



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

GENERAL REPORT

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Campus Safety and Equity Advisory Council February Meeting Report: Hate Speech, Hate Crimes, and Hate-Motivated Incidents

On February 22 and 23, members of the USHE Campus Safety and Equity Advisory Council met virtually to discuss hate speech, hate crimes, and hate-motivated incidents in campus communities. CSEAC Vice Chair Tiffany Chan, a senior at the University of Utah, volunteered to lead the discussion. The Commissioner's office is grateful to these students for their candor and selfless vulnerability in discussing complicated topics that can trigger complex emotions. These students demonstrate courage by sharing their thoughts and feelings about topics that affect them in deeply personal and often negative ways.

Students spoke about the ambiguity that can surround hate-motivated behaviors and the racial gaslighting that they can experience in the wake of that ambiguity. Several students expressed that, when they experience mistreatment, it can be difficult to know if the perpetrator was motivated by bias against their identity(ies). Similarly, a student shared that they feel confident in their understanding of what a hate crime is, but they have a harder time defining hate speech. As a result of this uncertainty and nuance, several students said it can sometimes be difficult to decide if the treatment they experience warrants filing a formal report. Another student shared that the nuanced nature of interpersonal interactions supports their personal philosophy that it's important to understand the intent behind a person's remarks and offer people grace and education when they unknowingly exact microaggressions. By practicing this philosophy, the student takes time to educate others on the harm their words inflict so that harm may be prevented in the future.

Two themes emerged most prevalently from the conversation. First, many students consistently expressed a desire for more swift and thorough communication and better transparency from their institutions when hate-driven incidents occur on campus. Second, many students expressed the opinion that institutions have a responsibility to continuously educate and train the campus community to recognize and avoid microaggressions and other harmful behavior and to help the campus community practice greater cultural competency and humility. Additional insights and opinions are outlined below.

Positive Feedback (7)	
Category	Examples (number of unique mentions in parentheses)
Communications and outreach (4)	<i>I know how to report hate speech, hate crimes, and hate-motivated incidents to my institution. (3)</i>
Communications and outreach (cont.)	<i>My institution does a good job of informing the campus community when hate speech, hate crimes, or hate-motivated incidents occur. (1)</i>
Institutional policies and practices (2)	<i>My institution does a good job of supporting diverse and multicultural student groups through funding. (1)</i>
	<i>Campus climate surveys are important and helpful in understanding and finding ways to improve campus culture. (1)</i>
Campus culture (1)	<i>I feel there is more diversity and acceptance on my campus now than there has been in the past. (1)</i>

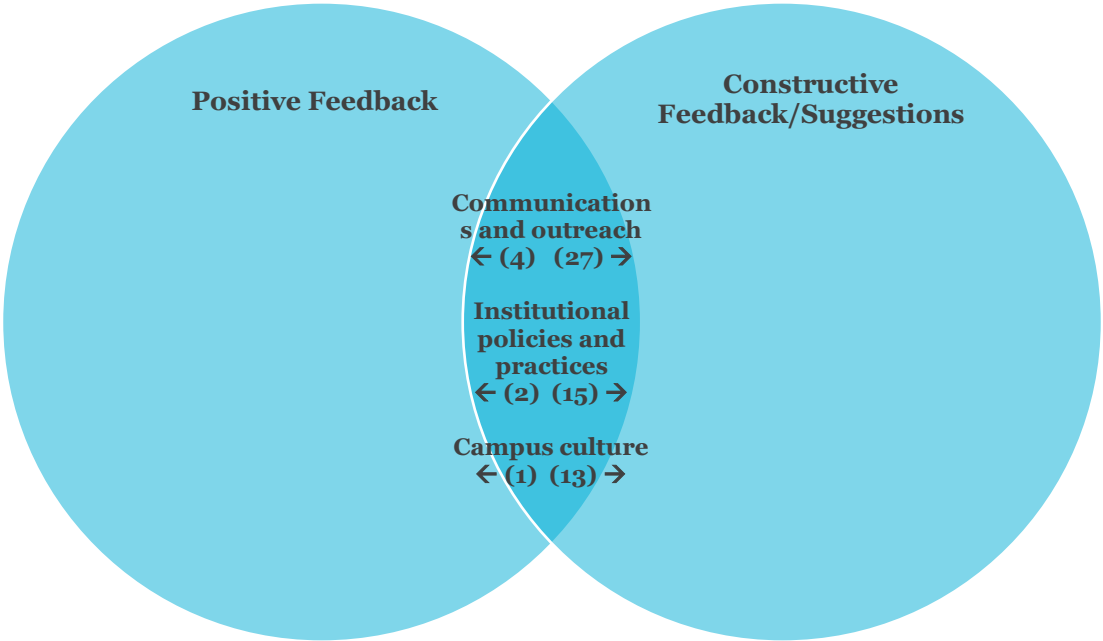
Constructive Feedback/Suggestions (55)	
Category	Examples (number of unique mentions in parentheses)
Communications and outreach (27)	<i>Institutions need to do a better job of continuously educating the campus community to help them understand and avoid microaggressions and other inappropriate behavior and build cultural competency and humility. (9)</i>
	<i>My institution needs to do a better job of informing the campus community when hate speech, hate crimes, or hate-motivated incidents occur. (8)</i>

<p>Communications and outreach (cont.)</p>	<p><i>I and/or some of my peers don't know how to report hate speech, hate crimes, or hate-motivated incidents to our institution. (5)</i></p>
	<p><i>I and/or some of my peers don't know how to seek support and resources in the wake of a hate speech, hate crime, or hate-motivated incident. (2)</i></p>
	<p><i>The way my institution has responded to recent hate-motivated incidents leaves me concerned that my institution is more devoted to protecting its public image than to creating equitable and systemic change for marginalized students. (2)</i></p>
	<p><i>Institutions can do a better job of naming racism and having an open dialogue about racism. (1)</i></p>
<p>Institutional policies and practices (15)</p>	<p><i>Institutions need to define more clearly what is and what is not tolerated behavior on campus. (3)</i></p>
	<p><i>I feel that students who perpetuate hate speech are not always consistently or swiftly held accountable. (3)</i></p>
	<p><i>When a student is the victim of a hate-motivated incident, they may feel more comfortable working with a non-police-affiliated campus leader instead of law enforcement, and institutions should attempt to accommodate those preferences. (3)</i></p>
	<p><i>I feel my institution is quick to listen when the campus community or broader public expresses concern about how marginalized student groups behave, but I feel my institution is not as quick to listen when marginalized student groups express concern about how they are treated. (1)</i></p>

<p>Institutional policies and practices (cont.)</p>	<p><i>When hate-motivated incidents occur, I feel my institution is thorough in offering grace to offenders, but I feel my institution is less thorough in offering support to students who are directly or indirectly victimized by these behaviors. (1)</i></p>
	<p><i>Syllabi should contain information on how to report hate-motivated incidents. (1)</i></p>
	<p><i>All USHE institutional codes of conduct should outline institutional expectations and subsequent responses pertaining to hate-motivated incidents. (1)</i></p>
	<p><i>My institution can do more to support members of the campus community who are not indirectly victimized by hate incidents rather than only supporting the student who was directly victimized. (1)</i></p>
	<p><i>Institutions should change policies to allow student groups to cater events through culturally relevant and authentic vendors rather than requiring them to use campus dining services (1)</i></p>
<p>Campus culture (13)</p>	<p><i>I and/or my peers have experienced microaggressions on campus. (4)</i></p>
	<p><i>I and/or my fellow students are not comfortable reporting hate speech, hate crimes, or hate-motivated incidents for fear that we will be retaliated against or be perceived as lying. (3)</i></p>
	<p><i>Current/world events can negatively affect the way students are treated by the campus community. (2)</i></p>

Campus culture (cont.)	<i>I feel I have been formally discriminated against by a faculty or staff member because of my identity. (1)</i>
	<i>I know peers who have stopped out due to how they have been treated on campus because of their identity(ies). (1)</i>
	<i>In light of two recent and similar violent crimes, I feel public outcry was greater, and my institution's response was more thorough in the crime in which a white student was victimized as opposed to the crime where a student of color was victimized. (1)</i>
	<i>I feel that members of the campus community can sometimes be resistant to EDI trainings or cultural sensitivity trainings. (1)</i>

Discussion Summary: Resources and EDI Initiatives for Students with Disabilities



Notable Quotes

- ***On the need to educate the campus community about racial microaggressions:***
 “What [my institution] can do is educate students about microaggressions and hate incidents

because people can be doing it and not even realize it. Even the littlest things...people think, 'Oh, it's an innocent question.'...An example of one I've gotten before is people touching my hair. I know it's not supposed to be out of hate or something, but then they make a sly comment like, 'How can you manage that? If I had that, I'd cut it all off.' There have been comments like that where it's not coming out of hate, but it's coming out of a lack of education and a lack of knowing how to deal with different types of people...It's a big lack of education not just with our schools, but as a culture and a thing here in Utah."

- ***On gaslighting:***

"Sometimes we gaslight ourselves too. 'Did that really happen? Am I overreacting? Was this really an experience I should be upset about?' But 99% of the time, it always is, and we just don't have the validation or the support from the institutions to really say, 'Wow, this affected me, and it affected my life, and it probably affected my academics and my student life, and now I'm the one who has to take a step back and analyze instead of being done right by the institution.'"

- ***On institutional responses to hate incidents:***

"[A student] made a [racially-motivated] TikTok that was pretty offensive...and one of the things that was very upsetting to me was that, one of the first responses that [my institution] wanted to do and that they felt was right was to bring that student in and kind of like give them a panel to be asked questions on like, 'Why would you do this? What have you learned from this?' And to me...when we have situations like this arise, it's once again providing EDI to the aggressor and not the victims. My first response would have been, 'What can we do for students? If this triggered something, can we expand our mental health services for a week and make support groups led by a therapist? How can we get feedback?' But instead, they were choosing to protect and almost uplift the aggressor instead of protecting and uplifting the victims. And I think, more often than not, that happens... I want to see the institution do an educational event on why immigrants are a very big part of our country and our background, and what can we do to educate that as well as uplift our immigrant community, uplift Center for Inclusion...be actionable in a genuine way. Consult the community...I totally believe in second chances, but I don't believe second chances should overshadow consequences or the reality of what [the student] did was hurtful."

- ***On institutional responses to hate incidents:***

"I'm a senior in public relations, so I get to work with the marketing and communication firm on campus quite a bit. And I know that when things like that happen [hate incidents], it [institutional response] is done for damage control rather than for the need to fix the actual problem... Universities, I feel like, don't want to go out of the way to punish these crimes in an appropriate way because of the attention it can cause, the donors they can lose."

- ***On the idea that marginalized student groups are censured more than they're supported:***

“We had a drag show on campus last fall, and with that drag show, we had some public outcry. The public wasn't happy. Somebody on the school board in [my city] got a hold of it, and she was telling people to come protest. And instead of taking a stand and saying, 'This is what students want to see. We support it,' [my institution] kind of just...caved in to please. We had to change our marketing...just to keep people happy. But when I see opposite situations...like, say, we have a group on campus that openly doesn't support undocumented students or DACA students or openly doesn't support gay students, then I just don't see the public outcry for that or the university really listening to the public outcry for that.”

- ***On how current world events can negatively affect students' experiences:***

“This happened when the escalation between the Russians and the Ukrainians started in February last year. We have a Russian student. She was feeling really stressed because she felt like a lot of people had a negative attitude against Russians. She felt like she was being blamed for the fact that Putin was attacking Ukraine. At the beginning of March, we had this international showcase where she participated, and someone behind her said, 'Kill all the Russians.' She felt so bad, and she was really struggling. She said she didn't want to go to campus because she felt there was so much negativity just because she was Russian, even though she's against the war.”

- ***On resistance to cultural sensitivity training:***

“I really think that because hate crimes and hate speech are so closely associated with vulnerable populations, as in people of color, people who identify as LGBTQ+ community, I think that it becomes a pretty sensitive topic or people seem very sensitive to it. I think that, from my experience working with other professionals while I used to work at [my institution], it seems like there was just so much pushback. I really loved working for the police department [on campus], but what I witnessed often is that their mentality was, 'Well, we treat everybody the same, so we don't think we need these additional trainings.' And in my mind, I would just think, 'Well, maybe that's part of the problem - that you're thinking we treat everybody the same, because people aren't the same.' That's one thing I reflect on is it seems like the professionals on campus that I was working with just seemed very hesitant in my experience to want to receive more cultural sensitivity training, or even responding to hate crimes and hate speech.”