PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF A
CAMPUS CLIMATE FOR DIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This study expands upon previous research in higher education related to student perceptions of a campus climate for diversity. Such studies have generally found that the perceptions of students of color in predominantly White institutions of higher education are largely negative. Additionally, the unique experiences and perspectives of Asian and Pacific Islander students not aggregated into the pan “Asian Pacific American” category are missing from the literature on campus climate studies. Given the diversity within the Asian and Pacific Islander population, coupled with the fact that they are the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in the U.S. and increasingly compose a significant proportion of college-bound students, it is important that institutions include Asian and Pacific Islander student perspectives in institutional climate studies.

This institution-specific study examined the effect of proportional representation of Asian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian undergraduate students on their experiences and perceptions of diversity within Kanter’s (1977) theoretical framework. In contrast to the student makeup in the majority of colleges and universities, students at the target institution were 25% Caucasian and nearly 60% Asian or Pacific Islander. Dependent variables were students’ personal experience with diversity on campus, perceptions of the campus climate, perceptions of institutional actions about diversity, and overall satisfaction with college. Survey responses from 322 Asian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian students and qualitative data from 29 focus-group participants were analyzed. Multivariate analyses suggest that proportional representation of racially diverse students has a significant effect on student perceptions of diversity. Moreover, qualitative findings reveal that these differences are ethnicity specific, rather than race specific. This study corroborates previous research that demonstrated the proportions of socially and culturally different people in the environment shape the dynamics of interaction and their perceptions in different ways. Its primary contribution to the literature is that it broadens the findings to Asian and Pacific American
students and affirms that not only race, but also ethnicity and culture, influence the context, experience, and perception of diversity on college and university campuses.
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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction to the Problem

Colleges and universities engage in climate research to determine what can be done to improve the college experience for their students. Of the numerous studies investigating the college environment on student success, a common finding is that institutional climate and culture contribute to student satisfaction and success. While a "chilly" climate negatively affects student retention (Hurtado & Carter, 1994), grades (Fuertes & Sedlacek, 1995), and graduation rates (Tafalla, Rivera, & Tuchel, 1993), positive perceptions of the campus climate lead to meaningful educational experiences (Blue, 2004), higher grades and graduation rates (Brown, 2004), and higher levels of student involvement (Astin, 1993).

While some campus climate studies address the experiences of women, students with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students, the majority of research focuses on the experiences of racial and ethnic minority students. Institutional emphasis on racial and ethnic diversity is not surprising, given the fact that American college students continue to grow in number and diversity with respect to race and ethnicity. Of the more than sixteen million individuals enrolled in U.S. postsecondary institutions, one third are racial or ethnic minorities (Eckel & King, 2004). A heterogeneous student population, coupled with emerging evidence supporting the educational benefits of diversity, has resulted in the promotion of diversity efforts at colleges and universities across the nation.

An Operational Definition of Diversity

The term "diversity" has many definitions. A decade ago, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) developed an operational definition for diversity that is now commonly used in higher education realms: "The variety created in any society (and within any individual) by the presence of different points of view and ways of making meaning which generally flow from the influence of different cultural and religious heritages, from the differences in how we socialize women and men, and from the differences
that emerge from class, age, and developed ability” (Association of American Colleges & Universities, 1995). In other words, diversity involves the participation and not merely the presence of people who are different in culture, religion, gender, class, age and ability.

Diversity and the Educational Mission

Expanding diversity has become a common goal for the majority of American colleges and universities. In fact, over fifty higher education organizations have publicly endorsed diversity in the Chronicle of Higher Education (American Council on Education, 1998) stating how diversity benefits individuals, the workplace, and communities (Chang, 2002). If the primary mission of higher education is to provide a quality education, then institutions of higher education have an obligation to “create the best possible educational environment for the young adults whose lives are likely to be significantly changed during their years on campus” (Gurin, 1999). In a nation characterized by diversity, creating this optimal learning environment is directly influenced by the diverse makeup of an institution’s students.

A growing body of research is clearly documenting the value of a racially and ethnically diverse student population because it leads to an enriched educational experience (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002), a workforce with greater levels of cross-cultural competence and higher levels of creativity and innovation, and a more educated citizenry (Milem & Hakuta, 2000). Given the significance of these educational outcomes, it is important to understand the forces affecting institutional climates toward diversity (Inkelas, 2003).

Current Context of Diversity in Higher Education

Half a century ago, earning a college degree was a pursuit in which primarily Whites engaged in. With the advent of civil rights legislation beginning in the early 1960s, students of color were less of a rarity but by no means a common presence on campus. Earlier efforts in increasing campus diversity were focused almost entirely at providing access for groups
traditionally underrepresented in higher education in terms of their race and/or ethnicity. Although access for certain populations is still an issue, some regard diversity in higher education to also refer to the "value and significance that community places on particular differences" (Smith et al., 1997). Diversity, particularly in higher education, is a multidimensional construct (Smith, 1995) that includes representation, climate and intergroup relations, education and scholarship, and institutional transformation.

Representation, or structural diversity, addresses the numerical representation of diverse groups (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1998) and is necessary for the other dimensions of diversity to occur. Representation in higher education has evolved to mean representation proportional to the group's representation in the larger community, rather than access to a token few. Elements of this dimension include access, retention, and success of students traditionally underrepresented, such as African Americans, Native Americans, and Latino/as. Due in part to their rapid progress and visible success in higher education, less attention has been given to Asian American students. Viewed as the "model minority," Asian American issues regarding representation were often ignored (Smith et al., 1997). To date, there is still a paucity of research regarding the rich diversity within the Asian Pacific American population, thereby explaining why issues of their representation and success are missing from the literature on campus diversity (Hune & Chan, 1997).

Campus climate and intergroup relations focus on the influence of the collegiate environment on institutional and student success and involve both the frequency and the quality of intergroup interaction. The majority of these interactions are informal and occur outside of the classroom (Gurin et al., 2002) and include experiences in the residence halls, during campus events, and in the course of social activities (Antonio, 1998; Chang, 1996). As access for students of color has increased, issues regarding the college climate have emerged. Much of the literature centers on the unresponsiveness of the institutional environment to minority student needs, past experiences, and educational expectations (Smith et al., 1997),
particularly to African American students and other students of color, and to a lesser extent to
students with disabilities, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students. Less is known
about the effects of the institutional culture on particular groups of students, including Asian
and Pacific Americans.

The third dimension, education and scholarship, targets the impact of issues of
diversity in the curriculum, on teaching methods, and on scholarly inquiry. Persistent findings
on this dimension demonstrate that infusing cultural diversity into college coursework,
involving peers in classroom instruction (e.g., small group discussions), and participating in
co-curricular and experiential education activities (e.g., service learning) increases critical
thinking and intellectual engagement (Smith et al., 1997).

The fourth dimension, institutional transformation, addresses comprehensive
institutional commitment to diversity and its effects on students. Included in this category are
the role of visible leadership, mission statements, faculty and staff diversity, and students’
self-reported perceptions that diversity is taken seriously on campus (Smith et al., 1997).
Numerous studies validate the finding that an institutional commitment to diversity increases
student satisfaction with college (Astin, 1993; Villalpando, 1994; Tanaka, 1996). A
comprehensive institutional commitment to diversity that encompasses a simultaneous
approach—increasing representation of diverse students, creating a positive campus
environment respectful of diversity, and infusing diversity in the curriculum—maximizes the
educational benefits of diversity on student learning (Chang, 2002).

Statement of Problem and Purpose of Study

As evidenced previously, the study of diversity in higher education is an evolving and
multi-dimensional field. While there is a growing body of research on the various dimensions
of diversity, much more work is needed to identify the unique experiences and issues faced by
groups such as Asian Pacific American (APA) students. Specifically, studies that focus on the
diversity within the APA population are needed. Because data on APAs in higher education
are aggregated, overgeneralizations and inaccurate interpretations of their experience are made. When data are disaggregated, significant educational differences within and among ethnic groups are revealed.

APAs are the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in the United States and are expected to reach 10 percent of the population by 2050 (The White House Initiative, 2004). Despite making up only 4% of the total American population, APAs comprise between one quarter and one half of the enrollment in many public and private institutions of higher education. Although APAs as a whole are more likely than any other racial/ethnic group to earn a bachelor's degree by age 25, only 20% of Vietnamese Americans, 16% of Native Hawaiians, and less than 6% of Tongans, Laotians, Cambodians, and Hmong do so. In fact, Southeast Asians have the highest high school dropout rates in the country (Le, 2005). Given this fact, climate studies on college campuses investigating ethnic and racial diversity must include ethnically diverse APA students.

In addition to differences in educational attainment, educational experiences, and representation, APA students differ in geographic residence and country of origin. Within the APA community, there are 31 diverse groups not linked by a single language, religion, social class, or national origin (Liang, Ting, & Teraguchi, 2001). Asian Americans encompass populations ranging from the “Hmong of Duluth to fifth-generation Nisei of the East Bay to the South Asians of ‘Mississippi Makala’” (Adelman, 1997), while Pacific Islander Americans herald from the State of Hawai‘i, the countries of Samoa and Tonga in Polynesia to Guam and other islands in Micronesia that were historically part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Immigration status and length of time in the United States varies for APAs, and four out of every ten APAs do not speak English fluently (The White House Initiative, 2004).

One of the purposes of this study was to contribute to the paucity of literature on the APA experience of diversity in higher education. It examined APA undergraduate student
perspectives of the campus climate for diversity at a large, predominantly APA university and
sought to determine whether proportional representation of APA students affects their
perception of diversity.

**Rationale for Studying the Problem**

Many colleges and universities engaged in institutional climate research have found
that student perceptions of diversity issues are related to overall satisfaction with their
institution and that perceptions vary by racial group (Helm, Sedlacek, & Prieto, 1998).
However, a review of the literature in the last decade uncovered only two studies that
addressed the proportional enrollment of racial/ethnic minorities and its impact on student
outcomes. One of these studies focused on educational outcomes (Chang, 1996) and the other
on perceptions of diversity (AdisaThomas, 2000). No studies were found that investigated the
effect of proportional representation of ethnically diverse APAs on their perceptions of the
campus climate for diversity. In addition, no similar study was conducted at an institution with
a predominantly APA student population.

**Need and Significance of this Study**

In the literature on racial diversity in higher education, Asian American student needs
are often overlooked because they are thought not to need services (Kodama, McEwen, Liang,
& Lee, 2002) or because the black/white conceptualization of race renders APAs "invisible"
(Osajima, 1995). In Gish Jen's words, Asian Americans are in fact "quite profoundly
nobody...neither seers nor seen" (as cited in Adelman, 1997). Even less visible in the
literature are Pacific Islander student experiences in higher education. Despite the fact that the
U.S. Census acknowledged Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders as a separate ethnic
group in 2000, they remain among the least studied and most misunderstood of all
racial/ethnic groups (Makuakane-Drechsel & Hagedorn, 2000). When views of APAs are
discussed, it is often only in comparison to findings that emphasize other racial/ethnic groups
(Osajima, 1991; Yonezawa & Antonio, 1996). APAs are considered the "missing" minority in
the collegiate racial discourse (Inkelas, 2003), and diversity researchers in higher education have pointed to the need for more research on their experiences and perspectives (Smith, 1997; Hurtado et al., 1999). In particular, diversity research must examine the diversity of experiences within the different ethnic subgroups and not generalize APA student experiences (Inkelas, 2003).

This study used Kanter’s (1977) theory of proportions to expand upon previous research on gender and racial composition and student outcomes, none of which took into account differences within the APA population. The results of this study provide further information about the unique experiences faced by Pacific Islanders when disaggregated from Asian students.

Rationale for Approach to the Problem

While diversity in higher education has evolved to include intergroup relations, education and scholarship, and institutional commitment, some researchers argue that expanding agendas have overshadowed one of basic goals to achieving diversity—proportional enrollment (Chang, 1996; Mohanty, 1994; Roman, 1993). Proportional enrollment is achieved when students attend an institution of higher education (IHE) to the extent of their racial/ethnic representation in the population from which they come (Chang, 1996). For example, in the State of Hawai‘i, Asians and Pacific Islanders comprise two thirds of the general population, Caucasians make up one quarter, and African Americans, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and Hispanic Americans together comprise less than ten percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). What makes Hawai‘i’s population particularly unique is that one in five people is multi-racial compared to one in forty-two people nationwide (see Table 1).
### Table 1. National and State Population by Race, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Hawai‘i (%)</th>
<th>United States (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>N=1,211,537</td>
<td>N=281,421,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>75.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino (any race)</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some other race</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APA student enrollment at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa (UHM) also differs from APA student enrollment at national institutions of higher education. According to the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics, 6 percent of students nationwide in 2001 were APA compared to nearly 60 percent of students at UHM, and nearly 70 percent of students were Caucasian versus only 25 percent at UHM (see Table 2).

### Table 2. IHE Student Enrollment by Race, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>UHM (%)</th>
<th>National (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>68.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed race</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At first blush, it would appear that Asians participate at UHM similar to their proportion in the larger population, which is approximately 40 percent. When subgroups within the overall Asian category are disaggregated, however, data reveal that Chinese, Japanese, and Korean are overrepresented at UHM, while Filipinos are significantly underrepresented. Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are also severely underrepresented at UHM and constitute less than half of their respective proportion in the larger population (see Table 3).

Table 3. Comparison of APA Population by IHE and State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>UHM (%)</th>
<th>Hawai‘i (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Subcontinent</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guamanian or Chamorro</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micronesian</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Ethnic Background</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dashes indicate data not available.
The evidence presented here suggests that UHM has not achieved educational parity for different ethnic groups and that proportional enrollment related to APA students deserves attention. Although recent studies have examined proportional enrollment and its impact on educational outcomes (Sax, 1994; Chang, 1996) and its influence on perceptions of diversity (Adisa Thomas, 2000), none have examined the proportional enrollment and perceptions of diversity primarily of Asian and Pacific Americans within a predominantly non-White institution of higher education.

Theoretical Model and Framework Examined

To determine how proportional representation might impact APA student perspectives of diversity, this study used Kanter’s (1977) theory of proportions as the theoretical framework (see Figure 1). As a result of her research on women in the workplace, Kanter hypothesized that proportion significantly influences group dynamics between men and women and between people of different cultures. Her concept of “tokenism” relates to environments where one group is severely underrepresented such that the solo or “token” member is often given undue attention by “dominant” members belonging to the majority group, thereby resulting in stereotypes. The skewed environment leads to dominant control of the environment and heightened visibility, polarization, and assimilation of the token (Kanter, 1977).

Visibility increases the pressure to perform or conform, resulting in higher stress. Polarization exaggerates differences between tokens and dominants and can result in heightened group boundaries, feelings of isolation or being on the “periphery,” exclusion from informal peer networks, and misperceptions of identity and role in the environment. Assimilation imposes a social role on tokens leading to stereotyping and the likelihood of being trapped into limiting roles (Kanter, 1977).

In contrast, people who are represented in very high proportion tend to fit in more easily, be more likely to participate with others informally, form peer alliances, face less
stress, and encounter fewer misperceptions regarding their identity. In a higher education context, Kanter’s theory would predict patterns of visibility, polarization, and assimilation among students, depending upon their proportional enrollment. Kanter developed four types of possible proportions: "uniform" groups having a ratio of 100:0; "skewed" groups, in which one group predominates and controls the group, having a ratio of 85:15; "tilted" groups, in which a majority group is affected by the culture of the minority group, approaching a ratio of 65:35; and lastly “balanced” groups, in which no group predominates, having a ratio near 60:40 and 50:50 (Kanter, 1977). As proportional composition approaches 20 to 30 percent, the potential effects of tokenism are reduced because individuals become more aware of within-group differences and stereotypes of the minority group are less evident (Mullen, Rozell, & Johnson, 2000).
Kanter's (1977) group types as defined by proportional representation of two social categories in the membership.

In this study, Kanter's theory would predict students belonging to the token group (Pacific Islanders) would have a less positive perception of the campus climate for diversity than students in the tilted group (Caucasians) or the dominant group (Asian). Caucasians
would have a more positive perception of the campus climate when compared to Pacific Islanders, and Asian students would have the most positive perceptions overall.

**Research Questions**

This study addressed three specific questions: Is there a relationship between proportional representation of APA ethnicity on campus and their perception of diversity? Moreover, what are APA undergraduate student experiences with, and attitudes and actions relative to, diversity issues? Lastly, what are ways to improve the campus climate for diversity for both Caucasian and APA students? The first question was addressed by examining 322 student responses to a survey on the campus climate for diversity. The second and third questions were addressed by examining student responses to the survey and by reviewing student feedback from 29 students participating in five ethnic-specific focus groups: Japanese, Filipino, Caucasian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander.

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. This first chapter provides the theoretical background, purpose, need, significance, and rationale for the study. Chapter 2 contains a summary of recent literature on campus climate studies and proportional enrollment of underrepresented students. Chapter 3 describes the methods of analysis and procedures used for examining the relationship between proportional enrollment and perceptions of diversity on campus. Chapter 4 describes the results of the analyses from the survey and the focus groups. Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the findings and presents the conclusions and implications of these findings for the evaluation of APA student perspectives on diversity.

**Explanation of Terms**

*Attitudes and actions relative to diversity issues:* In this study, attitudes and actions are measured by degree of actual and desired contact with different people and by institutional emphasis on diversity (e.g., leadership, course content, classroom climate). In addition, responses to derogatory comments, jokes, and graffiti are identified.

*Campus climate:* In this study, campus climate refers to the environment for
current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of faculty, staff, and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential.

**Discriminatory:** Prejudicial.

**Diversity:** This study adopts the definition of diversity endorsed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U, 1995): “The variety created in any society (and within any individual) by the presence of different points of view and ways of making meaning which generally flow from the influence of different cultural and religious heritages, from the differences in how we socialize women and men, and from the differences that emerge from class, age and developed ability.”

**Dominant:** In a given group, dominants make up between 36% and 85% of the population. In this study, students belonging to the dominant group are Asian students. Due to their significant proportion, dominants significantly influence social interactions and the culture of their environment.

**Experiences with diversity:** In this study, experiences with diversity are limited to awareness of diversity events and groups and personal experiences and observations of harassment.

**Harassment:** Any offensive, hostile, or intimidating conduct that interferes unreasonably with a person’s ability to work or learn.

**Institutional commitment:** Students’ perception of the institution’s dedication to producing an environment conducive for student success (e.g., academic, social).

**Tilted:** Students belonging in the “tilted” group represent between 16% and 35% of the student population on campus. In this study, Caucasian students are considered a tilted group. Comprising a less extreme proportion than either token or dominant groups, tilted groups are often viewed as a minority.

**Token:** A “token” is a member of a skewed group that forms 15% or less of the population. In this study, membership in the token group is limited to Native Hawaiian and
other Pacific Islander students because of their low numbers relative to other students on the campus.

*Underrepresented students:* Underrepresented students are students traditionally underenrolled at IHEs given their proportion of the general population because of their age, ancestry, gender, racial or ethnic background, disability, national origin, religious creed, or sexual orientation. In this study, the underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minority students is considered. These students are Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, including Samoans, Tongans, and Micronesians.

**Limitations of the Study**

The sample of students in this study was limited to one university (UHM), which is unique from other IHEs on the U.S. continent. All interpretations were thereby limited in their representativeness and generalizability. The limited sample size was not conducive to the statistical examination of specific ethnic perspectives of diversity. For example, the APA sample was divided into two subgroups, Asian and Pacific Islander. While further division of each subgroup into Filipino, Japanese, or Chinese (Asian) or Native Hawaiian, Micronesian, or Samoan (Pacific Islander) was possible, given the small sample size of some of the ethnic groups some statistical procedures were not appropriate. However, some of these limitations were accommodated by the ethnic-specific focus groups employed by the study. Lastly, the limitations in the sample may have contributed to some of the inconsistencies between the study's findings and previous research.
CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Organization of Review

This chapter is organized into three main sections. The first section outlines the criteria for inclusion in the literature review and describes key studies in the literature related to the impact of the campus climate on both White students and students of color. The second section discusses the importance of contact among diverse peers and reviews similar empirical studies within Kanter’s theoretical framework conducted at other universities. The final section contains a summary of the major findings of the literature review.

Introduction and Criteria for Inclusion in Review

The literature review encompassed a search of documents, which addressed three different areas: campus climate, proportional enrollment, and Asian and Pacific Islander students’ experience in higher education. The majority of articles on campus climate focused on perceptions of students of color, primarily the African American student experience. A thorough review of the literature uncovered three empirical studies that used proportional enrollment as the primary research interest or independent variable. Of these, one focused on the proportional enrollment of women and educational outcomes; one examined the proportion of racially diverse students and educational outcomes; and the last addressed proportional enrollment and perceptions of the campus climate. The literature review did not identify any study, which investigated the effect of proportional enrollment of Asian, Pacific Islander, and White students in a non-predominantly White institution on student perspectives on diversity.

Campus Climate Studies

General findings of climate studies point to differing racial and ethnic views of diversity. Experiences with, and attitudes and actions relative to, diversity issues vary by racial and ethnic affiliation (Hurtado, Carter, & Kardia, 1998). Perceptions are also influenced by the institution’s historical legacy of excluding various ethnic groups, the dynamics of
intergroup relations, the representation of diversity in the curriculum, and the structural
diversity of the student body (Hurtado et al., 1998). These multiple elements are interrelated:
an institution's history of segregation may make it difficult to enroll a racially and ethnically
diverse student population, which may contribute to negative stereotypes and misconceptions
that affect how students and faculty interact with each other. Therefore institutions must
consider a multidimensional approach to enhancing diversity on campus. When institutions
fail to concurrently address these elements, the outcomes of diversity are not necessarily
positive.

The majority of evidence indicates almost universal difficulty with the campus
climate among students of color, particularly African American students and to a lesser extent
Latino/a, Native American, and Asian American students (Smith et al., 1997). In addition, the
literature reflects the perceptions of White students relative to students of color. Less common
in the literature are research studies that highlight either negative or positive effects of the
campus climate on Asian Pacific American students. The next subsections highlight selected
studies in the literature that specifically address the perceptions of the campus climate by
African American, White, and Asian and Pacific American students.

**Climate Studies and African American Students**

The perception of the campus climate by African American students appears to differ
according to institutional type. Gilliard (1996) examined the impact of campus racial climate
on the success of African American and White students at six predominantly White colleges
and universities in the Midwest and found that African Americans reported higher alienation
and lower sense of belonging when they reportedly encountered resentment, stereotyping, or
perceptions of discrimination from campus administrators. Likewise, Phelon-Rucker (2000)
and Hamer (2000) examined perceptions of the campus climate on African American students
at separate predominantly White institutions and demonstrated that students felt they were
devalued in the classroom, alienated from campus life, that they experienced conflict with
faculty members (Phelon-Rucker, 2000), and they felt uncomfortable interacting with people from other ethnic groups (Hamer, 2000). Apparently, many African American students are less satisfied with the institutional climate and less satisfied overall with their experience at predominantly White institutions (Crahen, 2001) than their White peers. Tatum (1997) specifically describes the types of overt and covert manifestations of racism often faced by African American and other students of color on predominantly White campuses:

Whether it is the loneliness of being routinely overlooked as a lab partner in science courses, the irritation of being continually asked by curious classmates about Black hairstyles, the discomfort of being singled out by a professor to give the Black perspective in class discussion, the pain of racist graffiti scrawled on dormitory room doors, the insult of racist jokes circulated through campus e-mail, or the injury inflicted by racial epithets hurled from a passing car, Black students on predominantly White campuses must cope with ongoing affronts to their racial identity (Tatum, 1997, p. 79).

Williams (2002) suggests that ethnic-specific experiences play an important role in mitigating a “chilly” climate for African American students on predominantly White campuses and are related to both their persistence and academic achievement. Williams applied bivariate and multivariate techniques to longitudinal data from students at the University of Michigan and found that African American identity and involvement in ethnic specific organizations were positively related to their academic achievement and helped shield them from the hostile effects of the campus climate.

In contrast to these findings, students attending selective institutions have different perceptions of the campus climate. After conducting an exhaustive analysis of the undergraduate admissions process and college experience of 45,000 students of all races in 28 selective colleges in 1976 and 1989, Bowen and Bok (1998) found the vast majority of both Black and White graduates believed that “going to college with a diverse body of students made a valuable contribution to their education and personal development.” Another significant finding related to learning outcomes demonstrated that African American students who enter selective institutions despite lower high school grades and SAT scores were more
likely to graduate, earn advanced degrees, earn high salaries, and be satisfied with their
college experience than their African American counterparts at less selective institutions
(Bowen & Bok, 1998).

Climate Studies and White Students

Dissimilar to the experiences of African American students and other students of
color, the campus experiences of White students in general are more positive, perhaps because
the overall culture on most campuses is geared towards them (Sedlacek, 1988). In a multi-
institutional study that determined the factors influencing students’ openness to diversity,
Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, and Terenzini (1996) found that a non-discriminatory
racial environment, on-campus residence, participation in a racial or cultural awareness
workshop, and a large degree of involvement with diverse peers positively influenced White
students’ openness to diversity. Similarly, in studies on the impact of diversity on educational
outcomes, White students appear to benefit the most from their interactions with diverse peers
(Chang, 1996; Gurin et al., 2002; Hu & Kuh, 2003; Villalpando, 1996). Specifically, cross-
racial interaction positively affects White students’ awareness of inequality (Lopez, 1993),
sense of responsibility, and participation in community service activities (Villalpando, 1996).

Yet perceptions of a poor racial climate on diversified campuses negatively affect
White students’ sense of belonging (Gilliard, 1996). In fact, significant research refutes the
myth that students of color self-segregate, or “balkanize.” Rather, self-segregation is more a
pattern described by White students on campuses with large proportions of minority students
(Appel, Cartwright, Smith, & Wolf, 1996). In their summary of the impact of diversity on
students, Appel et al. (1996) concluded that although diversity initiatives positively impact
minority and majority students, they tend to alienate majority students, most often White.
Tanaka (1996) confirmed this finding in his study examining the impact of multiculturalism
on White students’ sense of community, cultural awareness, desire to promote racial
understanding, and satisfaction with college. He found that the racial diversity of students and
faculty tend to have negative effects on White students' perceived sense of community. His results suggest that the impact of diversity efforts are maximized for White students if IHEs coordinate diversity approaches, find ways to involve White students in diversity experiences, and take steps to develop new identities for White students not based on race (Tanaka, 1996).

**Climate Studies and Asian Pacific American Students**

As evidenced thus far, the literature tends to focus on African American and White students' perceptions of the campus climate. Their different experiences make up polar ends of the spectrum, while Latino/a and Asian and Pacific Americans (APA) tend to fall somewhere in the middle (Institute for the Study of Social Change, 1991). Some researchers claim that Asian Americans may not see themselves as similar to other racial/ethnic minorities and therefore may identify more with White students (Wang, Sedlacek, & Westbrook, 1991). Others posit a different conclusion: APA students view the campus environment in racialized terms similar to African Americans and Latino students (Williams, 2002). Upon careful review of the literature, it does appear that the Asian and Pacific American student has more in common with the African American student experience with diversity, particularly in regard to racism. In a national sample of college students, Hurtado, Dey, and Treviño (1994) concluded that 30 percent of APA students experienced racial discrimination. This finding was validated when Tan (1994) investigated the unique experiences and factors associated with Asian American students' academic performance at a large predominantly white university in the Southwest and found that Asian American college students were more similar to than different from African American students. Both groups experienced incidents of racism and prejudice and had difficulty coping with them.

Likewise, Woo (1997) explored the Asian American experience at Berkeley and concluded that Asian American students often experience subtle racism in academic and nonacademic settings, including being stereotyped or ignored by both other students and faculty. Similarly, Asian American students who felt faculty were racist in and out of class
were likely to be dissatisfied with their school (Helm et al., 1998). Williams' (2002) study on ethnic identity and the campus climate revealed significant differences between APA students and their African American peers. Although APA students largely held a positive view of the interpersonal and institutional climate for diversity compared to other groups, their involvement in ethnic-specific organizations and experiences was not connected to academic outcomes, in contrast to African American students. His research suggests, however, that discrimination and racial hostility are real for APA students who strongly identify with their ethnic heritage, as they are for African American students.

In sum, perceptions of a negative campus climate negatively affect APA students' racial attitudes (Cabrera & Nora, 1994; Inkelas, 2003), increase the level of racism-related stress experienced by APA students (Li, Liang, & Kim, 2001; Williams, 2002), and increase APA student concern with safety and security issues (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000; Helm et al., 1998). The research is much more limited in identifying outcomes associated with positive perceptions of diversity, although exposure to racial/ethnic diversity tends to increase APA student support of affirmative action principles (Inkelas, 2003).

**Desired Diversity Experiences**

The literature on campus climate emphasizes a common conclusion: most students, regardless of their race or ethnicity, desire to make the campus climate more open to diversity. Yet, students differ on how to make the campus more inclusive. In a comprehensive ethnographic study of students on issues of diversity, researchers at the University of California at Berkeley found that African Americans want more classes, programs, and institutional commitments and responses related to diversity while Whites want "more individual, personal contacts" developed at their own time (Institute for the Study of Social Change, 1991). While White students perceive diversity in terms of proportions, Asians perceive diversity in terms of cross-race social interactions. Similar to African Americans,
Asian American students prefer improving the campus climate for diversity through institutional or structured activities (Woo, 1997).

This finding is echoed at other institutions. Lopez (1993) studied the effect of group contact and curriculum on two types of intergroup attitudes: awareness of ethnic inequality in society and support for educational equity. For African Americans at the University of Michigan, curriculum increased support for educational equity, while group contact did not change intergroup attitudes. For Asians, group contact was important to intergroup attitudes and support for educational equity, while curriculum showed little effect (Lopez, 1993). In another study at the University of Michigan, Adelman (1997) revealed that African American students describe diversity in terms of the university's commitment to inclusion—in the curriculum, in interactions, and most of all in being taken seriously as students (Adelman, 1997). These differing views on diversity and on improving the campus climate suggest that studies on racial and ethnic diversity in higher education must address diversity in terms of proportions of various groups but also specifically address aspects of the campus climate, including the dynamics of intergroup relations (Hurtado, Carter, & Kardia, 1998).

The Importance of Contact

A common theme illustrated in the preceding section and recurring in the literature speaks to the importance of contact in improving race relations. The "contact" hypothesis postulates that race relations improve when interaction with diverse peers increases under certain favorable conditions (Allport, 1954). These conditions include an acceptance in formal settings, institutional support, an association with pleasurable or positive events, knowledge of the other groups' culture, and similarity of group goals (Triandis, 1988). When these conditions are present, contact can lead to successful interpersonal relationships and improved attitudes toward diversity. In the absence of these conditions, however, contact can result in an increase in prejudice and incidents of racism (Triandis, 1988).
In support of the contact hypothesis, there is a wealth of evidence echoed throughout the literature that consistently demonstrates the value of interacting with diverse peers. From data collected on 25,000 students in 217 four-year colleges, Astin (1993) found that socializing with racially and ethnically diverse peers is positively associated with many measures of academic achievement. To date, the most compelling evidence for increasing diversity in college campuses comes from University of Michigan researchers. Gurin, Dey, Hurtado and Gurin (2002) explored the relationship between college students' experiences with diverse peers and their educational outcomes from both a cognitive developmental and social psychological theoretical framework. Using data from two longitudinal databases, one from the University of Michigan and one from a national sample of college students, they found that diversity in higher education exposed students to "relational discontinuities" that were essential to identity construction and to fostering cognitive growth (Gurin et al., 2002).

Specifically, the researchers examined the effects of classroom diversity and informal interaction among African American, Asian American, Latino/a, and White students on learning outcomes. Diversity experiences, particularly informal interaction with diverse peers, were significantly associated with higher levels of intellectual engagement and self-reported academic ability. Intellectual engagement was measured by self-rated responses regarding aspirations for graduate school, the drive to achieve, intellectual self-confidence, the importance placed on original writing and creating artistic works, and the intellectual quality and challenge of classes. Academic ability was measured by self-rated ability in academics; writing, listening, and analytic skills; and skills in problem-solving, critical thinking, and foreign language. Also, self-reported growth in general knowledge, the motivation to understand human behavior, a preference for complex explanations, and the tendency to think about underlying causes were measured. As interaction among diverse peers increased, intellectual ability and academic ability increased.
The research demonstrates that a racially diverse student body increases the opportunity for cross-racial contact and interaction, which can improve both race relations and enhance student development. The next section discusses three studies in the area of relative proportions of underrepresented groups within an institution of higher education setting. Specifically, the studies show how proportional representation influences student development outcomes and student perceptions related to diversity.

**Empirical Studies Based on Kanter’s Theory of Proportions**

Kanter’s theory of tokenism (1977) posits that it is solely the composition of a group that determines a person’s behavior, attitude, or performance whether it be a person’s participation rate, academic performance, or attitude toward diversity. It states that increasing numbers of “token” or underrepresented groups such as women or people of color should lead to greater contact, less stereotyped perceptions, fewer imposed social roles, and decreased discrimination. In a higher education context, Kanter’s theory would predict that a more equal distribution or proportional composition of students from different groups would create positive conditions for social interaction, thereby leading to positive learning outcomes. Moreover, as the proportion of underrepresented groups approaches 20 to 30 percent, the potential effects of tokenism are reduced (Mullen, Rozell, & Johnson, 2000).

Sax (1994) empirically tested Kanter’s theory by examining how the proportion of women in an academic major affected both women’s and men’s college grades, academic self-concept, mathematical self-concept, social self-concept, satisfaction with major, and persistence in major. Her multi-institutional study of over 12,000 students indicated that increasing the proportion of women in a major had uniformly positive effects for women. In support of Kanter’s theory, Sax found that women were more likely to persist in their major and earn higher grades when they were among a greater percentage of female peers. In contrast to Kanter’s theory, which would have predicted that men would be adversely affected as their representation declined, Sax found that men were actually positively affected by the
proportion of women in their major. As the proportion of women increased, men were more likely to persist in their major, they were more socially confident, and they were more satisfied with their major. Sax’s study demonstrated that when the proportion of women in a major affects individuals, the effects tend to be relatively small and positive for both men and women. Her findings contradict one of the basic tenets of Kanter’s theory—that the gender composition of an environment will have noticeable and different effects for men and women. In addition, Sax’s study provides evidence that outcomes attributed to the influence of proportions based on gender or other demographic characteristics may be confounded by other group characteristics (e.g., academic major).

Other studies in the area of proportional representation and student outcomes have focused on racial composition rather than on gender. In a landmark study, Chang (1996) studied the impact of different levels of racial diversity at 300 colleges and universities from a sample of 11,600 students. He found that for the most part, environmental (e.g., institutional diversity orientation, greater faculty diversity emphasis) and experiential (e.g., attending cultural awareness workshops, taking an ethnic studies course) components of a diverse campus have positive impacts on retention, overall college satisfaction, college GPA, and intellectual and social self-confidence. Chang used Kanter’s theory to test the educational efficacy of student diversity within an Input-Environment-Outcome (I-E-O) methodological framework. His findings suggest that racial diversity enhances student development indirectly through its effects on multicultural/diversity-oriented institutional practices and student experiences. While racial diversity had a positive impact on White students’ inclination to socialize with diverse peers, it had a negative effect on college satisfaction among students of color, and it did not enhance students’ of color chances of cross-racial interaction. Chang attributed the differential effects for non-White students to the “balkanization” or “racialization” that sometimes arises on racially diverse campuses (Chang, 1996).
In contrast to Chang's study on the academic outcomes associated with the proportional representation of diverse students, Adisa Thomas (2000) examined student perceptions of diversity at a private institution of higher education. She used Kanter's theory of tokenism to investigate factors related to diversity: campus climate, curriculum, personal growth, and extracurricular activities. Given the racial composition of students at the target IHE, Adisa Thomas identified African American and Latino students as members of the token group, Asian Americans as members of the tilted group, and Euro-Americans as members of the dominant group. From data collected from 233 students and 11 faculty and administrators, Adisa Thomas found significant differences between students in the token and dominant groups and students in the tilted and dominant groups, but no significant differences were determined between tilted and token groups. Specifically, Euro-Americans in the dominant group had more favorable perceptions of the campus climate and the curriculum than either Asian, African American, or Latino students, while Asian students had a more positive perception of diversity-related extracurricular activities than did dominants.

In sum, her findings supported Kanter's theory in that undergraduate students generally hold different perceptions of campus factors related to diversity issues based on their proportion in the student body (Adisa Thomas, 2000). However, the differences on the extracurricular scale between the tilted (Asian) and dominant (White) groups did not demonstrate what was hypothesized: that the dominant group would have the most favorable perception of the extracurricular activities (e.g., multicultural events and programs) offered by the IHE. Adisa Thomas attributed the difference to the possibility that diversity-related extracurricular activities for Asian students provide highly needed and valued support services or resource programs that White, African American, and Latino students do not experience (Adisa Thomas, 2000).
Summary and Critique of Findings

A commonality among the three empirical studies described previously was the selection of proportional representation as the independent variable. While Sax (1994) focused on the influence of the proportion of women in a field of study on student outcomes, Chang (1996) and AdisaThomas (2000) chose to examine the effects of the racial proportion of students on student outcomes. Although all three reached differing conclusions in support of Kanter’s theory, they provided evidence that changes in the proportion of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, culture, race) within a larger community (e.g., college student body) are critical in shaping the dynamics of social interaction.

This finding is also echoed in the research on the importance of contact and on previous studies related to the influence of the campus climate on both minority and majority students. The literature demonstrates that the negative effects of the campus climate on students of color are often associated with studying in an IHE that fails to put in place the conditions necessary for positive contact as posited by Triandis (1988). As aforementioned, these conditions are support by the institution, associating diversity with pleasurable or positive events, having knowledge of and an appreciation for other cultures, perceiving that there are equal power relationships among the groups, and sharing a similarity of group goals (Triandis, 1988). Although many African American and Asian American students enrolled in predominantly White institutions have had negative experiences with the climate, White students are also negatively influenced by the climate when these conditions are not present.

In contrast, when students perceive the campus climate as positive, they experience or observe fewer incidents of racism, perform better academically, and are more satisfied overall with their college experience. From the literature, it appears that student involvement with campus groups that reflect extracurricular interests strongly influence students’ feelings of belonging and perception of institutional support. Likewise, the current research on student interactions with diverse peers provides additional evidence that experience with and exposure
to diversity contributes to positive perceptions of the campus climate. In light of these findings, it is essential that studies on the campus climate underscore the significance of support services, programs and centers for ethnic students, and the significance of intergroup interaction.

This study addressed the limitations of previous work. While there are a number of examples in the literature on the effects of a campus climate for diversity on students of color, none have specifically focused on Asian Pacific American students. The majority of studies have either lumped students of color into one group, or separated them into groups by race. None have disaggregated data on Pacific Islander Americans from Asian Americans. This study also expanded the methodological approach used in previous research by employing a mixed-method approach. Previous studies most similar to the present study were conducted strictly from a quantitative approach (e.g., a national student database) or from a limited mixed method approach (e.g., survey and interviews). This study gathered survey data from 322 undergraduate students and qualitative data from 29 undergraduate students participating in five separate focus groups. Additionally, past research on diversity in higher education was conducted in predominantly White campuses. This is not surprising as approximately 90 percent of IHES are predominantly white. The University of Hawai‘i at Manoa (UHM) is unique in that Asian and Pacific Americans comprise 57 percent of students, and 10 percent of students are of mixed race.

There is a need for this research. We need to examine the diversity of experiences within the larger APA category so that APA student experiences are not overly generalized. Aggregating Native Hawaiian, Samoan, and other Pacific Islander students into one group with Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino students could possibly confound the effects of diversity on the larger APA student population. Each of these groups has their own unique cultural experience that might suggest differing views on diversity. The target IHE provides a unique
setting in which to determine ethnic-specific differences in perceptions of a campus climate for diversity. Figure 2 provides a conceptual overview of the study.

Figure 2.

(-): significant negative effects and/or association
(+): significant positive effects and/or association

Note: TOK= Token; TIL=Tilted; DOM=Dominant

*The effect of group membership on perceptions of diversity (hypothesized).*
CHAPTER 3. METHOD

Introduction

The methods of analysis and procedures used in this study are described in this chapter. The participants included in the survey sample and in the focus groups, as well as the instrumentation and measurement of the variables, are discussed. The method of analysis is subdivided into sections detailing the analysis of the survey data and the analysis of the focus group data. The section on the survey data analysis summarizes the procedures used to refine the independent and dependent variables and the statistical methods used. The second section addresses the procedures used to analyze data from the focus groups.

This study investigated perceptions of diversity among Asian, Pacific Islander and Caucasian undergraduate students at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa (UHM), a public Research I University with over 18,000 students. The study consisted of two phases. The first phase involved the implementation of an instrument used in a national survey in 2000-2001 that utilized a Likert scale to measure students’ personal experiences with diversity on campus, their actions relative to campus climate issues, and their perceptions of institutional actions related to diversity. Items relating to students’ overall satisfaction with college were added to determine if diversity issues were related to students’ college experience and if their experience varied by their proportionality grouping. In the second phase, ethnic-specific focus groups were conducted to obtain qualitative feedback regarding student perceptions of diversity.

Participants

Survey participants were randomly selected from Asian, Caucasian, and Pacific Islander undergraduate students excluding first-year freshmen and international students who were enrolled during the fall semester in 2002. A form of stratified random sampling was used to ensure that adequate numbers of proportional groupings (e.g., token, tilted, and dominant) were attained. This resulted in a sample size of 1,400. Of this number, 121 surveys were
returned as undeliverable, and the sample size was adjusted to 1,279. Students were given the option of completing either a web-based or hard copy format of the survey. A total of 356 surveys—both on-line and paper-and-pencil—were returned for an overall response rate of 28 percent. As shown in Table 4, the response rates varied greatly by proportionality grouping.

For the purposes of this study, all respondents who failed to identify their ethnicity or who were from ethnic groups not categorized by their proportionality group (e.g., Asian, Caucasian, or Pacific Islander) were omitted. In addition, respondents who identified with more than one of the included proportionality groups (e.g., Asian and Caucasian or Asian and Pacific Islander) were placed in a proportionality group according to the following priority: If Pacific Islander, Asian and Caucasian, then placed in Pacific Islander group; if Pacific Islander or Asian and Caucasian, then placed in Pacific Islander group; if Asian and Caucasian, then placed in Asian group. This was done to accommodate multi-racial students, many of who identify with their non-Caucasian heritage. This resulted in a final sample of 322 students.

Table 4. Proportionality Groups by Ethnicity, Size and Response Rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Sampled</th>
<th>Returned</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Middle Eastern, Thai, and Vietnamese</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilted</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token</td>
<td>Guamanian/Chamorro, Micronesian, Native Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian, Samoan, Tongan</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,282</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kanter’s theory on tokenism provides parameters for categorizing proportionality groups. Token group members tend to comprise less than 15 percent of the population, tilted group members comprise between 16 and 35 percent of the population, and dominant group members comprised between 36 and 64 percent of the population. Given the racial/ethnic make-up of students at UHM, Pacific Islanders (n = 40) represent the token group based on their low representation within the undergraduate population at UHM (10%). Despite being oversampled, the response rate was significantly lower than the other two groupings. Caucasian students (n = 60) represent a larger proportion of the undergraduate population (24%) and as such were designated a tilted group. Lastly, Asian students (n = 220) compose the largest proportion of the undergraduate population (42%) and were designated as the dominant group. The total sample (N = 322) accounted for nearly 3 percent of the overall undergraduate population at UHM.

Focus group participants from five ethnic-specific categories were recruited from the pool of survey respondents and from the larger campus population. Ethnic categories were chosen to reflect the diversity within the Asian (e.g., Japanese and Filipino) and Pacific Islander (e.g., Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander) student population at UHM. A total of 29 undergraduate students participated in the focus groups, which helped to offset the lower than expected survey response rates from the tilted and token groups (see Table 5).
Table 5. Focus Group Participants by Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilted</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token</td>
<td>Native Hawaiian</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Pacific Islander students included (1) Chamorro; (4) Samoan; (1) Tongan; and (1) mixed Pacific Islander.

Design

This study employed a mixed method approach to determine if a relationship exists between group membership and perceptions of diversity among undergraduate students. Given the methodological limitations of climate studies previously conducted at other IHEs, this study heeded previous researchers’ recommendations to use both quantitative and qualitative inquiry in determining perceptions of the campus climate (AdisaThomas, 2000; Chang, 1996; Morrow, 2000). The mixed-method approach is an integrated research design that lends itself well to studying diverse populations (Harari & Beaty, 1990) and to increasing the complexity and richness of data (Creswell, 2002; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Quantitative methods alone are inadequate; although all research methods are fallible, both quantitative and qualitative inquiry are preferred to single-method studies for constructing reliable and valid knowledge (Shadish, Cook, & Leviton, 1991).

The independent variable, group membership, had three levels: token (Asian), tilted (Caucasian), and dominant (Pacific Islander). The four dependent variables were derived from sections of a Likert scale survey that queried students about the campus climate and their perceptions of diversity. The variables were (1) personal experience with diversity, (2)
perception of the campus climate, (3) institutional actions, and (4) satisfaction with college experience. *Personal experience with diversity* referred to students’ degree of comfort with the climate at the IHE, their degree of comfort within their academic college and department, and their campus experience with and observation of harassment. *Perception of the campus climate* addressed degree of contact with diverse peers, course content and classroom climate, actions related to diverse peers, and perception of overall campus climate for diversity. *Institutional actions* targeted institutional actions related to improving the campus climate, such as the provision of more classes, workshops, or programs on diversity to students, faculty and staff.

**Procedure**

In October of 2003, a ten-page scannable survey was sent to survey participants. The mailing included a personalized cover letter explaining the purpose and importance of the survey. The letter also provided the Website for students to complete an on-line version of the survey if they preferred, an invitation to participate in a follow-up focus group, a sharpened pencil, and a stamped and addressed return envelope. Follow-up e-mails were sent once a week to every student over the course of three weeks. All students were sent reminder e-mails because the survey was anonymous and no method was employed to track respondents.

In December 2003, follow-up focus groups were conducted to elicit more in-depth responses regarding diversity on campus. Five groups of eight students were recruited to participate, but eleven of the forty students did not participate or show up during the scheduled session. Each of the focus groups was led by a trained facilitator in discussing student experiences with and attitudes toward diversity. Further details regarding the survey instrument, the focus groups, and the subsequent analysis are described in the next sections.

**Survey Instrument**

The survey instrument (see Appendix) was patterned after the instrument used in the National Campus Climate for Diversity Project (2000-2001) that was administered to ten IHEs
on the U.S. continent. The original instrument, "Assessment of Campus Climate for Underrepresented Groups" (Rankin, 2002) was developed for a national project co-sponsored by NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) and NGLTF (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force). The conceptual model used as the foundation for the national study was developed by Rankin (2002) based on Smith et al.'s (1997) meta-analysis. The instrument used in this study was revised to include additional ethnic categories within the pan-Asian/Pacific Islander category on the original instrument, to identify diversity groups specific to the IHE, and to add two items relating to student satisfaction with college.

**Validity**

*Content validity.* The survey questions developed by Rankin (2002) were constructed based on the previous work of Hurtado (1999), Gross and Aurand (1999), and Rankin (1994) and were developed to elicit information about respondents' personal experiences on campus regarding diversity, their perception of the climate for diversity, and their perceptions of institutional actions including administrative policies and academic initiatives regarding diversity issues and concerns on campus (Rankin, 2002). The survey instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts: diversity researchers, experts in higher education survey research methodology, and members of underserved constituent groups (e.g., persons of color and persons with disabilities). In addition to expert input, a pilot study of the instrument was conducted.

*Construct validity.* A factor analysis of the data and a content analysis of the comment provided by the participants in the national study \((N = 1,757)\) yielded three scales: "lived oppressive experiences," "perceptions of oppression," and "institutional actions" (Rankin, 2002). Although data on correlations between responses and known instances of harassment were not known, the researcher who developed the survey was assured by experts in the field that the questions asked in the instrument were "non-biased, non-leading, and non-judgmental" (Rankin, 2002).
Reliability

The original instrument contained 55 items and an additional space for respondents to include write-in comments. The instrument had three subscales: personal campus experiences \((r = .84)\), perceptions of the campus climate \((r = .81)\), and perceptions of institutional action regarding diversity issues on campus \((r = .74)\) (Rankin, 2005). The revised instrument used in this study had 41 items and a space for commentary. In addition to the three subscales contained in the original survey, the author added one more on satisfaction with college. Internal consistency for each of the four subscales on the revised instrument was estimated using Cronbach’s coefficient alpha: personal experience with diversity \((r = .50)\), perception of the campus climate \((r = .89)\), institutional actions \((r = .97)\), and satisfaction with college \((.91)\) (see Table 6). The number of items under each subscale was different in the original and revised instruments and therefore account for the differences in the internal consistency of the subscales found between both instruments.

Selection of Variables

The scannable questionnaire consisted of 41 closed-ended items and 1 open-ended question in which students could add their comments. Twenty-five of the closed-ended items used a five-point Likert scale, while sixteen items were multiple choice. The Likert scale ranged from 1 (very comfortable, none, strongly agree, very unlikely, and very respectful) to 5 (very uncomfortable, very frequent, strongly disagree, very likely, and not at all respectful). For the purpose of this study, 21 of the 41 items were categorized and analyzed. The remaining 20 items were not relevant to the focus of this research. These items addressed issues such as the workplace climate and non-ethnic demographics. The 21 items were categorized based upon five broader dimensions which encompassed (1) personal experience with diversity, (2) perception of the campus climate, (3) institutional actions, (4) satisfaction with college experience, and (5) group membership (see Table 6).
Independent Variable

As aforementioned, the independent variable was group membership with three levels (dominant, tilted, token). Group membership was derived from one of the 21 items on the questionnaire. In particular, students were asked “with what racial/ethnic group do you identify?” from nineteen possible races/ethnicities. These included African American/Black, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian Indian, Chicano/Latino/Hispanic, Chinese, Filipino, Guamanian or Chamorro, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Micronesian, Middle Eastern, Native Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian, Samoan, Thai, Tongan, Vietnamese, White/Caucasian, or Other. Depending on their ethnicity, respondents were then placed into one of three groups: dominant, tilted, or token. Asian (Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Middle Eastern, Thai, or Vietnamese) respondents were identified as belonging to the dominant group, Caucasian respondents were placed into the tilted group, and Native Hawaiians/Part Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders (Guamanian/Chamorro, Micronesian, Samoan, Tongan) were placed into the token group. Respondents not belonging to any of the three groups were dropped from the sample.

Dependent Variables

Personal Experience of Diversity. The three questions selected under this scale addressed students’ overall comfort with the campus climate and student actual experience of harassment. The first question asked student’s overall comfort with the climate at UHM and was measured on a five-point scale ranging from “very comfortable” to “very uncomfortable.” The other two questions probed whether students had “personally experienced harassment” or “observed or personally been aware of any harassment directed toward a person or group of people on campus.” They were coded on a 2-point scale with one equal to “yes” and two equal to “no.”

Perception of the Campus Climate. This scale included twelve items, all of which were coded on a five point Likert scale. Two of the questions addressed students’ degree of
contact with diverse peers, three related to environmental determinants (e.g., course content, classroom climate), five questions asked students' likelihood of challenging derogatory comments, jokes, or graffiti directed at persons from underrepresented groups, and two questions asked students to rate the overall campus climate for diversity related to race/ethnicity, disability, gender, and sexual orientation.

Institutional Actions. This scale was composed of three items that asked students to rate on a five-point scale the following: whether the institution should provide more workshops/programs on specific aspects of diversity (age, country of origin, disability status, ethnicity, gender, physical characteristics, race, religion, sexual orientation); whether the institution should require all graduate and undergraduate students to take at least one class focusing on specific issues, research and perspectives related to diversity; and whether the institution should require all faculty/staff to participate in at least one program focusing on specific issues, research and perspectives related to diversity. In essence, this scale measured student perceptions of institutional effectiveness in improving the campus climate.

Satisfaction with College. The variable related to satisfaction with college was used rather than grade point average (GPA) because of the inherent problems of using GPA to gauge academic success (e.g., grade inflation, cumulative GPA vs. semester GPA). Two questions addressed this variable: “How would you evaluate your educational experience?” and “If you could start over again, would you go to UHM?” These were coded on a four-point scale ranging from “excellent” and “definitely yes” to “poor” and “definitely no” (see Table 6).
Table 6. *Survey Subscale Items and Cronbach Coefficients Alpha*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Items (#)</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Experience of</td>
<td>Comfort with institutional climate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Experience with harassment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observation of harassment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of the</td>
<td>Contact with diverse peers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Climate</td>
<td>Classroom climate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actions relative to diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall campus climate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Actions</td>
<td>Provision of diversity workshops/</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Require students to take diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Require faculty/staff to participate in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diversity program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with</td>
<td>Evaluation of educational experience</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>Attend IHE again</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Focus Group Instrumentation*

Five questions addressed the broader areas identified above: personal experiences with diversity on campus (questions 1 through 3), perceptions of the campus climate (question 4), and institutional actions to improve the climate (question 5). The following focus group questions were discussed:

1. What is your definition of diversity?
2. What diversity groups or services are you aware of at UHM? Have you attended or participated in a class on diversity or a program or workshop related to diversity?

3. Have you personally experienced or observed harassment at UHM?

4. How much contact would you say you have with people of a different age, different ethnicity, different race, opposite gender, people with a disability, people who speak English as a second language, people of a different religion, people of different sexual orientation, or people of a different socioeconomic class?

5. Do you think the campus climate needs to be improved? If so, what do you think can be done? Which aspects of diversity require more awareness?

The focus group sessions were facilitated by five different people trained in focus group techniques who were of the same racial/ethnic identity as the focus-group participants. This was done so that rapport between the facilitator and the focus-group participants would be less difficult to establish. The facilitators presented the purpose of the study, had participants introduce themselves, and presented the discussion topics and timeline for the session. The two-hour sessions were recorded via audiotape, and notes were taken by the researcher and an undergraduate student for inter-rater reliability. Students signed a consent form regarding their participation in the study and were assured that prior to, during, and after their participation in the focus groups, confidentiality would be maintained. In addition, student participants were given a $20 stipend within two weeks of the scheduled focus-group session.

Selection of Participants

The focus groups examined ethnic-specific characteristics and behaviors that influenced students' perception of a campus climate for diversity. Students were recruited as randomly as possible to participate in the focus groups. There were two primary methods of participant recruitment. During the initial phase of the project, students who completed the survey were asked to consider participating in a focus group to explore the survey items more in depth. The question about future participation and specific contact information was included in the cover letter that was distributed with the questionnaire.
To ensure adequate numbers of underrepresented groups were aware of the focus groups, student and special interest organizations on campus were also polled to determine their willingness to participate. For example, the Micronesian Club and the Samoan Club (Pacific Islanders), Pamantasan (Filipino students), and Kua’ana Student Services (Native Hawaiians) were approached by the researcher to solicit student participation. In addition, other methods of publicity included disseminating information about the focus groups to instructors in various departments (e.g., American Studies, Ethnic Studies, Asian Studies, Hawaiian Studies, etc.) and advertising in the student newspaper.

A total of eight students per group was selected from the larger pool of potential participants (survey respondents and students in special interest groups). It was expected that at least six of the eight students recruited would participate. Efforts were made to stratify the focus groups such that representation of gender and level in school (e.g., freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior) were equitable.

Selection of Facilitators

Each of the five facilitators committed four hours to the study, including one hour of prior training, two hours facilitating the focus group session, and one hour of debriefing. Each received a facilitator incentive (i.e., a $75 gift certificate to the University Bookstore). Facilitators were selectively recruited; however, to address the potential problem of objectivity and bias, training in facilitation skills and conducting focus groups was provided by the researcher prior to the focus group sessions. Focus group questions were distributed to the facilitators at the training meeting and their feedback solicited.

Human Subjects

Approval from the institution’s Committee on Human Studies for the study was obtained in September 2003. Survey respondents were anonymous, and the identity of the focus group participants on audiotape recordings, consent forms, and field notes was solely controlled by the researcher. Focus group participants were assured in writing that they would
not be identified in the field notes and in the transcripts of the audiotapes and that only group
data would be reported.

**Data Analysis**

*Survey Data Analysis*

Survey results were expected to indicate differences in the perceptions of diversity at
UHM among the proportionality groups. The first step in data analyses was preparing the data.
Survey data were reverse coded so that all variables were conceptually consistent during data
interpretation. Several descriptive statistical analyses were conducted on the survey data,
including the calculation of distribution, frequencies, means, and intercorrelations of the
dependent variables. Data from three hundred and twenty two undergraduate students were
collected. The dependent variables of personal experience with diversity, perception of the
campus climate, institutional actions related to diversity, and student satisfaction with college
were analyzed by the independent variable of group membership (i.e., token, tilted, and
dominant). Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the
proportion of variance accounted for by group membership in each of the dependent variables.

*Focus Group Data Analysis*

Focus group results were expected to validate survey results. For all focus groups, a
content analysis was conducted to reduce field notes and transcripts from the focus groups
into categories through a coding system. Transcripts of the audiotapes and field notes from
each focus group session were transcribed, read, reread, coded, and analyzed. A trained co-
reader and I independently read and rated the transcripts and field notes of the focus group
sessions. Transcripts and field notes were synthesized and initially categorized according to
the focus group questions as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). Initial categories
paralleled the dependent variables associated with diversity: personal experiences with
diversity on campus, perceptions of the campus climate, and institutional actions to improve
the climate. In addition, responses to the categories were designated as "positive" or
"negative" and "high" or "low" (e.g., degree of contact with diverse peers). After all coding was completed, the researcher and co-reader discussed the ratings and determined there were no disagreements with the ratings.

The initial categorization changed as major themes emerged from the data during initial and subsequent reviews of the transcripts. Examples of emerging themes included the disconnection between faculty and students, the conflict between "local" students and students from the U.S. continent, and the lack of awareness of diversity groups at UHM. Although not addressed specifically in the focus groups, these themes emerged when analyzing data and are discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents results for each of the three questions addressed in the study. The first section presents selected descriptive and inferential statistics for each of the three proportionality groups. Multivariate analysis results primarily answer the following question: Do what extent does the proportional representation of Asian and Pacific Islander students on campus account for these students’ perception of diversity? The second section presents data primarily from the focus groups to answer the remaining research questions: What are Asian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian student experiences with, and attitudes and actions relative to, diversity issues? What are ways to improve the campus climate for diversity for Asian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian students? Results in the second section are presented according to focus group questions, and summarized across the different groups. The final section presents data specific to each proportionality and ethnic grouping and reviews the similarities in findings and common themes across all groups. The chapter concludes with a summary of the results.

Descriptive and Multivariate Analyses

Table 7 describes the average group means for each of the four variables. Preliminary inspection of the distribution of scores indicates that the means did not differ greatly from each other, with students across all three groups scoring towards the middle of the continuum. However, the difference in the means between Caucasian and Pacific Islander student perceptions of institutional actions appears to be quite large, accounting for a .78 standard deviation of difference. Pairwise deletion accounts for the unequal sample sizes used in calculating the mean scores (Table 7) and was used in calculating the correlation alpha coefficients for each subscale (Table 8).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Experience of Diversity</strong>&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilted</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perception of the Campus Climate</strong>&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilted</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Actions</strong>&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilted</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction with College</strong>&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilted</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Scores were obtained on a 2-point scale (1 = negative, 2 = positive).  
<sup>b</sup>,  
<sup>c</sup>Scores were obtained on a 5-point scale.  
<sup>d</sup>Scores were obtained on a 4-point scale.

Table 8 presents the intercorrelations of the dependent variables. The correlation matrix of the variables suggests that the variables are not highly correlated. There appears to be a weak but positive ($r = .29$) relationship between students' personal experience with
diversity and satisfaction with college, whereas there is a weak but negative ($r = -0.17$) relationship between personal experience with diversity and perceptions of institutional actions related to diversity.

Table 8. Intercorrelations Between Diversity and Satisfaction With College Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal Experience with Diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perception of the Campus Climate</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Institutional Actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Satisfaction with College</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA with the Wilk's lambda criterion) was performed to examine the relationship between proportionality group and four measures of student perceptions of diversity. MANOVA was conducted using listwise deletion, thereby resulting in a lower overall sample size. Despite the decrease in sample size, the analyses revealed a statistically significant effect of group membership on the combined dependent variables representing perceptions of diversity ($A = 0.954; F (4, 212) = 2.55; p < .05; \text{partial eta squared} = 0.046$).

Focus Group Results

Despite the fact that quantitative findings suggest proportionality groups (dominant, tilted, and token) did not greatly differ in their experience of diversity, perceptions of the campus climate, perceptions of institutional actions related to diversity, or in their overall satisfaction with college, qualitative data generated from the focus groups shed more light on
the unique experiences and perceptions of students in each proportionality group. The following subsections address each of the focus group questions and provide more detail regarding ethnic-specific experiences and perceptions regarding diversity.

**Definition of Diversity**

Students across all five ethnic groups share a similar understanding of the meaning of diversity. Without exception, each group described diversity in terms beyond race, ethnicity and culture. All groups identified differences in class, age, sexual orientation, language, and disability as characteristics of diversity. Moreover, each of the groups independently concluded that diversity is more than just the presence of different people but their interaction, "mixing," or "intermingling" as well. Students also expanded diversity to mean the valuing of different values, attitudes, and behaviors. In the words of one of the students, "diversity is really 'what you think' versus 'what you are.'"

**Awareness of Diversity Groups**

Despite the similarity among the groups in their view of diversity, students’ awareness of the diversity groups and services available on campus was not as universal. Students in the Japanese focus group were the least aware of diversity organizations, citing only two that they were vaguely familiar with, while Filipino, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students were familiar with four of the diversity groups on campus. This represents a small proportion as there are over twenty groups related to diversity on campus. There is at least one campus office and/or student group that specifically addresses the needs of students from different racial and ethnic groups (e.g., Native Hawaiians, Filipinos, Samoans, Micronesians) and students with disabilities (e.g., KOKUA). Native Hawaiian students were aware of many programs available specifically to them, including Kua’ana Student Services and the Keali‘i Pauahi Foundation/Kamehameha Schools scholarship program. In addition, there are offices that address student issues related to gender (e.g., Women’s Center), sexual orientation (e.g., Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Student Services), first-generation
college students (e.g., College Opportunities Program), and welfare recipient students (e.g., Bridge to Hope). There are also programs related to international student needs (e.g., International Student Services) and students from underserved populations and communities in Hawai‘i (e.g., Office of Multicultural Student Services). Table 9 illustrates the type and number of diversity groups students are aware of on campus.

Table 9. Awareness of Campus Diversity Organizations by Ethnic Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Diversity Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>KOKUA(^a), Women’s Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>KOKUA, Pamantasan(^b), LGBTI(^c) Office, Women’s Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>KOKUA, Women’s Center, LGBTI Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian</td>
<td>Counseling and Student Development Center, Ke Ali’i Pauahi Foundation/Kamehameha Schools, Kua’ana(^d), Student Support Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>KOKUA, Kua’ana, Samoan Club, Women’s Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) KOKUA is the Disability Access Office. \(^b\) Pamantasan is the multi-campus network of Filipino students, faculty, and staff. \(^c\) LGBTI = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex. \(^d\) Kua’ana refers to the Office for Native Hawaiian students.

Experience and Observation of Harassment

Student experience with and observation of harassment varies by ethnic group. Japanese students have observed the most incidents of harassment but have not experienced harassment in any form (see Table 10). Caucasian students have primarily observed harassment but have also experienced derogatory remarks (e.g., “stupid haole\(^1\)”) and racial/ethnic profiling. One participant in the Caucasian focus group felt that others on campus believed “racism is against everyone except White people.” Another mentioned she felt

\(^1\) The term, haole, is Hawaiian for white person, American, Englishman, or Caucasian. It was formerly meant to describe any foreigner or thing of foreign origin (Pukui & Elbert, 1986).
patronized and resented by an instructor in the Hawaiian Studies Department and that her experience was shared by other White students from the Mainland.

In contrast to students in the Japanese and Caucasian focus groups, Filipino and Native Hawaiian students did not observe incidents of harassment, yet both groups experienced derogatory remarks and racial/ethnic profiling. Filipino students and Native Hawaiian students mentioned being offended by derogatory remarks aimed at them by both students and faculty. Two Filipino students were offended by stereotypes of Filipinos by other students, such as being “fresh off the boat” or dressing “so buk buk.” A Native Hawaiian student reported being disturbed by a comment made by an instructor in his introductory mathematics class who described the class as being “math for Hawaiians” implying that it was for “dumb” people.

Surprisingly, Pacific Islander students stated that they had no experience with harassment and shared only two instances of observing harassment related to being ignored in class or hearing derogatory remarks about others (e.g., haole). Two Pacific Islander students expressed irritation that others were ignorant of their ethnicity. For example, one student was tired of having to explain what Chamorro was as most people he encountered were unaware of both the term and the culture. Another was irritated at explaining the difference between being Tongan from being Samoan.

Being ignored, derogatory remarks, and racial/ethnic profiling were the three most common types of harassment either observed or experienced by students (see Table 10). A common finding across the groups was that derogatory comments were often not intended to be derogatory. The consensus among focus group participants was that many comments and terms (e.g., “that’s so gay,” “haole,” “fresh off the boat”) are not intentionally meant to harass or be offensive. Comments and jokes depended on the source (e.g., friends, peers) and the

2 A reference to being a new immigrant from the Philippines and therefore less familiar with the culture of Hawaii.
3 “Buk buk” is a derogatory term used to describe a person’s poor fashion sense.
context (e.g., social versus academic). Interestingly, although students agreed that most derogatory remarks were not meant to be derogatory, they differed as to what comments were derogatory. The term “haole” was not considered offensive except by Caucasian students, while “fresh off the boat” was not considered offensive except by Filipino students. All students agreed that “that’s so gay” was a common expression and not meant to offend, but the finding may have been different among participants in a focus group on sexual orientation.

Table 10. Experience or Observation of Harassment by Ethnic Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Harassment</th>
<th>Dominant Japanese</th>
<th>Tilted Filipino</th>
<th>Tilted Caucasian</th>
<th>Token Native Hawaiian</th>
<th>Token Pacific Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being Ignored</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Stared At</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derogatory Remarks</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graffiti</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Assault or Injury</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications on Campus</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/Ethnic Profiling</td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats of Physical Violence</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsolicited E-mails</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. E = Experienced by the majority of group members; O = Observed by the majority of group members.

**Contact with Diverse Peers**

The majority of students have a high degree of contact with peers of a different ethnicity, race, gender, language, and age. In particular, students from all the focus groups reported having frequent interactions with racially/ethnically diverse peers and students of the opposite gender in classes, in the residence halls, and in extracurricular activities. In addition,
the majority of students cited being friends and “hanging out” with racially/ethnically diverse peers. It appears that students are polarized not according to race, ethnicity or gender but according to being “local” (e.g., from Hawaii’i) or “not local” (e.g., being from the Mainland). For example, Caucasian students from the Mainland identified the challenge of meeting other “local” friends and as a result, described their friends as being other Caucasians from the Mainland. The exception in this group was the experience of “local” Caucasian students and non-local hapa haole students who cited their primary friendships were with other “local” students, both Caucasian and non-Caucasian.

In contrast to students’ contact with peers of different races, ethnicities, gender, language and age, students’ contact with others of a different class, religion, and sexual orientation varied by ethnic group. Students in all the groups mentioned that their degree of contact with others of a different class and religion depended on the type of contact (e.g., classmate versus friend). For example, the majority of students mentioned that class was difficult to determine because most students don’t talk about money in the course of normal conversation, either in class or out of class. Similarly, religion is not often a topic of conversation, even among friends. In contrast to students in the other groups, Pacific Islander students are very aware of the religion of their friends and reported on having friends of various religions, including Catholic, Jehovah’s Witness, Mormon, Buddhist, Protestant, and Seventh Day Adventist.

Contact with students of a different sexual orientation also varied among focus group participants. In general, students across the focus groups appeared to have some contact with students who were lesbian and gay, and many shared that they had an acquaintance, friend or relative who was gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Interestingly, Filipino and Caucasian students admitted to the least amount of contact because the consensus in both groups was that is was difficult to determine sexual orientation. For example, students in both groups said they

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4 Hapa haole refers to a part-white person or of part-white blood (Pukui & Elbert, 1986).
weren't sure if they would really know someone was gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender unless they assumed they were based on their physical appearance or mannerisms.

A universal finding among the groups was that students have very limited contact with people with disabilities. Although focus group participants were aware of students with a visible disability (e.g., students with a wheelchair, students who are blind) in classes and in the residence halls, many admitted to feeling uncomfortable being around them or interacting with them. As one student stated, “I'm not sure what to say or do. Am I supposed to ask if they need help, or am I supposed to leave them alone?” Table 11 summarizes the degree of contact by ethnic group.

Table 11. Degree of Contact with Diverse Peers by Ethnic Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of Diversity</th>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Tilted</th>
<th>Token</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a 2nd language</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic class</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. H = High degree of contact; L = Low degree of contact

Ways to Improve the Campus Climate

All groups agreed that the campus climate at the target IHE needs to be improved, yet they differed as to what and how aspects of diversity need to be emphasized. The two most common aspects of diversity identified as needing more awareness and understanding were
disability and sexual orientation. Students in the Caucasian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander focus groups mentioned that they would like to know more about people with disabilities and their unique challenges so that they would feel more comfortable interacting with and among them. Students in the Japanese and Filipino focus groups stated that more needs to be done to increase understanding, respect, and tolerance for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. They felt that non-heterosexual students are the most discriminated against, although the discrimination is subtle and indirect (e.g., graffiti or jokes). Interestingly, Japanese and Caucasian students advocated for diversity efforts to be more holistic; rather than targeting specific differences (e.g., race, disability, sexual orientation), efforts related to improving the campus climate for diversity should address objectivity, respect and tolerance for differences in general.

In terms of how to change the campus climate, students also differed. Across the board, all students agreed that more student awareness of the available programs, offices, and classes related to diversity is needed. Additionally, students want more classes, programs and activities related to diversity to be offered but not required. Students agreed that the current course workload was heavy and that to require a specific class on diversity would result in resentment. Other suggestions included having more non-academic cultural events that “celebrate diversity, that make people aware of other cultures, and that build more of a college campus pride” (see Table 12).
Table 12. Suggestions for Improving the Climate by Ethnic Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Tilted</th>
<th>Token</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Increase student awareness of available diversity classes, programs, and activities.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Offer more classes, programs and activities related to diversity.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Provide more cultural events.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Increase student representation of underrepresented groups.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Increase faculty of color.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Emphasize a culture of tolerance and respect for difference in general.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Summary of Student Perceptions of Diversity*

**Dominant Group**

*Japanese students.* In general, Japanese students have often observed harassment related to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender but have not experienced any personally. Students agreed that the campus felt “safe” and that they rarely observed or were unaware of incidents of racial discrimination. As one student stated, “People in Hawai’i share jokes and comments regarding ‘haoles’ and ‘blacks’ that are not (considered) offensive here but may be taken to be offensive on the Mainland.” Japanese students are generally satisfied with the diversity on campus, although they felt that sexual orientation needs to be addressed.
MISSING PAGE(S)
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most marginalized on campus. In contrast to the experience of focus group participants, one
survey respondent validates the need for increased understanding of sexual orientation:
“Homophobia exists everywhere, and it’s a really sad reality. There are times I fear for the
safety of others and myself, because of the insecurities of some people. I wish that more
people would be educated about homosexuality.” Filipino students also want the University to
increase publicity of available diversity classes, programs and activities and are opposed to
adding a diversity class, program or activity as requirement.

Tilted Group

Caucasian students. Similar to their peers, Caucasian students have observed and
experienced harassment primarily related to race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Although
participants agreed that the campus was more open to diversity and more tolerant of others in
general when compared to other campuses, students in this group more than any other group
underscored their experience of feeling like a minority, both in class and out of class. In
particular, Caucasian students from the Mainland were more apt to feel like a minority than
Caucasian students from Hawai‘i or students of mixed race (e.g., hapa haole). Students
observed and experienced harassment from non-Caucasian instructors in academic settings
and from non-Caucasian students in non-academic settings (e.g., residence halls). One of the
respondents stated

Something that has no doubt shown up in your study are certain racist tendencies
towards groups traditionally thought of as a majority, but which have a very small
piece of the pie here in Hawai‘i. Hawai‘i seems to me to be the perfect haven for
sexual, racial, ethnic, etc. minorities because of its unique mishmash of people that
defies any one majority anything. The result of this is the occasional banding of such
minorities against a majority that does not in fact exist here, but for some reason must
be punished for alleged past injustices. I have been made to feel unwelcome before
because of my U.S. mainland, Caucasian heritage. It would be nice if the University
had been able to strike a balance in ethnic diversity, rather than priding itself on acting
so much in the direction of pandering to local interests to the point of alienating
others.
Similarly, another student remarked

I am a middle-class, white, straight, American male. I realize that I belong to one of the most privileged groups in the world but I can honestly say that I try very hard not to pass judgment on others, i.e., race, sex, etc., but I find it frustrating that people assume they can be disrespectful towards me and that they feel that I have no right to protest because of the historical doings associated to my ancestors.

Despite their negative experiences associated with race and ethnicity, students in this group had a high degree of contact with diverse peers. Similar to their Filipino counterparts, students in this group had fewer interactions with students with disabilities, non-heterosexual students, and students of a different economic class. In order to improve the campus climate for diversity, Caucasian students want more information and activities related to diversity that don’t target specific groups; rather, students want the University to emphasize open-mindedness and tolerance for difference. As one student put it, “Get people to be more open-minded...to take a more holistic approach...to teach people not to be a “jerk.”

**Token Group**

*Native Hawaiian students.* In their experience and observation of harassment, Native Hawaiian students are similar to Filipino students. For the most part, students in this group were unaware of harassment but shared examples of being victims of racial/ethnic profiling and being the brunt of derogatory remarks. They also reported on having the highest degree of contact with diverse peers. Similar to participants in the other focus groups, Native Hawaiians infrequently interact with students with disabilities or students of different religions. Unlike their peers, they are very aware of socioeconomic class, particularly as it relates to financing a college education. For example, the majority of participants acknowledged the difficulty that they and many of their Native Hawaiian friends had in paying for school. The following comments from three of the focus group participants are indicative of their experience:

I seem to know underprivileged students, but I haven’t met any rich students.

There are a lot of prospective students who aren’t here...people from Waianae...there aren’t enough who have the opportunity to attend school because they think that this place is for rich people.
I had to work really hard to go to college...I was one out of three Hawaiians in my high school who went to college.

Students in this group also pointed to the need for more Native Hawaiian students and faculty. One student said, “There are no Hawaiian professors outside of Hawaiian Studies and Hawaiian Language. We are so underrepresented among students and even more so among the faculty.” They agreed that one way to improve the campus climate for diversity is to increase the representation of students and faculty of color. One student mentioned, “You can’t force people to interact if they don’t want to but a degree of comfort is attained if they do interact...that’s why you need representation.” Native Hawaiian students want more emphasis on diversity related to disability and sexual orientation, and they want the University to offer more classes, programs and activities related to diversity and to increase publicity of available programs.

Pacific Islander students. Interestingly, Pacific Islanders students reported having no personal experiences of harassment despite being the most underrepresented of all student ethnic groups involved in the study. Although they have infrequently observed others being ignored or being the brunt of derogatory remarks, they professed feeling very comfortable on campus. The consensus among participants was that they felt the campus to be “very easy-going” and although they “expect to be a minority, most people are open to learning more about our culture.”

In terms of contact with diverse peers, Pacific Islander students had the least amount of contact with students with disabilities, students of a different age, and students of a different socioeconomic class. What distinguishes the findings in this group from the findings of the other groups is that Pacific Islander students are the most likely to have diverse peers as friends. Students agreed that their circle of friends included people of different races, ethnicities, gender, religion and sexual orientation. One student remarked
I have friends who are Mexican, Hawaiian, Japanese, Filipino, Samoan, and Japanese nationals. I have friends who are LDS (Latter Day Saints) from the North Shore, friends who are Catholic, Jehovah’s Witness, Buddhist, atheist, Protestant and SDA (Seventh Day Adventist). I have friends of every color and faith!

Similar to students in the other groups, Pacific Islander students want the University to publicize available diversity programs and offer more diversity-related activities, classes, and cultural events. Like their Filipino and Native Hawaiian counterparts, they would also like to see more students and faculty of color.

**Similarities in Findings**

After an extensive review of the transcripts, field notes, and write-in comments from survey respondents, five themes emerged. Themes were divided into categories, which were adapted, by Shapiro, Sewell and DuCette (1995) in their discussion on reframing diversity in higher education (AdisaThomas, 2000). These categories were also used to organize themes emerging from AdisaThomas’ (2000) study on perceptions of diversity among students, faculty and administrators. “Differences in kind” refer to differences among members of the learning environment (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender) while “differences in degree” describe differences in the learning environment (e.g., curriculum, programs, activities). Three themes emerged under “differences in kind” and two themes emerged under “differences in degree” (see Table 13).

Table 13. **Similarities Among Proportionality Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Disconnect between students and professors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Conflict between local students and non-local students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lack of exposure to people with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Desire for more cultural/diversity activities and programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lack of awareness of diversity groups, services and classes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of students in each focus group expressed concerns relating to all five themes. The subsequent subsections discuss each theme in more detail and provide supporting excerpts from students in each proportionality group. Each exemplary quote highlighted under each theme is from a different focus group participant or survey respondent. This was done to ensure that a particular participant’s or respondent’s viewpoint was not overly represented in the results.

**Theme 1. Disconnect Between Students and Professors**

Across the board, students experience a disconnect with professors. There are three types of disconnect: racial (e.g., between Caucasian students and non-Caucasian faculty), political ideology (e.g., liberal versus conservative), and method of communication (e.g., verbal versus indirect). For example, many Caucasian students have alluded to feeling marginalized by faculty in specific academic departments because of their race. In addition to racial differences, students also shared that their participation in class is inhibited when their views are in conflict with the teacher’s views. The following comments, each from different individuals, are indicative of the disconnect involving race or political ideology:

I feel as a “white American” often times I’m treated as if I was ignorant, ungrateful and not worthy of being here. The job of an educator is not to humiliate, or seek revenge for something our ancestors have done. It is to enlighten. *(Tilted)*

I was the brunt of derogatory comments by a pro-sovereignty movement instructor (I was the only haole in my class) but I didn’t allow her views to ruin my classroom experience. Not all people believe the same way about all issues—nor should we. *(Tilted)*

I have a current teacher that imposes her anti-capitalistic views on our class and says it is America’s fault that September 11th happened. We are not hesitant to speak our voice in class. Also, when we answer her questions and we are wrong, she speaks to us in a condescending tone, therefore we don’t answer her that much anymore. *(Dominant)*

I keep a low profile because I’m in the National Guard. I’m upset about the global situation and the role of the military and I feel discriminated against in some of my classes because of the anti-war sentiment. *(Token)*
Likewise, students pointed to differences in communication styles and difficulties in learning from non-native English speaking faculty:

I feel sometimes the climate tends to gear towards the Mainland culture and dominant race (Caucasian). Especially in the classroom where we find a majority of mainland hires sometimes I find professors may not know how to cope with or have become indifferent to the different responses and educational dispositions of the local students. Not to say that all locals are one way and all mainlanders are another and that’s that. For example, sometimes local students may not talk all that much in class or present opinions. It doesn’t mean that they don’t have an opinion, but maybe their culture or the schools that they attended voicing that opinion was not fostered or encouraged. I have heard a lot in my classes that the locals don’t talk, care, or participate at all in class. (Dominant)

It is good that UHM is positive for non-native English speakers, but my learning experience has been very bad due to the fact that the instructor was a non-native speaker. Nobody can understand and learn from them. I’ve had a couple of these non-native English speakers and it’s a waste of money and time to take classes. (Tilted)

**Theme 2. Disconnect Between Local Students and Non-Local Students**

A second recurrent theme emerging from the focus groups and survey respondents was the disconnect that many students from the Mainland have with local (Hawai’i residents) students. Students, primarily Caucasian students from the Mainland, sense an underlying tension between themselves and non-Caucasian students who call Hawai’i home. The following three quotes illustrate this disconnect:

Outside of Hawai’i, we are the minority. Let the haoles go to the Mainland if they don’t like it here. (Dominant)

Mostly remarks are inconsiderate, yet still racial, made by other students, e.g., “oh, stupid haole.” Although they probably don’t consider the seriousness of their words, such remarks are nevertheless racist, rude, and very ignorant. (Tilted)

There is some hostility in classes from teachers and students towards White students from the Mainland, I and others I know felt. (Tilted)

The discrimination is often felt by Caucasian students not from Hawai’i, although some Caucasian students raised in Hawai’i have also experienced racism:

I grew up in Hawai’i as a white female, so I have always felt discriminated against for my skin color and UH is no different. I feel I am being judged as some haole from the Mainland, just because of the way I look. I never feel like this from professors, just when I am around groups of students. (Tilted, local)
In general, however, the majority of local Caucasian students and non-Caucasian students from the Mainland have not experienced this and in fact feel very comfortable with other students on campus. It appears that students are polarized according to their residency (e.g., from Hawai‘i versus not from Hawai‘i) and also according to race (e.g., Caucasian versus non-Caucasian or biracial). For example, students from the Mainland who are part Caucasian or biracial tend to physically be taken for “local” and therefore are not seen as different at face value. The following comment provides evidence of this:

I find the campus to be very friendly and being hapa haole, I blend in. (Tilted, nonlocal, biracial)

Non-Caucasian students, including Japanese, Filipino, and Native Hawaiian students, have also observed and experienced this disconnect with Caucasian students. The following comments illustrate the subtle exclusion sometimes experienced by non-Caucasian students from Caucasian students and faculty:

I sometimes feel left out when white students here tend to strike up conversations with other white students. (Dominant)

White students in classes taught by white faculty get preferential treatment. (Token)

**Theme 3. Lack of Exposure to People with Disabilities**

The third theme to emerge from the qualitative data was students’ unfamiliarity and low degree of contact with students with disabilities and their desire to know more about disability as an aspect of diversity. The following comments are indicative of this theme:

I’m uncomfortable interacting with blind people and people in wheelchairs. (Dominant)

I see a girl in a motorized wheelchair in the dorms and she gets stared at a lot. I’m uncomfortable around people with disabilities. There needs to be more awareness of people with disabilities on campus. (Tilted)

I feel uncomfortable around people with disabilities… I mean, what am I supposed to say or do around them? (Token)
Students in every focus group agreed that they would like more information on disability, particularly related to interacting with people with disabilities. One student said: “I believe students are required to take enough classes that make us aware of race and ethnicity. There are few, but still some courses that make us aware of gender relations and homosexual relations. I’ve never seen a class that taught us more about handicapped people’s problems.” Students agreed that increased interaction would result in a higher degree of comfort around people with disabilities and more understanding of the unique challenges students with disabilities face while attending college.

**Theme 4. Desire for More Cultural/Diversity Activities and Programs**

Students across all proportionality and ethnic groups expressed the desire for more diversity-related activities and programs. Students are not in favor of requiring classes on diversity or for adding credits to what was agreed was an already-overloaded core. Rather, students cited the need for non-academic programs and activities that highlight the cultural diversity that exists in Hawai‘i and elsewhere. The following comments reflect this desire:

This campus focuses strongly on the Pacific region, which makes it a complete culture shock to those locals who travel to the Mainland. It is not very diverse, in my opinion, because the majority of the population has some sort of Asian background. The campus needs to provide more cultural events for those who are from the Mainland as well as local students. (Dominant)

This campus needs more life, more cultural knowledge and awareness, and not just a class to fulfill requirements. It needs more major events, famous and accomplished guest speakers. (Tilted)

I think we need more cultural activities. It would be nice if we had a performance or something to promote different cultures around the world at least once a week. We really need to address native issues such as Hawaiian and Native Americans a lot more, and issues dealing with women. (Tilted)

I would like to see more ethnic clubs and activities directed toward other more under represented groups like African Americans. (Token)

We need to offer food from different cultural cuisines and have different cultural days on campus. (Token)
Theme 5. Lack of Awareness of Diversity Groups, Services, and Classes

It appears that students are unaware of diversity groups or services or possess only a superficial recognition of a small number of existing groups and offices. Of the multitude of groups, services and classes available, students were either unaware of or unfamiliar with them. In general, students have had some exposure to diversity in coursework, primarily in classes offered by the Ethnic Studies, Women’s Studies, and Hawaiian Studies departments. Although they don’t want more required classes, they welcome optional courses on diversity issues. They would also like to know more about existing classes that focus on specific aspects of diversity. The following comments speak to the need for more publicity:

More activities that showcase diversity are needed. There needs to be more flyers to get the word out about what’s here. The responsibility for advertising is both the student group’s and Student Affairs. (Dominant)

I know the clubs are out there, but there is little awareness and publicity about them. (Dominant)

There are virtually no clubs/groups/organization that promote ethnic or racial diversity. There should be tables selling food or promoting academic activities on campus. There is so little effort put into promoting Hawai‘i as the melting pot of the world. (Tilted)

It would be good to have a designation for specific diversity classes when you register. (Token)

Summary of Results

The results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses indicated several significant findings that answer the three research questions addressed by this study:

1. Is there a relationship between proportional representation of Asian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian students on campus and their perception of diversity?

2. What are Asian, Pacific Islander and Caucasian undergraduate student experiences with, and attitudes and actions relative to, diversity issues?

3. What are ways to improve the campus climate for diversity for Asian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian students?
The major findings in response to the research questions of this study are identified and briefly summarized in the following section.

Student participants were categorized into groups, as defined by Kanter (1977), based on their proportion of the student body at UHM: dominant, tilted, and token. The relationship between group membership and experience with diversity, perception of the campus climate, perception of institutional actions, and overall satisfaction with college was examined using one-way MANOVA. The major finding in response to Question One is

1. There is a significant relationship between group membership based on proportional representation and students' overall perceptions of diversity.

To determine qualitative differences in student experiences with and perceptions of diversity, five separate focus groups were conducted: two Asian groups (Japanese and Filipino), one Caucasian group, and two Pacific Islander groups (Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander). Intra-group and inter-group similarities and differences among students in the Asian (dominant), Caucasian (tilted), and Pacific Islander (token) groups were found. The major findings in response to Question Two are

2. Students across all groups share a similar understanding of the meaning of diversity.

3. Student experience or observation of harassment varies by ethnic group.

4. The most common forms of harassment are derogatory remarks and racial/ethnic profiling.

5. Students across all groups have a high degree of contact with peers who are diverse in age, ethnicity, gender, language, and race.

6. Students' degree of contact with peers who are diverse in religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic class varies by ethnic group.

7. Students across all groups have a low degree of contact with peers with a disability.
8. There is a disconnect between students across all groups and professors.

9. There is a disconnect between local and non-local students.

The major findings in response to Question Three, how to improve the campus climate for diversity, are

10. Students across all groups want an increase in awareness and availability of classes, programs and activities related to diversity and culture.

11. Students’ desire to increase the representation of students and faculty of color varies by ethnic group.

12. Students’ desire to emphasize a culture of tolerance and respect for diversity in general varies by ethnic group.

The major findings of both the quantitative and qualitative inquiry support the notion that group membership based on proportional (racial) representation has a significant effect on overall student perceptions of diversity, particularly on student perceptions of institutional actions related to diversity. The findings also support the notion that ethnic group membership influences student experiences and perceptions of specific aspects of diversity.
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

Introduction

The discussion section is organized into three sections. The first section discusses the summary of the research and its purpose as well as the findings of the study. The second section develops conclusions and implications drawn from this study within the framework of Kanter’s (1977) theory of proportions. The final section addresses the contributions of this study to research related to a campus climate for diversity and the possible implications for practice and future research.

Summary of Study and Purpose

Due to the ongoing desire to improve the college experience for their students, colleges and universities have engaged in institutional climate research. Although many climate studies have concluded that the institutional climate and culture can have both positive and negative impacts on student satisfaction and success, previous research regarding the unique experiences students in non-predominantly White institutions of higher education has been minimal largely because 90 percent of IHEs in the U.S. are predominantly White. Additionally, data regarding the unique experience of Asians and Pacific Islanders not aggregated into the pan “Asian and Pacific American” category are missing from the literature in higher education. Given the diversity within the Asian and Pacific Islander population, coupled with the fact that they are the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in the U.S. and increasingly form a significant proportion of college-bound students, it is important that institutions include Asian and Pacific Islander student perspectives in climate studies, particularly institutions that have large proportions of Asian and Pacific Islander students in their student body.

In addition to neglecting Asian and Pacific Islander student issues, institutional climate studies that specifically examine proportional representation on student perspectives of diversity occur rarely in the literature. While diversity in higher education has evolved to
include group dynamics, curriculum and research, and institutional commitment, expanding agendas have ignored one of the basic goals to achieving diversity—proportional enrollment. Kanter's (1977) theory of proportions addresses the importance of structural diversity, or composition of a group. The purpose of this study was to contribute to the paucity of literature on the Asian and Pacific Islander experience of diversity in high education by determining whether the proportional representation of Asian and Pacific Islander students affects their perception of diversity.

This study examined survey responses from 322 Asian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian students to determine if proportional representation has an effect on perspectives of diversity. Additionally, the study synthesized qualitative data from 29 focus-group participants to further investigate specific experiences and perspectives of diversity among Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Caucasians. The specific foci of the study were student perceptions of diversity including personal experience with diversity, perceptions of the campus climate, perceptions of institutional actions related to diversity, and overall satisfaction with college.

Discussion of Findings

The major findings of this study will be discussed in sections addressing each of the three research questions. The first section discusses the results of the first question, including the multivariate findings supporting the relationship between proportional representation and student perspectives of diversity. The second and third sections address the findings associated with the qualitative results of undergraduate student experiences with, and attitudes and actions relative to, diversity issues and ways to improve the campus climate for diversity.

Question 1: Is there a relationship between proportional representation of Asian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian students on campus and their perception of diversity?

This question focuses on one of the two primary goals of the study, that is, to determine if proportional representation has an effect on student perceptions of diversity.
Multivariate analyses were conducted to test the hypothesized relationship. The findings support that there is indeed a relationship between group membership and perceptions of diversity and that group membership has a modest effect on perceptions of diversity. Kanter’s (1977) theory hypothesizes that students belonging to the token group (Pacific Islanders) would have the least positive perceptions overall on all measures, including personal experience with diversity, perceptions of the campus climate, perceptions of institutional actions, and satisfaction with college. When compared to Pacific Islanders, Caucasians would have more positive perceptions, while Asians would have the most positive perceptions overall. Yet my results do not confirm what was hypothesized for the experience of members in the token group.

Although group membership affects students’ perceptions of diversity as measured by the combined set of dependent variables (e.g., personal experience with diversity, perception of the campus climate, institutional actions related to diversity, and satisfaction with college), statistical analyses were inadequate for determining which of the dependent variables accounted for what proportion of variance observed. Inferential statistical analyses were not appropriate because of the low sample size. However, qualitative data from focus group participants revealed that Asian (dominant), Caucasian (tilted), and Pacific Islander (token) students have different experiences of diversity, different perceptions of the campus climate, and different perceptions of institutional actions related to diversity. This suggests that although multivariate analyses indicate that racial group membership influences student perceptions of diversity, qualitative analyses demonstrate that differences may be attributed more to membership in an ethnic group (e.g., Filipino, Native Hawaiian) rather than to membership in a proportional racial group (e.g., dominant, tilted, token). Asians and Pacific Islanders are more similar to each other on some issues related to diversity despite their proportion in the student body while on some issues, Caucasian students identify more with being a member of a “token” group instead of a “tilted” group.
These findings differ from Adisa Thomas' (2000) findings on student perceptions of diversity at a private institution of higher education. She found significant differences between students in the token (African American and Latino) and dominant (Caucasian) groups and students in the tilted (Asian) and dominant (Caucasian) groups but no significant differences between tilted (Asian) and token (African American and Latino) groups. The present study's results, however, are similar to other research indicating that Asian students prefer improving the campus climate for diversity through institutional or structured activities (Woo, 1997). They also confirm Rankin's (2005) findings from her national study on how students of color and White students perceive the campus climate for underrepresented groups. She found that students of color, including Asians and Pacific Islanders, were more likely to believe that institutional interventions would significantly improve the climate than were White students.

**Question 2: What are Asian, Pacific Islander and Caucasian undergraduate student experiences with, and attitudes and actions relative to, diversity issues?**

**Differences Among Groups**

The other primary goal of this study was to investigate inter-group and intra-group differences in student experiences and perceptions related to specific diversity issues. Qualitative findings from five focus groups comprising Japanese, Filipino, Caucasian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students, revealed that there are more similarities than differences among student experiences and perceptions of diversity. In addition, when differences are manifested, they appear to cross all proportionality groups. For example, student experience with harassment appears to vary by ethnic group and not by overall racial group. While only 14 percent of survey respondents have experienced harassment, 30 percent of Filipino (dominant racial group), Native Hawaiian (token racial group), and Caucasian (tilted racial group) focus group participants reported incidents of harassment. Harassment tends to be subtle rather than overt (e.g., derogatory remarks and racial/ethnic profiling). In contrast, Japanese (dominant racial group) and Pacific Islander (token racial group) students
have observed but not experienced harassment towards students of other underrepresented groups.

These differences can be partially attributed to each group’s racial proportion in the student body as well as to socioeconomic differences that are not based on proportion. Although both are subsumed in the larger pan Asian category, Japanese and Filipino students differ in their representation and experiences in the State’s educational system. For example, Japanese students are 11 percent of Hawai‘i’s public school students (Hawai‘i Department of Education, 2003) and 19 percent of students at UHM, while Filipino students make up 20 percent of public school students and 7 percent of UHM students. Filipino students also prefer to begin higher education in the community colleges but transfer to four-year institutions at much lower rates (Harms, 2001). Reasons for their low transfer rates include the perception that UHM is an impersonal place dominated by certain ethnic groups and cost (Office of Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity, 1996). Unlike Japanese students, many Filipino students are first generation college students from low-income families (Harms, 2001).

Like Filipino students, Native Hawaiian students are also underrepresented at UHM given their proportion in the public school system. Native Hawaiian students comprise 27 percent of students in Hawai‘i public schools (Hawai‘i Department of Education, 2003) but only 8 percent of UHM students. Similarly, two-thirds of Native Hawaiian transfer students are first-generation college students from low-income families (Harms, 2001). In light of this, it appears that Filipino and Native Hawaiian students have more in common with each other than with other ethnic groups in their respective racial categories (Asian and Pacific Islander): both are similarly underrepresented at UHM and have experienced harassment in similar ways.

The findings related to Caucasian student experiences of diversity not only support Kanter’s theory (1977) but other similar studies on the campus climate in racially diverse IHEs. As members of the tilted group, Caucasian students are viewed as a minority given their
proportion in the student body but less of a minority than token members. According to Kanter, individuals in the tilted group may still experience tokenism although the potential effects of tokenism are reduced as proportional representation approaches 20 to 30 percent. In this study, Caucasian students experience harassment similar to Filipinos and Native Hawaiians. Although their composition of the student body (24%) parallels their composition in the public school system (27%), Caucasian students, particularly students from the Mainland, appear to find the campus culturally incongruent.

According to the literature, this is not all that uncommon. For example, researchers of the Diversity Project found that a racially heterogeneous environment forces Caucasian students to confront their identity and that this is often a bitter and negative experience for them because they are uncomfortable with the “acultural” perception of being “white” (Institute for the Study of Social Change, 1991). In addition, this study confirmed similar findings that many Caucasian students on racially diverse campuses report feeling alienated (Appel et al., 1996) and left out of discussions, activities, clubs, and programs related to diversity (Chang, 1996). Likewise, this study also supports Tanaka’s (1996) conclusion that a racially diverse campus tends to have negative effects on White students’ perceived sense of community.

Despite their extremely low proportion in the student body (less than 3 percent), non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander students report generally positive experiences with the campus climate. This finding is inconsistent with the premise of Kanter’s theory: that members of a group will be the most adversely affected as their representation within the environment declines. However, this finding is consistent with the literature on the Pacific Islander student experience in higher education. Pacific Islanders are the least represented in the literature in higher education, even less so than members of other indigenous cultures, such as Native Hawaiians and Native Americans (Casey, 2001). A few studies addressing this invisible minority, however, point to cultural characteristics, which distinguish Pacific Islander students...
from other minority students in higher education (Ah Sam & Robinson, 1998). These include communication differences in which being quiet, reserved, and soft-spoken or responding in culturally desirable ways so as to avoid conflict are considered respectful (Casey, 2001). In addition, the socialization of many Pacific Islanders while in the U.S. leads them to react submissively in the classroom (Kuk, 1997). Their desire to minimize conflict and deflect controversy may explain in part the lack of negative experiences related to diversity shared by Pacific Islander focus group participants.

Another explanation for their positive experiences is that Pacific Islanders expect to be a minority given their proportion in the larger community and at UHM and therefore tend to be skilled in relating to others who are different. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, Pacific Islanders are more likely than students in the other groups to have diverse peers who are not only acquaintances but also friends. Given their positive relationships with others, it is not all that surprising that Pacific Islander students have experienced and observed fewer incidents of harassment.

**Similarities Among Groups**

Focus group data also revealed inter-group and intra-group similarities. These similarities demonstrate that overall, students across all groups are satisfied with the campus climate and that they have a high degree of contact with peers who are diverse in race, ethnicity, and gender. Survey data and focus group data confirm that in general, the majority of students at UHM are comfortable with the campus climate and satisfied with their college experience. Ninety percent of survey respondents and 80 percent (24 of 29) of focus-group participants are comfortable with the climate, while 75 percent of all respondents were satisfied with their educational experience. These outcomes support the findings of a number of researchers who have demonstrated that a high degree of contact with diverse peers increases the opportunity for cross-racial contact and interaction thereby leading to comfort
with the racial climate and positive educational benefits (Astin, 1993; Chang, 1996; Gurin et al., 2002).

Another similarity among students is their lack of exposure to students with disabilities and their absence of knowledge regarding disability as an aspect of diversity. Both survey respondents and focus-group participants report infrequent interactions with students with disabilities resulting in discomfort around people with disabilities and the lack of desire to “hang out with them.” This finding supports the results of previous research demonstrating that students in Hawai‘i with limited knowledge of and stereotypical attitudes toward people with disabilities are intolerant of them (Pfeiffer, Ah Sam, Guinan, Ratcliffe, Robinson, & Stodden, 2004). There are two significant trends salient to this issue: the institution has shown an increase in the past five years in the number of students with disabilities needing services and 20 percent of the population in the State has a disability (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Given these statistics, it is likely that students at UHM as well as students at IHEs throughout the nation, will at some point interact with people with disabilities in their personal and professional lifetimes.

Lastly, students in every group have experienced a disconnect with a number of professors regarding differences in race, politics, and communication styles. This disconnect can be partially explained by basic demographic variations between the student body and the faculty which have a significant effect on the educational experience of students and which influence faculty teaching and student learning styles (Ah Sam, Agbayani, & Ching, 2003). For example, most of the undergraduate students who enter UHM from local public schools (65%) find the faculty dramatically different from the faculty in their high schools. While a majority of public school teachers are female of Japanese ancestry (39%) or Caucasian race (26%), the institutional faculty are predominantly male (62%) and Caucasian (67%). Racial differences between students and faculty sometimes result in differences in verbal and nonverbal communication, evaluation of academic performance and interest, and concepts and
experiences of what constitutes racial or sexual harassment (Ah Sam, Agbayani, & Ching, 2003).

**Question 3: What are ways to improve the campus climate for diversity for Asian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian students?**

**Differences Among Groups**

Results from the quantitative analyses reflect the most variation in the means of responses across groups regarding perceptions of institutional actions. Items under this subscale addressed possible institutional strategies to improve the climate on campus, including offering more workshops and programs on diversity, requiring students to take a course on diversity aspects, and requiring faculty and staff to participate in a diversity-related workshop or program. Findings from this study indicate that Asian students ($M = 3.60$) were more likely than Caucasian students ($M = 3.18$) to think that additional institutional actions would considerably improve the campus climate, while Pacific Islander students were the most likely among the three groups to think so ($M = 3.96$). This finding supports results from Rankin’s (2005) study that concluded that students of color were significantly more likely to advocate workshops and required training sessions for staff. Additionally, this finding supports conclusions from researchers at the University of California at Berkeley (Institute for the Study of Social Change, 1991), which demonstrated that Caucasian students prefer improving the campus climate for diversity through non-institutional or structured activities.

Filipino, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students agree that increasing the representation of students and faculty of their respective ethnicities will improve the campus climate for diversity. In particular, students in these groups want more faculty of color, which likely means they are not satisfied with the current faculty demographics (e.g., largely male, Caucasian). Given the disconnect between students and faculty discussed previously, this recommendation is notable. This finding also supports AdisaThomas’ (2000) research that
demonstrated students, faculty, and administrators at the IHE involved in the study all pointed to the desire for more faculty of color to reflect the makeup of their students.

Although Japanese students feel the most satisfied with the campus climate, they share a similar desire with Caucasian students: an institutional emphasis on tolerance and respect for diversity. Findings related to Caucasian students' feelings of alienation explain in part their desire at UHM for more institutional support for a culture of tolerance rather than an emphasis on specific ethnic, racial, or cultural groups. Given that 50 percent of transfer students are primarily Caucasian students from the Mainland and that transfer students overall account for 13 percent of overall enrollment at UHM, it is important that Caucasian students' needs be addressed. This result supports the research of Tanaka (1996) who suggests that institutions find ways to involve Caucasian students in diversity experiences and take steps to develop new identities for them not based on race.

Similarities Among Groups

Survey respondents and focus-group participants agreed that an increase in institutional activities related to diversity would improve the campus climate. This suggests that although students in general reported feeling comfortable with the climate overall, there is still room for improvement. Specifically, students acknowledged that the institution should increase student awareness of available diversity classes, programs, and activities, offer more classes, programs, and activities incorporating more than just racial and ethnic diversity (e.g., disability), and provide more cultural events in non-academic settings. This finding supports Adisa Thomas' (2000) study, which found that students, faculty, and administrators perceive multicultural clubs and activities on-campus as useful and valuable.

Conclusions and Implications

Kanter's (1977) theory on tokenism was used to test whether the proportional (racial) representation of students has an effect on their perceptions of diversity as measured by their personal campus experiences of diversity, their perception of the campus climate, their
perception of institutional actions related to diversity, and their overall satisfaction with college. Two main conclusions regarding proportional representation and perceptions of diversity were developed from the findings of this study.

**Conclusion One:** The proportional representation of racially and ethnically diverse students affects student perceptions of diversity on campus in different ways. This conclusion corroborates previous research. This study finds that the proportions of socially and culturally different people in the environment shapes the dynamics of interaction and their perceptions differently among different groups. In other words, the effects of racial proportion are not uniform for students of different racial groups. This finding concurs with the conclusions of Chang (1996) and Hurtado et al. (1994). However, Conclusion One does not support prior research that found “token” members of an environment to be adversely affected by their low proportion in the larger community.

The primary implication of this conclusion is that socially and culturally different people are not necessarily polarized according to race or gender. In this study, differences among students were related to ethnicity, residency, and cultural norms. The policy implications of this distinction are important. For example, institutional policy might begin to acknowledge, support, and encourage diversity beyond racial diversity. Ideally, institutions of higher education that articulate the value of difference in race, ethnicity, age, gender, country of origin, disability, class, and sexual orientation would validate that diversity is more than just an issue of race.

**Conclusion Two:** The proportional representation of students involving not only race but also ethnicity, culture, gender, disability, sexual orientation, class, and religion are important in maximizing positive student perceptions of diversity. Conclusion Two builds upon Conclusion One and also concurs with previous research. This study found that the majority of students across racial and ethnic groups are generally comfortable with the overall campus climate, have a high degree of contact with diverse peers, and are either satisfied or
very satisfied with their college experience. This supports a wealth of evidence in the
literature that demonstrates the value of a racially and ethnically diverse student population on
student outcomes. Unlike 90 percent of IHEs on the Continent, UHM is an ethnically and
racially diverse campus with no ethnic or racial group comprising more than 40 percent of the
student population.

The primary implication of this conclusion is that IHEs must continue to admit a
racially and ethnically diverse student population. In addition, students who differ according
to culture, gender, disability, sexual orientation, class, and religion must also be considered by
IHEs as adding value to the college experience. Findings from this study also imply that
diversity that is limited to the numbers of racial and ethnic students on campus is necessary
but insufficient to achieving the full benefits of diversity. A host of researchers emphasize that
a comprehensive, sustained, and coordinated approach must be used to maximize the
educational benefits of diversity. They argue that in addition to representation and intergroup
interaction, diversity efforts must also include attention to perceptions and attitudes between
and among groups, diversity in the curriculum, and institutional commitment to diversity.
Claiming that structural diversity alone is adequate for achieving desired educational
outcomes is similar to stating that “having good buildings, high faculty salaries, and good
libraries would all be sufficient to ensure a good education” (Gurin et al., 2002, p. 21).
Diversity does make a difference but only when it is addressed from a multidimensional
approach.

Theoretically, this study demonstrated that Kanter’s theory is insufficient in
examining the degree of differences in perceptions among students at UHM. For example,
given their experiences and representation in Hawai’i’s public school system and their
socioeconomic status, Filipinos exhibit more “token” characteristics than “dominant”
characteristics and are more similar to Native Hawaiian than Japanese students. Likewise,
Caucasian students from the Mainland often feel like a cultural minority, despite their
proportional representation at UHM. Results from this study imply that ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic differences influence student experience and perceptions of diversity more than proportional representation. In essence, students' differing perceptions of diversity cannot be explained merely by "numbers."

**Contributions and Recommendations**

The results of this study may be helpful to UHM as well as to other IHEs that are less racially and ethnically diverse. The following recommendations are made:

1. The institutional commitment to diversity should be reviewed such that educational policies (including admission policies), curriculum, programs, and activities embrace diversity in all its forms and that tolerance and respect for diversity be emphasized wherever possible. Similarly, institutional commitment should result in hiring more faculty of color; admitting more students traditionally underrepresented given their race, ethnicity, class, disability, age, sexual orientation, or religion; and providing support for more courses and research addressing diversity.

2. IHEs should scrutinize the fundamental issues that go "beyond calling for greater commitment to and establishing appropriate diversity-related mandates for diversity" (Chang, 2002). The institutional commitment needed to address diversity is often at odds with an institution's drive to compete for the most talented students. Competition for admission to the more selective colleges and universities is particularly fierce and unusually complex. While many institutions of higher education compete to attract academically superior students and students who have other non-academic talents (e.g., athletic ability, leadership, creativity, community service), they may make academic and financial choices that are not consistent with the institution's mission, the best interests of the community, or the institution's long-term financial health. University presidents, college administrators, and higher education faculty tend to make these kinds of choices because (1) they fail to understand the educational benefits of diversity, (2) they lack the commitment to ensure that diversity is more than
rhetoric, or (3) their desire to improve diversity competes with other institutional priorities, values, or practices.

These competing issues include the following as identified by Chang (2000): maintaining educational excellence while providing equal access to underrepresented students; maintaining civility while encouraging free inquiry and discourse; imposing greater normative influence (e.g., equal-status interaction) and embracing the unique autonomy of higher education; and lastly, acknowledging the self-interest of colleges and universities to be more attentive to their reputations and more committed to accumulating resources than with social concerns and the broader public good that is usually specified in their missions.

**Implications for Future Research**

The results of this study suggest that proportional representation based on the race of undergraduate students is necessary but insufficient when examining student perspectives of diversity. This study found that aspects of diversity beyond race contribute to student perceptions of a campus climate for diversity. Future studies should examine experiences and perspectives related to diversity of students from other underrepresented groups, including other racial minorities (e.g., African American, Native American), ethnic minorities (e.g., Southeast Asians, Samoans, Micronesians), students with disabilities, and non-heterosexual students. Similarly, future studies at UHM could address differences in student perceptions of diversity based on residency (e.g., from Hawai‘i versus from the Continent), length and duration of residency in Hawai‘i (e.g., childhood years spent in Hawai‘i versus adulthood years spent in Hawai‘i), or socioeconomic status. In addition, examining the experiences and perceptions of faculty, staff, and administrators would validate the important role of all members in the higher education community in embracing the value of diversity.
CAMPUS CLIMATE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA

Rationale:
You are invited to participate in a research survey of students regarding the climate at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM). The results of the survey will provide important information about the climate at UHM and will enable us to improve the environment for working and learning on campus. Participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you do not have to answer any questions on the survey that you do not wish to answer. There are no risks in participating in this project beyond those experienced in everyday life. By completing the survey, your informed consent will be implied. Individuals will not be identified and only group data will be reported. The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate. You will not be asked to provide any identifying information and information you provide on the survey will remain anonymous.

Directions:
Please read and answer each question carefully. For each answer, darken the appropriate oval completely. If you want to change an answer, erase your first answer completely and darken the oval of your new answer. You may decline to answer specific questions. Please use a number two pencil and do not fold the survey form.

Thank you for your participation in this project.

Questions concerning this project should be directed to either:

Susan R. Rankin, Ph.D.
Senior Research Associate
Rankin and Associates, Consulting
PO Box 576
Howard, PA 16841
sue@rankin-consulting.com

Anna Ah Sam
Office of Student Equity, Excellence & Diversity
University of Hawaii at Manoa
2600 Campus Road, QLC 413
Honolulu, HI 96822
808-956-9217
anna@hawaii.edu

If you cannot obtain satisfactory answers to your questions or have comments or complaints about your treatment in this study, contact:

Committee on Human Studies
University of Hawaii
2540 Maile Way
Honolulu, HI 96822
808-956-5007

DO NOT FOLD
Part 1. Campus experiences

Please respond to all questions as they apply to you within the past year.

1. Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate at UHM?
   Note: Climate is considered as current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of faculty, staff, and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Comfortable</th>
<th>Comfortable</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Uncomfortable</th>
<th>Very Uncomfortable</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate in your academic college (e.g., Arts & Sciences, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Arts & Humanities, Education, Engineering, etc.)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Comfortable</th>
<th>Comfortable</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Uncomfortable</th>
<th>Very Uncomfortable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate in your academic department?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Comfortable</th>
<th>Comfortable</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Uncomfortable</th>
<th>Very Uncomfortable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. I have attended the following events at UHM: (Mark all that apply.)
   - Residence hall diversity program
   - Diversity workshop/training (e.g., National Coalition Building Institute-sponsored activity)
   - Diversity program
   - Diversity speaker

5. I am aware of the following diversity groups at UHM: (Mark all that apply.)
   - The Manoa Commission on Diversity
   - The Commission on the Status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Individuals
   - The Commission on Disability Access

6. Have you personally experienced harassment (any offensive, hostile, or intimidating conduct that has interfered unreasonably with your ability to work or learn) at UHM?
   Note: If you would like to elaborate on your experiences, please go to item 42 where space is provided.
   - Yes
   - No (If no, please skip to question 7)

6-1. What do you feel this conduct was based upon... (Mark all that apply.)
   - Your age
   - Your country of origin
   - Your ethnicity
   - Your gender
   - Your learning disability
   - Your physical characteristics
   - Your physical disability
   - Your race
   - Your religion
   - Your sexual orientation
   - Your socioeconomic class
   - Other (specify)

6-2. How did you experience this conduct? (Mark all that apply.)
   - I was the target of racial/ethnic profiling
   - I observed others staring at me
   - I was the target of derogatory remarks (e.g., "that's so gay", "I got jewed down")
   - I was the target of physical violence
   - I felt excluded from some activities
   - Other (specify)
6-3. Where did this conduct occur? (Mark all that apply.)

- In a class
- In a residence hall
- In a campus office
- In a faculty office
- In a meeting with one other person
- In a meeting with a group of people
- While working at a UHM job
- While walking on campus
- At a campus event
- In a public space on campus (e.g., Student Union, library, athletic facility)
- Other (specify)

6-4. Who was the source of this conduct? (Mark all that apply.)

- Student
- Faculty
- Graduate assistant
- Resident assistant
- Administrator
- Teaching assistant
- Staff member
- Campus security/public safety
- Student group
- Don't know classification of source person
- Other (specify)

6-5. Please describe your reactions to experiencing this conduct. (Mark all that apply.)

- I felt embarrassed
- I avoided the person who harassed me
- I left the situation immediately
- I didn't know who to go to
- I made a complaint to a UHM employee/official
- I didn't report it for fear of retaliation
- It didn't affect me at the time
- I told a friend
- I ignored it
- I confronted the harasser at the time
- I confronted the harasser later
- Other (specify)

7. Have you observed or personally been made aware of any harassment (conduct that you feel has created an offensive, hostile, or intimidating working or learning environment) directed toward a person or group of people at UHM? (Mark all that apply.)

- Yes
- No (If no, please skip to question 8)

7-1. Do you feel that this conduct was based upon their… (Mark all that apply.)

- Age
- Country of origin
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Learning disability
- Physical characteristics
- Physical disability
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic class
- Other (specify)

7-2. What forms of conduct have you observed or personally been made aware of at UHM? (Mark all that apply.)

- Racial/ethnic profiling
- Written comments
- Publications on campus
- Unsolicited e-mails
- Someone being stared at
- Derogatory remarks
- Graffiti
- Threats of physical violence
- Physical assault or injury
- Someone being deliberately ignored
- Others excluded from activities
- Other (specify)

7-3. Where did this conduct occur? (Mark all that apply.)

- In a class
- In a residence hall
- In a campus office
- In a faculty office
- In a meeting with one other person
- In a meeting with a group of people
- While working at a UHM job
- While walking on campus
- At a campus event
- In a public space on campus (e.g., Student Union, library, athletic facility)
- Other (specify)
7-4. Who was the source of this conduct? (Mark all that apply.)

- Student
- Faculty
- Graduate assistant
- Resident assistant
- Administrator
- Teaching assistant
- Staff member
- Campus security/public safety
- Student group
- Don't know classification of source person
- Other (specify)_

7-5. Please describe your reactions to observing this conduct. (Mark all that apply.)

- I felt embarrassed
- I avoided the harasser
- I left the situation immediately
- I made a complaint to a UHM employee/official
- I encouraged the victim to report the incident
- It didn't affect me at the time
- I told a friend
- I ignored it
- I confronted the harasser at the time
- I confronted the harasser later
- I didn't know to whom I should report the incident
- Other (specify)_

8. Are you employed by UHM?

- Yes
- No (If no, please skip to question 9)

While at your place of employment, did you encounter any of the following?

8-1. I experienced discriminatory hiring based on my... (Mark all that apply.)

Note: Discriminatory refers to a prejudicial bias.

- Age
- Country of origin
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Learning disability
- Physical characteristics
- Physical disability
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic class
- Other (specify)_

8-2. I experienced discriminatory firing based on my... (Mark all that apply.)

- Age
- Country of origin
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Learning disability
- Physical characteristics
- Physical disability
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic class
- Other (specify)_

8-3. I experienced discriminatory promotion based on my... (Mark all that apply.)

- Age
- Country of origin
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Learning disability
- Physical characteristics
- Physical disability
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic class
- Other (specify)_

9. The people in the offices I frequent are accepting of people based upon their... (Mark all that apply.)

- Age
- Country of origin
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Learning disability
- Physical characteristics
- Physical disability
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic class
- Other (specify)_
Part 2. Actions relative to climate issues

10. Generally speaking, how much contact would you say you have with persons of the following backgrounds?

10-1. With persons from the following racial/ethnic backgrounds?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None</th>
<th>Slight</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Frequent</th>
<th>Very Frequent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Americans/Blacks</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indians/Alaskan Natives</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Indian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chicanos/Latinos/Hispanics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guamanian or Chamorro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
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<td>Vietnamese</td>
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<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

10-2. With persons who are...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None</th>
<th>Slight</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Frequent</th>
<th>Very Frequent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-native English speakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender persons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Persons with disabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Persons with religious backgrounds other than your own</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

11. Would you be comfortable being close friends or roommates with a person who is...

(Please mark one response for each category.)

11-1. With persons from the following racial/ethnic backgrounds?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Close Friend</th>
<th>Roommate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American/Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Indian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicanos/Latinos/Hispanics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guamanian or Chamorro</td>
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<td>Japanese</td>
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<td>Native Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian</td>
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<td>Thai</td>
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<td>Tongan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11-2. With a person who is a...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Close Friend</th>
<th>Roommate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual woman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual man</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native English speakers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openly lesbian or bisexual woman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openly gay or bisexual man</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with disability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with religious beliefs different than your own</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with HIV or AIDS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgender man or woman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please continue on the next page
Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

12. UHM positively addresses issues related to...

   Note: If you would like to elaborate on these experiences, please go to item 42 where space is provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mental disability</th>
<th>Physical characteristics</th>
<th>Physical disability</th>
<th>People who speak English as a second language</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Sexual orientation</th>
<th>Socioeconomic class</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. UHM has visible leadership from upper level administrators who foster diversity.

14. Course content at UHM includes materials about individuals from underrepresented groups.

   Note: Underrepresented groups can be based on age, ancestry, gender, racial or ethnic background, disability, national origin, religious creed, or sexual orientation.

15. The classroom climate is welcoming for students from underrepresented groups.

16. The workplace climate is welcoming for employees from underrepresented groups.

17. How would you rate the accessibility of the campus for people with disabilities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Accessible</th>
<th>Accessible</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Somewhat Inaccessible</th>
<th>Inaccessible</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus Center</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Buildings</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Classrooms</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Building</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounds (construction)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation (e.g., shuttles)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Facilities</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Facilities</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Halls</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating Halls</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information in Alternative Formats</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18. Challenge others on racially derogatory comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Somewhat Unlikely</th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

19. Challenge others on ethnically derogatory comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Somewhat Unlikely</th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

20. Challenge others on derogatory comments regarding sexual orientation/gender identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Somewhat Unlikely</th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
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</table>

21. Feel disapproval for a display of public affection (e.g., kiss) by a heterosexual couple

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Somewhat Unlikely</th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
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</table>

22. Feel disapproval for a display of public affection (e.g., kiss) by a gay or lesbian couple

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Somewhat Unlikely</th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
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23. Refuse to participate in comments or jokes that are derogatory toward persons in underrepresented groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Somewhat Unlikely</th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
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24. Voice disapproval at offensive graffiti directed at persons from underrepresented groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Somewhat Unlikely</th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
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</table>

25. How would you rate the overall campus climate for diversity in regards to the following groups:

25-1. For persons from the following racial/ethnic backgrounds?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Respectful</th>
<th>Moderately Respectful</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Somewhat Respectful</th>
<th>Not At All Respectful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Americans/Blacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indians/Alaskan Natives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian Indian</td>
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<td>Chicanos/Latinos/Hispanics</td>
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<td>Guamanian or Chamorro</td>
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<td>Native Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian</td>
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<td>Vietnamese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whites/Caucasians</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please continue on the next page ☞
Part 3. Background information

26. What is your gender?
   ○ Female   ○ Male   ○ Transgender

27. What is your sexual identity?
   ○ Bisexual   ○ Gay   ○ Lesbian   ○ Heterosexual   ○ Uncertain

28. What is your age?
   ○ 17 or under   ○ 18-21   ○ 22-31   ○ 32-42   ○ 43-52   ○ 53 and over

29. What is your student status?
   ○ Freshman (0-24 credits)   ○ Sophomore (25-54 credits)
   ○ Junior (55-88 credits)   ○ Senior (89 or more credits)

30. Are you full-time or part-time?
   ○ Full-time   ○ Part-time

31. Do you have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity (such as seeing, hearing, learning, walking)?
   ○ Yes   ○ No

32. With what racial/ethnic group do you identify? (If you are of a multi-racial/multi-ethnic background, mark all that apply.)
   ○ African American/Black   ○ American Indian/Alaskan Native
   ○ Asian Indian   ○ Chicano/Latino/Hispanic
   ○ Chinese   ○ Filipino
   ○ Guamanian or Chamorro   ○ Japanese
   ○ Korean   ○ Lao
   ○ Micronesian   ○ Middle Eastern
   ○ Native Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian
   ○ Samoan   ○ Thai
   ○ Tongan   ○ Vietnamese
   ○ White/Caucasian   ○ Other (please specify)

33. What is your citizenship status?
   ○ US citizen - born in the United States   ○ Permanent resident (immigrant)
   ○ US citizen - naturalized   ○ Permanent resident (refugee)
   ○ International (F-1, J-1, H-1-B, or other visa)

34. If you are a student, where do you live?
   ○ Residence hall   ○ Other campus housing (e.g., co-op)   ○ Off campus   ○ Family student housing

35. How would you evaluate your educational experience at UHM?
   ○ Excellent
   ○ Good
   ○ Fair
   ○ Poor

Please continue on the next page
36. If you could start over again, would you go to UHM?
   - Definitely yes
   - Probably yes
   - Probably no
   - Definitely no

Part 4. How to improve the campus climate

In your opinion, how would each of the following affect the climate at UHM? Climate is considered as current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of faculty, staff, and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential.

37. Providing more workshops/programs to become more aware of the issues and concerns facing people based upon their...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Country of origin</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

38. Requiring all graduate and undergraduate students to take at least one class that focuses on issues, research, and perspectives on...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country of origin</td>
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39. Requiring all faculty/staff to participate in at least one program that focuses on issues, research, and perspectives on...

<table>
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<th>Age</th>
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40. Include diversity-related activities as one of the criteria for performance evaluations of non-student employees.

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Please continue on the next page
41. Please rate the campus climate at UHM using the following scale: (e.g., very friendly = 1, very hostile = 5)

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Don't Know
Part 5. Your additional comments

42. This survey has raised a large number of issues. If you would like to offer your own suggestions on how the campus may move forward to improve the campus climate, please use the space below or write your comments on an additional sheet of paper. Thank you.
REFERENCES


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Harms, J. (2001). *Filipino, Hawaiian and other transfer students from the University of Hawai‘i Community Colleges*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.


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http://www.aapi.gov/resources/aapifacts.htm

