

AUGSBURG UNIVERSITY
Faculty Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2019

Provost Karen Kaivola presided and called the meeting to order at 3:40 pm

First Word

Sarah Groeneveld Kenney, Assistant Professor of English, provided the First Word.

Approval of Minutes

The Faculty Meeting minutes from 9/18 were approved as written.

Approval of Agenda

Today's agenda was adjusted to include a few additional announcements, and a vote to approve two replacements on the Committee on Tenure and Promotion. The agenda was approved with changes.

Announcements

Bettine Hermanson, Managing Director of the Human Rights Forum, reminded faculty of the upcoming Forum, scheduled for October 28-29. Electronic signs and Amail submissions have full information on this event.

Robert Gould, Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management, provided an enrollment update. The current academic profile remains fairly consistent. He announced that financial aid packages have now become the top reason why students enroll at their eventual institution. So far in 2019 we are down in inquiries, but we have received 274 applications – which is a bit ahead of last year. Robert will continue to update faculty on enrollment numbers throughout the year.

Rebekah Dupont, Director of STEM Programs, noted that the Registrar's Office will soon be sending out course spreadsheets in preparation for 2020-21 course scheduling. She asked faculty to consider where AugSem course pairings might be possible.

Bob Cowgill, Associate Professor and Department Chair of English, spoke on behalf of colleague Mzenga Wanyama, Assistant Professor of English. As Mzenga's work authorization has been held up since last spring, Mzenga has not been eligible to receive pay since August. Bob has initiated a Go-Fund-Me page to assist Mzenga and his family, and encouraged others who might want to contribute to visit this page. Following Bob's announcement, Karen noted that the University has just learned that Mzenga's work authorization just came through, and that this approval is for two years, where previous approvals have been for one year at a time.

Provost's Report – Karen Kaivola

Karen framed the report by noting the 3 factors that permeate her consideration of University priorities: equity/inclusion, signature experiences across academic programs, and structure/infrastructure. These guide the development of Academic Plan 2025, and are connected to questions of sustainability.

In donating her time to Rebecca John, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, to speak to the Fiscal 2019-20 budget recently approved by the Board of Regents, Karen noted that questions of sustainability and adaptation/transformation are impacting the vast majority of colleges and universities.

Rebecca noted at last Spring's all-hands, we anticipated more revenue than had been budgeted for Fiscal Year 2019-20 owing to the large size of the incoming class. However, while the University began the current year with more tuition revenue than anticipated, it was not as much as had been hoped, as Day program revenues were largely offset by a significant decline in graduate enrollment and revenue. There was also roughly \$500k in new expenses associated with the large undergraduate class, as well as an increase in costs for food service. Finally, large ticket items that were not in the original budget (i.e., women's wrestling, the new PA lease), cut into new revenue.

The Board of Regents voted last Spring to restructure some of the University's debt, in order to realize savings and to achieve greater stability in debt payments. After expenses, the new tuition revenue and the debt restructure combined generate a net projected surplus of \$317,678 (against which some additional investments in program growth will be made). We anticipate a balanced budget—but it will require that all keep within the bounds of their budgets.

Terrance Kwame-Ross, Associate Professor of Education, asked how much the University is allocating toward marketing. Rebecca responded that this area is underfunded as much as any other area. Some academic programs are more competitive than others and so we use funding for programs we believe we can grow. Terrance followed up with a question about marketing strategy.

Faculty Senate Report – Milda Hedblom, Faculty Senate President

Milda spoke to the timeline for the general education redesign update, noting that an inquiry for a faculty vote will go out to faculty likely at the same time that the proposal is distributed.

She reported recent discussions on the Academic Plan that will continue in Senate, particularly regarding the proposed five-faculty member academic unit. Karen's proposal is to consider structuring academic units with aligned faculty, which would translate to fewer total department chairs (in order to reduce administrative work for faculty and put more faculty in classrooms).

Jenny Hanson, Director of Online and Blended Learning Pedagogies, presented at the last Faculty Senate meeting to discuss potential changes to the approval process for online and blended courses. Both AAC and GAAC members have not been satisfied with the current process.

John Schmit, chair of the Committee on Tenure and Promotion, asked for faculty approval of two members of CTP: Diane Pike to replace Evren Guler for the fall term, and Jacqui deVries as the full year Humanities/Fine Arts representative. MSC to approve.

Faculty Handbook Revisions – Bob Groven, Chair, Personnel Policies Committee

Bob provided an overview on the progress of recent Handbook revisions, as well as the direction for PPC's work this year. He identified the recommended revisions to the faculty constitution and bylaws and substantial changes to the main portion of the Handbook that were voted on by the faculty; reviewed by the provost last spring; reviewed by legal counsel last summer; reviewed by a subcommittee of the Academic Affairs Committee; brought to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board; and approved by the full Board as part of the consent agenda. These changes were passed unanimously. Major changes include an expanded, revised role of the department chair, clarification that program directors report directly to the department chair (excluding interdisciplinary programs), substantial revisions to the faculty dismissal for cause process, and the articulation of a progressive discipline system in the event of ethical violations.

Bob reported the PPC has a long list of agenda items for 2019-20, but invited questions, additions, and concerns from faculty.

Inclusive Classroom Study – James Vela-McConnell, Professor of Sociology

Last Spring, James and a team of students surveyed Augsburg students to assess their perception and experiences with issues of inclusion and diversity. The report that James shared is a preview to the full report which will come to the faculty at a future date. Most of this report is written but there is work to be done to make transcript data reader-friendly. James is working with a student research assistant on this part of the project.

Approximately 280 students responded to this survey (a 13.2% response rate), and 8 focus groups had approximately 25 participants each. James provided a breakdown of research participant demographics and examples of the type of information gathered. All examples came from close-ended survey questions.

Generally, students have a very positive perception of Augsburg faculty, noting there are a "few bad apples." Students suggest faculty do not have an understanding of the current students' circumstances – that they are not middle-class, privileged students. One of the goals of this study is that it will spark discussions with students to learn more – and then act upon what is learned in order to teach our students more effectively. (A pdf copy of James' slides are attached to these minutes.)

General Education Update – Stacy Freiheit, Director of General Education

Stacy focused her remarks on two priority areas for general education:

(1) General Education Redesign. Work to incorporate revisions made over the summer into the final proposal is almost complete. Stacy hopes that it may be ready by the November faculty meeting. The anticipated timeline for this fall is to bring the proposal to AAC, and then to Faculty Senate. It is hoped then it will be ready for a vote by faculty in spring, with a vote by the Board of Regents at their May meeting.

(2) General Education Assessment. Stacy noted the importance - in light of the response by the Higher Learning Commission to Augsburg's assurance argument - of creating a more robust assessment plan of general education by April 2022. By this date, we must map all general education courses to undergraduate learning outcomes appropriate to each dimension of the general education curriculum. The General Education team will consolidate a list of learning outcomes this fall (from what is, at present, a very long list) and bring to the faculty in spring, followed by a plan for implementation by the end of the year. Ben Denkinger, Director of Assessment, is in agreement with this plan and timeline.

Open Forum

A faculty member proposed that we consider changing the format of regular faculty meetings to allow for time for discussion (of matters relevant to faculty, such as the Inclusion Study presented by James Vela-McConnell). It was suggested that we allow roughly 1/3 time for reports; 1/3 for business, and 1/3 for open forum.

A faculty member asked if there have been recent changes in admissions standards – as well as available resources to support students. She reported a perception of decline in student preparedness and wondered if information was available on the “profile” of this year's entering class. A faculty member responded by suggesting that discourse on the students who choose Augsburg is the wrong focus - we should focus our attention on ourselves, as faculty, and our preparedness to teach the students in our classes - in an effort to be student-centered and faculty-focused. Not all teachers know - especially across demographic differences - how to understand the student, where he/she/they come from, and this understanding is critical to their ability to learn. Several faculty added perspectives on these matters.

Meeting adjourned 5:10 pm,
Judi Green, recorder

Curricular Inclusion & Diversity at Augsburg University

An Assessment by Students

James A. Vela-McConnell, Ph.D.

Student Research Team:

- Tom Commers
- Jordan Marth
- Maribel Morales
- Ebelin Morales Delgado
- Loni Rutherford

The logo for Augsburg University, featuring the word "AUGSBURG" in a large, bold, serif font above the word "UNIVERSITY" in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the end of "UNIVERSITY".

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Research Questions

Perceptions and experiences with issues of inclusion and diversity within the context of:

- Classes
- Majors and minors
- The curriculum in general

What do they feel is going well and what areas for improvement can they identify?

Areas of Focus

- Student's Sense of Welcome & Respect
- Personal Experiences with Inclusion and Diversity
- Student Learning in the Areas of Inclusion, Inequality, and Diversity
- Experiences Within Majors and Minors
- Diversity and Inclusion Within the Augsburg Curriculum Overall

Research Participant Demographics

	Survey	Focus Groups
Students of Color	49%	60%
Female	62%	60%
Male	33%	28%
Non-Binary, Transgender, & Gender Queer	5%	12%
LGBQA	31%	40%
First-Generation College Students	42%	52%
Low-Income Students	40%	56%
TRIO Students	22%	24%

Student Learning in the Areas of Inclusion, Inequality, and Diversity

Figure 3.7: Student evaluation of how often they are assigned class materials produced by those from diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences, ranked by mean

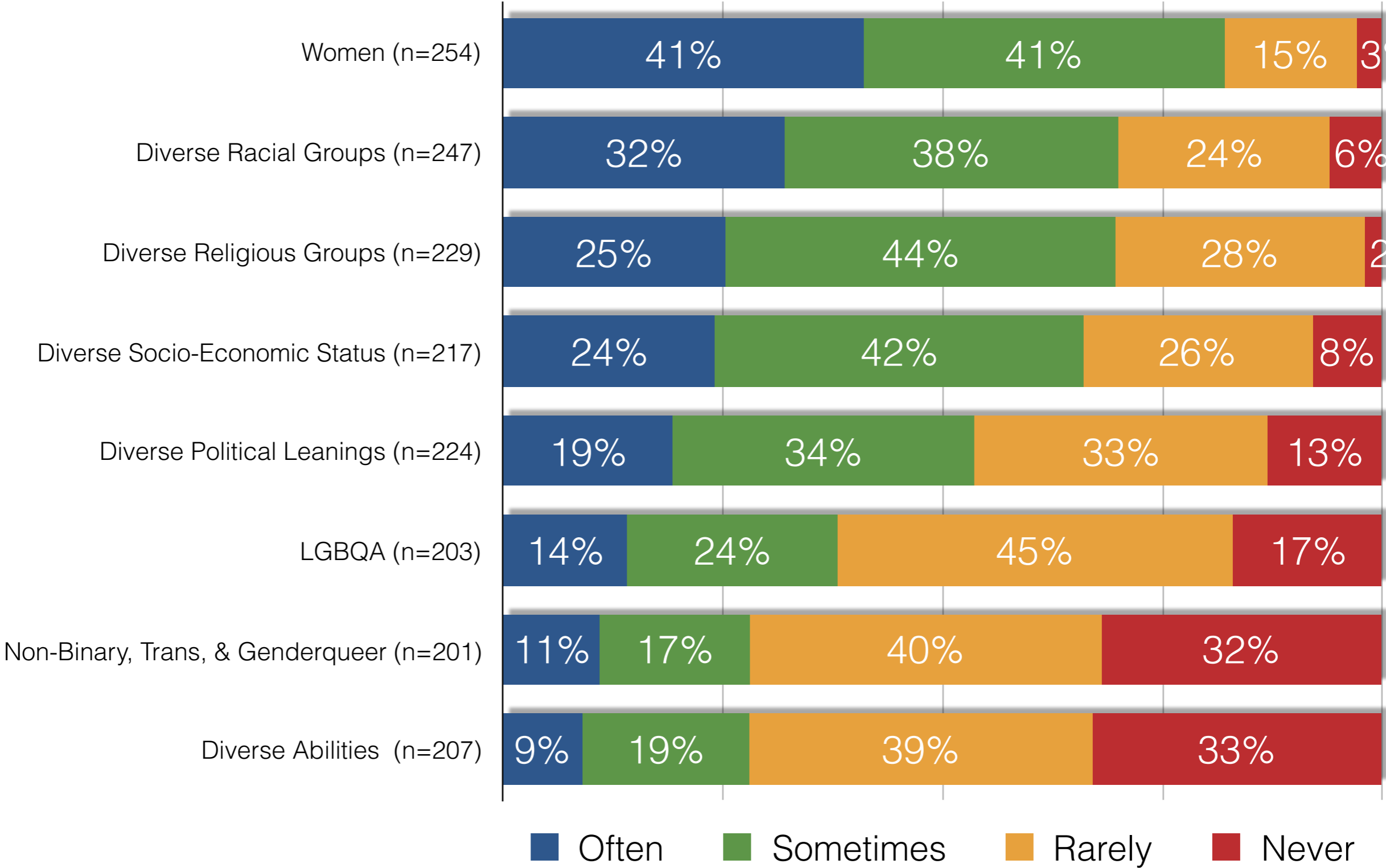


Figure 3.13: Students' agreement with the statement that "faculty work hard to be inclusive with regard to course content and materials" (n=272)

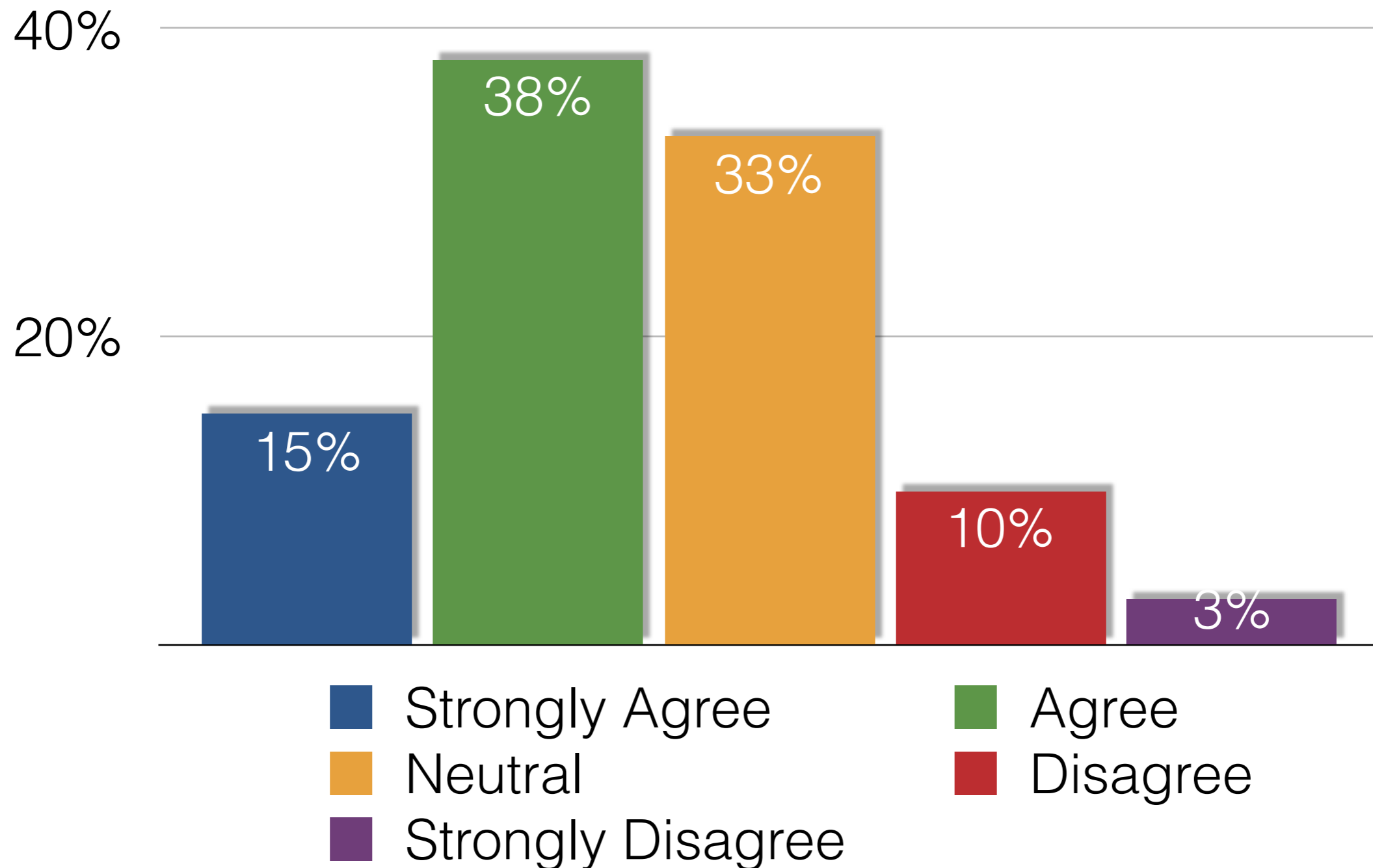
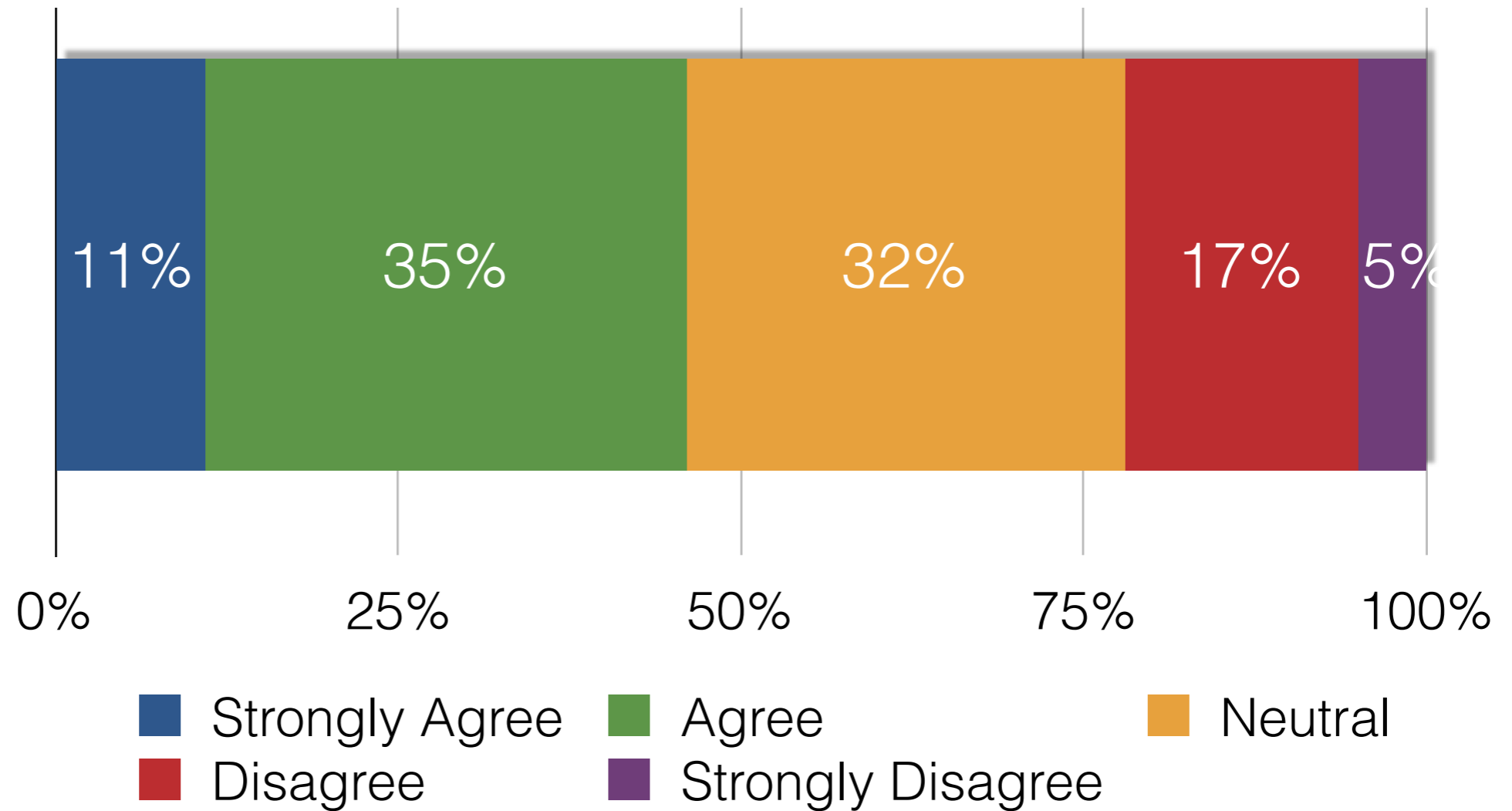


Figure 3.14: Students' agreement with the statement that "diverse groups and experiences are fully integrated into the course as a key aspect of the subject matter" (n=283)



Inclusion and Diversity with Within the Augsburg Curriculum Overall

Figure 5.6: Student evaluation of the curriculum in terms of the inclusion of narratives from a variety of perspectives (n=222)

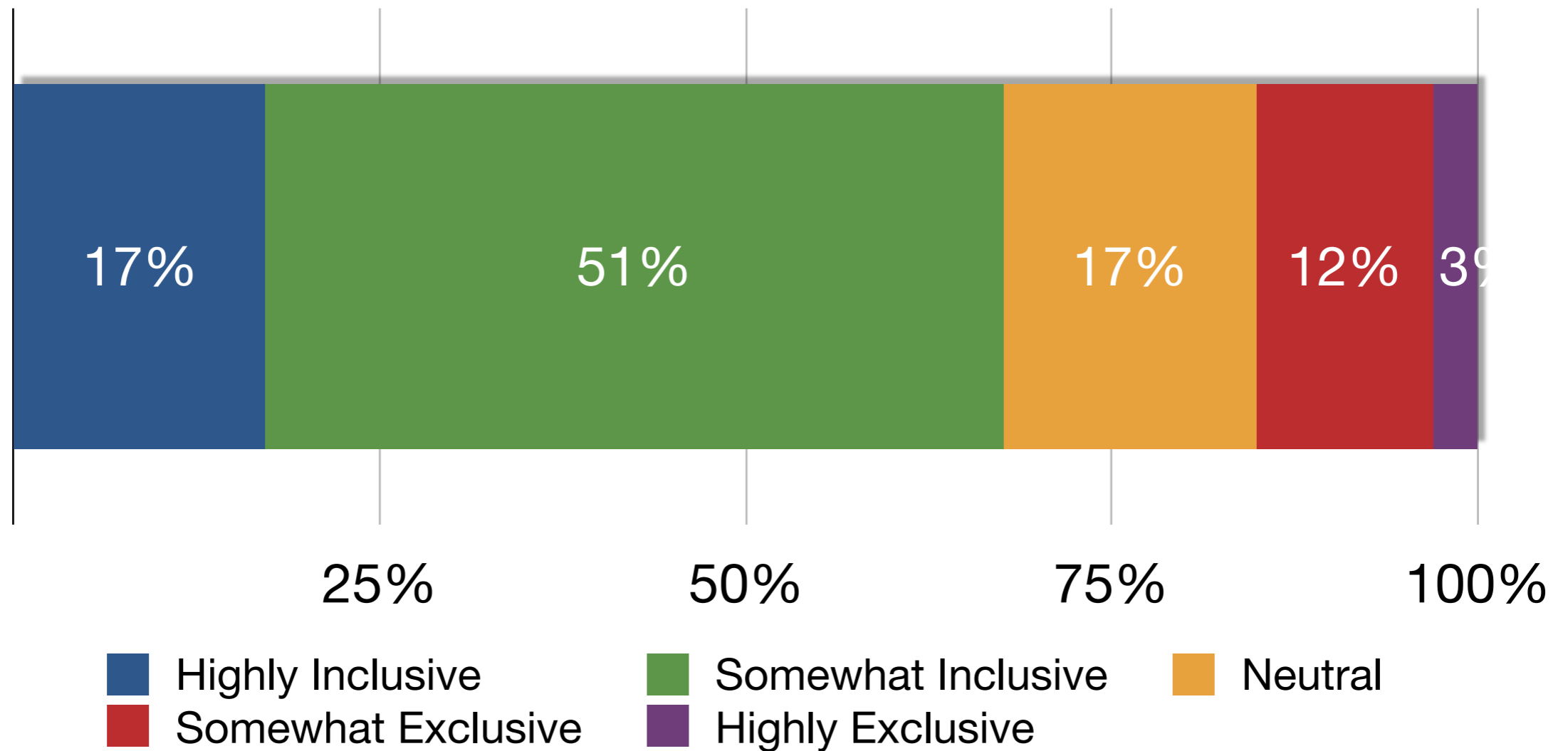
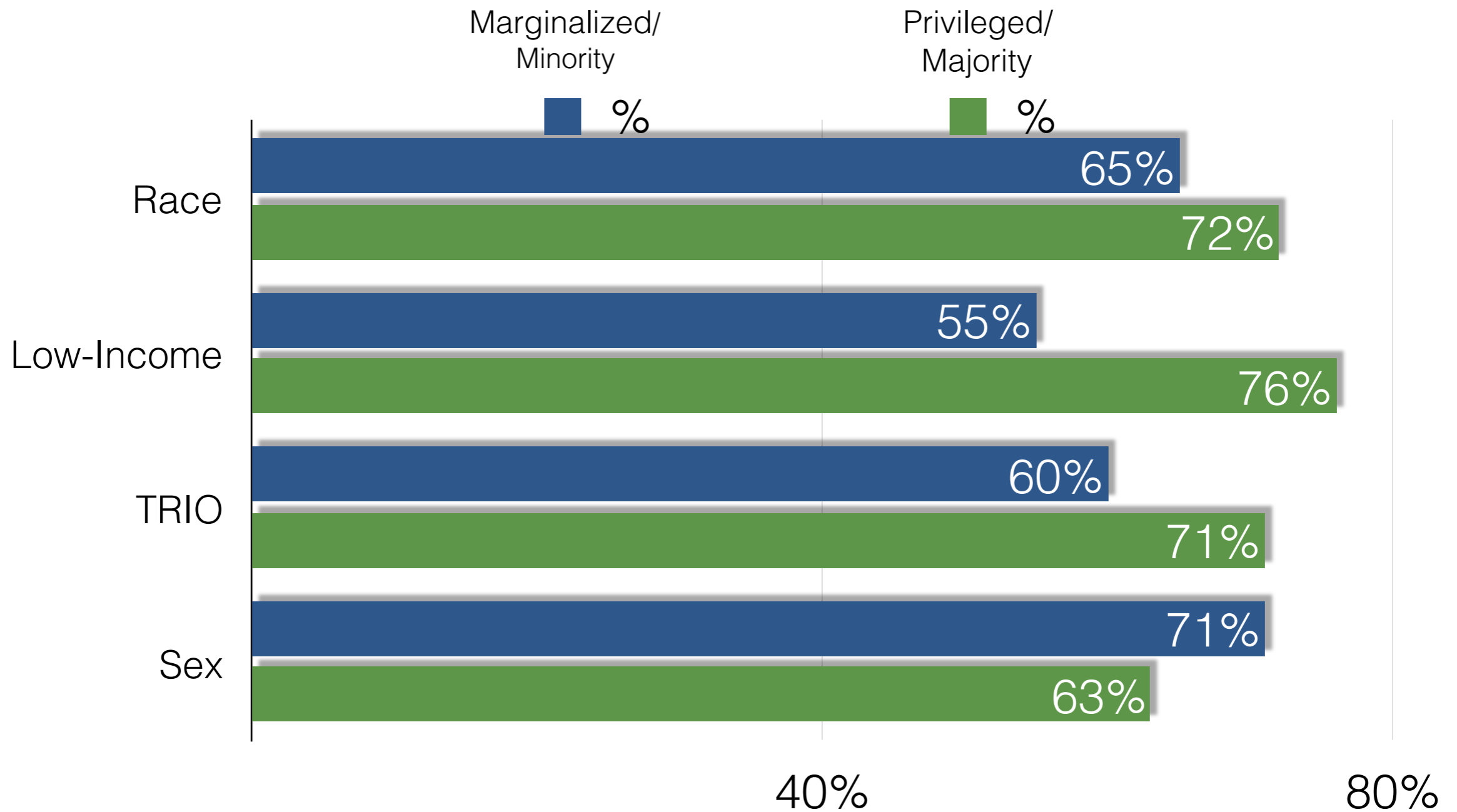


Figure 5.7: A comparison between marginalized and privileged students in terms of their satisfaction with the inclusion of narratives from a variety of perspectives across the curriculum (n=215)



Qualitative Data

“It feels like a betrayal ...”

**“... they seem to operate
in this colorblind
mindset.”**