Memorial Student Center
Diversity Climate Survey
Spring 2024

Purpose of Assessment

The Memorial Student Center (MSC) Student Programs Office provides leadership development opportunities for students through its 18 programming committees and resource areas. MSC Diversity leadership wanted to assess how MSC committee members and executive teams perceived the diversity initiatives instituted toward creating an inclusive student union. Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research worked with the MSC starting in 2011 to assess the diversity and inclusion efforts and its effects on its membership.

Key Findings with Recommendations

Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research identified several key findings and developed actionable recommendations that Memorial Student Center staff and student leadership may take based on the results. However, MSC staff and students may identify other findings using their knowledge and understanding of the community. Staff members and student leaders are strongly encouraged to read all the results and qualitative comments to gain a fuller understanding of students' experiences.

- MSC students responding to the survey were generally positive about the MSC, its influence on their ideas of diversity, and were comfortable as members of their committees and of the MSC as a whole. The students overall indicated they found the MSC to be welcoming. However, they rated the MSC slightly less welcoming based on religious beliefs. Additionally, approximately one-third of students reported exposure to a prejudiced environment in the MSC.
  - o This could be an opportunity for the MSC to connect with student groups to campus ministries and Texas A&M Hillel for co-programming and awareness workshops or trainings for committee members.

- The rate that students indicated experiencing exclusionary behaviors within the MSC increased slightly compared to 2021. The percentage of students who witnessed these encounters and intervened on another's behalf increased by two percentage points compared to 2021; those who witnessed encounters and did not intervene stayed the same.

- Respondents seemed to understand the importance of communicating and working with people who are different from themselves. However, students were slightly less confident in being prepared to work in diverse teams and communicate with people different from themselves, but these areas improved compared to 2021. Students' level of agreement that the MSC and their committee focused on issues of diversity decreased compared to 2021.
  - o The MSC is encouraged to continue creating opportunities for diversity and inclusion education within committee programming, as well as promoting opportunities for committees to collaborate with one another for co-programming. This may enhance students' confidence in working with diverse teams, communicating with people different than themselves, and understanding issues of power, privilege, and oppression better. Forming partnerships between MSC committees and organizations outside the MSC would also provide opportunities for MSC members to improve these skills.

- These results are recommended to be widely shared with MSC committee members, executives, advisors, and other stakeholders.

Method and Sample
The electronic survey was developed using Qualtrics®, a survey design software that creates web-based forms and databases. The survey consisted of 43 questions: 36 questions were quantitative, three were qualitative, and four were demographic. Due to branching technology, not all students saw all the questions. The data were analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package, Tableau®, a data visualization software package, and Microsoft Excel®.

An email invitation with the survey link was sent on January 30, 2024, to 1,053 MSC members and executives; however, four email addresses were invalid. Non-respondents received up to three email reminders before the survey was closed on February 26, 2024. Of the 1,049 students who successfully received the survey link, 234 responded to at least some part of the survey, yielding a 22% response rate. Compared to 2021, the response rate this year is 23% lower; however, in previous years the climate survey has been administered during the fall semester.

Results
Results are reported as means, standard deviations (sd), and frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. Tables are in descending mean or frequency order for 2024 unless otherwise specified. Qualitative themes are provided in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document. Comparisons to the similar MSC climate surveys, last conducted in fall 2021 will be made where appropriate. An interactive dashboard was also created allowing others to look at the results by specific demographics.

MSC students were asked to report their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements regarding the influence of the MSC on their personal development and ideas of diversity. Table 1 shows that students were most in agreement with being satisfied with their personal development since becoming a member of the MSC, which is similar to previous years. The level of agreement with the other two statements decreased slightly compared to previous years.

Statements	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
I am satisfied with the extent of my personal development since becoming a member of the MSC.	46%	52%	2%	--	3.44 (.54) [211]	3.42 (.60) [505]	3.38 (.72) [204]	3.40 (.61) [291]
The MSC has positively influenced my idea(s) of diversity.	30%	61%	7%	2%	3.18 (.65) [211]	3.31 (.64) [506]	3.32 (.73) [207]	⌇
My interest in matters of diversity have increased since joining the MSC.	25%	62%	10%	3%	3.09 (.69) [211]	3.20 (.67) [507]	3.25 (.75) [209]	⌇

Table 1: Influence of the MSC
⌇ Not asked

Students were asked about their comfort levels as members of their committee, within the MSC and at Texas A&M University. Table 2, on the following page, reveals that students reported high levels of comfort overall but were most comfortable as a member of their MSC committee and least comfortable as part of Texas A&M. These results are similar to previous years.

How comfortable are you as part of….	Very Comfortable (4)	Comfortable (3)	Uncomfortable (2)	Very Uncomfortable (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
Your MSC Committee	71%	27%	2%	--	3.69 (.50) [206]	3.69 (.50) [507]	3.72 (.58) [208]	3.65 (.58) [292]
The Memorial Student Center	55%	43%	2%	--	3.52 (.55) [205]	3.57 (.54) [507]	3.60 (.58) [206]	3.50 (.58) [291]
Texas A&M University	51%	43%	6%	--	3.45 (.61) [207]	3.40 (.64) [507]	3.47 (.71) [207]	3.40 (.67) [292]

Table 2: Respondent Comfort within MSC and Texas A&M

Respondents were asked about how welcoming they found the MSC based on their demographic profiles. Table 3 demonstrates that students generally perceived the MSC to be a welcoming environment; however, students found it a little less welcoming in relation to their religious beliefs. The response option "I don't know" was removed from the analysis; however, in previous years, this option was included in the analysis as the neutral response, even though it was the last Likert scale option displayed. Due to this change in scale, results from previous years were removed from the table; however, responses in 2024 were very similar to previous years when you account for the different scale.

The degree of welcoming by the MSC based on my ……	Extremely Welcoming (4)	Friendly (3)	Unfriendly (2)	Extremely Unwelcoming (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]
U.S. Citizenship Status	60%	40%	--	1%	3.59 (.53) [189]
Gender	53%	46%	--	1%	3.52 (.53) [201]
Race	51%	48%	1%	1%	3.50 (.54) [199]
Ethnicity	51%	48%	1%	1%	3.50 (.54) [195]
Religious Beliefs	42%	53%	5%	1%	3.36 (.60) [187]

Table 3: MSC Welcoming Climate

Those who reported the MSC was unfriendly or extremely unwelcoming for any of the demographics were asked to share why they found the MSC unfriendly or unwelcoming. Two of the three responses were about religion. One felt that Christians try to talk with other MSC students who look like they might not be Christian, and the survey respondents did not find this positive. Another student shared that they felt condemned for aligning their beliefs with Christian values. The last response reported that they were not sure who the [MSC] diversity office was for.

MSC students were asked about the extent they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements focused on interacting with diverse people, and their preparation to do this. Table 4 indicates a high level of agreement with all statements. They were most positive about communicating with people different than themselves as an essential leadership skill. Conversely, they were least positive about talking with others with different values helping them to understand themselves and their values better.

Statements	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
Being able to communicate with people who are different than me is an essential leadership skill.	78%	22%	--	--	3.78 (.42) [203]	3.84 (.34) [486]	3.82 (.40) [175]	3.84 (.38) [259]
It is important to include diverse people in teams. *	71%	27%	2%	--	3.70 (.49) [203]	3.76 (.45) [486]	3.76 (.49) [174]	3.75 (.49) [257]
Meaningful interactions with people who hold different identities than my own are an essential part of my college education.	70%	29%	2%	1%	3.67 (.53) [203]	3.70 (.50) [485]	3.74 (.49) [175]	3.63 (.63) [257]
I feel prepared to work effectively in diverse teams.	65%	35%	1%	--	3.64 (.49) [203]	3.59 (.52) [486]	3.60 (.53) [175]	3.54 (.57) [259]
I feel prepared to communicate effectively with people different than me.	62%	38%	--	--	3.62 (.49) [203]	3.58 (.53) [486]	3.63 (.53) [174]	3.55 (.56) [257]
Talking with people who have values different than me helps me to understand myself and my values better.	61%	37%	2%	--	3.60 (.52) [203]	3.63 (.51) [486]	3.68 (.55) [175]	3.71 (.47) [257]

Table 4: Interaction with Diverse People
* Prior to 2021 this statement ended with the phrase "and organizations."

Respondents were next asked about their perceptions of the MSC regarding its focus on issues of diversity. As noted in Table 5, on the following page, nearly two-thirds thought their committee frequently included sufficiently diverse materials, perspectives, or experiences for their members, but less often thought their committee focused on issues of diversity. All three statements decreased compared to last year.

To what extent does….	Frequently (4)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (2)	Not at all (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
Your committee include sufficiently diverse materials, perspectives, or experiences for its members.	65%	32%	3%	1%	3.61 (.58) [199]	3.67 (.54) [484]	3.61 (.65) [176]	3.57 (.56) [226]
The MSC focus on issues of diversity.	54%	41%	5%	1%	3.47 (.64) [200]	3.56 (.60) [484]	3.49 (.65) [175]	3.44 (.66) [226]
Your committee focus on issues of diversity.	47%	42%	9%	3%	3.33 (.76) [200]	3.46 (.68) [484]	3.47 (.75) [176]	3.37 (.74) [226]

Table 5: MSC Focus on Diversity

Participants were next asked to report how often they were likely to engage in certain inclusive and divisive behaviors as a result of their participation in the MSC. As detailed in Table 6 over three-fourths of the students reported that they frequently initiated contact with people not of a similar racial/ethnic background or religious background as a result of participation in the MSC. However, almost one-third of students indicated they sometimes or frequently were exposed to a prejudiced environment within the MSC.

As a result of your participation in the MSC, how often are you likely to	Frequently (4)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (2)	Not at all (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
Initiate contact with people not of a similar racial/ethnic background.	82%	17%	1%	1%	3.80 (.46) [196]	3.75 (.50) [475]	3.72 (.53) [175]	3.54 (.71) [228]
Initiate contact with people not of a similar religious background.	77%	20%	2%	1%	3.73 (.55) [196]	3.68 (.55) [475]	3.64 (.61) [176]	3.50 (.69) [226]
Initiate contact with people not of a similar sexual orientation.	74%	20%	4%	2%	3.67 (.63) [196]	⸥	⸥	⸥
Discuss a topic related to diversity.	39%	47%	11%	2%	3.24 (.73) [196]	3.33 (.71) [475]	3.53 (.65) [176]	3.38 (.68) [228]
Confront others who use hurtful or negative language about people who are different from themselves.	38%	40%	17%	5%	3.12 (.85) [196]	3.16 (.86) [475]	3.19 (.87) [176]	3.01 (.81) [227]
Have been exposed to a prejudiced environment within the MSC. *	16%	15%	31%	37%	2.11 (1.09) [195]	1.90 (1.00) [476]	2.01 (1.06) [175]	1.80 (.93) [227]

Table 6: Inclusive or Divisive Behaviors
⸥ Not asked
* In 2016, the question used the term "racist", not "prejudiced"

Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with statements regarding activities, resources, and initiatives intended to improve the diversity and inclusion of the MSC. Table 7 shows that students were most agreeable about the chance to learn about different cultures than their own when participating in activities and programs.

Statements	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
When participating in activities and programs, I have had the chance to learn about cultures different than my own.	48%	46%	4%	1%	3.42 (.63) [192]	3.44 (.61) [433]	ⱡ	ⱡ
The MSC effectively made efforts to recruit people different from me. *	44%	52%	4%	1%	3.39 (.59) [191]	3.31 (.60) [432]	3.33 (.66) [170]	3.18 (.76) [206]
The MSC has diversity resources available for committees to utilize.	40%	55%	3%	2%	3.34 (.62) [192]	3.39 (.57) [433]	3.46 (.63) [169]	3.24 (.69) [206]
The MSC effectively made efforts to recruit people like me.*	39%	51%	9%	1%	3.27 (.67) [192]	3.25 (.71) [432]	3.36 (.69) [170]	3.22 (.79) [206]
As a result of my experience in the MSC, I have a better understanding of issues of power, privilege, and oppression.	40%	46%	12%	3%	3.23 (.75) [192]	3.21 (.74) [432]	3.45 (.69) [170]	3.25 (.69) [206]

Table 7: MSC Diversity Education and Recruitment
ⱡ Not asked
* Previous: The MSC effectively reached out to people different than me during recruitment periods.

Students were then requested to provide feedback regarding their experiences within the Student Programs Office (SPO) in the MSC. Table 8, on the following page, details that most students felt that the SPO was a space in which they could work. However, students were less in agreement that they had a chance to interact with people from other MSC committees when in the SPO or felt as though they could approach anyone.

When in the Student Programs Office (SPO)….	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
I feel as though I have a space in which I can work.	54%	41%	5%	--	3.49 (.59) [189]	3.46 (.60) [464]	3.47 (.72) [170]	3.35 (.72) [208]
I see people similar to me represented in pictures within the Student Programs Office (SPO). *	45%	45%	7%	3%	3.33 (.72) [190]	3.36 (.67) [463]	3.41 (.72) [170]	3.25 (.71) [208]
I feel as though I can approach anyone with questions or to just talk.	43%	44%	12%	1%	3.30 (.70) [190]	3.20 (.73) [464]	3.26 (.83) [171]	3.13 (.82) [208]
I have the chance to interact with people from other MSC committees.	39%	47%	13%	2%	3.23 (.73) [189]	3.25 (.71) [465]	3.26 (.67) [170]	3.10 (.79) [208]

Table 8: MSC Student Programs Office
* The phrase "within the Student Programs Office (SPO)" was added in 2021

Table 9 displays the students' responses when asked if, within the past year, they had witnessed or experienced any exclusionary behavior within the MSC. Those who responded yes (n=14) were asked to describe the exclusionary experience or behavior they experienced or witnessed. Of the seven who provided comments, four comments were from those who personally experienced exclusionary behaviors. Two comments were about attending MSC events, but not feeling included due to not receiving tickets like other students. Students who reported witnessing exclusionary behaviors commented about others speaking poorly about a bisexual friend, military members, and Christians.

Witnessed or experienced exclusionary behavior within the MSC.	2024 Frequency Percentage [n=191]	2021 Frequency Percentage [n=466]	2018 Frequency Percentage [n=170]	2016 Frequency Percentage [n=207]
No	93%	95%	92%	87%
Yes, witnessed and did interfere	3%	1%	1%	5%
Yes, experienced	3%	3%	4%	4%
Yes, witnessed and did not interfere	2%	2%	4%	4%

Table 9: Exclusionary Behaviors within MSC

Students were provided the option to share any information they would like the MSC to know that they were not able to communicate through the other questions within the survey, and eight students provided a comment. One student encouraged MSC Diversity to investigate upcoming officer selection to avoid any bias occurring, which they claimed happened to committee chairs in the past. One student expressed concerns about moving from a department committee to a recognized student organization. One student shared that this was a good survey. Three students shared what MSC committee they were a member of.

Students were requested to respond to a series of demographic questions to assist the MSC in understanding differences and similarities between people of different backgrounds. Students were asked to report their gender in a check-all-that-apply response. Of the 188 students who responded, 59% selected female, 39% selected male, 2% selected gender-fluid/non-binary/genderqueer, and 1% indicated they preferred not to answer. No one chose the selections of two-spirit, intersex, or wrote a response to "not listed above (please specify)."

A new question this year asked students to select their sexual orientation using a select all that apply option. Three-fourths (78%) of the 186 responses indicated they were straight/heterosexual, 9% selected bi-sexual, 4% reported they were gay, 3% said they were queer, 3% preferred not to answer, 2% shared that they were lesbian, and 2% selected the "not listed above" option. Those indicating that their sexual orientation was not listed were given the opportunity to write their sexual orientation. Three students wrote a comment and said ace-spec, asexual, and that there were too many options. Nobody selected the pansexual or questioning options.

The survey asked students to share their religious affiliation. As seen in Table 10, the majority of students identified as Christian, at the same percentage as 2021, but lower than 2018 and 2016. Four of the five "Not Listed" responses listed Catholic, and one student wrote Mormon.

Religious Affiliation (check all that apply)	2024 Frequency Percentage [n=186]	2021 Frequency Percentage [n=462]	2018 Frequency Percentage [n=169]	2016 Frequency Percentage [n=209]
Christian	57%	57%	71%	70%
Agnostic	14%	15%	9%	8%
Atheist	10%	8%	5%	5%
Prefer not to Answer	9%	8%	5%	--
Spiritual, but not religious	6%	6%	5%	6%
Hindu	5%	3%	2%	1%
Not Listed	3%	4%	4%	4%
Muslim	1%	2%	2%	3%
Buddhist	1%	1%	2%	1%
Jewish	--	2%	1%	--
Pagan/Wiccan	--	<1%	--	1%

Table 10: Religious Affiliation of MSC Students

Lastly, participants were asked, in general, how they would describe their political views. Table 11 demonstrates that just over one-third of students described their political views as moderate, followed closely by describing their views as liberal. These two switched when compared to 2021.

Political Views	2024 Frequency Percentage [n=187]	2021 Frequency Percentage [n=169]
Moderate	35%	29%
Liberal	29%	32%
Conservative	14%	14%
Very Liberal	12%	17%
Don't Know/Undecided	7%	5%
Very Conservative	3%	3%

Table 11: Political Views

The MSC provided students' Universal Identification Number (UIN) to gather demographics from official university records. The demographics of survey respondents and MSC member student population are noted in Table 12, on the following page in descending order by MSC members for each category. Note that demographic data could not be found for two students. Survey respondents were similar to MSC members overall, except for a slightly lower percentage of seniors and males and a slightly higher percentage of freshmen, females, and non-first-generation students. Citizenship of survey respondents and MSC members can be found in a separate document.

Demographics	Survey Respondents [n=232]	MSC Members [n=993]
Classification		
Senior	25%	31%
Junior	22%	23%
Sophomore	22%	20%
Freshman	26%	18%
Masters	3%	6%
Doctoral	<1%	2%
Other (post-baccalaureate, Vet, Law)	--	<1%
Academic College/School		
Arts and Sciences	30%	28%
Engineering	27%	28%
Mays Business School	13%	14%
Bush School of Government	9%	10%
Agriculture and Life Sciences	7%	8%
Education and Human Development	3%	3%
Public Health	4%	2%
Architecture	1%	2%
Other	3%	2%
General Studies	2%	1%
Performance and Visualization	1%	1%
Nursing	--	<1%
Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences	--	<1%
School of Law	--	<1%
Ethnic Origin		
White	48%	47%
Hispanic or Latino of any Race	26%	24%
Asian	19%	17%
International	1%	5%
Multi-racial excluding Black	4%	3%
Black or multi-racial with Black	2%	3%
Unknown	--	<1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	--	<1%
American Indian	--	--
Sex		
Female	61%	56%
Male	39%	44%
First Generation		
Not First Generation	87%	79%
First Generation	11%	14%
Unknown	3%	7%

Table 12: Student Demographics

Table 13, on the following page in descending order by response rate, shows the percentage of MSC members and survey respondents by committee, as well as the response rate for each committee. Only three committees had half of its members respond to the survey.

MSC Committees	Survey Respondents [n=234]	MSC Members [n=1,052]	Response Rate by Committee
Fall Leadership Conference (FLC)	2%	1%	83%
Freshmen in Service and Hosting (FISH)	34%	10%	78%
Student Conference on Latino Affairs (SCOLA)	3%	1%	75%
OPAS	12%	6%	47%
L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness	3%	1%	46%
Committee for the Awareness of Mexican American Culture (CAMAC)	2%	2%	29%
Hospitality	9%	8%	27%
Wiley Lecture Series	3%	2%	26%
Aggie Cinema	6%	6%	24%
Resource Teams	2%	2%	20%
Visual Arts Committee (VAC)	3%	4%	19%
Freshman Leadership International (FLI)	4%	7%	13%
Carter G. Woodson Black Awareness Committee (WBAC)	1%	2%	13%
Student Conference on National Affairs (SCONA)	4%	8%	11%
Aggie Leaders of Tomorrow (ALOT)	6%	13%	10%
Town Hall	3%	7%	8%
International Student Association (ISA)	3%	11%	5%
Spencer	<1%	2%	5%
Abbott Family Leadership Conference	1%	10%	3%

Table 13: MSC Committees

Department Background

The Memorial Student Center (MSC) is a department in the Division of Student Affairs providing students with leadership, educational, cultural awareness, and visual and performing arts programs. The MSC provides leadership development opportunities for students involved in any of the 18 committees and five resource areas.

Project Details

Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research provides quality assessment services, resources, and assessment training for departments in the Texas A&M University Division of Student Affairs and student organizations. Services by Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research are funded, in part, by the Texas A&M University Advancement Fee. Results of this project and other assessment projects done through Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research can be found at https://sapar.tamu.edu/results/. Additionally, anyone can follow Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research on Facebook.

To work with Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research for future assessment projects, please fill out the Assessment Questionnaire at https://sapar.tamu.edu/aqform/.