step: Implement and/or offer annual implicit bias and cultural competency training.
   c) Action Step: Create more diversity and inclusion among senior leadership.
   d) Action Step: Create a protocol to address bias within Harris.
   e) Action Step: Encourage professional development, work more closely with staff on career pipelines, and create enhanced mentoring opportunities.
2) **Recognize, reward, and support staff who are at the front lines of attending to students' concerns about diversity and inclusion.**
   a) Action Step: Create a Harris Award for Diversity and Inclusion.
3) **Develop a shared sense of strategy and identity as a school (in terms of pedagogical and research philosophy, and "product identity/niche") across all constituent groups at the school.**
   a) Action Step: Institutionalize efforts with respect to shared language, vision, and how we discuss/market/celebrate our work.
   b) Action Step: Work across units to develop shared language and messaging for both prospective students and current students.
4) **Provide a continuum of student support and services from acceptance to graduation.**
   a) Action Step: Conduct a cross-team audit on all services provided to students; engage in cross-team collaboration to ensure that Harris is delivering high-quality services and to ensure communication of the school's services and various internal touchpoints with students.

Alumni and Greater Harris Community

1) **Commit to fostering opportunities for alumni, mentors, guest lecturers and instructors to be involved with Diversity and Inclusion initiatives.**
   a) Action Step: Have alumni leaders solicit input from the Harris Council and Harris Alumni Council about involvement from alumni and public policy leaders in Harris Diversity and Inclusion initiatives and discussions.
   b) Action Step: Assess Harris Mentoring Program and identify areas for improvement with respect to mentor representation from diverse backgrounds and experiences.
   c) Action Step: Have alumni leaders conduct proactive outreach to underrepresented alumni regarding opportunities for lectures or speaking engagements, mentoring current students, nominating alumni for awards, or attending events with students, staff, and faculty.
   d) Action Step: Communicate information on Diversity and Inclusion initiatives, current events, and news in Harris alumni-related communications.
   e) Action Step: Within current Harris resources or programs, implement a mechanism where a collection of information on mentors, alumni, and other subject matter experts within the Harris community that work in Diversity and Inclusion can be found.

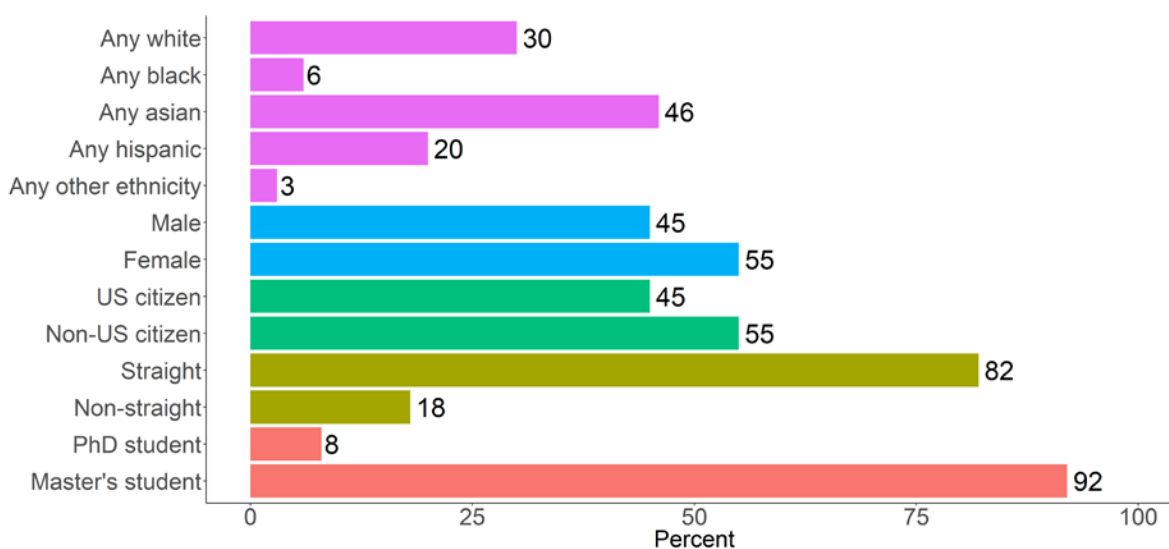# Appendix: Climate Survey Methods and Findings

A. Survey Fielding

In addition to receiving many important, powerful comments and opinions during these meetings and consultations, the DIAB received an unprecedented level of student participation in the 2018 survey.

- 71% of students responded to the survey, 352 in total.[2] By comparison, only 29% responded to a UChicago-wide Campus Climate Survey in 2016.
- Although students entering Harris in the 2018-19 academic year did not have an opportunity to respond to the survey, the DIAB nevertheless collected their concerns during the three listening sessions that occurred immediately after our town hall meeting.
- The survey questions are listed in Appendix B

In general, the diversity survey and corresponding analysis focus on several dimensions of identity: race, gender, sexual orientation, and the concerns of domestic versus international students. Figure 1 illustrates the identities reported by the student body at the time of the survey. The proportion of students who are female, US citizens, and PhD students roughly matches Harris administrative records, and so the other self-reported identities are likely to be representative of the student body. Note that students can report multiple races/ethnicities.[3]

B. 2018 Climate Survey Results: Key Figures

Figure 1: How did respondents self-identify in the survey?[4]

Figure 2: Core does not address issues of diversity

Statement	Percent
Classroom prepares me for the real world	54
Core curriculum addresses identity	40
Assignments reflect and accept my identity	70
Classroom discussion of identity encouraged	50
Courses address and explore identity	57
Students have equal opportunity for success	85
Can fulfill coursework without sacrificing my identity	87
Coursework is accessible to my identity	78

Figure 3: Students, faculty, and staff accepting of identities

Statement	Percent
Students accepting of various identities	88
Staff accepting of various identities	89
Faculty accepting of various identities	87
Students value diversity	76
Staff value diversity	71
Faculty value diversity	43
Sense of value to the Harris community	77
Sense of belonging to the Harris community	84
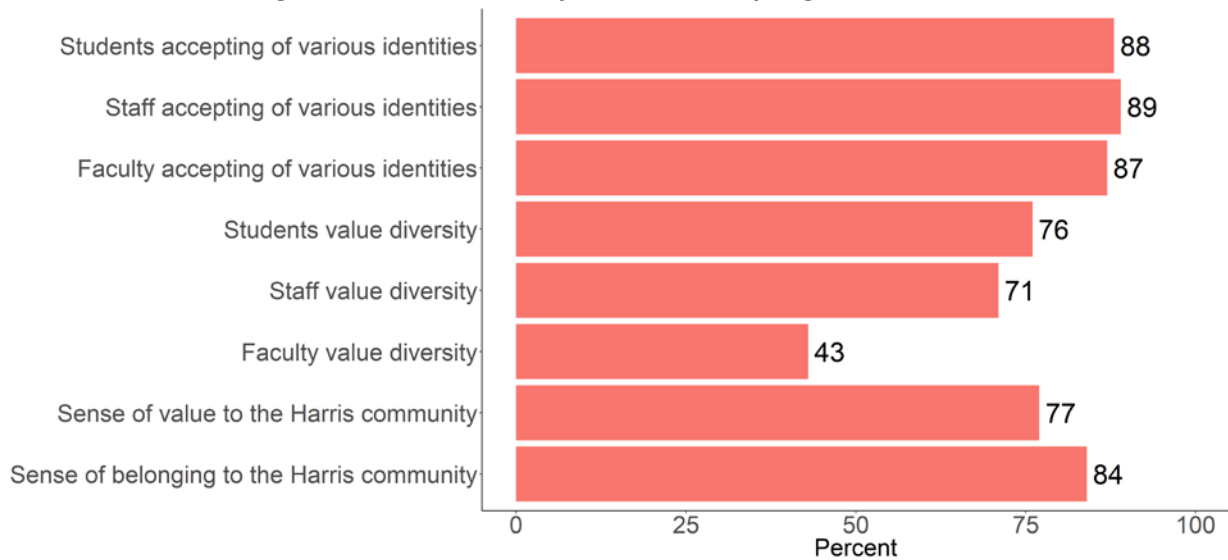
Figure 4: Percent of students that "agree" or "strongly agree" that the Harris curriculum is too US-centric

Category	Percent
All respondents	60
Any white	61
Any Black or African American	57
Any asian	55
Any hispanic	71
Any other ethnicity	67
Not Disabled	60
Disabled	57
Non-straight	58
Straight	61
Non-US citizen	60
US citizen	60
Male	56
Female	63
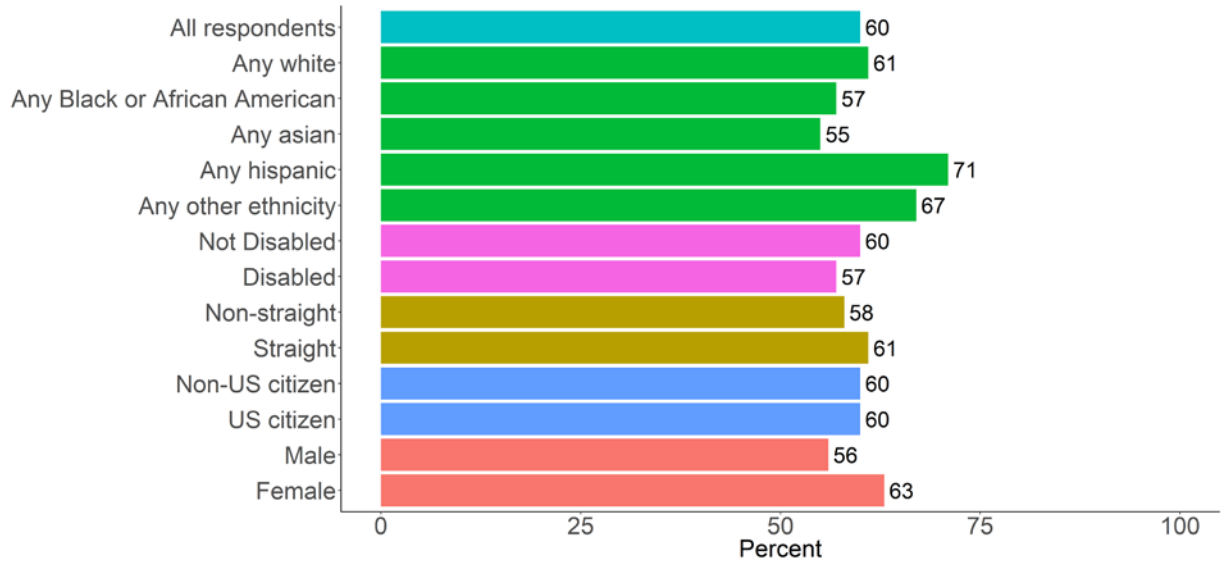
Figure 5: Percent of students who report instance of bias, harassment, or discrimination

Category	Percent
All respondents	22
Any white	19
Any Black or African American	48
Any asian	20
Any hispanic	22
Any other ethnicity	42
Male	22
Female	22
US citizen	27
Non-US citizen	18
Straight	22
Non-straight	23
PhD student	26
Master's student	22
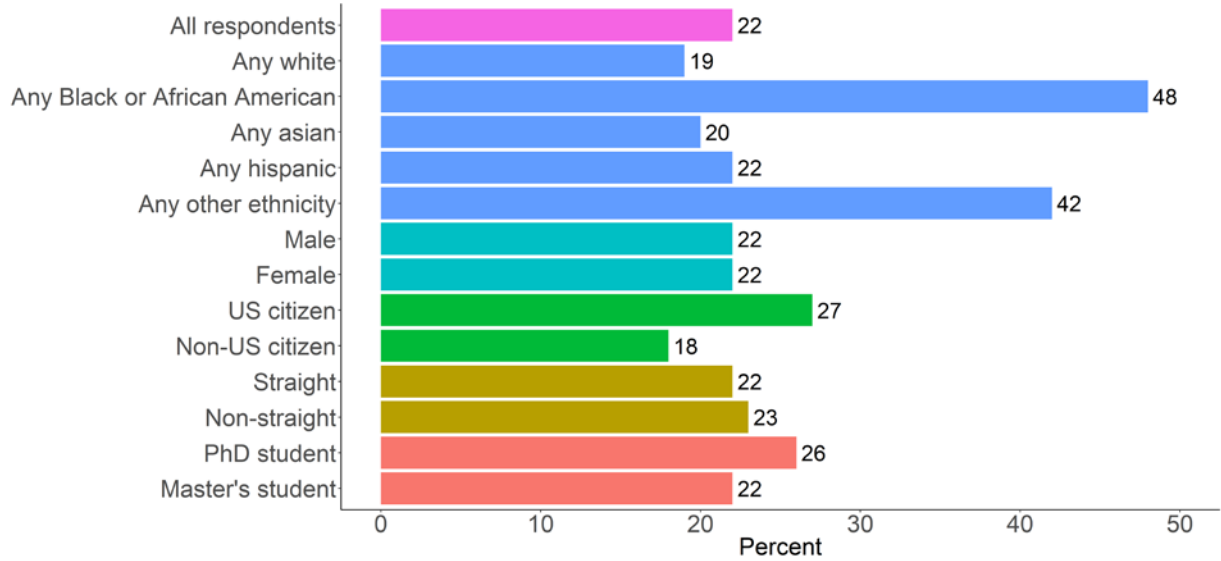
Figure 6: Percent of respondents reporting a sexist experience "sometimes" or "often"
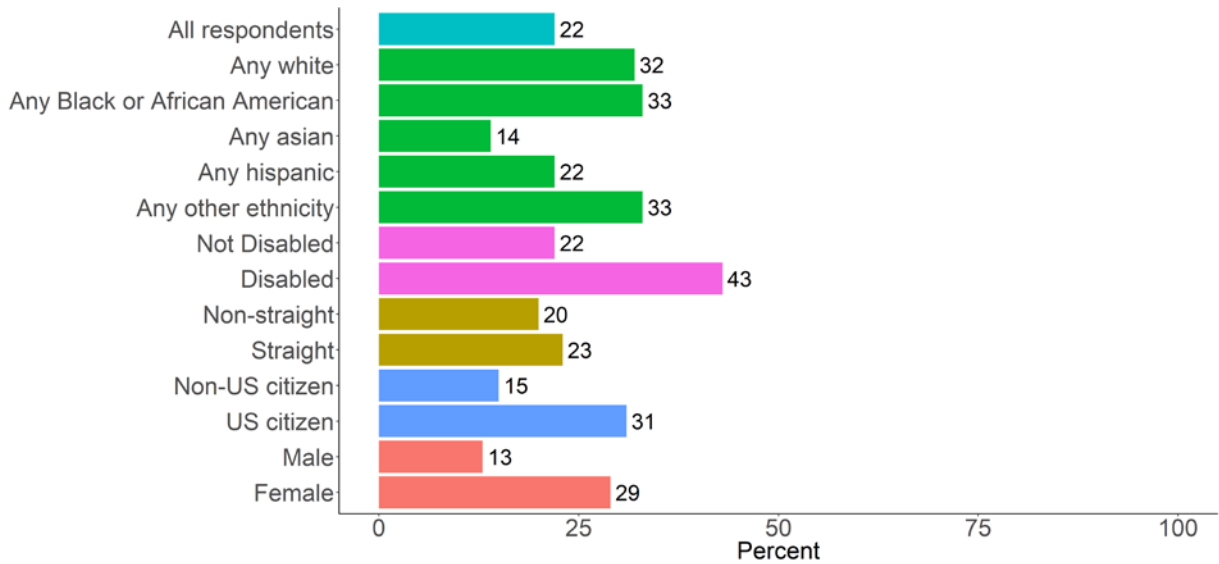
Figure 7: Some groups less likely to agree with "I feel that I belong at Harris"
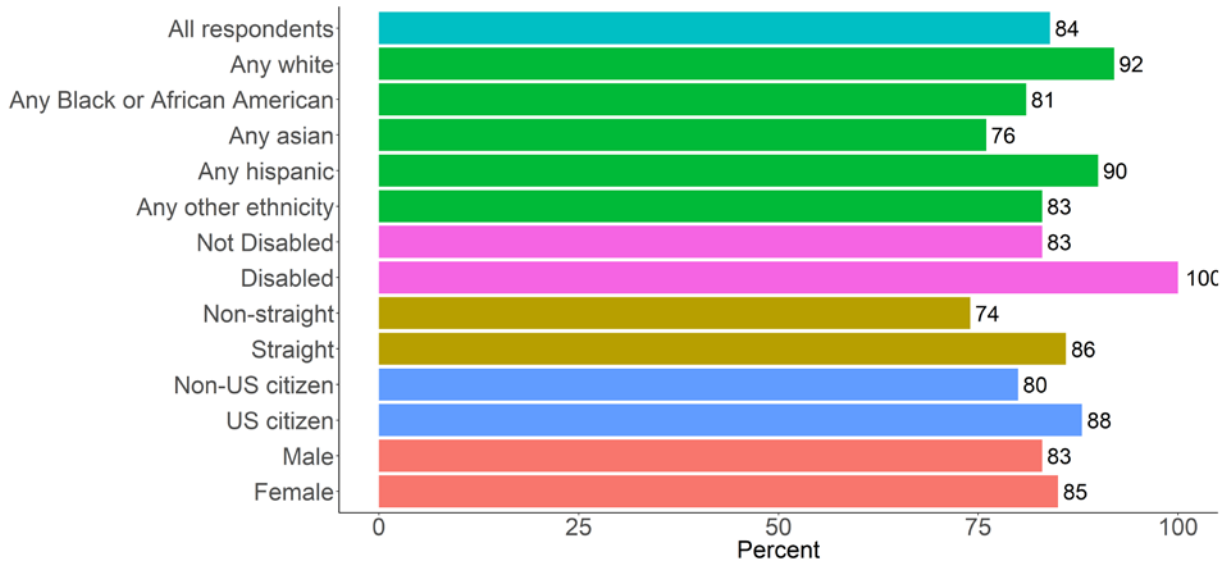
C. 2018 Climate Survey Questions

Which of the following describes your current status in the Harris School?

- First year Master student
- Second year Master student
- Third year and beyond Master student
- PhD student

Which of the following describes your citizenship status?
- US Citizen or Permanent Resident (Green Card Holder)
- Non US Citizen

What is your gender identity? *Please select all that apply:*
- Female
- Male
- Intersex
- Transgender
- Genderqueer
- Self-identify (please specify)

What is your sexual orientation? *Please select all that apply:*
- Bisexual
- Fluid
- Gay
- Heterosexual
- Lesbian
- Queer
- Questioning
- Self-identify (please specify)

With which of the following races/ethnicities do you identify? *Please select all that apply:*
- American Indian or Alaskan Native (e.g., Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, or Inupiat Traditional Govt., etc.)
- Asian or Asian American (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, South Asian, Vietnamese, etc.)
- Black or African American (e.g., Jamaican, Nigerian, Haitian, Ethiopian, etc.)
- Hispanic or Latinx (e.g., Puerto Rican, Mexican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Colombian, etc.)
- Middle Eastern or North African (e.g., Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Moroccan, etc.)
- Native Hawai'ian or Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Guamanian, Chamorro, Tongan, etc.)
- White (e.g., German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.)
- Another race, ethnicity, or origin (please specify)

Do you have a disability of any kind?
- Yes
- No

[If answered yes to previous question] What is your disability?

Based on your experiences and observations, please rate the overall climate and frequency of the below dimensions from your vantage point as a student.

How frequently do you have experiences at the Harris School that are as follows?

	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)
Sexist (1)	○	○	○	○
Racist (2)	○	○	○	○
Homophobic (3)	○	○	○	○
Religiously intolerant (4)	○	○	○	○
Intolerant of disability accommodation (5)	○	○	○	○
US-Centric (6)	○	○	○	○
Disrespectful of social class differences (7)	○	○	○	○

Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly agree (4)
I feel that I belong at Harris (1)	○	○	○	○
I feel valued at Harris (2)	○	○	○	○
Harris has diversity in faculty (3)	○	○	○	○
Harris has diversity in staff (4)	○	○	○	○
Harris has diversity in student body (5)	○	○	○	○
Faculty at Harris are culturally accepting of different races, ethnicities, backgrounds, religions, cultures, ages, and abilities (6)	○	○	○	○
Staff at Harris are culturally accepting of different races, ethnicities, backgrounds, religions, cultures, ages, and abilities (7)	○	○	○	○
Students at Harris are culturally accepting of different races, ethnicities, backgrounds, religions, cultures, ages, and abilities (8)	○	○	○	○
Harris accommodates students' dietary needs (9)	○	○	○	○
Harris listens to students' concerns related to diversity & inclusion (10)	○	○	○	○
Harris acts on students' concerns related to diversity & inclusion (11)	○	○	○	○

Now please think about the overall classroom/learning environment and indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly agree (4)
Examples and topics in my coursework and examinations are accessible to someone of my background and nationality (1)	○	○	○	○
I can fulfill the requirements of my coursework without suppressing my own identity, background, or experience (2)	○	○	○	○
I have opportunities for academic success that are similar to those of my classmates (3)	○	○	○	○
Courses address and explore research related to race, nationality, socioeconomic class, gender, sexuality, ability (4)	○	○	○	○
Classroom discussion of race, nationality, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, ability is encouraged (5)	○	○	○	○
Classroom examples and homework assignments reflect and are accepting of my own identity, background, or experience (6)	○	○	○	○
Core Curriculum addresses race, nationality, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, ability (7)	○	○	○	○
My classroom experiences prepare me for the real world (8)	○	○	○	○
I feel supported by Harris' stance on free speech and safe spaces (9)	○	○	○	○
Men and women are respected equally at Harris (10)	○	○	○	○

Since coming to Harris, have you experienced any bias, harassment, or discrimination because of the following due to your race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, religious identity, disability status, or political views?

	Yes (1)	No (2)
Received an unfair performance evaluation in a Harris job (1)	○	○
Denied physical/mental health or student services (2)	○	○
Offensive or derogatory remarks/gestures, graffiti, or any other action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination (3)	○	○
Threats to expose your personal perspective on sexual orientation, gender identity expression, religious identity, disability status, or political views (4)	○	○
Embarrassment/humiliation/threat in an email, text, or social media post (5)	○	○

[If answered yes to any part of the previous question] Has the source of the interaction(s) been from any of the following?

	Yes (1)	No (2)
Staff (1)	○	○
Faculty (2)	○	○
Student (3)	○	○

How well has Harris responded to you when you have reported issues of bias/discrimination related to the following factors?

	Not applicable (1)	Totally ineffective (2)	Somewhat ineffective (3)	Somewhat effective (4)	Totally effective (5)
Sexual orientation (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Gender identity and expression (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Race/ethnicity (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Religious identity (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Disability status/campus accessibility (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Particular political view points (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Socioeconomic status (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Conduct of student organizations (8)	○	○	○	○	○
Conduct of faculty (9)	○	○	○	○	○
Conduct of staff (10)	○	○	○	○	○

Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly agree (4)	Don't know/not applicable (5)
There is adequate space for religious practice (1)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Harris promotes cultural and/or religious literacy (2)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Harris takes into account religious holidays that would cause students to miss out on events (3)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

If you had an experience related to any action or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination, please elaborate on your experience. Please write N/A if not applicable.

Please tell us about a faculty member, staff member or student rep that you feel comfortable turning to for support on diversity and inclusion issues. Please write N/A if not applicable.

What are your recommendations/suggestions to create a more diverse/inclusive community at Harris? Please write N/A if not applicable.

What is Harris doing right when it comes to diversity and inclusion? Please write N/A if not applicable.

Please share your thoughts on any topics related to diversity and inclusion that were not covered in this survey. Please write N/A if not applicable.