The first step in the analysis of the Campus Climate Survey results was to compare the sample distributions of demographics from the survey respondents to the population distribution of demographics for the university. The distributions were similar. Since the respondents were voluntary response, this analysis step was simply used as evidence that the volunteers were somewhat representative of the university in terms of demographics.

The second step of the analysis was to group the 130 questions into theme categories using a combination of the knowledge of the survey developers and factor analysis procedures. Most of the questions were rated on a Likert scale of strongly disagree, disagree, neither, agree, and strongly agree. Others were rated on a scale to allow for information regarding the frequency of various incidents. A comprehensive approach had to be utilized in order to convert the responses for each individual question into numerical scores. Comparisons of analyses of questions on the original scale with analyses of the questions on the numerical score scales suggested that using summaries of the numerical values could provide information about the underlying theme.

Reliability analysis was also conducted. The six resulting themes were: 1) Environment Inside the Classroom, 2) University Commitment / Responsiveness, 3) General Campus Climate – Students (students’ perceptions of their peers), 4) General Campus Climate – Staff (students’ perceptions of staff), 5) Intercultural Competence / Self Assessment, and 6) Impact of Learning Experiences. Six theme scores were calculated for each volunteer respondent as the sum of the theme questions (with reverse coding as needed so that large values always indicated a more positive feeling or opinion about the campus climate), divided by the maximum theme score possible (i.e., the score possible if that respondent had indicated a positive answer for each question in the theme). Theme scores could range from 0.2 to 1.0.

The third step in the analysis was to examine the sample distribution of each theme score. The purpose was to examine the shape of the distribution as well as the summary statistics of the distribution such as average, median, maximum, minimum, etc. The distributions revealed that the theme scores were low when compared to the possible theme scores if most respondents had positive opinions or feelings about the climate (i.e., indicated the positive response to many of the questions). Most of the averages were approximately 0.6 for each theme. This average of 0.6 could have several interpretations. One possibility is that all volunteer respondents indicated a neutral on the original scale to all questions. A second possibility is that the distributions were generally symmetric so that approximately one-half of the sample respondent scores fell below the average of 0.6 and one-half fell above the average of 0.6. A third possibility is that the distributions were heavily skewed such that a majority of the sample respondent scores fell below (or above) the average of 0.6. The second possibility is what examining the distributions...
revealed; indicating that approximately one-half of the respondents indicated less than favorable responses to many of the theme questions.

The fourth step in the analysis was to examine scores on individual questions within a theme to determine if the low scores were due to specific questions. This also offered another opportunity to analyze the questions on the original scale once again to ensure the theme scores were useful. A few questions had distributions that appeared a little different than the overall scores, but no individual questions really stood out as primary drivers of the low theme scores.

The fifth step in the analysis was to compare the theme scores, and individual questions, across demographic groups to see in any groups had opinion or feelings that were consistently lower or higher than the overall theme score. Analysis of Variance techniques were used for this step. Some checks were performed to ensure that some basic assumptions of Analysis of Variance were met, but the assumption that each sample is a truly random sample of a particular population is difficult to ensure. While some groups had theme score means that appeared to be “statistically” lower or higher than the overall theme mean, the mean scores for the different groups were basically consistent with the overall theme means.

The sixth step was to use qualitative analysis of the open ended questions and focus group discussions to gain further information about the respondent’s opinions and feelings about campus climate that were being approximated by the survey question responses. Themes that emerged from these qualitative analyses provided additional context for the fixed response survey data that tended to validate that low theme scores reflect a pattern of dissatisfaction among some members of the student body in terms of the campus climate for appreciation of human diversity.