

**CFAES**

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

# 2022 CFAES Student Climate Survey Results



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

*—We Sustain Life—*  
**[cfaesdei.osu.edu](https://cfaesdei.osu.edu)**

# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>31</b>





# Executive Summary

---

## Executive summary

In spring of 2021 the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences conducted a climate survey of students enrolled as graduate students and undergraduate students. The survey asked about student perceptions of the climate for diversity, equity, and inclusion at the college. The survey addressed student experiences with discrimination and harassment, perceived treatment of individuals with intersecting identities, overall view of college leadership related to DEI, and overall view of the college as a welcoming and inclusive place for Underrepresented Minority (URM) students. Members of the CFAES DEI Action Council contributed to the construction of survey questions. Survey questions were also drawn from an earlier student climate survey distributed in 2016.

The survey was approved by IRB in February 2022 and distributed at the beginning of March and closed on March 28, 2022. Three thousand four hundred sixty-six students received invitations to complete the survey. There was a 35% response rate (1296) and a 94% completion rate (1218). Nine hundred twelve undergraduates responded, and 308 graduate students responded.

## Who was invited

**2829**

Undergraduate students

**631**

Graduate students

**2230**

Columbus campus

**19**

Marion campus

**471**

Wooster campus (ATI)

**20**

Mansfield campus

**64**

Newark campus

**16**

Lima campus



# Who responded

N = 1,220 respondents

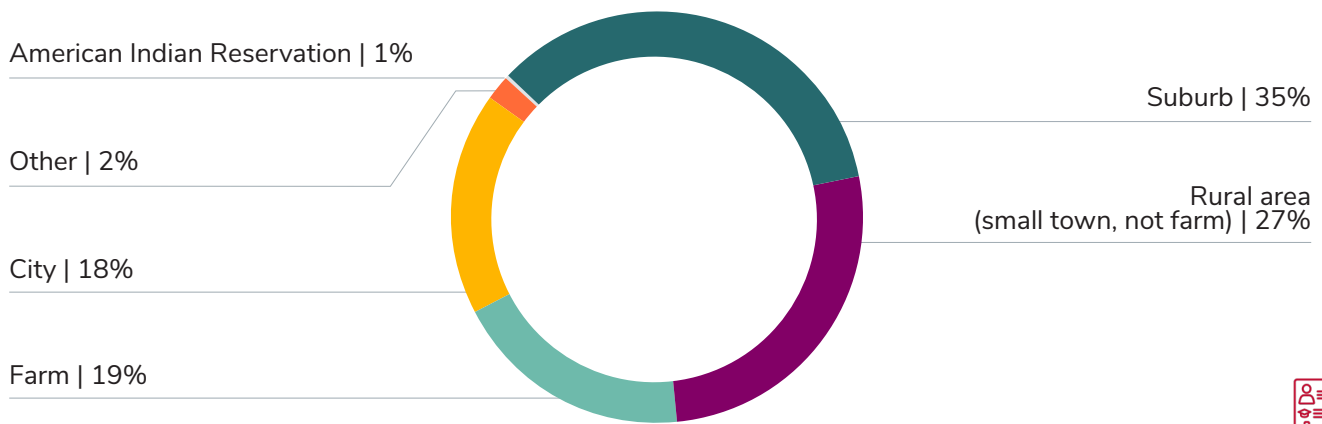
**912 | 32%**  
Undergraduate students

**308 | 49%**  
Graduate students

Two hundred eight or 22% of those who responded identified as first generation while 752 or 78% indicated that there were not first generation. Eleven percent (106) identified as individuals with a disability, 86% (820) indicated that they did not identify as having a disability and 3% (33) preferred not to answer.

# Where do our students come from

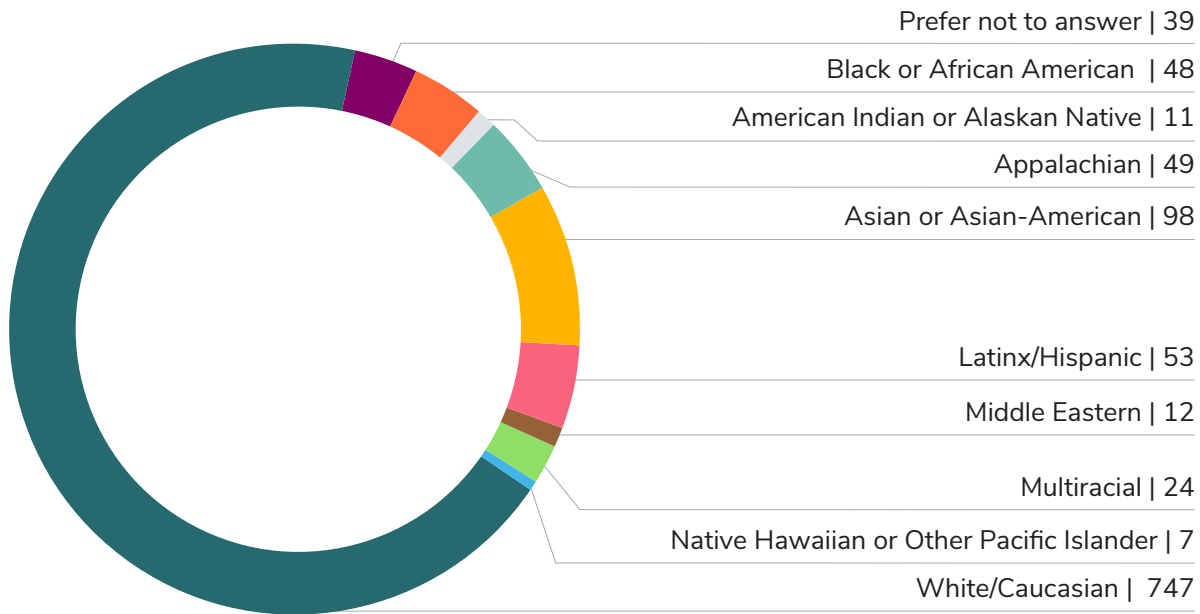
CFAES is often perceived to have students mainly from rural areas or farms. CFAES is actually very diverse when it comes to where students grew up. The first question of the survey asked students to identify where they spent most of their life. Approximately 46% of respondents indicated that they grew up on farms or in rural areas. Fifty-three percent of those who responded indicated that they grew up in cities or the suburbs. Just under 2% indicated growing up on other areas and less than 1% indicated growing up on American Indian Reservations.



GRAPH 1



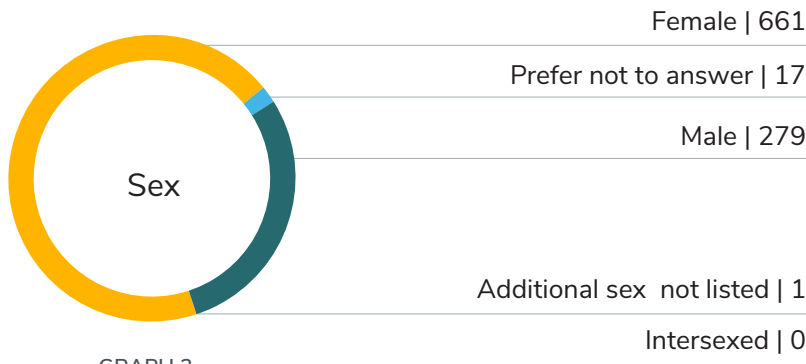
# Demographics of Respondents



GRAPH 2

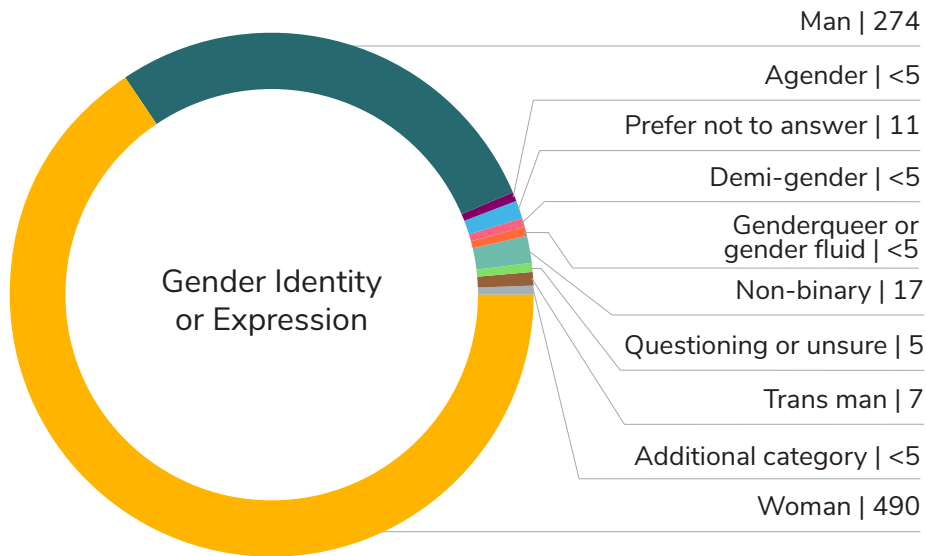
Respondents were able to provide specific ethnicities if they identified as Asian or Hispanic/Latino/a/x. Respondents indicated ethnicities that include:

- Indian
- Taiwanese
- Tamil
- Chinese
- Vietnamese
- Filipino
- South Asian
- Indonesian
- Korean
- Dominican
- Brazilian
- Puerto Rican
- Uruguayan
- Argentinian
- South American
- Nicaraguan
- Peruvian
- Mestizo
- Ecuadorian
- Paraguayan
- Mexican
- Bolivian



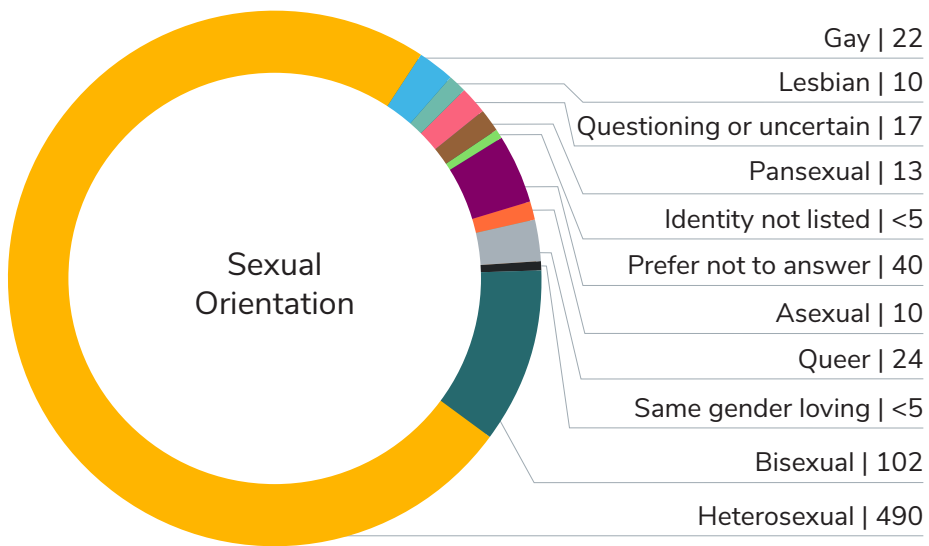
GRAPH 3





GRAPH 4

Androgyne	0
Trans woman	0



GRAPH 5



# Key Findings

---



# Perceptions of the College as a whole

Most respondents (94%) agreed or strongly agreed that college leaders promote appreciation of diversity and 89% agreed or strongly agreed that CFAES is committed to diversity. Many of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt welcome in classes and indicated that inclusive language was used in CFAES classes. Over 90% also indicated that CFAES instructors modeled cultural awareness in classes and that different perspectives were encouraged.

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel welcome in my CFAES classes.	<1%	3%	44%	53%
Inclusive language is used in my CFAES classes.	2%	9%	50%	40%
Instructors model cultural awareness.	1%	9%	49%	41%
Different views and perspectives are encouraged.	<1%	6%	46%	48%
When humor is used, is it not offensive.	<1%	3%	46%	51%

TABLE 1

When asked about how students with intersecting identities are perceived to interact within classes most respondents indicated that students with multiple intersecting identities participate equally in classroom discussions. There was also a strong response to students with intersecting identities being expected to speak for their groups in classroom discussions.

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Students of different racial/ethnic backgrounds participate equally in classroom discussions.	2%	12%	46%	40%
Male-presenting and female-presenting students participate equally in classroom discussions.	1%	9%	49%	41%
Students with disabilities participate equally in classroom discussions.	1%	8%	52%	39%
Students with different sexual orientations participate equally in classroom discussions.	<1%	4%	53%	43%
Students with disabilities are expected to speak on behalf of their group.	5%	32%	36%	27%



LGBTQ+ (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer/Questioning) students are expected to speak on behalf of their group.	6%	36%	37%	21%
BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students are expected to speak on behalf of their group.	6%	33%	39%	22%
Instructors include contributions from a variety of racial/ethnic groups in course content.	3%	14%	52%	32%
Instructors include the contribution of women in the course content.	1%	8%	54%	36%
Instructors include the contributions of people with disabilities in the course content.	5%	22%	47%	26%

TABLE 2

## Sense of belonging in CFAES

Question		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
ALL	I feel accepted as a person.	1%	4%	42%	53%
Female		1%	4%	43%	53%
Male		1%	4%	38%	58%
URM/BIPOC		2%	5%	44%	49%
White		1%	4%	41%	55%
ALL	I feel accepted as a capable student in CFAES.	1%	3%	42%	54%
Female		1%	4%	43%	53%
Male		1%	2%	40%	58%
URM/BIPOC		3%	6%	44%	47%
White		1%	3%	41%	56%
ALL	I feel a sense of belonging in CFAES.	2%	12%	39%	47%
Female		3%	11%	41%	45%
Male		1%	12%	34%	53%
URM/BIPOC		4%	13%	41%	42%
White		2%	11%	39%	48%



ALL	Instructors use my name in conversation.	2%	12%	42%	43%
Female		2%	13%	43%	42%
Male		1%	9%	41%	49%
URM/BIPOC		2%	9%	43%	46%
White		2%	13%	42%	43%
ALL	I can express my honest opinion in my CFAES classes.	2%	10%	45%	43%
Female		1%	12%	47%	40%
Male		3%	6%	41%	50%
URM/BIPOC		3%	11%	41%	45%
White		2%	10%	47%	42%
ALL	I see myself as part of the CFAES community.	2%	11%	43%	44%
Female		2%	11%	43%	44%
Male		2%	10%	40%	48%
URM/BIPOC		4%	10%	43%	44%
White		2%	11%	42%	45%

TABLE 3

## Experiences hearing negative or disparaging remarks

Students were asked how often they experienced other students, staff and faculty making negative or disparaging remarks about a wide array of identity groups.

Identity Group (Students)	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Women (provide examples)	79%	18%	2%	<1%
Men (provide examples)	84%	14%	1%	<1%
BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students (provide examples)	86%	13%	1%	<1%
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) students (provide examples)	82%	16%	2%	1%
Students who are non-native English speakers (provide examples)	85%	13%	2%	<1%



Students with political beliefs different from theirs (provide examples)	67%	23%	7%	3%
Students with disabilities (provide examples)	92%	7%	1%	<1%
Students with different religions (provide examples)	91%	8%	1%	<1%
Students with different financial background/class/financial standing (provide examples)	92%	8%	<1%	1%
Students with different gender identity or expression (provide examples)	85%	13%	2%	1%

TABLE 4

## Themes/examples (students)

Lack of belief on the part of males that females experience harassment
Instructors showing disdain for students related to sexual orientation, lack of ag background, political beliefs etc.
Being talked over by male students and not having opinions taken seriously.
Questioning whether women belong in agricultural fields.
Male being equated with “toxic masculinity”.
Concerns about the “me too movement”.
Concerns regarding, “reverse racism”.
Use of the “n word with hard r”.
Making fun of TAs and professors’ accents.
Discomfort with LGBTQ students- “there isn’t really a problem as long as no one makes anyone uncomfortable”; “wish they wouldn’t show pda”.
Lack of understanding or agreement with pronouns.
Word “gay” being used as an insult.
Lack of representation of LGBTQ community.
Gay jokes.
“Complaining about being in groups with people who have strong accents”.
“Rarely students who are non-native English speakers are given the opportunity to speak and are often passed over”.
Making fun of TAs who are non-native English speakers.
Using political affiliations as insults and making fun of each other-deeming one group as less intelligent than the other-this goes both ways.
Perception that the majority of CFAES students are conservative.
“I always hear students talking about how foolish certain ideologies are and refusing to listen to other ideas apart from their own”.
Seeing having accommodations for disabilities as unfair advantages.



“It’s just the nature of attending such a high-ranking college, a lot of kids come from well off families and don’t realize their own discrimination of the lower class”.

Homo and transphobia.

Identity Group (Staff)	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Women (provide examples)	95%	5%	<1%	<1%
Men (provide examples)	96%	3%	0%	<1%
BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students (provide examples)	97%	3%	<1%	<1%
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) students (provide examples)	97%	3%	<1%	<1%
Students who are non-native English speakers (provide examples)	96%	3%	<1%	<1%
Students with political beliefs different from theirs (provide examples)	93%	6%	1%	<1%
Students with disabilities (provide examples)	97%	3%	<1%	<1%
Students with different religions (provide examples)	97%	3%	<1%	<1%
Students with different financial background/class/financial standing (provide examples)	97%	2%	<1%	<1%
Students with different gender identity or expression (provide examples)	97%	3%	<1%	<1%

TABLE 5

## Themes/examples (staff)

Politics

Feeling like there is a lack of respect for those students with learning disabilities

Identity Group (Faculty)	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Women (provide examples)	94%	6%	<1%	<1%
Men (provide examples)	97%	3%	<1%	<1%
BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students (provide examples)	96%	3%	<1%	<1%
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) students (provide examples)	97%	3%	<1%	<1%
Students who are non-native English speakers (provide examples)	95%	4%	<1%	<1%



Students with political beliefs different from theirs (provide examples)	91%	7%	1%	<1%
Students with disabilities (provide examples)	96%	3%	1%	<1%
Students with different religions (provide examples)	97%	3%	<1%	<1%
Students with different financial background/class/financial standing (provide examples)	97%	3%	<1%	<1%
Students with different gender identity or expression (provide examples)	97%	2%	1%	<1%

TABLE 6

## Themes/examples (faculty)

Male instructors talking down to female students or assuming that they can't do certain things, "man-splaining".  
 "Especially in male faculty, its clear some do not take factors of sexism like the wage gap or gender inequality in their departments seriously".  
 "White privilege being applied mostly to cis white men but not women".  
 Not trying to learn proper pronunciation of all students' names.  
 Political statements on both sides.  
 Not honoring accommodations for students with disabilities.  
 Not honoring pronouns-using the wrong ones and misgendering students.

## Experiences with discrimination and harassment

All students were asked about their experiences with discrimination and harassment in classes since coming to CFAES. Both discrimination and harassment were defined for the students.

Since coming to CFAES, have you experienced discrimination in classes?	Yes	Count	No	Count
All respondents	4%	37	96%	933
White	3%	24	97%	725
URM/BIPOC	6%	13	94%	208



Female	3%	23	97%	637
Male	3%	9	97%	269

TABLE 7

Was the discrimination ever reported?	Yes	Count	No	Count
All respondents	19%	7	81%	30
White	21%	5	79%	19
URM/BIPOC	15%	2	85%	11
Female	22%	5	78%	18
Male	22%	2	78%	7

TABLE 8

For those who reported some reported to academic advisors, the Office of Institutional Equity, CFAES DEI, University Disability Coordinator, and or instructors.

For those who did not report the discrimination most indicated that they chose not to because they felt that nothing would be done and that the behaviors are “normalized” within certain fields. Fear of retaliation was also cited as a concern regarding reporting. One respondent indicated, “Because I am afraid it will reflect poorly on me”. For others it was a matter of not knowing how to or who to report it to. “I was a First Gen student; I was not aware that I could report such incidents. And when you attend regional campuses, you are not made aware of such services”.

Reason	All	Freq.	URM/ BIPOC	Freq.	White	Freq.	Fem	Freq.	Male	Freq.
Age	6%	4	9%	2	4%	2	3%	1	8%	2
Race/ethnicity	18%	13	36%	8	10%	5	23%	9	12%	3
Skin color	8%	6	14%	3	6%	3	8%	3	12%	3
Sex	8%	6	9%	2	8%	4	10%	4	8%	2
Sexual orientation	7%	5	0%	0	10%	5	3%	1	15%	4
Gender identity or expression	8%	6	0%	0	12%	6	8%	3	8%	2
Country of origin	7%	5	14%	3	4%	2	8%	3	8%	2
Religious beliefs	3%	2	0%	0	4%	2	3%	1	4%	1
Political beliefs	7%	5	5%	1	8%	4	5%	2	8%	2
Ability or Disability	17%	12	0%	0	24%	12	21%	8	8%	2



Financial background/class/ financial standing	6%	4	5%	1	6%	3	5%	2	8%	2
Other	4%	3	9%	2	4%	3	5%	2	4%	1

TABLE 9

## Themes/examples

### RACE/ETHNICITY

- Being ignored by TAs or instructors.
- Not being wanted in groups during class projects.
- Assignments with triggering events related to race relations.
- Being belittled for being white.
- Being excluded because of having English as a second language.

### AGE

- Lack of support for older students and those who take more time to graduate.

### SEX

- Professors favoring male students over female students.
- Ideas from females being disregarded by professors.
- Male opinions being sought out more frequently.
- Being asked to clean up a lab space but males not being asked to do the same.

### SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- Homophobic remarks/jokes made by fellow students.

### ABILITY/DISABILITY

- Instructors/professors not honoring official university accommodations.
- Lack of flexibility when there are official university accommodation on file.
- Being made fun of because of having an accommodation for a disability and being told to drop the class.

### COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

- Having fellow students make assumptions of country of origin (assuming student is from one Asian country when they were from another).

### OTHER

- Professor making inappropriate comments (sexual in nature).
- Professor presenting inaccurate historical information related to the Black community.





Since coming to CFAES, have you experienced harassment in classes?	Yes	Count	No	Count
All respondents	2%	21	98%	949
White	2%	16	98%	750
URM/BIPOC	2%	5	98%	215
Female	2%	12	98%	649
Male	2%	6	98%	278

TABLE 10

Was the harassment ever reported?	Yes	Count	No	Count
All respondents	14%	3	86%	18
White	19%	3	81%	13
URM/BIPOC	0%	0	100%	5
Female	8%	1	92%	11
Male	33%	2	67%	4

TABLE 11

For those who chose not to report experiencing harassment the following reasons were given, fear of retaliation; sense that nothing would be done; not wanting additional stress that would be brought on by reporting; “Because those methods of reporting are often not helpful and retraumatizing”; “Because it was my advisor and what was I supposed to do”; “The professor has tenure, so nothing can be done”; “Too much work, I removed myself from the situation”.

Type of harassment experienced	All	Freq.	URM/BIPOC	Freq.	White	Freq.	Fem	Freq.	Male	Freq.
Verbal comments	32%	14	25%	2	33%	12	39%	9	24%	4
Written comments	11%	5	13%	1	11%	4	4%	1	18%	3
Being excluded	18%	8	13%	1	19%	7	13%	3	18%	3
Stares	16%	7	13%	1	17%	6	17%	4	18%	3
Physical assault	2%	1	3%	1	0%	0	0%	0	6%	1
Other	20%	9	38%	3	17%	6	26%	6	18%	3

TABLE 12



Participants were also asked if they experienced discrimination or harassment while participating in CFAES sponsored activities, less than 1% (6) of those who responded indicated that they experienced discrimination while participating in CFAES sponsored activities of the six who responded yes, one indicated that they reported the discrimination the examples of the discrimination were tied to sense of belonging and feeling welcome. Five people or less than 1% of respondents indicated experiencing harassment while participating in CFAES activities, one indicated reporting the harassment. Most harassment was listed as verbal comments, but no examples were provided.

Students were asked about their perception related to respecting individuals with a variety of identities. The majority of respondents indicated that students respected each other's identities. Politics and gender identity or expression had larger percentages of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that there was mutual respect related to those identities.

Question	Unsure/ I don't know	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Students in CFAES respect students with different racial/ethnic backgrounds than theirs.	2%	1%	6%	46%	45%
Students in CFAES respect students with different religious affiliations.	4%	1%	4%	48%	42%
Students in CFAES respect students with different sexual orientations than theirs.	3%	1%	6%	47%	42%
Students in CFAES respect students with gender identity or expression different from theirs.	4%	2%	9%	44%	41%
Students in CFAES respect students with political beliefs different from theirs.	5%	3%	16%	42%	34%
Students in CFAES respect students who have financial background/class/financial standing different than theirs.	3%	1%	3%	46%	47%
Students in CFAES respect each other regardless of age.	2%	1%	2%	46%	51%
Students in CFAES respect students who have disabilities.	3%	1%	3%	45%	48%
In CFAES, male-presenting and female-presenting students respect each other.	2%	1%	4%	47%	46%

TABLE 13

Participants were also asked a series of questions regarding their class-based interactions with students with a variety of intersecting identities as well as developing friendships across those intersecting identities. For the majority of identities, respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that they have the opportunity to interact in



classes with diverse individuals but far more disagreed or strongly disagreed to forming friendships with people with different identities than their own. Please see appendix A for more information.

There was one open ended question that asked **what actions can we as a college take to build a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all faculty, staff, and students?** Several themes emerged.

## Themes/examples

### Events/Programs/Trainings

- Encourage networking activities via social events where we can all meet outside of the classrooms, offices and labs.
- I think a peer-peer mentoring program for students belonging to marginalized groups would be beneficial.
- Having classes that talk about common problems as a discussion would help involve students in a casual way.
- More about how Black students can find work in agricultural fields. Maybe include some African American guest speakers or even events. I work so going to events is hard.
- I think having more conversations around various identities and privileges are important. Many students come from areas where they are not exposed to people who look and have the exact same opinions as them, so working on breaking down the barriers to diversity.
- Require all faculty, staff, and students to attend sensitivity training, commit to DEI training initiatives in student's First Year course on CFAES, invite courses in student core curriculum's outside of CFAES, hire DEI staff for each department, intentionally raise up the voices of marginalized students across CFAES comms,
- Promote the integration of international students in all the activities.
- More conversations about diversity, maybe more trainings...just making it clear discrimination is not tolerated.
- Encourage students to engage in productive conversations about diversity and politics rather than avoiding these topics.
- Possibly a way to help professors and students meet before ever even taking a class together.

### Hiring/Leadership

- Hiring, recruiting, and retaining more diverse staff, faculty, and students.
- I have no mentors of color in CFAES in my graduate studies and I felt alone throughout my time here.
- Continue to maintain a diverse group of faculty members who constantly provide the sparkle to the warm and welcoming environment.
- Most of the administration is older and white. Including more diversity of age, race, and ethnicity at the administrative level should allow for policy changes that better represent the student population.
- Hire more diverse professors at CFAES to make students in different diversity groups feel more welcome.
- and hire and retain diverse staff.
- Having staff and faculty members of a diverse background and with various life experiences. I feel as if most staff and faculty are of similar backgrounds and doesn't foster a diverse learning environment.
- Work on recruiting and retaining more BIPOC faculty.



### Hiring/Leadership (cont.)

- Fund and support faculty of color and young faculty. Many of these faculty are the change agents for the college, bringing in new ideas and cultural expectations. However, when you bog new faculty down with unrealistic course requirements (ex: faculty who teach a 3-day a week course with labs are given the same credit as faculty who teach seminars), have administrative expectations without compensation, don't provide lab or office space, or parental leave- there's no wonder why they end up leaving. We are losing faculty and staff who have the ability to build a diverse, equitable, inclusive and welcoming environment because they are not supported.
- Hire more BIPOC professors.
- Educating faculty and staff on the experiences that their diverse students encounter at a PWI, and hold faculty/ staff accountable when discrimination occurs. Also, include more diverse sources/content in classes.

### Curriculum/Classes

- Include more content that focuses on BIPOC communities or comes from those communities as I feel they are underrepresented in the student population.
- Continue incorporating justice concepts into course material and making sure that CFAES events are accessible to all students.
- I think the classroom material is huge - really need more variety/diversity in author inclusion. Also, would say that I learned a lot about the college's understanding of disability from the pandemic (not in a good way).
- More funding opportunities for underrepresented communities and more inclusive teaching practices.
- Put a priority on inclusive. When professors teach, they include the diversity of agriculture not just the tradition white rural image we consistently see. Agriculture looks different all over including multiple races and ethnicities.
- I think including more discussion within classes about diversity. Additionally, I think more opportunities for community members to know about diverse job opportunities in the environmental field would be helpful.
- Actively encourage professors to provide specific examples of minoritized groups within the field of study. For example, if you are writing an exam question and decide you need to include a name/identify a person, don't always choose to have a name like Jim. Be more inclusive in examples.
- Encourage instructors to include relevant DEI material into courses in some way.
- I think we need more understanding for students in different financial situations. Many CFAES students are commuters and bring a car to campus while there are many who live in Columbus and don't have a car. Expecting that people can show up to labs outside of campus, or events should not be a given.
- I think if people, especially faculty and staff, were more vocal about pronoun declaration and usage, it would be more widely accepted and properly used.
- Emphasize DEI in course content more.
- I think that sharing stories of successful women, people of other races, those with other gender identities, etc. in class would feel more inspiring to those who fall into those categories.
- Continue to spotlight authors/scholars/etc. who are non-white, queer, differently abled, etc.
- Recognize that some students have disabilities and be willing to work within approved plans.
- Understand that not everyone enters CFAES with an agricultural background and should treat everyone with the same respect regardless of previous experience.
- Make sure that college graduates leave here with a basic understanding of DEI -- require all students to take a cultural competency class as part of the curriculum. Make sure examples used in class are relatable to more than just White students who grew up on a farm.



### Student Recruitment

- Try to get minority groups interested in agriculture.
- Work on including more people of color and women in ag business and those who are from more urban and suburban areas into the rural side because it is a whole different world with lots of different terminology.
- Encourage more diverse communities to come to CFAES, as well as have more support groups for minorities.
- Keep encouraging students from city backgrounds to study in CFAES.
- Do more recruiting and reaching out in minority communities, make sure that there are support groups for minority students in CFAES.
- There's no diversity in CFAES. I'm surrounded by non POC all day and everyone turns the other way, despite my attempts to connect with people. I don't feel like there's really anyone in the college that I can relate to. I can sit in a room full of 200 students in a CFAES class and I'll be only 1 of 2 African Americans.
- I think that part of CFAES often feels unwelcoming is that although there is a public acceptance for diversity, there is a lack of it. Majority of CFAES is white, heterosexual, Christian, rural-background individuals. Unless more people of different races, ethnicities, etc. are interested in CFAES, it will remain exactly where it is now. I do appreciate the diversity talks and such, but there is such a lack of diversity. When you're not a part of the main crowd, the main population of students at CFAES, whether by race, religion, etc., it immediately sets you apart from them. I've found many students to be welcoming, but on the other hand, many snub you out and form their own exclusive cliques. I just would like it if CFAES made an effort to make themselves more known on main campus to attract the attention of more diverse people who might have not previously thought about what CFAES has to offer.
- Faculty need to recruit more of a diverse graduate student population.

## Focus groups

### Student Focus Group Qualitative Analysis

During spring semester 2022, 25 students participated in nine focus groups to discuss their views on the current state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the college. Eleven undergraduate and 14 graduate students participated in the focus groups. Each focus group lasted approximately 60 minutes.

Programs represented:

- Agricultural Comm, Ed & Leadership
- Animal Sciences
- Biochemical Sciences
- Construction Systems Management



- Environment & Natural Resources
- Environmental Policy & Decision Making
- Environmental Science
- Environment, Economy, Development & Sustainability
- Food Science and Technology
- Food, Agricultural & Biological Engineering
- Forestry Fisheries & Wildlife
- Horticulture and Crop Science
- Sustainable Plant Systems

Students were asked to respond to 9 questions:

1. What does a diverse, inclusive, and equitable college look like?
2. What are your impressions of CFAES when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
3. What are your biggest concerns related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in CFAES?
4. What issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion are most important to you?
5. What creates an inclusive climate?
6. How does the College demonstrate that there is a value for diversity, equity, and inclusion?
7. What detracts/erodes an inclusive climate?
8. What would you like to tell the Dean about diversity, equity, and inclusion?
9. What should we have asked that we did not?

Question responses often overlapped as students shared stories of their experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion. Each question and associated responses are summarized below and include some direct quotes.

## Question 1: What does a diverse, inclusive, and equitable college look like?

The most frequent response to this was a desire to see an increased representation of non-white students, staff, and faculty. Students noted that a diverse college should mimic the demographics of the communities it serves. Followed by the need for a diversity of thought, expression, and respect for differently abled individuals. Students stated a desire to have more diversity of thought within the classroom as it relates to authors, researchers, and opinions was a topic that should be discussed with faculty. Students also noted the classroom spaces should be and feel inclusive for all students, suggesting training for faculty and staff on creating inclusive classroom spaces. One student noted that a diverse and inclusive college is one where students from different backgrounds and with different abilities are able to succeed.



- “I think in terms of diversity of student, I think of racial diversity and experiential diversity. I see that oftentimes colleges lean heavily on their international student populations to account for diversity, which is fine. But it’s not diversity if you’re only pocket if your primary populations are international students”. (Grad student)
- “I completely agree with like having the diversity of you know race background, but I also want to emphasize like diversity of thought and just like. Making sure people who have different thought processes are different like ideals or ideologies”. (UG student)
- ” I think just more than more than white people and a lot of them are old. So, I think younger staff would help as long. If nothing else, because they would probably be able to relate to the certain things and familiar with what we are going through now”. (UG student)
- “I think a diverse college one looks like an equal opposite representation of the population I’m from what I’ve seen majority of our faculty is white and we don’t see I personally don’t experience a lot of professors that are outside of being white... So I would like to see student and teacher demographics are actually more diverse, then what is currently seen by me, this is my personal experience.” (UG student)
- “...accessibility for people, not only with disabilities, but even mentally I think that we need to be more open to. Addressing that with each other and like kind of kill the stigma.” (UG student)
- “Giving I don’t know training or tips for faculty and staff to have more inclusive classroom practices like creating your own groups, whether like the Professor head makes them or uses like a name group generated using pronouns and making that very welcome and or like, as well as the use of nicknames or other preferred names again from the gender identity side of if your legal name does not match what you prefer to be called. Being able to make space for that in in your classroom, so I think: Putting some of that responsibility on the faculty and staff to help make an overall more inclusive”. {UG student)

## Question 2: What are your impressions of CFAES when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion?

General impressions of CFAES were that DEI efforts were widely talked about but not often seen. Impressions that DEI efforts were superficial and performative lead the results. Both graduate and undergraduate students mentioned challenges of inclusion within their programs and classes. Overall impressions were that in some ways the college is doing better than it was a few years ago but there is still a long way to go towards being truly diverse, equitable and inclusive.

- “It’s a lot harder to break into I feel and then maybe if you’re to go into like. Something like the less well-known spaces that don’t attract like the same kind of people all the time, so I think there’s definitely parts of the College that are like a lot harder to like break into than others.” (UG student)
- “I feel like there’s a there’s a standard that’s been established, as far as inclusion is concerned. I think that could be more implementation there’s, just like you said it’s hard to crack in sometimes once you do you know you start to feel comfortable around people...” (Grad student)
- “In terms of the superficial level like we can see the diversity is there, we can see people coming from all races and religion and all sorts of ideas is that relevant mentioned. Like on superficial level it’s there, but as we talked before deep down the class dynamics and how it is being”. (UG student)



Other students mentioned a lack of understanding they faced from peers on the challenges of being a minority on a predominately white campus along with apathy about the need to create diverse and inclusive spaces.

- “it’s hard you, you want to have a role model, and also the role models don’t look like you and it feels like you know I’m the only one, and it gets so hard, sometimes, especially as an undergraduate student at Some of these undergraduate students that don’t understand what it’s like to have an experience unique to ours and be very insensitive and it’d be nice to at least have another pod of anything student faculty and staff to at least talk to, or have focus groups with or just anything like that.” (UG student)
- “I think that there are ways that it can improve in terms of like support of students and faculty initiatives and supportive, especially faculty of color. I think, as a graduate student being kind of closer to that realm of faculty and seeing. The ways that some faculty don’t have to engage and like can check out of DEI initiatives or causes and there’s like no repercussions. It does shape the culture of your school and department overall and how other faculty members are like heavy laden with all of these responsibilities, as are some graduate students are. Then, some graduate students can just check out, so I think it’s not necessarily like the intent is fair, right? Like the vibe I guess is kind of like there in the background. And, it’s like it feels like people leaders in the college know the words that should be said, but in terms of enacting those words are like what does it mean to actually do that work day to day is not taking us seriously or it’s not taking us like a real thing a yeah.” (Grad student)

### Question 3: What are your biggest concerns related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in CFAES?

Students’ most salient concerns related to DEI were lack of support towards DEI efforts and a focus more on inclusion and equity, including students with physical and mental disabilities.

In relation to having a support system, students noted concerns about being recruited into programs to increase diversity numbers but not having support from faculty or staff with regards to mentoring, navigating policies and rules, and not really being champions of DEI but being forced to participate in DEI efforts within the college.

- “As much as we can promote diversity, it shouldn’t be a forced thing. Like if someone doesn’t want to do it, then they shouldn’t be like forced to; we should be able to offer as many resources to make people feel this is a good choice for them...we’re providing people with the right resources.” (UG student)
- “...some self-reflection and awareness, for maybe like allies, or people who want to be allies. I can’t put into words it’s like I just think, because this is a predominantly white institution, those who want to be allies, it’s a good opportunity but I definitely feel it’s a slippery slope. I don’t want them to think that this is about them because it’s not. Maybe for some of the faculty and staff who are white, who are teaching, you know, POC, they need to understand some signs to look for... I’m not going to raise my hand if I feel like none of my ideas are being heard. I’m not gonna do it i’m just simply not.
- It is difficult to participate if the professors are not aware of the student dynamic that’s going on... they need to be informed, because if we’re going to advocate for diversity at a predominantly white institution. These white professors, these white students, they gotta understand like this isn’t us just saying, “hey we’re here.” It’s a lot





more than that, there's a lot that comes with this. There's people need to understand like what a micro aggression is like how does it impact a student of color? students' grades? or how does it impact their self-esteem? Like they gotta start understanding these things. You can't bring students in and then, as a white professor, think, just this "Oh, well you're here." like it ends there because it doesn't. (Grad student)

The comments regarding more of a need to focus on inclusion and equity provided insight into students thinking about how different communities are treated in the college, specifically LGBTQ+ students, non-native English speakers, students of color and students with physical and mental disabilities. For LGBTQ+ students, participants noted that a lack of visible LGBTQ+ campus members contributed to feelings of isolation and invisibility. For non-native English speakers, participants provided examples of being misunderstood when presenting and colleagues refusing to learn how to pronounce their names correctly.

- "I had a presentation yesterday for my proposal presentation and I was so nervous that I would like forget words...my first language is Spanish...we learn English but it's not at all the same level as it will be here. Which is like more formal and English words I have never heard of...it's kind of challenging for me to be evaluated at the same level as an English native speaker. And I tend to forget words I am translating from Spanish to English in my mind, all the time. And, especially when i'm nervous... I don't know if that's something that is something that could be addressed for more to me a more inclusive environment for all our different groups." (Grad student)
- "... I can't tell you my name every other day, and you keep on saying, How do you pronounce your name, did I pronounce it correctly? A name is the basic identity that somebody has been given and it's very important."

Students with disabilities both physical and mental, noted concerns about lack of access to field experiences and required internships along with the taboo nature of discussing mental health disabilities with peers and faculty.

- "...general like kind of culture in the resources we have like probably is the biggest issue...as a disabled student just not feeling like I have the same access to resources... the field work was so inaccessible [environmental science major] and so many of my classes are just completely unprepared to deal with any sort of like physical disability...it's been just like ridiculously difficult for me to work with my professors so many of my classes, I just like can't do parts of them, and I just have to do like you know some other different makeup assignment because I can't do it like based on like how the classes are set up." (UG student)
- "... there's now a course for preparation for graduate school... they did mention the wellness things available, but at the same time, when it came up around this difficult title of mental, it felt for me like a taboo..." (Grad student)

## Question 4: What issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion are most important to you?

The top issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion were creating a more inclusive college which includes an updated curriculum reflective of new scholars and knowing which resources and supports are available and how to access them. Inclusion related



concerns included a desire for students to have their voices heard and reflected in the authors utilized in courses along with being able to conduct research that was important to them and their personal and professional goals. Another inclusion related theme was students commenting about their desire to find common ground with peers which led to feeling a sense of belonging and acceptance.

Finding supports and resources on campus were mentioned and were similar to responses for Question 2. New additions to this theme were a desire for more formalized peer to peer mentoring and orientation programs which students found useful.

- “I think the element of being accepted, like your ideas being valued, it’s really important because there’s no human being, who doesn’t have an idea...and having that support system to help you grow, that’s why people go to school...” (UG student)
- “I think, for me, the thing I brought up earlier around poverty and supporting students who do need extra support. As one as well as student mental health, helping students get the support they need, as well as supporting students with disabilities, this is the first degree I’ve done with accommodations for ADHD because I didn’t know I had it previously.” (grad student)
- “...I’m just an undergraduate student I have a very limited experience with research. But from what I’ve observed, there is like kind of an emphasis on the imperial empirical science and like that’s not necessarily a bad thing, I understand our society is structured that way. I think there needs to be more appeals to the social sciences...I feel like the social scientists like aren’t integrated super well into the College, because our college is so like focused on hard science. Getting all these facts so good, but then we have to be able to translate that for the public and that’s where the social sciences come in and I just feel like there’s not enough resources or programs kind of helping bridge the gap between those two and also. You know, helping natural scientists figure out how to communicate their research.” (UG student)

## Question 5: What creates an inclusive climate?

Students offered several examples of what creates an inclusive climate with the top items being: mentoring program students, a focus on creating improved access and support for students with disabilities and LGBTQ2+ students, feeling a sense of belonging and equal opportunity for access the success.

The desire for formal mentoring as means to helping students learn to navigate life at OSU was mentioned by both undergraduate and graduate students as contributing to an inclusive climate by providing students with an immediate campus connection. One undergraduate student mentioned the peer mentoring program available in SENR and shared that it was helpful as he transitioned from high school to college. The need for access and support for students with disabilities has been mentioned several times through the focus groups and was brought up again on this question. Sense of belonging was again mentioned as students shared their desire to be in environments where they could be always their authentic selves without the need for code switching or hiding parts of their identities. Finally, the college and university should provide equal



opportunity for access and enrollment by ensuring recruitment practices and support systems are focused on DEI efforts.

- “I know one thing that some of my classes in my undergrad institution did was we would introduce ourselves, along with our pronouns... for people who wanted to say their pronouns or their pronouns did not necessarily match maybe their expression, you would be able to use the correct pronouns as opposed to just assuming that they use like she or he pronouns And I know that can be very...can be odd for like cisgender and straight people to be like, “Hi I’m Matthew I use he/him pronouns, but it can be very validating to people who have different gender identities and different gender expressions so that’s one way that can be very inclusive.” (UG student)
- “A diverse student body in a classroom would make it more inclusive as well, and then also making sure, like the classroom is accessible just for anybody like the students with disabilities to be able to come to class and participate, the same as everybody else.” (UG student)
- “...an inclusive climate to me is one where I can fully do myself and don’t have to worry about code switching or acting differently, just because I’m around specific group of people...I feel like if it’s an inclusive environment I should be able to fully be myself without worries of ... there’s a word I’m looking for, but I cannot think it’s like it’s synonymous with punishment...” (UG student)
- “I think that’s the first definition that came to mind to me was just where I would fully be able to be myself and get the support that I need and being able to be as frank, as I needed to be or as genuine and authentic as I could be to get the things that I do need to be successful.” (Grad student)
- ‘...Like a you know, an institution as large as OSU is like challenging sometime, most the time honestly, because we don’t do a lot with disabled students in anyway, even with queer students... And I know our President is like LGBT Q she’s married to a woman...but I feel like there’s just not enough. This needs to come from the administration and even the President herself to kind of elevate and empower declaring disabled students and other students who are minorities and part of marginalized communities here on campus like. I’m tired, I need more like I’m not getting it. (UG student)
- “...the ability to create an inclusive climate that revolves mostly around the fact of making sure the gates are open to everybody, but not singling them out if they do come in, like you have to be here, you have to be there has to be. A conglomerate of sorts without singling people out for their differences and make sure they all just understand that everybody’s different. and be respectful at the same time.” (Grad student)

## Question 6: How does the College demonstrate that there is a value for diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Students struggled to articulate ways in which the College demonstrates that there is value for diversity. Ways mentioned by students include use of diverse images in promotional materials, invited speakers, seminars on DEI and increasing recruitment of diverse students, staff, and faculty.

- “...there are also some efforts being made on the administration’s behalf like you know...with the dean’s email... there’s a section on everything that’s happening with diversity equity inclusion. And it’s like. it’s usually like somewhere at the towards like the middle to the top of the email, which is really good because, like, I feel like more people are likely to read it and it’s closer to the top.” (UG student)



- "... they provide resources that students might be able to use like the food pantry or the mental health services or those sorts of things are advertising events for students, I think I think that's great as well as I think if, as does a good job of keeping an eye on the climate and the temperature and taking complaints or student concerns seriously... I feel as if it's very intentional and it's done in a good way right now and just continuing to be intentional....And I think the other thing is exactly what you are doing right now, like you're like not just taking time to meet with students and hear their perspectives are different stakeholders and hear their perspective to see how I can better."
- "...I see a much wider diversity of students and even being intentional about hiring. A wider range of individuals, whether it's age race. Sexual orientation any of those things, and I think that that's wonderful and I think just I came to Columbus to work on my undergrad in 2008 and it's a completely different world than it was in 2008 within the College I think there's been a lot of progress has been made, but I think we have to keep that momentum moving forward..."

## Question 5: What detracts/erodes an inclusive climate?

Students had clear thoughts about things which detract or erode an inclusive climate with the top themes being resistance to change, lack of safe spaces for underrepresented students, and intolerance. When speaking about the resistance to change, students mentioned ideas that came up in previous questions: resistance to update curricula to be more inclusive of underrepresented scholars and researchers, resistance recognizing gender differences and support gender expression, and viewing DEI as a checklist item without being engaged in making lasting change.

A lack of safe spaces for underrepresented students was mentioned as meaning students are fearful of bringing their full identities into classroom and lab spaces. As previously mentioned, students want to bring their authentic selves to campus and not feel the need to hide any parts of themselves. When students encounter faculty who ask them as an underrepresented student to speak on behalf of all members of their group, who ignore gender expression and pronoun preference and/or only use the works of white authors and researchers, students reported feeling inability to speak up without fear of retribution.

Finally, intolerance was mentioned in conjunction with the other two themes as students reported some faculty seemed to view DEI efforts as useless and unworthy of their time and energy.

- "So when whenever we're in class and the topic of diversity or inclusion comes up don't always pick the person, that is the most diverse to speak on that topic knows in my everybody has an opinion and also encourage people to talk." (UG student)
- "Not being open. When people resist change when people don't want to reflect on something that they said or something that they did. When they are not willing to reevaluate their own maybe personal biases or opinions it could get completely hold us back. (UG student)



- “Rigid mindset. and the lack of concern for the other person. can easily erode their efforts...we are living in a world where people are questioning. A lot of inconsistencies that have been ongoing for us for long so as a professor what examples are you using in in class? Are you sticking to the past, or are you telling people that hey, this is what was there, I mean it has is it had its own good and bad, but now, this is where we are, or this is how we are, we can move forward as a generation or as a class or for in this concept?” (Grad student)
- “...feeling like the like it's not a safe space to share your opinions and views definitely what erodes an inclusive climate, because people wouldn't feel safe sharing their opinions and views” (UG student)
- “...what came to mind, for me, was just intolerance, so he who aren't willing to accept people from different backgrounds, different cultures. And something that I am always thinking about in agriculture, specifically, is that, like historically agriculture was not a place that people that look like me could thrive.” (Grad student)
- “What does it call like anti racist you know conversations being held within the College and that's great and everything. But at the same time, I feel like there also needs to be an appeal to the privileged people. I'd be like, “Hey let's talk about your privilege as a white person let's talk about your privilege as a man let's talk about your privilege as a straight person or cisgender person.”. Because I feel like a lot of people who are within those oppressed communities are going to be showing up to those anti racist talks, rather than like a lot of privileged people, and I even myself like as much as I say, like oh i'm anti racist I do all this and whatnot. I didn't go to any of those.” (Grad student)
- “...from what I have observed, not only within the College, but also across the university there's always these diversity equity inclusion efforts happening without really addressing like specific. privileged groups. It's always appealing to the oppressed people like. that's good for communities' sake, but we also have to get all these other people who are in the privileged spaces to realize oh man, we have privilege, we need to be with these oppressed people if you're not you're not if you're not making those connections it's not going to be as effective.” (Grad student)

## Question 8: What should we have asked that we did not?

1. What specific things can the College do to improve diversity and like.
2. What the university could do specifically and follow through with those actions.
3. Questions about prospective college students and what resources can help them get to OSU.
4. How you see other students and how they react to things like that
5. Maybe something specific and supposed to personal experiences I don't know how willing everybody is to share what anything that like specifically happened to them.
6. What are moments are instances where you have needed support and didn't receive it as a student of you know marginalized identity or a student of color.
7. What our resources that you feel like lacking resources and experiences.



A

# Appendix A

---

In CFAES classes I interact with students who have a different race/ethnicity than mine.

Answer	%	Count
Unsure/I don't know	1%	10
Strongly disagree	3%	23
Disagree	13%	101
Agree	55%	416
Strongly agree	27%	200

TABLE 14

In CFAES classes I interact with students who have a different religion than mine.

Answer	%	Count
Unsure/I don't know	11%	85
Strongly disagree	1%	11
Disagree	8%	51
Agree	55%	414
Strongly agree	25%	188

TABLE 15

In CFAES classes I interact with students who have a different political affiliation than mine.

Answer	%	Count
Unsure/I don't know	7%	52
Strongly disagree	2%	13
Disagree	7%	56
Agree	52%	393
Strongly agree	31%	235

TABLE 16

