

A GUIDE TO THIS REPORT

WHAT IS CAMPUS CLIMATE?

In 2005, AAC&U's publication "Toward a Model of Inclusive Excellence and Change in Postsecondary Institutions" stated, "...educational excellence cannot be envisioned, discussed, or enacted without close attention being paid to inclusion."

In her invitation to members of the campus community to serve on the Campus Climate Task Force Steering Committee, President Kenny spoke of campus climate as "...the pervasive backdrop that motivates and inspires our work at Stony Brook, and key to creating an inclusive community characterized by a "can do" spirit and positive morale." The Task Force has used this definition, and expanded it to include "... both policy and practice that refer to behaviors within a workplace or learning environment that can influence whether an individual feels safe, listened to, and treated fairly and with respect. It also refers to an organization's structures, policies, and practices; the diversity of its faculty, staff and students; the attitudes and values of its members and leaders; and the quality of personal interactions and communication."

HOW IS THIS REPORT AND ACTION PLAN DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS?

The Report and Action Plan of the President's Task Force on Campus Climate has the ambitious goal of bringing about a lasting change in the campus culture. Therefore, the integration of the recommendations into campus life must follow a process different from the familiar standard operating procedures. This process will effectuate a cultural change with regard to all practices and all policies. Indeed, the success of the Action Plan depends on the implementation and integration of a communication process, outlined under the report's section on "mapping," that underpins all the recommendations.

Unless this different approach to communication and decision making becomes pervasive, the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations will at best prove superficial and fleeting. In its deliberations over the past six months, the Task Force attempted to model this process, characterized by Cornell University as "360 degree communication"; and it now urges the campus community to do the same. For the past six months, posters around campus have proclaimed Stony Brook's goal "...to become the most inclusive campus community in America." To this end, the Task Force subcommittees invited participation of the entire campus via town hall meetings, interviews, focus groups, and dedicated web site correspondence, and maintained a high level of visibility for the project across the entire campus. Subcommittees shared their proceedings with one another, progress reports were given to the campus community, and feedback was sought and acted upon frequently. The reader may speculate about the impetus for approaching the implementation of the Task Force's Action Plan differently than in the past, and the origins of the sense of urgency that characterizes this report.

WHY THIS REPORT?

For over two decades faculty, staff, and students have participated in committees and task forces focusing on how best to address the inevitable academic and social challenges associated with our dynamic and ever-changing campus environment. Typically, these groups produced institutional reports and recommendations that identified a range of issues from access to success of students, to brick and mortar, and from course content to addressing social life on the campus. These reports have resulted in successful diversity efforts that focused largely on the student body. We have been less successful in our efforts to bring more diversity to the faculty and staff. Put bluntly, our success has been within specific segments of the campus, but we have been less successful in providing university-wide attention to our diversity efforts. We believe that diversity and inclusion are not simply additions to the traditional mission of teaching, research, and service, but a prerequisite for its effective implementation.

Previous campus reports reveal a consistent pattern of recommendations that focus on a real need for the University to realistically address issues of diversity and inclusion in our policies and practices throughout all sectors of our campus community (see Appendix A). Whether by employment policies and practices that hinder diversity, attitudes bent on discouraging diversity and inclusion, or ignorance or indifference; these issues appear to remain largely ignored, unattended, or not fully addressed. The Campus Climate report documents a perception that institutional racism, homophobia, sexism and other forms of discrimination persist despite a common belief that we have made substantial progress in eliminating it.

No previous campus survey or report at Stony Brook University has focused solely on the perceptions of faculty and staff related to the overall climate on the campus. The Campus Climate Survey was an important step towards moving beyond simply identifying issues in an isolated fashion. We focus on the relationship of issues to one another and on taking a more holistic approach to developing a more effective change process. The data presented in the Campus Climate Survey will help change institutional behavior by identifying the existence or absence of diversity and inclusion while also documenting the experiences of faculty and staff throughout the campus. The survey also allows us to examine and dismantle assumptions or misconceptions that prove counter to our institution's diversity goals. By examining data derived from within the campus, we are able to frame specific issues and seek solutions through a continuous process that allows us to identify areas for improvement and assess our effectiveness.

What is needed now is not just acknowledgement of what is wrong, but also an institutional commitment to do things differently. Precisely because the Campus Climate Report documents significant insights and individual experiences of faculty and staff on the campus, we are able to examine attitudes and behaviors that either enable or hinder our diversity efforts. More importantly, we are able to speak to a wider range of issues on how best to incorporate diversity and inclusion in both policies and practices. The task is difficult, but not impossible. In the future, the general test of our university will lie in our ability to align its policies and practices with its stated mission for diversity and inclusion—it is simply a matter of commitment and institutional will.

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT
(as of October 16, 2006)

Gleaned from the results of the 2004 Campus Climate Survey, the 2004 Middle States Self-Study Report, the 2005 Graduate Student Survey, and statistics on the Stony Brook Workforce Ethnic Distribution, the following realities reflect the lived experience of people who work and learn at Stony Brook (for references to the full reports, see the “references” section of this document):

- Approximately 1/3 of employees do not feel like part of the family or team at Stony Brook. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- 3/5 do not believe that people of color always or mostly have a fair representation on policy or decision-making groups. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- ¾ do not believe that people with disabilities always or mostly have a fair representation on policy or decision-making groups. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- Almost 30% had observed harassment on the basis of foreign accent over the previous two years. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- Almost ¼ had observed harassment on the basis of gender over the previous two years. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- Almost ¼ had observed sexual harassment over the previous two years. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- About ¼ of women report that they have observed both gender based and sexual harassment over the previous two years. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- While 9% of Whites agree with the statement that making fun of people based on their ethnicity is acceptable in their department, 27% of Asian/Pacific Islanders agree with this statement. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- About 20% of Blacks, Hispanics/Latino, Asians/Pacific Islanders and Native American/Alaskans report experiencing harassment based on ethnicity by faculty /staff over the previous two years. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- 32% of Asians/Pacific Islanders report experiencing harassment based on foreign accent by faculty/staff over the previous two years. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- 22% of Blacks report experiencing racist harassment by faculty/staff over the previous two years. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- While about 30% of Blacks, Hispanics/Latinos and Asians/Pacific Islanders report observing harassment on the basis of ethnicity by faculty/staff over the previous two years, 16% of Whites report similar observations. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- While about 10% of Christians report that they have observed religious harassment by faculty/staff over the previous two years, over 30% of Muslim/Islamic and over 20% of Hindu respondents report that they have observed religious harassment by faculty/staff over the previous two years. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
-
- Over 40% of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgendered respondents report that they have observed harassment based on sexual orientation by faculty/staff over the previous two years. (2004

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT
(as of October 16, 2006)

Campus Climate Survey)

- Over 15% fewer Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgendered respondents than Heterosexual respondents report that LGBT are always or mostly treated with respect by every occupational level of administration, faculty, immediate supervisor, professional and clerical staff, support staff and coworkers. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- While 15% of People without Disabilities said they would not choose to work at Stony Brook again, 24% of People with Disabilities say they would not choose to work at Stony Brook again. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- Almost ¼ of People with Disabilities report that they have observed harassment based on disability by faculty/staff over the previous two years. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- Nearly half (49.5%) of LGBT people are not “out” in their departments. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- Nearly one quarter (24.1%) of employees at Stony Brook agreed with the statement “compared to men, women are appointed to less important committees and task forces.” (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- Persons with disabilities were more likely than persons without disabilities to say that it is acceptable in their department/work unit to make fun of someone based on disability. 13.8% of people with disabilities reported that it is acceptable as compared to 6.6% of people without disabilities. (2004 Campus Climate Survey)
- Students were asked whether they have observed faculty members denigrating students, i.e. insults, name calling, derogatory remarks with regard to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age country of origin, etc. 15% answered yes, and 7% said they were not entirely sure. (2005 Graduate Student Survey)
- As part of the 2002-2004 Self Study for the Middle States Accreditation, it was found that only 48% of faculty could agree with the statement that Stony Brook has a somewhat or strong sense of community (p. 81)
- The percent of tenured faculty who were Black at Stony Brook rose from 2.4% in 1995-6 to 3.1 in 2005-6 an increase of 7/10 of a percent in ten years. (Stony Brook Workforce Ethnic Distribution)
- The percent of executive/management employees at Stony Brook who were Hispanic decreased from 4% in 1995-6 to 3.8% in 2005-6. (Stony Brook Workforce Ethnic Distribution)
- The percent of executive/management employees at Stony Brook who were Black decreased from 9.6% in 1995-6 to 4.8% in 2005-6. (Stony Brook Workforce Ethnic Distribution)
- The percent of employees on both State and RF payroll at Stony Brook who were Native American remained static at .1% from 1995-6 to 2005-6. (Stony Brook Workforce Ethnic Distribution)