



NYU

**SILVER SCHOOL
OF SOCIAL WORK**

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

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Prepared by Kimberly Hudson and Rohini Pahwa

Approved by the Social Justice and Diversity Committee, April 2017

I. BACKGROUND

A. Committee Charge

The Social Justice and Diversity Committee was established by the Dean in 2012 in response to the School's Strategic Plan. The primary purpose of the committee was to bring to the attention of the School issues of concern related to oppression, racism, and diversity. The committee has also been charged with meeting other goals and objectives as outlined in the School's strategic plan. This memo describes the accomplishments of the Committee in the academic year 2016-17 and provides recommendations from the Committee to the Dean.

B. Members

Jeane Anastas, Professor (2015-2017)
Ai Bo, PhD Student (2016-2017)
Jennifer Fana, MSW student (2016-2017)
Kirk James, Clinical Assistant Professor (2016-2017)
Linda Lausell-Bryant, Clinical Assistant Professor (2015-2017)
Justin, Lerner, PhD student (2015-2016)
Yuhwa Eva Lu, Associate Professor, Chair (2015-2017)
Kimberly Hudson, Assistant Professor (2015-2017)
James Martin, Ex-officio (2015-2016)
Darcey Merritt, Ex officio (new) (2016-2017)
Robin Miller, Clinical Assistant Professor (2015-2016)
Ikechi Nwankwo, Staff, Co-Chair (2015-2017)
Courtney O'Meally Ex-officio (2015-2016)
Rohini Pahwa, Assistant Professor (2015-2017)
Clara Rivera-Keita, Staff (2016-2017) (new)
Shira Rose-Berk, MSW Student (2015-2017)
Adriana Ruvalcaba, MSW Student (2015-2016)
Stevana Sims, MSW Student (2015-2016)
Tamela Sue, Staff (2015-2016)
Jessica Yoon, BS Student (2016-2017)

II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A. Full committee

1. Collaboration with other committees (2016-2017 priority)

Lead: Kirk James and Darcey Merritt

This year, we made a concerted effort to create effective communication channels between the multiple school committees with overlapping efforts related to diversity and social justice. This included the Social Action Committee and Strategies and Tactics for Action group.

2. Transmitting Silver’s commitment to diversity (2016-2017 priority)

High on our priorities list was preparing a report to the incoming Dean that would effectively, clearly, and firmly communicate to the new Dean the School’s commitment to diversity and social justice. We considered the importance of the Dean’s potential views, experiences, and commitments related to these matters. We also overwhelmingly agreed that our shared commitments could facilitate the transition in leadership. Part of what our committee could offer is a brief synopsis of recent history related to the School’s engagement in diversity and social justice issues, and what values and priorities we have identified moving forward.

3. Revisions to the committee by-laws (2015-2016 priority)

Lead: Eva Lu

The Social Justice and Diversity Committee recommended changes to the bylaws for the committee in Article II, Section 3.2.2. This motion passed unanimously in the September 2016 faculty meeting (1st vote) and October 2016 faculty meeting (2nd vote). The main purpose of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Diversity Committee is: “to serve as a catalyst for development, implementation, and assessment of a comprehensive strategy to address social justice, equity, and inclusion in the Silver School of Social Work.” (See Appendix A)

Subcommittee work

4. Diversity area of the School’s Strategic Plan (2015-2016 priority)

Member: Kimberly Hudson

We prepared a draft of Silver’s new strategic plan in the area of diversity as a starting point for discussion among faculty and leadership. (See Appendix B)

5. Response to student listening sessions (2015-2016 priority)

Members: Kimberly Hudson, Rohini Pahwa, Ikechi Nwankwo, Linda Lausell-Bryant, Shira Rose-Berk

During the 2015-2016 school year, several listening sessions were held with students. The purpose of these sessions was to listen to students' experiences within Silver, and specifically, how the social/political climate of that time (specifically, a spike in visibility around issues of police violence against unarmed black men and black youth) was impacting them. It was also used as an opportunity for students to express perceived issues related to social justice and diversity within Silver, and discuss Silver's role in social justice advocacy and engagement. While this committee did not lead these sessions, we committed ourselves to following up with students. Based on those conversations, we prepared a set of potential action steps. We also determined an important next step would be to report back to the students efforts taken this year by Silver, including key findings from the 2015-2016 climate survey. (See Appendix C)

6. Student climate / Implicit curriculum survey pilot (2015-2016 priority)

Members: Jeane Anastas, Jim Martin, Rohini Pahwa, Kimberly Hudson, Courtney O'Meally

During the 2015-2016 school year, several committee members designed and implemented a student climate survey. This survey was multi-functional: it served as a pilot survey for the 2016-2017 climate survey for CSWE reaffirmation purposes. It was also framed as part of the School's response to the student listening sessions. The sub-committee members are currently in the process of preparing a report of 2015-2016 findings, and a summary report of efforts that Silver is currently engaged in related to its diversity and social justice efforts. (See Appendix D)

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Moving forward, the Social Justice and Diversity Committee recommends that **the Dean's office address the student body multiple times a year regarding issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion** in the School. The content of these addresses could be variable and could depend on the most recent initiatives of the school with respect to issues of diversity, equity and inclusion including student and faculty recruitment, financial and other supports available and provided to students and faculty members from marginalized groups, steps related to curriculum and training of instructors with respect to issues related to diversity inclusion and equity. A few recommendations on when these conversations could be facilitated include:

1. Orientation days in August and January. Addressing these issues at the beginning of the student's tenure at NYU Silver will reflect initiative on the school's part and will convey to the students that the school is proactive regarding issues of diversity, equity and inclusion.
2. Common Days. The Dean's office should work with the GSA to determine the scope and content of the Dean's address.
3. Welcoming students to continue engaging the faculty and administration with these issues, without penalty or fear of backlash. This could include orienting students to the formal avenues for having their voices heard, e.g. the USGA, GSA, Dean's Office Hours, student committees, student groups, within and across every academic program.

B. Furthermore, the Social Justice and Diversity Committee recommends **continued attention to the institutional and program-level issues and potential mechanisms to address students concerns** around matters of diversity, inclusion, and equity, including:

4. School climate issues related to students, faculty, staff and administrators.
5. Faculty development around diversity issues (with attention to adjunct faculty members).
 - a. Faculty's preparation and willingness to teach with attention to social justice issues.
 - b. The hiring and retention of faculty members (contract and full time) from marginalized groups.
 - c. An accountability process for addressing issues with instructors as they arise.
6. Infusion of diversity content across courses.
7. Expanding DROP courses (e.g. DROP II, III, IV) or electives/seminars in the area of diversity and social justice.
8. Faculty-Fast-Responses which would include brief written or video recorded practical tips and strategies for faculty to address time-sensitive social (in)justice issues and tragedies (e.g., police violence inflicted on communities of color) and relevant current events (e.g., navigating a charged political environment).

C. The Social Justice and Diversity Committee also recommends the **consolidation and streamlining of committees that address issues of diversity across the School**. It is the consensus of the Social Justice and Diversity and Social Action Committees that Silver's infrastructure around issues of diversity, equity and inclusion needs strengthening in order

to address the complexity of diversity and inclusion issues in the school. Additionally, in order to achieve crucial goals such as the competent and informed integration of diversity issues into classroom instruction and the creation of consistent opportunities for the Silver community to come together to plan for social action, the school needs to provide a structure and mechanisms for the recommendations to be converted to action steps. The current social climate has brought these issues front and center. As a leading school of social work, we would be better served with a more robust structure for addressing the current challenges.

9. The Social Justice and Diversity committee, the Social Action committee, and the Strategies for Tactics and Action committees should be reorganized under a central diversity office within the School, with a full-time Officer.
10. This Officer should be resourced with a modest budget as well as support staff to support the implementation of ideas that are generated by the Social Justice and Diversity and Social Action committees. The staff in this office could be additionally augmented by MSW interns.
11. The office should aim to forge alliances with the communications office and student affairs offices at Silver, as well as other faculty- and student-led committees and organizing efforts. The Office should also align with University-level diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts and resources (e.g. the new Chief Diversity Officer).

APPENDIX A. BY-LAWS REVISION

The Social Justice and Diversity Committee recommended changes to the bylaws for the committee in Article II, Section 3.2.2. This motion passed unanimously in the September 2016 faculty meeting (1st vote) and October 2016 faculty meeting (2nd vote).

Rationale: The current By-Law description of the role, responsibilities and format for conducting the work of the Social Justice and Diversity Committee provides the flexibility needed for this committee to serve as a catalyst for development of a social justice, equity and inclusion agenda, but the committee recommends eliminating 3.2.2.f because the committee members do not see the capacity of this committee to implement any of the assigned responsibilities.

3.2.2 Standing Committee on Social Justice and Diversity

3.2.2.1 The main purpose of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Diversity is to serve as a catalyst for development, implementation, and assessment of a comprehensive strategy to address social justice, equity and inclusion in the Silver School of Social Work.

3.2.2.2 The activities of the Committee on Social Justice and Diversity will include but not be limited to:

- a. Developing a comprehensive strategic diversity plan that creates an equitable and inclusive School environment for all students, faculty, staff and administrators community members;
- b. Ensuring the enhancement of the explicit and implicit curriculum in the areas of social justice, equity and inclusion;
- c. Proposing diversity action items related to the School's Strategic Plan;
- d. Making recommendations related to recruitment, admissions, retention, career development and climate issues for students from racially diverse and other traditionally underrepresented groups in all of our academic programs;
- e. Making recommendations related to recruitment, hiring, retention, career development, and promotion of faculty – including adjunct and field faculty – and staff from racially diverse and other traditionally underrepresented groups;
- f. Collaborating with and supporting all School and University-wide initiatives addressing social justice and diversity and social justice when appropriate and in keeping with the committee's overall purpose/agenda.

3.2.2.3 The Standing Committee on Social Justice and Diversity will consult with faculty, administrators, staff, and students and alumni as needed in its work. The Committee's recommendations will be submitted to faculty for periodic review and approval as appropriate. Recommendations of the Committee will be referred to the Dean's office for staffing and implementation as needed.

APPENDIX B. Revisions to the Silver School's Strategic Plan

Silver School of Social Work Strategic Plan 2016

Area: Diversity

Goal: To continue to foster an environment based in the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, united by a common educational framework across programs.

Objective 1: Inclusion.

To develop and implement a comprehensive, multi-approach diversity plan that continues Silver's objective of creating an inclusive School environment that effectively transmits its value of diversity among students, staff, and faculty.

- Action Step 1: Continue to support a standing diversity committee within the school's current governance structure that represents Silver's diversity by including staff, students, and faculty. Ongoing efforts will be made to appoint members who are diverse in race/ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual identity, age, and ability.
- Action Step 2: Intentionally foster a sense of belonging, respect, and value among our faculty, students, and staff who identify with less-represented and traditionally-marginalized groups. This should include climate and curricular issues, including the infusion of diversity and social justice content across all courses.
 - For students: expressed through admissions, programming, curriculum, pedagogy
 - For faculty: ongoing programs for faculty development dedicated to teaching and learning
 - For administrators: ongoing programs for professional development
- Action Step 3: Encourage, support and invest in student-led initiatives focused on diversity, racism, oppression, and privilege.
 - This includes but is not limited to the accomplishments of the Social Justice and Diversity MSW Intern working under Student Affairs, and the programs and events enacted through the Social Justice and Diversity Grant
- Action Step 4: Ensure that all Silver publication materials, including all pages of the website that contain images of students, faculty and/or staff; flyers and brochures, employ language and visuals that are representative and welcoming of a diverse community. This step is less meaningful if the other action steps are not taken and objectives are not met.

- Action Step 5: Consider cluster hire in priority areas in order to increase sense of community and membership

Objective 2: Equity.

Develop, monitor, assess, and communicate to the School community proactive and consistent efforts to address equity, including those issues related to institutional and structural racism, particularly with regard to resource allocation, access, and utilization.

- Action Step 1: Create a concrete and executable 5-year plan for hiring diverse faculty (to include full-time, part-time and adjunct), staff and administrators.
- Action Step 2: Foster the professional growth and upward mobility of faculty, staff, and administrators of color.
 - Create standardized and measurable means to accomplish and track these efforts
- Action Step 3: Track and measure data on the recruitment and retention of students of color.
- Action Step 4: Make ongoing and continued efforts to market Silver to graduates of HBCUs and other institutions of higher education that have higher enrollment of students of color.
- Action Step 5: Increase the percentage of scholarship funds earmarked for students of color who meet qualifying income standards.
 - Develop clear and manifest benchmarks for the acquisition of these scholarships
 - Increase and uphold confidentiality with regard to which students hold scholarships and/or actively work toward “unlinking” being a student of color at Silver and being on scholarship.
- Action Step 6: Specify and formalize a system by which faculty are recognized for “excellence in diversity,” including in research, teaching, mentorship, and service to the School, during performance review and promotion.
 - Determine how this recognition is linked to hiring, promotion, retention, annual merit pay increases, or workload distribution.
 - Reward excellence in diversity and social justice performance through formal recognition during annual performance review.

Objective 3: Common Framework.

Adopt and integrate a consistent educational framework across all of the School's degree-granting programs, in the classroom, field, learning environment, and continuing education, that is grounded in and reflective of the core values of diversity and social justice.

- Action Step 1: Clarify commitment to clinical excellence as inclusive of a systems-cognizant, strengths-based, culturally-sensitive structural perspective and include this commitment in descriptions of Silver's academic programs

- Action Step 2: Institute a means to assess prospective students' commitment to social justice in admissions application materials, during the application process, and as a criterion for acceptance decisions.
 - Includes but is not limited to the addition of questions related to the student's understanding of and commitment to social justice and any involvement in social justice initiatives

- Action Step 3: Create a system to evaluate the inclusion of learning materials (to include diversity among book and article authors, vignettes utilized as case presentations, audio/video materials, and theories) that reflect and respect a wider range of social identities, including those that challenge normative assumptions about who social workers are and who clients are, in each academic department.

- Action Step 4: Implement regularly-scheduled training on varying issues related to diversity and incentivize attendance at these trainings for faculty, staff, and administrators.

- Action Step 5: Clarify the School's global perspective, for example, theories of and approaches to addressing globalization, global issues, global learning, global practice, including human rights

Appendix C - Responding to student listening sessions

The Response Task Group was formed as a working group of the Social Justice and Diversity Committee. This group included two students, one administrator, and three faculty members. The task group's charge was to brainstorm on the what, when, why, how of how to respond to the student listening sessions with the students in Fall 2015.

The initial recommendation of the group was to host an event where the Dean's office would respond to the questions and concerns raised by the students. Upon further reflection, the task group agreed that it was too late to host a new event at such a short notice, but that we need to find an alternate way to respond to student concerns.

The task group agreed on making a recommendation to the Dean's office to organize an ongoing student/administration event where the Dean's office could share their diversity initiatives with the students and respond to any questions or concerns that the students might have. The event should be organized by the Dean's office since the office receives the reports around issues related to diversity, curriculum and any changes with respect to these issues.

A suggestion was made at the meeting to include this as an agenda item in the fall and spring Common Days since it would remove the complications of organizing another event, issues of attendance, student participation and sustainability. The task group decided to have involve the GSA to get their thoughts on the idea and seek suggestions. On April 14th, Kimberly joined the GSA meeting to discuss what this response might look like. Kimberly asked: What response do you want from faculty and administration? What should a response include?

Suggestions surfaced at this meeting:

- Students supported the idea of the Dean speaking at Orientation for new students in both August and January. Content of the Dean's address should include: "What we are mindful of..." (as far as issues related to school climate, diversity issues) and "What we are doing at Silver to address this..."
- Students supported the idea of the Dean speaking at Common Days, reporting on efforts related to diversity, equity, inclusion, etc, **upon invitation and introduction** by the GSA.

- A video response from the Dean by the end of the semester would be well-received. It should include the message “We hear you,” “We are working on it,” “We are working on it in these ways.”
- A more comprehensive response to the listening sessions should:
 - Include resources for retention and support of students.
 - Be sustainable.
 - Build student self-advocacy skills for both field and classroom.
 - Include on-going faculty teaching/pedagogical development, particularly of adjuncts.
 - Include a process for evaluating adjuncts and clarifying to what extent adjuncts can be held accountable to poor teaching evaluations, to what extent adjuncts can be expected to and/or incentivized to participate in teacher trainings.
- Students also voiced support for expanding the DROP to DROP II, III, and IV, as well as infusion of content across all courses
 - Suggested the creative use of seminars: 1-unit required courses/electives, 3-day intensives, etc, on diversity, anti-oppression, and social justice.

The Response Task Group brought these recommendations to the larger Social Justice and Diversity Committee where they were discussed and refined. From this process, the following recommendations were agreed upon:

Moving forward, the Social Justice and Diversity Committee recommends that

1. The Dean address the student body multiple times a year regarding issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the School, including:
 - a. Orientation days in August and January. Addressing these issues at the beginning of the student's' tenure at NYU Silver will reflect initiative on the school's part and will convey to the students that the school is proactive regarding diversity, equity and inclusion.
 - b. Common Days. The Dean's office should work with the GSA to determine the scope and content of the Dean's address.
2. Welcome students to continue engaging the faculty and administration with these issues, without penalty or fear of backlash. This could include orienting students to the formal avenues for having their voices heard, e.g. GSA meeting, Dean's Office Hours, co-directors of student committees, student groups.

Furthermore, the Social Justice and Diversity Committee recommends continued attention should be paid to the institutional and program-level issues and potential mechanisms to address students concerns around matters of diversity, inclusion, and equity, including:

3. School climate issues related to students, faculty, staff and administrators.
4. Faculty development around diversity issues (with attention to adjuncts).
5. Infusion of diversity content across courses.
6. Expanding DROP courses (e.g. DROP II, III, IV) or electives/seminars in the area of diversity and social justice.

APPENDIX D - CLIMATE SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT

CLIMATE SURVEY 2016

SUMMARY REPORT on MSW STUDENTS[1]

Prepared by Jeane Anastas[2], Ph.D.

Measures of campus climate include “people’s attitudes about, perceptions of and experiences within a specified environment” (Ryder & Mitchel, 2013, p. 32), in this case at the Silver School of Social Work. This document summarizes the data we have from distributing an electronic “Climate Survey” in 2016 that focused on diversity. The report provides data for items that will remain on the 2017 version[3].

The total number of MSW survey participants was small (n = 209) compared to the total MSW enrollment. Because of the low number of participants, ALL RESULTS SHOULD BE TREATED AS PRELIMINARY.

The vast majority of the 2016 respondents were from the Washington Square campus. Therefore no comparisons across campuses will be reported, although they will be an essential part of our self-study report when we will have a larger participation rate.

Sample Demographics[4]

Half of the respondents to the 2016 survey were enrolled in the Two Year Fulltime program, with 18% in the Extended and 13% from the 16 Month Program; about half were in their first year of study.

Unfortunately many survey participants chose not to answer questions in the section at the end of the survey about their personal characteristics. Based on those who did answer these questions, most (62%) were born between 1985 and 1994. Most (76%) described themselves as women and 18% as men, while only 3 students identified as transgender or gender non-conforming. Most (67%) identified as straight (heterosexual) with small numbers of students in each of the other categories. Their racial identifications were white (44%), Hispanic or Latino (15%) Asian or Asian American (14%--categories that will be listed separately going forward), and Black or African American (14%). The next largest group identified as biracial (6%). About 85% reported that English was their primary language; 8% reported Chinese and 3% reported Spanish as their first language

Most (91%) were US citizens and 8% were visa holders.

As to disability status, 16 of responding students reported having a disability, mostly a mental health disorder. Only 3 students reported having served in the military. Most students identified their economic backgrounds as “middle income” (52%), with the next largest group being low income (25%) and about 16% being high income. The most common responses to the question on religious affiliation was no affiliation (39%) or Christian (33%), with 8% Jewish. Politically, most identified themselves as liberal (65%) or centrist (13%).

Climate Findings

This reports divides the questions asked about the School’s climate into two groups: (1) those questions that are designed for students to report on things that happened to them, and (2) those questions in which students answer based on their assessment of what happens to all students whether or not the item applied to them personally. This has been done because the patterns of ratings seem a bit different for these two sets of questions.

In general, findings show that on items that require a report of something that happened to you, means were lower (meaning the ratings were more positive) and problems were less frequently reported. These responses make sense because there are fewer enrolled students in any of the groups listed. In other words the percentage of respondents with problems that happened to them would be limited by the number of enrolled students who identify with each group named in the question.

By contrast, questions that asked everyone to comment on their experiences or observations of things in general, mean scores were higher (meaning the ratings were less positive) and the percentages of people giving “problem ratings” were higher than in the first set of questions. This can be attributed to the fact that that students may report on things they have observed even if they didn’t experience them personally.

Below each table is a description of specific survey items where racial/ethnic differences in responses were found. These findings are based on comparing ratings across four groups of students: those who identified as Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino/a, Asian or Asian American[5], and non-Hispanic white. This omits those respondents who did not identify their racial identification and those who identified as “multiracial,” the latter being a group with too few respondents for analysis. While the exact findings for each item should be viewed with caution, there are some overall trends in them that should be noted,

such as the pattern showing higher levels of discontent among Hispanic/Latino and Asian/Asian-American students. Any survey item not discussed below a table showed no significant differences in responses by race.[6]

Finally, a selection of the open-ended comments made by students is presented at the end. Comments on the survey itself, comments including specific names (positive and negative), and comments specific to particular situations (as from the one student who reported having been sexually harassed at her agency) are not discussed.

Things That Happened to Respondents

Table 1. Have you experience intimidating/hostile behavior because of your:

Student Group	Mean Rating	Percentage “often” or “very often”
Race	1.6	5%
Ethnicity	1.6	3%
Socioeconomic Status	1.5	3%
Age	1.3	1%
Sex	1.3	1%
Religion or Spiritual Beliefs	1.3	1%
English Proficiency	1.2	2%
Country of Origin	1.2	1%
Sexual Orientation	1.2	1%
Gender Identity or Expression	1.2	1%
Disability or Health Status	1.1	1%
International Status	1.1	1%
Immigration Status	1.1	1%

(1 = never; 2 = rarely; 3 = sometimes; 4 = often; 5 = very often).

Racial ethnic differences in responses to these items showed that Hispanic/Latino and Asian/Asian American more often reported problems with intimidating behavior based on race, ethnicity and English proficiency. Problems based on national origin were least often reported by whites. Problems based on international status and immigration status were most often reported by Asian/Asian American students.

Experiences of physical, emotional and sexual threat. Separate questions also asked if respondents had ever felt physically or emotionally threatened. Answering about physical threat, 6% of respondents said yes, with incidents reported in the classroom, elsewhere on the Washington Square Campus, and in the field. When answering about emotional threat, 29% said “yes,” predominantly in the classroom (48% of those giving a “yes” answer). Only 1 student reported having had unwelcome sexual contact, which occurred in the field setting.

Table 2. Have you been made to feel excluded or marginalized because of your:

Students'	Mean Rating	Percentage "often" or "very often"
Race	1.8	10%
Ethnicity	1.7	7%
Socioeconomic Status	1.5	5%
Age	1.5	5%
Sexual Orientation	1.3	6%
Disability or Health Status	1.3	3%
Religion or Spiritual Beliefs	1.3	3%
Country of Origin	1.3	2%
Sex	1.3	1%
English Proficiency	1.2	2%
International Status	1.2	2%

Immigration Status	1.2	2%
Gender Identity or Expression	1.1	1%

(Response scale was from 1 = never; 2 = rarely; 3 = sometimes; 4 = often; 5 = very often)

Marginalization based on race and ethnicity (separate items) was least often reported by white students. Marginalization based on English proficiency was most often reported by Hispanic/Latino and Asian/Asian American students. Marginalization based on country of origin was more often reported by Black/African American students while problems based on international status were most often reported by Asian/Asian American students.

Table 5. Based on your experiences in the courses you have taken, how often have the following things happened to you?

Student Statements	Mean Rating	Percentage “often” or “always”
I feel I have to work harder than other students to be perceived as a good student.	2.3	24%
I have been stereotyped by students in a course I was taking.	2.3	13%
Because of a personal characteristic I have, I sometimes get singled out in my courses to speak on behalf of a specific group.	2.1	16%
I have been exposed to an intolerant atmosphere created by students in a course I was taking.	2.0	8%
I have heard faculty express stereotypes based on race/ ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation.	1.7	7%
Student Statements (cont.)	Mean Rating	Percentage “seldom” or “never”

I have been exposed to an intolerant atmosphere created by the instructor for a course I was taking.	1.7	6%
I am often ignored in class when I attempt to participate.	1.7	6%
I have been stereotyped by the instructor in a course I was taking.	1.7	5%
I feel comfortable sharing my own perspectives and experiences in class.	3.8	13%
My instructors recognize that I have important ideas to contribute.	4.2	4%
When I make a comment in my courses, I am usually taken seriously by the instructor.	4.3	6%

(1 = never; 2 = seldom; 3 = occasionally; 4 = often; 5 = always).

Asian/Asian American students least often felt that their comments in class were taken seriously. Black and Hispanic/Latino students reported more often than others being asked to speak on behalf of a specific group. Black students reported more often than others being exposed to an intolerant atmosphere created by students. Black/African American and Asian/Asian American students more often felt that they had to work harder than other students to be perceived as good students.

Experiences at the School in General

A positive campus or school climate can be described as one in which most or all students experience a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere where everyone is treated in a fair, respectful and equitable way. In a positive school climate, all students have a sense of belonging. The question was asked in terms of how much of the time the student experienced a sense of belonging at the Silver School. On a 5-point scale with 1 being the best score (“almost all the time”), the mean rating was 2.6 (s.d. = 1.2), somewhere between “often” (29%) and “sometimes” (25%). Low ratings were given by 24% who responded

“occasionally” or “almost never.” Open-ended comments suggested that things other than diversity issues, like living at a distance, can contribute to these findings.

The next tables are about students’ assessments of the climate in general at the School.

Table 6. How well does the school provide an inclusive environment for:

Student Group	Mean Rating	Percentage “not very well” or “not well at all”
Race/ Ethnicity		
Native American/Alaska Native	3.1	44%
Black/ African American	2.4	23%
Hispanic/ Latino	2.3	22%
Multiracial	2.3	18%
White European American	1.4	1%
Religion		
Muslim	2.6	25%
Other Non-Christian	2.3	13%
Christian	2.2	14%
Jewish	2.0	6%
International student status	2.3	17%
Sexual and Gender Identity		
Trans-identified and Gender Nonconforming	2.4	20%
Bisexual	2.2	15%

Lesbian	2.1	16%
Gay	2.0	14%
Male	2.1	12%
Female	2.0	2%
Income Background		
Working class	2.7	33%
Middle-Class	2.2	14%
Affluent	1.7	7%
Military Background		
Veterans or in military service	2.3	9%
Age	2.2	13%

(1 = very well; 2 = fairly well; 3 = neutral; 4 = not very well; 5 = not well at all).

In these ratings on inclusiveness, inclusiveness for multiracial students was rated more highly by whites than the other groups. Inclusiveness for Jewish students and for those from poor or working class backgrounds was rated lower by both Black and Hispanic/Latino respondents.

Table 7. How often have you heard uninformed, inappropriate or prejudicial comments made by:

Dimension of diversity	Mean Rating	Percentage “often” or “very often”
Socioeconomic status		

Classroom faculty	1.6	5%
Fellow students	2.1	12%
Field instructors	1.6	6%
Age		
Classroom faculty	1.5	3%
Fellow students	1.8	5%
Field instructors	1.4	2%
Religion		
Classroom faculty	1.5	5%
Fellow students	1.8	7%
Field instructors	1.4	3%
Ethnicity		
Classroom faculty	1.9	5%
Fellow students	2.5	21%
Field instructors	1.4	3%
Sexual orientation		
Classroom faculty	1.5	4%
Fellow students	1.8	8%
Field instructors	1.3	0%
Disability or health status		
Classroom faculty	1.3	2%
Fellow students	1.7	6%

Field instructors	1.4	4%
Race		
Classroom faculty	2.0	7%
Fellow students	2.6	20%
Field instructors	1.5	4%
Sex		
Classroom faculty	1.5	1%
Fellow students	1.8	5%
Field instructors	1.3	2%
Gender identity or expression		
Classroom faculty	1.3	1%
Fellow students	1.9	10%
Field instructors	1.3	1%
Country of origin		
Classroom faculty	1.3	2%
Fellow students	1.6	6%
Field instructors	1.2	0%
Immigration status		
Classroom faculty	1.4	3%
Fellow students	1.8	8%
Field instructors	1.2	0%
English proficiency		
Classroom faculty	1.5	2%

Fellow students	1.7	5%
Field instructors	1.2	0%
International status		
Classroom faculty	1.3	2%
Fellow students	1.5	6%
Field instructors	1.2	0%

(1 = never; 2 = rarely; 3 = sometimes; 4 = often; 5 = very often).

These findings show that problems were more often experienced with fellow students than with faculty or field instructors. Faculty were rated lower with respect to English proficiency and immigration status by both Hispanic/Latino and Asian/Asian American students. Student-related problems based on race and ethnicity were more often reported by Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students. More Black/African American students reported problems from other students based on gender identity and sexual orientation than others. For field instructors, only one item showed a difference: Black and African American students reported more frequent problems based on race than other students did.

In a follow-up question on the survey item asking about classroom teachers, students were asked how often classroom faculty “handled such incidents constructively.” Many (41%) of students responded “most of the time” or “always,” while 59% replied “sometimes” or “never” (this was a 4-point response scale). White respondents were more likely than other respondents to think that instructors had handled “such incidents constructively.” Black respondents were least likely to think so.

There was another question about classroom faculty:

Table 8. Indicate how many of your instructors:

	Mean Rating	Percentage “very few” or “less than half”
Have open discussions about privilege, power, and oppression	2.8	33%

Include diverse perspectives in discussions and assignments	2.9	29%
Turn controversial topics into good discussions	2.9	26%
Encourage students to contribute different perspectives	3.1	21%
Value individual differences	3.1	15%
Treat all students as capable learners	3.3	10%
Know students' names	3.1	17%
Share their own experience and background in class	3.2	13%

(1 = very few; 2 = less than half; 3 = most; 4 = all)

The next two items addressed aspects of the overall campus climate.

Table 9. How would you assess faculty/instructor respect for:

	Mean Rating	Percentage "fair" or "poor"
Students from a minority racial/ ethnic group	1.9	24%
Non-native English speakers	1.9	18%
Students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged	1.9	18%
Students with religious affiliations other than Christian	1.7	16%

Students who are transgender or gender nonconforming	1.7	15%
International students	1.7	14%
Students with Christian affiliations	1.7	14%
Students with a disability	1.6	13%
Students in general	1.6	8%
Male students	1.5	6%
Female students	1.5	6%
Students who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual	1.5	6%

(1 = excellent, 2 = good, 3 = fair, 4 = poor).

Table 10. How would you assess student respect for:

	Mean Rating	Percentage “fair” or “poor”
Faculty/instructors who are non-native English speakers	2.1	21%
Students from a racial/ ethnic group other than their own	2.0	23%
Students who are non-native English speakers	1.9	26%
Students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged	1.9	22%
International faculty/instructors	1.9	19%
International students	1.9	19%

Faculty/instructors from a marginalized racial group	1.8	18%
Students who are transgender or gender nonconforming	1.8	18%
Students who have non-Christian affiliations	1.8	18%
Students with a disability	1.8	16%
Faculty/instructors in general	1.8	9%
Students with a sexual orientation different than their own	1.7	15%
Students who have Christian affiliations	1.7	13%
Male students	1.6	8%
Students who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual	1.6	13%
Female faculty/instructors	1.5	7%

(1 = excellent, 2 = good, 3 = fair, 4 = poor).

Faculty respect for students in general and for students affiliated with non-Christian religions was given the lowest ratings by Black/African-American students. Faculty respect for students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged was given lower ratings by Black and Hispanic/Latino students.

Open-Ended Comments

Several students expressed a sense of marginalization and lack of belonging because they were not enrolled in the traditional two year course of study, with one even noting that opportunities for activity in student government were limited for advanced standing

students. One student noted that although “welcomed,” “there aren’t many opportunities IN the actual SSW building to engage with classmates outside of class” [emphasis in the original].

Several respondents wanted to see more diversity among students, both based on race and ethnicity and on income/SES. As one low-income student said, “As it stands right now, there will be a lot of white female social workers from the upper class working with vulnerable populations.”

Comments of experiences with faculty members in the classroom, with “leadership” and about the School overall were both positive and negative. Negative statements included “The silver school had a very destructive and intolerant culture that stemmed from faculty, students and administration,” making it “difficult to learn, and “It has been a white privileged experience.” A couple of students mentioned feeling “silenced.” By contrast, other students made statements like “I think the NYU administration and faculty are working hard to create a welcoming, supportive environment for all” and “I had a lot of good professors this year that were strong in all areas of inclusiveness.”

Several respondents asked for some courses to be taught in Spanish. At least one mentioned the absence of or resistance to asking about preferred gender pronouns at the start of classes.

An unexpected finding was the number of complaints about poor teaching in general, mostly focused on adjunct faculty. As one student said, “I have had some really great profs at Silver, but I also had some really terrible profs” including one who “feel asleep during student presentations.” One student attributed lack of respect for faculty to poor teaching rather than on their personal characteristics. One student suggested in-class observations “for faculty consistently receiving poor reviews.”

Quite a few students were pleased that these questions were being asked and expressed hope that the findings would lead to action and not a defensive response.

Preliminary Conclusions

The first thing to be noted is the differences in how these findings can be interpreted. In Table 5, for example, the mean rating on hearing faculty express stereotypes was 1.7, or somewhere between never and sometimes. We could conclude from the mean rating and the percentage of students giving low ratings (6%) that students don’t hear faculty make

such remarks very often—the “glass half full” interpretation. On the other hand, if we are striving for the ideal of students never hearing such remarks from faculty (mean = 1) and if we observe that 6% of students giving low ratings on this item amounts to 1 in 16 or 17, we might interpret the findings in a “glass half empty” way. Without clear benchmarks for success, what we can do is compare ratings across items to identify areas of focus for making initial improvements.

As I interpret these data, some of the main findings are:

- Responses to many questions—both about things that happened to students and about the school climate in general—race and ethnicity are often named as factors related to a less favorable climate.
- Based on both descriptive ratings and other analyses, Hispanic/Latino and Asian/Asian American students have been experiencing a number of problems that have not yet been widely discussed.
- Problem ratings were frequently elevated when discussing socioeconomic status (meaning students identified as poor working class).
- The environment of the school was rated as least inclusive for Native American/Alaska Native students (even though there were none in the sample). This might be an observation related to lack of content on this population in the curriculum.

This survey was conducted because of an awareness of some problems and a wish to do better in celebrating diversity, enhancing inclusion, and minimizing marginalization within the school community. The findings show that, as is true in most historically white institutions and as reflected in the national climate at this time, some concern is merited. The results of the survey, especially if validated when the survey is repeated, may suggest priorities for action going forward.

[1] The Social Justice and Diversity Committee initiated and sponsored the student survey. Professors James Martin, Rohini Pahwa, Kimberly Hudson and I were on the subcommittee that wrote and implemented the survey. None of this work could have been accomplished without them.

[2] Meredith Ruden's assistance in this task was invaluable.

[3] Slight changes have been made to the wording of some items and response categories have been changed to be less biased and easier to interpret. The questions have also been made more specific as to time frame ("in this academic year") and context.

[4] Percentages reported may not round to 100% due to rounding error, "other" responses, or other reasons.

[5] Based on feedback from students and faculty on this survey, subsequent versions will separate these two groups.

[6] Copies of the complete report on these findings are available upon request.