



# Taking Seriously the Perspectives of Others: Two Views of the Same Campus

**L. Lee Knefelkamp**, Professor of Psychology and Education, Teachers College, Columbia University and Director of Dialogue and Assessment, Core Commitments and  
**Nancy O'Neill**, Assistant Director, Core Commitments and Director of Programs, AAC&U

October 17, 2008



## Session goals



- Provide an overview of the Core Commitments initiative
- Offer some context regarding campus climate
- Share the project's framework for understanding and influencing campus climate
- Share and probe select results of the PSRII
- Discuss what climate data can and cannot do in the process



## I. AAC&U Initiative: *Core Commitments: Education for Personal and Social Responsibility*

### The genesis of Core Commitments...



- 2003-2005: AAC&U lays groundwork for a project on reclaiming and revitalizing education for personal and social responsibility
- Convening of national experts on definitions and parameters; developmental framework
- Articulation of five dimensions of personal and social responsibility widely endorsed by the Academy and able to be assessed
- Selection of a leadership consortium of 23 institutions of different types and sizes
- Development of a campus climate instrument
- Funding from John Templeton Foundation to launch multi-pronged initiative

## Five dimensions of personal and social responsibility



- Striving for Excellence
- Cultivating Personal and Academic Integrity
- Contributing to a Larger Community
- Taking Seriously the Perspectives of Others
- Developing Competence in Ethical and Moral Reasoning

## Guiding philosophy



- Student learning is the collective obligation of all individuals and units responsible for the curriculum and co-curriculum
- Education for PSR, to be intentionally fostered in all students, **should pervade institutional cultures**
- Higher education institutions have an educational and civic obligation to unapologetically teach for personal and social responsibility

## Guiding philosophy



- Ethical, civic, and moral development should be closely tied to a substantive vision for student learning in the college years that is shared across constituent groups
- The development of personal and social responsibility is cumulative, builds on prior knowledge and experience, and should be assessed along the way

## Institutional pervasiveness



- **Breadth:** the degree to which efforts to promote personal and social responsibility are present and connected throughout the institution (versus absent or isolated), and
- **Depth:** the degree to which those efforts are deeply embedded in various areas of the campus culture (versus superficially addressed).

## Elements of Organizational Climate



- $B=f [P \times E]$  – *behavior* is a *function* of *people* in the context of their *environment* (Lewin 1935)
- $E=f [P \times B]$  – one can characterize *environments* by studying the *behaviors* of the *people* in those environments (Schneider 1987)
- Climate measures are designed to produce a profile of the perceptions people have of the environment in which they work or are engaged

## P x E framework



- Person: five dimensions of PSR
- Environment: ten markers of campus culture
- Without intentionality, coherence, and shared commitment, the environment may either *not contribute* to the enrichment of the person or may *work against* the enrichment of the person

## Five dimensions of personal and social responsibility



- Striving for Excellence
- Cultivating Personal and Academic Integrity
- Contributing to a Larger Community
- Taking Seriously the Perspectives of Others
- Developing Competence in Ethical and Moral Reasoning

## Ten markers of campus culture



- Mission and Educational Purpose
- Institutional Leadership and Advocacy
- Policies and Procedures
- Expectations for Competency and Growth
- Campus Activities and Organizations
- Scholarly Activities
- Curriculum and Pedagogy
- Evaluation and Assessment
- Reward Systems
- The Overall Campus Climate\*

\* this marker represents a cumulative sense of the culture based on the other nine markers

## Framework for understanding and influencing campus climate



Dialogue + Data → Decision-making

Three-phase sequence of activities:

1. Engage with the big ideas
2. Engage with the evidence
3. Engage with the efforts

## Phase 1: Engage with the big ideas



- Publicize effort
- Team completes matrix
- Share and discuss five dimensions, guiding philosophy
- Build shared vocabulary and shared commitment
- Learn which dimensions resonate with which constituents
- Prepare campus for climate survey

## Phase 2: Engage with the evidence



- Discuss instances of congruence and dissonance
- Examine where there is C/D and for whom
- Probe reasons why C/D might be occurring
- Disaggregate data further (e.g., by major, unit, department, gender, race/ethnicity) to provide a more robust picture of responses within and across groups
- Record new questions that grow out of the dialogues; use them as the basis for further data collection/investigation

## Phase 3: Engage with the efforts



- What will be different in terms of outcomes, given the new efforts? How define and measure success?
- Do the efforts have sufficient “reach” and depth (or a plan for scale-up and for a developmental trajectory)?
- How ensure coherence between Core Commitments efforts and other initiatives on campus, as well as linkages between CC efforts and mission, strategic planning, budgeting, etc.?
- Where do pockets of success/promising practices exist?
- Who else might serve as “local” experts?

## II. The *Personal and Social Responsibility Institutional Inventory*

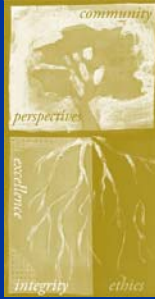


### The *PSRII*



- Surveys four constituent groups: students, faculty, academic administrators, and student affairs staff
- Gauges perceptions about opportunities for education for PSR across the institution – gives insight into institutional pervasiveness
- Congruence and dissonance
- Within-group and across-group comparisons
- Types of items: Ideal/real, perceptions (agreement), behaviors (frequency), open-ended
- The need to mind the gap

## Fall 2007 administration, LC campuses



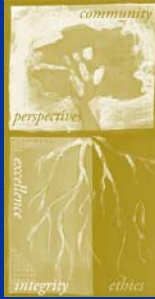
- Administered to 23,950 students
- 85.5% age 18-24
- 25% in each class year
- 47% female, 53% male
- 48.5% white, 4.8% African American, 1.8% Native American, 5.4% Asian American, .8% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 3.1% Mexican American/Chicano, .9% Puerto Rican, 2.8% other Latino, 33% unknown

## Fall 2007 administration, LC campuses



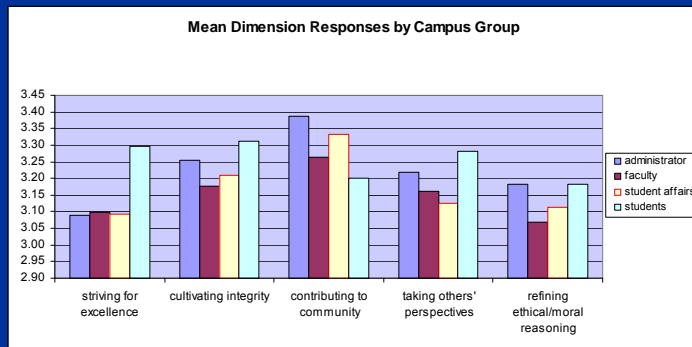
- Administered to 8,825 campus professionals
- Faculty: 4,408 in sample; 3,802 with rank identified; **2,745 with rank, gender, and race identified**

	Male			Female			Total
	Tenured	Tenure Track	Non Tenure Track	Tenured	Tenure Track	Non Tenure Track	
White Faculty	25.5%	8.7%	11.1%	18.2%	9.4%	14.3%	<b>87.2%</b>
Faculty of Color	3.0%	2.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%	<b>12.8%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	<b>12.8%</b>	<b>19.9%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### III. Faculty and Student Data: Views on Perspective-Taking

## Overall picture



#### Perspective-taking

Administrator: 3.22

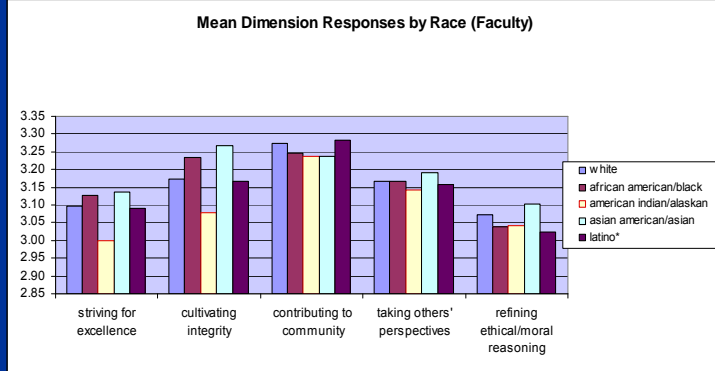
Faculty: 3.16

Student Affairs: 3.13

Students: 3.28



# Faculty: Race

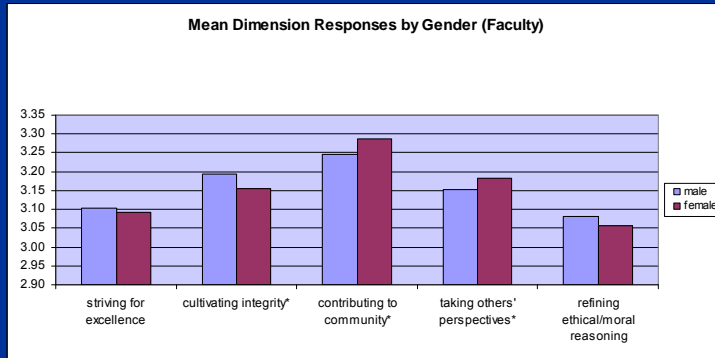


Perspective-taking

White: 3.17  
 African-American: 3.17  
 American Indian: 3.14  
 Asian American: 3.19  
 Latino: 3.16



# Faculty: Gender



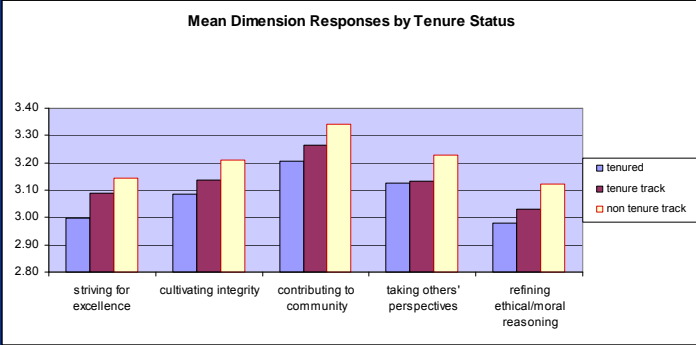
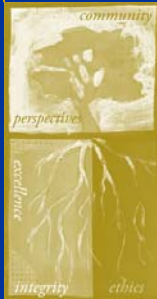
Perspective-taking\*

Men: 3.15  
 Women: 3.19

\*Achieved statistical significance



# Faculty: Rank

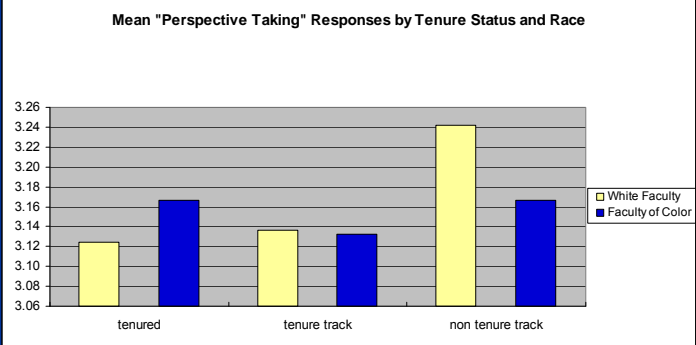


Perspective-taking

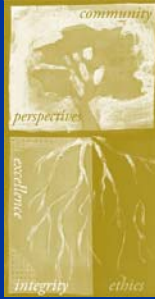
Tenured: 3.12  
 Tenure-track: 3.13  
 Non tenure track: 3.23



# Faculty: Rank and Race



## Faculty: Critical items



Attitudinal Item: "During the times students are here, they develop an increased ability to understand the evidence, analysis, and perspectives of others, even when they disagree"

- Overall faculty mean: 3.28
- Male faculty: 3.26
- Female faculty: 3.31
- Tenured faculty: 3.25
- Tenure track faculty: 3.29
- Non tenure track faculty: 3.43
- Difference btw. M & F, T & NT is statistically significant
- Things to probe?

On a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 = strongly agree

## Faculty: Critical items



Behavioral Item: "Faculty publicly advocate the need for students to respect perspectives different from their own"

- Overall faculty mean: 1.47
- Male faculty: 1.54
- Female faculty: 1.41
- Difference is statistically significant
- Things to probe?

On a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = frequently

## Faculty: Critical items



Attitudinal Item: "It is safe to hold unpopular opinions on this campus"

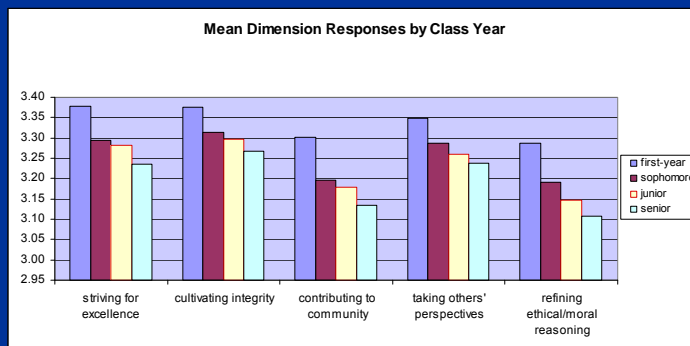
	Tenured	Tenure Track	Non Tenure Track
Male	2.65	2.65	2.79
Female	2.63	2.59	2.86

	Tenured	Tenure Track	Non Tenure Track
White Faculty	2.62	2.60	2.85
Faculty of Color	2.91	2.73	2.69

On a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 = strongly agree

- Things to probe?

## Students: Rank

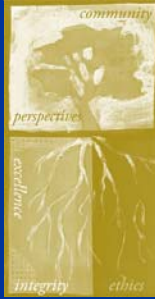


### Perspective-taking

First-year: 3.35  
 Sophomore: 3.29  
 Junior: 3.26  
 Senior: 3.24



## Student: Critical items



On a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 = strongly agree

Attitudinal Item: “Students are respectful of one another when discussing controversial issues, perspectives, and points of view”

- Overall student mean: 3.11
- First-year students: 3.31
- Sophomore: 3.18
- Junior: 3.06
- Senior: 3.03
- Differences between years 1 & 2 and years 3 & 4 reach statistical significance
- No statistical difference by race, gender
- Things to probe?

## Student: Critical items



On a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = frequently

Behavioral Item: “Faculty publicly advocate the need for students to respect perspectives different from their own”

- Overall student mean: 1.67
- First-year students: 1.58
- Sophomore: 1.62
- Junior: 1.68
- Senior: 1.69
- Differences between years 1 & 2 and years 3 & 4 reach statistical significance
- No statistical difference by race, gender
- Things to probe?

## Student: Critical items



### Attitudinal Item: "Faculty teach about the importance of considering diverse intellectual viewpoints"

On a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 = strongly agree

- Overall student mean: 3.27
- First-year students: 3.41
- Sophomore: 3.32
- Junior: 3.21
- Senior: 3.20
- Differences between years 1 & 2 and years 3 & 4 reach statistical significance
- No stat. diff. by race, approaches stat. diff. by gender, with women in stronger agreement
- Things to probe?

## Student: Critical items

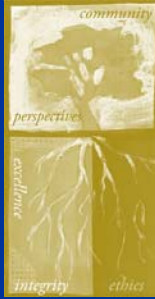


### Behavioral Item: "I reconsider my own perspective after listening to the views of others."

On a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = frequently

- Overall student mean: 1.54
- First-year students: 1.55
- Sophomore: 1.53
- Junior: 1.57
- Senior: 1.54
- No statistically significant differences by rank, gender, race
- Things to probe?

## Student: Critical items



On a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 = strongly agree

Attitudinal Item: "It is safe to hold unpopular positions on this campus"

- Overall student mean: 3.27
- First-year students: 3.32
- Sophomore: 3.22
- Junior: 3.08
- Senior: 3.07
- Differences between years 1 and 2 and years 1 and 2, 3, & 4 reach statistical significance
- No statistical difference by race, gender
- Things to probe?

## Faculty & student: Critical items



On a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 = strongly agree

Attitudinal Item: "I have developed an increased ability during college to understand the evidence, analysis, and perspectives of others, even when they disagree"

- Faculty mean: 3.28
- Student mean: 3.48
- Statistically significant difference
- Things to probe?

## Faculty & student: Critical items



Behavioral Item: "Faculty publicly advocate the need for students to respect perspectives different from their own"

- Faculty mean: 1.48
- Student mean: 1.67
- Statistically significant difference
- Things to probe?

On a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = frequently

## Faculty & student: Critical items



Attitudinal Item: "Students are respectful of one another when discussing controversial issues, perspectives, and points of view"

- Faculty mean: 3.12
- Student mean: 3.11
- No statistical difference
- Things to probe?

On a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 = strongly agree

## Key “take-aways”



### Administration

- Importance of improving demographic data collection

### Interpretation

- Need to disaggregate data
- Who owns the interpretation matters
- Statistical significance vs. meaningful difference
- Need to compare within and across groups on critical items, clusters of items, and whole dimensions
- Attend to both quantitative and qualitative data
- Need to make data accessible and available to appropriate constituent groups
- Need for dialogue, other investigation to probe “why”
- Need to understand data in light of specific culture (no national norms)

## Key “take-aways”



- One cannot expect in our students what we do not support in the culture
- Intentionality + transparency + connectedness → pervasiveness