

Climate-related Excerpts from
[Making Diversity Work on Campus: A Research-Based Perspective](#)

a publication from AAC&U's [Making Excellence Inclusive initiative](#)

“We know from many studies of campus climate that administrators, students, and faculty from different racial and ethnic backgrounds are likely to view the campus climate in dramatically different ways. Hurtado and colleagues (1998, 1999) assert that who people are and where people are positioned in an institution affect the ways in which they experience and view the institution, its mission, and its climate. It is critical that campus leaders neither dismiss nor underestimate the significance of these perceptual differences. These perceptions are products of the environment, and they influence the decisions that people make about their future interactions in the environment as well as the outcomes that result from these interactions.” p.17

“As illustrated by Chang et al. (2004), a supportive campus climate and set of institutional practices might be linked to, or serve as a proxy for, high levels of cross-racial interaction among students—and make it possible for all students to improve their knowledge of and ability to accept others from different backgrounds and cultures.” p. 12

“If leaders are to help students achieve the educational benefits of diversity, they must pay close attention to the broad campus climate. Although bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences is an important first step in providing students with opportunities to learn from diversity, it cannot be the only step. Diverse learning environments provide unique opportunities for and challenges to learning and teaching that must be addressed. If we are to maximize opportunities and minimize negative outcomes that may emerge from campus diversity, it is important that we understand more completely the forces that interact to create the often contested conditions under which students can successfully learn from diversity.” p. 13-14

See *Understanding the Campus Racial Climate* pp. 13-19

“Developing Positive Perceptions of the Campus Racial Climate As was stated earlier in this paper, intentional fostering of a positive campus racial climate is critical to achieving the benefits of diversity. According to the framework presented earlier, an important aspect of an institution’s racial climate is psychological. Therefore, institutions need to understand how their policies and practices influence student perceptions of institutional commitment to diversity and intergroup relations. Below are five policy areas that can help campus leaders enhance the psychological dimension of the campus racial climate and create an environment supportive of cross-racial interaction, and cultural exploration and affirmation, irrespective of a student’s race or ethnicity.

Institutional History

- Diversity as Policy
- Campus Balkanization
- Cultural Spaces
- Transforming Classroom Environments
- Faculty of Color
- Effective Pedagogy
- Curricular Transformation” **See pp. 22-26 for more detail on each policy area.**

More on “Encouraging and Fostering Interracial Contact” p. 27

More on “Racial and Ethnic Student Organizations” p. 29

“Diversity-related efforts are not limited to simply improving the proportional representation of students of color; they also seek to address multiple aspects of campus life and climate.” p. 31

Reference:

Milem, J. F., Chang, M. J., & Antonio, A. L. (2005). [Making diversity work on campus: A research-based perspective](#). Washington, DC: Association American Colleges and Universities.