



University of Missouri

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Survey Finds Mizzou Students Have High Cultural Competency

A recent survey conducted at Mizzou found a high-level of cultural competency among MU's Spring 2014 graduating seniors. The survey of 730 seniors was developed by MU's Faculty Council and conducted last spring. The students were asked 15 cultural and diversity related questions.

"People have different ideas and backgrounds that feed into a diversity of cultural views," said Angela Speck, professor of astronomy and chair of the Faculty Council Diversity Enhancement Committee. "We need to be able to work across and within different cultures in an increasing global world. Cultural competency is the ability to interact with people for a broad cross-section of the world."

When asked if the student can best understand someone after getting to know how he/she is both similar and different from the student, 93% of respondents answered agree, agree a little or strongly agree. When asked if the student is only at ease with people of their race, 88% responded with disagree, disagree a little or strongly disagree.

"Based on this survey, we can be reasonable happy that the majority of students leave our campus culturally competent," Speck said. "However, this is just one small survey and more needs to be done. We cannot tell from this data set whether this is a result of the students' time at MU or whether they were already culturally competent when they arrived on campus."

Beginning this academic year, freshman will be surveyed in the fall and seniors will complete the survey in the spring in order to analyze long-term trends and determine what affects student cultural competency. The purpose of the survey is to determine if courses at MU adequately address cultural competency.

"It is likely that the aspects of cultural competency embedded in various courses here at Mizzou are promoting cultural competency in our students," Speck said. "But, it is too soon to know that for sure."

The Diversity Enhancement Committee was established during the 2004-05 academic year to address the broad range of diversity possibilities on the MU campus. Current members include Speck, Charles Franz (Management), Berkley Hudson (Journalism), John Gahl (Engineering) and Rachael Brekhus (MU Libraries).

The complete survey and data are attached.