

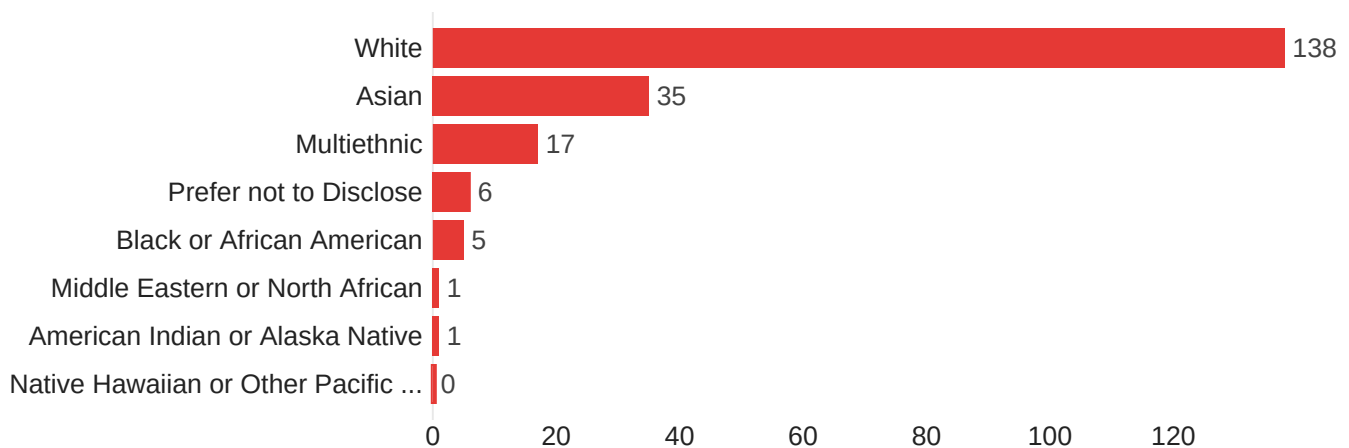
UNL Graduate Student Assembly Campus Climate Survey

Background

UNL Graduate Student Assembly's (GSA) Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee created a campus climate survey to help explore our current campus climate for graduate and professional students. One hundred (100) survey questions asked about demographics, family, support, experience, diversity and inclusion, and discrimination and misconduct. The survey was distributed to departments in spring 2021 and remains open for additional responses. 221 responses were recorded as of Sept. 28, 2021. The following report summarizes select results from the survey; full results can be requested from the D&I committee via email: diversityinclusiongsa@unl.edu

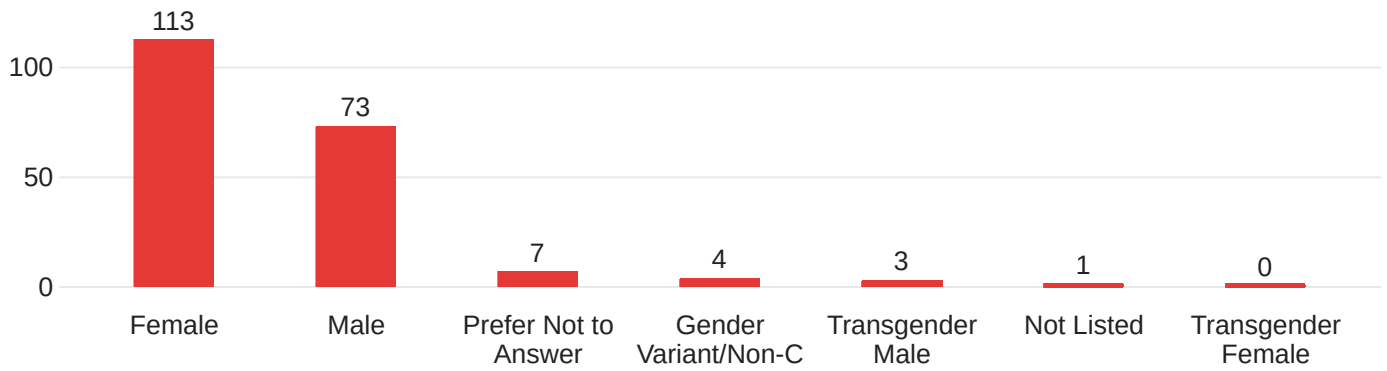
Demographics

Please indicate how you identify yourself. (Select one or more).

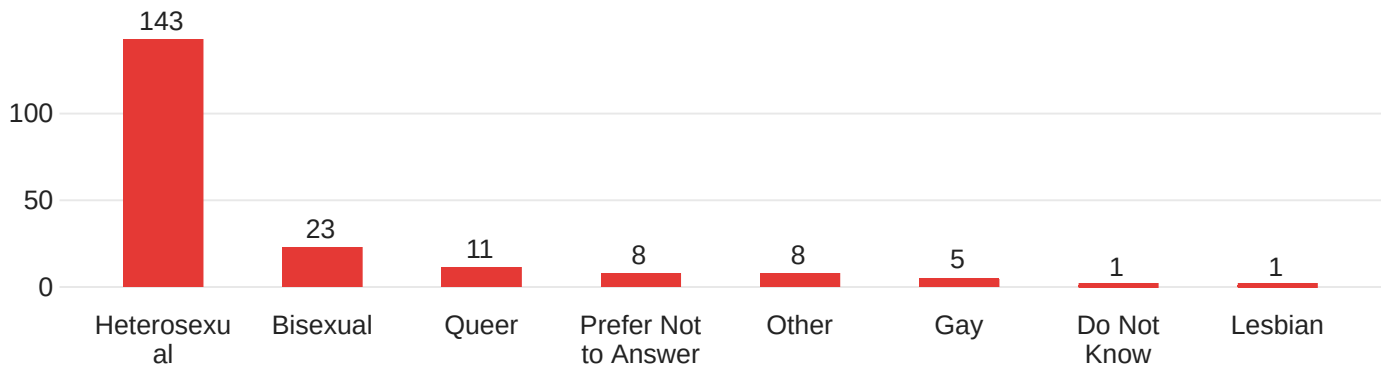


62% of respondents identify as white, 16% identify as Asian, 8% identify as multiethnic, 2% identify as Black or African-American, 0.5% identify as Middle Eastern or North African, 0.5% identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, 0% identify as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. These percentages closely mirror the identities of graduate and professional students as recorded by the [Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics](#) for spring 2021.

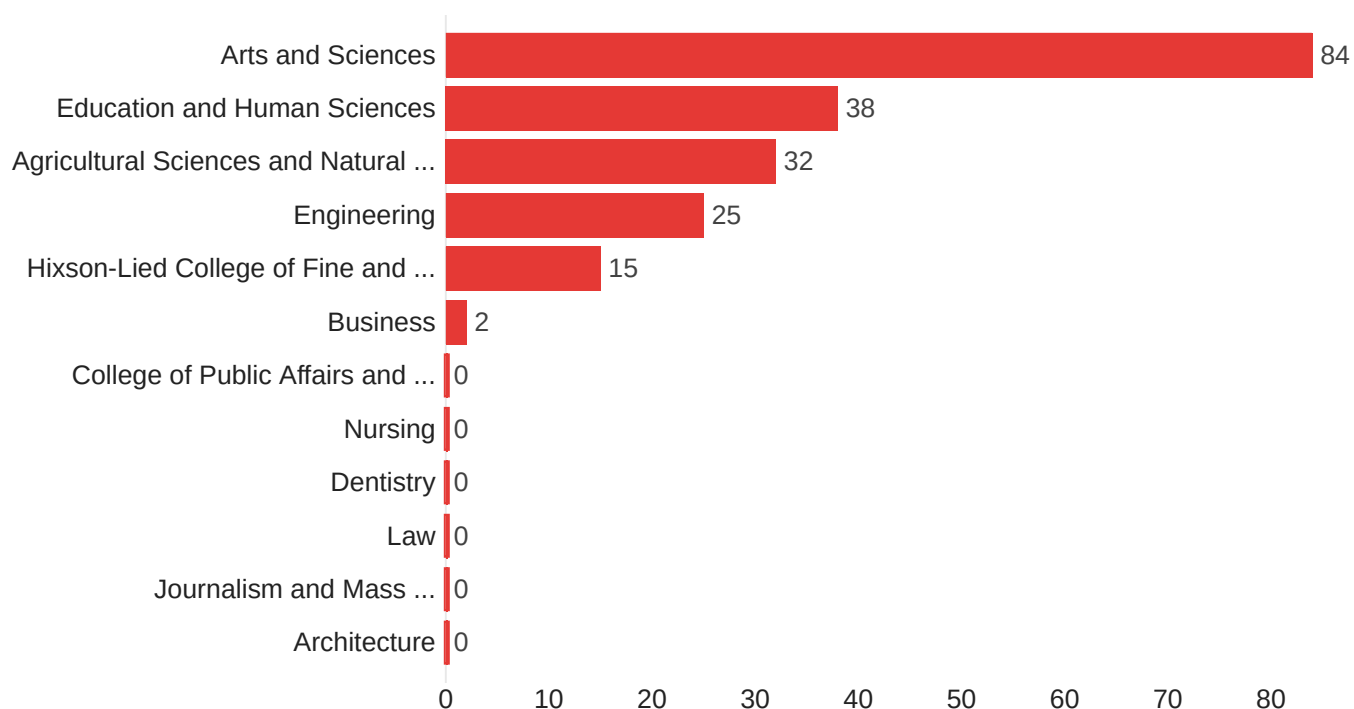
Which gender do you identify? (Select one or more).



What is your sexual orientation?



What college is your program of study in?



Overrepresentation

- Arts and Sciences (38% of responses and comprise only 21% of graduate/professional students overall)
- Performing Arts (7% of responses and comprise only 3% of graduate/professional students overall)

Adequate representation

- Education and Human Sciences
- Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
- Engineering

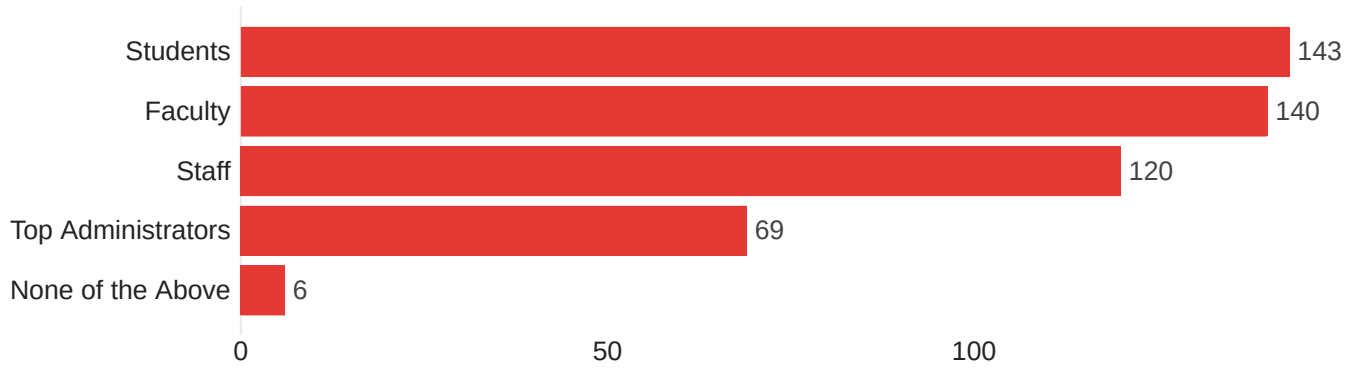
Underrepresentation

- Business (0.9% of responses and comprise 13% of graduate/professional students overall)
- Public Affairs and Community Service (0% of responses)
- Nursing (0% of responses); Dentistry (0% of responses)
- Law (0% of responses and comprise 9% of graduate/professional students overall)
- Journalism and Mass Communication (0% responses and comprise 2% of graduate/professional students overall)
- Architecture (0% of responses and comprise 0.5% of graduate/professional students overall)

Overall data as recorded by the [Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics](#) for spring 2021.

Diversity and inclusion

The following individuals are committed to diversity and inclusion (select all that apply):



Other - Text

I'm not really sure to be honest. Uncomfortable generalizing here.

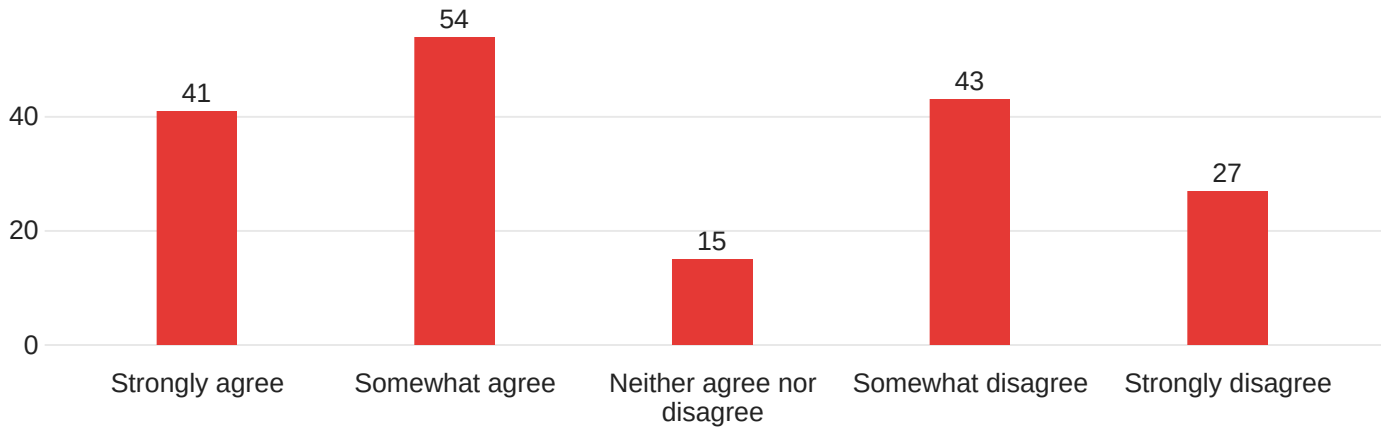
direct mentor

There's no way this can be made as a blanket statement. Most faculty, staff, and students are, but the few who aren't are very comfortable about that.

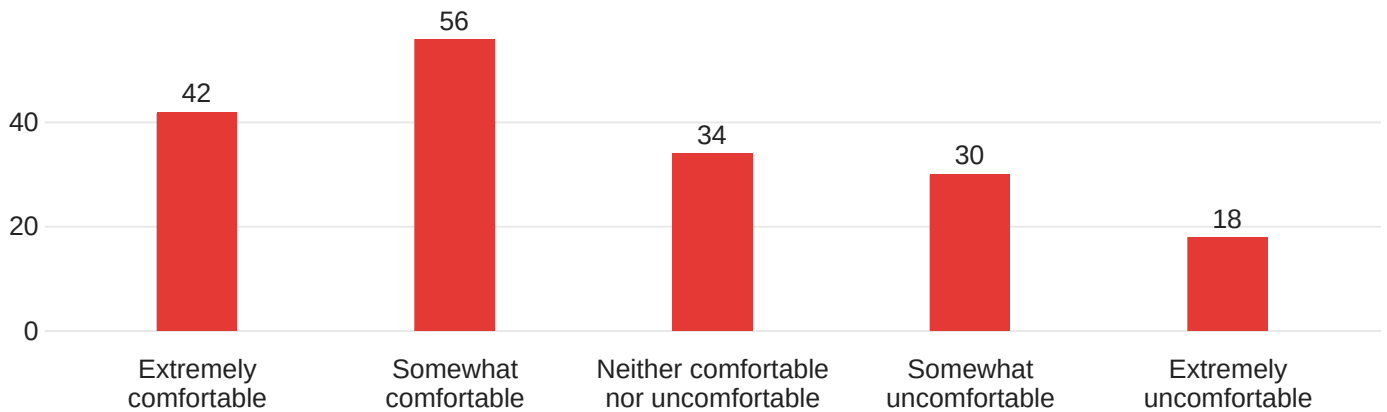
Bricks are more inclusive than bureaucrats

Discrimination and harassment

I know the process for reporting discrimination or harassment.

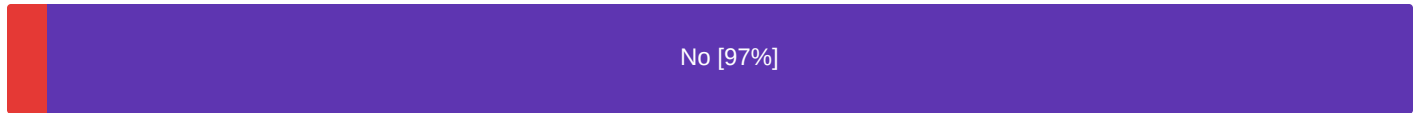


I am comfortable reporting an act of discrimination or harassment that I experience.



Nearly half of student respondents (47%) were neutral or felt they do not know the process for reporting discrimination or harassment. A similar percentage (46%) were neutral or felt they were not comfortable reporting an act of discrimination or harassment that they experience.

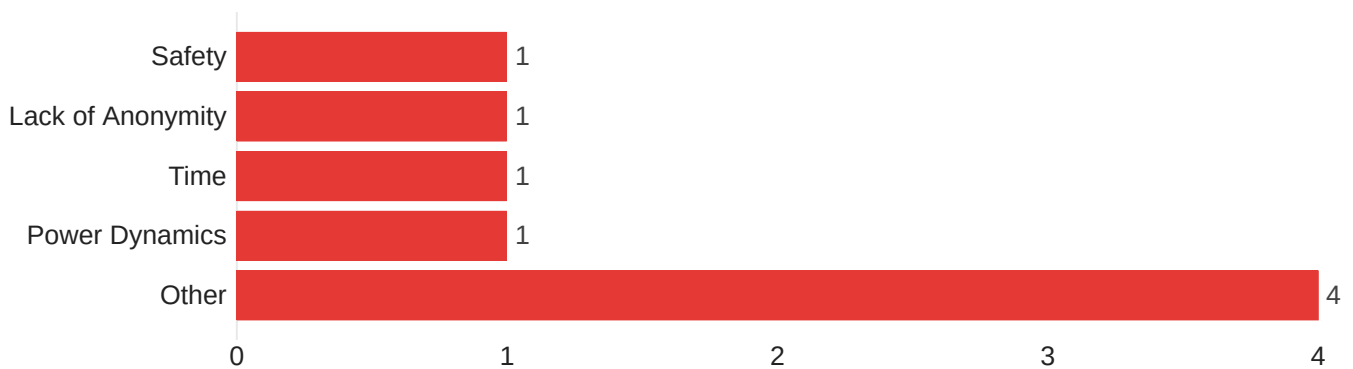
Within the past year, have you experienced any uninvited sexual attention? Sexual attention is defined as unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks or questions; unwanted pressure for dates; unwanted letters, phone calls, or emails; unwanted touching, leaning over, cornering, or pinching; unwanted pressure for sexual favors; stalking; rape or assault?*



Did you make an official report of it to anyone?



What prevented you from making an official report? (Select all that apply).



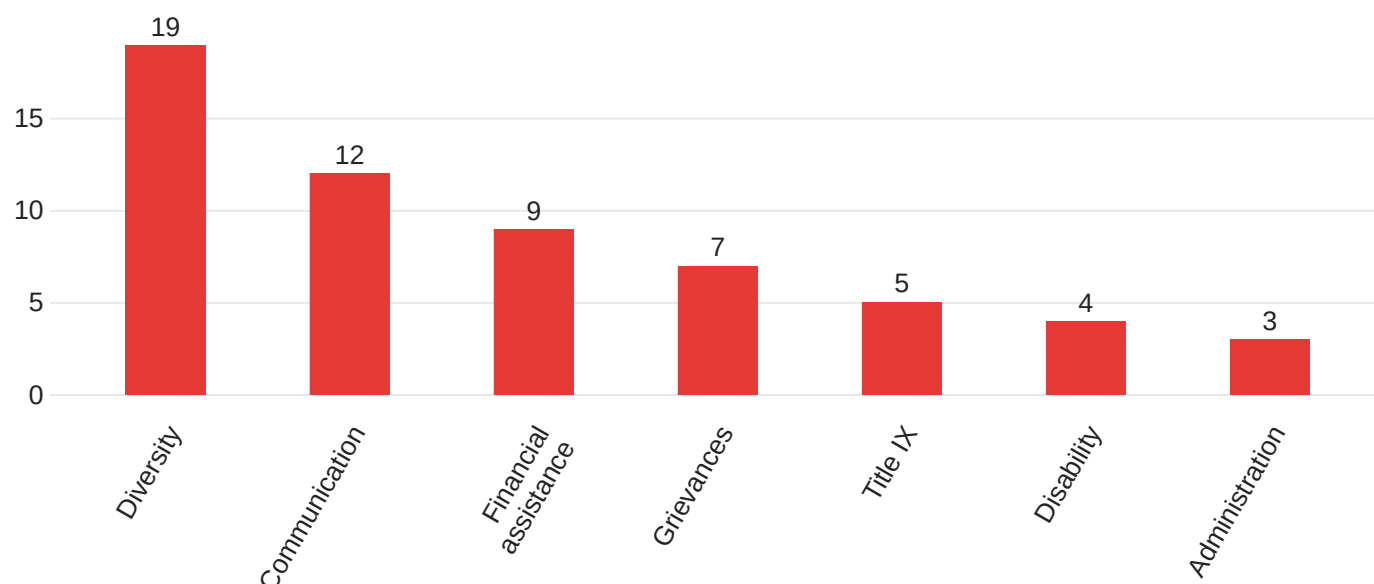
I thought i handled it well and did not feel threatened about it

Most students (97%) did not report experiencing uninvited sexual attention in the past year. Of those who experienced uninvited sexual attention, none made an official report. One respondent indicated they felt they handled it well themselves, while other respondents indicated safety, lack of anonymity, time, power dynamics, and/or other factors prevented them from making an official report.

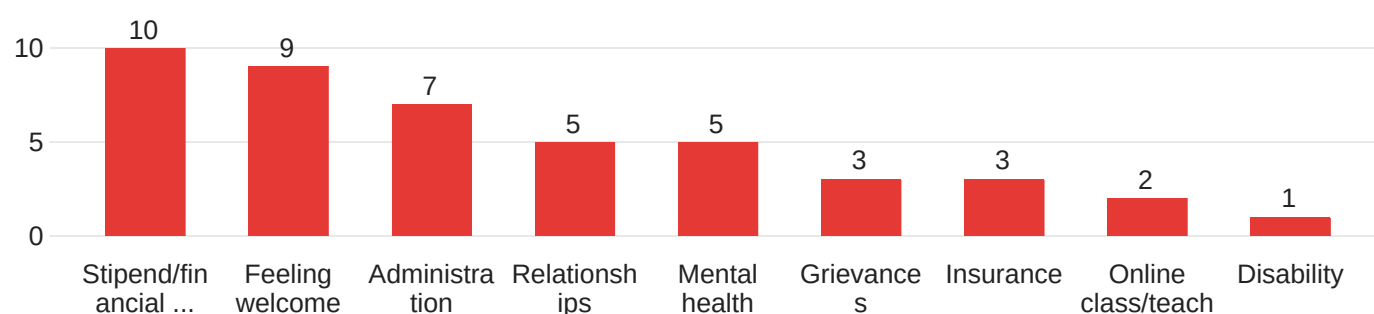
Open text responses - campus climate and support

Responses to open text questions are included to provide further context and suggestions from graduate and professional students to improve campus climate and support. Responses were categorized into various thematic categories and may be placed into multiple categories, depending on the content.

Themes - *What suggestions do you have for UNL that would provide all graduate students with a positive campus climate?*



Themes - *Please share any other thoughts you have about University support.*



The top issues identified by student respondents to improve campus climate were diversity, communication, and financial assistance. Student respondents identified a number of ways the university can improve general support for graduate students; many of the responses indicated a need for better communication to graduate students from the university administration, departments, and faculty. Several students indicated strong dissatisfaction with the Title IX office and feeling their views are represented and respected on campus.

Responses

What suggestions do you have for UNL that would provide all graduate students with a positive campus climate?

just make it clear where to go for what we need

None at the moment

Make sure we collaborate between each other rather than competing among ourselves. It is killing us.

Stop allowing faculty/staff/students to harass others to disclose their vaccine record, and whether or not they've been vaccinated for COVID. As of last semester, I have experienced 7 instances of humiliating and degrading behaviour from students and faculty, online and in-person, when I refused to share my personal health records with them. 5 of these instances were in front of the entire class, and I was not the only one to experience this segregated and targeted harassment. Following my refusal to disclose the information, the student/faculty would alter either the plans for the class, or degrade me as a person and be sure that everyone knew I was potentially "unvaccinated".

To allow more inclusion among students and faculty

per semester meetings with grad student to face-to-face hearing their concerns

A dedicated facility so graduate students can interact with other graduate students outside of their respective department/program.

NA

Top administrators set the tone for diversity and inclusion. If they are all cisgender, white, straight, old, Christian men then it's likely they have little understanding of power as it applies to our social world and so are not in a position to evaluate whether D&I efforts are helping. I would incorporate more people with diverse identities into leadership positions so we can get things done.

Make Nebraskan students aware about the fact that grad school has the most diverse population so their sense of inclusiveness should better.

Respect to all

Take concerns of graduate students and graduate student committees seriously and try to address them in a timely manner.

I need to think more about this

Avoid sending tons of emails to say the same thing or report the same news over and over

We need greater support for students with disabilities as evidenced in part by this survey which did not even ask about participants' disability status. Academia tends to understand disability and graduate work as mutually exclusive categories. My department never adequately supported me or accommodated my disability (blindness), and at times failed to even recognize it. Our department chair told me once when I asked a genuine question in a graduate Q&A session that I "just needed to remind people more that I can't see." It wasn't until this last year that ever I received any accommodations for my teaching beyond access to one piece of adaptive software.

Donut Mondays

Stronger accountability for graduate faculty to be present and helpful to their students.

UNL is over-committed to diversity/equity/inclusion that it is beginning to alienate portions of the population that did not beg for the university to focus solely on this issue.

Be student friendly, have feedback from students for faculty

To not try to scale the same solutions for all. Keep trying, and personalize based on student population feedback. Partner with local community organizations for more on campus involvement and connection.

Have a person outside the university framework for people to talk to. It can be hard to talk to people in your department due to fear of retaliation. Having someone on the outside to listen and give you feedback would be great. Having someone to validate your opinions and feelings before moving forward with the whole UNL process.

Faculty should not be able to use a text for the class if it was written by it themselves.

Teach students how to report harassment/discrimination

Be open about values. We are exposed to our professors, so their approaches represent the university. Policies and statements from top administrators don't mean as much as the statements and attitudes of our instructors. When they say something aloud, it resonates.

As a student with more conservative political views, I feel like I have to hide these views in order to get along with faculty and classmates. I think a basic awareness that different political views are ok and viable.

no thoughts. My experience in my graduate program has been nothing but great.

Don't ban CRT and pay us a liveable wage

Assistant professors should be trained to not have their personal grudge be a reason for ruining a student's reputation and career.

Make the campus safer for coming by bikes please!! Most of the grad students will highly appreciate that.

Establish a board that oversees the Title IX office and has the authority to remove staff if needed.

Diversity should be more supported in financial and pedagogical ways. The SSD office is passive and underfunded. Recruitment of racially diverse students outside of athletics is low. There is a lot of support for in-state students, but it means diversity is low. The university makes headlines for regents trying to ban CRT but diverse faculty struggle to gain tenure or have security in the department. We use the term intellectual diversity so we don't have to challenge how white supremacy undergirds the institution. We should be leading the way in the state but we toe the line.

Hear or present political voices equally (not always left wing)

Pay us more

Set clear expectations for international students under the current code of conduct and standards

Diversity efforts for disabled students

There is a clear emphasis on diversity and inclusion, but there is a natural conflict of interest — acceptance means allowing individuals to be and express and pursue their own academic beliefs and interests. While some faculty support this, it is not always in harmony with the department - or individual faculty members' - desired goals and outcomes. Acceptance is incongruent with intentional 'shaping'; the problem, as I see it, is not in intentions, but in the underlying philosophies that guide higher education.

Make a Title IX office that isn't fucking useless!

share information in a more understandable manner

Actually doing something about complaints when they are made, more conversations about what to do if you feel you are being harrassed and more protection for victims

More diversity, more inclusion of all people, MORE FUNDING DIRECTLY INTO OUR POCKETS!

The number of mishandled Title IX cases I have heard of is unbelievable. I don't think UNL is going to change its practices for stifling misconduct claims, so I don't know if anything will happen without external pressure (e.g., media attention, unionization, etc)

Take title IX reports seriously, even if they aren't sexual harassment. Harassment in general can cause extreme mental issues in a person to the point where they don't seem safe. Nebraska is the whitest (race) University I've ever been to, and that is a problem. The university needs to reach out to the diverse Nebraskans in Omaha and other regions with higher diversity locations to make an impact on their ability to diversify and inclusion of non-white peoples. Also, I have never felt heard even when I have been open to speak at departmental evaluations . Nobody actually listens to graduate students at this university.

none

Hire a more diverse faculty and make a concentrated effort to bring in more diverse students

Increase the interaction of faculty-student and student-student from different backgrounds so each one can experience different cultures. This would help to understand where others come from and why they are the way they are.

Stop embracing tenets of critical race theory and value people for the content of their character rather than the color of their skin.

This focus on sexual harassment/discomfort overlooks the fact that there are more toxic groups/labs than sexual abusers in the faculty.

Graduate student stipends do not allow all students to have the same ability to engage in research and personal life with reasonable financial security. The lower stipends need to increase to give students from all departments equal opportunity to get an education.

Graduate students who report misconduct from faculty and other students are often ostracized or even pushed out of their academic program entirely. This perpetuates gendered discrimination and is a terrible practice. Addressing this issue with graduate programs/department would be advisable. The primary thing UNL can do for its graduate students to improve their experience is to pay them a living wage. It is very difficult to succeed and focus on graduate school when you are under the constant stressors of poverty.

Encourage interests outside of academia and friendship among students. Increasing stipends and especially summer funding might give students the time and resources to do so.

More equitable pay for GTAs, lower costs for student fees, greater diversity in recruiting students and faculty, outspoken opposition to racist policies

Increase our stipend enough so we can afford to live in Lincoln without having to take out loans or cut down on meal sizes to save money.

Online training is window dressing. Support for diverse access, safety, and care need to have financial support and go beyond putting pressure on individuals. Graduate students were asked to do extraordinary labor in the last year to make things okay for undergrads without adequate compensation or care. Disabled students had to cope with traditional accommodations that were intended for traditional classrooms and were left on their own. Department

a respect for diversity of thought

Avoid clique/mob mentality used to gang up on students/faculty; offer opportunities for work to those who need/request it even if it's interdepartmental

Awareness of disability discrimination

Increased stipends to be able to live comfortably. Financial security and health insurance are two of the most important things to survive in life and UNL does not adequately provide enough funding support for graduate students.

More diversity throughout the entire university. A Title IX office that does not retraumatize victims and instead has trauma-informed professionals.

Responses

Please share any other thoughts you have about University support.

In terms of Covid, the fact that there is no vaccine mandate puts TAs at risk because we have no option to move classes online. It feels as if the upper administration does not care about our health and treats us as expendable.

I don't feel much cohesion or camaraderie in my cohort or department of grad students

The number one way the university could support my mental health is by paying me more. Money is at the root of so much stress I experience here.

no more thoughts

The questions about childcare are based upon a poorly worded initial question regarding children. While I have children, they are no longer living at home. Therefore, my answers to childcare are neutral.

I feel isolated and alone. Not because of COVID, but when one tries to stand up for themselves, there are consequences that lead to isolation and not being included.

I feel the university grad school is diverse and very welcoming. I have heard some other students complain about inclusiveness and other problems. But, I haven't faced that myself.

There must be proper guidance to students

More staff members to help and work with International students at ISSO

The support for students with disabilities, particularly at the graduate level, is lacking. The staff does their very best, but they are severely under-resourced and under-trained

I like the graduate students I work with.

The university doesn't care about me and doesn't hold it's faculty to being good educators.

Not very welcoming

Make sure faculty and staff are aware of the mental health services that are available for undergraduate and graduate student. So they can pass on this information to students are necessary.

I completed my master's at UNL and that experience was extremely isolating and unsupported. In my doctoral cohort I feel more connected.

get rid of fees

I would like to see graduate level hybrid course offerings continue. This would make it easier to take more classes while also giving me more family time in lieu of a long commute.

The debates on Critical Race theory have made me want to leave because my realities seem not to be welcomed

Unique for each graduate student. Particularly unique for graduate students not attending full time and receiving support outside of the campus community.

Better resource critical student support areas (e.g. health center, CAPS, etc.)

I don't feel like the grad students' greivences are heard or taken seriously.

Pay graduate students more. Pay for medical care. Students student have to pay ~\$3,000 per year for healthcare out of their stipends as they barely get paid enough to survive.

I feel UNL does a great job at making it known the programs and locations to get support for medical, mental, scholastic issues.

very ableist, like all universities.

Mental health has only recently been a topic of discussion in graduate student circles, so making it a part of each class and lab would be beneficial for all.

It's lacking for grad students. I feel expendable and exploitable.

Very positive feelings in general for my UNL community

good

I have support in large part because I'm a full time and fully funded student. I would like to see more support available for part time graduate students.

I feel our department is pitted against the institution in terms of philosophy and it plays out through the way budget is allocated. It's hard to feel supported as an academic department when being asked to provide proof of profitability. Even more difficult when our demand for academic freedom and equitable treatment is met with silence

Pay us more

No

There are a lot of much needed conversations about welcoming and supporting students of color and gender diversity, but sometimes these conversations turn the table too far and discriminate against others and their identity and cultural belief. I have been very offended by derogatory remarks about my religious beliefs in the classroom and my religious identity has been unfairly attacked and held responsible for wrongs that I personally advocate against. There is still a long way to go to demonstrate equitable respect for all cultural identities.

I am not sure if this is what you are after, but we just need greater financial support as GTAs.

It would be a good idea.

As a graduate student who started at UNL during the fall of 2020 i understand that tbe university was limited on what it could do to welcome new students but i wasnt told who was in my cohort, how to register for classes, there was no introduction to the department, i just moved half way across the country and started taking online classes. It was extremely isolating

As a graduate student, I do not not feel part of the larger UNL community. I feel like more could be done to connect graduate students.

Feel as if having discussions with faculty (e.g., about the pandemic and protective measures for grad students, especially those who are teaching) was just a way to pacify the grad students. It seemed as if the faculty were just allowing us to voice our opinions, but had no intention of doing nothing.

Professors who are not supportive are not reprimanded in any way. I have told incoming graduate students to keep away from multiple professors in my department in order for them to keep their sanity. Everyone knows these professors are not supportive of graduate students and are terrible people in general, yet nothing gets done to reprimand the professors.

great university

My stipend is not livable, and I have significant stress over how I will pay for an emergency that pops up. For example, last week I cut myself really badly, and I was really nervous that I was going to have to go the ER, because I didn't know how I would pay for it.

There is a clear division from graduate students within their own ethnicity. It is understandable, trying to do some interactive activity between different communities might help to reduce it.