

# 2024 James Madison College Student Climate and Culture Survey: Comparison of 2016 and 2024 Results

Conducted on Behalf of  
James Madison College

By

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Table of Contents	
Racial Diversity of College Compared to High School .....	3
Table 1. Racial Diversity of College Compared to High School: 2016 – 2024 Comparison.....	3
Importance of Diverse Student Body .....	3
Table 2. Importance of Diverse Student Body: 2016-2024 Comparison .....	4
Satisfaction with Racial and Ethnic Diversity in College.....	4
Table 3. Satisfaction with Racial and Ethnic Diversity in College: 2016 – 2024 Comparison .....	4
Race and Ethnicity and Safety in the College and at MSU .....	4
Table 4. Race and Ethnicity and Safety in the College and at MSU: 2016 – 2024 Comparison .....	5
Classroom Experiences.....	5
Table 5. Classroom Experiences: 2016 – 2024 Comparison .....	5
Experience Bias in College.....	6
Table 6. Experience Bias in the College: 2016 – 2024 Comparison .....	6
Bias Incidences Addressed.....	6
Table 7. Bias Incidences Addressed – 2016 – 2024 Comparison .....	7
Confidence in Addressing Bias Incidences.....	7
Table 8. Confidence in Addressing Bias Incidences: 2016 – 2024 Comparison .....	8
Communication within the College .....	8
Table 9. Communication within the College: 2016-2024 Comparison .....	8
Classes Specifically Address Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality .....	8
Table 10. Classes Specifically Address Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality: 2016-2024 Comparison .....	9
Extent MC201 and MC202 Should Address Issues.....	9
Table 11. Extent MC201 and MC202 Should Address Issues: 2016 – 2024 Comparison .....	9
Major and Elective Course and Overall Curriculum Address Issues .....	9
Table 12. Major and Elective Course and Overall Curriculum Address Issues: 2016 – 2024 Comparison .....	10
Satisfaction with Curriculum Addressing Specific Racial and Ethnic Groups.....	10
Table 13. Satisfaction with Curriculum Addressing Specific Racial and Ethnic Groups: 2016-2024 Comparison .....	10

This document presents a comparison of data from questions asked in both 2016 and 2024 assessing the climate at James Madison College.

The data for 2016 was gathered by the Office for Survey Research between March 18 and March 30, 2016, resulting in 342 complete responses.

For the 2024 data, the same sampling frame was used as in 2016, which included all currently enrolled students. This data collection occurred between September 25 and October 25, 2024, and yielded 124 completed responses.

While efforts were made to maintain the same questions and question wording for comparison between the two time periods, slight changes in wording and question structure were incorporated in 2024 to better meet the needs and reflect changes in the college since 2016.

For all items where means are presented, means are calculated on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 represents the most negative position and 5 the most positive.

**Racial Diversity of College Compared to High School**

There was a slight shift in the level of diversity in schools’ students attended prior to attending James Madison College with the college being more racially and ethnically diverse than student’s prior schools in 2024 compared to 2016.

In 2024, 59.7% of students reported that the college was a lot more or somewhat more racially and ethnically diverse compared to their prior schools, an increase from 52.2% in 2016.

Additionally, in 2024, 23.4% of students indicated that the college was less diverse than their previous school, down from 31.0% in 2016.

**Table 1. Racial Diversity of College Compared to High School: 2016 – 2024 Comparison**

How does the racial and ethnic diversity at James Madison College compare to that of your high school?	A lot more racially and ethnically diverse (1)	Somewhat more racially and ethnically diverse (2)	Similar racially and ethnically diverse (3)	Somewhat less racially and ethnically diverse (4)	A lot less racially and ethnically diverse (5)	N	Mean	Std. Dev
2016	30.8%	21.4%	16.7%	15.8%	15.2%	341	2.63	1.44
2024	36.3%	23.4%	16.9%	9.7%	13.7%	124	3.59	1.41

**Importance of Diverse Student Body**

The importance of having a racially and ethnically diverse student body slightly increased among students between 2016 and 2024.

In 2024, the mean score was 4.32, compared to 4.23 in 2016, marking an increase of 0.09 points. Additionally, the overall percentage of students who considered this aspect somewhat or very important rose from 80.1% in 2016 to 85.5% in 2024.

**Table 2. Importance of Diverse Student Body: 2016-2024 Comparison**

How important is it to you that the James Madison College student body be racially and ethnically diverse?	Not at all important (1)	Somewhat unimportant (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat important (4)	Very important (5)	N	Mean	Std. Dev
2016	3.8%	2.6%	13.5%	26.9%	53.2%	342	4.23	1.03
2024	4.8%	3.2%	6.5%	25.8%	59.7%	124	4.32	1.06

### Satisfaction with Racial and Ethnic Diversity in College

Student satisfaction with levels of racial and ethnic diversity in the college decreased between 2016 and 2024.

The greatest decline in satisfaction was regarding the racial and ethnic diversity of faculty. In 2016, the mean score was 3.30, while in 2024, it dropped to 2.87, reflecting a decrease of 0.43 points.

The next largest drop was in satisfaction with the racial and ethnic diversity of support staff; the mean score decreased from 3.35 in 2016 to 3.04 in 2024.

Additionally, there was an 11-point decline in mean scores measuring satisfaction with the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body, with scores falling from 3.09 in 2016 to 2.98 in 2024.

**Table 3. Satisfaction with Racial and Ethnic Diversity in College: 2016 – 2024 Comparison**

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the racial and ethnic diversity of the James Madison College . .	2016	2024
Student Body	3.09	2.98
Faculty	3.30	2.87
Support Staff	3.35	3.04

### Race and Ethnicity and Safety in the College and at MSU

In 2024, eight items were asked in this series of questions. Of the six items assessed in both 2016 and 2024, two were framed negatively, meaning that mean scores closer to 1.00 and higher levels of disagreement are viewed positively. These two items addressed how often respondents felt they were the only one or one of a few students of their race in college classes and classes at MSU. Both mean scores dropped from 2016 to 2024, indicating a rise in agreement in the negative direction.

The largest decrease was observed in the item measuring diversity within MSU classes, where the mean score was 1.74 in 2016 and 2.06 in 2024, a difference of 0.32 points. The difference in mean scores regarding the prevalence of this issue in college classes was 0.28.

Although students' perceptions of racial and ethnic diversity in classrooms declined between 2016 and 2024, scores measuring openness to learning about the experiences and perspectives of people of different races, ethnicities, and nationalities increased. There was notable growth in support for a racially and ethnically diverse faculty and staff, with the most significant increase in mean scores for staff.

Additionally, students in 2024 reported feeling less safe in Case Hall compared to 2016, with a decrease of 0.24 in mean scores.

**Table 4. Race and Ethnicity and Safety in the College and at MSU: 2016 – 2024 Comparison**

Thinking about your experiences in and/or outside of the classroom, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.	2016	2024
I am frequently the only one or one of the few of my race or ethnicity in my James Madison College classes. <sup>a</sup>	1.91	2.19
I am frequently the only one or one of the few of my race or ethnicity in my MSU. <sup>b</sup>	1.74	2.06
Most James Madison College students are open to learning about the experiences and perspectives of people of different races, ethnic groups, and nationalities.	4.03	4.11
The James Madison College faculty should be racially and ethnically diverse.	4.17	4.30
The James Madison College staff should be racially and ethnically diverse.	4.04	4.30
I feel physically safe in Case Hall.	4.55	4.31
I feel physically safe in classrooms at MSU.	NA	4.10
I am frequently the only one or one of the few of my race or ethnicity in James Madison College clubs and/or organizations.	NA	2.03

a,b, For these statements, means closer to 1.00 and higher levels of disagreement are positive.

### Classroom Experiences

Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with nine statements to measure different classroom experiences in both 2016 and 2024. No changes were made to the wording of these statements.

Two of the statements were framed negatively (where mean scores close to 1.00 are considered positive) and measured students' feelings of needing to represent their racial or ethnic minority position in class, as well as their sense of responsibility to educate peers about the experiences of their race, ethnic, or national origin group. The mean scores for these statements increased in 2024, indicating improvement in experiences since 2016.

In contrast, six of the remaining seven items, which were framed positively, showed a decrease in mean scores, suggesting a more negative attitude in 2024 compared to 2016.

The largest decrease, 0.48 points, occurred for the item "When filling out evaluations (SPLS), I feel free to include detailed comments when evaluating my professors." The mean score dropped from 4.36 in 2016 to 3.88 in 2024.

Two items experienced a decrease of 0.17 points; these measured whether college classes allowed open discussion of issues related to race and ethnicity, as well as students' feelings of freedom to discuss their perspectives in class.

Other decreases in mean scores ranged between 0.06 and 0.11. The only mean score that showed a positive increase was for the statement "Most James Madison College professors are open to diverse views related to race and ethnicity," mean score in 2016 was 4.22, in 2024, 4.26.

**Table 5. Classroom Experiences: 2016 – 2024 Comparison**

Thinking about your experiences within James Madison College classes, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.	2016	2024
James Madison College classes permit open discussion of issues pertaining to race, ethnicity, and national origin.	4.23	4.06
I feel free in my James Madison College classes to discuss my own perspectives related to race, ethnicity, and national origin.	3.91	3.74

I feel I must represent a racial or ethnic minority position in my class. <sup>a</sup>	2.47	2.33
When filling out evaluations (SPLS), I feel free to include detailed comments when evaluating my professors.	4.36	3.88
I feel comfortable discussing my perspectives with my James Madison College professors.	4.21	4.14
I feel comfortable discussing my perspectives with students of other races, ethnicities, and nationalities at James Madison College outside of class.	4.02	3.91
I feel responsible for educating students not of my race, ethnicity, or national origin about the experiences of my racial, ethnic, or national-origin group. <sup>b</sup>	2.76	2.59
My racial community, history, and experiences are represented in the James Madison College curriculum.	3.89	3.83
Most James Madison College professors are open to diverse views related to race and ethnicity.	4.22	4.26

a,b For these statements, means closer to 1.00 and higher levels of disagreement are positive.

## Experience Bias in College

The percentage of students who reported experiencing incidents of bias, both inside and outside the classroom, decreased between 2016 and 2024. The most significant reduction was seen in incidents occurring outside the classroom, with an 18.6% decrease during this period.

Additionally, incidents of bias experienced in the classroom decreased by 6.5%.

**Table 6. Experience Bias in the College: 2016 – 2024 Comparison**

During your time at James Madison College, how many times, if at all, have you experienced a racial bias incident that made you uncomfortable . . .	Survey Year	5 or more times	3-4 times	2 times	Once	Never	% Experiencing Bias	n
In the classroom	2016†	7.4%	18.7%	16.6%	16.3%	41.1%	58.9%	326
	2024	4.0%	9.7%	17.7%	21.0%	47.6%	52.4%	124
Outside of the classroom	2016	13.2%	17.2%	13.8%	13.5%	42.3%	57.7%	326
	2024	6.5%	9.8%	13.0%	9.8%	61.0%	39.1%	123

† In 2016 the term "racial comments and/or escalating racial events" was used

## Bias Incidences Addressed

A higher percentage of students reported that bias incidents occurring outside of the classroom were addressed all, most, or some of the time in 2016 compared to 2024. In 2016, 33.0% of students indicated that these bias incidents were addressed, while this figure dropped to 28.3% in 2024. The percentage of students who reported that bias incidents occurring outside of the classroom were never addressed did not change between 2016 and 2024.

Additionally, the percentage of students who reported that all, most, or some of the bias incidents in classrooms were addressed in 2024 decreased significantly from 2016, falling from 73.4% in 2016 to 52.3% in 2024. Moreover, the percentage of students reporting that these incidents were never addressed more than doubled during this period, increasing from 9.9% in 2016 to 21.5% in 2024.

**Table 7. Bias Incidences Addressed – 2016 – 2024 Comparison**

How often have	Survey Year	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	% Bias Incidents Addressed	n
Your James Madison College professors addressed a racial bias incident in the classroom?	2016†	17.7%	25.5%	30.2%	16.7%	9.9%	73.4%	192
	2024	7.7%	21.5%	23.1%	26.2%	21.5%	52.3%	65
The incidents you experienced outside of the classroom, addressed, either by faculty or staff (i.e., James Madison College staff, residence hall staff, etc.)	2016	5.9%	9.0%	18.1%	29.8%	37.2%	33.0%	188
	2024	2.2%	10.9%	15.2%	34.8%	37.0%	28.3%	46

† In 2016 the term "racial comments and/or escalating racial events" was used

### Confidence in Addressing Bias Incidences

Students were more confident in 2016 than in 2024 about professors' ability to address racial bias incidents in the classroom. The mean score for 2016 was 3.90, while the mean score for 2024 was 3.59, reflecting a difference of -0.31 points, which was the largest difference among the three items assessed. Additionally, mean scores regarding professors' willingness to address such incidents also decreased, with a score of 4.02 in 2016 and a score of 3.86 in 2024.

Furthermore, students expressed more confidence in finding supportive peer environments in 2016, with a mean score of 4.25, compared to a mean score of 4.04 in 2024.

**Table 8. Confidence in Addressing Bias Incidences: 2016 – 2024 Comparison**

Again, thinking about your experiences in and/or outside of the classroom, please indicate for each of the following statements how confident you are that . . .	2016†	2024
James Madison College professors know how to address racial bias incidences in the classroom.	3.90	3.59
James Madison College professors are willing to address racial bias incidence in the classroom.	4.02	3.86
You can find supportive peer environments at James Madison College.	4.25	4.04
You know how to report a racial bias incident when it happens.	NA	3.40

† In 2016 the term "racial comments and/or escalating racial events" was used

### Communication within the College

The mean scores for both items assessing effective communication decreased between 2016 and 2024.

There was a -0.23-point difference in the mean scores for effectively communicating with students about important events and issues, and a -0.44-point difference in mean scores for the college's communication regarding important events and issues related to the racial climate on campus between 2016 and 2024.

**Table 9. Communication within the College: 2016-2024 Comparison**

Thinking about your experiences within James Madison College, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.	2016	2024
The College communicates effectively with students about important events and issues that arise in the College.	3.97	3.74
The College communicates effectively with students about important events and issues related to the racial climate that arise in the College.	3.75	3.31
The College effectively communicates how to report issues related to the racial climate and/or bias incidents that arise.	NA	3.22

### Classes Specifically Address Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality

Students were more favorable in their assessment of MC201 regarding issues of race, ethnicity, and national origin, as well as for having the representation of authors of color in 2024 compared to 2016.

However, students were considerably less favorable in assessing the same metrics for MC202 in 2024 than in 2016. The mean score for MC202 addressing issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality fell by 0.57 points, from 4.16 in 2016 to 3.59 in 2024.

Additionally, the mean score for measuring MC202's representation of authors from minoritized backgrounds decreased by 0.33 points, dropping from 3.82 in 2016 to 3.49 in 2024.

In 2016, the evaluation question for MC111 included references to both MC111 and MC112. However, in 2024, the question only referenced MC111. While a comparison between the two years is provided, it is important to note that the change in wording means the comparison is not precise.



Mean scores also declined for MC111 in both areas: addressing issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality fell from 4.53 in 2016 to 4.25 in 2024, a difference of 0.28 points. The mean score for MC111's representation of authors decreased by 0.10 points, from 4.41 in 2016 to 4.31 in 2024.

**Table 10. Classes Specifically Address Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality: 2016-2024 Comparison**

For each of the following James Madison College courses, please indicate to what extent the course curriculum addresses issues related to race, ethnicity and nationality. To what extent does . . .	2016†	2024
MC 201 address issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality?	3.71	3.81
MC 201 have representation of authors from minoritized backgrounds?	3.49	3.83
MC 202 address issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality?	4.16	3.59
MC 202 have representation of authors from minoritized backgrounds?	3.82	3.49
MC 111 address issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality? †	4.53	4.25
MC 111 have representation of authors from minoritized backgrounds? †	4.41	4.31

† MC112 was also referenced in the question in 2016

### Extent MC201 and MC202 Should Address Issues

Students were asked to what extent MC201 and MC202 should address these issues. In 2016, the courses were combined into one question, while in 2024, they were separated into distinct questions. Therefore, the comparison between the two years is not precise.

**Table 11. Extent MC201 and MC202 Should Address Issues: 2016 – 2024 Comparison**

To what extent should	2016†	2024
MC 201 address issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality?	3.76	4.04
MC 202 address issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality?		3.72

† In 2016, asked as a single question

### Major and Elective Course and Overall Curriculum Address Issues

Students were more positive in their assessment of the extent to which required and elective courses, as well as the overall curriculum, addressed issues related to race, ethnicity, and nationality and had representation of diverse authors in 2024 compared to 2016.

The items with the largest positive increases measured required courses that included the representation of diverse authors, with a mean score of 3.54 in 2016 and 3.99 in 2024, indicating a 0.45-point increase. Additionally, the item measuring the overall curriculum's representation of diverse authors also saw an increase, with mean scores of 3.51 in 2016 and 3.95 in 2024, resulting in a 0.44-point increase.

There was a 0.38-point increase in mean scores between 2016 and 2024 on the item measuring the extent to which the overall curriculum addressed issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality.

Items measuring both concepts for elective courses also experienced increases of 0.15 points and 0.22 points.

The smallest increase was 0.06 points on the item measuring required courses addressing issues related to race, ethnicity, and nationality.

**Table 12. Major and Elective Course and Overall Curriculum Address Issues: 2016 – 2024 Comparison**

For each of the following, please indicate to what extent courses in your major and the overall curriculum address issues related to race, ethnicity, and nationality. To what extent . . .	2016	2024
Do required courses in your major address issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality?	3.86	3.92
Do required courses in your major have representation of authors who are diverse with respect to race, ethnicity, and nationality?	3.54	3.99
Do elective courses in your major address issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality?	3.79	3.95
Do elective courses in your major have representation of authors who are diverse with respect to race, ethnicity, and nationality?	3.62	3.84
Does the James Madison College curriculum overall address issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality?	3.76	4.14
Does the James Madison College curriculum overall have representation of authors who are diverse with respect to race, ethnicity, and nationality?	3.51	3.95

### **Satisfaction with Curriculum Addressing Specific Racial and Ethnic Groups**

Between 2016 and 2024, the levels of satisfaction regarding the representation of different racial and ethnic groups in the curriculum increased slightly for Asian Americans (+0.06), Latin Americans (+0.06), and Hispanic/Chicano/Latinx individuals (+0.08).

However, satisfaction decreased slightly for Africans (-0.06) and Asians (-0.01).

Addressing issues facing Native Americans saw the largest increase in satisfaction, rising by 0.64 points, from a mean score of 2.39 in 2016 to 3.03 in 2024.

For African Americans, there was the second-largest increase of 0.25 points, with mean scores rising from 3.65 in 2016 to 3.90 in 2024.

**Table 13. Satisfaction with Curriculum Addressing Specific Racial and Ethnic Groups: 2016-2024 Comparison**

Please indicate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the way the James Madison College curriculum overall addresses issues concerning the following groups:	2016	2024
African Americans	3.65	3.90
Africans	3.35	3.29
Asian Americans	2.89	2.95
Asians	2.91	2.90
Latin Americans	3.06	3.12

Hispanics/Chicano/Latinx	3.02	3.10
Native Americans	2.39	3.03