September 16, 2021

Ohlone College Employee Survey:
Perspectives on Racism, Bias and Efforts Toward Equity
Summary of findings

At the request of Ohlone College President Eric Bishop, Wheelhouse surveyed Ohlone College employees to help the college understand college-wide employee perspectives on racism and bias. Specifically, we sought to support Ohlone’s efforts to learn more about employee attitudes and beliefs about efforts at the college to improve equity and the experience of students and staff. This memo provides a summary of findings that are intended as a starting point for campus community conversations and reflections on employee experiences, the college’s strengths and room for growth.

This summary organizes high-level findings into four sections:
(1) **employee perceptions** of the college’s structural barriers and progress towards racial equity and inclusivity (closed-ended responses);
(2) self-reported **employee comfort levels and capacity** to participate in or lead conversations about racism, bias and inequities (closed-ended responses); and
(3) **perceived obstacles** to, and **ideas for creating**, a more equitable and inclusive campus (open-ended responses).

(4) **expanded findings** for each closed-ended question.

How the survey was developed and administered

The survey instrument was developed by Wheelhouse in consultation with college leadership and was administered starting May 3, 2021. It included closed-ended, scaled responses but also opportunities for respondents to provide detail in their own words through open-ended responses. Following the initial email of the survey link to all full- and part-time employees, including adjunct faculty, President Bishop sent 2 more personal email reminders on May 10 and 17. The instrument remained open until June 4, 2021 and captured 305 responses for a response rate of 37%. About 24% of respondents were classified/professional staff, 48% were faculty, and 16% were managers/administrators. About 6% of respondents were African American, 19% were Asian/Asian American, 14% were Latinx, 9% were Multi-Ethnic, 17% were other, and 35% were White. Tables with additional respondent characteristics can be found [here](#).
1. Employee perceptions of the college’s structural barriers and progress towards racial equity and inclusivity (responses to closed ended questions)

- Survey respondents believe hiring processes, classroom interactions and promotion processes are the top priorities the campus needs to address to achieve greater equity and inclusivity. (Q3)

- With some exceptions, employee perceptions of Ohlone’s progress towards racial equity and inclusivity seem to be more positive based on positionality, meaning positions with greater power such as managers/administrators or faculty, say they experience improved dialogue and greater momentum or urgency to address racism, inequality, and social justice. (Q5-Q7c)
  
  - 33% of faculty reported experiencing “a lot” more explicit discussions of race and racism inside the classroom while 16% reported “not at all” and 12% reported “a little.” (Q7d)
  - 50% of managers/administrators reported experiencing “a lot” more explicit discussions of race outside the classroom; followed by 48% of faculty, and 37% of classified/professional staff. (Q7e)
  - When categories “some” and “a lot” are combined, all employee groups report experiencing more explicit discussions outside the classroom at rates of 82% or higher. (Q7e)

- Roughly half of respondents believe the pace of change towards adopting an equity-minded culture in the college or in their department/unit is “about right.” (Q20)
  
  - 52% rated the pace of change in their department/unit as “about right” and 45% rated the pace of change at the college overall as “about right.”
  - 14% of respondents rated the pace of change as “fast” within their department/unit and 20% rated the pace as “fast” within the college overall. 0% rated the pace “too fast” within their department/unit and only 1% rated it “too fast” within the college overall.
  - 23% of respondents rated the pace of change as either “too slow” or “slow” within their department/unit, a similar finding for the pace of change within the college overall.

- Almost a third of respondents reported personally being a target of racism and/or implicit bias, with slight differences by position and large differences by race. (Q8)
  
  - Classified/professional staff reported being a target at slightly higher rates than faculty and managers/administrators. Classified/professional staff reported a rate of 33%, faculty reported 29%, and managers/administrators reported 27%.
  - 78% of African American respondents (n=18) reported being targets of racism and bias. By comparison, 42% of Multi-Ethnic respondents, 30% of respondents categorized as Other, 22% of White respondents, and 20% of Asian/Asian American

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1 Respondents were provided 7 items and were asked to rate each item on a 5-point scale ranging from “Top priority” to “Not a priority.” The three items highlighted were chosen as a “top priority” at highest rates across all 7 items. For example, 35% of respondents rated “hiring processes” a “top priority.”

2 Questions 7c, 7d, and 7e were part of a battery of questions that asked respondent to differentiate their current perceptions of topics such as “observed increased action around issues of race and racism...” or “experienced more explicit discussion of race and racism...” from their perceptions prior to the murder of George Floyd.
respondents.
• 40% of female respondents reported being the target of racism and bias. By comparison, 18% of male respondents reported being targets, followed by 15% of Other respondents.

2. Self-reported employee preparation for and capacity to lead or navigate conversations and to address issues of race, racism/bias, and inequality (responses to closed-ended questions)
• A little over one-third of all respondents “have not participated” or “...have, but can’t remember the details” of a diversity training. Similarly, almost half of all survey respondents “have not participated” or “have, but can’t remember the details” of an implicit bias training or other related training. (Q13)

• Overall, respondents report greater comfort levels with discussions about equity than racism. (Q10-11)
  • 84% of managers/administrators reported being comfortable (“extremely” and “somewhat” comfortable combined) with conversations about racism.
  • Managers/administrators reported the highest rates of comfort. The remaining employee groups shared similar rates (~75%) of being comfortable with conversations about racism. When only focusing on “extremely comfortable” faculty reported higher rates (33%), followed by classified/professional staff (30%), then managers/administrators (27%).
  • 95% of managers/administrators reported being comfortable (“extremely” and “somewhat” comfortable combined) with conversations about equity.
  • Managers/administrators reported the highest rates of comfort with conversations about equity. When only focusing on “extremely comfortable”, faculty reported the highest rates (56%), followed by managers/administrators (48%), and classified/professional staff (40%).

• Respondents have greater interest in participating in conversations about racial equity than leading them. (Q14-15)
  • 73% of managers/administrators are “extremely” or “very” interested in participating in conversations about racial equity, compared to 64% of faculty and 45% of classified/professional staff.
  • 36% of managers/administrators and 35% of faculty expressed being interested in leading conversations and efforts around racial equity (“I am interested...but don’t have...training” and “I am interested...and have some training” combined).

• In terms of employee desire for greater capacity, 76% of respondents reported wanting “...to learn more” about how to lead conversations and efforts centered on racial equity. (Q16)
  • 47% reported having “...some basic skills...” while 29% reported uncertainty about “...where to start...” Notably, the remainder of respondents (24%) to this question reported being “competent” or “an expert” in leading conversations and efforts centered on racial equity.
  • Faculty and managers/administrators reported wanting to learn more at similar rates (75%).
  • At equal rates, faculty shared having some basic skills (39%) and uncertainty
about “…where to start…” (39%). 25% reported being “competent” or “an expert.”

• By contrast, managers/administrators shared at higher rates (63%) having “…some basic skills...”; 13% shared uncertainty about “…where to start…” and 25% shared being “competent.”

• In terms of capacity to address racism/bias…on a daily basis, 13% of respondents reported not seeing racism/bias and 23% shared seeing racism/bias but not feeling they “...can call it out...” (Q17)

• 45% of respondents feel competent in addressing racism/bias when they see it, but far fewer -- only 19% -- reported “When I see racism and bias in the workplace, I call it out.” Table 1 summarizes the overall response patterns (in percentages) for question 17. Table 2 summarizes response patterns (in percentages) by college roles.

Table 1. Summary of responses: Overall in percentages (Q17)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don't see racism or bias in the workplace.</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I see racism and bias in the workplace, I don't feel I can call it out.</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I see racism or bias in the workplace, I feel competent addressing it.</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I see racism and bias in the workplace, I call it out.</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Snapshot of responses: By select college roles in percentages (Q17)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Classified/ professional staff</th>
<th>Faculty (full time or adjunct)</th>
<th>Manager/administrator/confidential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don't see racism or bias in the workplace.</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I see racism and bias in the workplace, I don't feel I can call it out.</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I see racism or bias in the workplace, I feel competent addressing it.</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I see racism and bias in the workplace, I call it out.</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A complete set of tables along with data visuals can be found [here](#).
3. Obstacles to and ideas for creating a more equitable and inclusive campus

This section summarizes broad themes that emerged from each of the following open-ended questions:

- Q4: What do you believe are the biggest obstacles to addressing racism at Ohlone College?
- Q18: How can Ohlone’s leadership better support your development as a member of our community?
- Q19: How can Ohlone College be a more inclusive institution?
- Q21: What efforts have you taken to make your classroom a more equitable space for students?
- Q22 & 23: If the college was becoming more equitable and inclusive, how would you know? What evidence would make this clear?
- Q24: What efforts have you taken to create or work within more inclusive teams?

Q4: What do you believe are the biggest obstacles to addressing racism at Ohlone College?

By far the most cited obstacle to addressing racism at Ohlone College was a lack of awareness or understanding of what racism is and how it operates. This was coupled with expressions of a need for education and spaces that foster constructive dialogue around entrenched biases, stereotypes, and attitudes to debunk misconceptions by community members who deny the campus has no issues. In addition, respondents also reported that the delivery of higher education to students perpetuates racism citing concerns over lack of diverse representation in the curriculum, equity in hiring and promotions of faculty and management, and accessibility to technology and affordable textbooks and financial penalties for students who cannot take a full of load classes.

Appendix #1 presents more robust descriptions of each theme along with sample quotes.

Q18: How can Ohlone’s leadership better support your development as a member of our community?

Responses to the question “How can Ohlone’s leadership better support your development as a member of our community?” fell into several related central themes. Respondents overwhelmingly support professional development opportunities (i.e., training, seminars, speakers) and the creation of spaces that foster constructive dialogue around a host of topics such as: helping employees develop an equity or antiracist mindset or how racism and bias are reflected in the College’s current practices and processes.

Relatedly, a portion of respondents advocated for more equitable access to professional development by adjunct faculty. These suggestions were coupled with requests for eliminating barriers to encourage employees to participate in professional development opportunities (i.e., offering incentives such as flex days). Some respondents tied spaces for constructive dialogue to increased transparency of leadership and cultivation of a cohesive diversity, equity, and inclusion vision and implementation plan that reflects buy-in from the campus community. In addition to informing professional development support efforts, a notable number of employees expressed support for continuation of current practices by leadership. A subset of responses also highlighted salient ideas on how to incorporate DEI into the classroom.
Appendix #2 presents more robust descriptions of each theme along with sample quotes.

Q19: How can Ohlone College be a more inclusive institution?

When asked “How can Ohlone College be a more inclusive institution?” employees primarily reflected on campus culture and campus policies. Respondents proposed increasing professional development (PD) opportunities and campus engagement with PD opportunities as a means to create a more inclusive campus culture. There was also overwhelming support for changes to Ohlone’s policies and practices around hiring and promotion to increase employee diversity. Similarly, respondents supported student-centered initiatives that foster diversity and inclusion within the student population. Respondents who shared more detailed reflections on campus culture identified a culture that is not inclusive of the Deaf community or adjuncts. Respondents urged concerted efforts to ensure those communities feel they are valued members of the broader campus community. Respondents also wanted a culture that is supportive of deep conversations on race, diversity, and inclusion that lead to action and change.

Appendix #3 presents more robust descriptions of each theme along with sample quotes.

Q21: What efforts have you taken to make your classroom a more equitable space for students?

Responses to the question “What efforts have you taken to make your classroom a more equitable space for students?” tended to coalesce around three interconnected areas where respondents are investing their efforts: curriculum, classroom policies, and classroom environments. Respondents who have invested efforts into revising the curriculum detailed efforts to integrate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles into their class content and teaching methods. Respondents also spoke about ensuring that teaching materials are culturally relevant and reflect student diversity. When sharing changes to classroom policies, respondents described employing student-centered policies that allow for greater flexibility in student learning styles and grading and assessments. Respondents also described soliciting feedback from students and offering extra support as needed. Respondents, who felt fostering an equitable classroom environment was a priority, detailed their efforts to elevate student voices and to promote respect, positivity, and openness in their classrooms.

Appendix #4 presents more robust descriptions of each theme along with sample quotes.

Q22 & 23: If the college was becoming more equitable and inclusive, how would you know? What evidence would make this clear?

When asked “If the college was becoming more equitable and inclusive, how would you know? What evidence would make this clear?” by far, respondents cited changes in behaviors and perceptions among Ohlone employees that support an improved campus experience among faculty, staff, and students. Other respondents, shared that seeing more diverse representation across faculty, staff, and students would signal equity and inclusion. In order to accomplish behavioral changes and demographic shifts, a considerable number of responses seemed to suggest that embedding DEI into the structure of the organization would make it clear the college was becoming more equitable and inclusive. Respondents also shared that improved student learning experiences and a greater
use of student retention and success data to close student equity gaps across academic departments would be evidence the campus was becoming more equitable.

Appendix #5 presents more robust descriptions of each theme along with sample quotes.

Q24: What efforts have you taken to create or work within more inclusive teams?

Descriptions of respondent efforts to create or work within more inclusive teams tended to fall into two overarching categories: mindset and actions. Respondents who expressed their efforts in term mindsets shared cultivating or practicing self-awareness around power structures when interacting with others. Respondents also shared being more deliberate in their recognition and understanding of the value of inclusivity and diversity in relation to their college role. Respondents under this theme also shared promoting or participating in formal DEI trainings, initiatives, and workshops to actively expand their knowledge. Other respondents described encouraging and/or participating in informal conversations as a means of fostering more inclusive climates for teams but also students. There were also respondents, especially those in supervisory and managerial positions, who shared employing practices to diversify representation on advisory or hiring committees as a means to creating or working within more inclusive teams.

Appendix #6 presents more robust descriptions of each theme along with sample quotes.

4. Expanded findings for closed-ended questions

Q3. Top priorities\(^3\) that need addressing to achieve greater equity and inclusion at Ohlone College:

- Hiring processes (35%)
- Classroom interactions and participation (34%)
- Promotion processes (29%)

Q5. Perception of momentum to address issues of social justice and racial inequality:

- Managers/administrators and faculty perceive greater momentum compared to classified/professional staff.
- African American/Black respondents perceive less momentum compared to all other groups.

Q7. Perception of sense of urgency to confront racial bias and inequality:

- Managers/administrators and faculty perceive greater urgency to confront racial bias and inequality compared to all employee groups.
- While all race/ethnic groups had rates of perception above 70%, indicating that employees perceived “a lot” or “some” urgency, Asian/Asian Americans reported perceiving less urgency to confront bias and inequality compared to all other groups.

Q7b. Perceptions of increased or improved dialogue around issues of race and racism:

- Managers/administrators had the highest perceptions of increased or improved dialogue, followed by faculty, then classified/professional staff.
• There were minimal differences in perceptions by race/ethnicity when response categories “A lot” and “Some” are combined. However, African American/Black respondents reported “Not at all” at the highest rate compared to all other groups.

Q7c. Observations about increased action on issues of race and racism:
• Managers/administrators and faculty perceive increased action in higher rates (i.e., “some” or “a lot”) compared to classified/professional staff.
• African Americans and Latinx respondents were notably below the overall average in their perceptions of increased actions (i.e., “some” or “a lot”) compared to Asian/Asian American and White respondents.

Q7d. Experienced more explicit discussions of race and racism in the classroom:
• 70% of faculty reported experiencing (i.e., some or a lot) more explicit discussions of race and racism in the classroom while 28% reported “not at all” or “a little.”

Q7e. Experienced more explicit discussions of race and racism outside the classroom:
• Classified/professional staff reported somewhat lower rates of experiencing “a lot” more explicit discussions of race and racism. Almost 40% of classified/professional staff reported experiencing “a lot” more explicit discussions of race, compared to almost 50% of faculty and 50% of managers/administrators. When categories “some” and “a lot” are combined, all employee groups report experiencing explicit discussions at rates of 82% or higher.
• African American respondents reported lower rates of experiencing “a lot” more explicit discussions of race and racism outside the classroom. Asian/Asian Americans and Latinx respondents trail closely behind. When categories “some” and “a lot” are combined, all race/ethnicity groups report experiencing more explicit discussions at rates of almost 80% or more.

Q8. Was the target of racism and/or implicit bias:
• Almost a third of respondents reported personally being a target of racism and/or implicit bias.
• Classified/professional staff reported at higher rates, compared to faculty and managers/administrators, but differences were small.
• African American respondents disproportionately reported being targets of racism and bias.
• Women reported at higher rates (compared to men) being targets of implicit bias.
• The majority of open-ended responses to a follow up question asking employees who responded “yes” on question 8 tended to fall into three broad categories (Q9):
  • Gender bias/sexism: A significant number of respondents described experiences with sexism along with other forms of gender bias. Respondents detailed how they had been treated differently and unfairly professionally because of their gender and/or sex. Respondents shared how the unfair treatment resulted in double standards, unfair workloads, and a lack of recognition of their professional contributions.
  • Stereotyping: Respondents detailed instances when they were subjected to racial

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4 Questions 7c, 7d, and 7e were part of a battery of questions that asked respondents to differentiate their current perceptions of topics such as “observed increased action around issues of race and racism...” or “experienced more explicit discussion of race and racism...” from their perceptions prior to the murder of George Floyd.
stereotyping both in the classroom and in workplace settings.

- Microaggressions: Responses in this category tended to detail microaggressions that created a negative environment for marginalized groups. Responses described instances of employees experiencing off-hand or subtle remarks that perpetuated racism, sexism, ableism, and other biases.
- **Appendix #7** presents descriptions of each theme along with quotes.

Q10. Assessment of comfort level with conversations about racism:
- 84% of managers/administrators reported being comfortable (“extremely” or “somewhat” comfortable combined) with conversations about racism.
- When only focusing on “extremely comfortable” faculty reported higher rates (33%), followed by classified/professional staff (30%), then managers/administrators (27%).
- By race/ethnicity, Other and Asian/Asian American respondents shared at lower rates being comfortable (“extremely” and “somewhat” comfortable combined) with conversations about racism at rates of 53% and 65%, respectively.
- Multi-ethnic (88%), African American/Black (83%) and Latinx (88%) respondents shared higher rates of comfort (“extremely” and “somewhat” comfortable combined) with conversations about racism.

Q11. Assessment of comfort level with conversations about equity:
- 95% of managers/administrators reported being comfortable (“extremely” or “somewhat” comfortable combined) with conversations about equity followed by faculty (90%) and 87% of classified/professional staff.
- 56% of faculty reported “extremely comfortable” followed by 48% of managers/administrators and 40% of classified/professional staff.

Q13. Participation and knowledge retained from diversity or implicit bias training:
- A little over one-third of all respondents reported they “have not participated” or “...have, but can’t remember the details” of a diversity training. Similarly, almost half of all respondents “have not participated” or “have, but can’t remember the details” of an implicit bias or other related training.

Q14. Interest in participating in conversations and efforts centered on racial equity:
- Almost half of classified/professional staff are “extremely” or “very” interested in conversations about racial equity, which is a bit lower compared to 64% of faculty and 73% of managers/administrators.
- Employees categorized as Other and Asian/Asian American expressed at lower rates being “extremely” or “very” interested in participating in conversations and efforts centered on racial equity; 31% and 50% respectively. African Americans/Black and Latinx respondents expressed at higher rates (“extremely” and “very” interested combined) at highest rates, 89% and 71% respectively.

Q15. Interest in leading in conversations and efforts centered on racial equity:
- A little over a third of managers/administrators and a third of faculty expressed being interested ("I am interested...but don't have...training" and “I am interested...and have some training” combined).
- About one-fifth of managers/administrators and one-fifth of faculty respondents reported being interested but not having any training.
• Only 11% of classified/professional staff reported being interest in leading conversations.

Q16. Capacity to lead conversations and efforts centered on racial equity:
• 47% of respondents shared “I have some basic skills and want to learn more.”
• 29% of respondents shared “I am not sure where to start and want to learn more.”
• 63% of managers/administrators and 39% of faculty responded having some basic skills and wanting to learn more while 13% of managers/administrators and 36% of faculty responded not knowing where to start but wanting to learn more.

Q17. Capacity to address racism, biases, and other inequities that arise on a daily basis:
• 13% of respondents do not perceive racism or bias in the workplace.
  • 23% of Asian/Asian American, 23% of Latinx, 12% of Multi-ethnic, 7% of White, and 0% of African American respondents do not see racism or bias in the workplace.
• 23% of respondents do not feel they can call out racism and bias when they see it.
  • 34% of classified/professional staff, 20% of faculty, and 14% of managers/administrator reported “When I see racism and bias in the workplace, I don’t feel I can call it out.”
• 45% of respondents feel competent in addressing racism/bias when they see it, but only 19% reported “When I see racism and bias in the workplace, I call it out.”
  • 21% of Asian/Asian American, 45% of Latinx, 60% of Multi-ethnic, 57% of White, and 28% of African American respondents feel competent addressing racism and bias when they see it.
  • 29% of classified/professional staff, 50% of faculty, and 51% of managers/administrator reported “When I see racism or bias in the workplace, I feel competent addressing it.”
• 14% of classified/professional staff, 19% of faculty, and 26% of managers/administrators reported “When I see racism and bias in the workplace, I call it out.”
  • 42% of Asian/Asian American, 23% of Latinx, 12% of Multi-ethnic, 16% of White, and 22% of African American respondents do not feel comfortable calling out racism and bias when they see it.
  • 15% of Asian/Asian American, 10% of Latinx, 16% of Multi-ethnic, 20% of White, and 50% of African American respondents call out racism and bias when they see it.

Q20. Employee ratings of pace of change towards adopting an equity-minded culture within the college overall and in their department/unit:
• 52% rated the pace of change in their department/unit as “about right” and 45% rated the pace of change at the college overall “about right.”
• 14% of respondents rated the pace of change as “fast” within their department/unit and 20% rated the pace as “fast” within the college overall. 0% rated the pace “too fast” within their department/unit and only 1% rated it “too fast” within the college.
  • 23% of respondents rated the pace of change as either “too slow” or “slow” within their department/unit, mirroring responses for the college overall.