

# Awareness of Diversity 2003

## ACT Senior Exit Survey Results

Report Prepared: July, 2005

### Learning Outcomes

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.

### A. Freshman-Transfer Comparison of ACT Supplemental Questions on Diversity

#### Participants

During the 2002-2003 academic year altogether 390 ULV seniors completed the ACT Senior Exit survey, including especially designed supplemental questions, on the main campus and at Residence Centers. Students enrolled in the culminating Senior Project courses completed the survey under supervision in class settings. The demographic categories were as follows:

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Freshman Entry (Predominantly traditional-age)	53	14
Transfer Entry (Predominantly adult)	197	51
Unknown	140	36
Women	252	64
Men	129	33
Unknown	9	2

ACT's background form asks if students are Freshman Entry or Transfer Entry, and does not specifically identify students if they were enrolled on the main campus or at resident centers. For the purposes of this report Transfer Entry may be considered to be predominantly composed of adult students, and Freshman Entry may be considered to be predominantly composed of traditional-age students.

#### Supplemental Survey Questions

The supplemental questions were prepared by faculty in the Academic Assessment Committee in collaboration with the Director of the General Education. The questions dealt with the three areas of interest: (a) Diversity-7 questions (b) Community Service/Orientation-6 questions and (c) Fitness and Health-8 questions. This report deals with the diversity questions only.

## **Findings**

Table 1 summarizes the comparison of the Freshman Entry and Transfer Entry students on diversity items. The endorsements of items show similarities and differences between the two groups. In both groups high numbers, about three to four in five, reported that they socialize with and affirm people who are different from them. However, in both groups relatively few, one in five, individuals endorsed attending or immersing themselves in diverse cultural and ethnic events or talking with people different from themselves about walking in their shoes. Noticeably larger number of Freshman Entry (over half) than Transfer Entry (one in five) students sought to explore difference.

The two groups appear to be generally similar in their high or low endorsement of diversity.

Table 1  
Percentage of responses of ULV Seniors (ACT 02-03) on **Supplemental** items related to **Diversity** at ULV by **entry status**

ACT Items	Freshman Entry n=53	Transfer Entry n=197	All ULV n=390
1. I socialize with people who are different from my own culture (including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability). (Always/Usually)	66	79	77
2. I often talk with people who are different from me about what it means to live in their shoes. (Always/Usually)	26	35	36
3. I make an effort to go to cultural events that represent people different from me. (Always/Usually)	17	21	20
4. I am affirmative of people who are different from me. (Strongly Agree/Agree)	66	68	64
5. I like to read about cultures that are different from me. (Strongly Agree/Agree)	57	67	64
6. I immerse myself in cultures/religions/ethnicities/groups that are not my own. (Always/Usually)	21	33	29
7. When I am confronted with difference, I seek to understand the history and context of why we are different. (Always/Usually)	53	17	56

## **B. Ethnic group comparison of responses to standard ACT (02-03) Diversity related items**

### **Participants**

During the 2002-2003 academic year altogether 390 ULV seniors completed the ACT Senior Exit survey, including especially designed supplemental questions, on the main campus and at Residence Centers. Diversity related questions dealt with cultures, gender and special needs. Students enrolled in the culminating Senior Project courses completed the survey under supervision in class settings. The participants in various demographic categories were as follows:

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
<b>Ethnic Background</b>		
White	188	48
Black	29	8
Hispanic	80	21
Other and unknown	93	23
<b>Gender</b>		
Women	252	64
Men	129	33
Unknown	9	2

### **Findings**

Table 2 presents the responses of White, Black and Hispanic students to diversity related questions on the standard ACT form, and Table 3 presents their responses to the supplemental questions on diversity. For the standard questions national norms are also provided for Whites and for all minorities.

Several response patterns stand out:

- (a) Compared to national norms White, Black and Hispanic students at ULV report generally more favorable opinion about the college diversity climate and their personal growth related to diversity issues, as well as report greater contribution by the college towards their personal growth in areas of diversity awareness.
- (b) There are noticeable differences and similarities between the ethnic groups regarding diversity related campus climate and personal growth in diversity awareness.
- (c) There is greater satisfaction with some aspects of diversity than others.

The following are specific highlight of findings from Table 2 (Standard ACT Questions):

- All three ethnic groups report greater satisfaction with gender related climate and personal growth than with diversity related to culture and special needs.
- All three ethnic groups report comparably high opinions regarding the value of courses outside of major to broaden diversity awareness, personal growth in interacting with people from other cultures than their own, becoming more effective member in a multicultural society, and dealing fairly with wide range of people.
- In all three ethnic groups there is noticeable discrepancy between reported personal growth in becoming a more effective member in a multicultural society and interacting with people of other cultures, and the contribution of the college to such a growth. This discrepancy is especially large for Black students.
- Black students are less in agreement than White and Hispanic students that the college is equally supportive of all racial/ethnic groups.
- Black students report less contribution by the college than Hispanic students to personal growth in interacting well with people from other cultures and becoming a more effective member in a multicultural society.
- Black Students report less satisfaction than White and Hispanic students with the campus atmosphere of ethnic, political and religious understanding.

The following are highlights of finding from Table 3 (Supplemental Questions):

- Nearly two-thirds or more of all ethnic groups report socializing with other groups (with Black and Hispanic students reporting more so than White students), being affirming of other groups, and reading about cultures of others.
- Less than about one third of all three ethnic groups report talking with other ethnic groups about what it means to live in their shoes, attend culture events of other groups, and immerse themselves in cultures of other groups.
- While about one-half of Black students report seeking to understand the history and context of why people are different from themselves, only one-in-five White and Hispanic students report so.

Table 2

Percentage of responses of ULV Seniors (02-03) on items related to **Appreciation of Cultural Diversity** at ULV by **ethnicity**, compared to the ACT norms of national private universities

ACT Items	ULV Whites n=184	National Privates: Whites	ULV Blacks n=29	ULV Hispanics n=80	National Privates: All Minorities
4. Required courses <i>outside</i> my area of specialization helped me...broaden my awareness of diversity among people, their values and cultures  (Strongly Agree/Agree) (II-B4)	69	62	69	76	69

5. This college is equally supportive of women and men					
(Strongly Agree/Agree) (II-C5)	92	74	83	90	67
7. This college is equally supportive of all racial/ethnic groups					
(Strongly Agree/Agree) (II-C7)	87	69	66	91	63
3. Interacting well with people from cultures other than my own					
(Personal Growth: Very Much/Much) (II-D3)	71	57	86	82	68
(College Contribution: Very Great/Great) (II-D3)	59	43	59	77	52
35. Becoming a more effective member in a multicultural society					
(Personal Growth: Very Much/Much) (II-D35)	63	46	69	70	59
(College Contribution: Very Great/Great) (II-D35)	52	35	38	58	45
20. College response to nontraditional students (e.g. older, part-time)					
(Very Satisfied/Satisfied) (III-20)	60	52	37	57	47
10. Becoming more aware of global and international issues/events					
(Personal Growth: Very Much/Much) (II-D10)	69	45	59	68	52
(College Contribution: Very Great/Great) (II-D10)	53	34	62	60	41
22. Dealing fairly with a wide range of people					

(Personal Growth: Very Much/Much) (II-D22)	73	61	69	77	65
(College Contribution: Very Great/Great) (II-D22)	53	44	59	68	49
22. College response to students with special needs (e.g. disabled, handicapped)					
(Very Satisfied/Satisfied) (III-22)	27	40	25	46	43
23. Campus atmosphere of ethnic, political, and religious understanding					
(Very Satisfied/Satisfied) (III-23)	64	50	46	76	52
26. Developing productive work relationships with both men and women					
(Personal Growth: Very Much/Much) (II-D26)	75	60	66	78	64
(College Contribution: Very Great/Great) (II-D26)	57	42	59	73	48

Table 3  
Percentage of responses of ULV Seniors (ACT 02-03) on **Supplemental** items related to **Diversity** at ULV by **ethnicity**

ACT Items	ULV White n=188	ULV Black n=29	ULV Hisp n=80
1. I socialize with people who are different from my own culture (including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability). (Always/Usually)	70	90	84
2. I often talk with people who are different from me about what it means to live in their shoes. (Always/Usually)	27	34	40

3. I make an effort to go to cultural events that represent people different from me. (Always/Usually)	14	28	25
4. I am affirmative of people who are different from me. (Strongly Agree/Agree)	66	72	69
5. I like to read about cultures that are different from me (Strongly Agree/Agree)	62	59	69
6. I immerse myself in cultures/religions/ethnicities/groups that are not my own. (Always/Usually)	6	28	36
7. When I am confronted with difference, I seek to understand the history and context of why we are different. (Always/Usually)	18	48	20

---

### **C. Comparison of 1998 and 2003 responses to standard ACT diversity items**

Table 4 presents comparison of response to standard ACT diversity related questions from 1998 and 2003 for traditional age and non-traditional age students. The following are highlight of findings:

- For traditional age students no noticeable changes are shown except in few instances.

In the 2003 sample:

- (a) Somewhat fewer report contribution of the college to dealing fairly with a wide range of people.
- (b) Fewer show satisfaction with college's response to special needs students.
- (c) Fewer report agreement with required courses outside the major broadening awareness of diversity.
- (d) more report contribution of the college to awareness of global and international issues.

- For non-traditional students several shifts are noticeable.

In the 2003 sample:

- (a) More report college contribution to interacting well with people from other cultures.
- (b) More report becoming a more effective member in a multicultural society.
- (c) More report college contributing to dealing fairly with a wide range of people.
- (d) Fewer report satisfaction with the college's response to nontraditional students.
- (b) Fewer report satisfaction with college's response to students with special needs.

Table 4  
 Responses of ULV Seniors in 1998 and 2003 to ACT diversity questions.

	Tradition	Freshman	SCE	Transfer
	1998	Entry	(RCA)	Entry
	(n=134)	2003	1998	2003
	%	(n=53)	(n=106)	(n=196)
	%	%	%	%
1. Required courses outside major helped broaden awareness of diversity among people, their values & cultures (Strongly Agree/Agree) (II-B4)	72	62	79	75
2. This college is equally supportive of women & men (Strongly Agree/Agree) (II-C5)	87	92	93	89
3. This college is equally supportive of all racial/ethnic groups (Strongly Agree/Agree) (II-C7)	80	92	83	82
4. College contributed to interacting well with people from cultures other than my own (Very Great/Great) (II-D3)	67	62	48	66
5. College contributed to becoming a more effective member in a multicultural society (Very Great/Great) (II-D35)	53	53	45	54
6. College response to nontraditional students-older, part-time (Very Satisfied/Satisfied) (III-20)	62	62	83	58
7. College contributed to becoming more aware of global & international issues/events (Very Great/Great) (II-D10)	44	59	51	59
8. College contributed to dealing fairly with a wide range of people (Very Great/Great) (II-D22)	65	55	48	62
9. College responds to students with special needs-disabled, handicapped (Very Satisfied/Satisfied) (III-22)	61	42	56	30
10. Campus atmosphere of ethnic, political, & religious understanding (Very Satisfied/Satisfied) (II-23)	62	64	64	69



### **Action Recommendations**

1. Both traditional age and non-traditional age students need to be provided with greater opportunities to explore cultures and experiences other than their own, especially White and Hispanic students.
2. Gather in depth information from Black students regarding their sources of dissatisfaction with the campus climate.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of services provided by the university to non-traditional age students and students with special needs.