

# **Diversity & Equity Campus Climate Survey**

## **Executive Summary**

**October 2023**

### **Background**

A core area of focus for the Campus Diversity Officer (CDO) is to assess and improve campus climate for diversity and inclusion inside and outside the classroom. MSUM is committed to understanding the unique needs of our students through multiple means and modes. Campus climate is a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) that is measured in the MinnState Equity Scorecard to align with the goals outlined in the Equity 2030 framework that sets to eliminate gaps in graduation outcomes.

### **Survey Objectives**

The survey asked students about perceptions of MSUM's climate, perceptions of how MSUM supports diversity and equity, and experiences with discrimination and harassment at MSUM. The key objectives of the survey are to help university leaders understand MSUM's undergraduate and graduate student's perceptions and experiences with campus climate, assess belonging, inclusion and safety, and inform decision-making and planning efforts to improve the overall student experience.

### **Survey Planning and Implementation**

In Spring 2023 (March 22 to April 22, 2023), MSUM administered the [Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium \(HEDS\) Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey](#) to undergraduate and graduate students. This was the first year MSUM used this instrument. Previously, the campus administered the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) students. Chancellor Malhotra no longer encouraged this form of campus climate assessment in a June 2022 memo to his leadership council, comprised of the university and college presidents.

A variety of in-person, digital and print tactics encouraged survey participation. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Posters, flyers, business cards
- Campus digital signage
- Student and employee news
- Emails (4 UG & Grad to all from HEDS; 1 from Jered Pigeon)
- D2L slider and PPT provided to faculty
- Various campus meetings with employees and students
- Instagram

- Weekly \$50 gift card incentives (20 total winners promoted internally and on social to increase survey awareness and encourage survey completion.)

### **Next Survey Implementation Items to Fix**

- Ensure names used for email are not dead names but rather preferred names.
- Screen reader was not an option this year. Work with the System office to fix accessibility issues with the survey.
- Ensure rollout link works. This was quickly fixed, but it should have been tested before HEDS sent out the email.

### **Completion Goal**

To achieve a statistically valid percentage of students, HEDS leadership recommended a completion goal of 5-6% of students to provide a 95% confidence result.

MSUM exceeded its stretch goal (12-15%) with **742** or **17.7% participation** out of 4,191 students eligible to take the survey. Respectively, MSUM surpassed the survey completion rates of the three Minnesota State universities participating in the Spring 2023 survey (Mankato – 10%; Bemidji – 12%; Winona – 12%). We hypothesize that our comprehensive promotional tactics and weekly drawings significantly increased MSUM's participation rate.

### **Key Findings**

#### **Demographics of Respondents**

*Survey respondents largely reflect MSUM's demographic profile. (Fall 2022 30-day numbers)*

- International students represent about 3% of our student body.
- Students of color represent 15.3% of our student body.
- First-generation undergraduate students account for nearly 40% of our student body.
- Females comprise 64.3% while males comprise 35.1% of our student body.

#### **Campus Climate for Diversity and Equity**

*Students are Generally or Very Satisfied with MSUM's campus climate.*

- 82% of students are generally satisfied with MSUM's campus climate.
- 67% of students experience a sense of belonging.
- The vast majority of respondents, 88%, believe diversity improves campus interactions and 72% Agree or Strongly Agree that the campus is free from tensions.

#### **Student's Experiences with Negative Remarks**

*MSUM students are often the source of insensitive or disparaging remarks.*



**Several themes emerged in response to the question, “What one change would you make in order to enhance the sense of community at Minnesota State University Moorhead?”**

***Students want more events and opportunities to engage for on-campus, online and older than average students.***

- This response included a wide range of requests, from general student functions that bring people together (e.g., volunteering, community service, more inviting gather spaces) to requests for specific audiences or winter activities to more online opportunities for student engagement. Students don’t feel events are well advertised and want better communication about student organizations.

***Students want more diversity.***

- Students want to see more diversity among the student, faculty and staff population.

***Students want more education.***

- Students want more education about different cultures and all types of diversity, specifically on gender/sexuality or disability. There is interest in more classroom discussion within courses about how diversity applies across cultures, identities, contexts, etc.
- Students want interdisciplinary opportunities to engage with peers from different majors and backgrounds to promote a culture of collaboration and teamwork across the campus.

***Students want more support for all students, not just certain groups of students.***

- Students also frequently mention the need for mental health support and resources, financial assistance, and support for the arts.

**The survey asked people who said they did not report the discrimination/harassment they experienced in the past year to explain why they chose not to report.**

- Responses to this are quite varied, but the prominent response points to the idea that reporting discrimination/harassment doesn’t mean anything will be done about it and that it won’t change anything.
- Various other responses include not believing the person reporting the incident, fear of losing job or other repercussions, and a number of people who respond that it’s not that big of a deal.

## **Next Steps**

The University Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (UDEIC), advisory to the President, provides leadership in developing and implementing the University’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan. The committee reviews MSUM policies, programming, and practices through an equity lens and serves as a resource to students, staff, faculty, and other university groups for matters related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The

committee is also responsible for making recommendations to achieve equitable outcomes for MSUM students and employees.

Under the guidance of the CDO, the university DEI committee will be responsible for reviewing and reflecting on the data, hosting campus information-sharing meetings, aligning recommendations within various university structures, and setting intentions for proceeding with the data. Furthering the understanding of the data will require listening sessions and multiple opportunities for students to give feedback. This will help identify areas of focus to establish specific plans to make lasting improvements to climate. The individual responses in the survey will also be reviewed by the UDEIC, themed where possible, incorporated in the individual learning sessions, and provided to appropriate departments and committees across campus. The HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus Climate will be repeated in Spring 2026.

CDO Jered Pigeon and [members of the University Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee \(UDEIC\)](#) will share survey results and conduct information gathering in a variety of venues during Fall semester 2023. A website will be created to share information with internal and external audiences.

***Audience & Timeline***

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Audience</b>
Fall 2023	Cabinet
Fall 2023	Administrative Council
Fall 2023	Town Hall
Fall 2023	College Meetings
Fall 2023	Department Meetings (by request)
Fall 2023	Student Senate
Fall 2023	Other Student Groups (identify)
Fall 2023	Everyone

As appropriate, secondary audiences may receive some survey result information:

- Alumni and donors
- MSUM Foundation board
- Prospective undergraduate and graduate students and parents
- System office