

Survey of Faculty Involvement in Diversity and Inclusion

University of Central Florida
Fall 2018

Background

In their research, subsequently detailed in their article, *Factors Contributing to Faculty Incorporation of Diversity-Related Course Content* (2006), Matthew Mayhew and Heidi Grunwald surveyed faculty members at their university to determine what factors contributed to their willingness to support institutionalized diversity initiatives such as the integration of diversity-related course learning into the existing curriculum. In particular, the researchers examined variables such as demographics, institutional and departmental commitments to diversity, personal beliefs about diversity, and participation in workshops designed to increase awareness and sensitivity towards issues of diversity. In discussing the implications of their findings, the authors noted that “the particular history of a campus and the beliefs that faculty bring with them to the campus are important contributors to institutional dynamics, suggesting the need for additional campus-based studies of this kind.” This indicates that surveys like this one may result in very different findings across institutions and may provide insights into the unique dynamics of a particular college or university.

The *Survey of Faculty Involvement in Diversity and Inclusion* was developed and administered at the University of Central Florida to determine what factors might contribute to the incorporation of diversity-related content into courses at this institution.

Survey Instrument

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion provides a Diversity Track as part of the University of Central Florida’s annual Summer Faculty Development Conference. The project for the 2016 Diversity Track required faculty participants to develop survey items to assess faculty incorporation of diversity and inclusion-related topics and concepts in both the classroom and the curriculum. The survey items were categorized into seven key areas:

- Content Related to Diversity and Inclusion Currently Incorporated in Courses,
- Teaching Strategies Related to Diversity and Inclusion Currently Utilized in Courses,
- Departmental and Institutional Issues Regarding Diversity,
- Formal Participation in Diversity-Related Activities,
- Personal Beliefs About Diversity,
- Professional Characteristics, and
- Demographics.

The developed survey items were edited by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and subsequently were vetted with two additional faculty groups as well as staff members well versed in appropriate language around demographic questions. The survey was put into Qualtrics and representatives from Operational Excellence and Assessment Support (OEAS) reviewed the instrument for appropriate survey logic and soundness. The survey was distributed to faculty members in the fall of 2018.

Key Findings

The number of faculty members at the University of Central Florida who were invited and encouraged to participate in the *Survey of Faculty Involvement in Diversity and Inclusion* was 1,959. This number represents all individuals who have identified themselves as “faculty” in the PeopleSoft system. Of this number, 363 faculty members participated (18.5%), with 278 completing the entire survey (14%).

Three areas of the survey, **Departmental and Institutional Issues Regarding Diversity**, **Formal Participation in Diversity-Related Activities**, and **Demographics**, yielded statistically significant findings with p values ranging from $< .05$ to $< .001$.

- **Departmental and Institutional Issues Regarding Diversity**

Faculty responses indicate the *University* is perceived as being more supportive of diversity than either Colleges or Departments in terms of:

1. having a clear set of diversity goals and plans,
2. developing programs and workshops with the goal of retaining people with diverse characteristics,

3. having leadership that encourages faculty to include diversity and inclusion-related content in courses,
4. providing resources, events, and programs to help faculty develop inclusive course content, and
5. providing incentives to encourage faculty to include diversity and inclusion-related content in courses. Of additional note with respect to this last finding, mean values were relatively low for the University, Colleges, and Departments suggesting that very little in terms of incentives is being provided at any level of the institution.

When looking at the issues of:

1. treating LGBTQ+ faculty fairly, and
2. respecting differences in sexual orientation,

Departments are perceived as doing a better job in comparison to the Colleges, who are in turn doing a better job than the University.

- **Formal Participation in Diversity-Related Activities**

Significant findings in this area of the survey related to participation in the Diversity Track of the Summer Faculty Development Conference.

1. Participation in the Diversity Track significantly correlated with the actions of:
 - incorporating “core” cultural competencies in courses,
 - reflecting on and monitoring their own biases, stereotypes, and prejudices,
 - participating in, as well as participating in a greater number of, organized activities designed to promote sensitivity towards diversity issues, and
 - having a colleague share Diversity Track content with them.
2. Additional analyses (Chi-Square and ANOVA/t-tests) indicated faculty participants in the Diversity Track were more likely to:
 - teach a course that meets the diversity requirement,
 - be familiar with “core” cultural competencies,

- incorporate “core” cultural competencies into courses,
- teach discipline-specific competencies related to diversity and inclusion, and
- include materials in courses written or created by people of different backgrounds and/or perspectives.

- **Demographics**

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion clearly indicated in the survey that responding to the demographic questions was voluntary and that any or all of these questions may be skipped. Survey findings indicated that there was not enough demographic information to see interactions and some main effects.

One demographic area where several statistically significant findings were observed related to individuals who identified as part of the LGBTQ+ community and indicated that these faculty members were more likely to:

- teach a course that meets the diversity course requirement,
- be familiar with the “core” cultural competencies,
- consider multiple learning modalities in designing course content and experiences,
- include learning opportunities in courses that encourage students to share their diverse perspectives, and
- reflect on and monitor their own biases, stereotypes, and prejudices.

Next Steps

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion plans to meet with its Faculty Advisory Committee and other faculty partners to determine the best ways to explore in greater depth the key findings of this survey.