

## **Ozarka College Student Diversity Survey Results Fall 2009**

The Diversity Committee conducted an online Student Diversity Survey in the fall of 2009 over a two week period. There were a total of 185 respondents with the first online survey submitted October 22 and the last survey submitted November 6. This survey was designed by the Diversity Committee and included a total of 24 questions. Students were asked to rank each statement based on agreement with the options of highly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and highly disagree. At the conclusion of the survey these results were equated to a numerical figure of "five" for "highly agree" and "one" for "highly disagree." The range of the average scores on the diversity related items numbered 1 - 19 on the survey were 4.6 to 3.7.

The first nine questions addressed the Ozarka climate as related to nine different areas of diversity including race, ethnic cultural background, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, nationality and educational level. Welcoming and supportive climate based on gender and age differences were ranked most highly (4.6 each), with second highest being racial differences (4.4). Although receiving relatively high rankings, the climates ranking lowest were differences in religion (4.2) and sexual orientation (4.0).

The students felt that it was important to provide educational opportunities related to diversity (4.3). The two lowest rankings on the survey were that the student had had experiences at Ozarka that adequately prepared the student for dealing with issues of diversity (3.7) and that Ozarka had helped the student to accept and work more effectively with people of diverse backgrounds (3.8).

Students indicated that instructors showed interest in issues related to diversity (4.2) and encouraged them to develop insight and appreciation of diversity (4.1). They also said that Ozarka had contributed to their knowledge and appreciation of diversity (4.0), and that the Ozarka atmosphere was accepting to people of diverse backgrounds in general (4.3).

Two questions were related to witnessing and experiencing incidents of intolerance or discrimination against students of diverse backgrounds. Twenty-two students (12% of those surveyed) strongly agreed or agreed that they had witnessed these incidents and 21 (11.4% of those surveyed) had experienced these incidents while at Ozarka.

Two open-ended questions were included in the survey and are discussed below:

1. What would you like to learn more about regarding diversity?

- a. Thirty-three students were "none" or "nothing" or indicated that they knew what they needed about diversity.
  - b. Five students indicated that they did not know.
  - c. Three students listed religion.
  - d. Six listed learning about other cultures/ethnicities in general.
  - e. There was one entry for each of specific diverse groups: Asian, Native American, Mexican, single mothers
  - f. Two answers were general including more details and history.
  - g. One student wanted to learn about handling people who do not accept diversity and one wanted to know how to motivate people in a diverse setting.
  - h. One student wanted to learn about college policies and another listed paradigm diversity.
  - i. One commented on wanting to see more diversity on campus and another would like to see everyone getting along.
  - j. One student said that they have had no diversity related experiences at Ozarka whereas another said that Ozarka had taught him/her a lot about diversity.
  - k. Another student commented, "I believe Ozarka College is doing a good job with diversity. I have done work on diversity in at least one of my classes each semester I have been at Ozarka College."
2. What do you see as obstacles to diversity on campus?
- a. Forty-four respondents said "none" or "nothing" or the equivalent.
  - b. Fifteen students indicated the lack of diversity in the area or college and two indicated a lack of diversity among faculty.
  - c. Five indicated a lack of knowledge or experience
  - d. Three commented on discrimination or prejudice.
  - e. One commented on sexual orientation and another on the recognition of homosexuality as acceptable.
  - f. One commented on a lack of understanding of older students and their life problems.
  - g. Three listed faculty or instructors and one listed fellow student.
  - h. Two did not know.
  - i. One listed rural two-year colleges.

The results of this survey were used in the January 15, 2010 Diversity Committee meeting for Strategic Direction planning for 2010-2011.

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Survey results have been converted to a ranking on a 5 point scale based on agreement with "5 indicating highest agreement with the statement and "1" indicating the lowest.

1. The Ozarka climate is welcoming and supportive of differences in race.	4.4
2. The Ozarka climate is welcoming and supportive of differences in ethnic cultural background.	4.3
3. The Ozarka climate is welcoming and supportive of differences in gender	4.6
4. The Ozarka climate is welcoming and supportive of differences in disability.	4.3
5. The Ozarka climate is welcoming and supportive of differences in age.	4.6
6. The Ozarka climate is welcoming and supportive of differences in sexual orientation.	4.0
7. The Ozarka climate is welcoming and supportive of differences in religion.	4.2
8. The Ozarka climate is welcoming and supportive of differences in nationality.	4.3
9. The Ozarka climate is welcoming and supportive of differences in educational level.	4.4
10. Ozarka instructors showed interest in issues related to diversity.	4.2
11. Ozarka has contributed to my knowledge and appreciation of diversity.	4.0
12. It is important for Ozarka to provide educational opportunities related to diversity.	4.3
13. During my time at Ozarka, the courses provided adequate learning opportunities about diversity.	4.0
14. Ozarka instructors encouraged students to develop insight and appreciation of diversity.	4.1
15. While at Ozarka, I witnessed one or more incidents of intolerance or discrimination against students of diverse backgrounds.	1.9
16. While at Ozarka, I experienced one or more incidents of intolerance or discrimination.	1.9
17. In general, I found the atmosphere at Ozarka to be accepting toward people of diverse backgrounds.	4.3
18. I have had experiences at Ozarka that adequately prepared me for dealing with issues of diversity.	3.7
19. Ozarka has helped me to accept and work more effectively with people of diverse backgrounds.	3.8

Questions 20 and 21 are discussed in the narrative.

22. What is your gender?

Male	27	14.7%
Female	157	85.3%

23. How many hours have you accumulated at Ozarka?

0 to 15	58	31.2%
16 to 30	35	18.8%
31 to 45	37	19.9%
45 to 60	33	17.7%
over 60	23	12.4%

On a 5 point scale with 0 to 15 being "1" and over 60 being "5," the hours accumulated = 2.6. This can be used for interpretation on this survey and for comparing future surveys as to the hours achieved by the respondents.

24. Which group do you primarily identify with?

American Indian	4	2.2%
Asian American	1	0.5%
Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Hispanic/Latino	2	1.1%
White (not Hispanic/Latino)	174	94.6%
African American	3	1.6%