UA Racial Climate Surveys—and Next Steps...
2007 UA Employee Racial Climate Survey
Views of the Institution by African American & European American Employees
Who responded?

- 240 women, 188 men
- Race/Ethnicity:
  - 73 African Americans, 10 Asian Americans, 314 European Americans, 6 Hispanic/Latino Americans, 4 Native Americans, 5 Biracial Americans
- 96% US citizens
- 376 FT employees, 41 PT employees
- Employment areas
  - 82 contract professional, 95 classified staff, 157 faculty, 22 administrators, 7 paraprofessionals, 13 skilled craft, 46 service and maintenance
Survey response codes

Question responses:
- **Strongly Agree** = 1
- **Agree** = 2
- **Neither Agree Nor Disagree** = 3
- **Disagree** = 4
- **Strongly Disagree** = 5

Race:
- **African American** = 1
- **European American** = 3
26. This university is committed to diversity.
21. I witnessed individuals here at the university making racially insensitive assumptions about an individual or a group of people.

Question responses:
- Strongly Agree = 1
- Agree = 2
- Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3
- Disagree = 4
- Strongly Disagree = 5

Race:
- African American = 1
- European American = 3
20. I have heard racist remarks spoken at this university.
22. People of color are well represented at this university.
17. I have witnessed unfair hiring decisions at this university that affected people of color.
14. Overall, I feel that promotion and career advancement opportunities at the university are not limited for people of color.
Qualitative Responses

- “I believe that many of the discriminatory things that I've observed are rather subtle but, nevertheless, a reality of the work environment. For this reason, some of the questions in the survey were difficult to respond to.”
- “I do not believe that anything will come of this survey. I have made suggestions and complaints in the past and they have fallen of deaf ears. I feel powerless.”
“I feel the university has reached out to hire a diverse faculty and staff. If anything, I feel they may have gone far out of the way to hire people of color to reach these goals.”
“I know a number of employees of color who are not faculty. Without exception, each has related incidents concerning race that I have found appalling. Moreover and regardless of the 'facts', the University is perceived by the black community as racist. Whether it is true or not is beside the point. The perception is there. That said, I don't know what to do about it since I have know faculty who believe that every affirmative action hire forces us to ignore more qualified individuals, and that includes women. Finally, I wouldn't trust the results of this survey: I'm sure that those with reprehensible views on race and gender are also clever enough to cover their tracks.”
Climate as a Predictor of African American Employees’ Perceptions of UA Commitment to Diversity and Work Environment Satisfaction
Used institutional climate item ratings to predict perceived UA commitment to diversity

- A way to see what aspects of climate are most powerful in predicting employees’ overall sense of UA commitment to diversity
- Separate regressions for African American and European American employees, but we report only African American results here
- All items inter-correlated
For African American employees, 64% of the variance in perceived UA commitment to diversity was explained by:

- Q14 - career advancement not limited for persons of color
- Q22 - persons of color well-represented at UA
- UA commitment to diversity is conveyed most strongly to these employees by representation and advancement
First, we used departmental racial climate item ratings to predict work environment satisfaction.

- Identified aspects of an employee’s departmental climate that are most powerful in predicting his/her overall satisfaction with work environment.
- Separate regressions for African American and European American employees, but we report only African American results here.
- All items were inter-correlated.
For African American employees, 53% of variance in work environment satisfaction was explained by:

- Q1 - persons of color treated as competent & important
- Q2 - promo & advancement limited for persons of color
- Q4 - witnessed unfair hiring affecting persons of color

Satisfaction linked to perceptions of respect and fairness in work environment
Next, we used institutional climate item ratings to predict work environment satisfaction

- Identified aspects of the institutional climate that are most powerful in predicting an employee’s overall satisfaction with work environment
- Separate regressions for African American and European American employees, but we report only African American results here
- All items were inter-correlated
For African American employees, 47% of the variance in work environment satisfaction was explained by:

- Q20 - have heard racist remarks at UA
- Q22 - persons of color are well-represented at UA

Satisfaction linked to observations of racism and representation at the institution.
2006 Student Climate Survey
984 students enrolled at UA in Spring 2006 responded to web survey

- 118 African American (36M/82F), 740 European American (303M/437F) compared below

Similar mean responses across African American and European American students:

- Agreement that course faculty approachable, college staff helpful, residence hall staff and UA police treat them fairly, have studied with students of different racial/ethnic group
Differences in African American and European American students’ responses to:
- underlying racial tension at UA
- have discussed racial issues with persons of another race/ethnicity
- transition to UA was more difficult than expected
- have considered leaving UA
- have experienced racism at UA

Overall, African American students perceived a “chillier” climate at UA

2006 Student Climate Survey
Revisit 2006 student climate survey

Why?

- Issues with sampling and representativeness of African American sample in original
- Much has occurred on campus since 2006
  - Annual Race Week events, Black Male Summits, Chief Diversity Officer hired, Inclusive Excellence embedded in Academic Plan
- New national initiative to assess student perceptions of racial climate with the opportunity to receive descriptive feedback and to compare UA to comparable institutions
Next Steps...
Authoring by Dr. Sylvia Hurtado of UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute (HERI)
- National authority on diversity and diversity climate issues and assessment
- She and her colleagues have developed a 35 minute student survey that consists of
  - A core survey for all students
  - Optional modules to assess experiences of transfer students, in classroom, and intergroup relations
Hurtado’s HERI will score climate surveys and return to us:

- An individual institutional report based on themes and constructs that have been created for the survey
- Comparative norms in the pilot year, if there are at least 5 institutions that have a similar profile to UA