

# University of Puget Sound Campus Climate Survey

## 2012 Preliminary Report

*Diversity Advisory Council, October 2012*

As part of the university's ongoing commitment to actively create a welcoming and inclusive campus environment, the Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) was charged last fall by the President's Cabinet with creating a follow-up to the 2006 Campus Climate survey. This report shares initial results comparing the 2006 and 2012 responses.

Emerging from the **Diversity Strategic Plan**, the survey is one tool to help educate our community, share our perceptions, identify issues, and improve the campus experience for everyone. Other tools and reports can be found at **[www.pugetsound.edu/diversity](http://www.pugetsound.edu/diversity)**. We seek continuous improvement – there is always more to learn and do to create an environment that is fully welcoming and inclusive.

### Key Findings

This preliminary report focuses on the collective change in experiences and perceptions of Puget Sound as reported by faculty, staff, and students surveyed in 2006 and 2012. This initial analysis suggests some overall improvement in the 2012 survey results, along with guidance about areas in which to focus our efforts. Key findings detailed in this report include:

1. **Response rates.** More members of our community participated in the survey in 2012 than 2006.
2. **Incidences of discrimination.** There is a reduction in these incidences, but when they do occur, they tend to be around socioeconomic status, age and gender for faculty and staff, and around religious and political affiliation for students.
3. **Disparaging remarks.** While there is a decrease in respondents witnessing disparaging remarks, there is still substantial room for improvement, especially in remarks made outside the classroom setting.
4. **Sense of alienation on campus.** A qualitative theme analysis of written comments indicate that about eight percent of our community feel alienated and/or experience painful interactions on campus.
5. **Challenging discriminatory comments.** Campus community members report being more likely to challenge discriminatory remarks.
6. **Expression of religious and political beliefs in the classroom.** Students report having less concern about expression of religious and political beliefs in classroom settings.
7. **Engagement with students of different races/ethnicities.** More students report engaging in serious conversation with those of different races and ethnicities, and social interactions among students of different races and ethnicities has increased.
8. **Inclusive learning environment.** There is a substantial increase in those who believe that Puget Sound is an inclusive learning environment.
9. **Addressing the challenges of becoming more diverse.** Students, faculty, and staff have differing responses about addressing the challenges of becoming a more diverse campus.
10. **Reporting harassment.** Students, faculty, and staff are more likely to know how to report harassment or discrimination than they were in 2006, but students are the least familiar with the process. Faculty and staff report increased comfort in reporting discriminatory behavior.

Overall, the results of the 2012 survey point to an improvement in awareness about difference and decline in reported incidents of marginalization. From 2006 to 2012, survey respondents indicate a greater awareness of difference, more tolerance, and fewer reported incidents of discrimination. Although our campus appears to be more inclusive than it was in 2006, with this awareness comes a different set of challenges. We have made great progress in reducing incidents of discrimination; nonetheless, there are still times and places where disparagement happens. It appears that the instances in which discriminatory remarks are made tend to be in unstructured, more casual environments, where we may not be as sensitive to the impact of our statements, although such remarks are reported to occur in the classroom as well.

The 2006 and 2012 climate surveys were different in format and length. The 2012 survey was designed to be more in line with the definition of social diversity articulated in the diversity strategic plan. Thus, in some instances to make comparisons we matched different, but related questions. Details of question wording are included in each graph.

### **Next Steps**

We can best embrace these improvements by continuing our efforts to more fully achieve our goals. We have much of which we may be proud, but also areas of concern and much more to accomplish. The DAC and staff in the Office of Institutional Research continue to meet regularly to delve more deeply into the data and review the large number of written comments that accompanied the 2012 survey. There is additional work to do in analyzing the survey and in considering how the comments can help us better understand the survey data.

As we continue to note areas of concern, we invite all members of the community to engage in recommendations for action across all facets of campus life. Facilitated discussion and workshops, open forums, and/or other types of programming will be developed as we identify and prioritize areas for improvement. If you have questions about this report, or suggestions for responding to its contents, please contact any member of the Diversity Advisory Committee listed at the end of this report.

For additional information on campus activities to promote diversity and inclusion, and for a copy of the 2012 Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report, please visit [www.pugetsound.edu/diversity](http://www.pugetsound.edu/diversity).

*"I love teaching at Puget Sound. I find it, personally, profoundly welcoming. I have come to believe that this space is fundamentally marked as white, a bit less so as male and heterosexual and a bit liberal. I think to whatever degree someone falls outside this paradigm, the welcome is less so and, at times, not a welcome at all, but a rejection. I appreciate all that is being done to address this state of affairs. We've got more work to do."*

*- Comment from a faculty member on the 2012 Climate Survey*

## Analysis of Survey Responses

### 1. Higher response rates.

The 2012 survey was distributed in February with 1,355 student responses, 424 staff responses, and 233 faculty responses. The response rate represents a substantial improvement over 2006, and is coupled with slightly more representative results for student race and ethnicity. For faculty and staff, white men and women were overrepresented; for all members of our community, women were overrepresented, as was the case in 2006. It is important to remember that the responses of campus populations with large numbers (e.g., women, white, straight) may overshadow the perspectives of smaller populations.

Table 1.

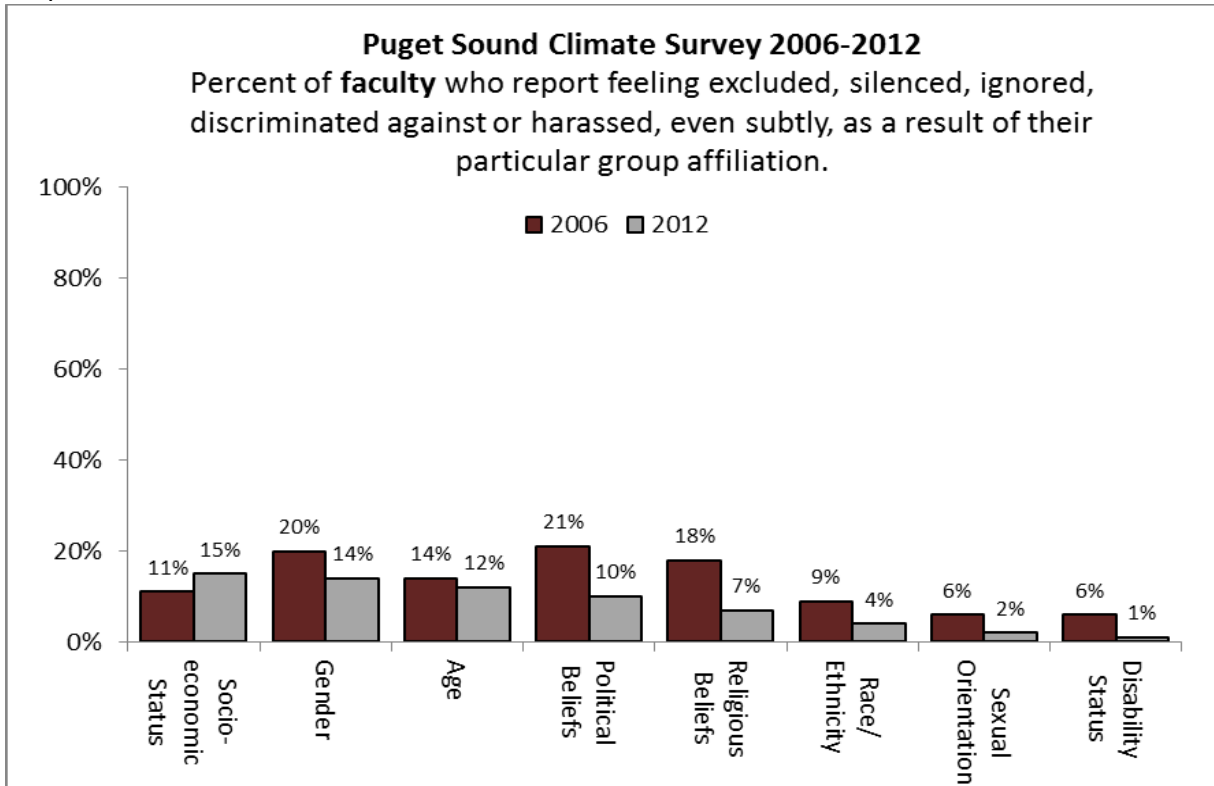
<b>Campus Climate Survey Response Rates</b>		
	2012	2006
Faculty	58%	34%
Staff	61%	45%
Student	40%	24%

In addition, respondents shared 1,759 comments. Comments shared as examples in this report were selected to represent several key themes identified to date.

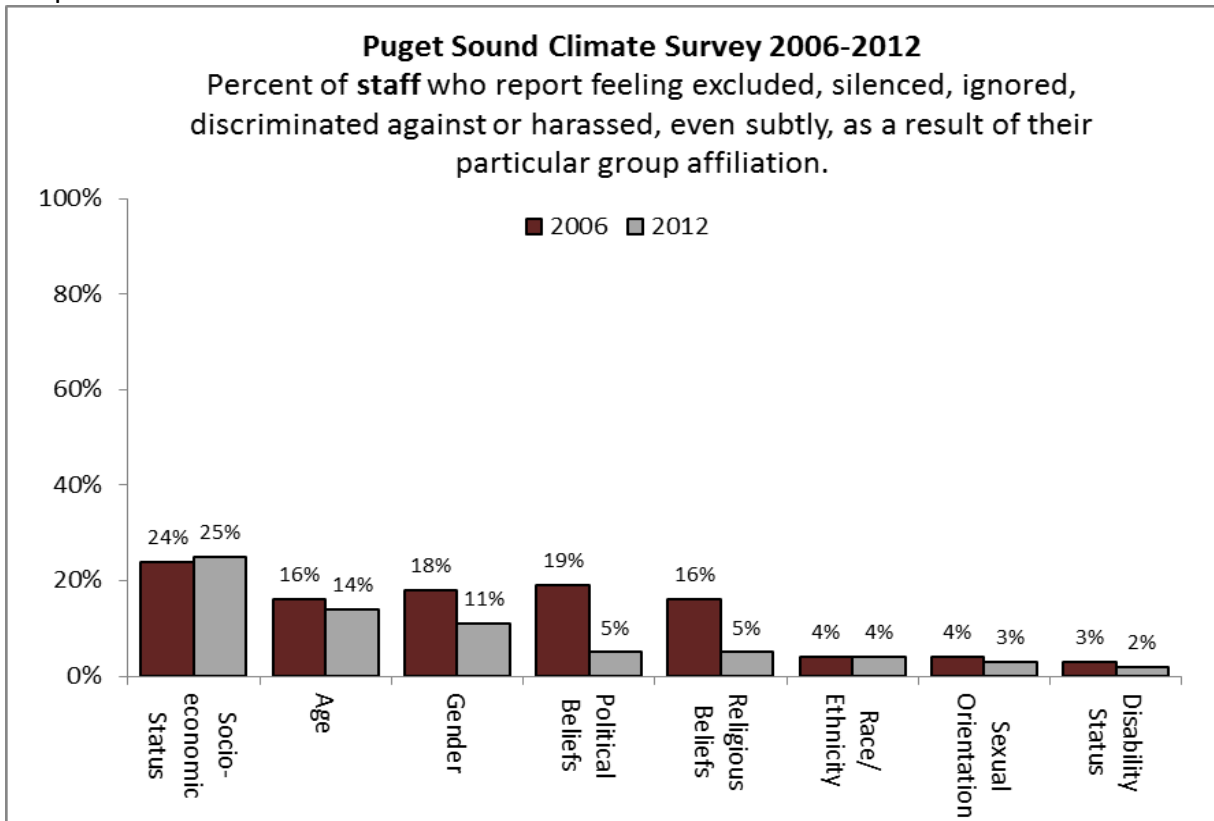
### 2. Incidences of discrimination.

The survey asked respondents questions related to socioeconomic status, gender, age, political beliefs, religious beliefs, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability status. Faculty, students, and staff at the University of Puget Sound are less likely in 2012 to report that they felt marginalized as a result of their identity, and a smaller percentage of faculty report feelings of marginalization compared to staff and students. The one area in which there has not been an improvement is among faculty and staff who are more likely in 2012 than 2006 to have felt marginalized as a result of their socioeconomic status. Some members of our community are still experiencing painful moments, and have concern about retaliation. While the overall likelihood of a member of our community experiencing discrimination is lower than in 2006, the groups that report being most affected have changed. In 2006, respondents were more likely to cite incidents based on political beliefs, gender, and religious beliefs. In 2012, respondents were more likely to do so based on socioeconomic status, age, and gender. Additional analysis will help us examine the percentage of people who identify with each group and experience alienation; the survey comments will help us understand the perspective of those who have these experiences.

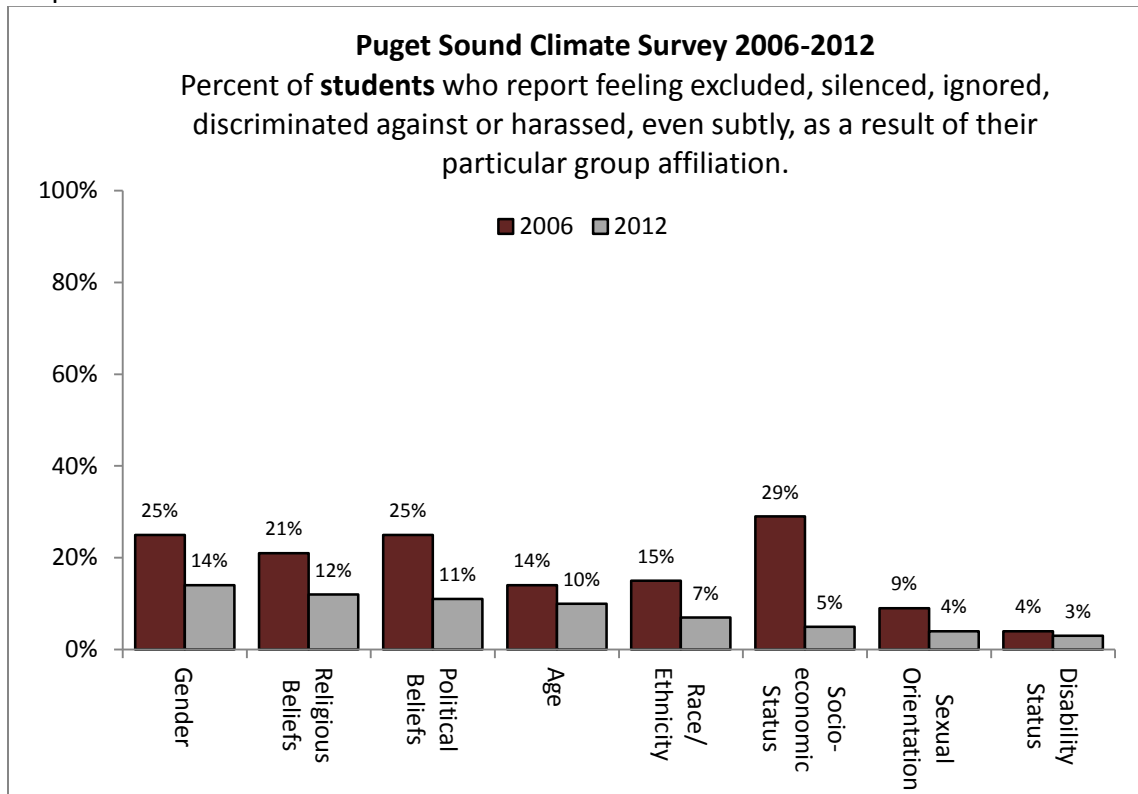
Graph 2A.



Graph 2B.



Graph 2C.



Notes: In 2012, this was a question with the choices "Yes" and "No". In 2006, "Yes" was comprised of "Once", "Twice", "Three", "4-5", "6-10" and "11 or more". In 2006, the questions were: "How often, in the last year, have you felt discriminated against or harassed (even subtly) at Puget Sound as a result of any of the following person characteristics?"

*"I believe that the issue of race and diversity is an ongoing struggle and it will be for a long time until people realize how important this issue is on this campus. The most disappointing thing that I found in my conversations with some students was that they didn't understand how much isolation some students who are minorities feel. While I am a social person who feels like I know plenty of people, there are times when I feel out of the loop or isolated from my social group because of my race. I just don't feel like racial discussions happen very often in the classroom, and I think that they should. Yes, these types of discussions are hard and awkward and uncomfortable, but the campus community won't know how the majority, and the minority, feel about race on campus unless they are asked."*  
 -Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey

*"As a rich white boy I am doing just fine here."*  
 -Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey

*"It's clear to me that there are still ... faculty members on campus who treat younger women pejoratively and with a lack of respect for intellectual and professional capabilities. I don't think this is unique at Puget Sound."*

*-Comment from a faculty member on the 2012 Climate Survey*

### **3. Disparaging remarks.**

In 2012, respondents were asked to distinguish between experiences in and out of the classroom. While that distinction isn't available for all of the 2006 data, differences can be seen between 2006 and 2012, as well as differences in 2012 between in and out of classroom experiences.

In 2006, 37% of students reported hearing a disparaging remark made by a faculty member, while in 2012, that percentage was smaller: 29% in class, and 21% out of class. Among faculty, 46% reported hearing a colleague make a disparaging remark in 2006, compared to 2012 findings that 23% had heard a faculty member make such a remark in the classroom, and 49% out of the classroom. The pattern is the same for staff.

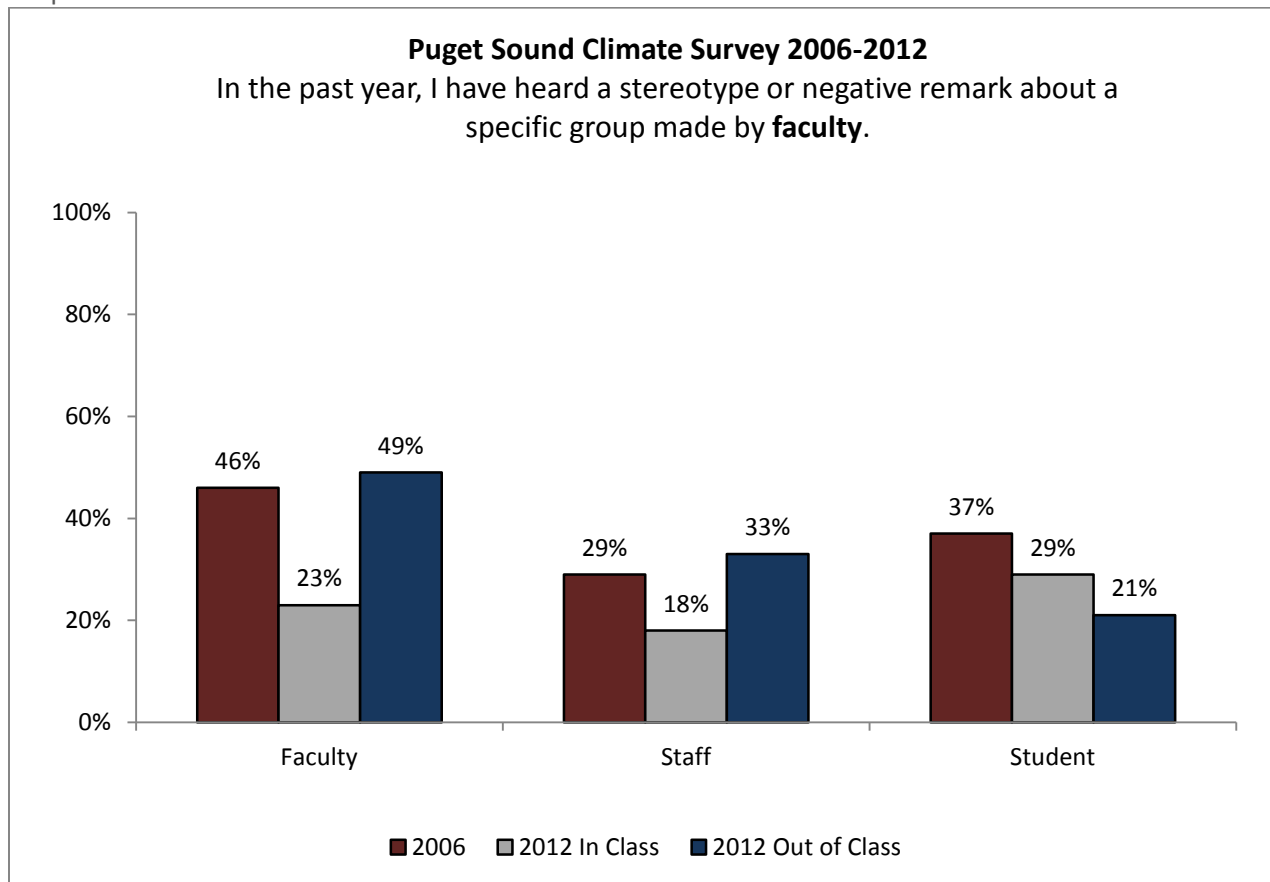
As far as hearing a student make a disparaging remark, the pattern is reversed – faculty are less likely in 2012 to hear a student make such a remark (67% in 2006 vs. 55% in 2012). And students, while less likely in 2012 to hear a peer make a disparaging remark in the classroom (65%), did not report a significant change from 2006 in hearing such a remark out of class (86% in 2006 vs. 87% in 2012).

While there is an overall decline in respondents reporting that they have heard disparaging remarks, the percentages of people who report hearing such remarks remains relatively high. For example, more than half of faculty and most students have heard a student express a stereotype or a negative remark about a specific group. The likelihood of hearing such a remark is higher when we are among our peers – students are more likely to witness it among other students, faculty among other faculty, and staff among other staff. This survey question is broad; nonetheless, the results suggest that while members of our community may be doing a better job overall, we may not be as sensitive to the impact of our statements when we are in less structured, more casual environments. We need to explore how we can further reduce disparaging remarks.

*“Although I have not disclosed my disability, I have been offended when staff members joke or talk in a derogatory way about others who ... have a ... disability. It is what makes me not feel comfortable disclosing. Also, staff know that I am of a certain religious persuasion but yet people in my group have a tendency to act in behaviors that I feel uncomfortable with...I feel like I have to ‘go along’ in order to be accepted.”*

*-Comment from a staff member on the 2012 Climate Survey*

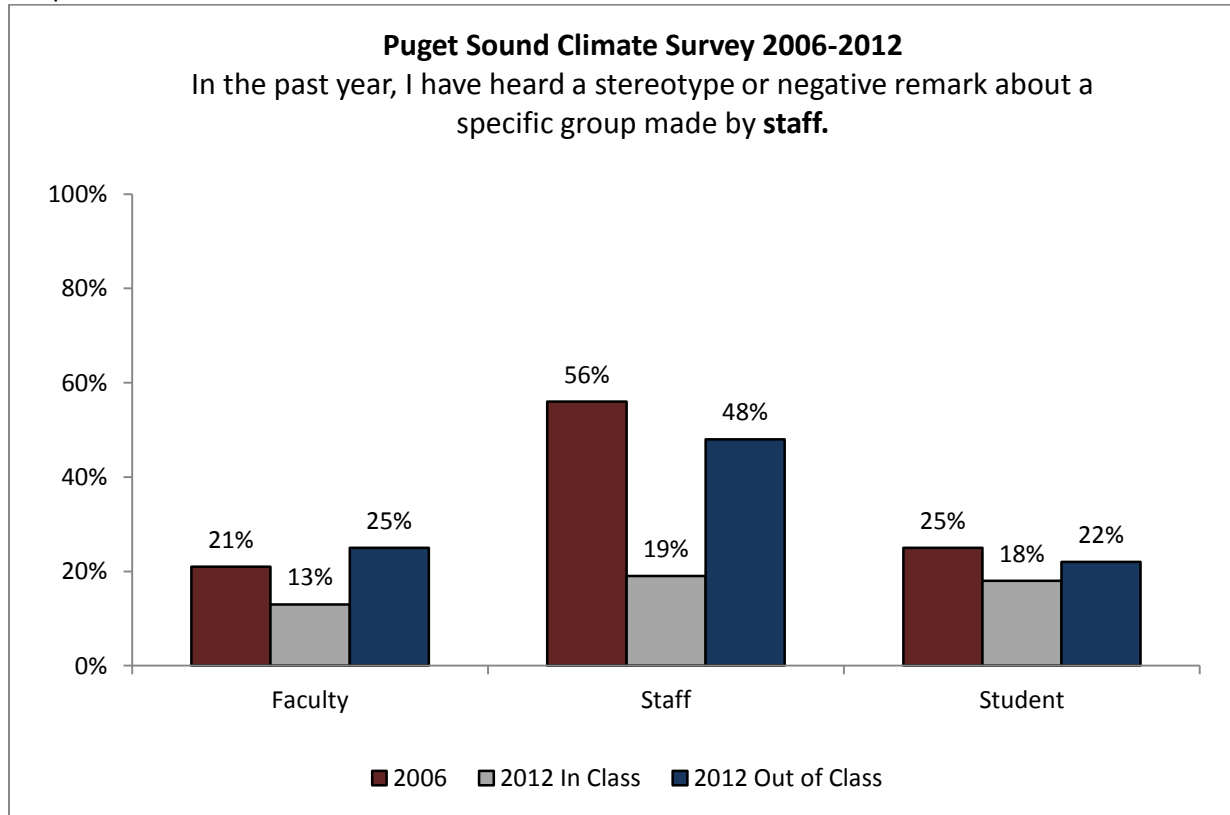
Graph 3A.



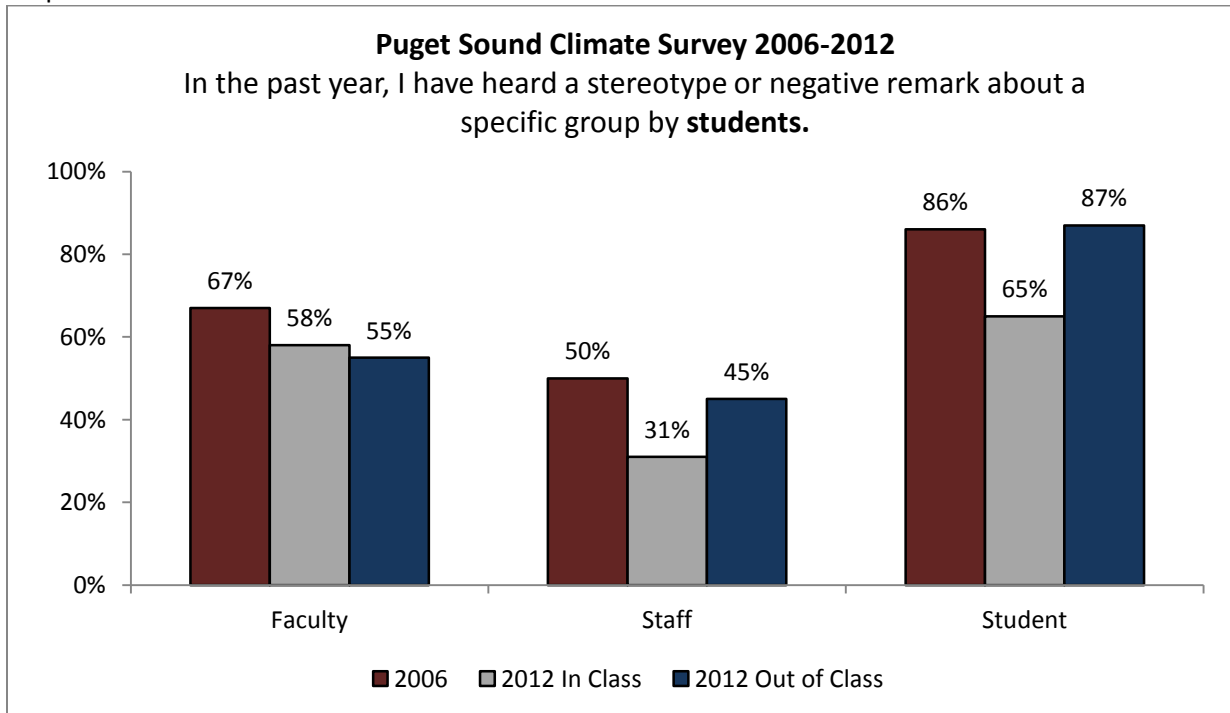
*"I hear a lot of people say 'faggot.'...I had to ask a member of my group project to stop. I am surprised by students' willingness to joke about race. I don't think it is okay, even in a playful way, to make jokes ... that reinforce any kind of stereotype. I hear a lot of students make the argument that 'stereotypes exist for a reason,' but in my opinion any kind of joke just perpetuates a stereotype. What surprises me even more is that some students joke about their own [identity]. Several of my ... friends make jokes ... one of my gay friends calls things 'gay' with a negative connotation... etc. I don't quite know how to react in these situations."*

*-Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey*

Graph 3B.



Graph 3C.



Notes: "Occasionally" for 2006 is comprised of "Very Often", "Moderately Often", "Sometimes" and "On Occasion". "Occasionally" for 2012 is comprised of "Very Often", "Sometimes" and "Seldom". In 2006, the survey question was "How frequently have you heard disparaging remarks with regard to a person's age, disability, ethnic identity, gender, religious or political beliefs, job or socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation on campus during this academic year?"



#### **4. Sense of alienation.**

A qualitative theme analysis of written comments indicated that about eight percent of the faculty, staff and students who responded to the survey noted in their comments that they had experienced a sense of alienation. Ten percent of faculty, two percent of staff and nine percent of students described an experience of alienation across all areas of difference. In reviewing the comments, it is clear that some members of our community have had very intense and painful experiences on campus as a result of difference. We must continue our work in mitigating these negative experiences.

#### **5. Challenging discriminatory remarks.**

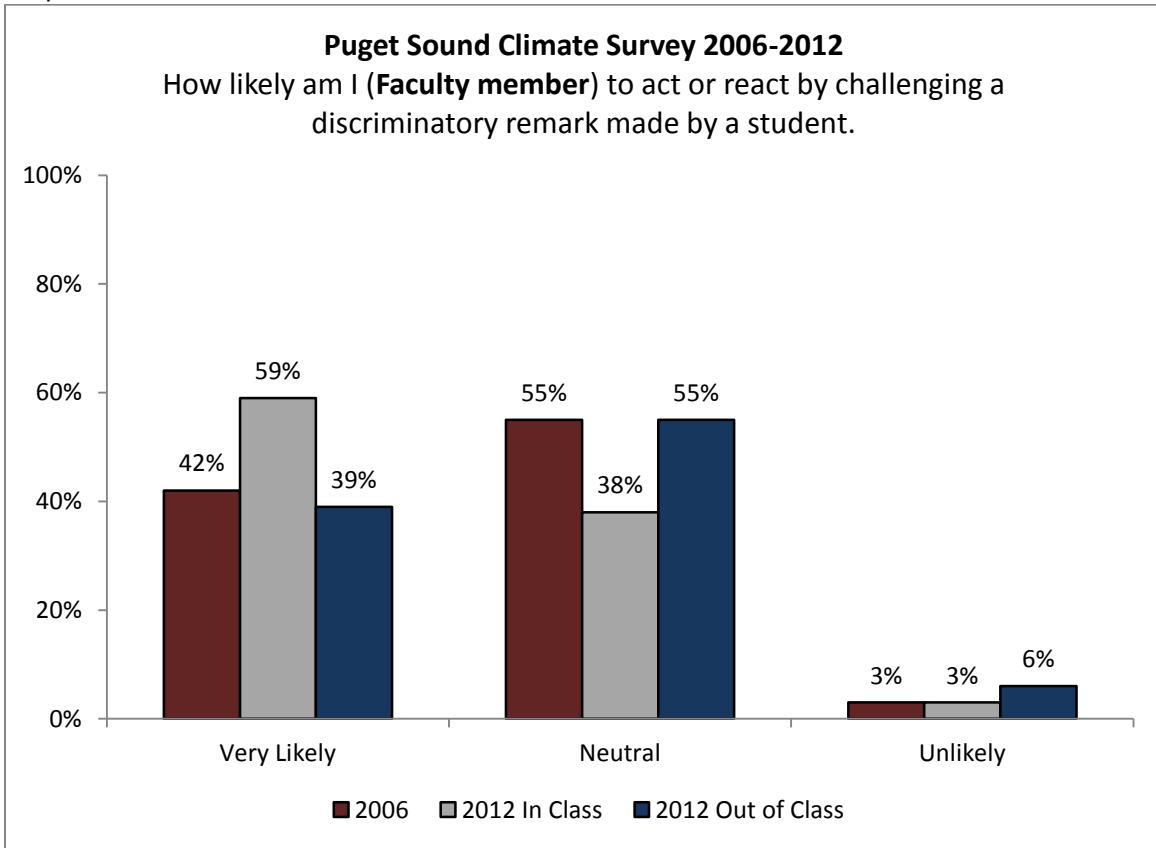
Staff and students are more likely in 2012 to challenge a remark either in or out of the classroom than they were in 2006. While more likely to challenge a discriminatory remark made by a student in the classroom (59%), faculty members are less likely to do so out of the classroom (39%).

Students are more likely to challenge a remark out of class (43%) than one made by their peers in class (36%), and in 2006, they were less likely to do so at all (28%). More work needs to be done to better understand in what settings and situations community members feel empowered to challenge unwelcome remarks.

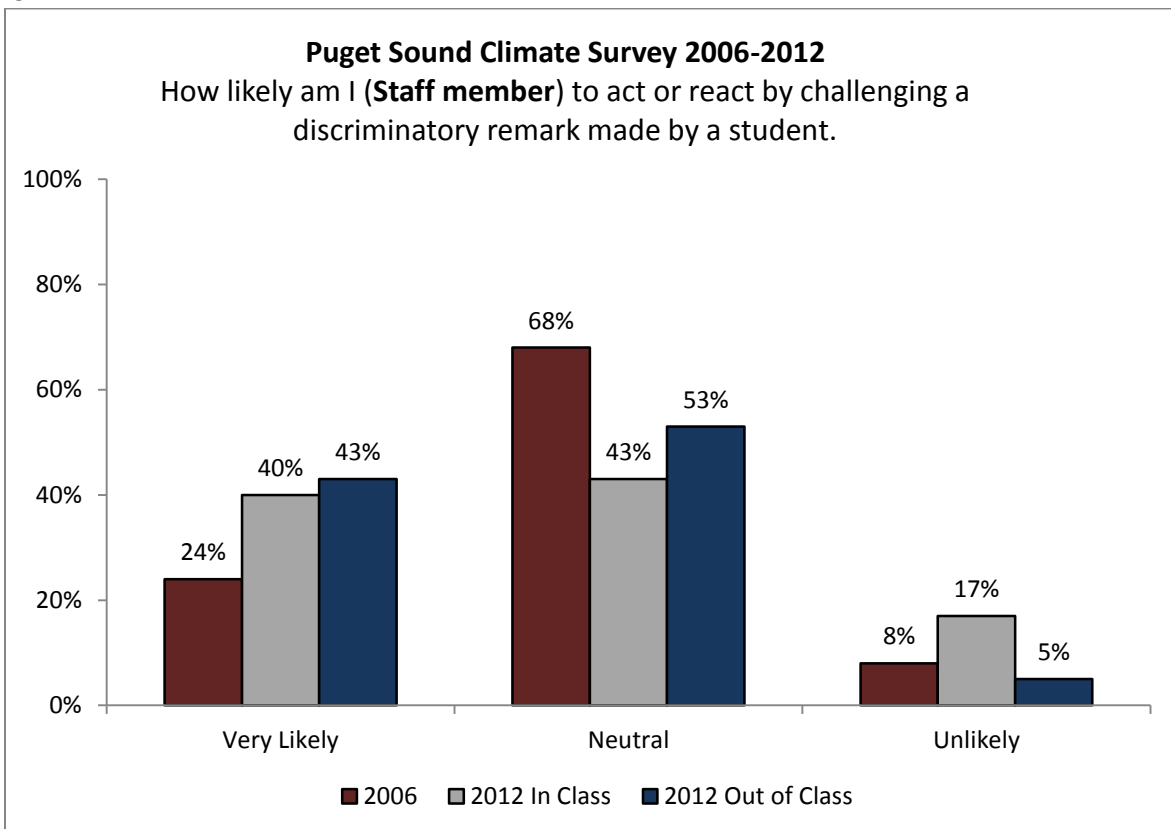
*“There is an obvious gap between the wealthy and not within the school and often people invite you places and expect you to be able to go and saying things like ‘I don't have the money’ students often respond like ‘can't you ask your parents?’ or ‘What about your parents credit card?’ but I don't ask my parents these things nor do they have the means to be supporting me doing unnecessary things. Kids here don't always understand that money isn't as accessible as it is for them.”*

*-Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey*

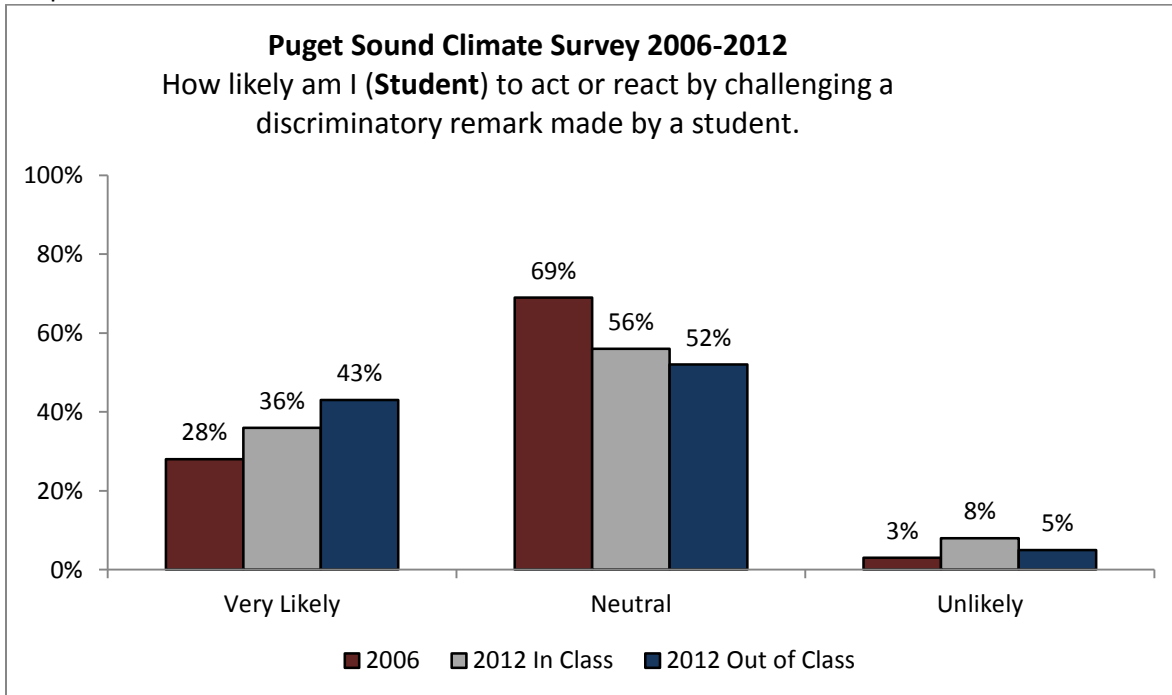
Graph 5A.



Graph 5B.



Graph 5C.



Notes: "Neutral" for 2006 is comprised of "Quite Likely", "Somewhat Likely", and "Slightly Likely"; "Neutral" for 2012 is comprised of "Somewhat Likely" and "Not Very Likely". "Unlikely" for 2006 is comprised of "Not at All Likely", while 2012 is comprised of "Highly Unlikely". The survey question in 2006 was "How likely are you to act or react in the following ways: Be willing to challenge faculty or staff members who make discriminatory remarks."

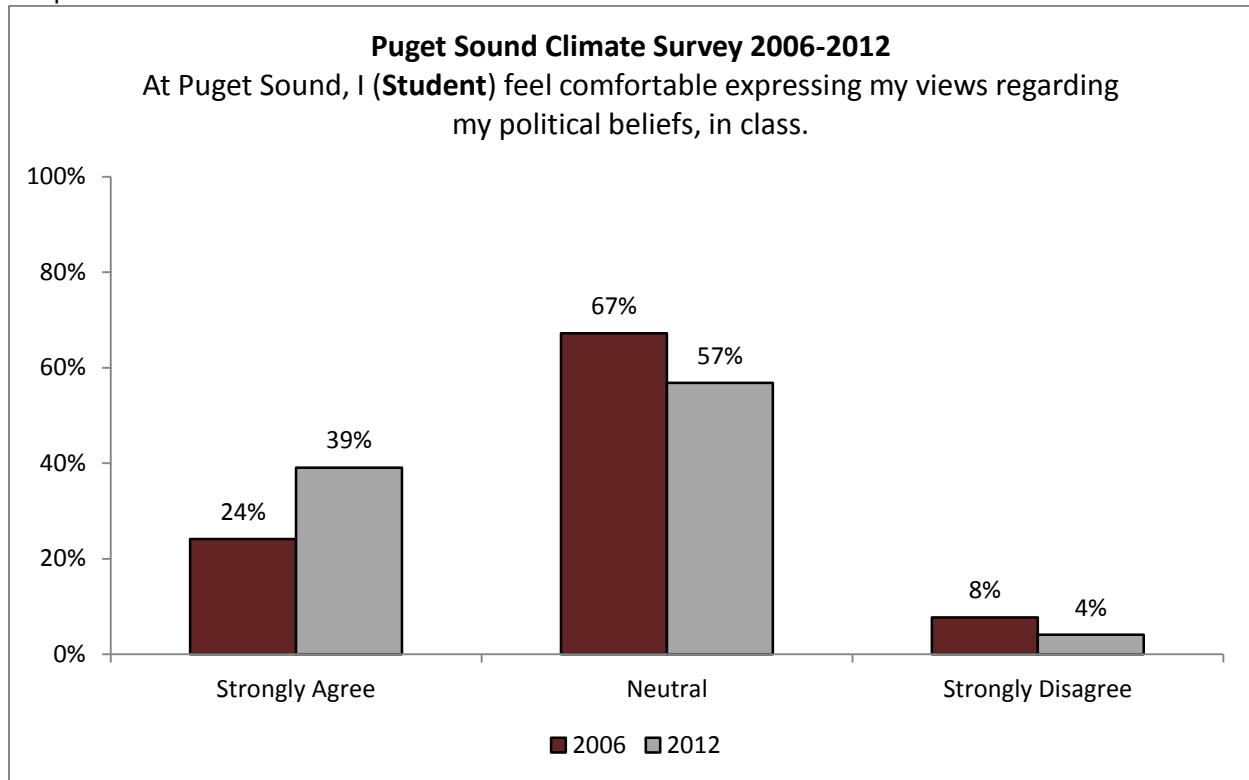
*"I've marked "very often" for students in the classroom because I tend to teach mostly freshmen. At this particular stage in their intellectual development, many of my students are not intentionally perpetuating stereotypes. Rather, they are often trying to work through a discourse using the kinds of language they know best. A big part of my job is helping these students to challenge what they often perceive to be common knowledge by asking them to think more critically about the statements they encounter in both the texts they read and class discussion."*

*-Comment from a faculty member on the 2012 Climate Survey*

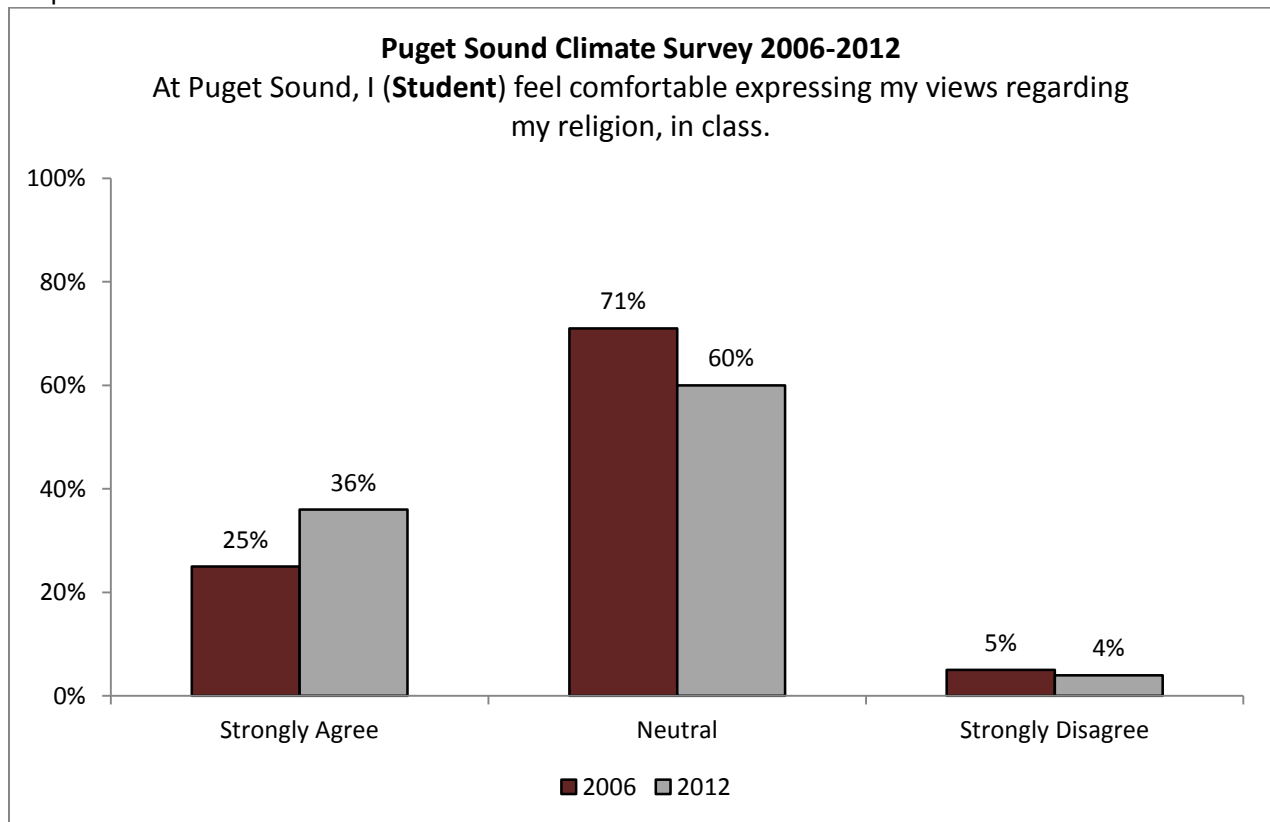
**6. Expression of religious and political beliefs in the classroom.**

In their comments, and in reporting of incidents of discrimination, students reported feeling marginalized as a result of religious and political beliefs overall, while also reporting that they feel freer to share their views in the classroom. In 2006, only 24% of students reported feeling comfortable expressing their political views; in 2012, 39% reported feeling comfortable doing so. The same pattern is true for religious beliefs (25% vs. 36%). Only 4% feel strong discomfort in expressing their religious and/or political belief in the classroom.

Graph 6A.



Graph 6B.



Notes: "Neutral" for 2006 is comprised of "Somewhat Agree", "Neither", and "Somewhat Disagree". "Neutral" for 2012 is comprised of "Agree" and "Disagree". The survey question in 2006 was: "I feel comfortable expressing my religious beliefs/political views in class."

*"With respect to political belief, I was raised by very conservative republicans. I now hold more liberal views than my parents, but still identify with some proponents of conservative politics. I feel silenced when professors assume that the entire class holds liberal views. I think that when professors signify their political leanings and slight the ideas of the opposing side, it makes it less possible to have enlightened democratic conversation that evaluates the merits of argument and reason behind policy choices. Even if and when conservatives advocate for socially regressive actions, it would be helpful to humanize those individuals and consider possible motives and logics that would compel their behavior rather than to simply laugh at candidates and officials who hold non-progressive views. People in the US need to learn how to talk more and listen to one another. If we cannot foster this kind of interaction within our college classrooms, I see little hope for civilized debate in the everyday world of adults and professionals."*

*-Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey*

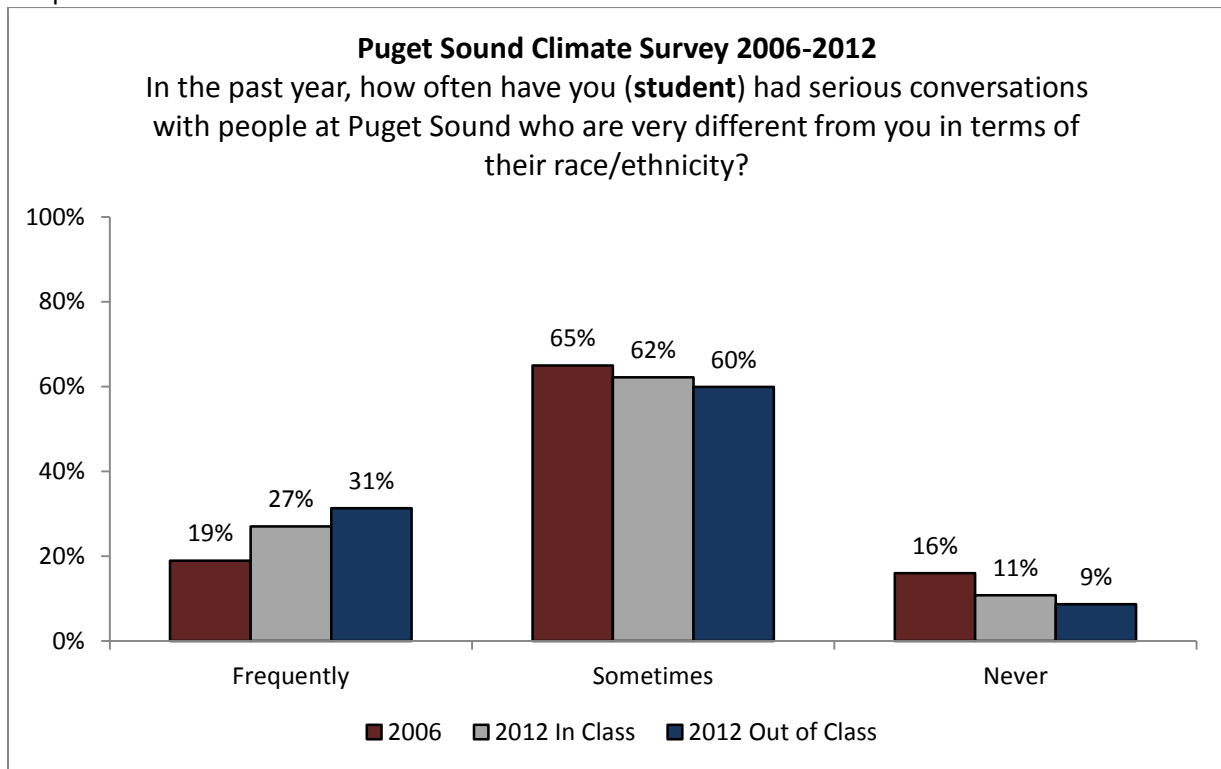
*"Studying abroad taught me a lot about diversity. I was in the minority for the first time in my life and I also now look at religion very differently. I would recommend that for everyone."*

*-Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey*

**7. Engagement with students of different races and ethnicities**

The percentage of students who report frequently engaging in serious conversations with someone of a different race/ethnicity increased in the classroom from 19% to 27%, and out of the classroom to 31%. For those who reported that they hadn't had such a conversation, the percentage dropped from 16% in 2006 to 11% in the classroom and 9% out of the classroom in 2012. It appears that these discussions are slightly more likely to happen in the classroom.

Graph 7A.

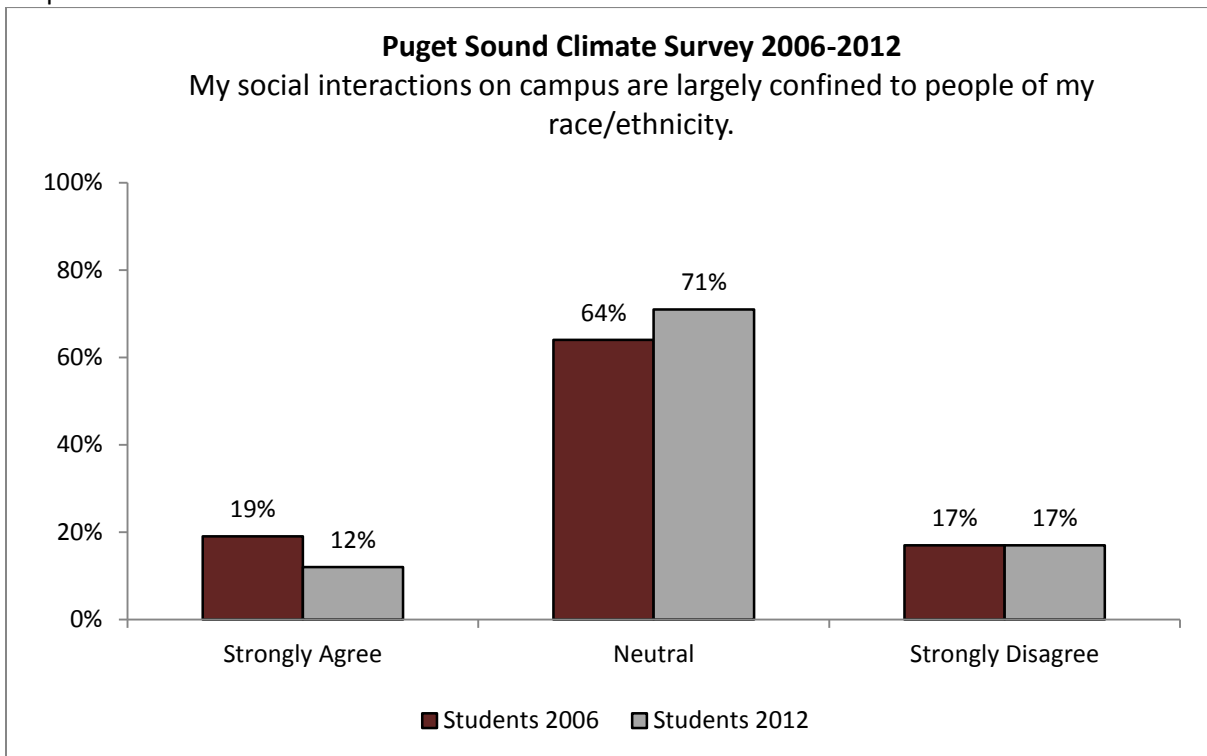


Notes: In 2006, "Frequently" is comprised of "Strongly Agree"; "Sometimes" is comprised of "Somewhat Agree", "Neither", and "Somewhat Disagree"; and "Never" is comprised of "Strongly Disagree". In 2012, "Frequently" is comprised of "Very Often"; and "Sometimes" is comprised of "Sometimes" and "Seldom". In 2006, the survey question was "I have had serious conversations with students of a different race/ethnic group about diversity on campus."

*"I have experienced many more of these discussions outside the classroom, but I don't feel as if this is a problem or something we need to alter. An extracurricular-based college experience is meant to provide space for these conversations in more organic situations, such as 'out of the classroom.'"*  
 -Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey

There was a slight improvement in the percentage of students who report expanding their interactions with people of varied race/ethnicity. While slightly fewer students are confining their interactions to people of their own race/ethnicity (12% in 2012 vs. 19% in 2006), there has been no change in the percentage of those who do not limit their interactions (17%). We need to learn more about those who do not confine their interactions, and what can be done to reach the population of students who still have an isolated campus experience with regard to difference.

Graph 7B.



Notes: In 2012, "Neutral" includes "Agree" and "Disagree"; in 2006, "Neutral" includes "Agree", "Neither", and "Disagree". In 2006, the survey question was "Please describe your agreement with the following statements. My social interactions on this campus are largely confined to students of my race/ethnicity."

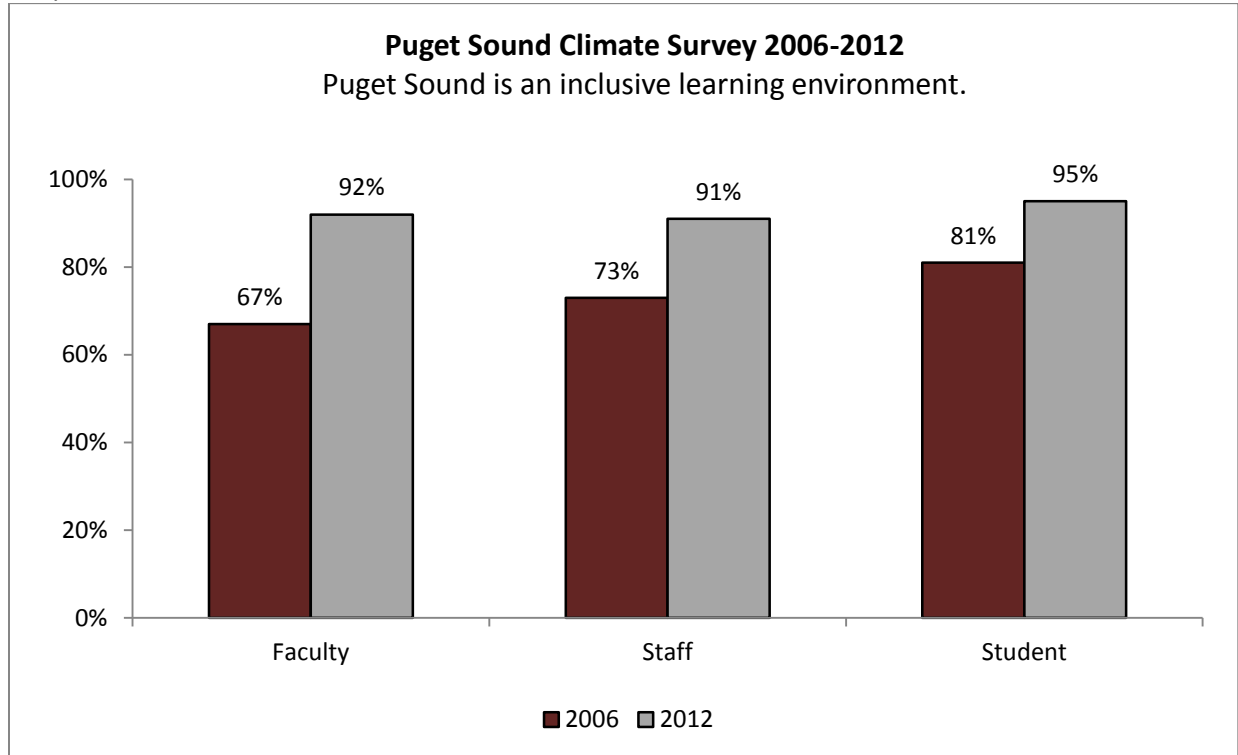
*"It's true, I mostly hang out with white, non-religious liberals. But due to the makeup of this campus, I don't have much choice. I would like to have a more diverse friend group, but you can't really go out of your way to make 'diverse' friends, so based on the general lack of diversity of students in some categories, it's just luck if you end up with a 'diverse' range of friends."*  
 -Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey

*"...The divide between the preaching of diversity at UPS and the practice isn't in the classroom. It's walking across S. 11th street."*  
 -Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey

**8. Inclusive learning environment**

More than nine in 10 of 2012 faculty (92%), staff (91%), and students (95%) agreed that Puget Sound is an inclusive learning environment. In 2006, a slightly difference question was asked: *“Puget Sound provides an environment that supports the free and open expression of ideas, opinions and beliefs.”* This changed wording may help explain the widely varying results, but there may be enough similarity in the intent of the questions that we can see some improvement, especially in the context of the rest of the survey results.

Graph 8A.



Notes: Results represent "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses. In 2012, options included "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree." In 2006, an additional option of "Neither" was included. In 2006, the survey question was: *“Puget Sound provides an environment that supports the free and open expression of ideas, opinions and beliefs.”*

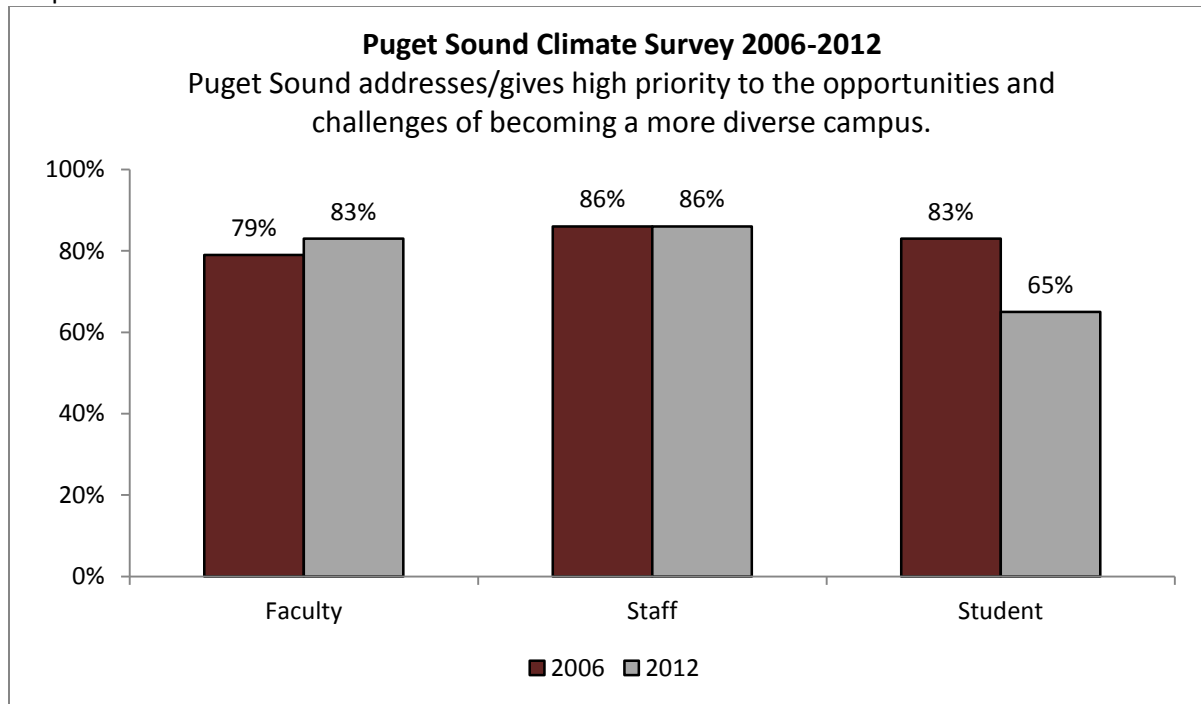
*“My good friend has been a target of several overt incidents of racism. Once having a student close a door on her face and tell her ‘you don’t belong here, N\*\*\*\*\*’. None of the other students in the class said anything about it, and she had to go in and sit through the class with that echoing in her mind.”*  
-Comment from a student on the 2012 Climate Survey



**9. Addressing the challenges of becoming more diverse.**

A higher percentage of faculty in 2012 (83%) compared to 2006 (79%) reported that Puget Sound addresses the opportunities and challenges of becoming a more diverse campus. Staff responses, at 86%, did not change. Students were less likely to agree that Puget Sound is addressing opportunities and challenges (83% in 2006 vs. 65% in 2012). This disparity may be due to the different wording of the question. It is also possible, in the full context of the results, that there is greater awareness about issues of difference, and given that students are more likely than faculty or staff to be exposed to moments of stereotyping, they may be more likely to call for action in 2012 than they would have in 2006.

Graph 9A.

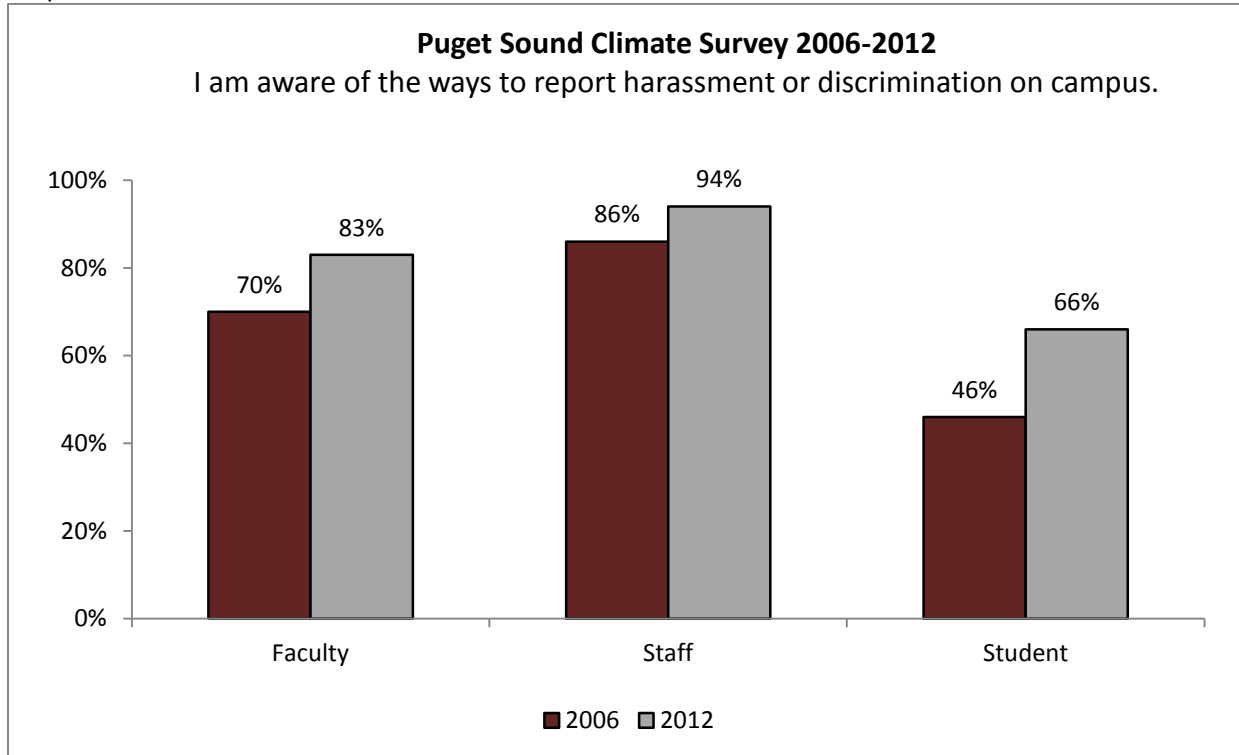


*Notes: Results for 2006 are comprised of "High Priority" and "Moderate Priority." Results for 2012 are comprised of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree." In 2006, the survey question was: "How high a priority do you believe it is at Puget Sound to create a diverse campus environment?"*

**10. Reporting harassment.**

Faculty (83%), staff (94%), and students (66%) are more likely in 2012 to know how to report harassment or discrimination than they were in 2006 (70%, 86%, and 46%, respectively). However, a third of the student body reports being unaware of how to report. While much attention is given to harassment and discrimination reporting methods during Puget Sound’s orientation programming, continuous efforts should be made throughout each academic year to promote these reporting channels.

Graph 10A.

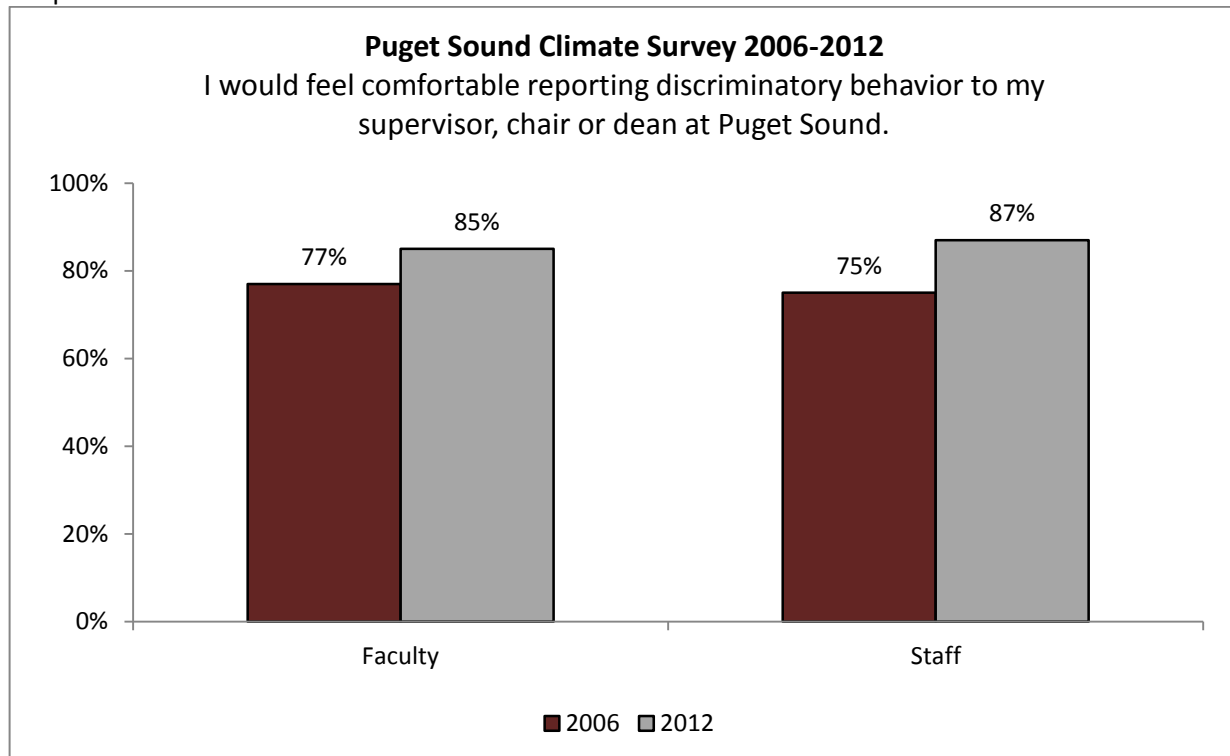


Note: Results for 2006 are comprised of "High Priority" and "Moderate Priority." Results for 2012 are comprised of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree."

*“Though this survey has been presented as confidential—and I believe that it is— still am not comfortable discussing specifics here. How will the results of this survey be disseminated?...Please don't put me at risk here.”*  
-Faculty or staff member comment on the 2012 Climate Survey

Both faculty (85%) and staff (87%) are more likely in 2012 to feel comfortable reporting discriminatory behavior than they were in 2006 (77% and 75% respectively).

Graph 10B.



*Notes: Results for 2006 are comprised of "High Priority" and "Moderate Priority." Results for 2012 are comprised of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree." In 2006, the survey question was: "I would feel comfortable reporting discriminatory behavior to my supervisor/department chair or dean."*

We invite you to share your thoughts about these preliminary results throughout the year and to contact any member of the Diversity Advisory Council with your questions, ideas and/or concerns.

### **2012-13 Diversity Advisory Council**

Grace Livingston, Associate Professor, African American Studies  
Cindy Matern, Associate Vice President for Human Resources  
Jeffrey Matthews, Professor, School of Business and Leadership  
Jada Pelger, Information Resources Coordinator, Collins Memorial Library  
Ellen Peters, Director, Institutional Research and Retention  
Geoff Proehl, Professor, Theatre Arts  
Czarina Ramsay, Director, Multicultural Student Services  
Amy Ryken, Associate Professor, School of Education  
Mike Segawa, Vice President and Dean of Students, Student Affairs (Interim Chair)  
Abigail Taitano, Access Programs Coordinator  
Nila Wiese, Associate Professor, School of Business and Leadership  
Dave Wright, University Chaplain

[www.pugetsound.edu/diversity](http://www.pugetsound.edu/diversity)