



Wisdom to make a difference.

2021 Campus Climate Survey Findings

Keene State College (KSC) has maintained a commitment to equity and diversity on campus. KSC strives to recruit and retain diverse students, faculty, and staff with a priority of creating and maintaining a supportive campus climate with a “student-centered experience” focus. Given the changes in demographics of potential college students, workforce needs, and the shrinking global context, the synergy between the KSC priorities is important to providing a quality education for all students and an inclusive culture for employees.

Many challenges in the United States and throughout the world are having an impact on higher education, and KSC is not exempted. To gain a deeper understanding of the impact and actively co-create a plan to address these challenges, KSC conducted a campus climate survey in fall 2021. All employees and students were invited to respond to it as a means of assessing how well KSC ensures that all members of its campus community feel welcome, supported, and safe.

Separate student and employee forms of this survey examine and compare experiences on campus and in the local community across race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, transgender identity, age, disability status, and employment category (for employees). In addition to quantitative measures that use scales to assess campus climate experiences, the survey contains open-ended items that ask respondents to describe critical incidents relating to their experience as an employee or student and share advice on how to improve the culture.

The campus climate survey is a locally developed online survey that was previously administered on a three-year cycle in 2011, 2014, and 2017. The 2020 administration was delayed by a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the summer of 2021, KSC experienced significant changes to its academic programs and faculty composition to adjust for lower enrollment. The impacts of these changes are evident in the comments from both students and employees and mostly likely account for some of the contrasts in the quantitative responses compared to prior administrations of the survey.

This report summarizes the results of the campus climate survey. Findings included in this report will inform the College’s equity and diversity programming.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Key Findings from the 2021 Campus Climate Survey	3
Methods	6
Survey Instrument.....	6
Participants	7
Administration	8
Campus Climate Measures	9
Supportive Environment.....	9
Welcoming and Unwelcoming Experiences	15
Additional Campus Climate Themes	17
Campus Climate by Respondents' Identities	20
Race/Ethnicity	20
Gender	21
LGBTQ+ Status	24
Disability Status	26
Political and Religious Ideology	29
Students' Class Level	30
Employees' Employment Category	32
Students Learning about Diversity	36
KSC Courses	36
KSC Out-of-Class Experiences.....	37
Recommended Actions	38
Conclusion	39

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE 2021 CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY

Context for Findings

The response rates for the campus climate surveys were low, with 9% of students and 20% of employees completing the survey. When interpreting key findings, it is important to consider that the small student sample and modest employee sample might not accurately represent the full KSC population. It is also noteworthy that findings might have been influenced by the significant changes KSC made to its academic programs and faculty composition as a response to low enrollment.

Supportive Environment

A majority of students feel welcome at KSC (77%) and physically safe on campus (69%). Only 48% agree that KSC provides the support they need to thrive socially. Compared to prior administrations of the campus climate survey, students' agreement with all supportive environment measures significantly declined in the 2021 survey.

A high majority of employees feel welcome at KSC (77%) and feel physically safe on campus (91%). Nearly all employees also reported being treated respectfully by students (87%) and staff (90%). Fewer agree that KSC provides the assistance they need to succeed in their work (41%—down from 54% in 2017) and that KSC communicates that all members of the college community are valued (47%—down from 57% in 2017). However, most of the employees' evaluations of KSC' campus climate remain consistent with the 2011, 2014, and 2017 surveys.

Welcoming and Unwelcoming Experiences

In the 2021 campus climate survey, 47% of students reported that they personally had an experience at KSC or in the greater Keene community in which they felt particularly welcomed and supported, which is a decline from prior surveys (54% in 2017). Nearly a third of students had an experience in which they felt unwelcome, unfairly treated, disrespected, or unsafe, which they believe was related to some aspect of their identity (32%), which is a significant increase from 2017 (26%).

Among employees, 49% reported experiences in which they felt welcomed and supported, which was relatively consistent with earlier administrations of the campus climate survey. Only 21% reported having an experience in which they felt unwelcome, unfairly treated, disrespected, or unsafe. This is a significant decrease from 2017, where nearly a third (32%) of employees reported having a negative experience like this.

Findings by Respondents' Identities

Race/Ethnicity

There were no statistically significant differences between responses from white students and students of color in the 2021 campus climate survey. Some open-ended comments described experiences of racial prejudice and recommendations to KSC relating to the experiences of students of color. Only 5 employees identified as people of color, so there are no employee analyses by race/ethnicity.

Gender

There were no significant differences in the campus climate experiences of students or employees between men and women. However, fewer nonbinary students had an experience of being welcomed and supported than men or women students (14% versus 47% and 49%, respectively). In the open-ended responses, some women students revealed a concern of sexual harassment and sexual assault, and some women employees described experiences of sexism in the workplace.

LGBTQ+ Status

Among both students and employees, there were no significant differences in the quantitative measures between heterosexual, cisgender respondents and respondents who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, non-binary, or another non-cisgender or non-heterosexual identity (LGBTQ+). In their open-ended responses, students who are LGBTQ+ described both positive and negative campus experiences.

Disability Status

A smaller proportion of students who reported having one or more disabilities feel that they belong at KSC compared to students who did not report having disabilities (53% versus 65%). In addition, only 66% of the students with disabilities agree that they are treated respectfully by staff/administrators, compared to 78% of other students. In response to the open-ended questions, students with disabilities described difficulties they face on campus, as well as recommendations to improve access and awareness.

Significantly more employees with disabilities reported that they had an experience in which they felt unwelcomed, unfairly treated, disrespected, or unsafe, which they believe was related to some aspect of their identity, compared to employees who did not report having disabilities (35% versus 18%).

Class Level

Most first year students agree that KSC communicates that all members of the college community are valued (70%), that KSC communicates the importance of treating all members of the college community with respect (75%), and that they overall would recommend KSC to friends or siblings as a good place to go to college (73%), whereas significantly fewer sophomores, juniors, and seniors agree with those statements. In the open-ended responses, students described positive experiences from their first year at KSC.

Employment Category

Tenure/tenure-track faculty have significantly lower agreement with six supportive environment measures than employees in other employment categories. For example, less than half (46%) of tenured/tenure-track faculty feel like they belong here, compared to over three-quarters of other employees. A higher proportion of tenured/tenure-track faculty reported an experience of feeling unwelcomed, unfairly treated, disrespected, or unsafe compared to operating staff. In open-ended responses, employees described particular challenges they face as faculty and staff members.

METHODS

Survey Instrument

Designed by the college in 2011 and revised in 2014, 2017, and 2021, the Keene State College campus climate survey investigates students and employees' experiences at and evaluations of KSC and the wider Keene community. There is a student version and employee version of the survey instrument. Sets of questions examine the following topic areas:

Supportive Environment

The 13 questions in this set ask participants to rate their agreement with statements expressing feelings of being welcome, supported, valued, safe, and respected (e.g., "I feel welcome at KSC;" "In general, I am treated respectfully by students.").¹

Welcoming and Unwelcoming Experiences

The two initial questions in this section ask participants to indicate if in the past three years they had 1) an experience resulting in a feeling of being welcomed and supported, and 2) an experience related to some aspect of their identity that caused them to feel unwelcome, unfairly treated, disrespected, or unsafe.

Participants who answered "yes" to either of these questions were asked to tell as much or as little about the experience as they were comfortable to share in an open-ended response.

Open-Ended Feedback

The four questions in this set ask participants if there is anything else they would like to share to assess the campus climate, as well as what participants think KSC should continue doing, stop doing, and start doing when it comes to co-creating an inclusive, welcoming, and equitable campus.

Demographics

A set of questions capturing participants' demographics allows for comparative analyses across identities, including by gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, disability status, student level (for students) and employment category (for employees).

Exposure to Diversity Issues

The student version of the campus climate survey also contains a section related to learning about diversity. These asked students to rate their agreement with their exposure to nine different diversity issues (e.g., age/generational status, disabilities, and gender) both in their academic courses and in out-of-class experiences sponsored by or taking place at KSC.

¹ Respondents rated these measures on a 5-point Likert Scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In this report, results are presented as the percent who agree or strongly agree with a given item.

Participants

Student Survey

The student survey was completed by 269 of the 3,104 students enrolled during the Fall 2021 term, creating a 9% response rate. This is a lower response rate than prior administrations of the campus climate survey (e.g., the 2017 student campus climate survey response rate was 12%). When interpreting results, it is important to consider that this small sample might not accurately represent the full KSC student population.

A comparison of select demographics between the student sample and the full student population indicates that sophomores are somewhat over-represented (Figure 1), and a higher proportion of on-campus students and women are in the survey sample compared to the full population (Figure 2). There were no major differences by race/ethnicity.

Figure 1.

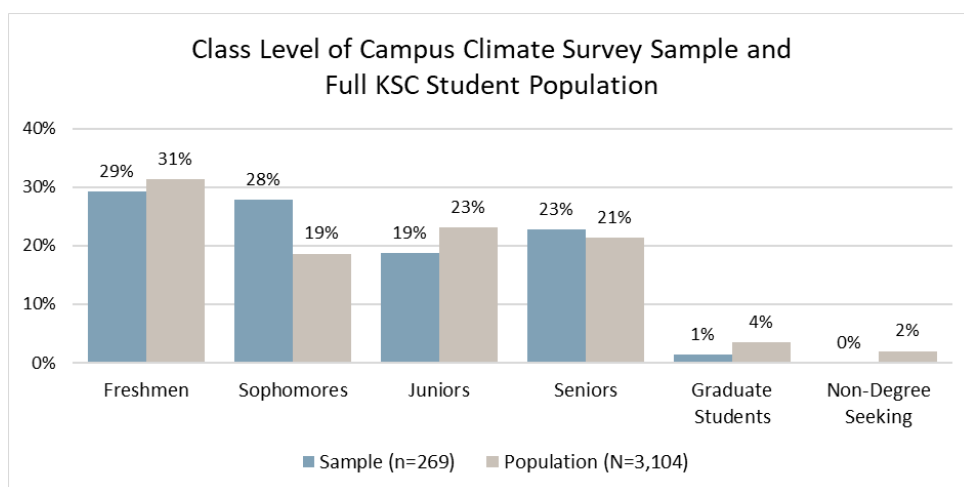
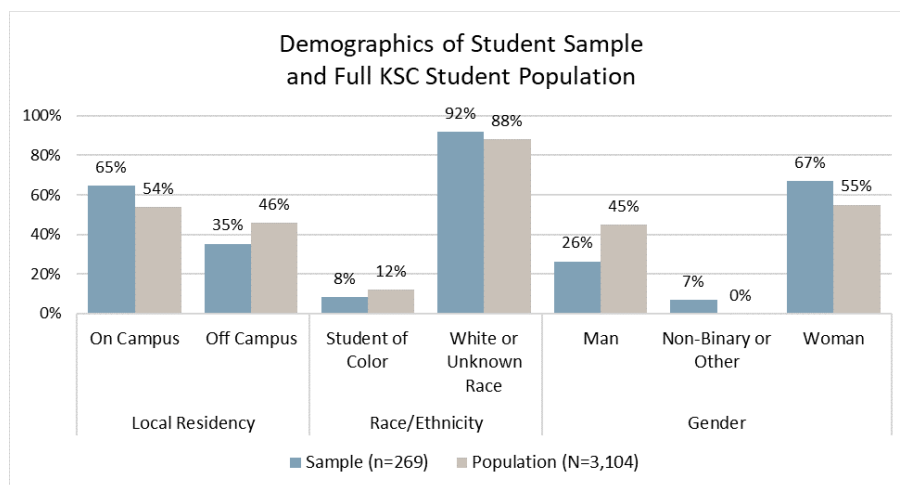


Figure 2.²



² The gender of the student population is from admissions data, where non-binary/other gender identities are not captured.

Employee Survey

Of the 1,000 people employed at KSC in Fall 2021, 197 completed the survey. This 20% response rate, while higher than the student survey, is lower than prior years' employee campus climate surveys (e.g., the 2017 employee campus climate survey response rate was 38%). However, among full-time employees with benefits, the response rate for the 2021 campus climate survey was substantially higher. Nearly half of PAT and operating staff completed the survey (49% and 45% respectively), and 28% of tenured and tenure-track faculty completed the survey.

Administration

During November 2021, employees and students received email invitations to complete the survey from President Melinda Treadwell. Follow-up reminder emails were sent by various campus leaders and by the president. Additional reminders were sent to both groups in December of 2021, and the 2021 campus climate survey administration window was closed at the end of the fall semester.

CAMPUS CLIMATE MEASURES

Supportive Environment

Students

Compared to prior years' findings, a significantly lower proportion of students agree with the measures about KSC being a supportive environment (Figure 3). Over three-quarters of students reported feeling welcome (77%), while a smaller majority agree that they belong here (59%), that they feel physically safe on campus (69%), and that KSC provides the assistance they need to succeed academically (61%). Less than half of students agree that KSC provides the support they need to thrive socially (48%—down from 68% in 2017).

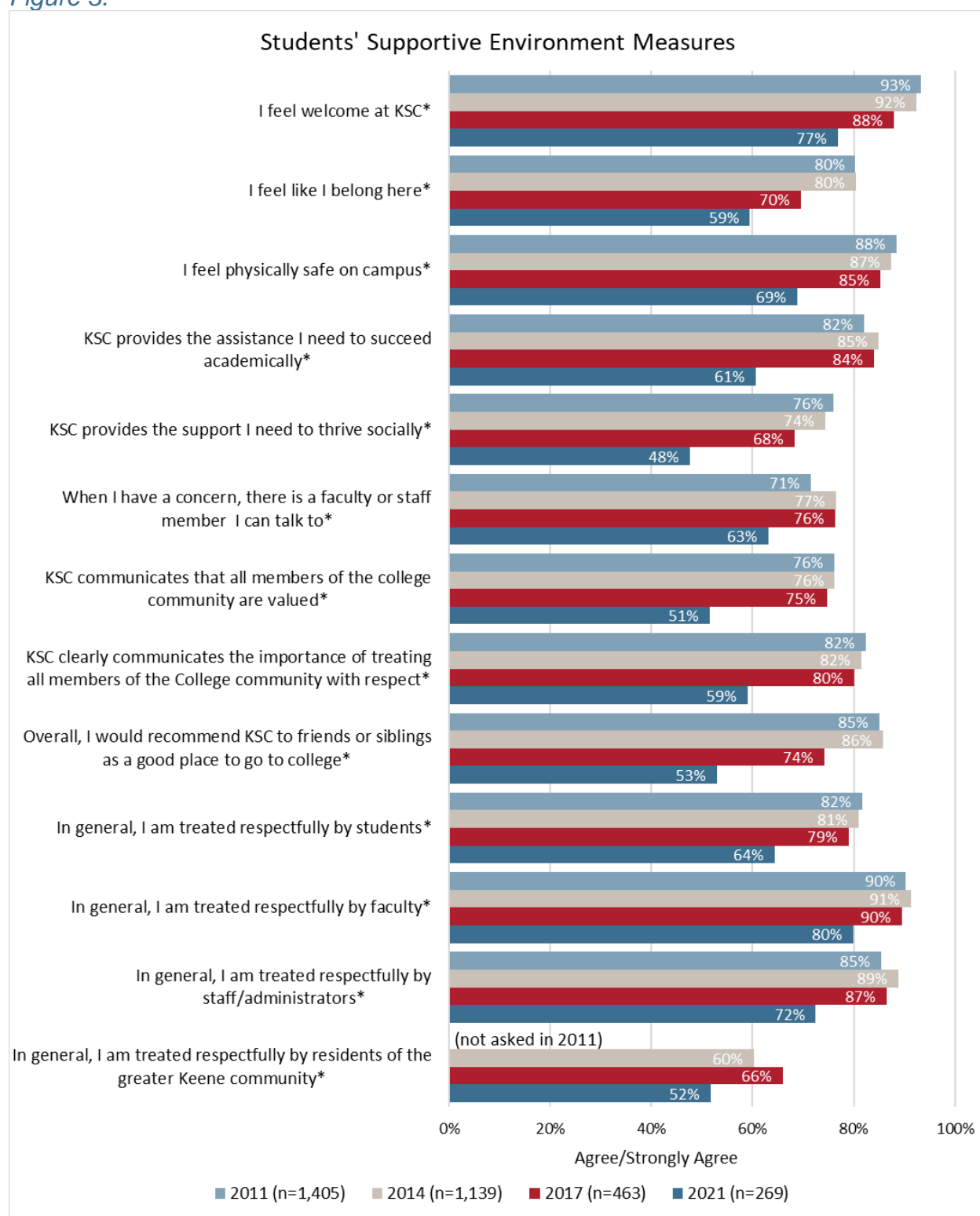
A modest majority agree that when they have a concern, there is a faculty or staff member they can talk to (63%), and over half of students think KSC communicates that all members of the college are valued (51%), that KSC clearly communicates the importance of treating all members of the College community with respect (59%), and that they overall would recommend KSC as a good place to go to college (53%).

Most students agree that they are respectfully treated by students (64%), faculty (80%), staff and administrators (72%), and residents of the Keene Community (52%). However, like all other supportive environment measures, there was greater agreement with being treated respectfully in prior years' student campus climate surveys.

The decline in agreement across all supportive environment measures from the 2017 to 2021 survey suggests that students are having a less positive experience at KSC compared to previous years. This could be due to factors such as the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' social and academic experiences. Low enrollment in recent years led to substantial changes in academic programs and loss of faculty in summer 2021, which affected some students' schedules and course options for fall 2021. Alternatively, a low response rate among KSC students might reflect that the 2021 results do not accurately represent the full student population.

In students' responses to open-ended questions, many described experiences and views that relate to these supportive environment measures. A set of students' responses are presented in Table 1. For some of these themes, such as treatment by residents of the greater Keene community, students provided both positive and negative examples.

Figure 3.³



³ For all figures in this report, an asterisk (*) after a measure indicates a statistically significant difference among the compared groups ($p < .05$). In this case, 2021 is significantly different from prior years' results.

Table 1. Examples of Comments Made by Students about KSC' Environment

Theme	Examples of Comments
Feel Welcomed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I think that Keene overall has done a very good job of making me feel welcome." • "I've made friends with people around the campus who have welcomed me, and I've become very close with them." • "I would say that the campus isn't unwelcoming, it's just not overly welcoming."
Belong Here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I have always felt very supported and heard here."
Physically Safe on Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I wish that we had more lights and cameras along the walk to Winch, I'd feel more safe walking over if there was more lighting and cameras along the way."
Support to Thrive Socially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "There are a lot of activities that are happening every week that everyone can participate in." • "I really like that there are a lot of groups and programs for people!"
Assistance to Succeed Academically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "All of my professors have been very accommodating and helpful when I reach out to them." • "Had an advisor that genuinely helped me in my field and recommended me for other programs and supported/challenged me to strive for more in my college career." • "Honestly I'm very disappointed in how Keene has been this semester. I feel like professors are setting us up to fail and not helping us at all. We need support in these hard times"
There Is a Faculty or Staff Member I Can Talk To	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "There are plenty of resources for a number of different issues." • "My first year here was remote so I wasn't able to take part in many social events. However, my first year seminar teacher has helped me a lot throughout the past two years and helped me to feel more prepared for when I got to campus by helping me with questions I had."
Communicates that All Members of the College Community are Valued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I really like how the college makes an effort to include those who are from different countries." • "[Office of Multicultural Student Support and Success staff] are great and I really appreciate that you guys are openly pro-LGBTQ+ and racially equity etc. and always have slides etc. up with info and resources."
Treatment by Residents of the Greater Keene Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I had someone stop me on main street once to tell me how thankful they were that Keene State students respected the local mask policy and covid regulations. It made them happy to see that the younger population of the area understood the risk of that timeframe." • "As a college student in the greater Keene community, there is such a bias against the college students who live and work in the city as being 'troublemakers', and that all we do is party. [...] I do not feel welcome in the city, and I do not feel supported as a young adult who is planning to stay after graduation to work and live here. I love the city of Keene and all it has to offer, but it's getting harder to do so."

Employees

Employees' responses to the supportive environment measures were more consistent with prior campus climate surveys (Figure 4). Most employees feel welcome (77%), like they belong here (65%), and physically safe on campus (91%). Two-thirds agree that KSC clearly communicates the importance of treating all members of the college community with respect. A high majority of employees feel that they are treated respectfully by students (87%) and by staff (90%). Most employees also agree that they are treated respectfully by faculty (69%), administrators (65%), and residents of the greater Keene community (73%). For all of these measures, the results in 2021 are consistent with prior years' campus climate surveys.

However, on some measures there was a decline in employees' agreement with supportive environment measures. Under half of all employees agree that KSC provides the assistance they need to succeed in their work (41%) and that KSC communicates that all members of the college community are valued (47%), whereas the majority of employees agreed with these statements in previous campus climate surveys. Unlike earlier, only a small majority of employees know who to talk with to begin to resolve an issue (53%) and would overall recommend KSC as a good place to work (54%).

Employees described their experiences with and views on KSC' campus climate within their responses to open-ended questions. Table 2 presents themes and example comments associated with the supportive environment measures. Like among students, employees' views on KSC vary, with some describing positive experiences and evaluations and others sharing about challenging or negative experiences.

Figure 4.

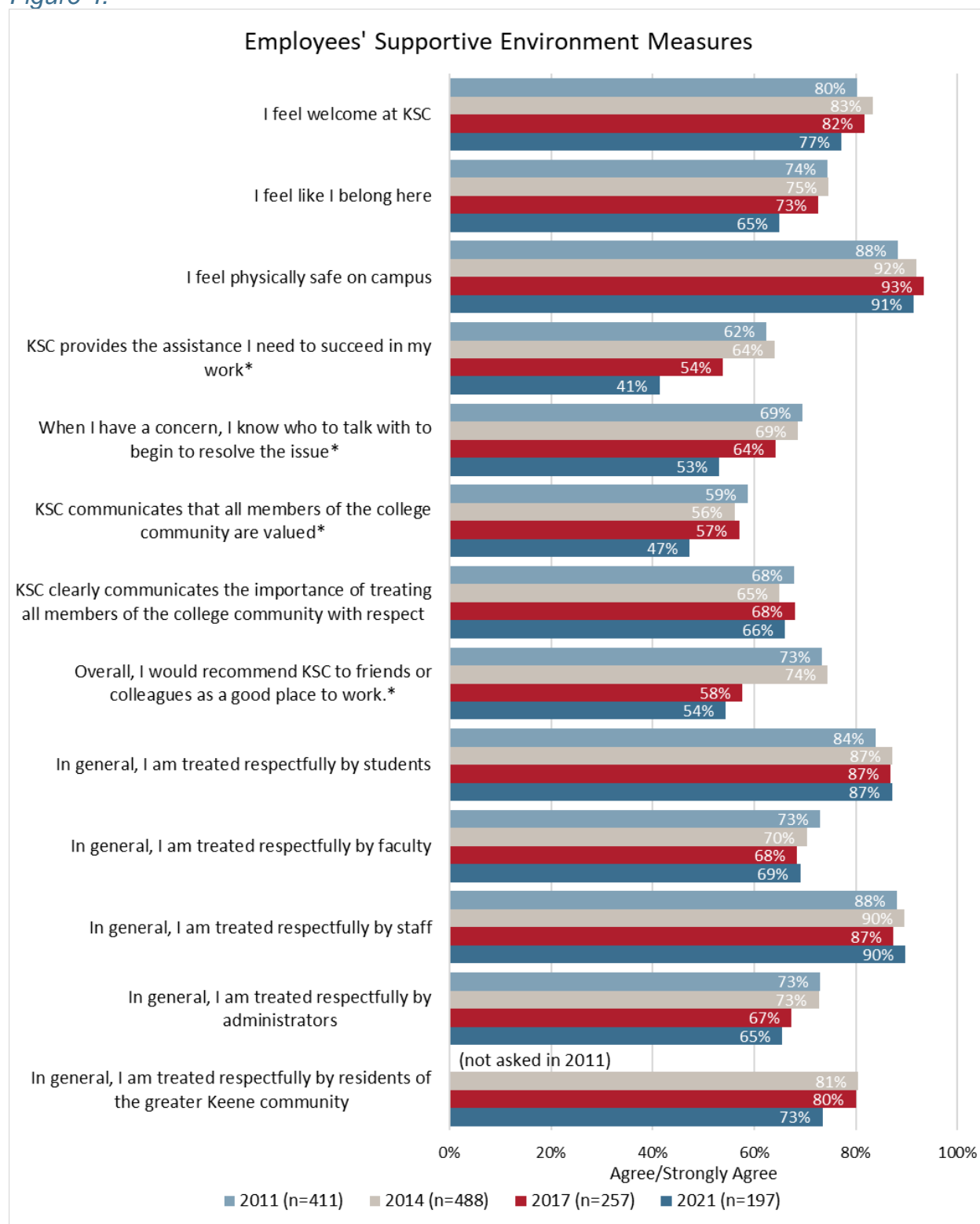


Table 2. Examples of Comments Made by Employees about KSC' Environment

Theme	Examples of Comments
Feel Welcomed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Over my short time at KSC, I have been openly and warmly greeted by students, staff, and administrators.” • “As a new employee, I have been made to feel welcome and supported by faculty and staff in my department through their clear communication about administrative details, attention to my comfort in the workplace, and eagerness to help me make connections on campus.” • “The campus climate and the actually work climate/conditions are two very different things. The campus climate is welcoming but the work conditions are tragically difficult which impacts the overall culture and attitude.”
Assistance to Succeed in Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Dean's office was especially helpful in funding/purchasing equipment that I could use to jump-start my scholarship at KSC.” • “As a new faculty member, I feel very supported in my department and throughout the campus. I wish I had more training prior to the start of my position related to the technology used on campus.”
Respected by Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “While I don't feel disrespected, sometimes I do feel invisible to students. I'd like us to extend ourselves to greet one another more regularly.”
Respected by the greater Keene community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In the Keene community I feel that there is overall great support and respect for the College.”
Respected by Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I am a long standing employee. And over the course of the last few years, I've had the occasion to provide support, suggestions, and feedback to new executive officers and other staff and feel that the input was appreciated and valued.” • “I have felt massively unsupported by the Upper Administration in every way.” • “I tell everyone how much I love my job, how much I love working with faculty, staff and students. However I always follow up that statement with how much I feel totally devalued by KSC administration. Working for my department is amazing, working for KSC is not.”

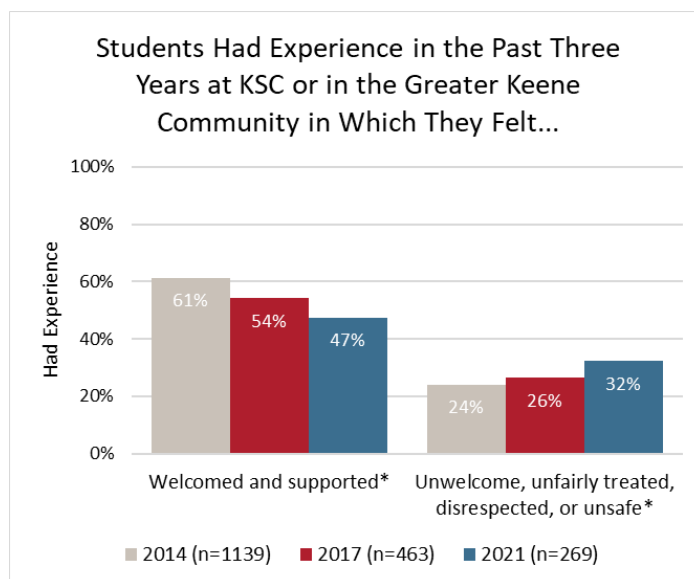
Welcoming and Unwelcoming Experiences

Students

In 2021, only 47% of students reported that in the past three years (2018, 2019, or 2020), they personally had an experience at KSC or in the greater Keene community in which they felt particularly welcomed and supported (Figure 5). In contrast, the majority of students in previous campus climate surveys had such an experience (61% in 2014 and 54% in 2017).⁴

Students were also asked if in the past three years they had an experience at KSC or the greater Keene community in which they felt unwelcome, unfairly treated, disrespected, or unsafe, which they believe was related to some aspect of their identity (such as age, race, gender sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status). Nearly a third of students reported having such an experience (32%), which is significantly more than in 2017 (26%) or 2014 (24%).

Figure 5.

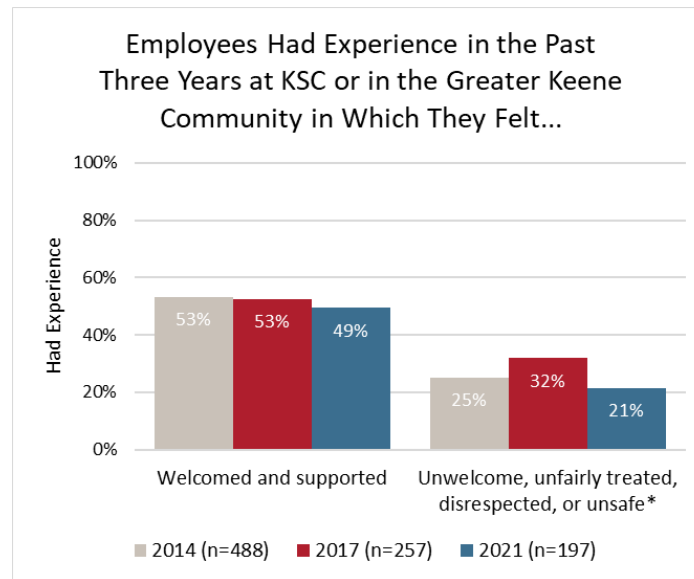


Employees

Among employees, 49% had experiences in the past three years (2018, 2019, and 2020) at KSC or in the greater Keene community in which they felt welcomed and supported (Figure 6). Only 21% reported having an experience in which they felt unwelcome, unfairly treated, disrespected, or unsafe, which they believe was related to some aspect of their identity. This is a significant decrease from 2017, where nearly a third (32%) of employees reported having such a negative experience.

⁴ Questions about a welcoming and unwelcoming experience were first introduced in the 2014 iteration of the campus climate survey, so there are no comparisons with the 2011 survey.

Figure 6.



ADDITIONAL CAMPUS CLIMATE THEMES

Students

In the open-ended responses, students described both strengths and weaknesses of KSC's campus climate beyond comments relating to the supportive environment measures (Table 3). Positive themes that arose were how much students enjoyed attending on-campus events and participating in college organizations or on-campus employment. A main issue that students described was losing faculty through department and program downsizing.

Table 3. Examples of Comments Made by Students about KSC' Campus Climate

Theme	Examples of Comments
Attending On-Campus Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I love the events that the SAC throws as my friends and I can go and have fun." • "I have gone to a lot of the programs here like stuff a plush and the winter carnival and everyone who puts one the events is super nice and welcoming."
Participating in Campus Organizations and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I remember when I was a freshman and I barely knew anyone so I decided to join the ecology club. Everyone there was extremely welcoming and I was proud to be a part of that club." • "I feel super welcomed by the Keene State College softball team when I got recruited to play." • "The best thing I could have ever done was join the staff at the Research and Writing Center here at KSC. I have never felt more like I belonged than when I'm with my staff and supervisors at the center." • "I felt proud and supported when I got recognized as a good option for a CA position. They acknowledged my strengths and it felt good to know that they wanted me as a bigger part in the community."
Downsizing Departments and Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "My program has a poor climate now that there is only one professor and the other three were let go before this semester. One professor creates a poor environment because we learn from only one method of teaching." • "Stand up to higher ups when they try and cut faculty and gut departments. It shows a lack of respect for not only your employees but their students who lose a mentor." • "A warm welcome to campus from students & faculty that has only soured over my time here due to apathy from administration and the utter gutting of important departments/positions." • "Need to stop cutting the humanities program down, it is impossible to succeed when my program is constantly being slashed in half."

Students also made a variety of suggestions for improving KSC, including increasing COVID restrictions, decreasing COVID restrictions, improving campus dining options, and providing clearer communications about campus-wide policies and issues. Some students requested more equity education for students, faculty and staff, while a few students requested that KSC decrease its diversity, equity, and inclusion programming.

Employees

Employees described several challenges that they face in their open-ended responses (Table 4). The main themes include issues associated with employee cuts, feeling overworked, the need for improved communications, concerns about the USNH merger, and recommendations regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Table 4. Examples of Comments Made by Employees about KSC' Campus Climate

Theme	Examples of Comments
Employee Cuts: Lack of Communication or Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We lost over 50 faculty and staff. It made for a difficult transition to the fall. Because we didn't know who had left - it made it difficult to support our colleagues who remain. You should call X and then we find out that X doesn't work here anymore.” • “Though the College had terrible decisions to make about faculty and staff cuts, the lack of communication and WHO and WHY rattled my whole sense of the campus community. I used to say that this was a great place to be; now I feel like everyone is looking around wondering who will be fired next. Stability is good for community. Why does someone who cares about KSC and Keene have to hear through the grapevine who is gone and who is still around? Why, after a whole year of planning for early retirements/departmental rearrangements, were sudden summer cuts made?”
Employee Cuts: Fear of Future Cuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The cuts from last year have not been adequately addressed and have resulted in a general mood of fear and paranoia. A clear and direct statement of vision and process would go a long way towards healing this.” • “I think people are really scared right now-- not knowing when and how one will be ‘let go’ because of our financial issues. While I think we all understand that faculty/staff had to be laid off, there is this feeling of loss of control (and control is a very big issue when at work).”
Employee Cuts: Appreciation and Grieving of Cut Faculty/Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Stop pretending that our campus wasn't absolutely gutted last year. We lost nearly 150 colleagues and haven't had a chance to mourn and process as a community.” • “Many of us are grieving on our own time and haven't had an opportunity to grieve in community.” • “A lot of people have left and there has been no recognition of their contributions to the college.”
Overworked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Staff and faculty are spread too thin for the amount of work that needs to be done. [...] This has led to extreme burn-out and unwillingness to stay at KSC.” • “I heard an admin say in a meeting the other day that ‘Keene State will work you really hard, it's the Keene State way’ and I thought, ‘How true and sad!’ We are burning out the employees we have left” • “The culture presently is stressed and faculty and staff will not settle to do the work until they feel safe.” • “It is possible to be included, welcomed, and equal, but also feel overworked and undervalued.”

Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There is a perception that communication is being stifled by a select few at the top of the administration. The messages are being crafted as if we are at a press conference and only the talking points will be discussed.” • “Consistent communication with matched action from the administration with regard to upcoming transitions would enhance the level of trust and confidence level across campus.”
USNH Merger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There is also a lot of ambiguity about our relationship with USNH and our ongoing financial difficulties. As a faculty member, I do not feel that I have a clear sense of my own job security.” • “I am in a department that merged with USNH as a whole, at times I no longer feel connected as I once did as there are so many people siloed and know little of Keene's practices. Getting things done can now be harder as it takes time to figure out who can help.”
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Continue providing opportunities for more RP/RJ work among faculty and staff, as well as students.” • “Hire and retain more people of color, queer and trans people, and disabled people at all levels of the institution” • “Search processes for upper administration have often seemed to ignore the importance of racial diversity in leadership.”

CAMPUS CLIMATE BY RESPONDENTS' IDENTITIES

Beyond understanding the overall experiences and evaluations of KSC's campus climate among students and faculty, the campus climate survey also aimed to determine whether different groups of students and employees face particular challenges as members of the KSC community. In this section, measures of the campus climate are compared across different respondents' identities. In addition, themes that arose from open-ended responses are presented that highlight students and employees' experiences and recommendations relating to their identities.

Race/Ethnicity

Students

Similar to the 2017 student findings, there were no statistically significant differences between white students and students of color in the 2021 campus climate survey across any of the quantitative measures, including supportive environment items and whether students had welcoming and unwelcoming experiences.⁵ Nevertheless, as illustrated by the comments from open-ended responses, some students describe experiences of racism and recommendations to KSC relating to the experiences of students of color.

Table 5. Examples of Comments Made by Students of Color

Theme	Examples of Comments
Racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "One incident was between students, they were using racial slurs and bullying within the group. I reported it and felt heard."• "I think students who are not white are treated poorly on our campus."
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "I think the college needs to be more open to students of color and show that they value them more than just putting them on a billboard."• "Accept more POC, have more spaces for them, more clubs or associations including them."• "Openly state the denouncement of racism because it is alive and well on this campus."

Employees

Only 5 employees identified as a race/ethnicity other than white. With such a small subgroup, race-based differences in the quantitative measures could not be calculated. No employees discussed experiences of racism or recommendations to address racism in open-ended responses.

⁵ Only 22 students of color completed the survey. Statistical significance can be difficult to achieve when a subgroup is small. Moreover, it is difficult to draw wider conclusions from a subsample so limited in size.

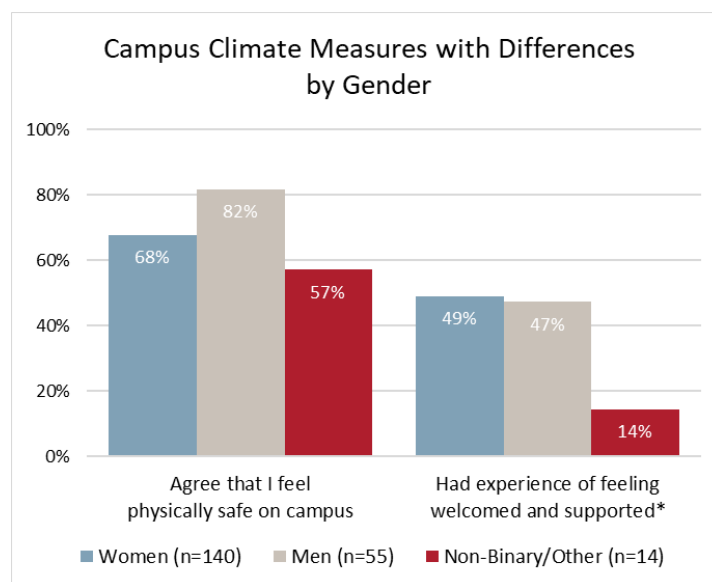
Gender

Students

Across all supportive environment measures, there were no significant differences by gender across men, women, and non-binary/other students' responses.⁶ This is in contrast with the 2017 campus climate survey, where significantly fewer women agreed that they were treated respectfully by members of the Keene community and felt physically safe on campus compared to men.

Figure 7 shows that there is a moderate—but not statistically significant—14-percentage point difference in men and women's agreement that they feel physically safe on campus, with 82% of men and only 68% of women agreeing. In addition, while the number of non-binary students or students who identify as a gender other than man or woman is small and should be interpreted with caution, significantly fewer of these students had an experience where they felt welcomed and supported: 14% compared to 49% of women and 47% of men.

Figure 7.



Although there were no significant differences in the campus climate experiences of women students compared to men, women's responses to open-ended questions revealed a greater concern of sexual harassment and sexual assault (Table 6).

⁶ These gender categories include both cisgender and transgender students. Only 6 men and women identified as transgender. Analyses that compared only cisgender women and cisgender men yielded similar results, with no significant differences by gender.

Table 6. Examples of Comments Made by Women Students

Theme	Examples of Comments
Sexual Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I felt physically unsafe because I was followed from my car to my dorm my freshman year by a man who was drunk. I had to walk on a dim path without blue lights to get to my dorm and I was verbally harassed and feared for my own safety. As a woman, I felt uncomfortable because I don't think this would have happened to a man.” • “I have been screamed at and cat called multiple times walking through or around campus” • “I am a female and have been catcalled numerous times while walking to my car in Winchester. It happens more when I am alone or in a group of females, but it also happens when there is a group of males and females. It happens way too often, and got to the point that if a female member of my friend group is walking back from the lot, they will pick another friend up to walk back with them because it feels unsafe at night.”
Sexual Assault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “As a girl I feel like Sexual assaults are not really taken care of and others not properly warned when a student poses a danger. I don't feel safe at night alone sometimes on campus” • “It is unsafe for women to be here at night, instead of the school providing safer options for women (adding more lights, self defense classes, etc.) they tell us not to walk alone at night which is basically impossible. A lot of the information provided by the school about how to protect ourselves basically says its our fault if we get assaulted or attacked. Keene State generally does a horrible job dealing with victims of assault, and the people who attacked them.”

Employees.

Like among students, there were no significant differences in supportive environment measures between men and women employees.⁷ There were also no significant differences in having a welcoming or having an unwelcoming experience by employees' gender.

In the open-ended responses, some women employees described experiences of sexism in the workplace (Table 7).

⁷ Only one employee identified as non-binary, so their responses were excluded from the quantitative analyses. No employees identified as transgender, so these categories represent cisgender men and cisgender women.

Table 7. Examples of Comments Made by Women Employees

Theme	Examples of Comments
Sexism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The male favoritism in my department was keenly apparent but complaining would have caused more issues.” • “I feel that the men in my area often are unwilling to look at the way their privilege disadvantages the women in the department. Women are more often interrupted, and there is a lot of mansplaining.” • “As a (relatively) young female professor I feel that I have been unfairly treated by members of my department. I feel like I am expected to do more service and uphold higher teaching standards than my male colleagues.” • “The retrenchments have put an increased amount of pressure on faculty, and this pressure is unevenly distributed. It's a well-documented phenomenon that administrative tasks, advising, and mentoring fall primarily on women faculty and faculty of color--this is exactly what has transpired at Keene State, making an already uneven workload distribution even worse.”

LGBTQ+ Status

Students

There were no significant differences in the quantitative measures between heterosexual, cisgender students and students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, non-binary, or another non-cisgender, non-heterosexual identity (LGBTQ+). This differs from the previous campus climate survey in 2017, where gay, lesbian, and bisexual students had lower agreement on certain measures of a supportive environment compared to heterosexual students, including having a welcoming experience and having a faculty member to talk to when they have a concern.

In their open-ended responses, students who are LGBTQ+ described both positive and negative experiences on campus relating to their identities (Table 8).

Table 8. Examples of Comments Made by LGBTQ+ Students

Theme	Examples of Comments
Positive Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Overall it’s just the community we build- especially how much I’ve bonded with classmates who hold multiple identities and how I’ve bonded with people who also hold LGBTQ+ identities like I do.”• “Having things like Pride Club.”• “Having people say their preferred pronouns and allowing students to change their preferred name is definitely something that I appreciate. Though I haven’t had a need to change my preferred name, it’s nice knowing that people have the ability to.”
Homophobia and Transphobia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Occasionally, people on or near campus will drive by me and yell homophobic slurs at me. The most recent incident was early October. I don’t know who the people are and usually aren’t able to get their license plate so I am unable to report incidents, but it still makes me feel unsafe and unwelcome”• “I was also called homophobic slurs when walking down the street from students in a car. They circled back around to continue to harass me and my friend who is also LGBT.”• “I have had cars drive by me while walking down main street and call me transphobic and homophobic slurs”• “I am a nonbinary trans person. The systems set up at this institution are made without trans people in mind. For example, the mail system still had my deadname on the slips even after I let the school know that my name had been legally changed and when I told the man at the mail about the issue I was met with condescension and belittlement. I have had professors that disregard asking students to share pronouns at the beginning of the course and therefore has singled me out as I am usually the only person to share my pronouns. I am constantly misgendered by staff, faculty, and students.”

Employees

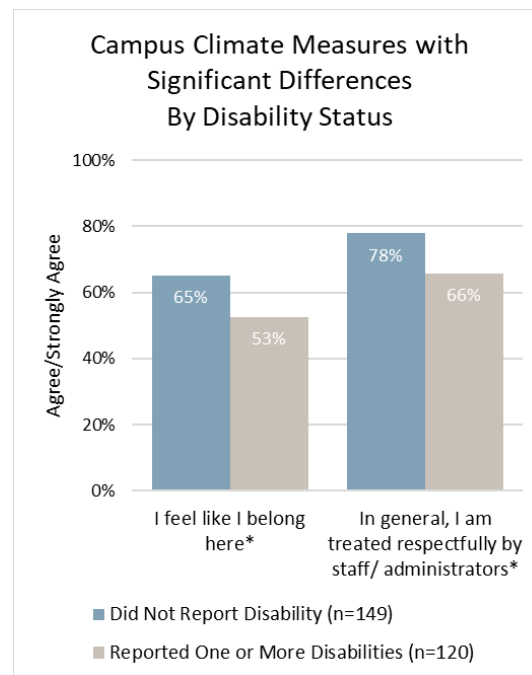
Like for students, there were no significant differences in quantitative measures between heterosexual, cisgender employees and employees who are LGBTQ+. In the open-ended responses, no employees discussed personal experiences or workplace issues relating to being LGBTQ+. This is a change from 2017, where employees with LGBQ sexual orientations were more likely than heterosexual employees to report having been treated unfairly or disrespected because of an aspect of their identity.

Disability Status

Students

As shown in Figure 8, a smaller proportion of students who reported having one or more disabilities feel that they belonged at KSC compared to students who did not report having disabilities (53% versus 65%).⁸ In addition, only 66% of the students with disabilities agree that they are treated respectfully by staff/administrators, compared to 78% of students who did not report having disabilities. Across all other measures, there were no statistically significant differences by students' disability status.

Figure 8.



In response to the open-ended questions, students with disabilities described difficulties they face on the KSC campus, as well as recommendations to improve access and awareness (Table 9).

⁸ Students reported several types of disabilities, including cognitive/learning, medical, and psychological disabilities.

Table 9. Examples of Comments Made by Students with Disabilities

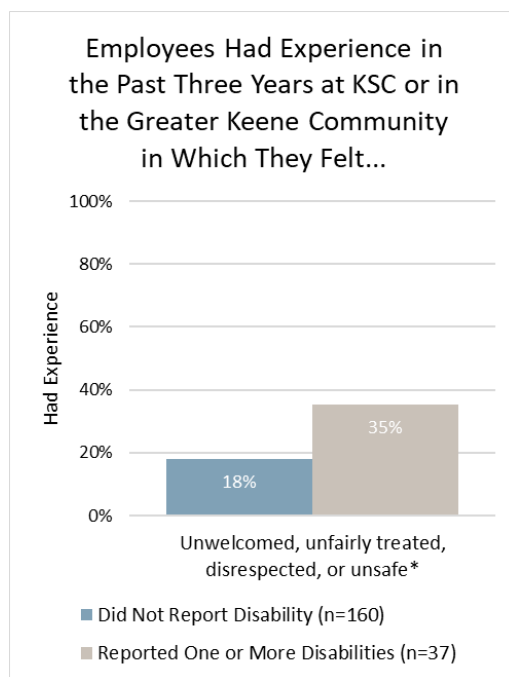
Theme	Examples of Comments
Lack of Resources and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I cannot put into words how inadequate the resources and hoops that disabled students, especially those with mental disabilities need to go through to get accommodations that themselves are inadequate when simple system changes can erase many of the unnatural, added obstacles we face.” • “Most systemic issues that affect disabled students more than abled students still have an impact on abled students in that changing them will help everyone.” • “The bathroom facilities need a lot of work there are already some buildings with only one handicapped bathroom that is actually handicapped accessible. If you continue to invite more disabled patrons to Keene State you are going to have to fix more of those bathrooms because as it is you have students wheeling sometimes to multiple buildings to find the one handicapped stall in that building that is not being used by somebody else.”
Recommendations to Improve Accessibility and Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Make online learning more available for disabled students. Have professors give access to notes, between hearing disabilities, visual disabilities, and learning disabilities, not everyone can keep up with taking notes while staying engaged in classes.” • “Improve location of handicapped door button at Student Center. When entering the second set of doors, I have to immediately back up to avoid my wheelchair getting hit. This problem exists across campus as well.” • “Add more elevators to buildings to make them all disability friendly, it’s sad to see that not everything is accessible to the handicapped.”
Recommendations to Increase Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I think having more discussions/events that bring awareness or open up conversations about disabilities (ex. Learning disabilities). This could help to reduce the stigma or even normalize these topics.” • “Enforcing the fact that the handicapped bathrooms are for those who are gender neutral or handicapped because when needed, as a handicapped person I cannot use the shower because the non handicapped, non gender neutral people use it just because they want to, which puts me at a disadvantage.”

Employees

Over a third of employees with disabilities reported that they had an experience in which they felt unwelcomed, unfairly treated, disrespected, or unsafe, which they believe was related to some aspect of their identity (Figure 9). This is a significantly higher proportion than among employees who do not have disabilities (35% compared to 18%). This finding is consistent with the prior years’ campus climate surveys, where employees reporting a disability were more likely to report having this negative experience than employees who did not report having a disability. There were no

statistically significant differences by employees' disability status across all other measures.

Figure 9.



Only one employee's open-ended response discussed issues regarding access and disability accommodations (Table 10).

Table 10. Examples of Comments Made by Employees with Disabilities

Theme	Examples of Comments
Lack of Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Many people do not understand the issues surrounding disabilities on this campus...disabled persons are either ignored during the decisions about when and where to hold events, when asking for help, or simply treated as idiots or whiners in some cases and by certain offices/persons on campus.”

Political and Religious Ideology

Students

Some students' open-ended responses described negative experiences due to being politically or religiously conservative (Table 11). Political ideologies were not captured in the survey's demographics, so analyses cannot be conducted comparing the campus climate measures by more conservative versus more liberal ideologies.

Table 11. Examples of Comments Made by Conservative Students

Theme	Examples of Comments
Religiously and Politically Conservative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "There's always a sense of unease since I am in the severe minority of religious, conservative students so any discussion of politics, religion, or hot topics result in people verbally attacking me. I've found that I need to just stay silent to prevent tensions."• "Multiple students make fun of Christians on a daily basis."• "I came to Keene State because of its stellar reputation for open inquiry and the free exchange of ideas. As someone who holds right-of-center political convictions, it's hard to operate within KSC's ever-advancing ruleset which ever more explicitly marginalizes folks like myself."• "People have said that the way I dress, talk and act isn't okay. And that my political views are wrong. I don't feel safe sharing my beliefs because I am scared it will affect my safety on campus."

Employees

A few employees also mentioned negative experiences due to religious beliefs and practices (Table 12).

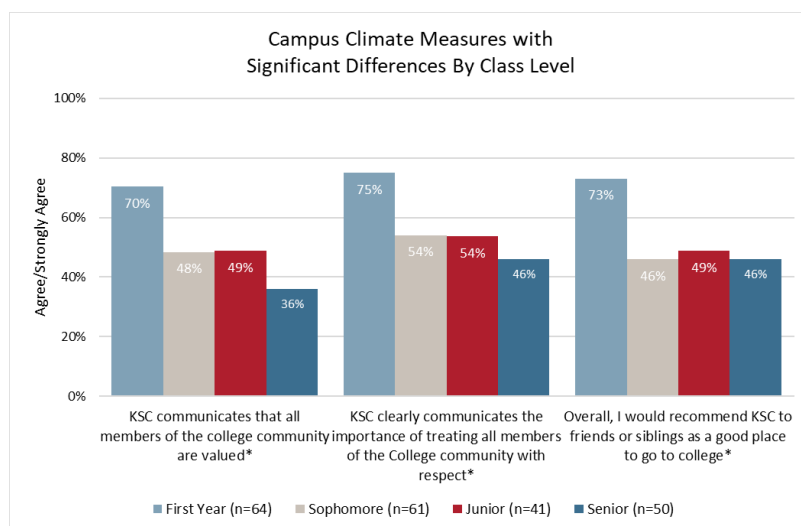
Table 12. Examples of Comments Made by Religious Employees

Theme	Examples of Comments
Religiously and Politically Conservative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "I feel that my political views, religious views, and medical views are opposed by the administration and general college culture. Opposing views of the administration, especially in terms of approaches to COVID have been unwelcome."• "Some faculty members consistently ignore non-Christian holidays when scheduling meetings and become indignant when rescheduling is requested"• "Open verbal hostility towards religion; Christianity in particular."

Students' Class Level

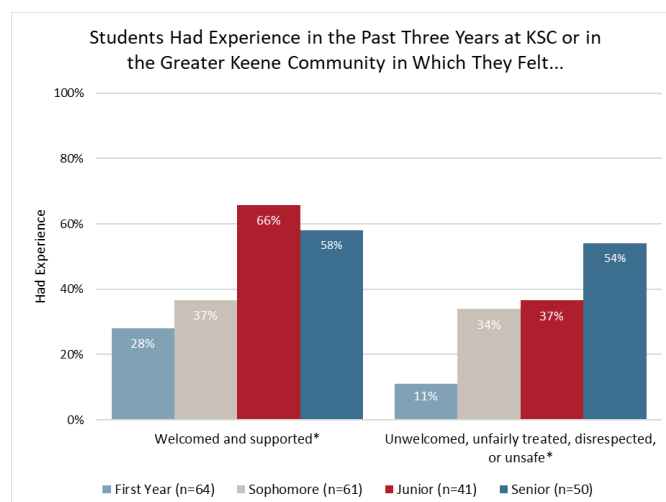
On three supportive environment measures, a higher proportion of first year students agree with positive statements about the campus climate compared to sophomores, juniors, and seniors. As illustrated in Figure 10, a modest majority of first year students agree that KSC communicates that all members of the college community are valued (70%), that KSC communicates the importance of treating all members of the college community with respect (75%), and that they overall would recommend KSC to friends or siblings as a good place to go to college (73%). In contrast, between 36% and 54% of sophomores, juniors, and seniors agree with those statements. All other supportive environment measures had no substantial differences by class.

Figure 10.



Compared to sophomores, juniors, and seniors, a significantly lower proportion of first year students had a welcoming experience or an unwelcoming experience in the last three years (Figure 11). However, this could be explained by the fact that first year students only had a few months at KSC at the time of survey administration, providing fewer opportunities to have these positive or negative experiences.

Figure 11.



In the open-ended responses, students described positive experiences from their first year at KSC (Table 13). One student also provided a recommendation regarding continuing support for students beyond first year. Not all of these students were currently in their first year; some sophomores, juniors, and seniors also reflected on their being welcomed to the KSC community during their first year.

Table 13. Examples of Comments Made by Students about First Year

Theme	Examples of Comments
Prospective Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When first considering KSC as a college, I participated in the online webinars for information about the school and clubs and other resources I can use. I instantly felt welcome, and the student panelists were extremely patient and welcoming as well as the staff. My stress about going to KSC was instantly soothed by them.”
Orientation and First Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I felt very welcomed during the first orientation days of the school year. whether it was my orientation Leader or the group of kids I was with, everyone was very nice and kind.” • “I think orientation day was done very well and was great at introducing the college to new students.” • “Freshman year as a whole the campus community was very welcoming and accepting from summer orientation, through LINKS, all the way up to the pandemic beginning back in March 2020.”
Recommendation for Support Beyond First Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I feel as if this college really only accommodates the freshman class. Obviously there should be special attention to the freshman because you want them to feel welcome and want to stay for four years. I know a lot of upper class men that feel completely swept under the rug and not recognized and valued.”

Employees' Employment Category

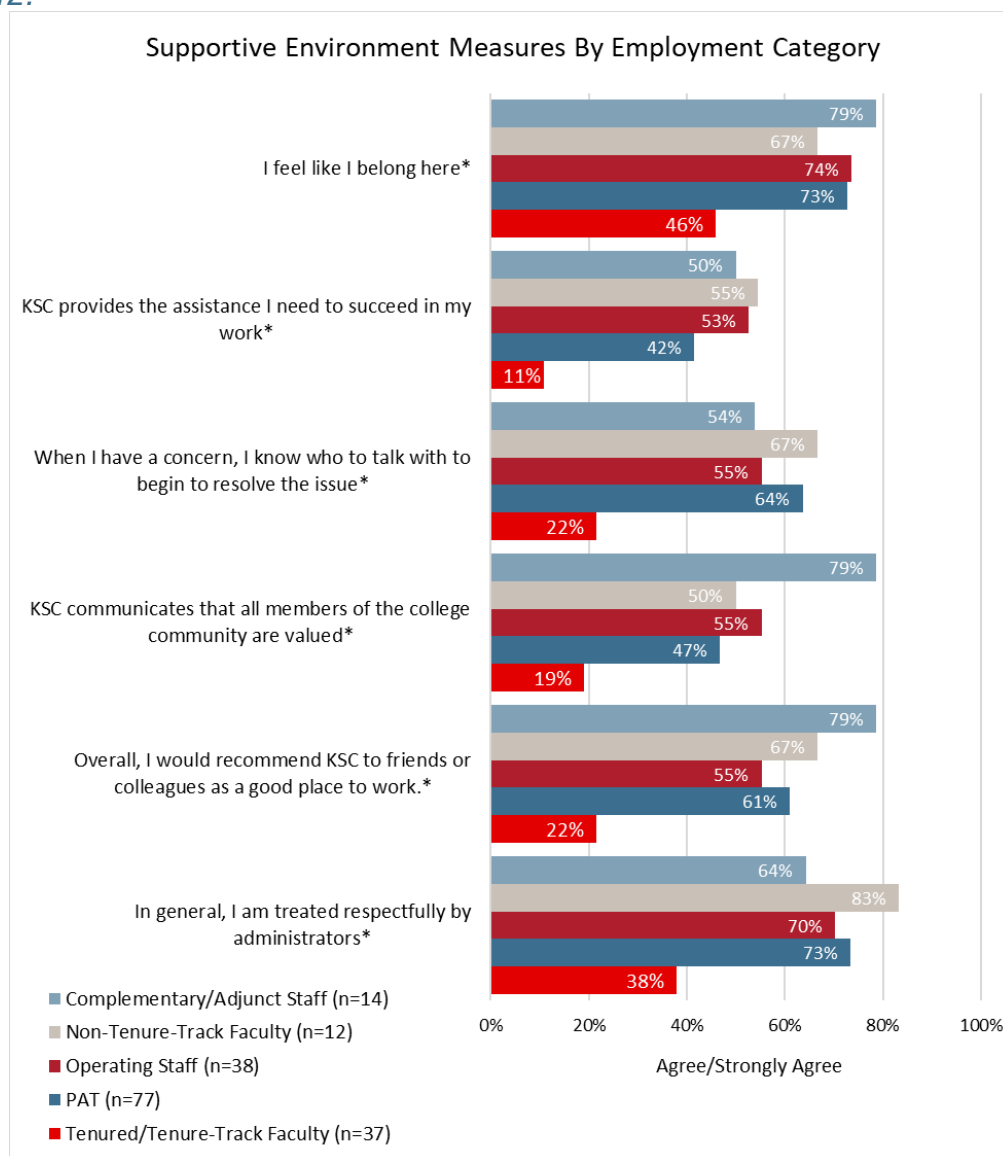
When comparing employees' findings by employment category, tenure/tenure-track faculty have significantly lower agreement with six measures of a supportive environment (Figure 12). Less than half (46%) of tenured/tenure-track faculty agree that they feel like they belong here, compared to over three-quarters of employees in the other employment categories.

Only 11% of tenured/tenure-track faculty agree that KSC provides the assistance they need to succeed in their work, whereas for other employees, agreement ranges from 42% to 55%. In addition, only 22% of tenured/tenure-track employees know who to talk with to begin to resolve an issue when they have a concern, whereas the majority of other employees agree that they know to whom they could reach out.

Fewer tenured/tenure-track faculty agree that KSC communicates that all members of the college community are valued (19%), that they would overall recommend KSC as a good place to work (22%), and that they are treated respectfully by administrators (38%) compared to other employees.

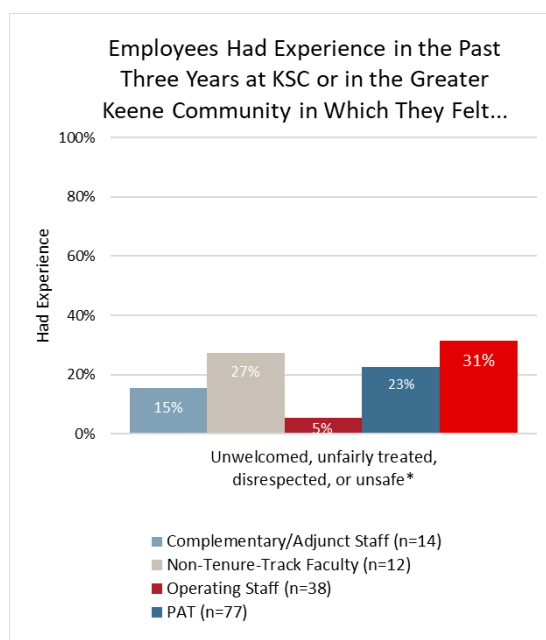
This stark difference in responses from tenured/tenure-track faculty and employees in other employment categories at KSC also represents a decline in tenured/tenure-track faculty members' evaluation of the campus climate from prior administrations of the survey. In 2011, 2014, and 2017, the majority of tenured/tenure-track faculty agreed with all supportive environment measures.

Figure 12.



While there was no substantial difference in having an experience of feeling welcomed or supported across employment categories, a higher proportion of tenured/tenure-track faculty reported an experience of feeling unwelcomed, unfairly treated, disrespected, or unsafe compared to operating staff (Figure 13).

Figure 13.



Open-ended responses provide a potential explanation for the significantly lower agreement with several campus climate measures among tenured/tenure-track faculty. While issues from employee cuts were described above as a main theme that arose relating to employees' campus climate experiences, faculty in particular discussed how losing colleagues affected them (Table 14). Staff members had more positive evaluations of KSC's campus climate, but they also described challenges that they face in their roles (Table 15).

Table 14. Examples of Comments Made by Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty

Theme	Examples of Comments
Faculty Morale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I have been here approximately ten years and have never felt such low faculty morale as now." • "Faculty morale is in the toilet and the college and system seem to have no desire to change that. If anything, the latter seek to make it worse. I have yet to speak to a colleague this year who is happy working here or who isn't actively searching for alternatives." • "Many faculty feel overworked and under appreciated. There a sense of tiredness and desperation as we strive to do beyond our best."
Eliminated Positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I do not feel supported by the administration of the college. I am not given the supports and tools I need to be successful at my job. With more and more faculty and staff being cut, I am continually being asked to do more with less." • "At this time, with all of the faculty and staff cuts that happened in the spring and over the summer, the atmosphere at the college is very discouraging. [...] As a tenure-track faculty member, I do not feel that I have any job security at all."

Table 15. Examples of Comments Made by Staff Members

Theme	Examples of Comments
Lack of Appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I believe rankism is still a problem at KSC, particularly among some faculty who believe they’re more valuable than staff. In my opinion, the tenure system for faculty exacerbates this.” • “[Stop] treating staff in ways that indicate they are not valued like faculty (not able to attend graduation if not working).” • “[I] have felt disrespected several times due to classification of job status. There is a very clear hierarchy of who is important and who is not at KSC.” • “I do not feel that people on the lower levels of pay are recognized for their opinions and suggestions [...] I feel that there have been many situations where input would have been very valuable but was not asked-instead suggestions are only considered by the administration who do not always know how the jobs in the ‘trenches’ are actually done. [...] We the people in the ‘trenches’ see and hear more than most from parents and students and from a larger array than most as well, and our input would be beneficial...we just need to be asked. Acknowledge our intelligence and we will feel a lot more respected. We matter too.”
Pay Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The one thing that appears to be a common sentiment among the staff is a question of why the Faculty is getting paid a lot of money to work for 9 months and work a very select portion of the week, while us that work as the staff work strange long hours and devote a lot of time to the institution and we get pennies compared to what even associate professors make.” • “This organization is top heavy with administration making very good salaries. Meanwhile, staff are having to work harder because of early retirements/lay offs and we have not received any kind of compensation for that.” • “If you are at all concerned about the quality of the work environment that exists at KSC, I hope someone in the administration will open their eyes and acknowledge that having staff work for years without raises while under constant fear of having their job positions retrenched is a detriment to the campus ‘climate’”

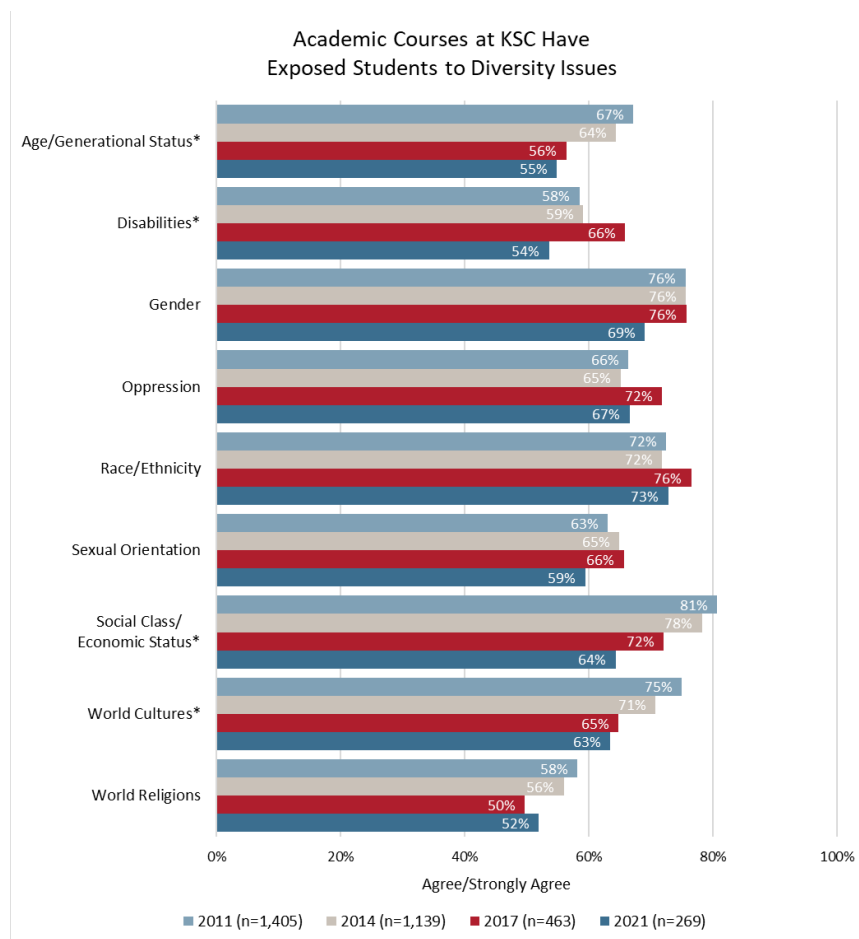
STUDENTS LEARNING ABOUT DIVERSITY

In the student campus climate survey, an additional set of questions asked about the diversity issues students have learned about at KSC. These include exposure to nine different topics both in their academic courses at KSC and in out-of-class experiences at KSC, in programs sponsored by or settings provided by the college.

KSC Courses

Over two-thirds of students agree that KSC courses exposed them to the following diversity issues: gender (69%), oppression (67%), and race/ethnicity (73%) (Figure 14). The issues that the fewest students learned about during their academic classes were age/generational status (55%), disabilities (54%), and world religions (52%). Compared with the first two iterations of the campus climate survey, agreement declined for age/generational status, social class/economic status, and world cultures, although 2021 was relatively consistent with 2017 findings. Students reported a higher agreement with exposure to disabilities in 2017, making the comparative result in 2021 significantly lower.

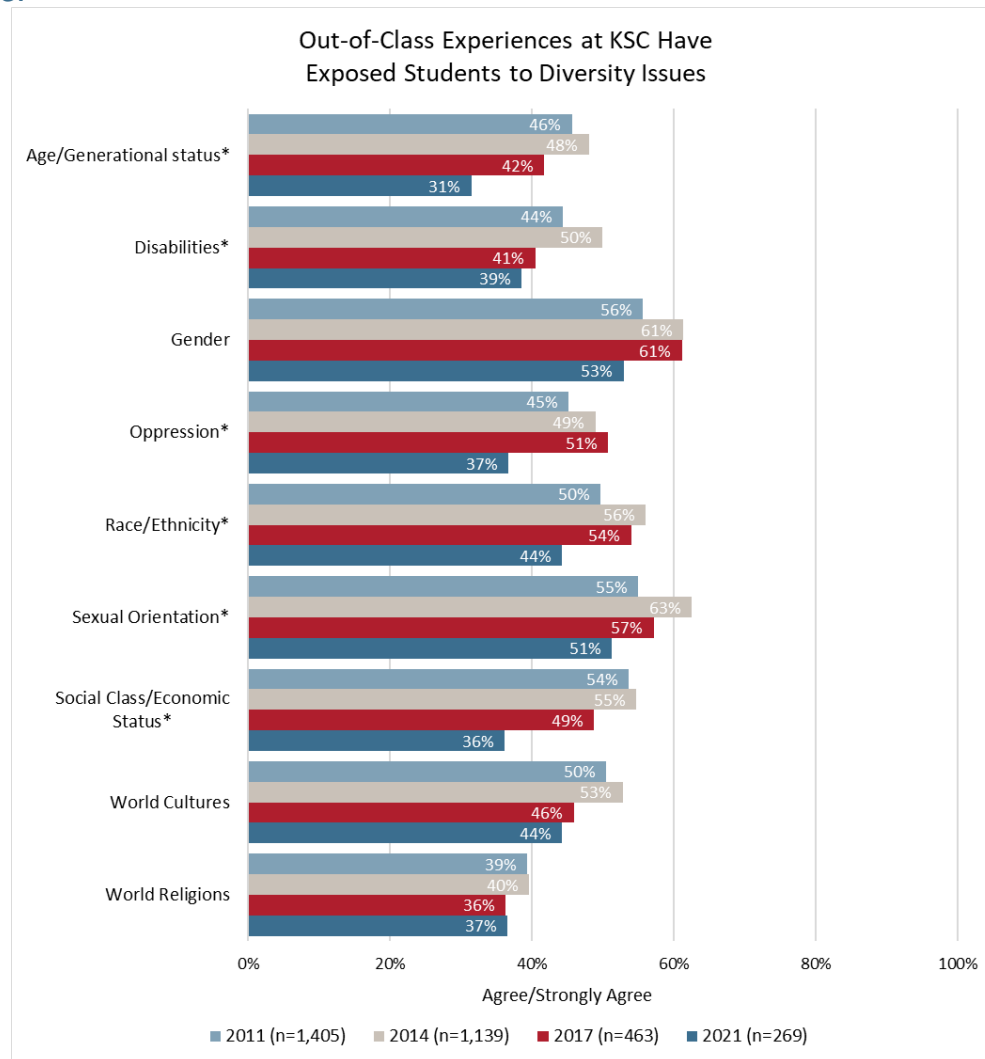
Figure 14.



KSC Out-of-Class Experiences

As shown in Figure 15, fewer student reported that their out-of-class experiences exposed them to many diversity issues than in prior years. Over half agree that these experiences exposed them to issues relating to gender (53%) and sexual orientation (51%), whereas the rest of these diversity issues were experienced by under half of student respondents. Age/generational status (31%) is the topic the fewest students learned about in out-of-class experiences.

Figure 15.



FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

There are four stages of follow-up actions planned: dissemination and discussion, additional insights, action plan, and implementation. First, events are being hosted to present results from the 2021 campus climate survey and facilitate discussions. The employee survey findings were presented to the KSC cabinet, faculty senate, and deans in spring 2022. Student and employee findings were also presented to the Strategic Planning Committee and to employees during two professional development sessions. After each presentation, audience members had a conversation about the campus climate findings. Findings from the student survey will be presented to the Student Assembly in fall 2022.

In addition to gathering feedback through post-presentation discussions, a set of focus groups with current KSC students will provide in-depth insights on how to tackle campus climate issues. These long-form, small-group conversations will help generate solutions to concerns raised by students, such as how to best share communications and provide support.

Based on this report's findings and insights from discussions and focus groups, an action plan will be developed. It will include specific steps to address campus climate issues and designate the staff members and offices responsible for addressing the issue.

Finally, the new action plan will be implemented. This process of developing and implementing an action plan will address larger issues raised by students and employees regarding the campus climate. Immediately addressable concerns raised from the survey responses—such as issues of physical access to specific campus buildings—have already been shared with pertinent KSC staff.

CONCLUSION

This report reveals students' and employees' overall impressions and evaluations of KSC's campus climate and where improvements could be made.

Students' positive experiences and evaluations of the campus climate are low compared to prior years. All measures of students' campus climate experiences are significantly different from earlier years. Among employees, overall evaluations of the campus climate were mostly consistent with prior campus climate surveys' results.

When comparing subgroups of students' and employees' experiences of the campus climate, there were no significant differences between people of color and white people, men and women, and LGBTQ+ respondents and cisgender, heterosexual respondents. However, both students and employees who reported having disabilities had significantly worse campus experiences than students and employees without disabilities. Thus, while the overall evaluation of the campus climate was lower in 2021 than in previous administrations of the surveys, there was less systematic inequality in access to a positive campus environment.

Despite similar results across quantitative measures, the open-ended responses indicate that there are still challenges that students and employees face because of their identities, including racism, sexism, and ableism. Another issue that the survey revealed was that employees—particularly tenured/tenure track faculty—felt the impacts of employee cuts on the campus climate, impacting their morale and sense of belonging.

The findings from this report are being shared to members of the KSC community to generate discussions about the campus climate and will inform the development of an action plan to address issues raised by students and employees.