AAVMC-AVMA
DiVersity Matters
College Climate Survey
Overview of Preliminary Findings

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Paige Carmichael, DVM, PhD, UGA CVM
AAVMC Annual Conference
March 10, 2012
Contents

1. Genesis, history and timeline of the survey
2. The questions and survey instrument
3. Preliminary results
4. Implications for continued work on CVM Climate
Genesis and History

• Previous Iverson Bell Symposium (2009) had focused on recruiting a diverse student body.
• DiVersity Matters Symposium focused on retention.
• “How comfortable are our students at our schools and colleges of veterinary medicine?”
  - Original planning committee guided the development of a survey instrument intended for use by individual SE institutions.

Dr. Allen Cannedy, NCSU; Dr. Donna Angarano, AU; Dr. Richard Meiring, MSU; Dr. Ed Monroe, V-Tech; Dr. Ruby Perry, Tuskegee U; Dr. William Hill, UT ; Dr. Joseph Taboada, LSU; Ms. Lakecia Pettway, UGA ; Dr Peter Cowan, NCSU; Dr Joy Harden, UGA.
The Survey Instrument

- Sought to explore 4 key areas:
  - What is the comfort level with respect to differences in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion?
  - What is the perceived level of institutional community support for URVM students?
  - What is the relative frequency of intolerant language on campuses?
  - Do our students experience harassment in vet school?

5. AAVMC - AVMA DiVersity Matters Climate Survey

16. How often do you hear sexist remarks used in school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From students</th>
<th>Very Frequently</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Very Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| From professors/teaching staff |               |            |             |        |             |       |
| From other college/university staff |                |           |             |        |             |       |
| From community members at college/university functions |    |            |             |        |             |       |

17. How often do you hear negative remarks about gender expression in school? (e.g., someone not being “masculine enough” or “feminine enough”)?

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18. How often have you been verbally harassed at school (called names, threatened, etc.) because of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your race or ethnicity?</th>
<th>Very Frequently</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Very Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your sexual orientation?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Your disability or perceived disability?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Your religion or perceived religion?</td>
<td></td>
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Survey Overview

- The survey included 50 questions.
  - 11 focused on demographics
  - 6 explored comfort levels
  - 8 explored “heard on campus” comments
  - 5 explored institutional/community support around areas of difference
  - 7 explored harassment
  - 6 explored co-curricular offerings around difference
  - 5 delved into faculty/student relationships
  - 2 inquired about specific institutional perceptions
2nd Annual Diversity Matters Veterinary Students’ Symposium

February 2010

Survey beta tested by various groups

July 2010

Survey submitted for UGA IRB approval.

January 2011

Decision made by committee to construct a National College Climate Survey.

February 2011

Survey introduced at AAVMC’s Iverson Bell Symposium as part of workshop.

March 2011

SURVEY LAUNCHED.

April 2011

AAVMC-AVMA DiVersity Matters Climate Survey
Response Rates
as of 7:00pm April 25, 2011

National Response Rate is currently 28.7% of total student enrollment.
AAVMC-AVMA DiVersity Matters Climate Survey
Response Rates
as of 12:00pm, May 9, 2011

National survey response rate is 48.1% of total student enrollment. The $500 SCAVMA incentive will be awarded to Cornell, Purdue, & University of Georgia.
• Very few emails expressing concern about the survey came in directly to the PIs.
  – Exclusion of questions on socioeconomic class
  – Concerns about confidentiality

• Far more pushback amongst students felt by SAVMA.
  – Concerns about whether the questions were indicting.
  – Discomfort from uncomfortable questions

• Since completion, students have expressed an interest for more questions on future surveys:
  – Socioeconomic class
  – Gender expression vs. gender identity
  – Religion
  – Open ended questions
The Data Set

- Over **25,000 pieces** of data, significantly more than we anticipated.
- Provides a unique ability to look at particular slices of the DVM student experience.
- Many implications for future research related to DVM students and the impact of institutional climate.
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA
List of Key Terms

• URVM = Underrepresented in Veterinary Medicine

• R/E = Race & Ethnicity

• L = Lesbian
  – A woman attracted to a woman.

• G = Gay
  – Men attracted to men.

• B = Bisexual
  – A person who is attracted to two sexes or two genders, but not necessarily simultaneously or equally.

• T = Transgender
  – Those whose psychological self ("gender identity") differs from the social expectations for the physical sex they were born with.

• Other
  – For these purposes an individual who identifies as ungendered (agendered),
  – or a person appearing and/or identifying as neither man nor woman, presenting a gender either mixed or neutral (androgyne).
  – A person whose gender identity is between genders or a combination of genders.

• Q₁ = Queer
  – A political statement, as well as a sexual orientation, which advocates breaking binary thinking and seeing both sexual orientation and gender identity as potentially fluid.
  – A simple label to explain a complex set of sexual behaviors and desires. For example, a person who is attracted to multiple genders may identify as queer.

• Q₂ = Questioning
  – A term that can refer to a person who is questioning their gender, sexual identity or sexual orientation.

Gender Equity Resource Center, University of California-Berkley, [http://geneq.berkeley.edu/lgbt_resources_definition_of_terms#queer](http://geneq.berkeley.edu/lgbt_resources_definition_of_terms#queer)
# Demographic Highlights

Climate Survey

2011

<table>
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<th>VMCAS 2012</th>
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<td>79.2%</td>
<td>77.9%</td>
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<td>Single</td>
<td>79.1%</td>
<td>xx</td>
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<td>6.5%</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>xx</td>
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<td>Rural Background</td>
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<td>2.7%</td>
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<td>Southern Residence</td>
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Student Reported Sexual Orientation
Climate Survey
2011

Another 0.5% self identified as Transgender
Reported knowledge of “out” faculty, staff or students
Climate Survey
2011

- Yes: 81%
- No: 11%
- I don't know: 8%
Student Reported Marital Status
Climate Survey
2011

- Single: 71.9%
- Married: 21.1%
- Domestic Partner: 3.6%
- Legally Separated: 1.8%
- Divorced: 1.5%
- Other: 0.2%
Self-Reported Student Impairments & Disabilities
Climate Survey
2011

We did not define each impairment, but allowed students to self identify based on phrasing. The responses for visual impairment could include respondents with corrective lenses.
Where Students Reported Spending Most of their Primary Years
Climate Survey 2011

- **Rural**: 29.0%
- **Suburban**: 54.8%
- **Urban**: 12.5%
Reported Region of Legal Residence
Climate Survey
2011

- South: 35.9%
- Midwest: 24.8%
- West: 19.8%
- Northeast: 18.6%
- US Territory: 0.4%
- Foreign National: 0.5%
Parent's Highest Level of Education
Climate Survey
2011

- Did not complete high school: 1.7% (Mother) 2.7% (Father)
- Graduated from high school: 14.2% (Mother) 14.8% (Father)
- Attended a college or university but did not complete a degree: 11.0% (Mother) 10.6% (Father)
- Completed an associate degree: 11.9% (Mother) 7.3% (Father)
- Completed a baccalaureate degree: 30.8% (Mother) 26.5% (Father)
- Completed a graduate degree: 35.1% (Mother) 27.1% (Father)
EARLY CLIMATE FINDINGS
General Findings

• Students report generally:
  – High levels of comfort with others who are different.
  – Low frequency of negative comments.
  – High levels of perceived institutional/ community support for highlighted populations.
  – Low levels of feeling harassed.

Overall, things feel pretty good at the CVMs!
Peeling Back Some Layers

- Students are more likely than any other group to make negative remarks around the college.

- There is a slightly elevated amount of neutrality and/or ambivalence around sexuality & religious difference and comfort levels.

- While there is a lot of support, there are questions about whether particular student populations are getting support from their student colleagues.
Peeling Back Some Layers

• Students report low levels of being harassed but also slightly higher levels of seeing other students being harassed through various mediums.

• Institutional level data suggest heightened pockets of discomfort around LGBT issues more than any other group.

• There is evidence that URVM group voice is muted in the national data set—across all areas of difference.
COMFORT LEVELS
Comfort Levels

• Very little difference across populations
  – Students

• LGBTQQ Students
  – Most likely to say both comfortable & uncomfortable with students of different faiths (22%)

Profiles of least comfortable students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least comfortable around people of different races or ethnicities</th>
<th>Least comfortable around people with different sexual orientations</th>
<th>Least comfortable around people of different faith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>Straight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Racial/Ethnic Difference</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>White</td>
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</table>
SUPPORT LEVELS
Support felt around the College

• About 2/3 of all students report that various URVM students have high to very high levels of support from the CVMs.

• About ¼ of students reported ‘both/neither’ supportive or unsupportive. The question did not include an “I don’t know,” which forced an assessment by the participants.

• Generally, staff were found to be the most supportive of student diversity in the eyes of students; however, faculty were found to be marginally more supportive of LGBT students.
Reported Institutional Support for Various Subpopulations
Climate Survey 2011
Students with a Supportive Group of Friends or Acquaintances at the CVM Climate Survey 2011

- Yes: 82.7%
- Sometimes: 14.9%
- No: 2.4%
Reported Percentage of Students with a Faculty or Staff Confidant
Climate Survey 2011

Yes: 64.1%
No: 35.9%
Reported Percentage of Students with a Faculty or Staff Confidant Climate Survey 2011

Reported Percentage of Students with a Faculty or Staff Confidant Climate Survey 2011

- All Students: 64.1%
- Transgender & Other Students: 47.6%
- LGBQQ Students: 57.6%

Reported Percentage of Students with a Faculty or Staff Confidant Climate Survey 2011

- Yes: 35.9%
- No: 42.4%
Reported Extent to Which Students Treat Each Other with Respect
Climate Survey
2011

- Always: 11.1%
- Almost Always: 73.8%
- Sometimes: 14.5%
- Almost Never: 0.6%
- Never: 0.0%
FREQUENCY OF INTOLERANT LANGUAGE
Heard at the College…

• Students were most likely to make comments around race and sexuality.

• Affected groups were more likely to hear the comments.
  – Nearly 1/3 of R/E URVM students reporting hearing racist comments from their students colleagues occasionally to very frequently.
  – Over 20% of LGBT students reported hearing homophobic comments from students occasionally to very frequently.

• Faculty had the second highest incidence of reported sexist comments.
  – Just over 21% of female students & 23% of transgender students said they heard faculty making sexist comments occasionally to very frequently.
Partial Reported Frequency of Comments from other Races about Stereotypes of a Student's Race
Climate Study 2011

87% of all students reported never being in a situation where they were expected to explain their difference.

Other stereotype questions were not asked in this survey.
HARASSMENT LEVELS
• Low levels of harassment reported
  – Across all areas combined, 14% of students reported experiencing ‘something’

• Of students who reported some form of harassment:
  – 76% reported harassment happening on campus
  – Most often in a common area (45.4%) or in a classroom (25.1%).

• Students don’t report
  – 89.5% of students never report harassment to anyone at the college
ARE WE DOING TOO MUCH?
Reponses to the question concerning whether the CVM has been overly sensitive and/or accommodating for underrepresented groups

Climate Survey
2011
Overly sensitive

- Marginal variance across groups concerning oversensitivity of the colleges—with a few exceptions

- **Groups who said yes at a rate higher than the total:**
  - 28% of students who reported they were from rural backgrounds
  - 30.3% of male students felt the CVMs were oversensitive
  - 31.3% of White male students

- **Groups who said no at a rate higher than the total:**
  - 63.8% of students with legal residence in Western states
  - 66.6% of student from suburban backgrounds
  - 59.1% of female students
  - 69.4% of R/E URVM female students
WRAP UP
What Does All of This Mean?

Overall things are good; we are doing something right in creating positive learning/living environments on our campuses.

• We can not explain why students may have responded the way they did. The findings suggest the need for additional research to probe these and other findings more deeply.

• The findings reveal opportunities for ‘teachable moments’ for students, faculty & staff.
  – This doesn’t mean just ‘diversity’ programming, but seeking collaborative ways of addressing how to challenge bias, how inclusion and professionalism can be addressed jointly, what these findings mean for future employees, employers and business owners.

• There is a need for individual institutions to dig into their data to assess whether there are issues that may require intervention on campus.
What Does All of This Mean?

• The data suggests that there are some populations that require greater attention.
  – It’s impossible to say that these students are “at risk” from this data, but it is clear that there are some students who may be living on the margins of vet school life.

• The findings should challenge how we think prospective applicants may view the college.
  – How much anecdotal data show up on FB, blogs, other electronic media and do such postings impact our pool and our ability to ‘take’ admitted applicants.
Looking to the Future

- Additional analysis to come

- Publication plans

- Follow up studies
  - Planned qualitative study on LGBT student experience at US CVMs

- Comparative with the WesternU faculty, staff & administrator study
Acknowledgements

- SE Regional DiVersity Matters Planning Committee
- Midwest Iverson Bell Diversity Summit Planning Committee
- Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
- AAVMC Committee on Multicultural Affairs
- American Veterinary Medical Association
- Veterinary Students One in Culture and Ethnicity (VOICE)
- Broad Spectrum
- Student Veterinary Medical Association
- Lesbian and Gay Veterinary Medical Association
- Lakecia Pettway, UGA
- Evan Brooks, AAVMC Data Analyst
- Tony Wynne, AAVMC Operations Manager

Many thanks for your contributions and support!
Questions?

Thank You

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Paige Carmichael, kpc@uga.edu