

National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (NACCC): 2019 Administration and Summary of Findings



Prepared by Dr. Hannah Lawler
Office of Institutional Research



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Background

In Fall 2019, Santa Monica College (SMC) participated in the 2019-2020 administration of the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (NACCC), a survey instrument developed by the USC Center for Race & Equity. A total of 1,606 SMC students participated in the approximately 15-minute long web-based survey (response rate of 5.1%) between November 4 and December 6, 2019.

The NACCC is comprised of 110 survey items (excluding demographic questions) assessing six content areas that provide information on ways students perceive and experience the campus racial climate. A description of the six content areas are included in each section of the report highlighting the trends and findings of the survey for SMC students.

The Six NACCC Survey Content Areas



The findings of the NACCC are intended to help SMC leaders and practitioners better understand and ultimately more strategically address racial problems on campus and close the equity gaps in experiences and outcomes for racially minoritized student groups. The racial campus climate assessment was included in the College's 2019 Student Equity Plan as one of the four priority activities. The goal of the activity, assessing and improving the racial climate at SMC, is to create a campus environment that validates the identities and experiences of our students.



For access to the 2019 Student Equity Plan, visit:

https://www.smc.edu/administration/institutional-research/documents/SMC_SEP_Executive-SummaryFinal2019.pdf

This report does not provide an in-depth item-by-item analysis of the results of the SMC administration of the NACCC. Instead, the report focuses on providing a summary of the broad trends across the 100+ survey items with a special focus on the experience of racially minoritized students.



For access to the raw survey data results disaggregated by student race/ethnicity, visit:

<https://www.smc.edu/administration/institutional-research/documents/SMC-NACCC-Fall-2019-Results-by-Race.pdf>

The table below compares the ethnic/racial breakdown of the Fall 2019 survey sample (N = 1,606) with the overall SMC population during the same term (N = 31,492).

Fall 2019	Survey Sample (N)	% Survey Sample	% SMC Population
Asian	242	15.1%	10.4%
Black	137	8.5%	7.7%
Latinx	544	33.9%	37.0%
Middle Eastern*	53	3.3%	--
White	293	18.2%	28.8%
Two or more	280	17.4%	4.0%
Other**	57	3.5%	12.0%
Total	1,606	100%	100%

**Middle Eastern is not one of options for race/ethnicity on the SMC college application but was offered as an option on the NACCC*

***Other for SMC includes Native American, Pacific Islander, and unknown. Other for the NACCC includes racial group sizes smaller than 20, including Arab/Arab American, Mestizo/a, Native American, Pacific Islander, and unknown/unreported.*

When compared to their representation in the credit and noncredit college population, Asian, Black, and students identifying with two or more races were overrepresented amongst survey participants. Latinx and White (including Middle Eastern) students were underrepresented in the survey population when compared to the college population.

Cautionary Note on Interpretation of the Results

As is the case with any voluntary survey, self-selection bias is present (the group that chooses to participate in the survey is not the same as the group that opts out) in the survey sample. As a result, the findings of the NACCC should be interpreted with caution and should not be generalized to the experience of all past and future SMC students. Even with its limitations, the NACCC results adds to our current understanding of what some students experienced and perceived at a point in time (November and December 2019) about the SMC's racial climate. The survey findings serve as a starting point for inquiry and campus-wide discussion.

Mattering and Affirmation

NACCC CONTENT AREA DESCRIPTION

NACCC respondents indicate the extent to which they feel they matter in classrooms and in various out-of-class campus spaces. Additionally, students indicate ways and the frequency with which faculty members affirm them.

In the NACCC survey, mattering is defined as others noticing and caring about what students think, want, and have to say. In one set of questions, students were asked to rate the extent to which they feel they matter in varying locations or scenarios (1 = I don't matter at all, 2 = I slightly matter, 3 = I somewhat matter, 4 = I mostly matter, 5 = I strongly matter). The survey findings suggest the following overall trends in the "mattering" section of the Mattering & Affirmation Content Area:

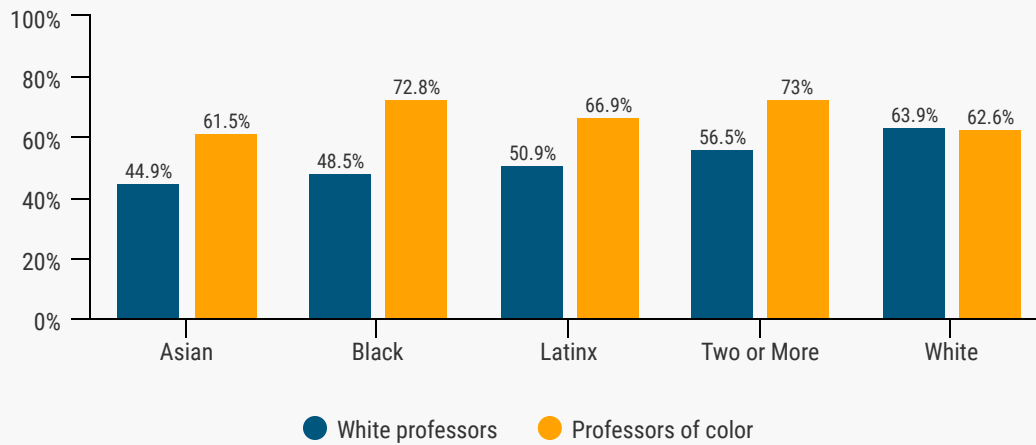
Goals of the Content Area

Prepare faculty to create affirming and culturally sustaining classrooms in which students, including racially minoritized students, believe they matter.

Increase overall sense of mattering and affirmation, including among racially minoritized students, in dominant social spaces/events important or significant to student life outside of classroom.

- Among the various **out-of-class campus spaces**, the largest proportion of students indicated they felt they mostly mattered or strongly mattered in the **academic advising office** (71%). The smallest proportion of students indicated they felt the same in the **campus quad or common gathering space** (34%).
- On average, disproportionately **fewer Asian** (48%) students and disproportionately **more Latinx** (64%) felt they mostly or strongly mattered in the **out-of-class campus spaces** (average across all items) when compared to other racial/ethnic groups.
- Overall, a larger proportion of students indicated **they mostly or strongly mattered in classes taught by professors of color** (70%) than classes taught by White professors (58%). However, the **pattern is reverse** for **White** students.
- Disproportionately fewer **Black** students (44%) indicated they felt that they mostly or strongly mattered in **classes taught by White professors** when compared to other groups; in contrast, a larger percentage of **Black** students indicated they felt they mostly or strongly mattered **in classes taught by professors of colors** when compared to other racial/ethnic groups (79%).
- While a larger percentage of every ethnic/racial group indicated they mattered in their major classes than in classes outside of the major, the gap between the two is largest for **Black** students (78% major vs. 48% non-major).

Figure 1. % Often or Almost Always Responses (White professors vs. professors of color): "How often you experienced concern for your feelings or experiences from your professors?"



Note: Data for the ethnic/racial groups with the largest responses (N >= 75) are included in the chart

A second set of questions asked students to rate how often (1 = Never, 2 = Once in a while, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Almost always) they experienced four acts of affirmation from faculty: welcoming facial expressions and/or words, concern for feelings or experiences, support for contributions to class discussions, availability outside of the classroom for questions and guidance.

All racial/ethnic groups, except White students, had higher percentage of students say their professors of color often or almost always engaged in the four acts of affirmation when compared to their White professors. The largest gap in percentage of often and almost always responses between White and professors of color related to expressions of concerns for students' feelings or experiences (White professors: 54% vs. professors of color: 67%). On this survey item, the difference between experiences with White professors of color are largest for Black students (see chart above).

The survey data suggest that professors of color are assets to the institution and leveraging their collective knowledge, skills, and expertise can potentially be one way SMC can ensure that students of color feel seen, heard, and cared for in their classrooms.



PERCENTAGE OF FACULTY WHO ARE FROM RACIALLY MINORITIZED BACKGROUNDS

42% of **full-time, tenure/tenure-track** faculty identify as Asian, Black, Latinx, Native American, or Pacific Islander

37% of **part-time, adjunct** faculty identify as Asian, Black, Latinx, Native American, or Pacific Islander

Cross-Racial Engagement

NACCC CONTENT AREA DESCRIPTION

NACCC respondents indicate the frequency and nature of their interactions on campus with same-race peers and with peers from different racial groups. Additionally, they report their level of comfort in discussions with other students about issues related to race.

In this content area, students were asked to describe how often they interacted with White students and students of color in various settings (1 = Never, 2 = Once in a while, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Almost always) and how often they have had conversations about selected political topics (the presidency of Donald Trump, the Black Lives Matter movement, ending of DACA, and travel ban policies) with White students and with students of color. Lastly, students were asked whether they feel calm, empowered, open, and encouraged when engaging in conversations about race.

The following bullet points describe some key findings from this content area:

- Overall, disproportionately **more students** (average 60%) indicated they hung out socially, voluntarily studied together, played recreational sports, and participated in student clubs or organization **with students of color** than White students (39%). This finding is not surprising given that a majority (59%) of the SMC population are from racially minoritized groups (see Table on page 4) .
- A **larger percentage of students from every racial/ethnic group** indicated they felt **moderately or extremely encouraged** (overall, 58%) engaging in conversations about race **with students of color** than with White students. Only about one in three students, overall, indicated they felt moderately or extremely encouraged having race conversations with White students (35%).

Goals of the Content Area

Account for racial power dynamics within the institutional and geographic contexts in which cross-racial engagement (particularly conversations) take place.

Facilitate meaningful dialogues inside and outside of classroom discussion in which racially minoritized students' perspectives and experiences are also centered.

Create an environment where conversations about race are considered healthy and important.

- A larger percentage of **White (68%) students** indicated they **felt moderately calm or extremely calm** being engaged in conversations about race **with other White students** than the percentage who felt the same in conversations with students of color (57%).
- The trend is opposite for Black and Latinx students; more **Black (77%) and Latinx (73%)** felt **moderately or extremely calm** having conversations about race **with students of color** than with White students (52% and 54%, respectively).

Figure 2. % Never Responses - How often have you had conversations about the Black Lives Matter movement with White students vs. students of color

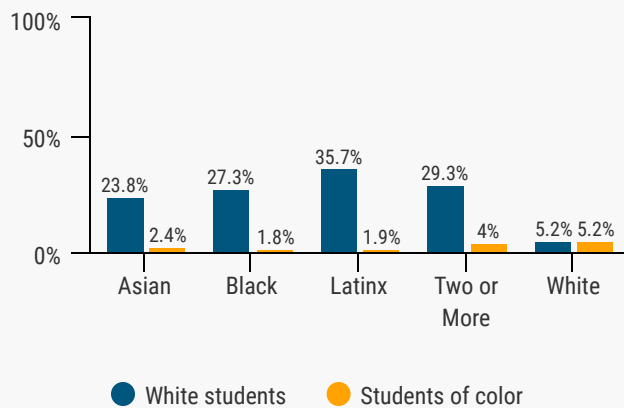
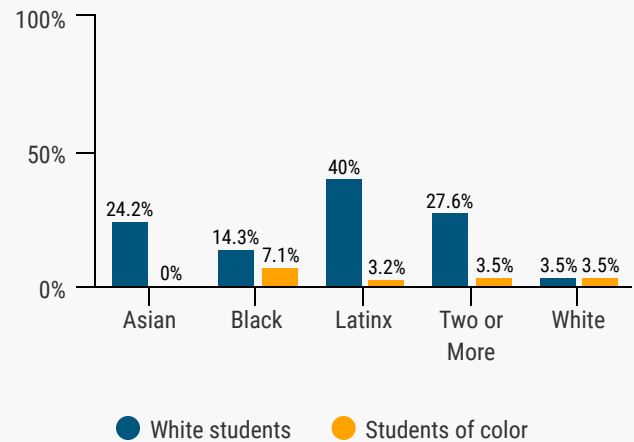


Figure 3. % Never Responses - How often have you had conversations about the ending of DACA with White students vs. students of color



Note: Data for the ethnic/racial groups with the largest responses (N >= 75) are included in the chart

The figures above compare the percentages of students, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, who indicated they have **never** had conversations about the **Black Lives Matter (BLM)** movement and the **ending of DACA** with White students vs. students of color.

- The survey data indicates that **more** students from racially minoritized groups have had conversations about these political topics at least once with **other students of color** than White students.
- Disproportionately **more Latinx** students said they have **never** had conversations about **BLM (36%) or ending of DACA (40%)** with White students when compared to other racial/ethnic groups.
- A **vast majority of White** students indicated they **have had conversations at least once about BLM (95%) and the ending of DACA (97%)** with other White students and students of color equally.

Racial Learning and Literacy

NACCC CONTENT AREA DESCRIPTION

NACCC respondents consider if and where on campus they learn about their own racial identities and about other racial groups. Additionally, students indicate the extent to which they feel racial diversity is reflected in curricula and class discussions, and how prepared they feel to live and work in a racially diverse society after college.

According to the USC Center for Race and Equity, the goals of racial learning and literacy are to develop and nurture students' abilities to collaborate, work, and live with individuals of different races and lessen the burden of cultural taxation experienced by racially minoritized students by improving racial literacy and racial competency among White faculty and staff. The survey data findings from this content area indicate that SMC has room for improvement in meeting these goals.

Students were asked to indicate where on campus they learned about race. The **top three places where students learned about race**, regardless of race/ethnicity, were:

1. In class discussions (57%)
2. In conversations with other students outside of class (45%)
3. In readings professors assign to me (48%).

In terms of *who* students learn about race from on campus, **more than half said they learned from professors and students of color**, disproportionately more than students saying they learned from White professors and students. The fewest percentage of students indicated they learned about race from White administrators or staff (15%).



PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO LEARN ABOUT RACE FROM WHITE PROFESSORS

48%

of **White** students said they learned about race from **White** professors

33%

of **Asian, Black, and Latinx** students said they learned about race from **White** professors

Goals of the Content Area

Improve students' understanding of the historical, social, institutional, and systemic relationships of power, specifically related to race and racism, in the United States.

Develop and nurture students' abilities to collaborate, work, and live with individuals of different races.

Lessen the burden of cultural taxation experienced by racially minoritized students by increasing personnel of color and improving racial literacy and racial competency among White faculty and staff.

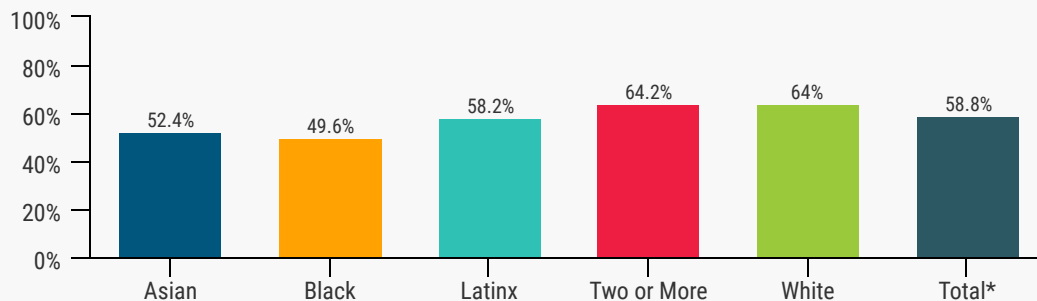
Students were asked to rate how much their major and non-major classes reflected racial diversity in the current school year (1 = Do not reflect racial diversity at all, 2 = Slightly reflect, 3 = Somewhat reflect, 4 = Mostly reflect, 5 = Strongly reflect racial diversity). In the NACCC survey, racial diversity is defined as the extent to which there are a variety of different racial groups represented. The survey data tells us that:

- Disproportionately **more White (70%)** students said students in their **major** classes **mostly or strongly reflected racial diversity** when compared to Latinx (50%), Asian (41%), and Black (31%) students.
- Disproportionately **more Asian (31%) and Black (31%)** students said **authors assigned** for readings/on the syllabus in their **majors** classes **did not reflect racial diversity** at all when compared to White (24%) and Latinx (17%) students.

The United States Census projects 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, institutions play a critical role in preparing students for post-college environments reflecting this demographic shift. Students were asked to rate the extent to which they believed SMC prepared them for functioning in racially diverse settings (1 = Not preparing you at all, 2 = Slightly preparing you, 3 = Somewhat preparing you, 4 = Mostly preparing you, 5 = Strongly preparing you).

A **majority of all students** said they believed **SMC mostly or strongly prepared them to interact with individuals of races that are different than theirs**, with more White and students from two or more races believing this statement than other ethnic/racial groups (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. % Mostly and Strongly Prepare Responses to the Question: "How well do you think your institution is preparing you to interact with individuals of races that are different than yours?"



*Total includes Middle Eastern and Other groups

Encounters with Racial Stress

NACCC CONTENT AREA DESCRIPTION

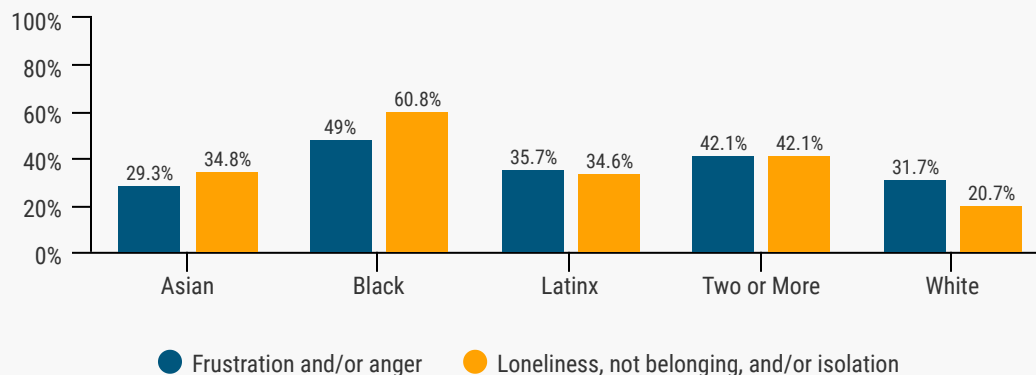
NACCC respondents appraise the racial environment of their institutions. They identify campus encounters they have experienced as racist, ranging from microaggressions and racial stereotyping to more overt acts of racial harassment and violence. Students indicate the impact of these encounters on their personal well-being and academic success.

In the survey, racism was defined as specific harmful acts, behaviors, or attitudes directed at students based on their race.

The survey data suggest that a majority of students perceive SMC positively in terms of racial climate. About **six in ten students said that SMC's environment was not at all racist**, with disproportionately more White (67%) and Latinx (60%) saying this than Asian (55%) and Black (54%) students. However, among those who said that SMC's environment was slightly to strongly racist, **about one-third**, on average, said that the racial environment at SMC resulted in **feelings of frustration and/or anger or loneliness, not belonging, and/or isolation**.

The data disaggregated by student race/ethnicity reveal that SMC's racial climate **disproportionately and negatively impacts Black students** (see chart below).

Figure 5. % Indicating SMC's Racial Environment Resulted in the Following Feelings



Note: Data for the ethnic/racial groups with the largest responses (N >= 75) are included in the chart

This finding is very concerning as students' sense of belonging has been documented to improve their retention, persistence, and degree completion. SMC's racial climate has an impact on students and their success, particularly our Black students, for whom encounters with racial stress contribute to feelings of loneliness, not belonging, isolation, and a lack of community.

Some other findings from this content area include:

- Students were asked to indicate how often they have personally experienced racism at SMC in the current school in various settings (financial aid office, tutoring, academic advising office, campus police, campus quad, study group, office hours, etc.). A large majority of all students said they never (0 times) experienced racism in these settings. However, **disproportionately fewer Asian students said they never experienced racism** in all of these settings when compared to other ethnic/racial groups. Still, a large proportion of Asian students ($\geq 71\%$) indicated they have never personally experienced racism at SMC.
- Disproportionately **more Black (32%)** and **students from two or more races (31%)** indicated they have **personally experienced or heard about acts of racism** happening at SMC, including race-based verbal and/or physical attacks, racially-offensive theme event, and racist signs, symbols, or graffiti, when compared to White (22%) students.
- More than any other group, **Black (66%)** and students from **two or more races (66%)** said these experiences **led to feelings of frustrations and/or anger** (for comparison, 30% of Asian, 57% of Latinx, and 59% of White students said they felt the same).
- Disproportionately **more Black students** reported they experienced **classroom and campus racial microaggressions** than any other racial/ethnic group, for example, being viewed as naturally less able than others in class (22%), expected to represent the view of their entire race in class discussion (21%), experienced jokes related to race that made them feel uncomfortable (21%), assumed to be a natural athlete and/or a member of a college sports team (9%).

**Goals of
the
Content
Area**

Significantly reduce, if not entirely eliminate, the frequency with which students experience racial stress by disrupting oppressive practices and providing support for those on the margins.

Provide sustainable resources for students to address mental and emotional health concerns related to encounters with racial stress.

Appraisals of Institutional Commitment

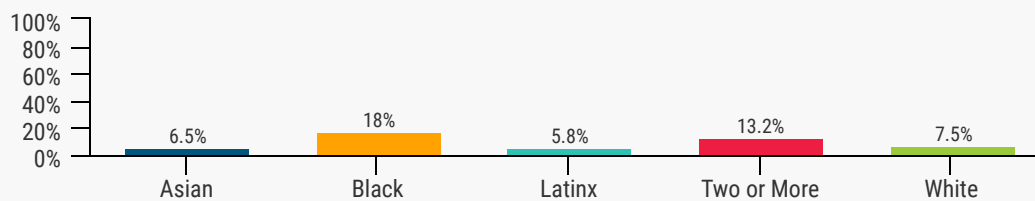
NACCC CONTENT AREA DESCRIPTION

NACCC respondents evaluate their administrators' demonstrated commitments to racial diversity and inclusion at their institutions. Students also assess institutional leaders' responses to racial problems on campus.

The survey data from this content area suggests that while half (50%) of students believe their **campus leaders deal with racism/racist incidents** at the college moderately or extremely **effectively**, fewer than half believe leaders responded in a moderately or extremely **timely manner** (43%) or moderately or extremely **in the open (33%)**. Fewer **Asian students** said campus leaders responded to racism on campus effectively, in a timely manner, and/or in the open when compared to other groups.

In addition, disproportionately **more Black (18%)** students said their campus leaders **don't acknowledge racism or racist incidents at all**, when compared to any other group (difference detected beyond margin of error). The data suggest that SMC has room for improvement in terms of immediately responding to incidents of racism, racial violence, and racial terror on-campus. See Figure 6 below.

Figure 6. % Indicating Administrative Leadership Don't Acknowledge Racism and Racist Incidents at the Institution



Note: Data for the ethnic/racial groups with the largest responses (N >= 75) are included in the chart

Goals of the Content Area

Achieve parity in the racial composition of college and university faculty that mirrors student racial demographics but recognize that culture and climate change, in step with demographic change, is also essential.

Be accountable for and immediately responsive to incidents of racism, racial violence, and racial terror on-campus.

Demonstrate proactive efforts to decrease likelihood of incidents of racism, racial violence, and racial terror.

Improve understanding among college and university personnel regarding the historical, social, institutional, and systemic relationships of power, specifically related to race and racism, in the United State.

When asked to rate the extent they felt administrators at SMC were committed to engaging in concrete actions related to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus, a large majority of students (>67%) said they believed administrators were mostly or strongly committed for each of the items (admitting students of color, graduating students of color, sponsoring activities about racial diversity, removing objects or structures on campus that are racially offensive, and hiring faculty and staff of color).

When analyzing the two items related to hiring faculty and staff of color disaggregated by ethnicity/race, the findings reveal that disproportionately fewer Asian and Black students felt administrators were moderately or strongly committed to hiring employees of color when compared to other groups, with Black students reporting the smallest percentage of "moderately" and "strongly" committed responses.



Impact of External Environments

NACCC CONTENT AREA DESCRIPTION

NACCC respondents reflect on their sense of security and on their encounters with racism in the cities/towns surrounding their campuses, and in online and social media environments.

The findings from this content area helps increase SMC's awareness of the differing levels of racial stress and violence our students may experience in the city/town surrounding campus. A comparison of the percentage of students reporting they feel moderately or extremely welcome in the Santa Monica area versus the SMC campus reveal **they experience an entirely separate racial reality** on campus than off campus. Data for welcoming environment at SMC can be found in the Encounters with Racial Stress Content Area.

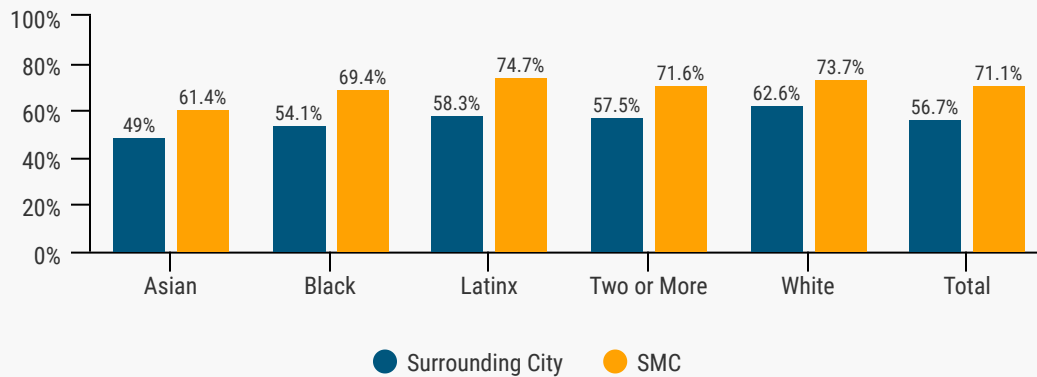
On average, **four in ten Asian, Black, and Latinx students** indicated they have **personally experienced racism at least once** in city/town surrounding SMC campus, compared to two in ten White students. Similar to the trends found in "Encounters with Racial Stress" content area, **Black students are disproportionately and negatively impacted by the racist encounters they experience.** Over 58% of Black students said they felt frustrated and/or anger because of the racism they personally have experienced off campus.

Goals of the Content Area

Monitor and acknowledge external incidents of racism and racial violence.

Be proactive and aware that students come from and are continually exposed to environments with differing levels of racial stress and violence apart from the campus community, and may, for example, experience an entirely separate racial reality on campus than in the city/town surrounding campus.

Figure 6. % Students Feel Moderately and Extremely Welcome in City Surrounding SMC vs. SMC Campus



Note: Data for the ethnic/racial groups with the largest responses (N >= 75) are included in the chart

Overall, disproportionately more students (71%) feel moderately or extremely welcome at SMC than in the city/town surrounding SMC (57%). This trend applies for every racial/ethnic group. Disproportionately fewer Asian students and more White and Latinx students indicated they feel welcome at SMC and in the city/town surrounding SMC when compared with other groups.

Conclusion

As expressed in the Vision for Success and Student Equity Plan, Santa Monica College (SMC) is committed to advancing equity for its students and closing racial equity gaps in outcomes and experiences for racially minoritized students. SMC's participation in the 2019 administration of the NACCC was the first step in helping college leaders and the community deepen our understanding of students' perceptions of campus racial climate and how the racial environment impacts their learning and emotional wellbeing. The survey data reveal where the College is doing well and where we can improve so that all students, regardless of race/ethnicity, feel supported, affirmed, and welcomed at SMC.