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DIALOGUE: DIVERSITY IN THE DISCIPLINE

## Does diversity matter? Evidence from a survey of political science faculty

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### ABSTRACT

Does diversity in political science departments matter? In addressing the question, this article helps assess the value of increasing diversity in the discipline overall. Members of gender, race, and sexual orientation minority groups remain underrepresented in political science departments. What effects does underrepresentation have? To answer this question we rely upon a 2009 American Political Science Association (APSA)-sponsored survey of all faculty in U.S. political science departments. We study responses to questions about the number of female; racial minority; and lesbian, gay, or bisexual faculty members in political science departments. We test hypotheses about the relationship between the degree of departmental diversity and the friendliness, collegiality, and productivity of the associated faculty. We find that diversity, significantly affects intra-departmental relations, productivity, and perceptions of the treatment of female and racial/ethnic minorities. For both attitudes toward racial minorities and attitudes toward sexual minorities, greater diversity is generally associated with more positive attitudes. Women and racial/sexual minorities perceive their departments as less “friendly” than men and non-minorities. The presence of five or more women triggers a rise in the unfriendliness of a given department; this pattern does not appear for racial/sexual minorities.

### KEYWORDS

Diversity; minority; higher education; collegiality; faculty productivity

### Does diversity matter?

This article focuses on the question: Does diversity in political science departments matter? To answer this question we rely upon a 2009 American Political Science Association (APSA)-sponsored survey of all faculty employed in political science departments (including departments of government and public affairs) throughout the U.S. We begin by studying responses to questions about the number of female; racial minority; and lesbian, gay, or bisexual faculty members in political science departments. We then test hypotheses about the relationship between these numbers and the friendliness, collegiality, and productivity of the associated faculty members. We expect that those employed in departments with “token” members of these minority groups (including

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token women) will report lower levels of collegiality than those employed in departments with multiple minority colleagues.<sup>1</sup> We also expect that experiences with and the effects of more diverse versus less diverse environments will differ for minorities as compared with white, heterosexual men.

Members of gender, race, and sexual orientation minority groups remain underrepresented in political science departments. Yet, departments vary: some are more diverse than others. An empirical test of the consequences of more diverse versus less diverse environments helps to answer questions about how important it is for departments to pursue opportunity hires not only for improving the educational and research mission of the institution but also for making the work environment a more pleasant and productive place to be. This inquiry into diversity at the departmental level thus contributes to an appraisal of the value of increasing diversity in the discipline overall.

### Existing research

The quality of interpersonal relationships with colleagues shapes job satisfaction, which is in turn related to productivity, which ultimately affects retention (Hesli and Lee 2011, 2013). Those who are experiencing higher levels of job satisfaction are more likely to feel engaged and to have a greater affinity with the department and a desire to contribute to the group (Hagedorn 2000, 9). Unfortunately, our previous research has revealed that members of ethnic or racial minority groups tend to be less satisfied with their jobs and tend to rate their departments as less collegial than non-racial minority faculty.<sup>2</sup>

Important for our purposes here are previous findings that link job satisfaction to “solo” status within a department and to the racial and gender composition of surrounding staff (Kirby and Jackson 1999; Niemann and Dovidio 1998). A sense of isolation may emerge when a female faculty member is the only woman, or when a person of color is the only ethnic or racial minority group member in a department (Aguirre 2000; Tack and Patitu 1992). Isolation is compounded if other members of the department believe that the woman or the person of color came into the department as a result of an affirmative action hire (Turner 2002). Political Science faculty at the intersection of gender and race are quite rare, making it difficult for quantitative scholars to capture their experiences. Women of color, however, have begun to discuss their isolation and to develop strategies for transforming the discipline (e.g., see McClain et al., 2016; Smooth, 2016).

Level of diversity also affects the workload of faculty members from underrepresented groups. Women in departments with few other women report heavier workloads in terms of committee assignments, student advising, and teaching (Sonnert and Holton 1995; Park 2000; Xie and Shauman 1998). Racial minority faculty may purposefully become more involved in mentoring and service as a result of their desire as underrepresented individuals to further diversity on their campuses (Blackwell 1988; Exum 1983). Note that this previous research focuses on the experiences of racial minority and female faculty. A literature has yet to emerge on the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) faculty. One of the contributions of this article is that we report on the perceptions of and attitudes toward LGBT political science faculty.

In addition to affecting the persons from underrepresented groups who are working in more or less diverse academic departments, diversity affects other members of the department. An underlying assumption is that senior faculty of color or senior female faculty

provide role models and mentors for less senior faculty and graduate students (Anderson and Ramey 1990; Cullen and Luna 1993; Hall and Sandier 1983; and see Ford, 2016). Having a senior colleague act as a mentor and role model improves career satisfaction among non-tenured women (August and Waltman 2004). With regard to other members of the department in general, having less frequent interaction with minority faculty may lead to judgments based on limited data and heavier reliance on preconceptions and stereotypes (Olsen, Maple, and Stage 1995, 286). Past research argues that a “chilly climate” exists within departments in which less than 15% of the staff are women (Henehan and Sarkees 2009, 436). Enhancing diversity also contributes to making the discipline more just (Mershon and Walsh, 2016).

In the analysis below, we use the terms Female Presence and Racial Minority Presence to account for numerical incidence of female and racial minority faculty (Bates, Jenkins, and Pflaeger 2012). We also categorize departments based on whether or not they have among their members self-identified LGBT faculty. We determine whether variations in Female, Racial Minority, and LGBT Presence are related to variations in departmental friendliness to women, respect for racial minorities, attitudes toward sexual orientations of faculty, and general levels of collegiality and tolerance. We shed light on the question of whether a numerical imbalance between female and male faculty or between racial minority and majority faculty is actually “felt” by those working in particular departments. We also test how variation in Female, Racial Minority, and/or LGBT Presence is related to the number of academic publications.

We hypothesize that the effects that more diverse or less diverse environments have on perceptions of friendliness, respect, acceptance, collegiality, and even productivity will be different at different academic ranks. Changes in rank bring new outlooks, different expectations, and changes in responsibilities (Baldwin 1990). For example, the lack of job security associated with lack of tenure puts one into a quite different experiential and perceptual world than, for example, a full professor nearing retirement with an established reputation. Socialization also occurs throughout each person’s life span, so that those who have been faculty members for decades are more likely to have accepted the workplace environment as it is or at least have learned how to survive within it.

## The findings

We begin with a description of the 2009 APSA-sponsored survey of all faculty employed in political science departments (including departments of government and public affairs) throughout the U.S. (response rate of 28.4%; for details, see Appendix A online). Within our representative sample of political science faculty, we have 1073 respondents who provided us with enough information to be included in this diversity analysis. Within this set, 68% are men and 32% are women.<sup>3</sup> Fourteen percent self-identify as a member of an ethnic and racial minority group. Among these, 4% are African American, 3% Asian American, 4% Latina/o or Hispanic American, 1% Native American/American Indian, and 3% other (including Jewish and many others).<sup>4</sup> Because the numbers in each of these subsets are small, we combine all self-identified members of an ethnic or racial minority group into a single category for statistical analyses.

Seven percent of our representative sample self-identify as bisexual, gay, or lesbian. Three percent are bisexual, 3% gay, and 1% lesbian. Because the numbers in each of

these categories are small, we group these three sexual orientations together for statistical analyses.

With regard to the diversity characteristics of the departments within which these faculty members work, 97% report that their department has at least one female faculty member. Seventy-eight percent report having at least one faculty member in their program who is a member of a racial or ethnic minority group. Thirty-five percent report having at least one departmental colleague who self-identifies as LGBT.<sup>5</sup> Table 1 shows what portion of respondents report different numbers of female and racial minority faculty. For example, 29% report having more than five female faculty in their department, while only 6% report having more than five racial or ethnic minority among their faculty. We do not have information on the number of LGBT faculty in each respondent's department. Moreover, we lack information on the total number of faculty in each respondent's department. As we cannot compute the percentages of faculty who are women or racial/ethnic minorities by department, we focus our discussion on the total number of each type of faculty. The existing literature also focuses on aggregate numbers; for example, Niemann and Dovidio (1998) analyze views of solo and non-solo minorities without reference to department size.

Are women and members of racial/ethnic minority groups employed more frequently in institutions that emphasize teaching and service and at lower prestige institutions, as some quite old studies suggest (Finkelstein 1984; Lomperis 1990)? We find exactly the opposite. We calculated the average Female Presence and Minority Presence for different department and institution types. As seen in Table 2, Ph.D. granting departments have greater Female and Racial Minority Presence than do M.A. granting departments or departments within four-year colleges. Departments that are ranked, using the Schmidt and Chingos (2007) ranking, also have greater Female and Racial Minority Presence than non-ranked departments. On average, public institutions have greater Female and Racial Minority Presence than do private institutions. The finding that females constitute a larger percentage of faculty within public as compared to private institutions is confirmed by AAUP Gender Equity Indicators.

Next, we turn to an analysis of the relationships between variation in Female, Racial Minority, or Sexual Orientation Presence and reports of the departmental climate. Four questions ask about perceptions of departmental behavior toward female and racial minority faculty, and attitudes toward sexual orientation of faculty. In Table 3, we report frequency distributions for these questions. As can be seen in the final row, reports about each faculty member's department tend on average to be better regarding Racial Minority

**Table 1.** Female Presence and Racial/Ethnic Minority Presence in political science departments.

Number of faculty members in respondent's department who are female or racial/ethnic minority	Percent reporting this number of female faculty	Percent reporting this number of minority faculty
0	3%	22%
1	8%	20%
2	15%	21%
3	14%	14%
4	13%	7%
5	12%	4%
More than 5	29%	6%
Missing	6%	6%
Total	100	100

**Table 2.** Female Presence and Racial/Ethnic Minority Presence by department and institution type<sup>a</sup>.

	Mean number female faculty	Mean number racial/ethnic minority faculty
Degree type		
Ph.D.-granting program	6.6	2.9
M.A.-granting program	4.4	1.9
Department within a four-year college	3.2	1.5
Department ranking		
Among top 86	7.2	3.1
Unranked	3.9	1.8
Institution type		
Public	5.2	2.4
Private	3.8	1.7

<sup>a</sup>We do not know the number of bisexual, transgendered, gay or lesbian faculty per department, so this is not included in the table.

Respect than women receiving equal career advice or attitudes toward lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientations. Such a comparison of means across questions should be done with some caution, however, given the relatively high percentage of missing responses on the Racial Minority Respect question.<sup>6</sup>

We can now compare the mean responses on these questions for different levels of departmental diversity (different levels of Female, Racial, and Sexual Minority Presence). Before we do this, we combine responses to the questions in columns one and two of Table 3 to create a scale that we label “Women Friendly” (we create this scale by calculating the mean for the two questions about female faculty). The question from column three is treated separately and is labeled “Racial Minority Respect” and the question from column four is labeled “Sexual Orientation Attitudes Positive.”

In Table 4, we compare mean scores on the Women Friendly scale for departments with different numbers of female faculty (Female Presence). We do not have a row in Table 4 for those departments without any female faculty because the questions about the environment for female faculty were only asked of those who report that at least one member of their department is a woman.

**Table 3.** Frequency distributions for statements on departmental behavior and attitudes toward minority faculty.

	“Men are more likely than women to receive helpful career advice from colleagues.”	“Departmental leaders treat male and female faculty equally.”	“Racial majority faculty members in my department treat minority faculty with respect.”	“In my department, some faculty have a negative attitude toward lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientations.”
Strongly agree	7%	48%	54%	6%
Somewhat agree	11%	19%	14%	13%
Neutral	15%	9%	4%	13%
Somewhat disagree	15%	11%	3%	16%
Strongly disagree	42%	6%	1%	44%
Missing	10%	7%	24%	8%
Total	100	100	100	100
Question mean	3.84	3.98 <sup>a</sup>	4.54 <sup>a</sup>	3.86

<sup>a</sup>In calculating the mean and in the analysis that follows, responses are reversed for the racial minority and departmental leaders’ questions, so that high values across all question items indicate agreement that a positive environment for an underrepresented group exists.

**Table 4.** Mean scores on the “Women Friendly” scale for different levels of Female Presence.

Number of female faculty in department	Women Friendly scale mean scores					Men only
	Full sample	Assistant professors only	Associate professors only	Full professors only	Women only	
One woman	4.13** (n = 87)	4.05 (n = 28)	3.86 (n = 29)	4.56** (n = 27)	3.18 (n = 19)	4.4** (n = 68)
2–3	3.98 (n = 303)	4.07*** (n = 95)	3.86 (n = 93)	4.05** (n = 102)	3.54 (n = 98)	4.19 (n = 205)
4–5	3.82** (n = 258)	3.67*** (n = 77)	3.63** (n = 65)	4.04 (n = 107)	3.28 (n = 87)	4.1** (n = 171)
>5 women	3.86 (n = 307)	3.63 (n = 90)	4.06** (n = 79)	3.92 (n = 127)	3.38 (n = 112)	4.13 (n = 195)
Number of cases	955	290	266	363	316	639

Notes: The vast majority of those surveyed were assistant, associate or full professors, though a few were lecturers or visiting professors. Lecturers and visitors are included in the analysis for the full sample, but are excluded when the analysis is divided by academic rank. Significance tests are calculated for every pair of scale means within each column. Asterisks mark significant differences between a pair of scale means across different numbers of female faculty.

\*\* $p < .05$ .

\*\*\*  $p < .01$ .

The first row of Table 4 contains mean scores on the Women Friendly scale for those who report that they have one female faculty member in their department and we compare these with mean scores from those with two or three (second row), four or five (third row), or more than five female colleagues in their department (row four). Once we calculate the mean scores on the Women Friendly scale for each of these categories of Female Presence, we use a *T*-test (comparison of means) to evaluate the hypothesis that a higher level of Female Presence will lead to a better score on the Women Friendly scale.

Our hypothesis *does not* receive confirmation. In fact, when looking at all faculty members together (column one Table 4), we see a relationship opposite to the one expected in our hypothesis. Our analysis reveals that the more female faculty in the department, the lower the scores on the Women Friendly scale. The mean score for departments with one female faculty member is significantly higher than in departments with four to five women.<sup>7</sup> The same pattern holds when looking only at the responses coming from assistant professors – except the differences among the means are even greater for the various levels of Female Presence (column two, Table 4). Assistant professors view their departments as the least Women Friendly when the department has more than five women. The major break point appears to be between four and five female faculty – with four or less female faculty, the department is perceived to be more Women Friendly than in departments with five or more female faculty. Among full professors, those in departments with just one woman report that their departments are the most female friendly compared with respondents in all other department types (column four, Table 4). The pattern is different, however, when associate professors are reporting (column three, Table 4). Associate professors working in departments with more than five female faculty see their departments as more Women Friendly compared with those working in departments with four to five women.

To further analyze the relationship between level of Female Presence and scores on the Women Friendly scale, we divide the sample between male and female faculty and look first at the responses of women only and then of men only (see last two columns, Table 4). Two noteworthy findings emerge when we look at men and women separately. The first is that women, in general, view their departments as much less Women Friendly



than do men (compare column five with the last column of [Table 4](#)). The second finding is that among women, the total number of female faculty in the department does not matter – no significant differences in mean scores on the Women Friendly scale are found depending on how many women are in the department. When we consider the responses of male faculty only (last column, [Table 4](#)), however, we see that those men working in the departments with just one woman are the most likely to view their departments as Women Friendly (the mean score for this group is 4.4).

Two caveats must accompany these findings. First, the findings do not permit inferences about the direction of causality. We do not know, for example, whether more women-friendly departments are more likely to hire or promote women, or whether departments more respectful of racial minorities are more likely to hire or promote racial minorities. Our survey did not include queries on recruitment and retention. More broadly, as a survey conducted at one point in time, it identifies correlations, not causal relationships. The second caveat regards what appear to be non-linear patterns for mean scores on the Women Friendly scale among associate professors and among women (revisit columns three and five of [Table 4](#)). With regard to the column for women only, no significant differences in means occur across the different numbers of women in the department. Thus, we cannot speak of a pattern. If we focus on the column for associate professors, the real difference occurs between the perceptions of those who work in departments that have four to five women in contrast to those who work in departments that have more than five women, with the latter being significantly more Women Friendly. Disaggregating associate professors by gender, we discover that men in departments with over five women are significantly more likely than women to perceive a Women Friendly environment (details available from authors). Here too, then, men see the climate in more positive terms than do women.

In [Table 5](#) we report mean scores on the Racial Minority Respect indicator for different levels of Racial Minority Presence within political science departments. Those who responded that they work in a department without any racial/ethnic minority faculty members (22% of respondents according to [Table 1](#)) are excluded because they were not asked the question about minority respect. As can be seen by the mean scores displayed in column one of [Table 5](#), when looking at the full sample we find that those working in departments with one minority faculty report (on average) significantly lower scores on the Minority Respect indicator than do those working in departments with three or four minority faculty members. This finding supports the hypothesis that increased Racial Minority Presence contributes to greater levels of Racial Minority Respect. Among assistant professors only (column two, [Table 5](#)), the relationship is linear: an increasing number of racial minority faculty members is associated with increasingly higher scores on the Racial Minority Respect indicator. Among associate professors only, however, the relationship is not as predicted. Among associate professors, the mean score for Racial Minority Respect is highest among those with only one ethnic/racial minority faculty member in their department and this is significantly higher than among those with two minority faculty members of their department (column three, [Table 5](#)). Among full professors only, the means for Racial Minority Respect do not differ significantly across levels of Racial Minority Presence in the department.

Across all department types, scores tend to be lower on the Racial Minority Respect measure among faculty members who themselves identify as a member of a racial or



**Table 5.** Mean scores on the “Racial Minority Respect” indicator for different levels of Racial/Ethnic Minority Presence.

Number of ethnic/ racial minority faculty in department	Racial Minority Respect mean scores					
	Full sample	Assistant professors only	Associate professors only	Full professors only	Minorities only	Non- Minorities
One minority colleague	4.48** ( <i>n</i> = 214)	4.24** ( <i>n</i> = 77)	4.76** ( <i>n</i> = 55)	4.6 ( <i>n</i> = 77)	3.71* ( <i>n</i> = 21)	4.57** ( <i>n</i> = 193)
2	4.47 ( <i>n</i> = 227)	4.59** ( <i>n</i> = 71)	4.38** ( <i>n</i> = 74)	4.44 ( <i>n</i> = 75)	4.05 ( <i>n</i> = 43)	4.58 ( <i>n</i> = 184)
3–4	4.69** ( <i>n</i> = 216)	4.72 ( <i>n</i> = 57)	4.63 ( <i>n</i> = 51)	4.66 ( <i>n</i> = 101)	4.30* ( <i>n</i> = 37)	4.76** ( <i>n</i> = 179)
≥5 minority colleagues	4.64 ( <i>n</i> = 96)	4.82 ( <i>n</i> = 22)	4.43 ( <i>n</i> = 28)	4.67 ( <i>n</i> = 42)	4.37 ( <i>n</i> = 27)	4.74 ( <i>n</i> = 69)
Number of cases	753	222	208	295	138	625

Note: see note to Table 4.

\**p* < .10.\*\**p* < .05.

ethnic minority group (column five, Table 5) than among those who do not (column six, Table 5). In other words, those who are themselves members of a racial or ethnic group are less likely to agree that minorities are treated with respect than are those who are not members of a racial or ethnic group. Those who are themselves the single racial or ethnic minority member in their department (column five, row one, Table 5) are significantly less likely to agree that minority faculty are treated with respect than are minority faculty members working in departments with three or more racial minority faculty members.

In Table 6, we report mean scores on the “Sexual Orientation Attitudes Positive” measure for different types of departments in terms of Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered (LGBT) presence.<sup>8</sup> We see that departmental attitudes toward lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientations are in general more likely to be positive in departments that have among their members self-identified bisexual, transgendered, gay, or lesbian (LGBT) faculty; the mean for this group is significantly different from the mean for the group that has no LGBT members of the department. If we look only at assistant professors, however, we see no significant differences in the means for the Sexual Orientation Attitudes Positive indicator across different department types (column two, Table 6). Among associate and full professors, having at least one self-identified LGBT colleague is associated with more frequent disagreement on average with the statement that the department has a negative attitude toward lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientations. Looking only at the responses of faculty members who themselves self-identify as bisexual, gay, or lesbian<sup>9</sup> (last column, Table 6), we see that these faculty are less likely, on average, than the full sample (column one) to disagree with the statement “In my department, some faculty have a negative attitude toward lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientations.” We therefore conclude (from Tables 4–6) that members of underrepresented groups, whether women, racial minorities, or self-identified bisexuals, gays, or lesbians, are less likely to view their departments as friendly, respectful, and positive compared with the corresponding majority group.

**Table 6.** Mean scores for “Sexual Orientation Attitudes Positive” measure for whether the department has LGBT presence.

Are any of your departmental colleagues self-identified bisexual, transgendered, gay or lesbian?	Sexual Orientation Attitudes Positive mean scores				
	Full sample	Assistant professors only	Associate professors only	Full professors only	Among those who self-identify as bisexual, gay or lesbian
Yes	4.02***	4.07	3.94**	4.12*	3.21
No	3.72	3.8	3.48	3.85	2.83
Don't know	3.88	4.06	3.69	3.89	3.09
Number of cases	983	291	267	389	70

Notes: The vast majority of those surveyed were assistant, associate or full professors, though a few were lecturers or visiting professors. Lecturers and visitors are included in the analysis for the full sample, but are excluded when the analysis is divided by academic rank.

\* $p < .10$ .

\*\* $p < .05$ .

\*\*\* $p < .01$  (level of significance for difference between mean for “yes” group and mean for “no” group).

### Determinants of perceptions of departmental environment

We now turn to investigating the determinants of perceptions of the departmental climate, treating the “Women Friendly,” “Racial Minority Respect,” and “Sexual Orientation Attitudes Positive” measures as dependent variables in multivariate analysis.<sup>10</sup> In Table 7, as predictors, we use dummy variables for self-identified group membership and faculty rank (associate professor is the excluded reference category).<sup>11</sup> We also add indicators of whether the department being evaluated is a private or a public institution and whether it is Ph.D.-granting department or an M.A.-granting program (working in a department within a four-year college is the excluded category).<sup>12</sup>

In the first section on Table 7, the Women Friendly scale is regressed on the predictor variables listed in the previous paragraph. As shown, men are significantly more likely than women to rate their departments as Women Friendly (second row, Table 7). We also see that full professors are significantly more likely to see their departments as Women Friendly than are associate professors. This multivariate analysis confirms that perceptions of a department’s treatment of women are related to academic rank. The type of department where the respondent is employed also systematically affects reports about the treatment of women. Those working in a department that offers doctoral degrees to graduate students are significantly less likely to rate their departments as Women Friendly. The important variable that is not significant in the regression is the total number of female faculty in the department: an increasing Female Presence in absolute terms within a department is not significantly associated with variation in scores on the Women Friendly scale (given the controls in the model, such as the self-reported gender of the respondent and the respondent’s academic rank).

In the second section of Table 7, the Racial Minority Respect indicator is regressed on an analogous set of predictors. Those who are themselves members of a racial or ethnic minority group (third row, Table 7) are significantly less likely to report that members of their department treat minority faculty with respect. Those working in a Ph.D. program are significantly less likely to rate their departments as respectful of minorities. Noteworthy (and *different* from the finding on the Women Friendly scale) is that as the number of racial or ethnic minority faculty in a department increases, scores on the

**Table 7.** "Women Friendly," "Racial Minority Respect" and "Sexual Orientation Attitudes Positive" measures regressed on characteristics of respondent and respondent's department (OLS).

	Women Friendly		Racial Minority Respect		Sexual Orientation Attitudes Positive	
	Estimated coefficient	Std. error	Estimated coefficient	Std. error	Estimated coefficient	Std. error
(Constant)	3.346***	0.147	4.362***	0.099	3.728***	0.106
Male faculty member	0.778***	0.077				
Ethnic or racial minority faculty member			-0.559***	0.082		
Bisexual, gay or lesbian faculty member					-0.848***	0.161
Assistant professor	0.138	0.090	0.031	0.079	0.325***	0.106
Full professor	0.177**	0.085	0.037	0.074	0.285***	0.100
Number of women in department (Female Presence)	0.002	0.041				
Number of racial/ethnic minority members in department (Minority Presence)			0.124***	0.032		
At least one colleague is LGBT					0.286***	0.088
Private institution	0.101	0.078	0.100	0.068	0.056	0.092
PHD program	-0.256***	0.094	-0.129*	0.074	-0.257**	0.101
MA program	-0.118	0.099	-0.009	0.087	-0.315***	0.117
R <sup>2</sup>	0.119	0.072	0.063			
Number of cases	953	751	967			

\* $p < .10$ .\*\* $p < .05$ .\*\*\* $p < .01$  (level of significance for estimated coefficients).

Minority Respect indicator also significantly increase. Hence increases in Ethnic and Racial Minority Presence in departments are associated with more positive reports about the treatment of minority faculty members.

In the third section of Table 7, the measure of Attitudes about Sexual Orientations serves as the dependent variable. Those who self-identify as bisexual, gay, or lesbian (fourth row, Table 7) are significantly less likely to disagree with the statement that faculty members in the department have negative attitudes toward lesbian, gay, or bisexual orientations. Thus, bisexuals, gays, and lesbians are more likely to report negative attitudes in their departments regarding sexual orientations than are their heterosexual counterparts. Those working in Ph.D. and M.A. programs also report more negative attitudes toward lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientations than those working in four-year degree-only institutions. More positive attitudes toward sexual orientations are reported by those working in departments with at least one colleague who is bisexual, gay, transgendered, or lesbian (compared with departments that have no such members). Both assistant professors and full professors report more positive attitudes towards lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientations than do associate professors.

For our last analyses, we consider the effects of Female, Racial Minority, and LGBT Presence on another set of outcome variables. We created two scales measuring the "climate" in the department. The Collegial Climate scale is a five-item scale based on rating the department on friendliness, respect, collegiality, collaboration, and cooperativeness (see online Appendix). The Tolerance scale is a three-item scale based on rating the department as non-racist, non-sexist, and non-homophobic. In addition to these two scales, we consider whether level of departmental diversity affects the publication rate of faculty. Total productivity counts the number of articles, chapters, and books published

**Table 8.** Collegial Climate, Tolerance, and Number of Publications measures regressed on characteristics of respondent and respondent's department (OLS).

	Collegial Climate scale		Tolerance scale		Total Productivity	
	Estimated coefficient	Std. error	Estimated coefficient	Std. error	Estimated coefficient	Std. error
(Constant)	3.631***	0.125	3.998***	0.108	1.398***	0.118
Male faculty member	0.123*	0.066	0.445***	0.057	0.220***	0.062
Ethnic/racial minority faculty member	-0.391***	0.089	-0.444***	0.077	-0.010	0.084
Bisexual, gay or lesbian faculty member	-0.004	0.122	-0.319***	0.104	0.046	0.115
Assistant professor	0.247***	0.076	0.081	0.066	-0.691***	0.072
Full professor	0.139*	0.073	0.069	0.063	0.678***	0.069
Number of female faculty in department	-0.078**	0.039	-0.019	0.033	0.108***	0.037
Number of racial/ethnic minority faculty in department	0.067**	0.028	0.057**	0.024	0.018	0.027
At least one colleague is LGBT	0.105	0.067	0.056	0.057	0.209***	0.063
Private institution	0.213***	0.067	0.089	0.058	-0.007	0.063
PHD program	-0.050	0.080	-0.121*	0.069	0.651***	0.076
MA program	-0.060	0.085	-0.098	0.073	0.231***	0.081
R <sup>2</sup>	0.053	0.118	0.413			
Number of cases	948	947	951			

\* $p < .10$ .\*\* $p < .05$ .\*\*\* $p < .01$  (level of significance for estimated coefficients).

as reported by each respondent. The results of regressing these scales on our previously identified predictor variables are found in Table 8.

Male faculty members tend to view their departments as more collegial and more tolerant than do female faculty (row two, Table 8). Men on average report more publications than do women.<sup>13</sup> Ethnic and racial minority faculty members tend to rate their departments as less collegial and less tolerant than do white/Caucasian faculty members (row three). Self-identified bisexual, gay, or lesbian faculty members rate their departments as less tolerant than do heterosexuals (row four). A greater Female Presence is associated with *less* positive reports on the collegiality of the department. Noteworthy, however, is that a greater Female Presence is associated with higher numbers of self-reported publications; this finding holds even with controls for whether the department is Ph.D. or M.A. granting. In support of our hypothesis about greater minority presence, we see that as the total number of racial/ethnic minority faculty in the department increases, reports of collegiality and tolerance within the department improve. We see that having at least one colleague who is bisexual, gay, transgendered, or lesbian is unrelated to reports of collegiality and tolerance, but is related to a greater number of self-reported publications.

## Conclusion

This analysis has aimed to demonstrate the empirical effects of diversity in the academic setting. We have done so. Diversity, measured as variation in the presence of women, racial/ethnic minorities, and sexual minorities, constitutes a reality within which people work. Such variation significantly affects intra-departmental relations, productivity, and perceptions of the treatment of female, racial/ethnic minority, and LGBT faculty.

The finding that a greater Female Presence in a department corresponds with reports by assistant and full professors of less Women Friendly environments is troubling. We emphasize that among assistant and full professors, it is those faculty members employed in departments with only a few female faculty members that report the highest levels of women friendliness in their departments, while those employed in departments with more female faculty tend to report lower levels of women friendliness. Because we only have data on the total number of female faculty and lack data on the total number of faculty in each respondent's department, we cannot be sure whether the lower levels of woman friendliness are associated with a higher percentage of females or a larger department size. We can say that even in departments with the largest numbers of females, female faculty still likely constitute a minority of total department members; thus, it is possible that women friendliness may improve when Female Presence reaches parity with male presence. The dynamic associated with greater Female Presence clearly needs to be better understood given the finding presented here that *greater* Female Presence is associated with reports from male faculty that their departments are less equal in terms of treatment of male and female faculty.

We also have clear evidence that the level of Racial Minority Presence matters when evaluating departmental climates. Considering associate professors only, Racial Minority Respect tends on average to be greater among those who have just one racial minority colleague. However, among assistant professors only, mean scores on the Racial Minority Respect scale increase as the number of racial minority colleagues increases. The multivariate analysis in [Table 7](#) reveals that, with controls, Racial Minority Respect improves with increases in the number of minority faculty in the department.

When looking at the question of attitudes toward lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientations, we see that having LGBT presence in a department is associated with reports of more positive attitudes toward minority sexual orientations. Thus, for both Racial Minority Respect and for attitudes toward sexual orientations, greater diversity is generally associated with more positive attitudes. Our findings from [Table 8](#) confirm that an increased number of racial minority colleagues within departments has a positive relationship with tolerance and collegiality.

A clear finding is that departmental relationships are experienced differently for those residing at different academic ranks. When it comes to relations between male and female faculty, those at higher ranks tend to view the department climate more positively than those at lower ranks. When it comes to Racial Minority Respect and looking at departments with more than one minority faculty member, assistant professors view their departments more positively than do associate and full professors. This means that faculty from one rank must be aware that faculty at different ranks are experiencing the same department in very different ways.

Our analysis also reveals that women, racial minorities, and LGB people experience their working environment quite differently than do their comparative counterparts. Female faculty, in general, view their colleagues and leaders as less likely to treat males and females equally than do male faculty (see Ford in this symposium on how this affects the ability of female faculty to acquire leadership roles, and what they might do about it). Racial minority faculty view their colleagues as having less respect for racial minorities than do non-racial minority faculty. Faculty members who self-identify as bisexual, gay, or lesbian are less likely, on average, than the full sample to disagree with the

statement “In my department, some faculty have a negative attitude toward lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientations.” Thus faculty who are women and faculty who are members of a minority racial/ethnic or sexual orientation group live in different experiential and perceptual worlds than do faculty from the associated majority groups. Such findings lead us to call for greater recognition by majority groups that regardless of intention, departments have not successfully created climates that are perceived by minorities as being fully collegial and respectful. Majority group faculty members need greater empathy – need to “walk in others’ shoes,” so to speak – in order to understand that departmental climates are different for different identity groups, whether it be gender, racial, or sexual identity. Elsewhere in this symposium, Smooth elaborates on the climate in departments and the discipline for women of color, offering important insights for majority group faculty members.

As academics, we need to feel valued and accepted as part of the scholarly community. The idea of being valued and accepted has been studied with the concept of “person-situation fit,” defined as “congruence between norms and values of organizations and the values of persons” (Chatman 1989, 339). The level of support and respect that an institution provides to women and to racial minority group members is itself an indicator of “fit” (Olsen, Maple, and Stage 1995, 271). When such congruence occurs, academics are more productive and can address important gaps in knowledge (Harris and Kaine 1994; McClain et al., 2016; Sax et al. 2002). Thus, poor fit is in turn related to higher turnover – and being valued, or not being valued, is directly related to the problem of retention (Caldwell and O’Reilly 1990; Chatman 1989; Joyce and Slocum 1982).

Although these findings regarding diversity and perceptions of minority group treatment are significant, this work, like any other study, has its limitations. Our findings are based on a single snapshot in time. With the current survey data, we have no possibility of evaluating whether change is taking place and we cannot draw definitive conclusions about causality. In 2014, however, the APSA completed a panel study that permits assessment of some of the important changes that we anticipate are occurring and we hope that an APSA report will be forthcoming (these data are available upon request from the APSA or from the authors).

In addition, because the numbers of survey respondents who self-identify as a member of a racial or ethnic minority group are small, we were not able to look at African Americans separately from, for example, Asian Americans or Latino/as or at women of color as a separate analytic category. If we did have adequate numbers, we could conduct multilevel analysis where the characteristics of faculty members interact with the characteristics of the institutions where they are employed. The realities of the profile of the contemporary U.S. political science profession, then, have posed a challenge for this research.

Despite these limitations, we can confidently say that the level of diversity within departments does matter. The findings reported herein are critically important: it is rare that hypotheses about how diversity matters are put to a systematic empirical test. We now have evidence that is based on a large-*N* sample, which supplements our own observations and anecdotal experiences, and shows that more diverse work settings affect a variety of aspects of intra-departmental relations.



## Notes

1. In this article, women are included when we use the general term “minorities” as females comprise just 19%, 30%, and 39% of full, associate, and assistant political science professors respectively (2009 APSA data).
2. For more detail on our findings and a review of the literature linking variation in job satisfaction to minority identification, see Hesli and Lee (2013).
3. These percentages emerge from the question: “What is your gender?” Although “transgender” was offered as an answer, none selected this option. As the online Appendix documents, the gender composition of the survey sample corresponds closely to the population of U.S. political scientists, according to APSA profession-wide data. The Appendix also describes the multi-step, consultative process of questionnaire design, the construction of the sample stratified by department size, the survey procedures, and the measurement of dependent and independent variables.
4. Whereas combining distinct minorities in a grouped racial minority category – and combining Jewish respondents with other minorities in the “Other” category – may well mask profoundly different experiences, the very small number in all minority categories makes separate analyses impossible. According to data compiled by an APSA Task Force on Political Science in the 21st Century (2011), 5% of all U.S. political science faculty members in 2010 were African American, 3% were Latina/o, and 3% were Asian Pacific Islander. Females comprised 29% of total political science faculty. These figures confirm that our survey respondents are representative of the discipline as a whole. The APSA does not report figures on sexual orientation.
5. We asked respondents whether any of their departmental colleagues self-identify as bisexual, transgendered, gay, or lesbian.
6. It is possible that the missing answers on this item point to the limitations of the prompt of “respect,” which may not capture the subtleties of the differential treatment experienced by minority faculty or which a respondent may have difficulty gauging. Another prompt, such as equal treatment, may be easier for a respondent to observe and assess. Alternatively, some respondents may be uncomfortable answering questions about the treatment of racial minorities in their midst. Any of these scenarios might lead a respondent to leave the question unanswered. We thank the anonymous reviewer who encouraged us to reflect on such possibilities.
7. The asterisks in the table mark significant differences in mean scores between two different numbers of female faculty in the department. The asterisks mark which mean scores are compared and the significance level. Note that the table is based on the aggregate number of female faculty; we do not calculate whether scores on the Women Friendly Scale differ across environments with larger or smaller *percentages* of women within the department. We know from APSA data for the year of the survey, however, that the overall proportion of female faculty does not vary significantly across Ph.D.-granting, M.A.-granting, and B.A.-granting departments.
8. The survey question is: “Are any of your departmental colleagues self-identified bisexual, transgendered, gay, or lesbian?” Possible answers are “yes,” “no,” and “don’t know.”
9. None of the respondents included in this analysis self-identifies as transgendered.
10. Although OLS estimated coefficients are reported, the models were also estimated with ordered probit, given that the ranges of the dependent variables are limited. The results confirm those reported herein. Interested readers may contact either author for details.
11. We do not have a large enough number of faculty members who self-identify as both female and a member of a racial/ethnic minority group to include interaction terms in the analysis. Likewise, we do not have enough women who self-identify as bisexual or lesbian to include a gender\*sexual orientation interaction term in the analysis.
12. We also estimated models that included dummy variables indicating the region of the country where the department is located (Northeast, Midwest, South, or West), but none of the estimated coefficients associated with these regional variables was significant. Also



estimated were models that included indicators of whether the department had a tenured woman (among its female faculty) or a tenured member of an ethnic or racial minority group, but these were also not significant, so the models reported do not include these predictors. We do not include departmental ranking because ranking is highly correlated with whether the department offers doctoral or masters degrees.

13. For more on predictors of faculty research productivity, see Hesli and Lee (2011).

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