Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Assessment

2024 Student Campus Climate Executive Report

June 2024

ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE
STUDENTS FIRST

Introduction

The Essex County College (ECC) Student Campus Climate Survey is administered annually each spring semester. It is run by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Assessment (IEPA). The survey was opened on March 27th, 2024 and was closed on April 22nd, 2024. The purpose is to gauge students' feelings of safety, acceptance, and their sense of being valued by ECC faculty, staff, administration and peers. The survey has four main sections.

- **Section I - Demographics:** Includes questions on gender, race/ethnicity, student status and major.
- **Section II - Safety:** This section includes questions based on perceived physical safety, freedom from harassment/discrimination and sense of community.
- **Section III - Interpersonal Interaction:** This section includes questions about student interactions with faculty and administrators, feelings of belongness as a student and sense of being valued by the campus community.
- **Section IV - Open Comments:** The last section of the survey was an open comment box where participants were invited to voice any other concerns about ECC's campus climate.

Methodology

This survey was distributed through Qualtrics. The target population was any ECC student who was enrolled the Spring 2024 semester. Additionally, the Office of IEPA solicited respondents through a poster campaign, attendance at a Student Resource Fair and the ECC app. Participants were incentivized to take the survey through a lottery to win one of five $20 Amazon Gift Cards. The survey was sent out to 5,122 students and 421 responses were received, yielding an 8.2% response rate. Section I was measured through a series of multiple-choice questions. Section II and III were both measured through a five-point Likert scale where 'Strongly Disagree' was coded as 1 and 'Strongly Agree' was coded as 5. Section IV was a simple open text box.

Section I: Demographics

- **Gender:** Female participants (74%) were overrepresented among respondents compared to the college population (59.5%) and Male participants (24%) were underrepresented compared to the college population (40.5%).

Figure 1: Gender
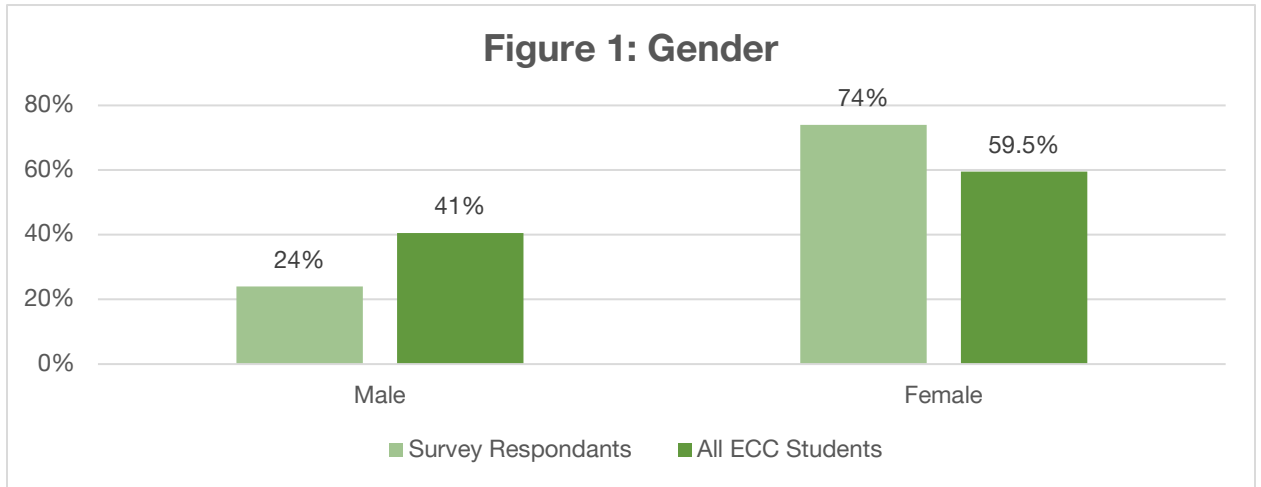
- **Race/ethnicity:** The race/ethnicity of respondents was relatively reflective of the ECC population with only the Black or African participants (52%) being slightly overrepresented in this sample compared to the college population (44.1%).

Figure 2: Race/Ethnicity
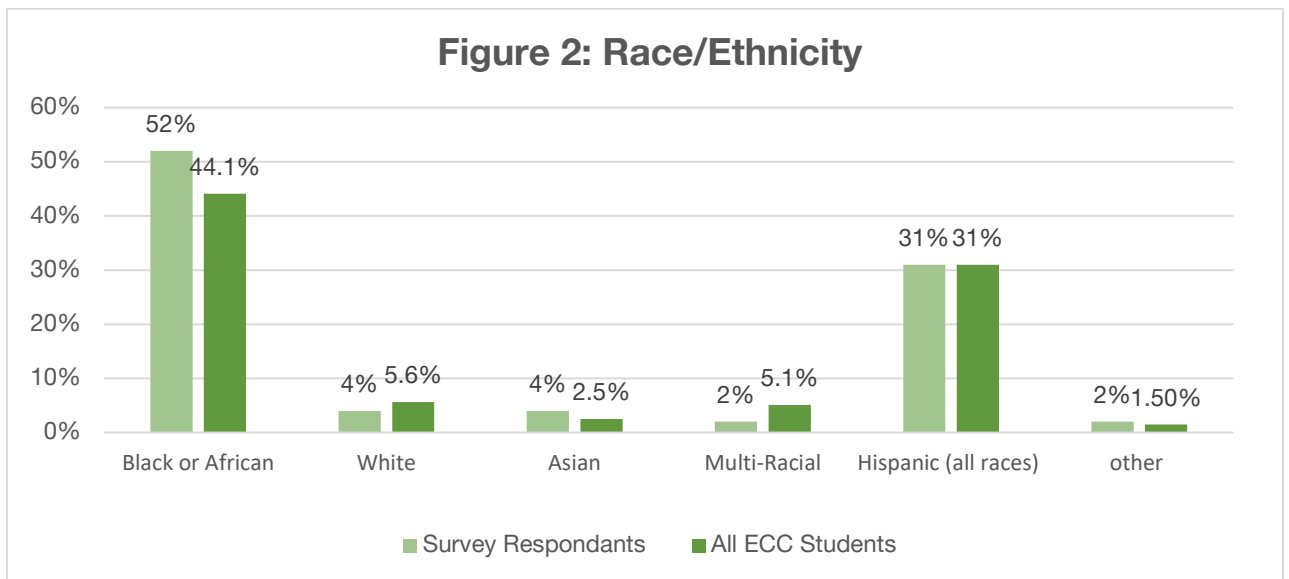
Section II: Safety

This section consisted of a five-point Likert scale where students rated their level of agreement on statements related to safety. The data showed that overall, students agree that ECC is a safe climate that does its best to prevent and stop harassment and discrimination. The average score of this section across all questions was 4.28. All questions from Section II are in the table below.

Table 2.1: 2024 Section II Data Table

Statement:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel safe at Essex County College	2.1%	1.0%	5.4%	39.0%	52.6%
There are sufficient support resources available	2.4%	2.9%	11.0%	41.4%	42.4%
I believe my difference are embraced and valued	2.1%	2.1%	12.9%	41.0%	42.0%
Discrimination is not tolerated at ECC	2.1%	2.1%	9.1%	34.6%	52.2%
Harassment is not tolerated at ECC	2.1%	1.6%	8.8%	33.4%	54.2%
ECC works hard to prevent discrimination and harassment from happening	1.5%	2.1%	14.1%	37.5%	44.7%
Racial and cultural differences are celebrated at ECC	1.6%	1.3%	6.2%	34.0%	56.9%
I feel a sense of community and belonging at ECC	2.6%	2.3%	11.7%	38.4%	44.9%
Campus police and security protect us from harm	1.8%	2.1%	14.6%	36.7%	44.8%
ECC provides sufficient programs and resources to foster the success of a diverse population	2.3%	2.1%	10.4%	38.8%	46.4%

Figure 3: 2023-2024 Section II Results
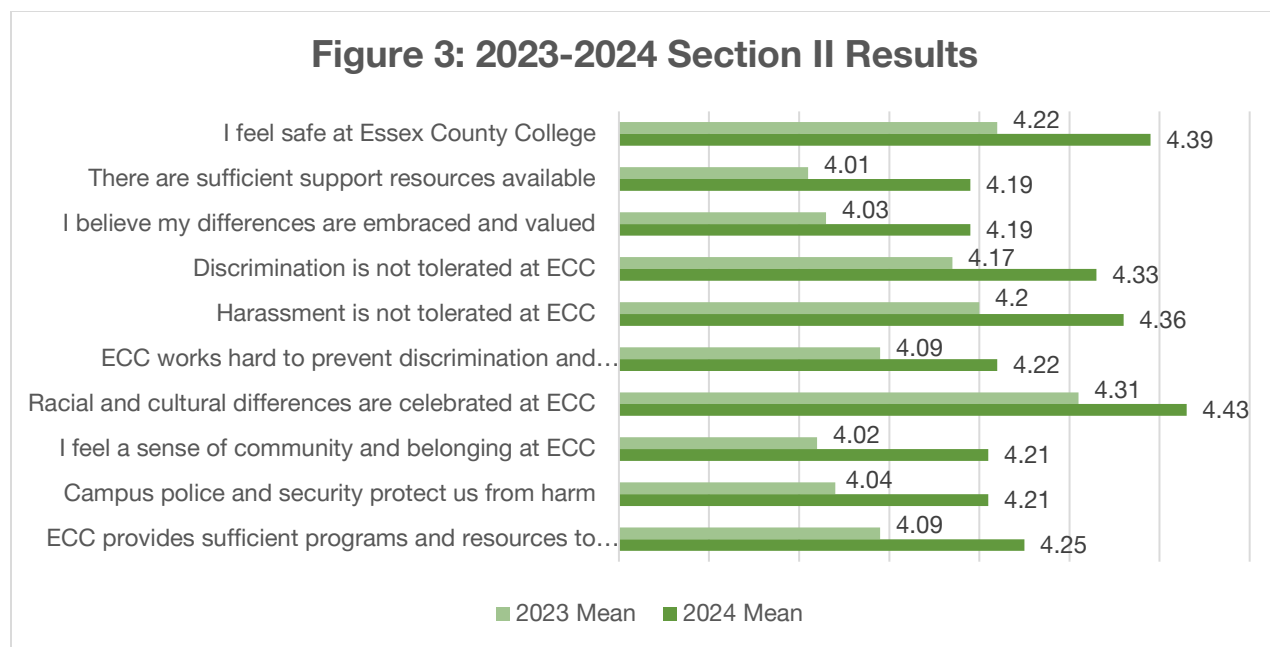
An independent t-test was run on the mean scores of each question. There was a statistically significant increase in scores from 2023 scores (Mean =4.12) compared to 2024 scores (Mean =4.28), p= 0.0013. There was an average increase of 0.16 in scores from 2023 to 2024. The statement that students most strongly agreed on was "Racial and cultural differences are celebrated at ECC." The statement that students least agreed with was "There are sufficient resources available" and "I believe my differences are embraced and valued." The statement that had the biggest year-over-year increase in score from 2023 to 2024 is "I feel a sense of community and belonging at ECC."

Table 2.2: 2023-2024 Section II Statistics Table

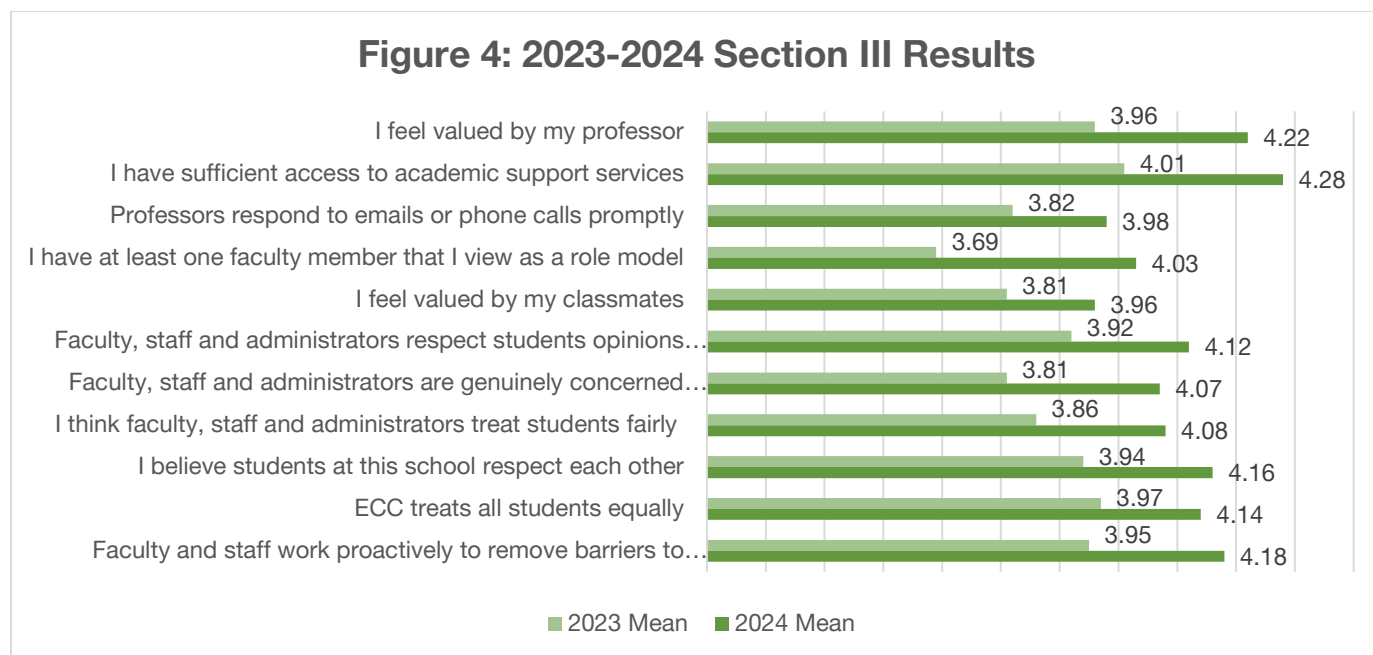| Statement:	2023 Mean	2024 Mean
I feel safe at Essex County College	4.22	4.39
There are sufficient support resources available	4.01	4.19
I believe my differences are embraced and valued	4.03	4.19
Discrimination is not tolerated at ECC	4.17	4.33
Harassment is not tolerated at ECC	4.20	4.36
ECC works hard to prevent discrimination and harassment from happening	4.09	4.22
Racial and cultural differences are celebrated at ECC	4.31	4.43
I feel a sense of community and belonging at ECC	4.02	4.21
Campus police and security protect us from harm	4.04	4.21
ECC provides sufficient programs and resources to foster the success of a diverse population	4.09	4.25

Note: The highest score possible was 5 (meaning that participants strongly agreed with the statement) and the lowest score was 1 (meaning that participants strongly disagreed with the statement.)

Section III: Interpersonal Interaction

This section consisted of a five-point Likert scale to gauged students' opinions on their interactions with faculty, staff and other ECC students. Data showed that overall, students agree that they experience positive and useful interactions with faculty, staff and other ECC students. The average score on this section across all questions was 4.11. All questions from Section III are in the table below.

Table 3.1: 2024 Section III Data Table

Statement:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel valued by my professors	1.9%	3.2%	12.2%	36.5%	46.3%
I have sufficient access to academic support services	1.3%	4.0%	8.0%	38.3%	48.3%
Professors respond to emails or phone calls promptly	2.7%	7.1%	15.3%	39.2%	35.7%
I have at least one faculty member that I view as a role model	2.1%	4.5%	22.4%	29.9%	41.1%
I feel valued by my classmates	1.3%	5.3%	21.6%	39.2%	32.5%
Faculty, staff and administrators respect student's opinions and thoughts	1.9%	3.5%	14.4%	41.3%	38.9%
Faculty, staff and administrators are genuinely concerned about my well-being	2.2%	3.5%	19.1%	36.0%	39.3%
I think faculty, staff and administrators treat students fairly	1.6%	3.5%	17.5%	40.2%	37.2%
I believe students at this school respect each other	0.5%	2.4%	15.5%	43.6%	38.0%
ECC treats all students equally	1.6%	4.1%	13.9%	39.3%	41.0%
Faculty and staff work proactively to removed barriers to success for diverse student populations	1.4%	1.6%	15.2%	41.0%	40.8%

Figure 4: 2023-2024 Section III Results

Statement	2023 Mean	2024 Mean
I feel valued by my professor	3.96	4.22
I have sufficient access to academic support services	4.01	4.28
Professors respond to emails or phone calls promptly	3.82	3.98
I have at least one faculty member that I view as a role model	3.69	4.03
I feel valued by my classmates	3.81	3.96
Faculty, staff and administrators respect students opinions...	3.92	4.12
Faculty, staff and administrators are genuinely concerned...	3.81	4.07
I think faculty, staff and administrators treat students fairly	3.86	4.08
I believe students at this school respect each other	3.94	4.16
ECC treats all students equally	3.97	4.14
Faculty and staff work proactively to remove barriers to...	3.95	4.18

■ 2023 Mean   ■ 2024 Mean

An independent t-test on the mean scores of each question was calculated. There was a statistically significant increase in scores from Section III from 2023 (Mean = 3.89 compared to 2024 (Mean =4.11), p= 0.0001. The statement that the participants most strongly agreed with was "I have sufficient access to academic support services" and the statement that was the least agreed with was "I feel valued by my classmates." The biggest year-over-year increase in scores from 2024 when compared to 2023 is "I have at least one faculty member that I view as a role model".

Table 3.2: 2023-2024 Section III Statistics Table

Statement	2023 Mean	2024 Mean
I feel valued by my professor	3.96	4.22
I have sufficient access to academic support services	4.01	4.28
Professors respond to emails or phone calls promptly	3.82	3.98
I have at least one faculty member that I view as a role model	3.69	4.03
I feel valued by my classmates	3.81	3.96
Faculty, staff and administrators respect students opinions and thoughts	3.92	4.12
Faculty, staff and administrators are genuinely concerned about my well-being	3.81	4.07
I think faculty, staff and administrators treat students fairly	3.86	4.08
I believe students at this school respect each other	3.94	4.16
ECC treats all students equally	3.97	4.14
Faculty and staff work proactively to remove barriers to success for diverse student populations	3.95	4.18

Note: The highest score possible was 5 (meaning that participants strongly agreed with the statement) and the lowest score was 1 (meaning that participants strongly disagreed with the statement).

Section IV: Open Comments

At the end of the survey, participants were prompted: "Please use the space below to provide any comments, concerns, or feedback." Among participants, 29.5% (n=125) left a comment. Of those comments, 54% of them emphasized a positive experience at ECC. 11.3% (n=14) critiqued professors and advisors. The themes of these comments were requesting more support and better responses to emails. Several comments were requesting more student support like more clubs/activities, more library and information commons hours and better options in the cafeteria (14.5% (n=18)). About 5% (n=6) of comments expressed concerns of faculty and staff being rude. Only 4.0% (n=5) expressed explicitly negative experiences (without suggestions) at the college.

Conclusion

Overall ECC students report a positive campus climate at ECC. The most notable finding was that there was a statistically significant increase in student campus climate and relationships with faculty, staff and peers compared to the prior year's results. However, there is room for improvement in areas such as increasing student support and improving student-to-student interaction.