



FDU 2022 Campus Climate Survey Executive Summary

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Background

As part of FDU's effort to become more welcoming and respectful of the increasingly diverse community it serves, the FDU Poll carried out a survey of students, faculty and staff across all three FDU campuses. Questions for the survey were adapted from existing campus climate surveys to fit FDU, edited to minimize the burden on the respondents, and changed in consultation with stakeholders and contractors brought in for this purpose. It was distributed via email to the entire campus community in May, 2022. After nine days of data collection, 918 completed surveys were logged, enough for a reasonable estimation of the attitudes of the FDU community, though the external validity of the responses cannot be fully assessed.

The responses were analyzed by the FDU Poll and are summarized in this report. The survey will be fielded again in the upcoming academic year in order to assess progress made on these measures, before a final report is produced.

Highlights of the findings are recounted here.

- Half of the FDU community (51 percent) say that FDU is “very” or “extremely” committed to diversity, with the lowest figures at the Florham campus, and the highest at Vancouver. Members of different ethnic and racial groups are all about equally likely to say that FDU is committed to diversity, but members of sexual orientation or gender identity minority groups are much less likely to think so. Members of these groups are also more likely to say that they are dissatisfied with their FDU experience, as are disabled individuals.
- Members of the FDU community frequently socialize with members of other racial or ethnic groups, and across religious lines. They are much less likely, however, to socialize with people who hold different political views, or have a different sexual orientation than themselves. African-American/Canadian respondents are less likely than others to socialize across racial and ethnic lines, and members of campus organizations are more likely to do so.
- Disabled respondents, especially at the Florham campus, are much less likely than other respondents to say that they feel welcome on campus. They're also less likely to report being respected by other students when they speak up in class, and while that gap exists across all three campuses, it is biggest at the Florham campus.
- There is a perception that conservative students feel less comfortable at universities, and that they feel that they are disrespected in the classroom. However, we find no evidence for this at FDU; if anything, liberal students are less likely to feel welcome and respected than their conservative counterparts. However, conservative respondents do report being more likely to feel negatively about having to represent their perspectives in the classroom, report having more trouble socializing than liberal or moderate students and are less likely to feel that they are respected by other students when they speak in class.
- Women at FDU are less likely to report feeling safe on campus than men, but women at the Metro campus are more likely than men to say that they feel welcome on campus. Still, women at FDU are more likely than men to report feeling excluded, and there are substantial campus differences. At Florham, men are more likely than women to report a sense of belonging; at Metro, the opposite is true.
- Tokenism remains a problem in the classroom. Nineteen percent of respondents, and large proportions of students from racial, ethnic, and sexual orientation or gender identity minority

groups report that they have to represent the views of some aspect of their identity. In general, these gaps are larger at the Florham campus than at the Metro campus. Members of these groups also generally do not feel positively about this need for representation.

- While there has been an uptick in violence and discrimination against people of Asian-American or Pacific Islander heritage, the FDU experiences of individuals from these groups are almost indistinguishable from those of other backgrounds. For instance, there are no more, or less, likely to report that they have to represent some aspect of their identity on campus.
- Thirteen percent of the FDU community, and 19 percent of students, identify as members of sexual orientation or gender identity minority group. They are 19 points less likely to say that they feel welcome at FDU than other respondents, and 17 points less likely to say that they feel respected. On the Florham campus, they are also less likely to report feeling safe and more likely to say that they are not respected when they speak out in the classroom. However, they are less likely to report feeling excluded on campus.
- Hispanic, Chicano/a and Latino/a respondents are slightly more likely than others to report feeling welcome on campus, mostly driven by figures from the Metro campus, and are little different from other students on most measures.
- Interestingly, being a member of an organized group on campus, be it a social group like a club or Greek organization, a race or ethnic-based organization, or anything else, has a minimal impact on the attitudes of students.
- There is a substantial gap between the perception of respect on campus, and what groups say that they experience. For instance, only 9 percent of respondents say that African-American or Black people are treated disrespectfully on campus, but that figure is 21 percent when we ask African-American or Black people. The biggest gap is among disabled people, disrespect for whom is apparently less visible than it is for other groups.
- Respondents report substantial gaps in their willingness to contact public safety. While most members of the FDU community report feeling “very comfortable” contacting them, men are more likely than women to feel comfortable doing so, and members of SOGI minority groups are much less likely than others to report feeling comfortable. There are indications of a particular sense of discomfort among Hispanic, Chicano/a and Latino/a respondents on the Florham campus, but African-American or Black respondents are more comfortable than others in calling public safety.
- African-American or Black students across all three campuses are less likely than others to report being able to find other students that they feel comfortable socializing or studying with.
- Most of the campus community (70 percent) say that they are satisfied with how FDU has handled the COVID pandemic, with just 18 percent saying that they are dissatisfied. Students who live on campus, though, are much more likely to be dissatisfied, and much more likely to say that COVID restrictions were too strict.