

MSUM FACULTY/STAFF/ADMINISTRATION RESPONSES TO TOCAR SURVEY OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Question 66: Please provide any additional comments you have regarding the racial climate on your campus.

* Our campus is intentional about addressing issues related to race. I want to note that some of your questions are difficult to answer because you've grouped terms such as "multicultural" and "anti-racism" together in a single statement or question. Since those are different things, my response isn't entirely clear. * Having conferences on diversity and equity does little to combat the problems. If administrators are willing to falsify personnel files or allow faculty to permit noncontractual information in tenure review processes—which happens here with minorities and women—no conferences or training in the world will solve the problem. Until our current administration is willing to stand against inequity or our current administration is replaced with those with the willingness to stand against racism and sexism, our campus will continue to have problems. * I have heard of numerous instances when members of the _____ department, [faculty] in particular, have made racist comments toward their [students]. * Sorry I didn't answer 21 above, but I don't make a habit of keeping track of the color of the skin of the committee members I serve with. I really have no clue what the number is. * I do not witness anything, but have had students of color, as well as faculty and staff of color, share with me their experiences, both positive and negative. Mainly our students report negative experiences on our campus from other students. * Question 67 is too ambiguous - especially at a time when layoffs are possible. * I'm a member of a religious minority on campus, but it is a minority throughout this region. I am the first person of my particular religion that many people have met. * Question 71 is poorly stated: Whose understanding are we being asked about? The administration's? The faculty's? The student's? * The idea that racial bigotry is not racism unless the bigotry is merged with racially Caucasian perpetrators,

because only whites enjoy sufficient power to inflict injury is intellectually repugnant. TOCAR is the most overtly racist operation to enjoy official acceptance in any higher education institution because of such nonsense. I have personally witnessed professional promotions of whites delayed, hirings of people of color made, and other preferential treatment accorded to people of color at MSUM that would NEVER have been tolerated but for the racial advantage going in a pre-determined politically correct direction. We too often treat candidates and students of color as fragile cases, unable to succeed without additional support. It is condescending and patronizing in the extreme, and robs such individuals of the rightful sense of pride in their accomplishments, because they never can be sure if the credit for those accomplishments was truly earned or distributed as alms to those who could not possibly be expected to succeed if held to the same standards others are. * I do not think we have people who are openly discriminatory, but we have a faculty, staff, and student body that does not know how to interact easily with people of other races or ethnic origins. * I am from the Midwest. I have always been pleasantly surprised about the diversity on our campus - it is so much more diverse than the neighborhoods where I was raised. And therefore I feel very lucky because I have had the opportunities to learn about other races and ethnicities here whereas I would not have if I didn't work at the university. It seems to be a very, very accepting climate. Almost to a fault - trying too hard sometimes. * I think overall it is very fair. * I find that the discrimination is there but not easy to address. The discrimination is covert rather than overt. Another area of discrimination at Moorhead that is overt is persons with a disability. I would think if you were a student of color with a disability you would never make it here. * I am of European descent. I know I am not alone in feeling that I encounter offensive actions directed at my race by Professor _____ and by other faculty of color. The only discrimination that I have witnessed and heard about at our school has been anti-white discrimination, including strong preferential treatment in favor of persons of color. * The faculty needs to be more balanced in its ethnic representation. More of an effort should be made to deal with racist attitudes of some of the general student population. * [name of person of color] is a check on

a list. * There are many ways the institutional gatekeepers can wield power and control even over the dominant WASP to minimize the reporting of racism. * I am not sure that Moslem students are treated with respect on our campus, or if they always feel comfortable. I do not know of any specific incidents of hate, or hateful language directed at them, but can only assume they may not feel at home when Moslems are being portrayed as evil by our society. This may be the current climate in America now, and may not be the views of the majority on campus. * I believe we talk the talk, but that's all.

* I learned of harassment incidents in the dorms (writing offensive comments on white boards). The students reporting the incidents and other students of color were very dissatisfied with the resolution of these incidents. There seemed to be uncertainty over the way to handle the problem - erase the evidence vs. taking a picture for evidence. I was told that some students left campus due to these incidents. I believe that there should be additional orientation, a no tolerance policy and that offending students should be kicked out of the dorms. * The racial climate at MSUM is an abomination to the philosophy of multiculturalism. I have grave doubts that MSUM will ever become truly multicultural. This became glaringly apparent at my last two TOCAR workshops. Educated people with terminal degrees and years of teaching experience voiced their opinion that racism does not exist here. I guess one must actually burn a cross on a front lawn for it to be recognized. Hegemony is the norm at MSUM and is alive and well. Our leaders do not see it and merely present workshops as an academic exercise and implementation of a mandate of law. Faculty who do welcome diversity do so as long as everyone does things the same. Social Darwinism is the action of choice for those who choose to report and stand up against discrimination of any kind. MSUM has been a dismal disappointment for me and for many of my students who have left the university because of the negative experiences here. I do not believe this institution should recruit students, employees, faculty or administrators of color until it is capable of progressing to at least the third level of the feminist perspective. Without evolving to this level it will be impossible to effect change and intellectual and social growth.

* I believe racism is a problem everywhere. You can never get rid of

it completely; you can only strive to make it better. * We are as antiracist as we are a dry campus. Policies do not change the habits of racism on our campus, nor do they change the use of alcohol. We have some light policies in place, but no clear definitions of racism that are "Universally" endorsed, and certainly no clearly advertised repercussions for actions beyond our standard harassment policies.

* It's difficult to respond to many of these. I have no personal experiences on which to base a "disagree" or "agree" response. Therefore, I often selected "not sure" as a substitution for "I don't know." I have not been witness to any of the above incidents, but that doesn't mean these things aren't happening. * On question # 67 - We should hire the best candidates for positions but we should not exclude candidates because of their race. On question #69-#70- I think we should offer the courses, but not require them, * For #63/64, it seems to be true that my institution is more _successful_ at recruiting international students and faculty than US citizens of color, but as far as commitment, it is hard to tell. They are not the same thing, obviously. * The 'racial climate' seems neutral - as far as interactions among faculty/staff/administrators or faculty/staff/administrators-to-student are neither in favor nor not in favor of people of color. There does seem to be some sense of accomplishment among the administration when a group of people of color (employee or student) comes to campus, but this does not seem to change how those people are actually dealt with on a person-to-person basis. Only complaints are: the occasional assumption that a person of color (including white American) is capable and willing to speak for their entire ethnic group; or the occasional problem with students acting in a discriminatory fashion (typically toward foreigners rather than Americans of color). * I believe the administration, and the institution as a whole, is trying to address issues of racism--mostly by providing education on the issue. I believe there are a fair number of students and staff who encounter subtle, individual forms of racist behavior on occasion. I also believe student-to-student racism is more prevalent than any other variety.

Question 82: Please provide any additional comments that you have on how racial-ethnic issues impact your academic experiences.

* Administration supports multiculturalism in the same way that politicians support education: no money, no time, and by "ghettoizing" those who work in multicultural studies (except those white men in 'traditional' fields). * Our department goals include information on diversity (e.g., diversity of sources of information, diversity of human behavior, etc) and I have seen in practice that this typically involves information on multicultural issues and racism/antiracism, even though those terms are not directly stated in our goals. * I would like to see more emphasis on courses that include the history of people of color and anti-racism efforts and strategies as a key feature of subject matter, rather than "special" courses that focus only on this. I think all relevant departments should be held accountable. * The courses I teach are for _____ or for freshmen. I do make it a point to include a class session on diversity in my FYE class. I also touch on ethnic diversity in my other classes as it applies to the subject. If students ask questions or bring up issues, I gladly talk about them in class. * Nothing to report. * The survey instrument is technically faulty. On a few items, I checked a box "yes" or "no" about whether I had personally seen or observed objectionable racist behavior, then change my mind. Once I had done so, subordinate questions for that survey item could not have the "yes" or "no" deleted for them. (If I had answered "no," because I had not witnessed such behavior, then I could not answer EITHER "yes," "no," or "not sure" to whether I had reported such behavior, or was satisfied with the institution's response, inasmuch as to do so implied an affirmative response to the leading item. But I found I could not delete the subordinate response. There needs to be a way to erase a response that is not applicable. Some of the racist actions (most, in fact) that I have personally observed on this campus are not directed at people of color, but rather at whites. Your definitions conveniently make such bias undefined, on the preposterous theory that whites who may be called "Honky" or "Casper" or some other derogatory term, or experience adverse employment decisions because of their race, have no case that we need to concern ourselves with. And I really do see that more often than I see abuse directed at people of color. This survey doesn't tap into that at all. My own experience is that people on this campus really try hard to be aware of the potential for racial discouragement, and they react quickly and firmly when

they observe or hear uncivil, racially insensitive or mean-spirited comments within earshot of those who might take understandable offense-- unless those demeaned or adversely affected are white. And then we are so very tolerant of free speech, of the presumed reasons that justify such perspectives, etc. * I teach in the natural sciences - not sure that this applies to those subjects. * This is my third semester and I had only had one student of color!! So, question 72 was hard to answer. * I try not to portray different racial groups as all having the same opinions, habits, or backgrounds. We are racist if we do. We should also be wary of those that portray themselves as speaking for a particular race. No one should be so bold. * If TOCAR is an example, then I regard teaching about anti-racism to be worthless. * One know all, answer all course is NOT the answer. * I believe that there should be more diversity of faculty, staff and students. The faculty with whom I have the most contact are non-racist yet I believe that there may be some who may discriminate - I don't have that information. While my dept does not have a stated emphasis on diversity in terms of goals and policies, I believe that there is no discrimination regarding treatment of students. From my own experience I believe that if I were to divide the class into segments based on days in attendance, students of color would fall in the lower level more often than whites - there would also be significant whites there. I don't think it is due to discomfort or standing out. I attribute it to complications in their personal lives including child care etc., excessive course and work loads in order to get done, clubs and extracurricular activities. I do believe that attendance has a large impact on performance. Looking back in my file folders of classes, there may be 1-3 good students per course who completed half of the class, did fairly well and then just got side-tracked and didn't finish the course. (By the way, I have no time limit for handing in work). Unfortunately I can see many faces of color among those students. I don't know what can be done to avoid this petering out mid-semester - lighter credit load?? I believe that I am open and accommodating and even if I set a deadline, it can be broken. Some students new to campus are nervous about handing in late papers. I don't think that students of color are more hesitant to talk to me or other faculty than white students. It would be good to know if that is

true. I believe that more should be done to avoid this attrition, burnout, or whatever one calls it. Perhaps students of color could be brought together to discuss these issues with interested faculty and figure out a way to stem the tide of incompletes. * Providing multiculturalism and promoting diversity as a goal and objective on a syllabus does not fall under the heading of supporting diversity. On paper we support these lofty goals. In reality they are treated as an issue that must be discussed but is not incorporated in the overall philosophy nor as an integrated curricula. Diversity is lip service and not a common practice. * In my subject area, being primarily not about people in general but sciences and logical thinking, racial and multicultural issues do not come up naturally in the courses that I teach. Hence, most of these answers are not applicable, and should be not applicable, to multicultural issues. If an issue should occur in a classroom, I presume and hope that I would start a discussion about it as the situation warrants, but no such situation has yet arisen. Anti-racism, as opposed to non-racism, should not be taught. I have left most questions blank that have included this term, as I was unsure of how you meant it. Anti-racism has a connotation of actively searching out and destroying any minute traces of negative behavior that are acted against a person of color, including any behavior that may be due to simple personal dislike of a personality trait rather than racist, but is considered racist due to the color of the person involved. For instance, if a dorm resident goes to most of her neighbors and invites them to her place for pizza, but does not bother to invite three of her neighbors because she feels that each of the three monopolizes any conversation, is it racist because the only black neighbor she has happens to be one of those three? Probably not, since others have been excluded. But 'anti-racism' would probably label it as such. Whereas someone looking for 'non-racist' behavior would probably say that such a situation is non-racist. * For me, DIFFERENCE of whatever socio-cultural sort (race, ethnicity, gender, religion,...) makes NO difference. Where, then, do antagonisms come from? My answer: issues of personality (i.e., psychological factors). ... * I wonder: how effective will anti-racism training for our students be if the community they live in is blind to its own racism? There are so many levels at which the problem needs to be addressed.

Question 106: Please provide any additional comments that you have regarding the racial climate in the Fargo-Moorhead community

* Rurally, it's not race, it's culture. White, black, pink, green, yellow or whatever, the exclusion is if you are not one of the long term individuals with a multiple generation family history. * The FM community has historically been a monoculture of people of Scandinavian descent. Immigration from parts of the US, and the world, are changing that, and soon too, those changes will be reflected in the composition of the students and staff at the college. The college population reflects the community which it serves. * I do not live in the Fargo-Moorhead area so I may not be as aware as others. * Many times people are accused of racism when they speak out against a person of color. We need to be able to separate race bias from behavior bias. Behavior issues can provide be a valid and valuable bias against individuals. * 101-105 depends on where you are in the community, I believe. * The tension is there but it is covert and indirect. * Some of the above questions should have a "not applicable" option. * Initial reception through work place or community groups are welcoming but the everyday living, shopping and overall cultural environment remains difficult for darker skinned people or those who are wearing clothing that appears "non-American". * Although programs are provided to help educate the community, they do not reach the people who probably need them. They tend to be self-selective, and only someone already somewhat culturally sensitive would choose to participate. * I think it depends on who you talk to. In my experience, younger to middle-aged people are more accepting. It tends to be the older community where I encounter racist jokes and ignorance. * There is a really strong insider/outsider orientation to living in Moorhead and probably all of the upper Midwest. I definitely feel that since I was not born and raised in MN, that I am of lesser value to the community. I was once told by a native Minnesotan that even after a faculty member had been living here for more than 20 years, all the Minnesotans on staff still referred to that faculty member as a [name of city reference]. If

you were not born and raised here, you don't really count. * There is a lot of racial prejudice in Fargo-Moorhead, directly mainly at new immigrants and migrant workers. I haven't experienced much actual discrimination (i.e. inability to find employment, housing, etc), but the comments and racist jokes are everywhere. * I have noticed that there is a great need for education. Racism seems to be getting far worse in this area, among all groups of people. There seems to be less tolerance among a particular people for any differences, other than THAT particular group. So if you happen to be half, the one group thinks you should stay with that group and vice versa. It also seems that certain groups ARE "fitting in", and others are particularly targeted as "bad". News media are helping the bad image, by spending more time on certain groups than others. For example, the newscaster may read about one individual that stole \$100,000 from their company - 10 seconds tops. THEN a person, with darker skin, stole a tool from a garage. That coverage was 5 minutes with the names printed on the screen, sometimes, they are shown walking from the courthouse. I could go on and on, AND then start in on the Moorhead Public Schools, some of our students can tell horror stories about that, and it does continue today. * Discrimination and anti-racism exists in the community. Minorities are singled out by police officers and store owners due to race.

Additional Comments: Please provide an additional comments that you would like to share.

* Some items difficult to rate because it varies so much. For example, I believe some faculty are very welcoming to students of color, but I don't feel that is the "norm" so I rated the faculty and not very welcoming, etc. * Since I am a white female, and most of my friends are also white, it is difficult for me to answer all of these questions, because I do not have first hand knowledge. The few friends of color I do have are so wonderful! They trust me enough to share their experiences in our community, so that I do have the opportunity to see what it is like in our community when one does not have white privilege. I am glad this survey is being done so that those who do not think racism is an issue in our community will see what does go on! Thanks for doing this! * Because I am white I was able to answer in a positive way. I have not been discriminated against due

to my race. But sexual orientation is another story. There were no questions on that. I have been discriminated against due to my sexual orientation through derogatory comments, slurs, etc. Since this is a racial/ethnic survey, the discrimination that one faces due to sexual orientation is never surveyed around here. The environment on campus as well as in the F-M community is very negative if one identifies with the GLBT community. It is time that the university and the community do something about harassment to the GLBT community members on and off campus. * I think it is difficult to address racial issues in a community that has traditionally been very conservative and homogenous. Although I have not had direct observation or experience of racism by other faculty/staff/administration, I do not believe that it doesn't exist. I have seen/observed racism among students, which I believe stems from the environment/community these students come from. I do believe that as an academic institution we need to be active in promoting anti-racism in a manner that does not minimize people either because of their color or because of their non-color status (i.e. lowered grade expectations or scholarship expectations for people of color, certain pro-diversity initiatives). As educators we should be responsible for thinking about and incorporating a variety of global perspectives into our courses, this should include perspectives of people of color/other cultures. * The survey has an agenda within it that is plainly observable, you should have written it more carefully. It is written so as to favor having an anti-racism course being taught, when we already have courses of this nature in the F liberal studies requirement for multi-culturalism. You don't have to beat a topic to death. * I believe there is little overt hostility, discrimination, or blatant racism on this campus but I also think there are subtle messages of indifference easily noticed by students from different ethnic or racial backgrounds. For example, cultural references or textbooks or visuals (still images and video) used in the class often represent the majority culture, language, and race. I get the feeling that if there are no people of color in a class, some faculty feel it is not necessary to show/stress diversity through verbal or visual material. * I hope in challenging racist attitudes, that we remember other "isms" that are problematic, and that we move to tackle those attitudes as well (specifically, sexism. That's still a big issue in this

area, and people "don't get it.") * One of the ways I believe this survey is flawed is that if I were to answer the questions as a white male, and reveal that I have been discriminated against by people of color, no one would be interested in that information. I have come across intense racial hatred by people of color against the white race, but for some reason this is not considered racism, and is rarely discussed. If we really want to be fair, we have to address racism as it exists against and by all people, not just against those of "color." Another area that needs to be discussed is the difference between perceived and actual bias. What goes on in the head of the person that is on the getting end of a perceived prejudicial statement is not necessarily the intent of the person on the giving end. Many people see racism where it does not exist. I have seen people protest that they were being discriminated against in a situation when actually they were just being total jerks. I have discussed this with my friends of "color" over the years and have never had a disagreement on this issue. But then, I don't choose my friends because of their "color." *

Some of these comments should not have been answered by me, a "white, European decent". Perhaps the survey should have started some sections with my race/ethnic origin to decide if I should continue - *

* Need to add religious affiliations for native Americans, these can be found by calling the reservation leadership in the area.

* This questionnaire is very hard to fill out because of scrolling problems. I do hope I actually checked what I meant to. Some questions are ambiguous or difficult to answer, or phrased in a way such that the intended answer might not be the answer read even though there is no question as to which box was checked. *

* This survey was TOO LONG. It was badly designed. There were many questions in which "yes" and "no" were the only choices, where it was OBVIOUS that "I Don't Know" should have been an option. *

Opinion: We need to hear and listen to our own people who live, study and work here rather than bringing in so-called experts. What's really going on? That would help us understand what to look for and how to begin to deal with it. What are our institutional experiences (good, bad, and indifferent) from which we can learn? *

* This is a subject that gets a wink and nod, perhaps a meeting or two and then it is left to die on the vine of Higher Ed. *

* On the subject of hiring: I

believe that the best candidate should always be given the position, regardless of race. However, I realize that I am probably somewhat ignorant about the dynamics of racism. I have never experienced racism. I would like the opportunity to know more. * This questionnaire is "informed" by a set of definitions that make it almost impossible to respond to most of the questions with some degree of confidence. I have no idea how to "operationalize" the definition of "racism" as presented/prescribed in the preface to the questionnaire. Because of this, there is good reason to doubt the validity of the entire data-gathering process. * If MSUM does not face reality it will cease to exist. WAKE UP MSUM and get serious our future is too precious to waste!!!!!!!!!! * The statistics reported from this survey MUST keep in line that "Respondents" include a majority of white people. Therefore, if not properly sorted, statistics on climate and responses to "I have been [mistreated] because of my race/ethnicity" are going to be extremely tainted. * I don't think that the feelings of alienation that people might be feeling are due to racism. I think it is much more like cultural specificity. Minnesotans feel a sense of righteousness about their way of life. They feel that they are right and other cultures are wrong. I also think that Minnesotans believe that the burden of adjustment is on the outsider. The outsider must initiate all activities, contacts, and friendships. When the fact is, the outsider is most likely to be the least comfortable person in the room. I have had students and faculty tell me, "Well they just sit there and don't try to get involved in anything. What do they expect?!!!" I don't, however, believe that this attitude is intentional in most cases. I just think that the vast majority of Minnesotans have barely been out of the county. They have no personal experience of themselves being an outsider, so they have virtually no sympathy for an outsider. * Many questions were left blank due to various reasons. See my statement about 'anti-racism' above. Several of the early questions were left blank because I feel that any answers to those questions are entirely irrelevant without similar questions related to students/situations in general. For instance, if faculty are very welcoming to students of color but not welcoming to students in general, there is a major problem, but your survey is likely to report such a situation as a positive outcome when it is not. Other questions ask about motivations of other people around us - information that we can only guess at. Such questions

measure _our_ racist or non-racist tendencies rather than those people that the question seems to address. As such, I also find them difficult questions to answer. * I don't think that racism can be eliminated through workshops. Some hope lies in changing the K-12 curriculum to emphasize the study of non-Western civilizations, world geography, etc. * In many of the survey questions (particularly numbers 25-36 -- those related to my experiences of discrimination), if gender were substituted for race/ethnicity, I could have answered "yes" to all of the questions. Racism, sexism and most other forms of discrimination and bias have similar roots. I believe the university as institution should look more carefully at inclusiveness in general and its attitudes toward difference of all kinds. * Relating to hiring and discrimination practices- top two were that I witnessed it. But was actually to the favor of a nonwhite applicant. The person who was more qualified for the position without a doubt was not hired because of a "fear" of not hiring the "nonwhite". * I attended and graduated from this university and continue to live in this community. I am not new to the university. * Keep up the good work