

Awareness of Diversity 1999

General Assessment Report

Summary

Learning Outcome

Through the General Education core course in International-Intercultural Experience (Core 310) and other curricular and co-curricular activities, students will develop an appreciation of cultural diversity.

Faculty and personnel Involvement

Teresa Bader-Hull, Deborah Burris-Kitchen, Aghop Der-Karabetian, Steve Maack, Shelly Millone, Gloria Morrow, Mary Prieto-Bayard, Darryl Stevens, Ann Wichman, and Dorena Wright

Methods and Procedures

1. G.E. Core 310: International-Intercultural Experience course embedded work
2. ACT Opinion Survey
3. ULV Diversity Survey
4. Focus groups
5. Senior exit survey
6. Alumni survey

Results

1. In the G.E. Core course students report greater understanding and comfort of other cultures, but have difficulty integrating other cultures, and adopting their perspectives. Overall, there was high degree of embracing of other cultures.
2. Campus diversity climate was perceived to be generally quite positive but varied among ethnic groups. African Americans perceive it less positively.
- 3 About one-half of seniors reported college contribution to becoming an effective member in multicultural society, and developing awareness of global issues.
4. Over 80% of alumni said they were better prepared than their peers in appreciating cultural diversity.
5. There was universal appreciation of the diversity of the student body, with the acknowledgement of the need to improve diversity among faculty and staff.

Actions for Program Improvement

1. Changed Core 310 grade option to letter grade or credit/no credit
2. Surveyed faculty about the ways they incorporate diversity in their courses.
3. The Diversity Coalition is in the process of compiling outlets to help departments increase the number of qualified minority faculty candidates in application pools.

4. With the President's support, a grant proposal for a multicultural center to improve student support, and generate outreach to the faculty and the surrounding communities was submitted to the James Irvine Foundation.

Awareness of Diversity

Outcome

Through the General Education Core course in International-Intercultural Experience (CORE 310) and other curricular and co-curricular activities (campus climate) students will develop an appreciation of cultural diversity. The CORE 310 G.E. requirement is one of the ways the University tries to live out its Mission of promoting appreciation of cultural diversity.

Faculty and Personnel Involvement

1. Deborah Burris-Kitchen, Ann Wichman, Aghop Der-Karabetian and their students in various classes developed and standardized a four-item scale to measure cultural tolerance.
2. Dorena Wright conducted the content analysis of student journals.
3. Faculty administered the pre- and post-test measure of cultural tolerance, and provided student journals for analysis.
4. Teresa Bader-Hull coordinated the pre- and post-test data collection from the Core 310 courses, and helped with the development of the attitude measure.
5. Shelly Millone, a senior psychology student, helped with the computer data analysis.
6. Gloria Morrow and Deborah Burris-Kitchen conducted focus groups of students, faculty, and staff.
7. Mary Prieto-Bayard helped develop diversity related supplemental questions for the yearly ACT Opinion Survey.

8. Darryl Stevens and his students developed and conducted a special survey to assess the campus climate of diversity.

9. Steve Maack helped with the senior exit and the alumni survey, as well as the ACT Opinion Survey.

Methods and Procedures

Six different approaches were used to collect data to assess the campus climate and appreciation of cultural diversity. Assessment of the impact of the G.E. Core 310 course was one of the approaches.

1. G.E. Core 310: International-Intercultural Experience

The impact of the G.E. Core requirement, Core 310: International-Intercultural Experience, was assessed using three different approaches.

a. Pre-post attitude measure: A pre-post cultural tolerance scale was developed to assess attitude change (See attached copy of the measure). Between 1996 and 1998 a total of 51 students completed both the pre-test and the post-test. Not all of them had to take the course to meet a graduation requirement. The normative sample included 100 respondents from the general undergraduate student body. The scale is composed of 4 items and yields a composite score, and is rated on a 6-point scale.

b. Student Journals: As part of the course requirement students are expected to write journals about their immersion experiences. Complete set of journals from 21 students from the Spring 1998 classes were content analyzed. Students were given clear directions about writing journals identifying elements and criteria that should be covered.

c. Self-report of change: As part of the post-test attitude survey students were asked to write how the course and the immersion experience changed them. Altogether 51 students responded to the question.

2. ACT Opinion Survey

The ACT Opinion Survey has a single item on diversity; “How satisfied are you with racial harmony at this campus.” (Section III, Number 36). Responses to this question were analyzed between 1992 and 1997.

Also, the 1997 Survey included a number of supplemental questions to assess the campus climate on diversity. Over 300 students participated in the survey. However, the number of responses to individual questions varied somewhat. The supplemental questions and overall response percentages are attached.

3. ULV Diversity Survey

This was a special survey developed to assess the diversity related experiences of students from different ethnic groups, and their opinions about the diversity climate of the campus. It was part of a class project in a Behavioral Sciences research methods course. The survey included ten 5-point Likert type questions. Altogether 380 students participated in the survey in the Spring of 1998. Number of responses varied on different items. A copy of the survey questions with student responses is attached.

4. Focus Groups

A total of eight focus groups were conducted in the spring of 1998. The total number of participants was 61, 28 men, 33 women, 21 Latino American, 18 African American, and 21 European American. The eight focus groups were: One faculty, one staff, and one management, one heterogeneous adult student group. There were 4 homogeneous student groups: One Latino, one Latina, one African American men, and one African American women. One homogeneous European American, and one Asian American group is planned for the Fall of 1999. One faculty member and one student were involved in running the focus groups.

5. Senior Exit Survey

The ACT College Outcomes Survey was used to survey seniors during the 1997-1998 academic year. The survey includes 10 questions that relate to diversity issues. Altogether 134 traditional age students and 191 returning adults participated in the survey. These questions and student responses are attached.

6. Alumni Survey

Altogether 84 undergraduate and 125 graduate alumni from 1995 were surveyed by phone using an internally developed questionnaire. There were

two questions about diversity: a) “Please tell me if the preparation you received at ULV was excellent, good, fair or poor concerning the appreciation of cultural diversity.” And, “Compared to your peers or co-workers from other colleges and universities were you better prepared, about equally prepared, less than most prepared, or no basis for comparison concerning the value of appreciating cultural diversity.”

Results

1. G.E. Core 310: International-Intercultural Experience

a. Pre-post attitude measure

The following are the highlights of the findings.

1. The students in the core courses did not score differently from the normative sample on the pre-test or the post-test.
2. There was no difference between the pre- and the post-test on the composite tolerance attitude scale or the individual items.
3. There were not differences between men (n=19) and women (n=39).
4. There was a strong correlation between the pre-test and the post-test ($r=.50$). Those who tended to score high at the beginning of the class also tended to score high at the end of the class.
5. The average scores on all four items ranged between 4.14 and 5.31 among the pre- and the post-test scores, indicating a generally high degree of cultural tolerance.

Analysis of student written comments on the post-test, about how this course changed them, showed some variation: Few said they did not change; some said they were already open minded at the start of the course, but became even more open to other cultures; and a majority talked about their increased understanding of and comfort in relating to other cultures.

b. Student Journals

The following table summarizes the degree to which the different thematic elements students were instructed to include were present in their journals.

Table 1

Percentage of students who had different elements present in their journals (n=21)

Element	Present	Limited presence	Not present
	%	%	%
1. Observations of culture	100	0	0
2. Information about the culture	100	0	0
3. Participation in a culturally significant event (meal, religious ceremony)	71	29	0
4. Reflections on experiences	86	14	0
5. Interpret experiences	52	48	0
6. Make connection between different aspects of culture	29	33	38
7. Adopt the perspective of another culture	24	33	43

The analysis of journal contents showed that students were having the greatest difficulty in interpreting their experiences, and integrating them into their existing viewpoints. Dorena Wright, who conducted the content analysis, has observed that, “Students seem to get a better understanding when they find someone or something that can act as an interpreter such as a person, film, or a novel.”

c. Self-report of change

As part of the post-test attitude survey students were asked to say how the course changed them. Table 2 summarizes the percentage of the different themes present.

Table 2

Percentage of themes present in student responses to the question, “How were you changed as a result of this course.”

Theme	Frequency of themes	%
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1. Understand differences better, broadened

knowledge	18	25
2. Better accept, respect other cultures	15	21
3. More open-minded, aware, comfortable interacting	8	11
4. No change, already high in intercultural orientation	7	10
5. Learned about myself, appreciate my culture more	7	10
6. More interest and comfort in other cultures	6	8
7. Had wonderful experience	4	6
8. Think differently about the world	3	4
9. Discovered similarities between cultures	3	4

The themes showed that some came to the course with high intercultural orientation who did not report change. About a third of the themes indicated cognitive and intellectual learning about understanding and discovering differences. About half the themes dealt with the affective domain of greater comfort, acceptance, and appreciation of other cultures. Several students just had a “wonderful time.”

2. ACT Opinion Survey

The following table summarizes the response of students to the ACT question, “How satisfied are you with racial harmony at this college?” for the 1997 sample, and the 1992-1997 samples combined.

Table 3
Satisfaction with racial harmony

	1997 Sample n=269 %	1992-1997 samples n=2237 %
Very Satisfied/Satisfied	77	66
Neutral	18	26

Cross-tabulation analysis of the 1997 sample showed that satisfaction with racial harmony was not different for different ethnic groups (Chi Square=6.22, df=4).

In the combined 1992-1997 samples, although two-thirds of the students were satisfied or very satisfied with racial harmony, there were differences between ethnic groups (Chi Square=56.32, df=8, $p<.001$). Somewhat more African Americans (18%) tended to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied than European Americans (7%), and Latino Americans (9%).

Analysis of the supplemental questions of the 1997 survey showed further variation in the perceived climate of the campus by different ethnic groups, although there were areas of similar perceptions.

Areas of similar perceptions (No significant Chi Square) included the following:

1. About 60% of all ethnic groups said that multicultural events in and out of the classroom contributed somewhat or very much to their personal and/or academic development (Q1).
2. Over 80% said that experiences at ULV prepared them very well (27%) or somewhat (56%) for working in a diverse or multicultural work environment (Q2).
3. About 70% of students said that they felt very comfortable and 20% somewhat comfortable socializing with students who are different from them culturally (Q4).
4. Concerning dating persons who are culturally very different from them, 46% said they were very comfortable and 32% somewhat comfortable.
5. About 35% said that they have had very few (23%) or no (12%) meaningful role models at ULV that helped them develop personally or academically (Q7).

Areas where ethnic groups had different perceptions (Significant Chi Square) were the following:

1. About 1 out of 10 European Americans and 1 out of 5 Latino Americans and African Americans perceived insufficient tolerance of diversity on campus (Q3).

2. Concerning faculty sensitivity to multicultural and/or diversity issues in classes, more African Americans (31%) perceived faculty as being somewhat insensitive or not at all sensitive than Latino Americans (16%) and European Americans (8%) (Q6).

3. While about one out of two students said that 26% to 75% of their friends (not casual acquaintances) were from other races or ethnicities. Twice as many Asian Americans (about 40%) than other groups said over 75% of their friends were from other races or ethnic groups (Q8).

3. ULV Diversity Survey

The ten questions and the percentage of responses of the total sample, and the mean response comparisons of the different ethnic groups are attached. The number of Asian American respondents was too few to include in the comparison analysis. The data generally suggested that students tend to report a relatively positive climate for diversity. However, it appeared that the different ethnic groups experience and perceive the diversity environment somewhat differently, with African Americans experiencing it less positively.

The following are the highlights of the findings from this survey:

1. Overall, nearly 60% say that race relations has not, and 30% say it has been a factor in their educational process. Moreover, on average African Americans agreed more strongly than Latino or European Americans that race has been a factor in their educational process (Q1).
2. About 80% of the sample agreed or strongly agreed that faculty were comfortable discussing issues of race and ethnicity as they relate to classes with no differences between groups (Q2).
3. Nearly 40% of the sample agreed or strongly agreed that most of their friends were from their own racial/ethnic group. However, on average African Americans agreed more strongly than Latino and European Americans about their friends being from their own racial/ethnic group (Q3).
4. About 90% of the sample agreed or strongly agreed that they find it easy to establish meaningful relationships with members of other racial/ethnic groups, with no group differences (Q4).

5. While about 85% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that it had been easy for them to identify with faculty and staff who were members of other racial/ethnic groups, on average African Americans appeared to have a harder time doing so than Latino or European Americans (Q6).

6. While 65% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they have personally experienced little or no racial/ethnic prejudice, there were differences between ethnic groups. On average, African Americans tended to agree more strongly about experiencing personal prejudice on the campus than Latino and European Americans, and Latino Americans more so than European Americans (Q7).

7. About 80% of the sample agreed or strongly agreed that they had not been treated unfairly in class because of racial/ethnic membership. However, on average African Americans and Latino Americans tended to agree less strongly that they have not been treated unfairly in their classes (Q9).

4.Focus Groups

The summary of positive and negative themes that emerged from the focus groups are attached. Each groups was also asked to make action recommendation, which are also attached .

The positive themes that emerged across many of the focus groups were the following:

1. Diversity of the student body
2. Diverse student groups and clubs on the campus
3. Multicultural activities
4. Faculty who are sensitive to diversity issues
5. Diversity issues in the curriculum
6. Support programs and resources
7. University's Mission and commitment to diversity

The senior management group tended to view the campus as more positive than any of the other groups. This may be attributed to excessive optimism, or to their broader perspective and awareness of the situation on the wider campus.

The negative themes that emerged across many of the focus groups were the following:

1. Faculty, staff, and senior management do not adequately represent the diverse student population
2. Segregation in the cafeteria and the clubs
3. Limited multicultural activities
4. Lack of diversity awareness opportunities
5. Presence of negative stereotypes and racist attitudes
6. Inadequacy of diversity related resources

The African American students, specially the men, tended to view the campus as more hostile and negative than the other groups. This observation is consistent with the findings from the ACT Opinion Survey and the ULV Diversity Survey.

5. Senior Exit Survey

As the attached responses of seniors show, on all of the ten diversity related questions more of the ULV seniors saw a positive environment and contribution of the college than seniors in the national normative sample of private colleges.

Over two-thirds saw the college as supportive and responsive to men and women, social/ethnic groups, non-traditional, and special needs students. About the same number felt great or very great contribution of the college to their awareness of diversity, ability to interact well and fairly with people of different cultures.

However, only about one-half of seniors reported college contributing to being an effective member in a multicultural society, and becoming more aware of global and international issues/events. These are areas that need attention by ULV.

The freshmen entries compared to transfer entries were quite comparable in their responses, except more of them tended to report contribution of the college to dealing fairly with a wide range of people, and satisfied with the campus atmosphere of ethnic, political and religious understanding.

More non-traditional age students tended to report broadening awareness of diversity and global issues, and satisfaction with support given to non-traditional age students.

6. Alumni Survey

Among the undergraduate alumni about one-half indicated as excellent the preparation they received at ULV in appreciating cultural diversity. On a four-point scale, with 1 being excellent, the mean rating of the preparation they reported receiving was 1.67. About the same proportion of the undergraduate alumni also felt that they were better prepared than their peers from other universities in the appreciation of cultural diversity.

Among the graduate alumni one in three said that their preparation in appreciating cultural diversity was excellent, and another 50% said it was good. Compared to their peers from other universities they felt they were better prepared (30%) or about equally prepared (59%) in appreciating cultural diversity.

Dissemination and Dialogue

These data, specially the findings from the Core 310 class, have received considerable attention, and have led to good discussions among variety of groups on campus. The sharing of more recent data, and as they become available, will continue in the Fall of 1999. The following groups have so far been actively involved in talking about the findings:

1. Faculty teaching the International-Intercultural courses
2. The Coalition for Diversity

3. The General Education committee
4. The Assessment Committee
5. A focus group of students selected from the ASF
6. Faculty at large

Conclusions and Recommendations

The experiences of students in the G.E. Core 310 class point to outcomes that is quite positive. But, there seems to be some difficulty on the part of students interpreting their experiences and integrating them into their existing viewpoints. The opinion surveys indicate a generally positive campus climate, as well as a considerable contribution of ULV's academic and co-curricular experiences in helping students embrace and appreciate cultural diversity. However, the survey data combined with the focus group findings suggest that different ethnic groups experience and perceive the campus environment somewhat differently, with African American students reporting it as somewhat less positive.

Focus groups acknowledged the positive nature of the diversity of the student body, multicultural activities and resources, and infusion of diversity in the curriculum. Moreover, there was a universal acknowledgement of the need to further improve the diversity among the faculty, administration, and staff.

The discussions of the data among faculty and students resulted in a number of recommendations. Faculty felt that in the G.E. Core 310 class it may be of value to meet weekly instead of bi-weekly, and give students more opportunity to interact in the class. This would give them more chances to talk about their own cultures and to help them better integrate their experiences. Faculty further suggested that it may be helpful to encourage students to find a focus, such as the role of family in a culture, to facilitate integration.

Both faculty and students suggested that the letter grade option also be used to evaluate student work, as well as the credit/no credit option. This would encourage students to be more diligent about their experiences and reflections, and would reward more those who take the class more seriously.

Students suggested that more international experiences be made available to students, such as study abroad, and study abroad opportunities be advertised more widely. They also suggested that students have more time to make their integrative presentations at the end of the class.

Coalition for Diversity felt that they could be more active and available to faculty to infuse diversity in parts of the curriculum where it is less than obvious. They also recommended that departments should be more proactive in their search processes to increase qualified minority faculty in the applicant pools.

Recommendations from the focus groups reaffirmed the need to have more culturally representative faculty and staff. They also recommended offering diversity workshops for faculty and other personnel, creating activities to bring together the different student ethnic groups, and distributing information and discussing racial harassment policies on an ongoing basis. The senior management focus group suggested that criteria for recruitment should include an assessment of the candidates' attitude toward diversity.

Actions for Program Improvement

Based upon the recommendations of the various groups the General Education Committee implemented the following changes in the G.E. Core 310 class:

1. Change the grade options from credit/no credit to letter grade or credit/no-credit.
2. Make special time during class to model making connections and comparisons between cultures.

Coalition for Diversity has taken the following actions:

1. Surveyed faculty about the various ways they incorporate diversity in their courses with over 60% return rate. This will help the coalition play a consultative role in curriculum development.
2. Compiling list of outlets and methods for recruiting minority faculty candidates to serve as better resources to departments in their efforts.
3. The President will make a direct request to department chairs and deans to use the Coalition for Diversity in a consultative role to help improve the number of qualified minorities in the faculty application pools.
4. With the strong support and direct involvement of the President, a committee submitted a grant proposal for the development of a multicultural

center on campus with a dual focus of (a) student support and (b) academic and community outreach to the James Irvine Foundation.

Attachment 1

Means, standard deviations and F-tests of responses of Latino, European, and African American students to the ULV Diversity survey questions (strongly agree=1, strongly disagree=5).

	a. Latino American n=142		b. European American n=143		c. African American n=63		F	P	LSD
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
1. Race relations have not been a factor in my education	2.52	1.17	2.52	1.21	2.98	1.13	3.95	<.02	ca cb
2. I have personally experienced little or no social/ethnic prejudice as a student here	2.43	1.03	2.15	.97	2.75	1.11	7.95	<.001	ab ac bc
3. I do not believe that I have been treated unfairly in class because of my social/ethnic membership	2.11	.92	1.89	.82	2.37	1.02	6.47	<.01	ab bc

Attachment 2

Percentage of ULV Seniors (97-98) indicating positive attitudes about the way ULV deals with **diversity issues**, compared to the ACT norms of national private universities.

ACT Items	ULV Trad Undergrad n=134	Fresh Entry n=73	Trans Entry n=57	CAPA n=85	SCE n=106	National Privates
1. Required courses outside major helped broaden awareness of diversity among people, their values & cultures (Strongly Agree/ Agree) (II-B4)	72	74	70	83	79	69
2. This college is equally supportive of women & men (Strongly Agree/ Agree) (II-C5)	87	92	81	88	93	69
3. This college is equally supportive of all social/ethnic groups (Strongly Agree/ Agree) (II-C7)	80	80	77	87	83	63
4. College contributed to interacting well with people from cultures other than my own (Very Great/Great) (II-D3)	67	66	67	55	48	44

5. College contributed to becoming a more effective member in a multicultural society (Very Great/Great) (II-D35)	53	49	58	48	45	29
ACT Items	ULV Trad Undergrad	Fresh Entry	Trans Entry	CAPA	SCE	National Privates
6. College response to nontraditional students-older, part-time (Very Satisfied/Satisfied) (III-20)	62	59	65	83	83	63
7. College contributed to becoming more aware of global & international issues/events (Very Great/Great) (II-D10)	44	44	46	54	51	37
8. College contributed to dealing fairly with a wide range of people (Very Great/Great) (II-D22)	65	70	58	46	48	48
9. College responds to students with special needs-disabled, handicapped (Very Satisfied/Satisfied) (III-22)	61	67	57	53	56	52
10. Campus atmosphere of ethnic, political, & religious understanding (Very Satisfied/Satisfied) (III-23)	62	67	58	71	64	53

