

Loyola College

**Views on Diversity
Class of 2010**

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Office of Institutional Research

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This report prepared by The Office of Institutional Research
Using data collected on the 2006 CIRP Survey

Views on Diversity Class of 2010

Introduction

In 2006, Loyola College participated in a national survey of entering first-year students—the CIRP—that is administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California at Los Angeles. Items on the CIRP touch on issues of diversity and Loyola took the opportunity to add institution-specific items to the survey to further assess the views on diversity among the incoming class. This report focuses on the diversity related items and is intended to inform program development at Loyola by describing the perspectives on diversity that students have when they arrive on campus.

Methodology

The CIRP survey was administered to all 946 incoming students during orientation. The surveys, in paper-and-pencil format, were provided to student orientation leaders (*Evergreens*) and were administered to the students in a group setting. Students completed the surveys in the group setting and returned them to their Evergreen.

A total of 859 students completed and returned their survey for a response rate of 91%. Based on this response, sampling error for proportions is $\pm 1\%$. Sampling error for subgroups may be higher and the number of responses to any one question may be smaller than 859 because of student non-response.

All group differences described in this report are statistically significant at the $p \leq 0.05$ level unless otherwise noted.

Loyola had a unique opportunity on the CIRP to add two sets of questions about diversity. In each set students were presented with scenarios and were asked which actor in the scenario they agreed with. An example of these scenarios is provided below.

Student A says that white students should try to learn about the challenges that students of color face. Student B disagrees and says if you got into Loyola you're pretty much the same and that students of color and white students don't really face different kinds of challenges. Which student do you agree with more?

Forty-eight percent of students were given a form where their possible responses were simply to agree with "Student A" or with "Student B." The other 52% of students were provided a 5-point scale of agreement that ranged from "Completely Agree with Student A" to "Completely Agree with Student B." Using these two answer formats enables us to identify issues where students are more likely to respond in a socially desirable manner (in other words, respond in the way that they think the College wants them to) while also maximizing variability for use in subgroup analysis and follow-up studies.¹

The complete list of the scenarios and response options can be found in Appendix A.

Demographics of the survey respondents are found in Table 1, next page.

¹ Sampling error for items that were asked in different formats is $\pm 4\%$.

Table 1. Key Demographics of Survey Respondents

	Number	Percent
Gender		
Women	537	63%
Men	320	37%
Ethnicity		
African-American	29	4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	36	4%
Hispanic/Latino	21	3%
White	735	88%
Other	14	2%
Family Income		
<\$100,000	289	38%
\$100,000-199,999	276	36%
\$200,000+	204	27%
Religion		
Catholic	617	73%
Non-Catholic	226	27%
Political Leaning		
Far right	7	1%
Conservative	240	29%
Middle of the road	367	45%
Liberal	193	24%
Far left	10	1%

For purposes of the subgroup analyses throughout this report, African-Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics/Latinos are grouped together as “students of color.” “Other” ethnicity students have been dropped from subgroup analyses. With regard to political leaning, the “far right” and “far left” groups have been dropped from analyses because of their small number.

Executive Summary

- ◆ Most students have socialized with people from another race/ethnic group prior to college and they expected to continue doing that at Loyola.
 - ◆ First-year students are generally more comfortable being around someone of a different race/ethnic group than they are being around someone of a different sexual orientation, but the majority of students said they were comfortable around both.

- ◆ Knowing that students tend to respond in socially desirable ways when asked about certain issues provides a context for Loyola staff and faculty to understand students' expressed opinions on diversity issues.
 - ◆ Areas where social desirability bias is highest include socio-economic class issues, sexism, and peer pressure around body/personal image.

- ◆ Although a majority of first-year students indicate that racial discrimination is a problem in America, many expressed contradictory views about affirmative action and other race-related topics.
 - ◆ Women, students of color, and those who are politically liberal had the most tolerant opinions on issues related to racial diversity.

- ◆ With regard to class issues, fewer than half of entering students feel that "wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now," but almost three-quarters agreed that "a national health care plan is needed to cover everybody's medical costs."

- ◆ When asked about a possible gender gap in the workplace, neither men nor women took a strong position on the issue, they did, however, tend to lean in opposite directions with women being more sensitive to a gender gap in the workplace than were men.

- ◆ Majorities of first-year students indicate support for gay rights with women, non-Catholics, and politically liberal students being the most supportive on this issue.
 - ◆ Students who indicated that they were uncomfortable with people of a different sexual orientation were more likely than others to be proponents of laws limiting homosexual relationships and less likely to support gay marriage rights.

Detailed Findings

Exposure to and Comfort with Others

Respondents were asked the extent to which they had “socialized with someone of another race/ethnic group” in the past year and their expectation for doing that at Loyola. Five percent reported that they had not socialized with anyone of another race/ethnic group and 7% indicated that there was *very little* or *no chance* that they would do that at Loyola. On that other hand, the majority of students indicated that they had frequently socialized with people from another race/ethnic group and that they expected to do that while at Loyola. See Figure 1.

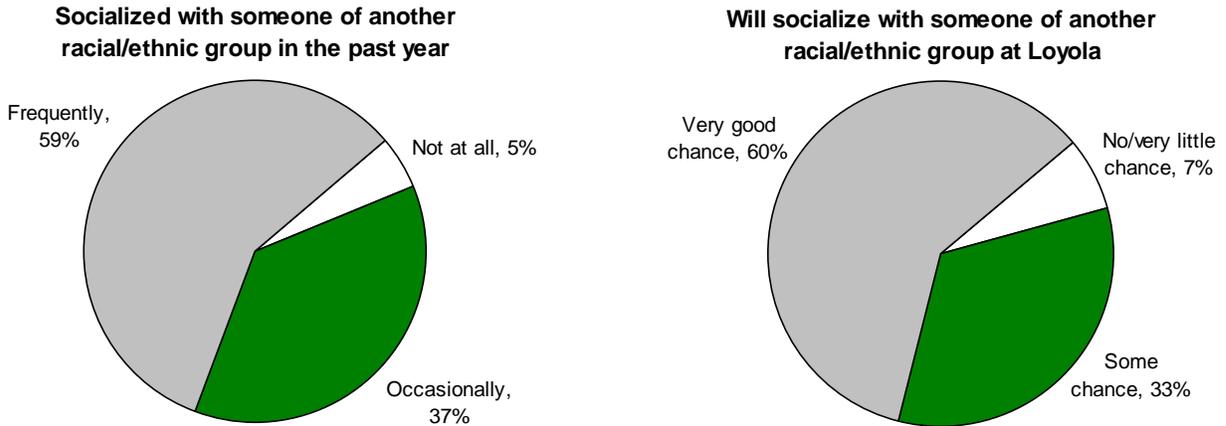


Figure 1. Experience and expectation of socializing with people from different racial/ethnic groups

When asked about their comfort level being with people from different racial/ethnic backgrounds and people whose sexual orientation is different from their own, most respondents indicated that they were either *very* or *somewhat comfortable*. More students were uncomfortable being around someone with a different sexual orientation (10%) than being around someone of another race/ethnic background (3%). See Table 2.

Table 2. Comfort Levels With People Who Are Different

	Someone of a different race/ethnic background	Someone of a different sexual orientation
Very comfortable	58%	36%
Somewhat comfortable	24%	30%
Mixed- it depends on the situation	15%	25%
Somewhat uncomfortable	2%	8%
Very uncomfortable	1%	2%

Diversity Scenarios

Loyola included on the CIRP survey a set of scenarios that were intended to elicit students' ideas about various diversity-related issues. An example of these scenarios is provided below.

Student A says that white students should try to learn about the challenges that students of color face. Student B disagrees and says if you got into Loyola you're pretty much the same and that students of color and white students don't really face different kinds of challenges. Which student do you agree with more?

While all students received the same scenarios in the same order, about half of the students were asked to pick one of the actors with which they most agreed while other students were provided a 5-point scale of agreement for their responses. An example of the 5-point scale is provided below.

- a. *Completely agree with Student A*
- b. *Generally agree with Student A*
- c. *Mixed – somewhat agree with both*
- d. *Generally agree with Student B*
- e. *Completely agree with Student B*

The complete list of the scenarios and response options can be found in Appendix A.

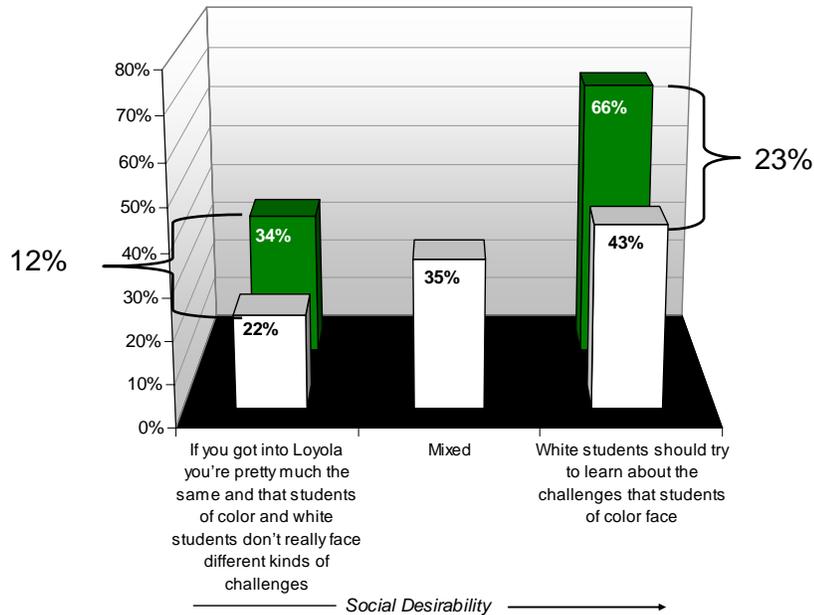
Comparing the responses to the same item using different scales allows us to identify topical areas where students are more likely to respond in “socially desirable” ways when talking with Loyola faculty, staff, and administrators. Because students may often provide responses on surveys, in focus groups, and in interviews that are consistent with what they *think* the College wants to hear, we might be left with a misleading picture of students' true feelings.

How to Read and Interpret the Scenario Charts

The charts on the following three pages show the responses to each scenario using both response options. The dark bars in the background are the responses of students who were given only two options (agreeing with “Student A” or with “Student B”). The white bars in the foreground show the responses of students who were given the 5-point scale. For purposes of analysis the “generally agree” and “completely agree” responses have been aggregated.

Each chart is oriented so that the more socially desirable position is on the right. When given the option of simply agreeing with one actor or the other in each scenario many students selected the actor who was stating the socially desirable or “politically correct” position. When given a range of response options, however, the proportion of students endorsing these politically correct opinions is lower as many students move into the “mixed—somewhat agree with both” category. Items where the difference between the dark bar and white bar on the socially desirable option is larger than the difference between the responses on the other end of the spectrum are areas where students are more likely to respond in socially desirable ways when asked about these issues at Loyola.

Using the following chart as an example, we see that when given just two options 66% of students chose the socially desirable position of saying that “white students should try to learn about the challenges that students of color face.” When given a range of options however, only 43% of students indicated that they agreed with that opinion. This 23 percentage point difference is much larger than the difference that we see at the other end of the spectrum (12 percentage points) and so we conclude that this is an issue where we are likely to find a social desirability bias.



It is important to note that not all of the scenarios have a “right” answer. The ambiguity about which student in the scenario is factually or politically correct was intentional. In these cases the socially desirable response is the one that we assume students would *think* we want to hear.

Social Desirability

Students were given four scenarios that directly dealt with issues of race. With the exception of the scenario that poses the question of whether students of color and white students face different types of challenges, respondents did not tend to respond in politically correct ways about race issues. See Figure 2, next page.

A social desirability bias is evident in student responses about issues related to foreigners, socio-economic class, and accommodations for students with learning disabilities (see Figure 3). In addition, issues having to do with sexism and pressures to maintain a certain image at Loyola are areas where students tend to respond in socially desirable ways (see Figure 4).

It should be noted that a lack of social desirability bias on particular issues does not indicate a sophisticated understanding of diversity issues. Knowing that students tend to respond in socially desirable ways when asked about certain issues simply provides a context for Loyola staff and faculty to understand students’ expressed opinions on diversity issues.

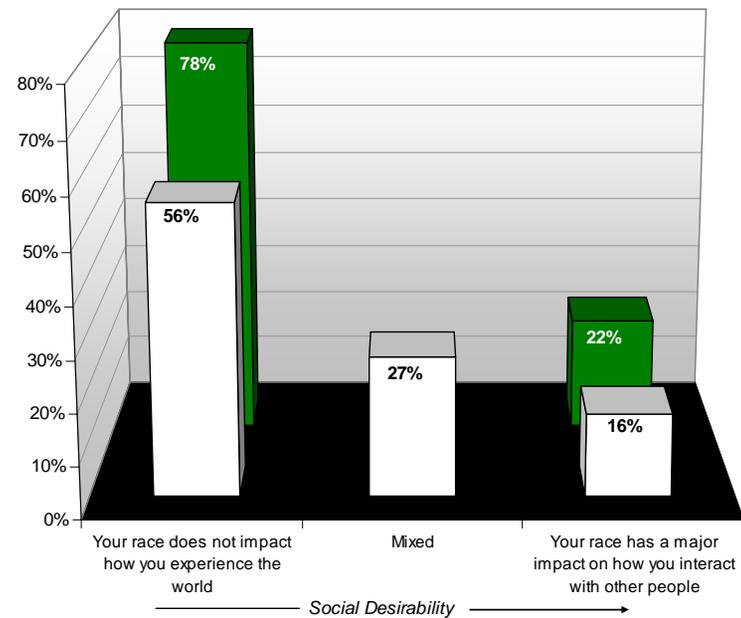
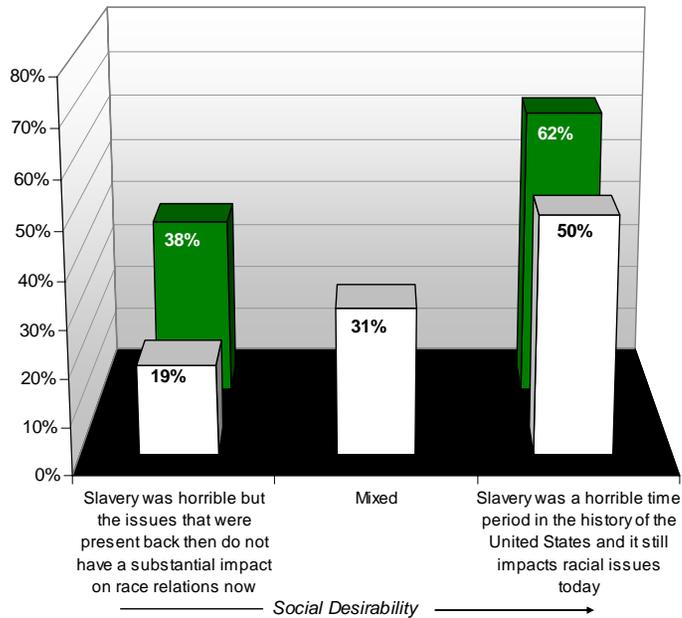
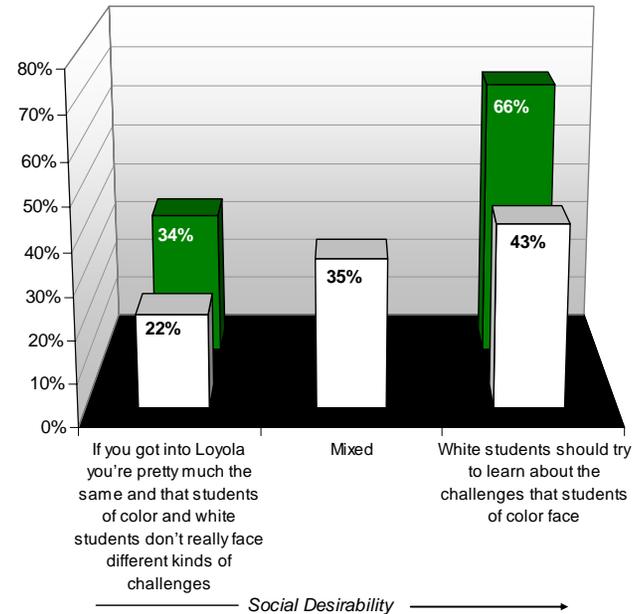
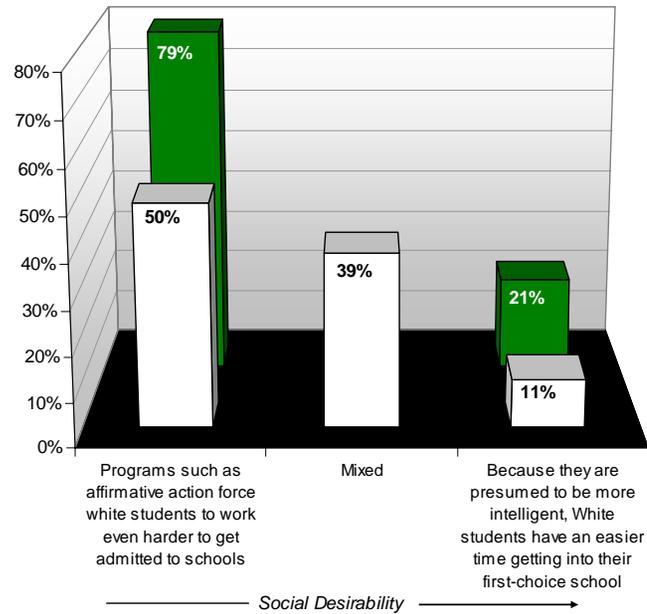


Figure 2. Scenarios dealing with issues of race

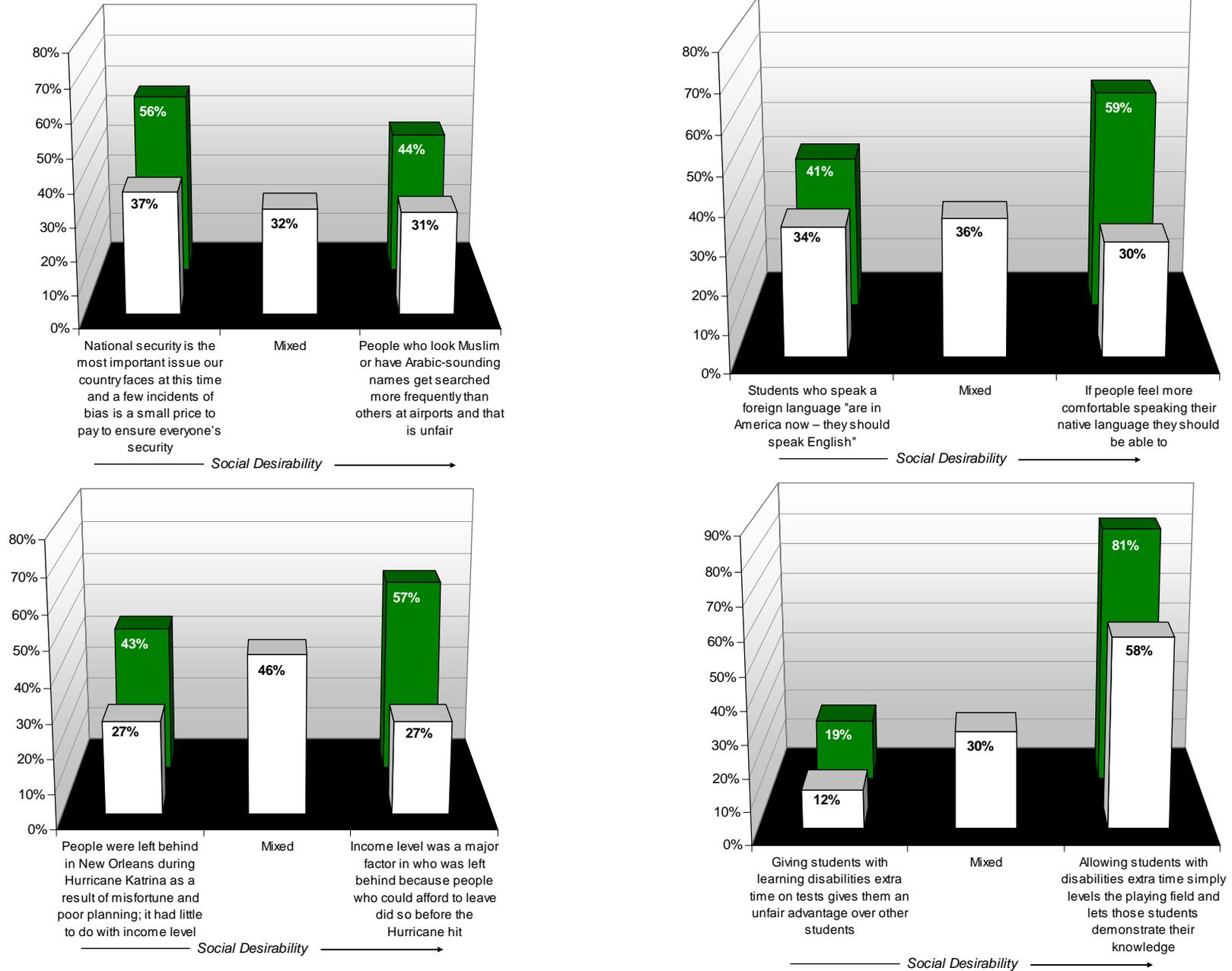


Figure 3. Scenarios dealing with ethnic, class, and disability issues

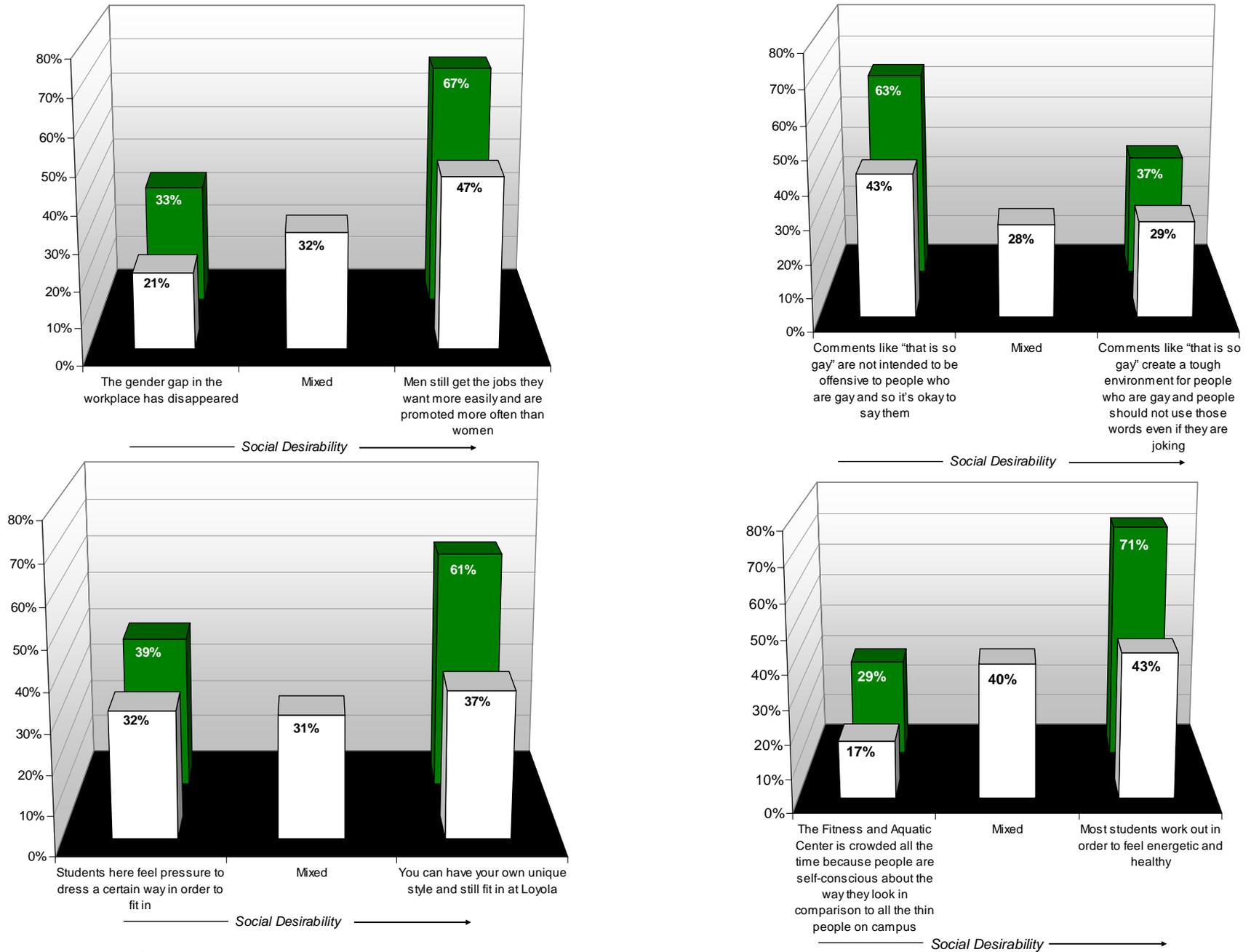


Figure 4. Scenarios dealing with gender, sexual orientation, and image issues

Opinions about Diversity Issues

In addition to the scenarios, respondents were asked their opinions about a series of items having to do with diversity issues. Responses on these additional diversity items, as well as a more detailed analysis of the scenario outcomes, are described below.

In order to minimize social desirability bias in the subgroup analysis, that analysis is based on the responses from students who responded to the 5-point scale and not those who responded on the 2-option methodology.

Racial Diversity

Interestingly, 83% indicated that racial discrimination is a problem in America, but large portions of students also agreed with the statements: “through hard work everybody can succeed” (76%), “undocumented immigrants should be denied access to public education” (52%), and that “affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished” (57%). See Figure 5.

These findings were also evident in student responses to the scenarios in which 50% of students indicated that “. . .programs such as affirmative action force white students to work even harder. . .” while 50% also indicated that the history of slavery “. . .still impacts racial issues today.”

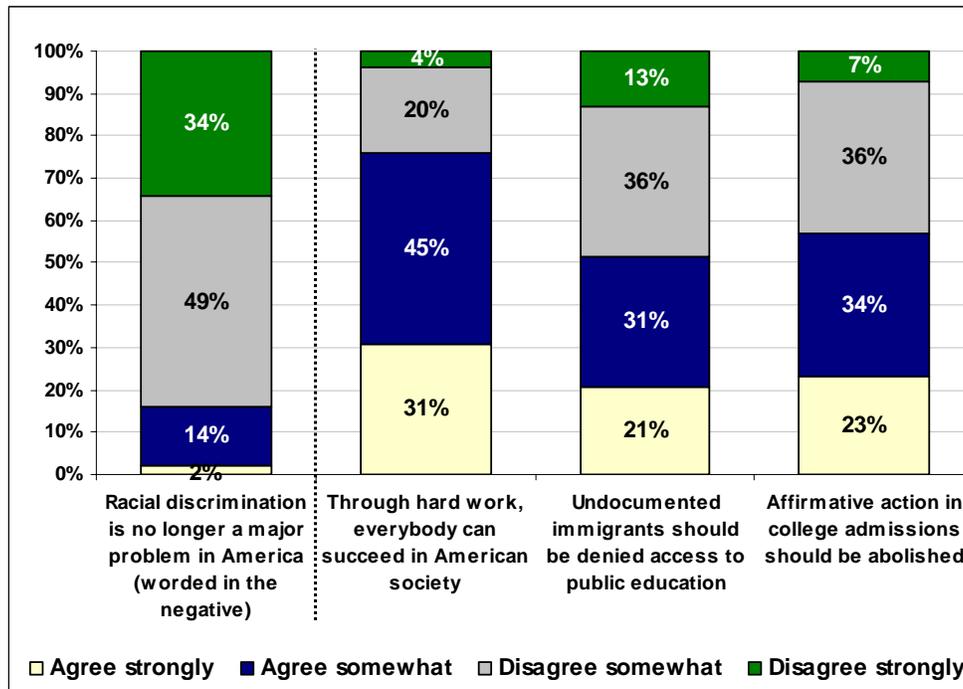


Figure 5. Opinions related to racial diversity

Women, students of color, and those who are politically liberal had more tolerant opinions on most of these issues. See Table 3, next page.

Table 3. Opinions Related to Racial Diversity: Differences among Student Subgroups

	Racial discrimination is a problem	Through hard work everybody can succeed	Undocumented immigrants should be denied public education	Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished
Gender				
Women	35%	28%	19%	19%
Men	33%	38% *	26% *	31% *
Ethnicity				
Students of color	51% *	25%	14%	7%
White	31%	32%	22% *	25% *
Family Income				
<\$100,000	40% *	33%	24%	20%
\$100,000-199,999	30%	31%	20%	25%
\$200,000+	30%	32%	21%	25%
Religion				
Catholic	33%	32%	22%	26% *
Non-Catholic	37%	30%	20%	16%
Political Leaning				
Conservative	25%	40% *	32% *	31% *
Middle of the road	31%	31%	19%	22%
Liberal	49% *	23%	12%	14%

Percents reflect the proportion of people in each group on the rows who indicated that they “strongly agree.” Because it was worded in the negative, in the case of “racial discrimination is a problem” the percent reflects those who “strongly disagreed” to the statement that it is “no longer a major problem . . .”

**Indicates a significant difference from other groups within a category.*

Students of Color on Scenarios Dealing With Issues of Race and Ethnicity

When looking at the average scores (on a scale of 1 to 5) of students of color and white students on the scenario items concerning issues of race and ethnicity, we find that all students were generally “mixed” in their feelings instead of strongly endorsing one position or the other. Although all students were grouped around the middle of the scale, students of color were more sensitive than white students were to each of the issues concerning race and ethnicity. See Figure 6 and Figure 7, next page.

There are two items that are particularly interesting in Figure 6. One is that in all but one scenario white students and students of color were similar in the direction of their feelings; the only scenario where students of color and white students differed in terms of the direction of their leaning was with affirmative action—white students leaned toward the position that states that affirmative action “. . .forces white student to work even harder. . .” while students of color indicated to a modest degree that because of a presumed intelligence “. . .white students have an easier time. . .”

The second noteworthy issue in Figure 6 is that students of color did not endorse the position that “. . .race has a major impact on how [they] interact with others.”

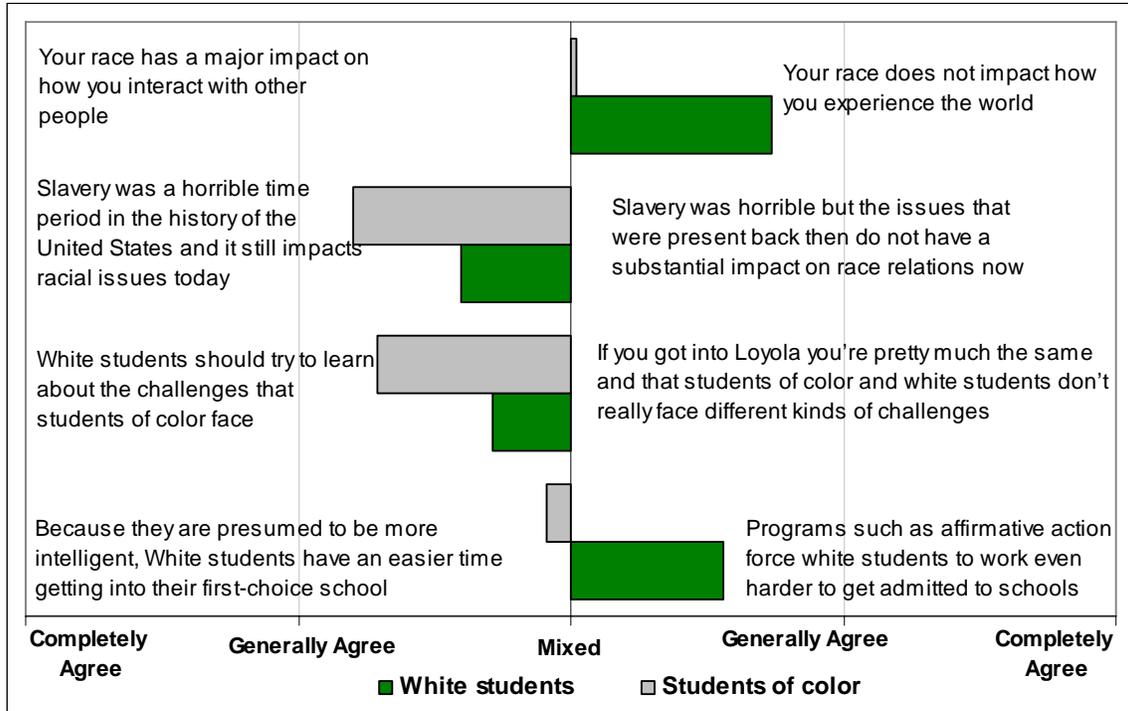


Figure 6. Average scores on scenario items dealing with issues of race: students of color and whites

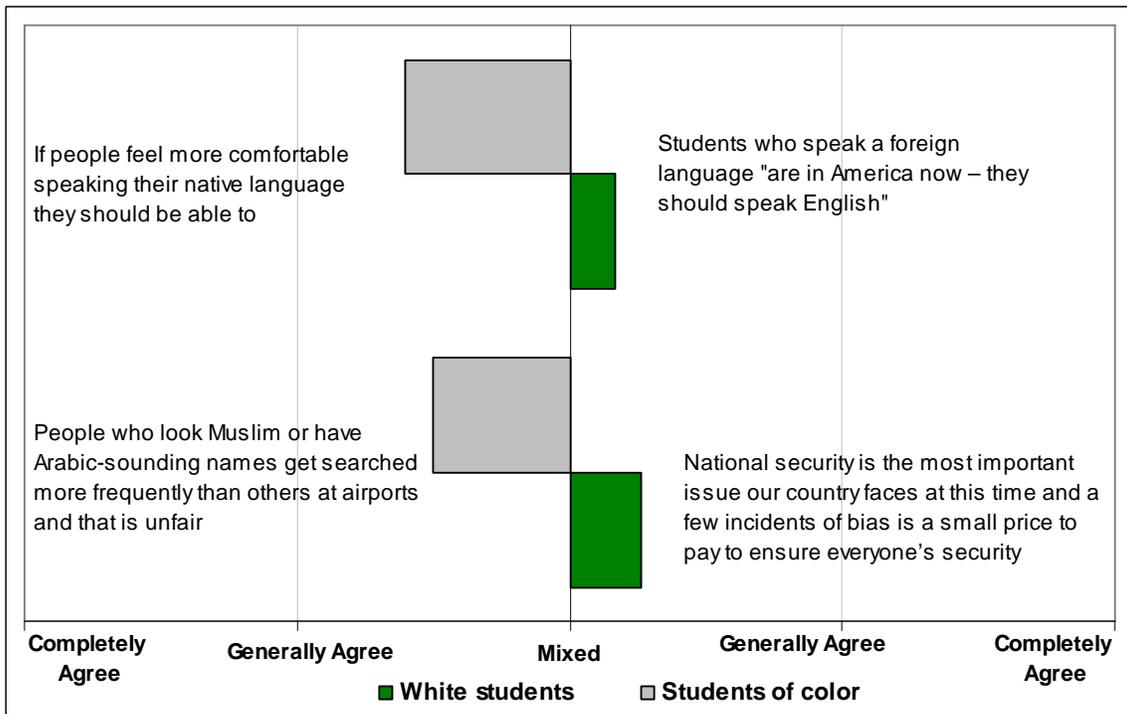


Figure 7. Average scores on scenario items dealing with issues of ethnicity: students of color and whites

Catholics on Scenarios Dealing With Issues of Race and Ethnicity

As seen in Figure 8, there were several scenarios in which Catholic students were less sensitive than non-Catholics to issues of race and ethnicity. (There were no differences between Catholics and other students in their responses to the race-related scenarios that are not represented in Figure 8.)

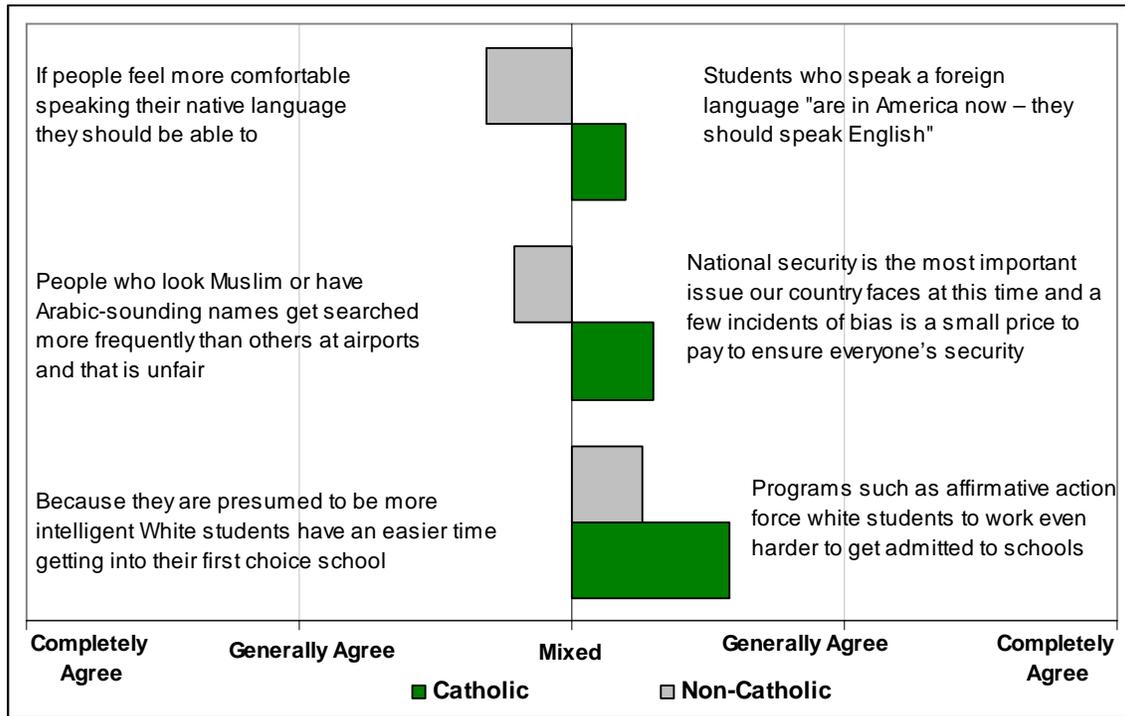


Figure 8. Average scores on scenario items dealing with issues of race and ethnicity: Catholics and non-Catholics

Class Issues

While less than half of entering students (47%) feel that “wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now,” nearly three-quarters (72%) agree that “a national health care plan is needed to cover everybody’s medical costs.” See Figure 9, next page.

Politically liberal students and students of color had the most inclusive opinions on class issues. Additionally, more women than men were in favor of a national healthcare plan and more students with family incomes less than \$100,000 endorsed higher tax rates on the wealthy as compared to those students who came from wealthier families. See Table 4, next page.

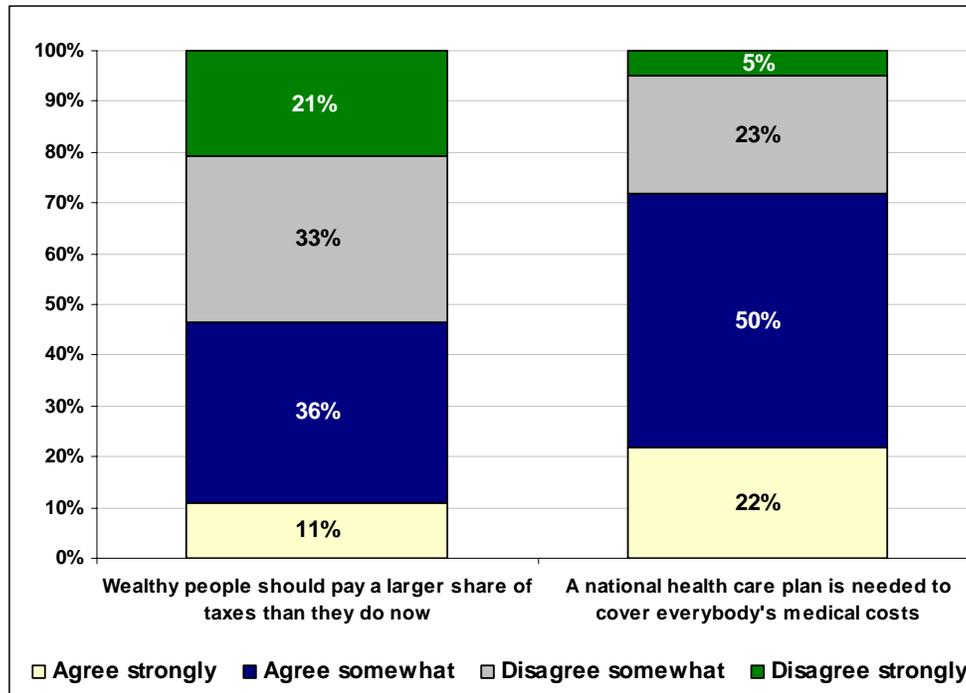


Figure 9. Opinions related to class issues

Table 4. Opinions Related to Class Issues: Differences among Student Subgroups

	Wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now	A national health care plan is needed to cover everybody's medical costs
Gender		
Women	11%	25% *
Men	11%	17%
Ethnicity		
Students of color	20% *	30% *
White	10%	21%
Family Income		
<\$100,000	16% *	25%
\$100,000-199,999	11%	22%
\$200,000+	5%	20%
Religion		
Catholic	12%	21%
Non-Catholic	10%	25%
Political Leaning		
Conservative	6%	14%
Middle of the road	11%	21% *
Liberal	15% *	34% *

Percents reflect the proportion of people in each group on the rows who indicated that they "strongly agree"

**Indicates a significant difference from other groups within a category.*

Income, Political Leaning, and Religion and the Scenario Dealing With Class

When looking at the average scores (on a scale of 1 to 5) of various groups of students on the scenario concerning class, we find that all students were generally “mixed” in their feelings instead of strongly endorsing one position or the other. Interestingly, there were no differences in average scores based on a student’s family income or religion, but politically conservative students were less sensitive than others were to the role that class played in the Hurricane Katrina Disaster (see Figure 10).

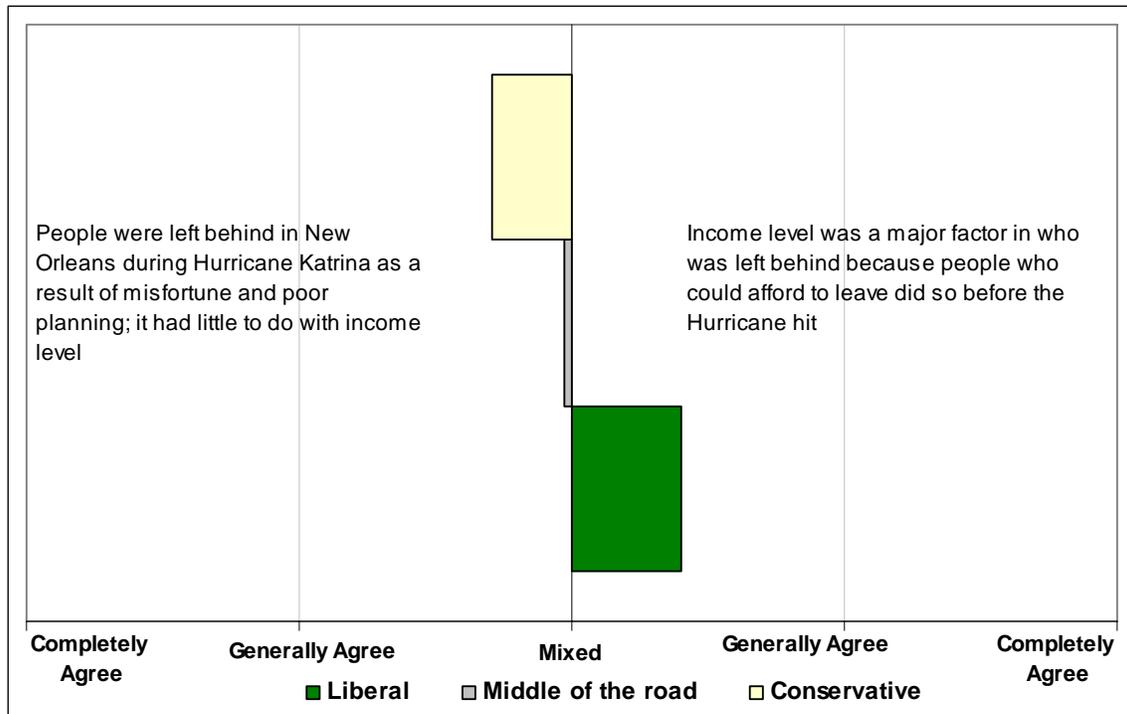


Figure 10. Average scores on the scenario dealing with class issues: Political conservatives, middle of the road, and liberals

Gender Issues

Students were presented with a scenario regarding the gender gap in the workplace. While neither men nor women took a strong position on this issue, they tended to lean in opposite directions with women being more sensitive to the gender gap issue than were men. Women were also more sensitive to issues of personal style (i.e. needing to dress in certain ways in order to fit in) on campus but they were no different than men when asked about body image and working out. See Figure 11.

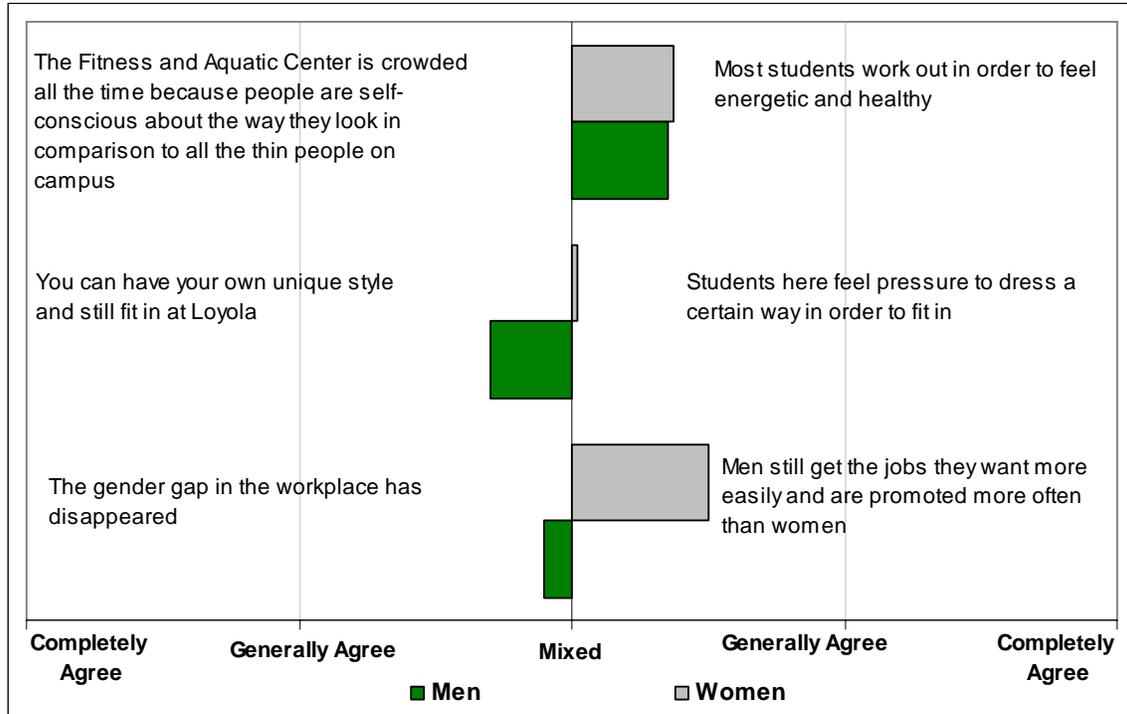


Figure 11. Average scores on scenario items dealing with gender and image issues: women and men

Sexual Orientation

While 85% of students opposed having “laws to prohibit homosexual relationships,” fewer (71%) agreed that “same-sex couples should have a right to legal marital status” (see Figure 12). Women, non-Catholics, and politically liberal students had the most tolerant opinions on these issues (see Table 5).

As might be expected, students who indicated that they were uncomfortable with people of a different sexual orientation were more likely to be proponents of laws limiting homosexual relationships (48% *agreed* or *strongly agreed*) than were those who said they were comfortable with people of a different sexual orientation (7% *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that there should be laws limiting homosexual relationships). Similarly, those who were uncomfortable with people of a different sexual orientation were less likely to think that same sex couples should have legal marital rights (32% *agreed* or *strongly agreed*) than were those who indicated they were comfortable with people of a different sexual orientation (81% *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that gays and lesbians should have legal marital rights).

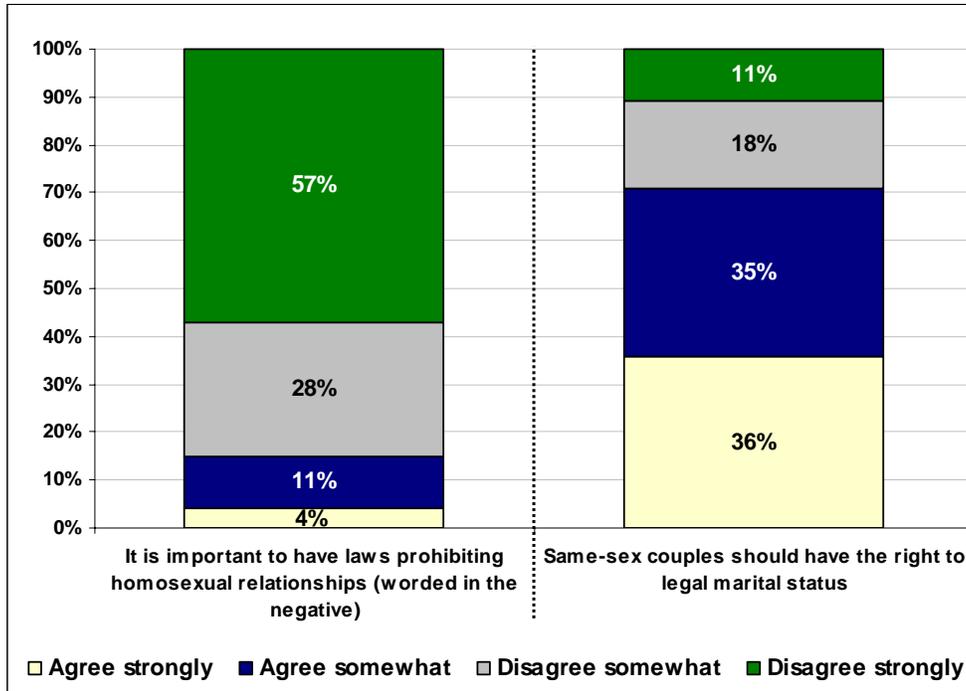


Figure 12. Opinions related to sexual orientation

Table 5. Opinions Related to Sexual Orientation: Differences among Student Subgroups

	Should not have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships	Same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status
Gender		
Women	68% *	48% *
Men	37%	16%
Ethnicity		
Students of color	54%	32%
White	57%	36%
Family Income		
<\$100,000	61%	37%
\$100,000-199,999	54%	34%
\$200,000+	54%	36%
Religion		
Catholic	52%	33%
Non-Catholic	68% *	44% *
Political Leaning		
Conservative	35%	14%
Middle of the road	59% *	35% *
Liberal	78% *	60% *

Percents reflect the proportion of people in each group on the rows who indicated that they “strongly agree.” Because it was worded in the negative, in the case of “should not have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships” the percent reflects those who “strongly disagreed” to the statement that it is “important to have laws . . .”

*Indicates a significant difference from other groups within a category.

Gender, Political Leaning, and Religion and the Scenario Dealing With Sexual Orientation

When looking at the average scores (on a scale of 1 to 5) of various groups of students on the scenario concerning sexual orientation, we find that students in general did not take a strong position in one direction or the other. Interestingly, there were no differences in average scores based on a student's political leaning or religion, but women were more sensitive than men were to the role that language can play in creating a tough environment for gay people (see Figure 13).

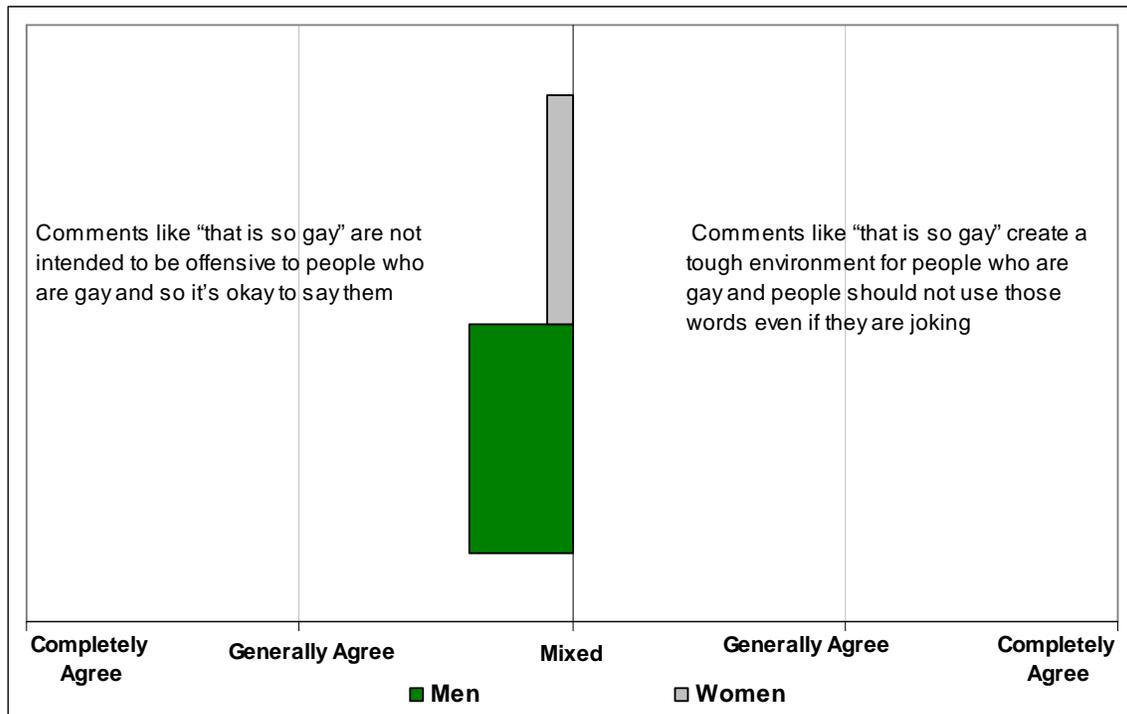


Figure 13. Average scores on the scenario dealing with sexual orientation: women and men

Summary

Although Loyola's class of 2010 is comprised of primarily white students from modestly or very wealthy Catholic families, the majority of students enter Loyola with some exposure to people of another race and a professed comfortableness with people from different race/ethnic or sexual orientations than themselves.

Exposure and comfort levels aside, the class of 2010 expressed some puzzling views on diversity, endorsing contradictory positions on several issues such as affirmative action and racial discrimination. These findings suggest that a deeper awareness and understanding of the interconnectedness of diversity issues is a learning opportunity for entering Loyola students.

A follow-up study of diversity views is planned for the end of the first-year. The findings of the follow-up study will provide important information about the extent to which diversity issues are effectively addressed during the first year at Loyola.

Appendix A: Scenario Items

What follows are descriptions of conversations between students at Loyola. Based only on the information presented in each scenario, please indicate which student you agree with more.

47. Student A says because they are often presumed to be more intelligent, white students have an easier time getting into their first-choice schools. Student B disagrees and says that programs such as affirmative action force white students to work even harder to get admitted to the schools they want to. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

48. Two students hear someone walk by and say, “That is so gay.” Student A says that comments like that create a tough environment for people who are gay and that people should not use those words even if they are joking. Student B doesn’t think it is a big deal and says that comments like that are not intended to be offensive to people who are gay and so it’s okay to say them. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

49. Student A says that white students should try to learn about the challenges that students of color face. Student B disagrees and says if you got into Loyola you’re pretty much the same and that students of color and white students don’t really face different kinds of challenges. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

50. Student A believes that the gender gap in the workplace has disappeared. Student B disagrees and says that men still get the jobs they want more easily and are promoted more often than women. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

51. Student A says that students here feel pressure to dress a certain way in order to fit in. Student B disagrees and says that you can have your own unique style and still fit in at Loyola. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

52. Student A says that his race is not something he thinks about on a regular basis and it does not impact how he experiences the world. Student B states that his race is a significant aspect of his identity and it has a major impact on how he interacts with other people. Which student do you identify with more?

- a. Completely identify with Student A
- b. Generally identify with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally identify with Student B
- e. Completely identify with Student B

53. Student A says that the Fitness and Aquatic Center is crowded all the time because people are self-conscious about the way they look in comparison to all the thin people on campus. Student B disagrees and says that most students work out in order to feel energetic and healthy. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

54. Student A says people were left behind in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina as a result of misfortune and poor planning; it had little to do with income level. Student B says that income level was a major factor in who was left behind because people who could afford to leave did so before the Hurricane hit. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

55. Student A states that slavery was a horrible time period in the history of the United States and that it still impacts racial issues today. Student B agrees that slavery was horrible but thinks that the issues that were present back then do not have a substantial impact on race relations now. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

56. Student A says that people who look Muslim or have Arabic-sounding names get searched more frequently than others at airports and that is unfair. Student B says that national security is the most important issue our country faces at this time and a few

incidents of bias is a small price to pay to ensure everyone's security. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

57. Student A says that giving students with learning disabilities extra time on tests gives them an unfair advantage over other students. Student B disagrees and says that allowing students with disabilities extra time simply levels the playing field and lets those students demonstrate their knowledge. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B

58. Student A comments about another group of students who are speaking in a foreign language: "They are in America now – they should speak English." Student B disagrees and says that if people feel more comfortable speaking their native language they should be able to. Which student do you agree with more?

- a. Completely agree with Student A
- b. Generally agree with Student A
- c. Mixed – somewhat agree with both
- d. Generally agree with Student B
- e. Completely agree with Student B