Executive Summary

College campuses are complex social systems. They are defined by the relationships between faculty, staff, students, and alumni; bureaucratic procedures embodied by institutional policies; structural frameworks; institutional missions, visions, and core values; institutional history and traditions; and larger social contexts (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, Alma, & Allen, 1998; Smith, 2009).

Institutional missions suggest that higher education values multicultural awareness and understanding within an environment of mutual respect and cooperation. Academic communities expend a great deal of effort fostering climates that nurture their missions with the understanding that climate has a profound effect on the academic community’s ability to excel in teaching, research, and scholarship. Institutional strategic plans advocate creating welcoming and inclusive climates that are grounded in respect, nurtured by dialogue, and evidenced by a pattern of civil interaction.

The climate on college campuses not only affects the creation of knowledge, but also affects members of the academic community who, in turn, contribute to the creation of the campus climate. Several national education association reports and higher education researchers advocate creating a more inclusive, welcoming climate on college campuses (AAC&U, 1995; Boyer, 1990; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Ingle, 2005; Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005).

The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) has a long history of supporting diversity initiatives\(^1\) as evidenced by the college’s support and commitment to this project. President Brown offers that;

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\(^1\) For more information on FIT’s diversity initiatives please see [http://www.fitnyc.edu/diversity](http://www.fitnyc.edu/diversity) and [http://www.fitnyc.edu/strategicplan](http://www.fitnyc.edu/strategicplan)
One of the key goals of the FIT Strategic Plan is to create a campus that is “purposefully diverse”—one which, through its students, faculty and staff—reflects the pluralistic city, nation and world in which we live. Diversity is a fact of life—a powerful source of enrichment, a vital tool in a competitive marketplace, and a cause for celebration. Indeed, it is a critical element in fulfilling FIT’s mission to prepare students with the kind of global perspective they will need for success (http://www.fitnyc.edu/diversity).

The Climate Assessment Project is an initiative of the FIT’s senior administration and implemented by the Diversity Council. The Diversity Council plays a primary role in FIT’s ongoing efforts to ensure diversity in all of FIT’s initiatives. Recognizing the need to understand how students, faculty, and staff experience the FIT environment and building on the results of student, faculty, and staff focus groups held in 2009-2010, the Diversity Council supported the current initiative. Working with the Office of the President, the Diversity Council began the search for a consulting firm that conducts climate surveys in higher education. Rankin & Associates (R&A) presented a proposal to the Council which was accepted and FIT contracted with R&A to facilitate a college-wide climate assessment. Members of the Diversity Council and representatives from all FIT schools and divisions, as well as the UCE and faculty senate served as the Climate Study Working Group (CSWG) and worked with R&A to design and administer the survey instrument.

Because of the inherent complexity of the topic of diversity, it is crucial to examine the multiple dimensions of diversity in higher education. The conceptual model used as the foundation for this assessment of campus climate was developed by Smith (1999) and modified by Rankin (2002). Informed by previous work of R&A, the CSWG developed the final survey instrument template that was administered at FIT in fall 2012.

The final climate survey contained 103 questions and was designed for respondents to provide information about their personal experiences with regard to climate issues and work-life.
experiences, their perceptions of the campus climate, and their perceptions of institutional actions (e.g., administrative policies and academic initiatives regarding climate issues and concerns) on campus. All members of the campus community (e.g., students, faculty, staff, and administrators) were invited to participate in the survey.

This report provides an overview of the results of the campus-wide survey. Qualitative comments offered by participants are provided throughout the narrative. Appendix A of the full report contains the commentary offered by respondents for the last open-ended question that was not linked to any particular quantitative question. A summary of the findings\(^4\), presented in bullet form below, suggests that while FIT has several challenges with regard to diversity issues, these challenges are found in higher education institutions across the country (Rankin & Associates, 2013).

\[^4\] Data for groups of fewer than 5 individuals were not reported to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. Instead, groups were combined to eliminate any potential for demographic information to be identifiable.
Sample Demographics

Of the FIT community members, 2,046 completed surveys for a response rate of 16.5%. While the overall response rate suggests caution in generalizing the results of the assessment to the entire population at FIT, there are several sub-groups where generalizations may be offered. These include all tenure/tenure track faculty members, non-classroom faculty, administrators, and staff members. More detailed information on the response rates of various sub-groups is offered in Table 1 of the narrative. The sample included:

- (73%) students; (12%) faculty; (15%) staff
- (47%) People of Color; (45%) White respondents
- 270 respondents (14%) with self-identified disabilities or conditions that affect major life activities
- (76%) heterosexual people and (12%) people who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer; respondents (2%) who were questioning their sexuality, and people (8%) who identified as asexual.
- (80%) women; (20%) men; (<1%) transgender
- 47% of respondents were affiliated with Christian denominations

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5 For definitions of terms used in the survey, see Appendix C (Survey Instrument) in the full report.
6 While recognizing the vastly different experiences of people of various racial identities (e.g., Chicano(a) versus African-American or Latino(a) versus Asian-American), and those experiences within these identity categories (e.g., Hmong versus Chinese), Rankin and Associates found it necessary to collapse some of these categories to conduct the analyses due to the small numbers of respondents in the individual categories. For demographics by individual racial categories, please see Figure 5 in the full report.
7 Transgender” is an umbrella term for someone whose self-identity challenges traditional societal definitions of male and female; man and women, masculine and feminine (Beemyn & Rankin, 2011). Given the small number of transgender respondents (n = 4), gender analyses do not include these respondents in order to protect their confidentiality.
Quantitative Findings

Experiences with Campus Climate

- Fifteen percent of respondents believed they had personally experienced exclusionary (e.g., stigmatized, shunned, ignored) intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct (hereafter referred to as harassment) within the past year. Respondents most often indicated the harassment was based on their gender, position at FIT, and discipline of study.

- 15% of respondents (n = 304) believed they had personally experienced offensive, hostile, or intimidating conduct on campus.

  - 25% of respondents who experienced such behavior said the conduct was based on their position (staff, faculty, student) (n = 77). Others said they experienced such conduct based on their physical appearance (18%, n = 55), ethnicity (18%, n = 54), age (17%, n = 52) or race (17%, n = 52).
  
  - Manners in which respondents experienced harassment included: 49% (n = 150) felt deliberately ignored/excluded, 40% (n = 120) felt intimidated/bullied, and 37% (n = 113) felt isolated/left out.
  
  - Compared with 13% of White people (n = 122), 15% of People of Color (n = 145) believed they had personally experienced such conduct.
  
  - Of Respondents of Color who reported experiencing this conduct, 30% (n = 44) stated it was because of their race.
  
  - Compared with 20% of men (n = 81), 13% of women (n = 214) and 100% of transgender respondents (n = 4) believed they had personally experienced such conduct.
  
  - Of the women who believed they had experienced this conduct, 14% (n = 30) stated it was because of their gender compared with 12% (n = 10) of men.

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8 The quantitative statistics reflect the n’s and percentages of participants who responded to each question. The percentages may not add to 100 and the n’s may not add to the total N for the question because respondents in some instances could mark more than one response. There are also sub-questions within sections where participants only chose those response choices that were salient for them.

9 Listings in the narrative are those responses with the greatest percentages. For a complete listing of the results, the reader is directed to the tables in the narrative and Appendix B.

10 The modifier “believe(d)” is used throughout the report to indicate the respondents’ perceived experiences. This modifier is not meant in any way to diminish those experiences.

11 Under the United States Code Title 18 Subsection 1514(c)1, harassment is defined as "a course of conduct directed at a specific person that causes substantial emotional distress in such a person and serves no legitimate purpose" (http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/vii.html). In higher education institutions, legal issues discussions define harassment as any conduct that has unreasonably interfered with one’s ability to work or learn on campus. The questions used in this survey to uncover participants’ personal and observed experiences with harassment were designed using these definitions.
Compared with 13% of heterosexual respondents (n = 203), 21% of LGBTQ respondents (n = 49) believed they had personally experienced such conduct. In order to not conflate the differential experiences of sexual minorities and gender non-conforming minorities, this report provides analyses for sexual minorities using the acronym LGBQ and gender non-conforming minorities using transgender.12

Of the LGBTQ respondents who experienced this conduct, 39% (n = 19) said it was based on their sexual orientation.

Non-bargaining staff (32%, n = 25) were more likely to experience harassment than other employment groups, while bargaining staff/classroom assistants were most likely to attribute the harassment to their position (46%, n = 22).

In response to experiencing harassment, 42% (n = 128) of respondents were angry, 37% (n = 112) felt embarrassed, 36% (n = 108) did nothing, and 35% (n = 105) told a friend.

While 5% of participants (n = 15) made complaints to campus officials, 10% (n = 30) did not know who to go to, 9% did report it but didn’t feel the complaint was taken seriously, and 12% (n = 36) didn’t report it for fear their complaints would not be taken seriously.

- One percent of respondents believed they had experienced unwanted sexual contact.

21 respondents believed that they had experienced unwanted sexual contact during their time at FIT.

Of these respondents 12 believed the incident happened off-campus and 8 believed the incident happened on campus.

The unwanted sexual contact reported by various demographics include:
- Position: 14 students; 5 Bargaining staff/Classroom assistants; 1 Faculty member; 1 non-bargaining staff member
- Gender: 15 women and 5 men;
- Race: 11 People of Color; 8 White
- Disability: 10 people without disabilities; 9 people with disabilities
- Sexual Orientation: 13 heterosexual; 5 LGBQ

The alleged perpetrators of the perceived sexual assault were most often reported as strangers (n = 7).

**Perceptions of Campus Climate**

12 Based on the literature identifying the differential experiences of sexual minorities (queer, lesbian, same gender loving, gay, lesbian, etc.) and gender non-conforming minorities (transgender, genderqueer, etc.) (Rankin, 2010; Beemyn & Rankin, 2011), this report provides analyses for sexual minorities using the acronym LGBQ and gender non-conforming minorities under the transgender umbrella. In the qualitative comments provided by respondents, we used the terminology they offered (e.g., LGBT, LGBTQ, LGBQ).
• The majority of respondents indicated that they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the overall climate at FIT (81%, n = 1668) and in their departments or work units (77%, n = 1586). The figures in the narrative show slight disparities based on disability and sexual orientation.
  
  o 82% of students were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate in the classes they are taking.
  
  • Students of Color were less comfortable than White students.

  o 78% of faculty members were comfortable with the climate in the classes they taught.
  
  • LGBQ faculty members were less comfortable than heterosexual faculty members.

• Eighteen percent of all respondents indicated that they were aware of or believed they had observed harassment on campus within the past year. The perceived harassment was most often based on position. LGBQ respondents were more aware of perceived harassment. Non-bargaining staff observed more harassment than other employee groups.

  o 18% of the participants (n = 355) believed that they had observed conduct on campus that created an exclusionary (e.g., shunned, ignored), intimidating, offensive and/or or hostile (harassing) working or learning environment within the past year.

  o Most of the observed harassment was based on position (21%, n = 75), ethnicity (18%, n = 65), physical appearance (18%, n = 63), and race (17%, n = 59).

  o Respondents most often were angry (36%, n = 128), did nothing (26%, n = 91), or told a friend (25%, n = 88) in response.

  o 34% (n = 120) of the respondents who observed harassment said it happened in a classroom.

  o These incidents were reported to an employee or official only 4% of the time (n = 14).

  o Respondents most often believed they had observed this conduct in the form of someone subjected to derogatory remarks (39%), someone being deliberately ignored or excluded (35%), someone being isolated or excluded (29%), or someone being intimidated/bullied (25%).
Satisfaction with FIT

- **68% of FIT faculty and staff (n = 360)** were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with their jobs/careers at FIT. **57% (n = 301)** were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with the way their careers/jobs have progressed at FIT. **48% (n = 252)** of employee respondents were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with their opportunities for job/career development.
  - By position, administrators were most satisfied with their jobs/careers, and the way their jobs/careers had progressed. Tenured/tenure-track faculty members were more satisfied than non-tenured/non-tenure-track faculty members with their jobs/careers and how their jobs/careers have progressed.
  - Employees of Color were least satisfied with their jobs/careers at FIT and the way their jobs/careers have progressed.
  - **42% (n = 223)** were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with their compensation as compared to that of their colleagues.
  - **57% of employee respondents (n = 305)** were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with the size and quality of their work space as compared to their departmental colleagues’/co-workers’ work space.

- **Students thought very positively about their academic experiences at FIT.**
  - **79% of students** felt they were performing at their full academic potential.
  - **74%** were satisfied with their academic experience at FIT.
  - **73%** were satisfied with the extent of their intellectual development since enrolling at FIT.
  - **73%** felt they performed academically as well as they had anticipated they would.
  - The majority of students felt their academic experience has had a positive influence on their intellectual growth and interest in ideas (81%) and that their interest in ideas and intellectual matters has increased since coming to FIT (79%).
  - **89%** intended to graduate from FIT; **18%** were considering transferring to another institution.
  - **72% of students (n = 1062)** felt valued by faculty in the classroom.
  - **62% (n = 913)** felt valued by other students in the classroom.
  - Many students thought that faculty (64%, n = 937), staff (52%, n = 752), and administrators (50%, n = 727) were genuinely concerned with their welfare.
  - **69% of students (n = 1045)** had faculty they perceive as role models.

- **15% of all respondents (n = 314) have considered leaving FIT. 20% (n = 112) of employees, and 14% (n = 201) of students.**
Among employees, 23% of men (n = 42) and 19% of women (n = 68) thought of leaving the institution.

28% of Employees of Color (n = 51) and 15% of White employees (n = 45) have seriously considered leaving FIT.

33% of LGBTQ employees (n = 23) and 17% of heterosexual respondents (n = 75) have seriously thought of leaving the institution.

Non-bargaining staff (27%, n = 21) were more likely to seriously considering leaving than other positions.

Among students, 13% of women (n = 168) and 14% of men (n = 31) considered leaving FIT.

13% of Students of Color (n = 100) and 15% of White students (n = 89) thought of leaving FIT, as did 16% of LGBTQ students (n = 26) and 13% of heterosexual students (n = 139).

First-generation students (n = 31) were just as likely as not first-generation students (n = 170) to seriously consider leaving (14%).

Students who were Non-Christian (15%, n = 107) were more likely to seriously consider leaving than their Christian counterparts (12%, n = 84).

**Faculty and Staff Work-Life Issues**

74% (n = 391) of all faculty and staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were comfortable asking questions about performance expectations.

41% of all faculty and staff respondents (n = 217) felt that salary determinations were fair, and 49% (n = 258) felt salary determinations were clear.

More than half of faculty and staff respondents thought the college demonstrated that it values a diverse faculty (64%, n = 341) and staff (65%, n = 343).

Fifteen percent (n = 79) were reluctant to take leave that they are entitled to for fear it may affect their job/career.

The majority of faculty respondents felt their teaching expectations, professional development, and contributions to the college (47%, n = 108) were similar to those of their colleagues.

More than half of all faculty respondents felt the reappointment process (62%, n = 148), tenure processes (54%, n = 127), and CCE process (57%, n = 131) were clear.

Seven percent (n = 39) of faculty and staff found it difficult to balance childcare with their work responsibilities, while 9% (n = 48) found it difficult to balance eldercare.

More than half of all employees believed that they had supervisors (52%, n = 275) at FIT who gave them career advice or guidance when they needed it.

31% (n = 165) of all employees believed FIT treats bargaining staff and non-bargaining staff equitably.
• Some faculty and staff respondents believed that they had observed unfair or unjust employment practices and indicated that they were most often based on position and ethnicity at FIT.
  o 22% of faculty and staff respondents (n = 115) believed that they had observed discriminatory hiring.
  o 13% (n = 66) believed that they had observed discriminatory employment-related disciplinary actions at FIT (up to and including dismissal).
  o 24% (n = 127) believed that they had observed discriminatory promotion practices.

• Students expressed financial concerns.
  o 53% of student respondents (n = 785) indicated they experienced financial hardship at FIT. Of those students, 79% (n = 622) had difficulty purchasing their books/equipment/supplies, 68% (n = 534) had difficulty affording tuition, 52% (n = 411) had difficulty in affording transportation costs, and 49% had difficulty in affording housing (n = 388) and fees (n = 385).
  o Half of students (515, n = 761) relied on family contributions to pay for college. In addition, 47% (n = 705) of student respondents used loans to pay for college, while 13% (n = 198) had academic scholarships or need-based scholarships (11%, n = 165).

• With regard to campus accessibility, substantial percentages of respondents did not know how accessible most aspects of campus were.
  o Walkways and pedestrian paths (58%), the elevators (58%), dining facilities (53%), FIT website (53%), academic buildings (51%), and restrooms (52%) were considered “fully accessible.”
Institutional Actions

Faculty and Staff

- A little more than half of faculty and staff thought providing more flexibility for promotion for faculty (55%, n = 269), and providing recognition and rewards for including diversity issues in courses across the curriculum (58%, n = 277) would positively affect the campus climate.
- Faculty and staff believed providing diversity training for staff (69%, n = 335) and faculty (69%, n = 335) would positively affect the climate.
- More than half of faculty and staff respondents thought increasing the diversity of the faculty and staff (66%, n = 323), the administration (68%, n = 332), and the student body (64%, n = 306) would positively affect the climate.
- Faculty and staff were in favor of providing, promoting, and improving access to counseling for people who have experienced harassment (79%, n = 385).
- 49% (n = 235) of faculty and staff thought that including diversity-related professional experiences as one of the criteria for hiring of staff/faculty would positively affect the climate.
- 48% (n = 231) of faculty thought that providing more flexibility for computing the probationary period for tenure would positively affect the climate.

Students

- Most student respondents felt that providing diversity training for all students (55%, n = 731), staff (68%, n = 910), and faculty (67%, n = 900) would positively affect the climate.
- Students thought increasing the diversity of the faculty and staff (57%, n = 757) and student body (56%, n = 751) would positively affect the climate.
- 70% (n = 932) of students were in favor of providing a person to address student complaints of classroom inequity.
- Many students believed increasing opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue among students (67%, n = 891) and between faculty, staff, and students (68%, n = 904) would positively affect the climate.
- 61% of students (n = 804) thought incorporating issues of diversity and cross-cultural competence more effectively into the curriculum would positively affect the climate at FIT.
- Finally, almost three-quarters (73%, n = 965) felt providing more effective faculty mentorship of students would be influential.
Qualitative Findings

Out of the surveys received at FIT, 1058 respondents contributed remarks to one or more of the open-ended questions. No respondents commented on all open-ended questions. Respondents to all of the open-ended questions included undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty, non-bargaining staff, bargaining staff, classroom assistants, and administrators. Open-ended questions were inserted throughout the survey to provide “voice” to the corresponding quantitative data. These qualitative comments are provided throughout the narrative. The final open-ended question allowed respondents to elaborate on any of their survey responses, further describe their experiences, or offer additional thoughts about climate issues or ways the College might improve the climate. Appendix A provides the comments offered by respondents to the final open-ended question on the survey (Question #103) as this question did not correspond directly to any quantitative question.

A few individuals applauded FIT for promoting diversity and inclusion and gave examples of the positive steps they have seen, including launching this survey and overall campus climate initiative. Suggestions for improvement were also provided. Some individuals commented about their experiences with faculty in and out of the classroom, and as faculty members at FIT. Some offered additional suggestions on how faculty can improve the classroom climate as well as how FIT can support faculty members. A number of respondents were concerned with the exclusive nature of the campus community. This relates to socioeconomic status; physical appearance; position at FIT; religious affiliation; and international status. Some shared their concerns with administrative offices, programs or departments on campus. A few respondents elaborated of the climate for People of Color and LGBTQ people in both positive and negative lights. Some respondents also complained about the cold temperature throughout offices and campuses on campus.

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13 The complete survey is available in Appendix C of the full report.
14 See footnote 12
15 Respondents suggested that the actual temperatures in offices on campus made it difficult to work
Summary of Success and Opportunities for Improvement

Two strengths/successes emerged from the quantitative data analysis. These findings should be noted and credited. First, the majority of respondents reported **high levels of comfort with the climate** at FIT. In particular, 81% (n = 1668) of all respondents reported that they were very comfortable and comfortable with the overall climate at FIT. Additionally, 77% (n = 1586) of respondents were very comfortable or comfortable with their departments or work units. Eighty-two percent students (n = 1220) were very comfortable or comfortable with the climate in the classes, as were 78% of faculty members (n = 188).

Second, **students felt and thought very positively about their academic experiences** at FIT. A majority of FIT students (79%) felt they were performing at their full academic potential; 74% were satisfied with their academic experience at FIT; 73% were satisfied with the extent of their intellectual development since enrolling at FIT; and, 73% felt they performed academically as well as they had anticipated they would. The majority of students felt their academic experience has had a positive influence on their intellectual growth and interest in ideas (81%) and that their interest in ideas and intellectual matters has increased since coming to FIT (79%). Eighty-nine percent of students intended to graduate from FIT.

These quantitative results for students and employees were also supported by various voices offered in response to the open-ended questions. The respondents’ voices echoed the positive experiences with the FIT campus climate. However, disparities existed where respondents from under-served college constituent groups typically reported less satisfaction and comfort with the overall campus climate, their department/work unit climate, and their classroom climate at FIT than their majority counterpart respondents. These underrepresented groups include People of Color, LGBQ people, people with disabilities, and staff members.

Three potential opportunities for improvement were also revealed in the assessment. The first opportunity for improvement is the inequitable treatment of FIT members based on **position** and differential treatment among different types/categories by FIT position. Administrators reported
they were more comfortable with the overall climate and the climate in their departments than other employee groups. Non-bargaining staff respondents (32%) personally experienced harassment at higher rates than other employee groups, followed by tenured/tenure-track faculty (26%) and bargaining staff/classroom assistants (24%). This theme extended to observed harassment where non-bargaining staff (36%) and tenured-tenure-track faculty (32%) were more likely to report observing such conduct. Position was indicated as the primary basis for both experienced and observed harassment at FIT. Bargaining staff/classroom assistants were more likely to report they experienced unwanted sexual conduct at FIT.

Furthermore, FIT position was cited as the primary basis for observed discriminatory employment-related disciplinary actions (35%) and discriminatory practices related to promotion (24%), and the secondary basis for discriminatory hiring practices (25%). Administrators were most satisfied with their jobs/careers; how their jobs/careers have progressed; their opportunities for job/career development; and their compensation than other employee groups. Staff members, regardless of bargaining status, were least satisfied with how their jobs/careers have progressed and their opportunities for career development. There were differences in satisfaction for faculty by tenure status. Tenure/tenure-track faculty members were more satisfied with their jobs/careers; how their jobs/careers have progressed; their opportunities for career development; and their compensation than their non-tenured/non-tenure-track faculty counterparts. More than one-quarter (27%, n = 21) of all non-bargaining staff members considered leaving FIT.

The second opportunity for improvement relates to racial tension. Although Respondents of Color and White respondents experienced exclusionary (e.g., shunned, ignored), intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct (harassing behavior) at similar rates, Respondents of Color who experienced harassment were much more likely to indicate race as the basis than White People (30% versus 4%, respectively). Ethnicity was cited as the secondary basis for both experienced harassment and observed harassment. Race was also mentioned often as a basis for observed harassment.

Employees of Color (39%) were less likely to agree that their workplace climate was welcoming based on race than White employees (64%). Employees of Color were also more likely than
White Employees to believe they had observed discriminatory hiring practices; discriminatory employment-related disciplinary actions; and discriminatory practices related to promotion at FIT. Race and ethnicity were cited among the top three bases for all types of discriminatory employment practices. Employees of Color were less satisfied with their jobs/careers at FIT; how their jobs/careers have progressed; and their opportunities with job/career development than their White employee counterparts. Employees of Color (28%) were almost twice as likely as White employees (15%) to have seriously considered leaving FIT. This theme did not extend to students: 13% of Students of Color versus 15% of White students seriously considered leaving FIT. Students of Color (80%) were slightly less comfortable than White students (85%) with the climate in their classroom. Students of Color (60%) were also less likely to believe the classroom climate was welcoming based on race when compared with White students (78%).

The experiences shared by LGBQ respondents’ calls attention to the third opportunity for improvement at FIT: LGBQ issues and concerns. LGBQ respondents (21%, n = 49) were more likely than heterosexual respondents (13%, n = 203) to believe that they had experienced harassment. Of those who believed they had experienced this type of conduct, 39% (n = 19) of LGBQ respondents versus 3% (n = 6) of heterosexual respondents indicated that this conduct was based on sexual orientation. A higher percentage of LGBQ respondents (24%) believed they had observed offensive, hostile, exclusionary, or intimidating conduct during the last year than did heterosexual respondents (17%). LGBQ respondents were also twice as likely (2%) than heterosexual respondents (1%) to have perceived they had experienced unwanted sexual contact at FIT.

Although comfort with classroom climate was high for all faculty members, LGBQ faculty members (86%) were less comfortable than heterosexual faculty members (95%). LGBQ employees (50%) were less likely to agree that the workplace climate is welcoming based on sexual orientation than their heterosexual counterparts (60%). Additionally, 33% of LGBQ employees (n = 23) and 17% of heterosexual respondents (n = 75) have seriously thought of leaving the institution, as did 16% of LGBQ students (n = 26) and 13% of heterosexual students (n = 139).
What do the results of this study suggest? At minimum, they add additional empirical data to the current knowledge base and provide more information on the experiences and perceptions for several sub-populations in the campus community. FIT is a unique institution which makes benchmarking with other similar studies more challenging.

It was the intention of the CSWG that the results be used to identify specific strategies to address the challenges facing their community and to support positive initiatives on campus. The recommended next steps include the CSWG and other campus constituent groups using the results of the internal assessment to help to lay the groundwork for future initiatives in conjunction with FIT’s strategic plan.