MCE Climate Town Hall

Alexander Choi, Tim Colonius (Chair), Leah Ginsberg, Melany Hunt, Marcus Lee, Victoria Lee, Carlos Portela Galindo, and Lynn Seymour

December 8, 2020

The MCE Climate Committee

Victoria (Tori) Lee, Marcus Lee, Alex Choi, Leah Ginsberg

Tim Colonius (Chair) (she/her) (he/him) (he/him) (she/her)

(he/him)

Carlos M. Portela
(he/him)

Hanna Song
(she/her)

Melany Hunt
(she/her)

Lynn Seymour
(she/her)

Town Hall Agenda

- Results of the climate survey
- Breakout discussion

  - Reactions to the survey/report

  - Share experiences around DEI

  - Ideas for moving forward

  - Poll Question: What is the most pressing issue that MCE should address?

- Summary of discussions and results of poll
- Institute perspective and broader initiatives
- Adjourn

Goals

❖ **Develop** system for <u>continuous self-examination</u> and reflection.
  ➢ Survey

❖ **Improve** community knowledge of <u>available resources</u> and comfort using resources.
  ➢ Title IX trainings

❖ **Provide** professional development and development of <u>cultural/diversity competencies</u>.
  ➢ Community seminars

❖ **Expand** community awareness and transparency of MCE's <u>reporting process</u>.
  ➢ MCE webpage update

❖ **Demonstrate** <u>explicit support</u> for improving culture pertaining to inclusivity and diversity.
  ➢ All of the above!

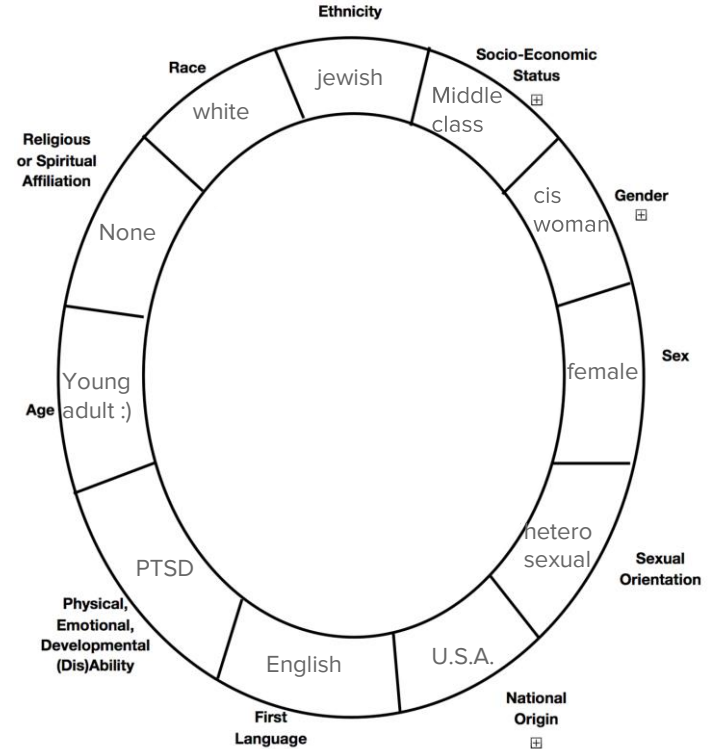*goals originally presented at the Jan 27th, 2020 SOPS-MCE faculty meeting on Inclusion and Diversity

What is Organizational Climate?

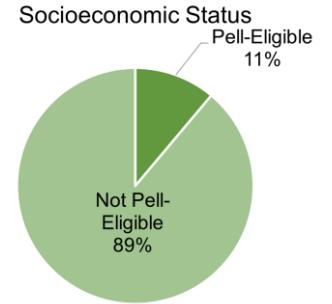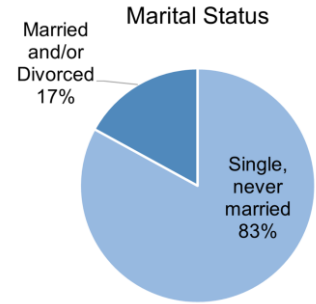Organizational *climate* concerns policies and practices of an organization
- Policies: written rules for how things should be done.
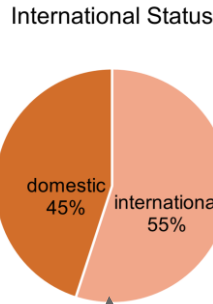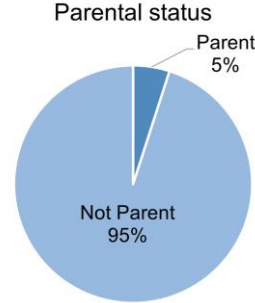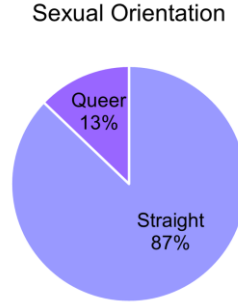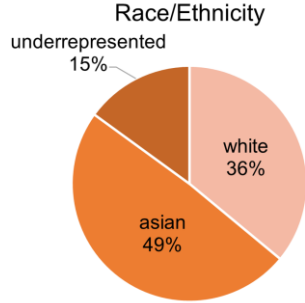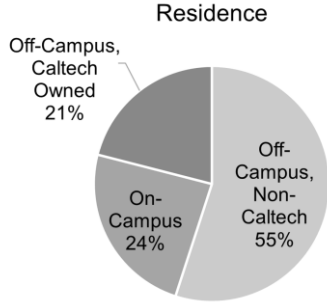- Practices: Behaviors that people in the organization engage in (i.e. how policies are or are not enacted.

Our organizational climate should support members of our community with all sorts of *identities*.

Identity Wheel

Our Community Identity

Residence
- Off-Campus, Caltech Owned 21%
- On-Campus 24%
- Off-Campus, Non-Caltech 55%

Race/Ethnicity
- underrepresented 15%
- white 36%
- asian 49%

Sexual Orientation
- Queer 13%
- Straight 87%

Parental status
- Parent 5%
- Not Parent 95%

Socioeconomic status
- First gen student 18%
- Not first gen 82%

Academic Status
- G1 13%
- G2 19%
- G3 15%
- G4 12%
- G5 18%
- G6+ 6%
- postdoc 17%

International Status
- domestic 45%
- international 55%

Gender Identity
- TGQN 2%
- Woman 22%
- Man 76%

Marital Status
- Married and/or Divorced 17%
- Single, never married 83%

Socioeconomic Status
- Pell-Eligible 11%
- Not Pell-Eligible 89%

Stanford: 42% international
MIT: 41% international
Caltech: 47% international

Stanford: 35% female
MIT: 35% female
Caltech: 31% female

Survey Design

- **Surveyed group**: graduate students and postdocs who belong to MCE, or have an advisor with an office in Gates-Thomas
- **Survey period**: May 28, 2020 - June 13, 2020
  - May 25, 2020 - death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota
- **Completion rate**: 101/118!!!
  - Nearly full population (86% Response Rate)
- Many trends observed in our climate survey are mirrored in the larger Caltech AAU Campus Climate Survey results from 2019
- We asked respondents to answer as they would have before the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown of campus
- Survey conducted and data analyzed by Dr. Hanna Song, Senior Director for Inclusion and Diversity in the Caltech CCID
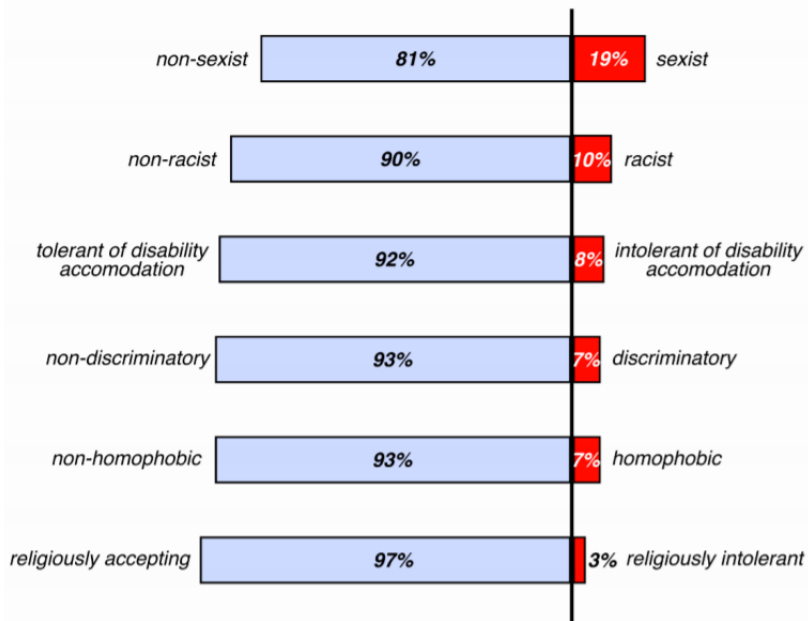
# Survey Results

Perception of departmental climate

MCE Perception

non-sexist	81%	19% sexist
non-racist	90%	10% racist
tolerant of disability accomodation	92%	8% intolerant of disability accomodation
non-discriminatory	93%	7% discriminatory
non-homophobic	93%	7% homophobic
religiously accepting	97%	3% religiously intolerant

Key takeaways:

- Women and those who reported witnessing harassment are more likely to view the department in a negative light.
- 27% of women viewed the climate as sexist, 18% as racist, 14% as homophobic, and 18% as intolerant to disability.
- 30% of those who reported witnessing harassment found the climate to be sexist.
- Only 1 out of 15 URMs found the climate to be racist.

Experiencing and witnessing discrimination and/or harassment

Experienced discrimination/harassment?

Men

9%

91%

No
Yes/I think so

Women

41%

59%

16%

84%

No
Yes
I think so
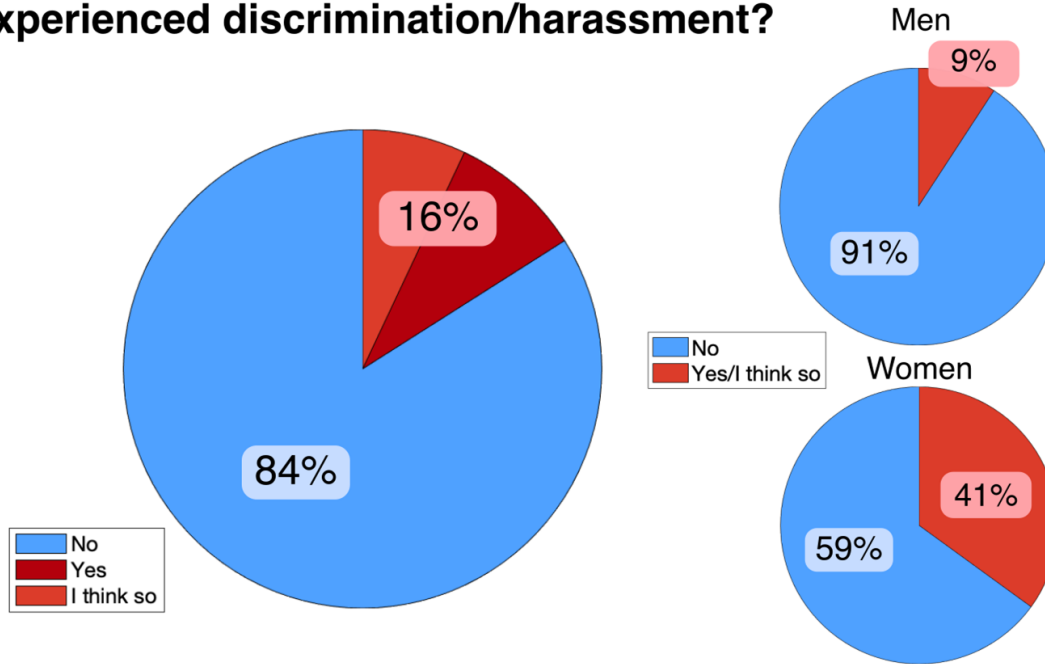
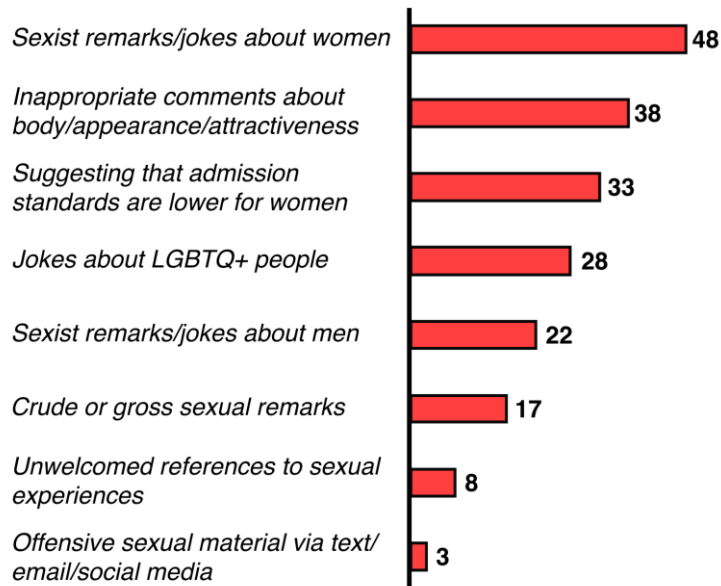Affirmative responses in other demographics:
- 30% of Queer
- 6.7% of underrepresented

From AAU survey:
- 52% of women
- 26% of men
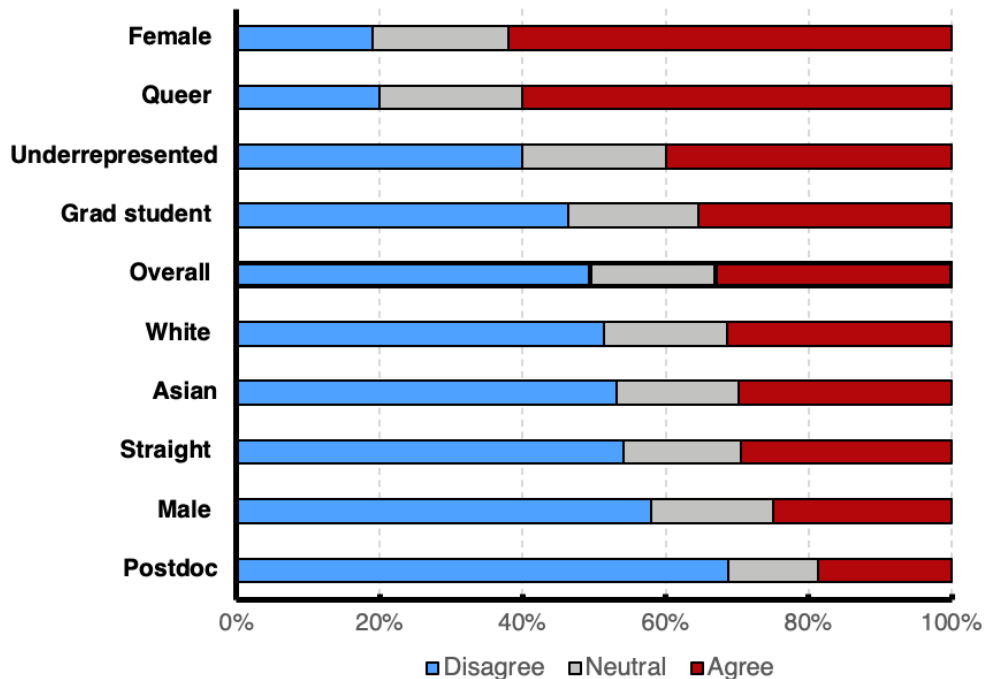- 80% of TGQN
(undergrad & grad combined)

Experiencing and witnessing discrimination and/or harassment

Forms of harassment witnessed

Form	Count
Sexist remarks/jokes about women	48
Inappropriate comments about body/appearance/attractiveness	38
Suggesting that admission standards are lower for women	33
Jokes about LGBTQ+ people	28
Sexist remarks/jokes about men	22
Crude or gross sexual remarks	17
Unwelcomed references to sexual experiences	8
Offensive sexual material via text/email/social media	3

"I am used to it, so I did nothing"

Worried about stigmatization for bringing up harassment/discrimination issues?

Categories (top to bottom): Female, Queer, Underrepresented, Grad student, Overall, White, Asian, Straight, Male, Postdoc

Legend: ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree

Faculty-student dynamics

- 69% felt faculty show *sufficient commitment* to diversity.
  - Rises to 93% among underrepresented
- 26% are **uncomfortable discussing mental health** with their advisor.
- Only 50% know 3 faculty well enough to ask for **recommendation letter**.

I can talk to my PI about anything that concerns me without fear of repercussions.
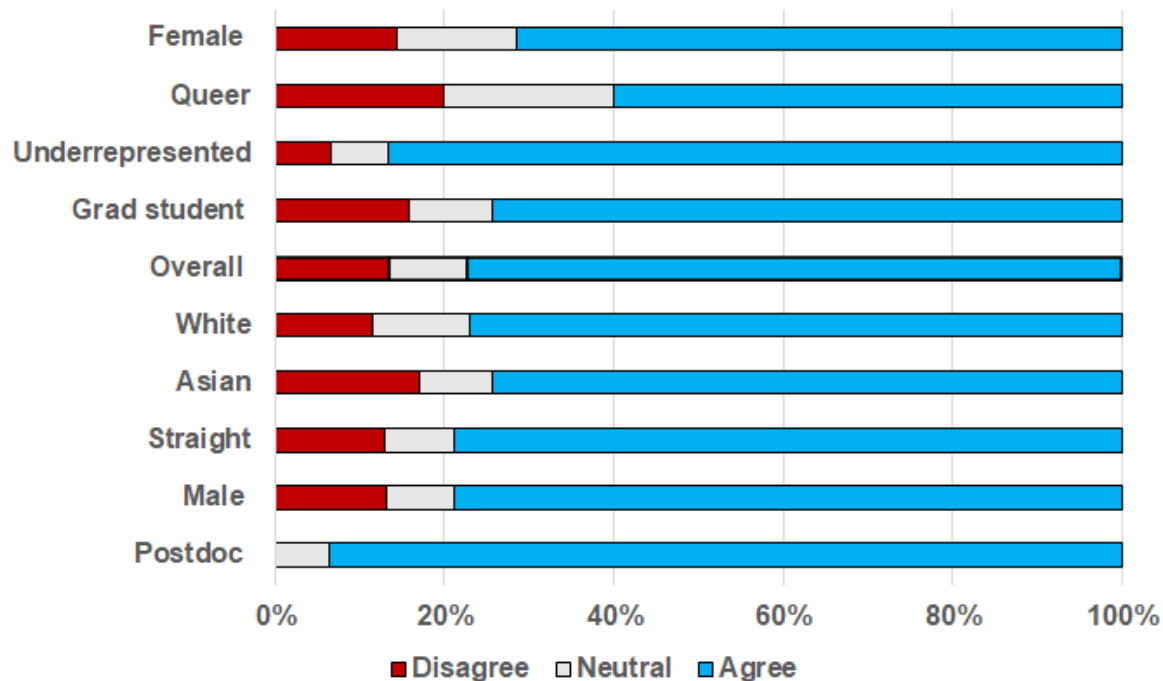
Work-life balance and social status

28% disagree with the statement "I have a healthy work-life balance."
28% disagree with the statement "I am working at a sustainable pace…"

Peer pressure to work more than comfortable?

22%

57%

Strongly disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Strongly agree

Men
12%
63%
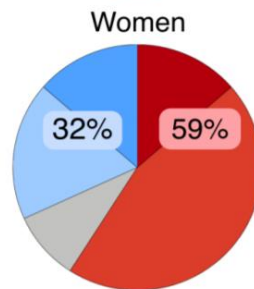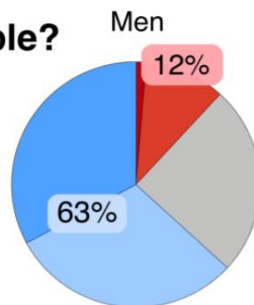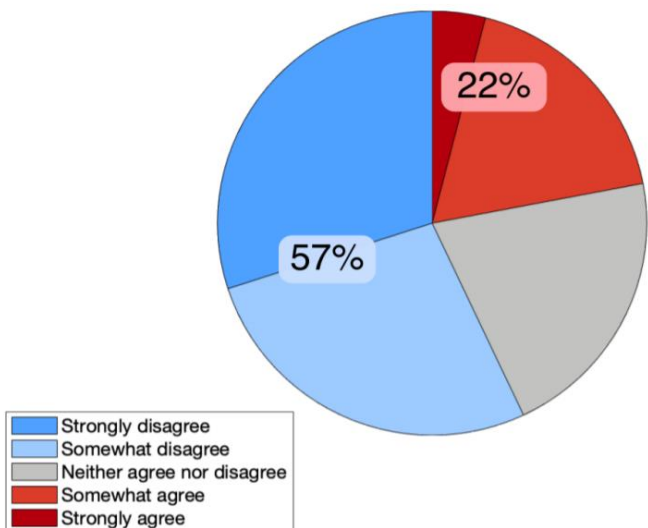
Women
32%   59%

Status in the workplace

28% of respondents feel that they have to *repeatedly* prove themselves to get the same recognition as their peers.

Rises to 46% in women.

75% of men feel that their opinion is valued when they speak in meetings or in class, but only 50% of women do.

Tools and resources

I am equipped to handle hostile, harassing, or intimating behaviors.
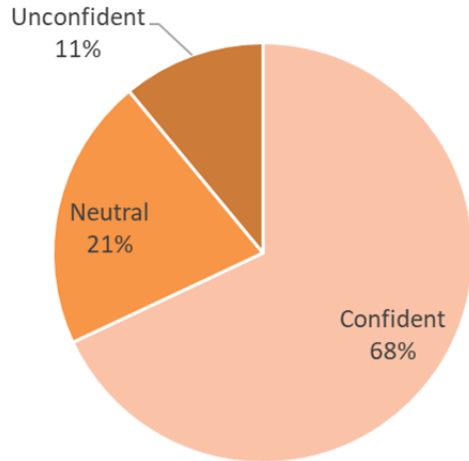
Women
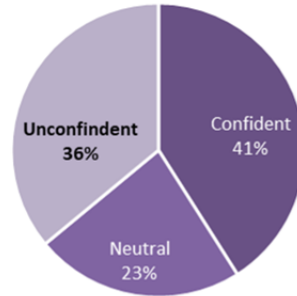
Witnessed Harassment
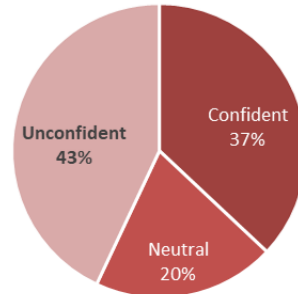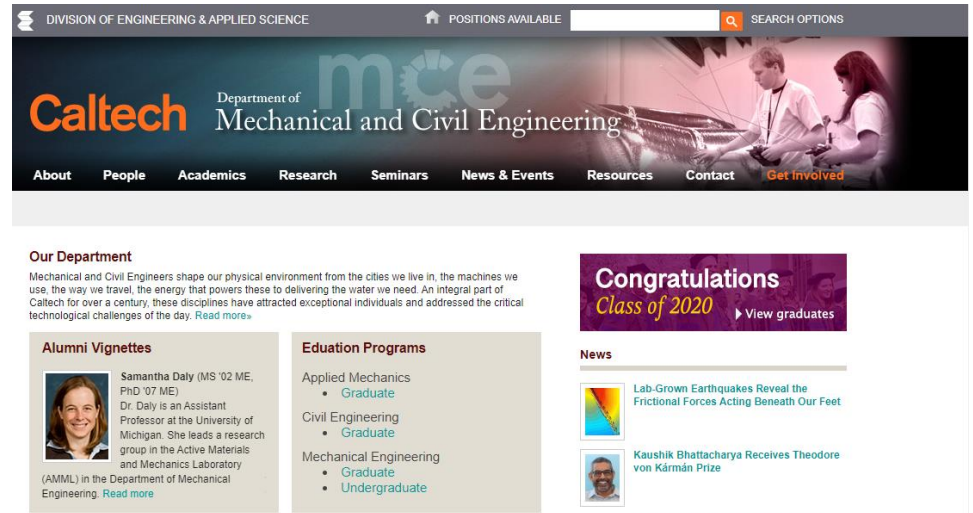
Do I know what to do if I am harassed?

- Confidence in handling hostile or harassing situations is substantially lower among women.
- Students who have not witnessed/experienced harassment may overestimate their ability to handle the situation.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

"MCE is an inclusive community committed to bringing out the best in one another, providing equitable treatment and support to each member, and celebrating our common pursuit of scholarship as enhanced through our individual differences. We welcome and respect all members regardless of their role at Caltech or their race, ethnicity, nationality, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, health status, religion, socioeconomic status, or political views."

- SOPS Climate Committee Presentations
- MCE Climate Committee Report
- SEED Report
- Non-discrimination policies
- Links to Title IX, CCID, & other resources

Summary and Recommendations

Departmental actions:

- Adopt the MCE Commitment to DEI
- Create a culture of self-assessment: repeat survey, town hall, report

Demonstrating explicit support:

- Having a candid conversation with the group about what expectations and culture exist in your research group
- Become knowledgeable about campus resources for students and staff (Title IX advocate training, "tech zone" certified)
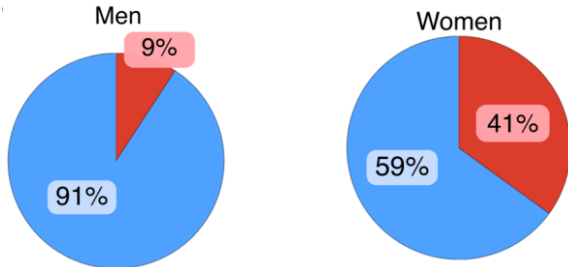- Participate in DEI or non-technical forums
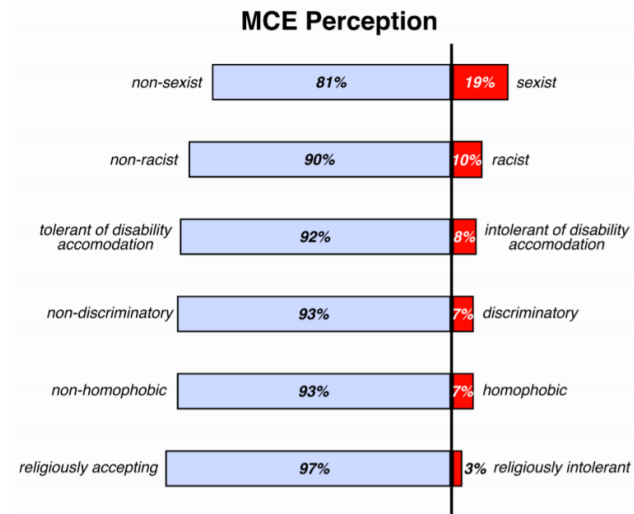
Highlighted Statistics for Discussion

Peer pressure to work more than comfortable?
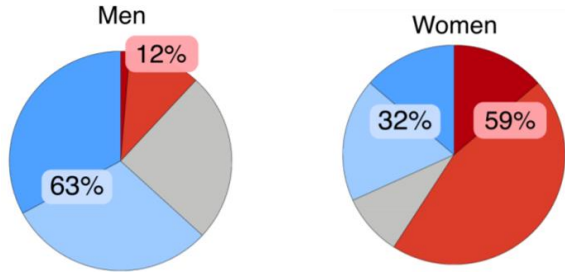
Men

- 12%
- 63%

Women

- 59%
- 32%

Experienced discrimination/harassment?

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26% are **uncomfortable** discussing mental health with their advisor. Only 50% know 3 faculty well enough to ask for **recommendation letter**.

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Most common response to witnessing harassment: *"I am used to it, so I did nothing."*