

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF  
COLLEGIATE CAMPUS CLIMATES

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY  
2019 ADMINISTRATION REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS



# RACIAL CLIMATE SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SPRING 2019 ADMINISTRATION

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# THE NACCC

is a national quantitative survey that began to be administered in Fall 2018 through the University of Southern

California's (USC) Race and Equity Center. It is administered annually at colleges and universities to provide data about students' encounters with racism and racial stress on campus, the extent to which they interact meaningfully with diverse others and where and what they learn about race, their feelings of readiness for citizenship in a racially diverse democracy after college and other relevant topics. All undergraduate students (13,618) at West Chester University (WCU) were invited to participate in the NACCC survey over a six-week period beginning March 25, 2019. Participation was incentivized through the opportunity to win a \$25 gift card to the university bookstore (20), \$250 in Ram Bucks (2) or a semester parking pass in the New Street Garage (1). There was a 23% response rate (3,132) and the majority of the respondents were women (70%). Twenty-eight percent of the respondents were men and 2% were transgendered or non-binary. Nineteen percent of the respondents identified as LGBTQA and the following was the participation by classification:



The survey provided results and recommendations in six content areas. **Areas were assigned a value from 1 to 4 ribbons based on each institution's performance within the NACCC cohort. Content areas are defined as follows:**

- **Mattering and Affirmation** is defined as others noticing and caring about what students think, want and have to say
- **Cross-Racial Engagement** is defined as whether students feel calm, empowered, open and encouraged when engaging in conversations about race.
- **Racial Learning and Literacy** is defined as the extent to which there is racial diversity reflected in classes, where students learn about race, who on campus helps them to learn about race and preparing to live in a racially diverse society.
- **Encounters with Racial Stress** is defined as specific harmful acts, behaviors, or attitudes directed at students based on their race.
- **Appraisals of Institutional Commitment** explores the extent to which students believe that the campus leadership deals with racism/racist incidents effectively, in the open, and in a timely manner.
- **Impact of External Environments** defines the racial makeup of students' high schools and neighborhoods during high school.

## RESULTS FOR WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY



**Mattering and Affirmation**



**Cross-Racial Engagement**



**Racial Learning and Literacy**



**Encounters with Racial Stress**



**Appraisals of Institutional Commitment**

**Impact of External Environments**



**Overall**

**Two ribbons** indicate "average ratings" in terms of performance in the cohort.

**Three ribbons** indicate "above average ratings" for performance in the cohort.

**Note\*\***

Terminology used throughout this executive summary represents data points identified by the survey administrators of the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climate Surveys (NACCC)- Terms include: Students of Color, Professors of Color, White/Caucasian Professors, and White/Caucasian students.

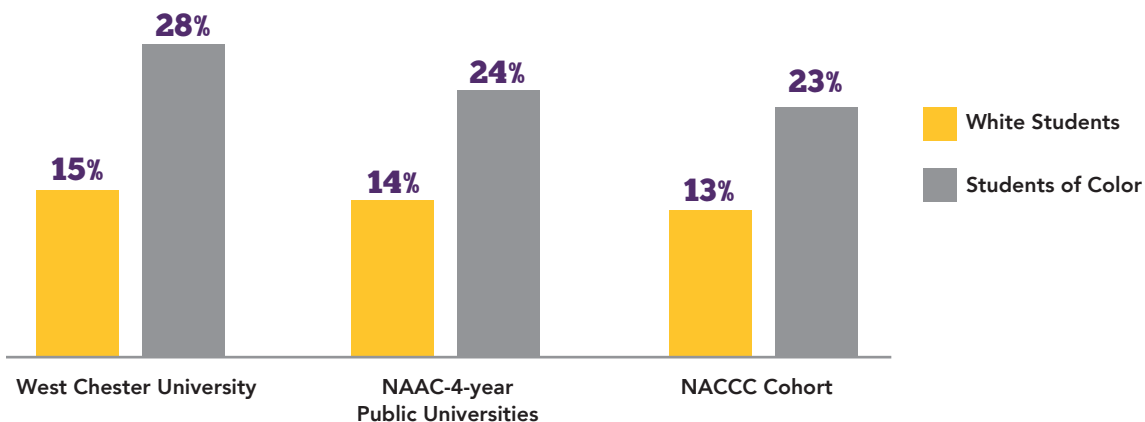
## ▶ KEY FINDINGS IN THE SURVEY BY AREA

### Matting and Affirmation

- There was a significant difference in the following places in which White Students felt more affirmed or Students of Color felt that they did not matter at all or only slightly mattered.
  - Dorms/student housing
  - Financial Aid Office
  - Classes taught by White/Caucasian Professors
  - Classes in Major
  - Events hosted by sororities/fraternities that are mostly Caucasian/White Students
- There were no significant differences in the following places
  - Tutoring/Learning Center
  - Academic Advising Offices
  - Campus Quad/Common Gathering Spaces and Social Events
  - Events hosted by clubs or campus organizations
  - Classes taught by Professors of Color
  - Classes outside their major
- White Students and Students of Color felt equally or more affirmed in classes taught by Professors of Color than classes taught by White professors through their facial expressions, words of support for class discussion and availability outside of class.

### Percent of Students Who Believed White Professors Never or Only Once in a While Showed Concern for Their Feelings or Experiences

### ◀ Matting and Affirmation



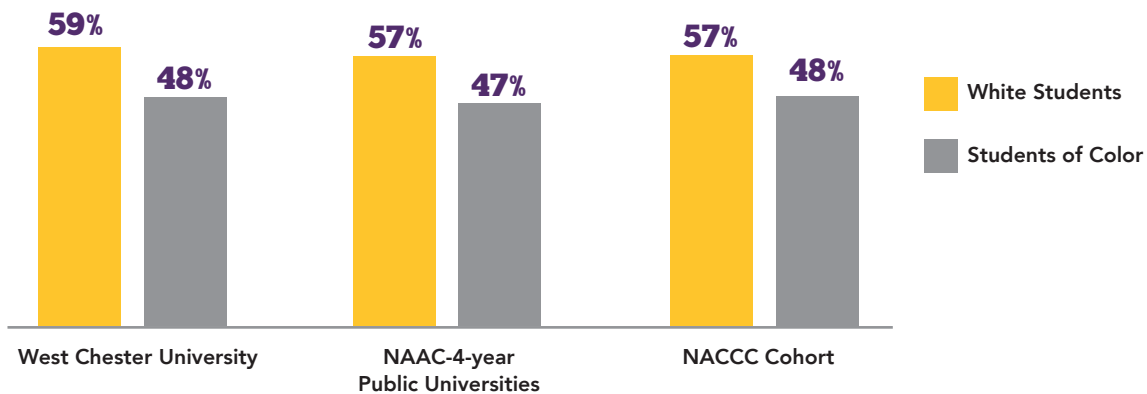
**Why This Matters:** National data (<https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=61>) show that 76% of allfull-time faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions are White (NCES, 2016). This overrepresentation places added responsibility on White faculty to ensure the students of color they teach felt seen, heard, and cared for in their classrooms.

## Cross-Racial Engagement

- There was no significant difference in the extent to which White Students and Students of Color
  - felt more empowered in conversations about race with White Students from WCU (35% compared to 35%)
  - “often” or “almost always” had conversations with students about the Black Lives Matter Movement (22% compared to 19%)
- There was a significant difference in the extent to which White Students compared to Students of Color ...
  - felt calm in conversations about race (71% vs. 55%) with White Students
  - felt open in conversations about race (59% vs. 48%) with White Students
- felt calm in conversations about race (51% vs. 76%) with Students of Color
- felt open in conversations about race (47% vs. 74%) with Students of Color
- felt empowered in conversations about race (27% vs. 65%) with Students of Color
- felt encouraged in conversations about race (35% vs. 65%) with Students of Color
- felt nervous, closed-off, discouraged or powerless in conversations about race with both White/Caucasian Students and Students of Color
- “never” or “once in a while” had conversation with White Students or Students of Color about the Presidency of Donald Trump, the ending of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), the Black Lives Matter Movement and Policies restricting travel from other countries.

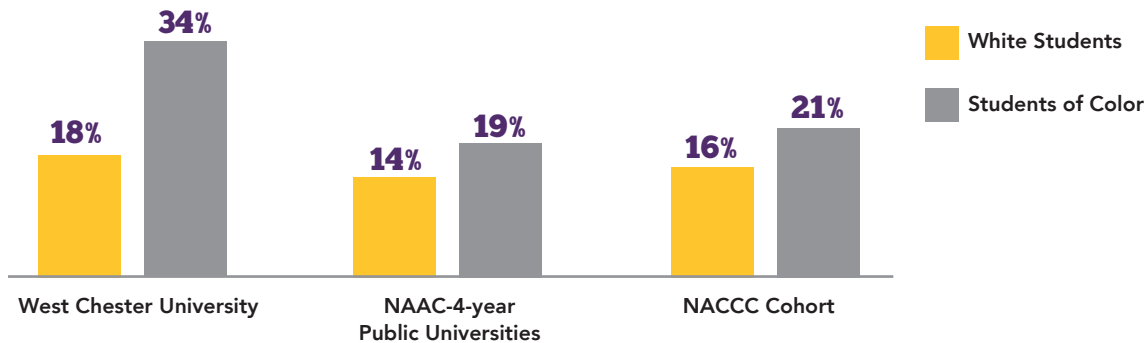
### Percent of Students Who Feel Open or Mostly Open About Being Engaged in Conversations About Race With White Students

### Cross-Racial Engagement



**Why This Matters:** Racial dialogue is often the first and most frequent form of cross-racial interaction among students on college campuses. When those campuses are predominantly White, students of color are overwhelmingly burdened with educating their White peers about race as involuntary spokespersons.

## Percent of Students Who Believed Their College or University Was Not Preparing Them at All or Only Slightly Preparing Them to Interact with Individuals of Different Races



**Why This Matters:** United States Census data (Colb & Ortman, 2015) project the shift of the country's racial and ethnic demographics in which non-Hispanic White people will no longer make up the numerical majority (<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p25-1143.pdf>). Therefore, preparing students for post-college environments reflecting this shift is an important learning outcome colleges and universities need to address.

### Racial Learning and Literacy

- There were no significant differences in the percentage of students that learned about race. White Students (80%) and Students of Color (72%) learn about race in class and from their professors more than any of other place on campus. In addition, 65% of Students of Color and 64% of White Students reported that they learn about race on campus-outside of class. A small percentage of students reported that they did not learn about race anywhere on campus (14% and 16%).
- There was a significant difference in the extent to which White Students (59%) and Student of Color (43%) felt WCU was preparing them to work or interact in racially diverse settings.
- Perceptions of racial diversity were significantly different and higher for White Students than Students of Color in the following areas:
  - Student's major
  - Authors assigned for readings on the syllabus
  - Topics of Classroom Discussion

### Encounters with Racial Stress

- More often Students of Color reported the following as a result of encounters with racial stress: decline in academic performance & emotional well-being, as well as feelings of frustration and/or anger. Feelings of loneliness, not belonging and isolation were most consistently reported by Students of Color across various types of racial encounters.
- More often Students of Color personally experienced or heard race-based incidents happening at WCU (ex: physical or verbal attack, racist signs, symbols or graffiti, or racially-offensive themed party or event) compared to White students.
- More often Students of Color personally experienced the following in the classroom or on campus when compared to White Students: Being viewed as a foreigner even when the student is not (16% vs. 1%); Assumed to be a natural athlete and/or member of a college sports team (8% vs. 3%); Considered only to have been admitted because of the student's race (10% vs. 1%); Being asked for ID by campus police/safety when others are not (7%

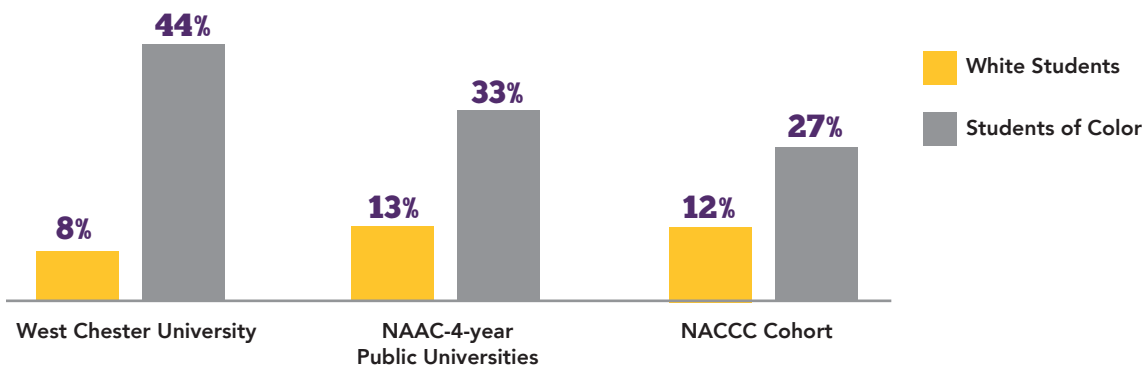
vs. 2%); Feeling excluded by members of student's own race (19% vs. 6%); Jokes related to race that make student uncomfortable (33% vs. 15%); or Being viewed as naturally less able than others in classes (16% vs. 4%); or Being asked or expected to represent the views of the student's entire race in class discussions (27% vs. 6%).

- There were no significant differences in encounters with racial stress in
  - Perceptions of feeling safe on campus
  - Classes or office hours with Professors of Color
  - Events hosted by sororities/fraternities that are mostly Students of Color
  - Students' increase in personal motivation or activism to make change
- There was a significant difference in the extent to which White Students compared to Students of Color...
  - felt welcome (78% vs. 55%) or included (64% vs. 41%) at WCU.
  - felt tension increase "quite a bit" or "a great amount" due to the presidency of Donald Trump, the ending of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and policies restricting travel from other countries.

- experienced racism in the following places:
  - ◊ Office hours with Caucasian/White Professors (3% compared to 12%)
  - ◊ Tutoring/Learning Center (6% compared to 13%)
  - ◊ Academic Advising Office – (4% compared to 15%)
  - ◊ Financial Aid Office – (6% compared to 18%)
  - ◊ Study Groups – (7% compared to 17%)
  - ◊ Events hosted by campus organizations/clubs (9% compared to 21%)
  - ◊ Campus Police/Security (10% compared to 24%)
  - ◊ College sporting events (13% compared to 23%)
  - ◊ Classes with Caucasian or White Professors (8% compared to 29%)
  - ◊ Campus Quad/Common Space (16% compared to 35%)
  - ◊ Events hosted by sororities/fraternities that are mostly Caucasian/White (23% compared to 39%)
  - ◊ Dorms/Student Housing – (18% compared to 42%)
  - ◊ Social events (Parties/Hanging Out) (27% compared to 46%)

### Percent of Students Who Ever Experienced Feelings of Loneliness, Not Belonging, and/or Isolation as a Result of Their Campus Racial Climate

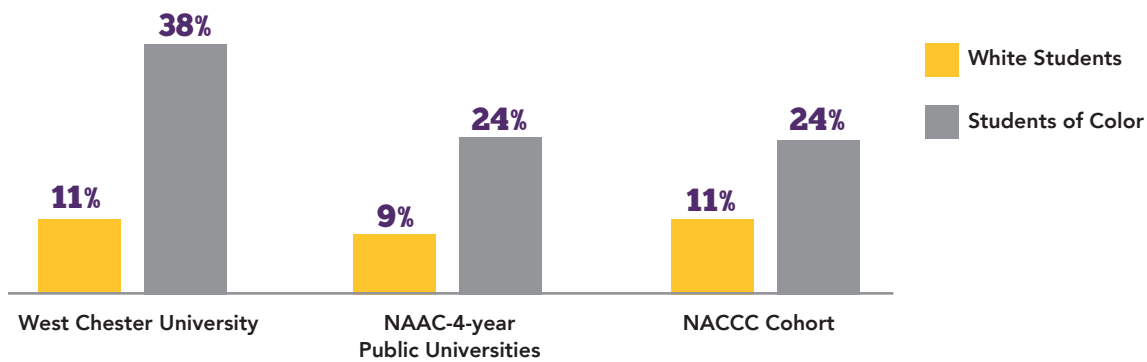
#### Encounters with Racial Stress



**Why This Matters:** Decades of higher education research indicate the importance of students' sense of belonging with regard to their retention, persistence, and advancement to degree completion. In addition, it is a key factor among students of color for whom encounters with racial stress increasingly contribute to feelings of loneliness, isolation, and a lack of community.

## Percent of Students Who Believed Their College or University was Not Committed at All or Only Slightly Committed to Hiring Faculty of Color

### Appraisals of Institutional Commitment



**Why This Matters:** The rhetoric of diversity, equity, and inclusion must accompany concrete changes to demonstrate a meaningful institutional commitment. This is especially important when the compositional diversity of an institutions faculty fails to reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the students it serves.

### Appraisals of Institutional Commitment

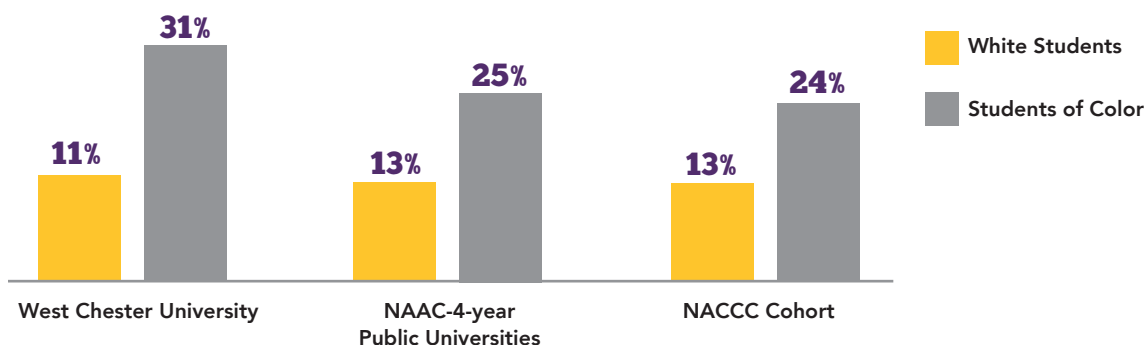
- There was a significant difference in
  - perceptions of how racially diverse is WCU. White Students viewed WCU as being far more racially diverse than Student of Color
  - perceptions of commitment to admit Students of Color (80% compared to 53%), hire Faculty of Color (66% vs. 38%), hire Staff of Color (71% vs. 48%), graduate Students of Color, sponsor activities about racial diversity (ex: lecture series) (81% vs. 59%) and remove objects or structures that are racially offensive (76% vs. 62%) were far lower for students of Color compared to White students.

### Impact of External Environments

- There was a significant difference in the percentage of White Students that “never” experienced racism in the city or town surrounding campus this school year (79%) compared to Students of Color (64%).
- The percentage of White Students that “never” experienced racism in the city/town they grew up in this school year (65%) compared to Students of Color (55%).
- The percentage of White Students that never experienced racism from local police this school year (85%) compared to Students of Color (69%).
- There were no significant differences in the percentage of students that experienced racism on social media.

## Percent of Students Who Indicated Experiencing Racism from Local Police in the City/Town Surrounding Their Campus

### Impact of External Environments



**Why This Matters:** As students are entrusted to institutions by parents and families, there is a responsibility for colleges and universities to actively engage local law enforcement in developing anti-racist professional practices.

## ► Key Recommendations in the Survey by Area

### Matting and Affirmation

- Assess and determine whether any groups are excluded from taking part in the construction of the campus identity
- Regularly convene university faculty, in conjunction with experienced staff from learning resource centers and centers for excellence in teaching, to discuss standards of inclusive teaching and ways to engage instructional personnel in developing culturally sustaining and affirming practices.
- Conduct an audit of public spaces to ensure that inclusive imagery surrounds students. Literally and figuratively walk the halls, classrooms, and lab spaces with students and see these from their perspective.
- Train staff across student affairs, auxiliary centers, and campus police and security in meaningful ways to cultivate inclusive environments.

### Cross-Racial Engagement

- Create intentional, facilitated opportunities for cross-racial engagement on campus including, for example, hosting inter and intragroup dialogues with skilled facilitators where privilege and marginality are discussed.
- Train and equip campus leadership, faculty, and staff to address spontaneous moments and controversies, and to initiate discussions about race.
- Develop teams comprised of student affairs professionals, academic advisors, tenure-track/tenured faculty, counseling professionals and other administrators with student-facing roles, across professional rank, and charge them with creating student engagement plans that move beyond dialogue and that provide opportunities for students to interact academically and socially across racial and other identity groups.
- Ask the campus community to be part of problem solving and collaboration when racial tensions arise.
- Communicate the message that talking about race is hard, but important, and also creates opportunities to push students to higher levels of critical thinking and toward better preparation to live in a diverse democracy.



## Racial Learning and Literacy

- Conduct regular co-curricular engagement of texts, colloquia, and other academically purposeful activities to center issues of race and racism, particularly in relation to the institution and the geographic context(s) within which it resides.
- Conduct departmental reviews of classroom materials to determine whose voices and experiences are centered, and whose are missing.
- Determine which academic programs on campus have been successful at advancing minoritized students and propagate elements of these programs across campus. Practice engaging in departmental and cross-departmental conversations about racial equity and incentivize and support faculty and staff for engaging in the work.
- Provide structured opportunities for students to learn about their own and other racial groups.
- Ask faculty to make space at the beginning or end of class for key events in the news about race or racism, and encourage them to seek out linkages to their discipline to address social issues and issues related to identity.
- Communicate that the pace of learning about race and discussing race on campus should not prioritize the hesitancy and/or interests of any one group, over actual progress toward achieving equity.

## Encounters with Racial Stress

- Institute professional development for faculty and staff to prioritize understanding of the effects of racism on learning and well-being. This professional development should include providing faculty and staff with the skills to confront and intervene when these incidents occur, and asking them to prioritize a consistent message to all students that they are intelligent, of worth, and capable of scholarship.
- Recognize race related stress and racial trauma on campus, and collectively engage with those on the margins to objectively hear their narratives and engage for action.
- Boldly confront long-standing racial problems embedded in the systems and structures at the institution, and communicate that racism is not just individual and overt.
- Practice and prepare for responsible race-conscious crisis scenario response, just as is done with other potential emergency situations on campus.

## Appraisals of Institutional Commitment

- Be clear in campus-wide messaging about the opportunities and benefits of racial equity and inclusion on campus.
- Review campus policies and resource allocations and consider whether they reflect racial equity goals.
- Consider that all faculty and staff search committees should go beyond bias reduction training to integrating proactive measures throughout the life cycle of hiring, including retention and promotion, particularly of minoritized faculty.

## Impact of External Environments

- Building from the existing or newly constructed campus climate team, work with community leaders (including both residents and elected officials) to establish a town & gown committee or working group to help prevent, manage, and respond to racial incidents taking place at the intersection of campus and community.
- Expect that students will be affected by incidents of racism and hate crimes locally or nationally, and employ messaging when these happen consistent with messaging for these types of incidents when they occur on campus.
- Prepare to support students who have already experienced racial battle fatigue when they first arrive on campus. Also support students who face anxieties about the physical safety and well-being of their loved ones back in their hometown communities.
- Be aware that equity initiatives on campus should focus on eliminating conditions on campus that harm marginalized students and students from marginalized communities, and not on “fixing” these students.

