

**TO:** José M. Torres, Ph.D., Members of President’s Cabinet, and the Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Adrienne Coleman, Ed.D., Hannah R. Anderson and Amber Stitzel Pareja, Ph.D.

**SUBJECT:** 2017 Diversity Climate Survey Results

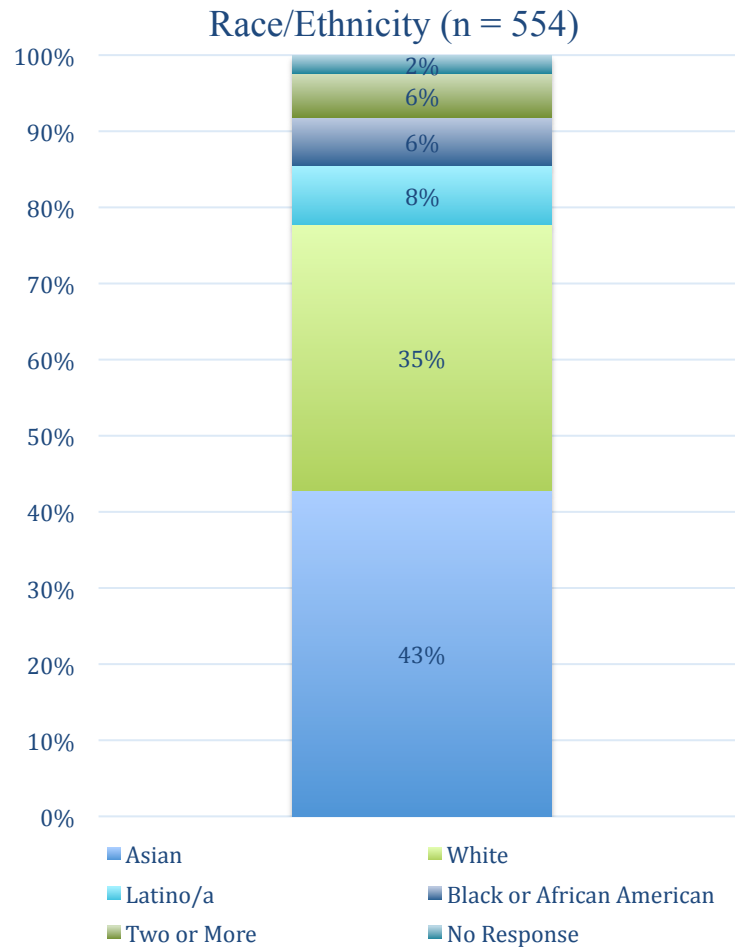
**DATE:** August 16, 2017

In February 2017, a survey regarding diversity and school climate was administered by the Diversity Committee based off of the National Climate Survey developed by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). There were a total of 577 students that took the survey. Those students who had incomplete surveys ( $n = 20$ ) or who marked all possible choices for sexual orientation ( $n = 3$ ) were excluded from the data analysis, and the remaining 554 respondents were considered “authentic.” Of the 554 authentic respondents, 203 were sophomores, 169 were juniors, 176 were seniors, and six did not indicate their grade level. Following is a summary of the major results from the survey.

### **Survey Respondent Demographics**

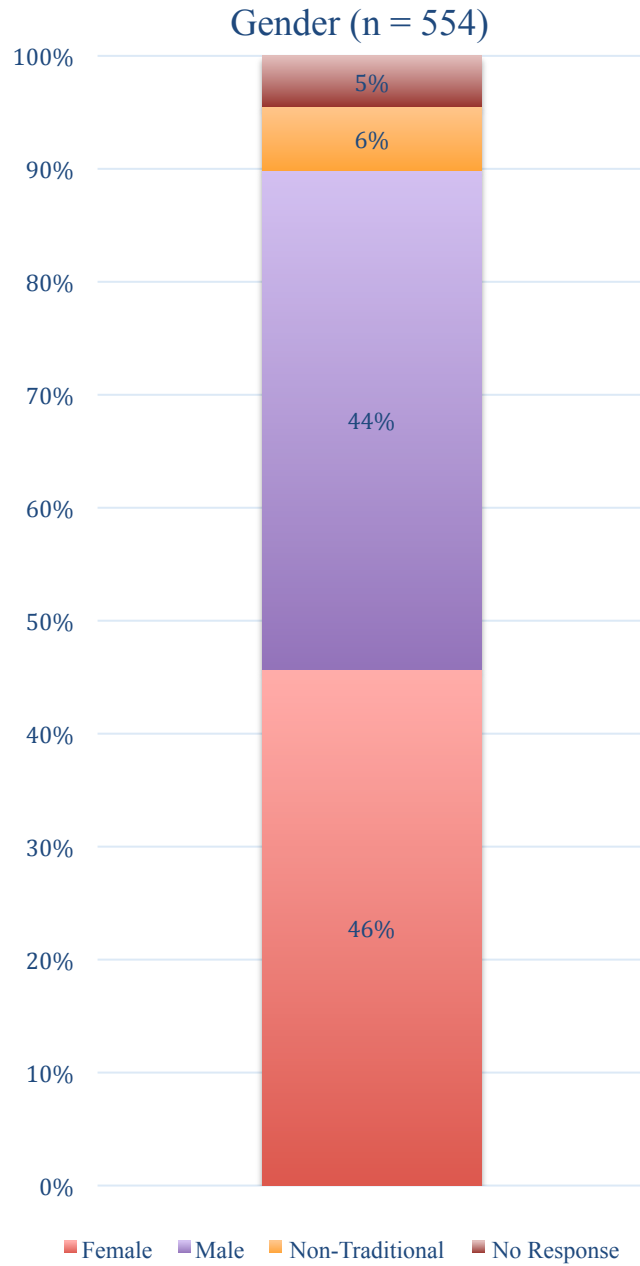
#### **Race/Ethnicity**

Students were asked to identify their race and ethnicity. Students who selected more than one race were categorized as “Two or More.” After taking into account multiple responses, there were no students who exclusively identified as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Additionally, there were too few American Indian/Alaskan Native students ( $n = 2$ ) to include in the data analysis for questions analyzed by race/ethnicity groups. Below is a summary of the respondent demographics according to race/ethnicity.



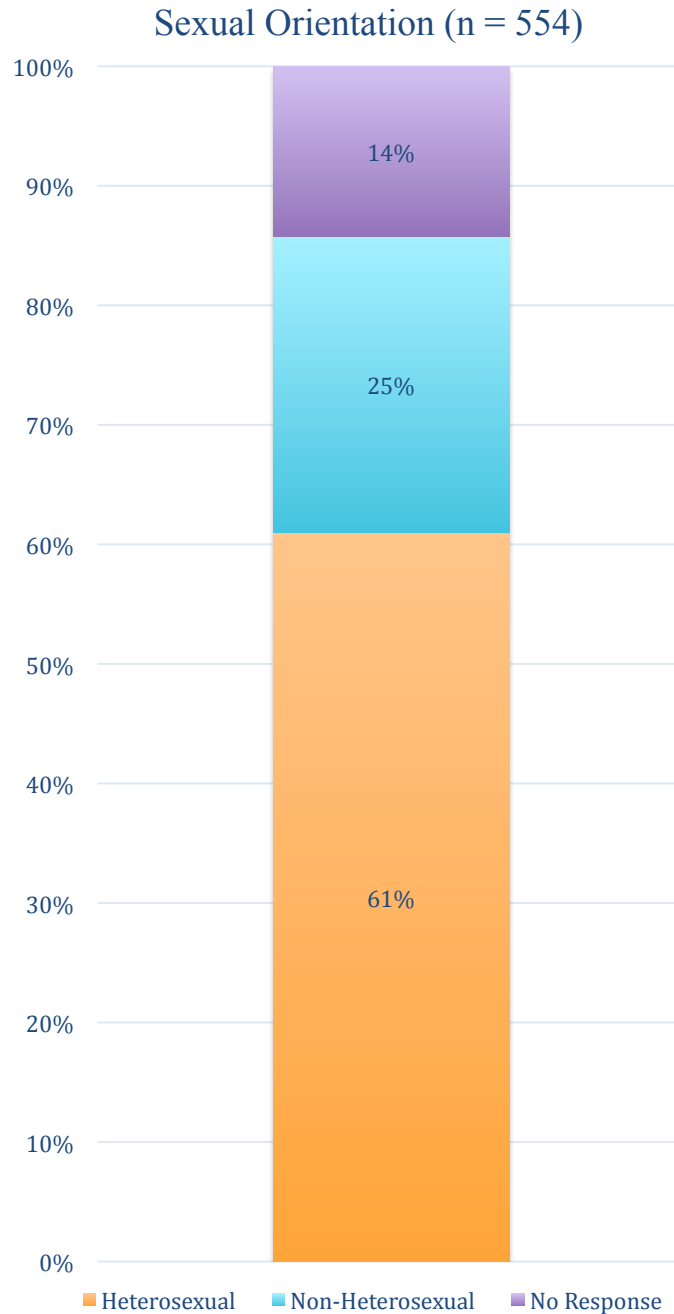
## Gender

The survey offered the students a variety of response options for their gender identity. For purposes of data analysis and group comparisons, any gender selected other than Male or Female, was categorized as Non-Traditional. The Non-Traditional classification included the following genders classifications: Transgender (n = 0); Transgender Male-to-Female (n = 1); Transgender Female-to-Male (n = 3); Non-Binary (n = 7); Gender Queer/Gender Fluid (n = 2); and “Two or More” genders (n = 18) in which more than one response was provided. Below is a summary of respondent demographics by gender.



## Sexual Orientation

Students were asked to identify their sexual orientation. For the purposes of data analysis and group comparisons, students who chose a category other than Heterosexual were classified as Non-Heterosexual. The category of Non-Heterosexual includes the following sexual orientation classifications: Gay (n = 13); Lesbian (n = 8); Bisexual/Pansexual (n = 31); Queer (n = 10); Questioning (n = 20); and “Two or More” sexual orientations (n = 55) in which respondents selected more than one response. Below is a summary of respondent demographics based on sexual orientation.



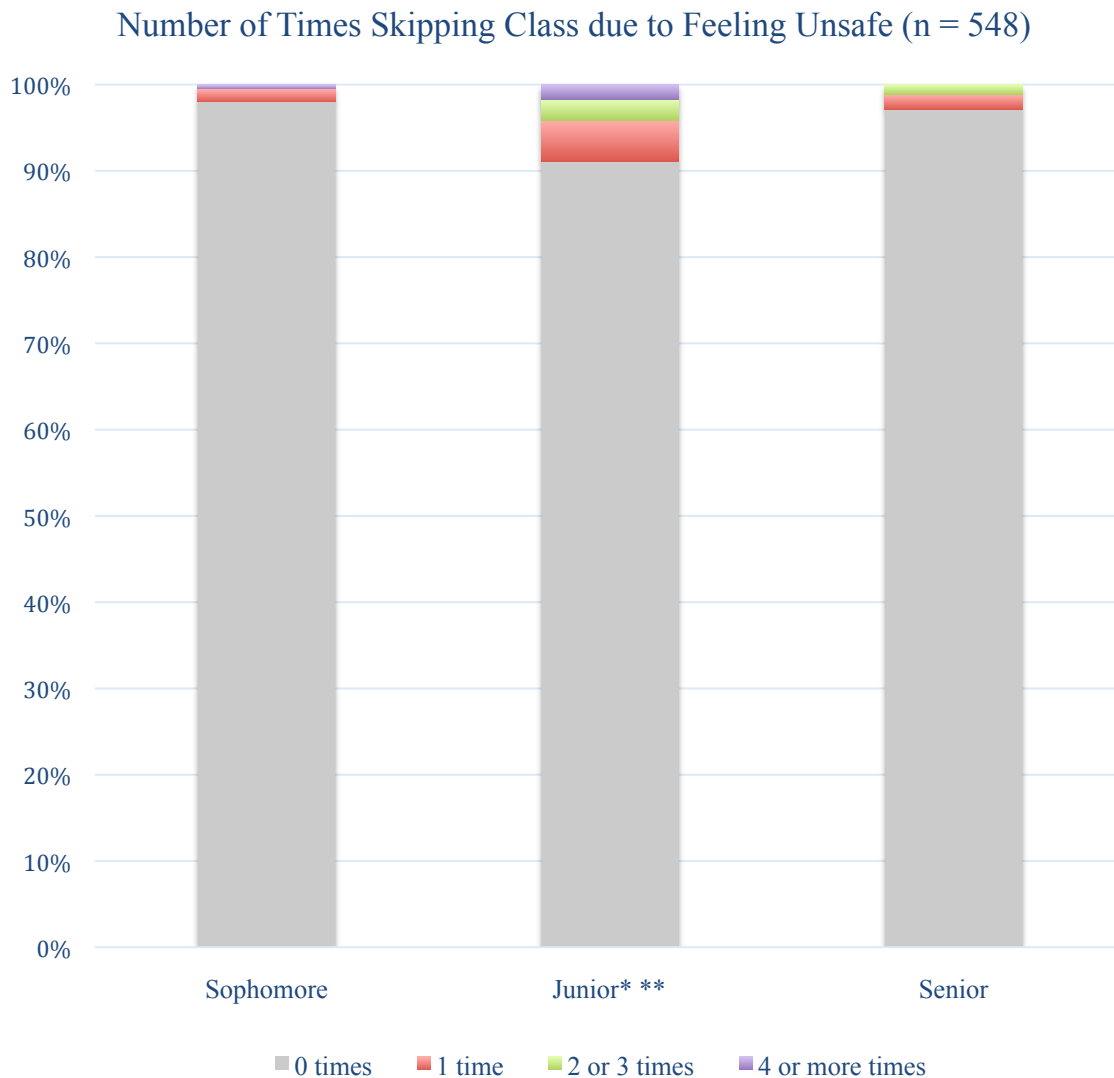
## 2017 Survey Results

### Classroom Environment

One survey question asked, “In the past month, how many times have you skipped class because you felt uncomfortable or unsafe in that class?” A vast majority (95%) responded that they had not skipped class due to feeling unsafe, suggesting that in general, students do not feel unsafe in the classroom. In order to further explore which groups of students skipped class because they felt unsafe, an ANOVA analysis was conducted to determine the mean differences in skipping class between different groups of students based on their grade level, race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.

#### *Grade Level*

The grade level analysis indicates that there is a significant difference in the number of times students skipped class according to their grade level ( $p = .004$ ). Post-hoc analysis revealed that juniors were significantly more likely to skip class compared to the sophomores or seniors ( $p = .008$  and  $p = .016$ , respectively).



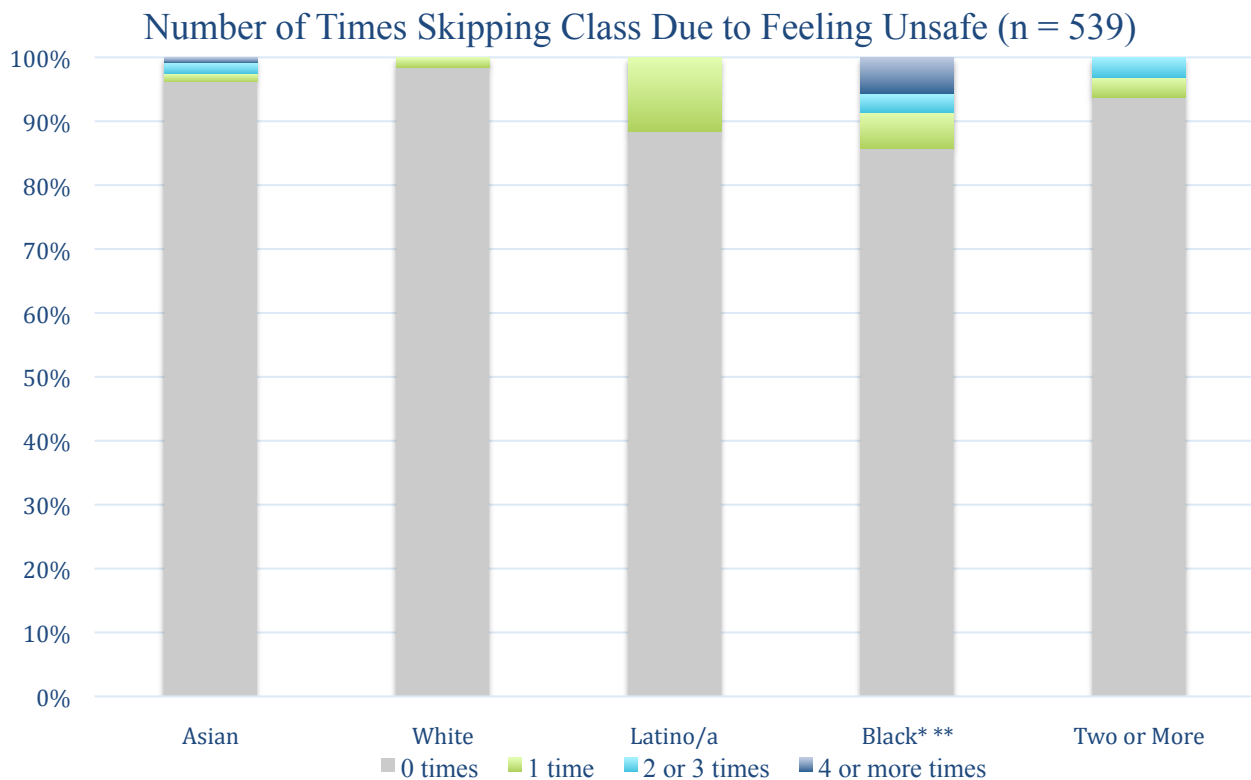
*\*p < .05 when compared to Seniors, \*\*p < .01 when compared to Sophomores*

**Table 1**  
**Classroom Environment by Grade**

Grade	Number of Times Skipping Class				n
	0	1	2 or 3	4 or more	
Sophomore	199	3	0	1	203
Junior	154	8	4	3	169
Senior	171	3	2	0	176
<b>Total</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>548</b>

*Race/Ethnicity*

Similarly, the race/ethnicity analysis showed that there is a significant difference in the number of times students skipped class due to feeling unsafe according to their race/ethnicity ( $p = .003$ ). More specifically, those respondents identifying as Black were significantly more likely to skip class due to feeling unsafe compared to those identifying as Asian ( $p = .009$ ) or White ( $p < .001$ ).



\* $p < .01$  when compared to Asian, \*\* $p < .001$  when compared to White

Table 2

Classroom Environment by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Times Skipping Class				n
	0	1	2 or 3	4 or more	
Asian	227	3	4	2	236
White	190	3	0	0	193
Latino/a	38	5	0	0	43
Black	30	2	1	2	35
Two or More	30	1	1	0	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>539</b>

*Gender/Sexual Orientation*

Finally, the analyses for gender and sexual orientation revealed that there were no significant differences in the number of times students reported skipping class due to feeling unsafe in the classroom according to their gender or sexual orientation.

**Residence Hall Environment**

Another survey question asked students, “In the past month, how many days have you felt unsafe in your residence halls?” A large majority (84%) responded that there were zero days they felt unsafe, suggesting that on most days IMSA students do not feel unsafe in the residence halls.

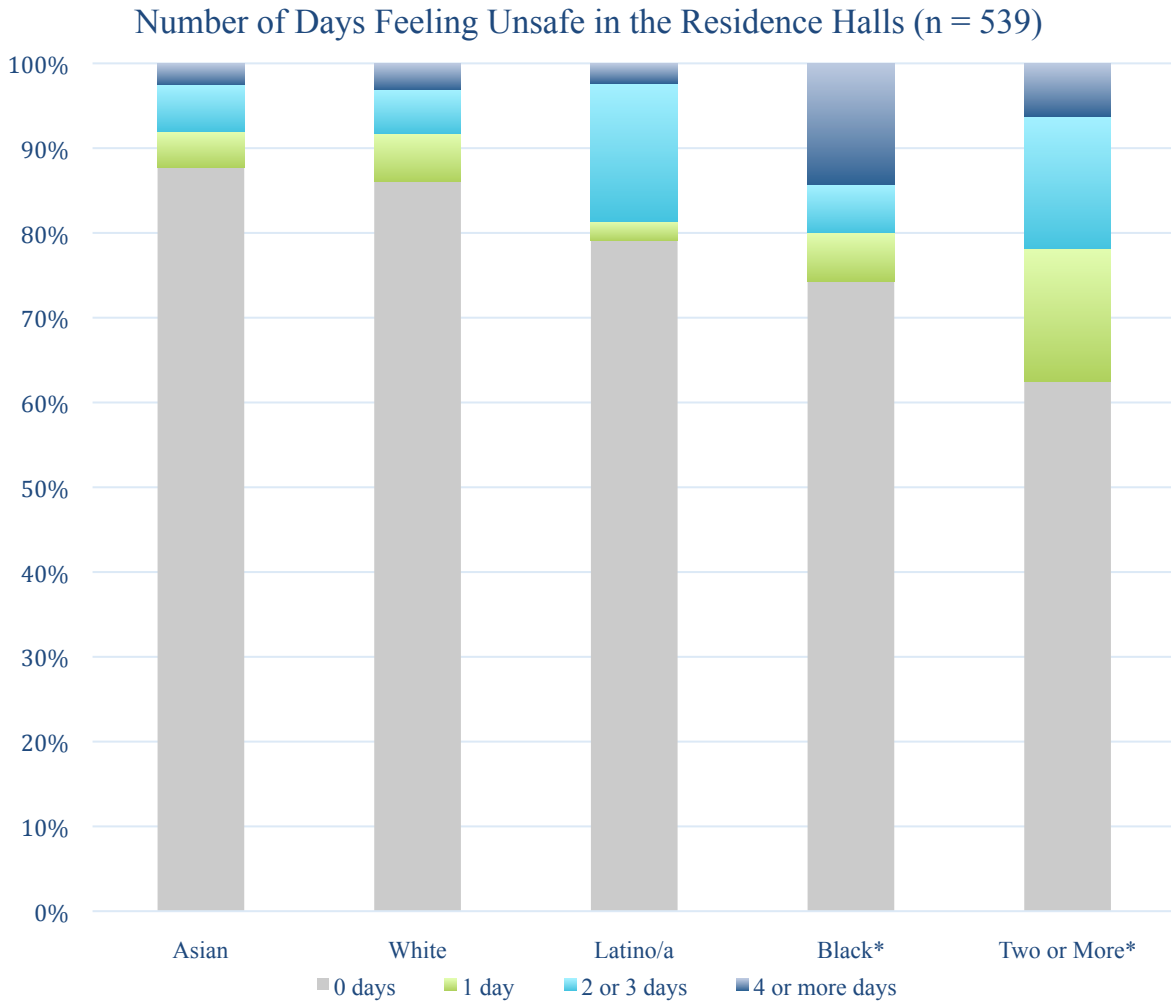
In order to further examine which groups of students indicated feeling unsafe one day or more in the residence halls, an ANOVA analysis was conducted to determine the mean differences between different groups of students according to their grade level, race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.

*Grade Level*

The analysis between grade levels was not found to be statistically significant. In other words, there were no significant differences in the number of days students felt unsafe in the residence halls according to their grade level.

*Race/Ethnicity*

The race/ethnicity analysis indicates that there is a significant difference in the number of days students felt unsafe in the residence halls according to their race/ethnicity ( $p = .004$ ). Post-hoc analysis revealed that those students identifying either as “Two or More” or Black indicated they felt unsafe in the residence halls on more days when compared to Asian students ( $p = .032$  and  $p = .043$ , respectively).



*\*p < .05 when compared to Asian students*



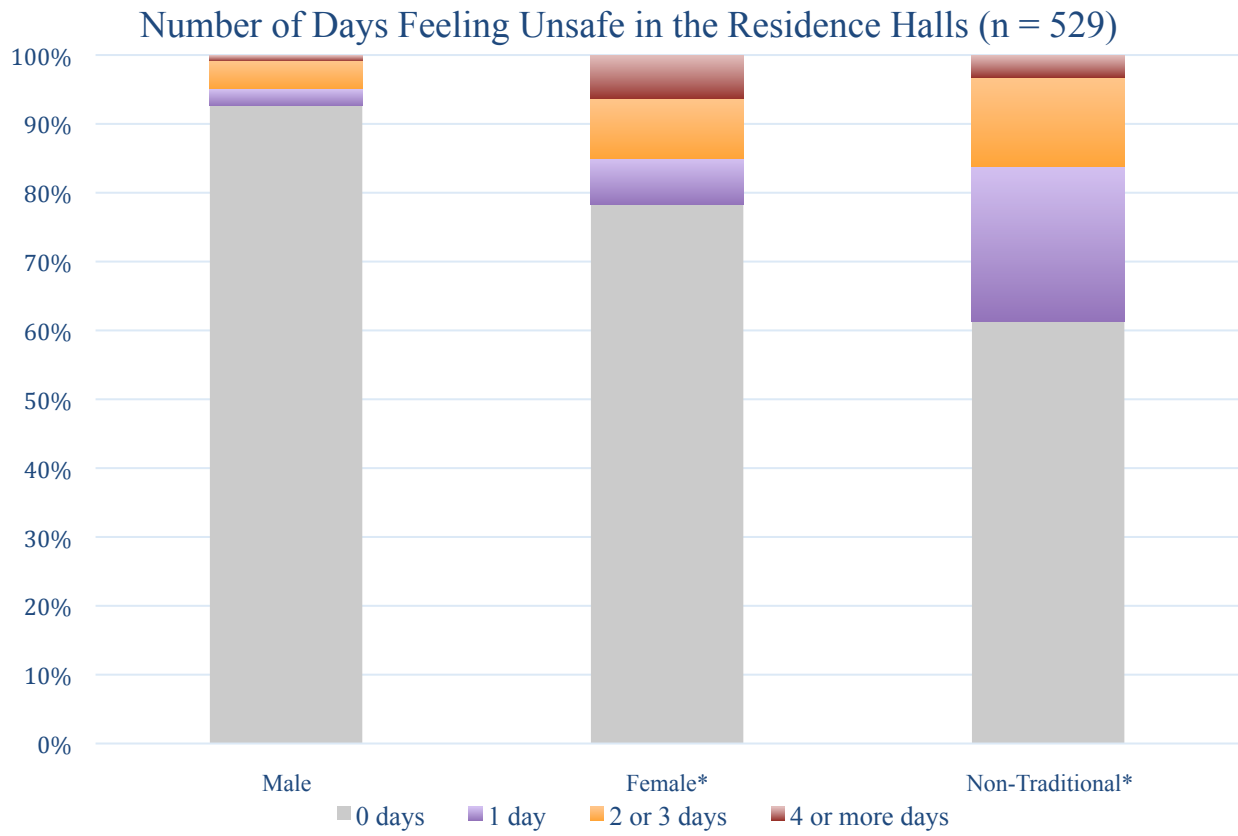
Table 3

Residence Hall Environment by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Days Feeling Unsafe				n
	0	1	2 or 3	4 or more	
Asian	207	10	13	6	236
White	166	11	10	6	193
Latino/a	34	1	7	1	43
Black	26	2	2	5	35
Two or More	20	5	5	2	32
Total	453	29	37	20	539

*Gender*

Similarly, the gender analysis results reveal that there is a significant difference between the number of days students felt unsafe in the residence halls according to their gender ( $p < .001$ ). Further analysis indicated that both Females ( $p < .001$ ) and Non-Traditional ( $p = .008$ ) students felt unsafe in the residence halls on more days when compared to Males. However, there was no significant difference between Females and Non-Traditional students.



\* $p < .05$  when compared to Males

**Table 4**  
**Residence Halls Environment by Gender**

Gender	Number of Days Feeling Unsafe				n
	0	1	2 or 3	4 or more	
Male	227	6	10	2	245
Female	198	17	22	16	253
Non-Traditional	19	7	4	1	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>529</b>

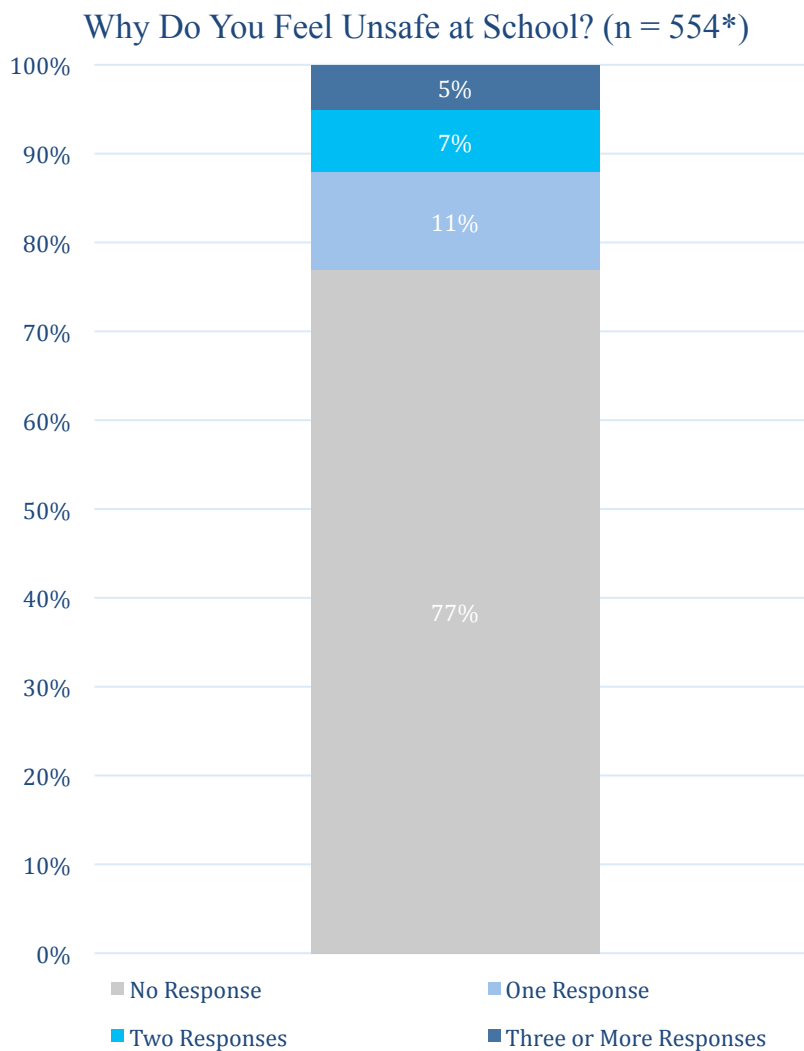
*Sexual Orientation*

Lastly, the analysis for sexual orientation was not statistically significant. In other words, there was no significant difference in the number of days students felt unsafe in the residence halls according to their sexual orientation.

### School Environment

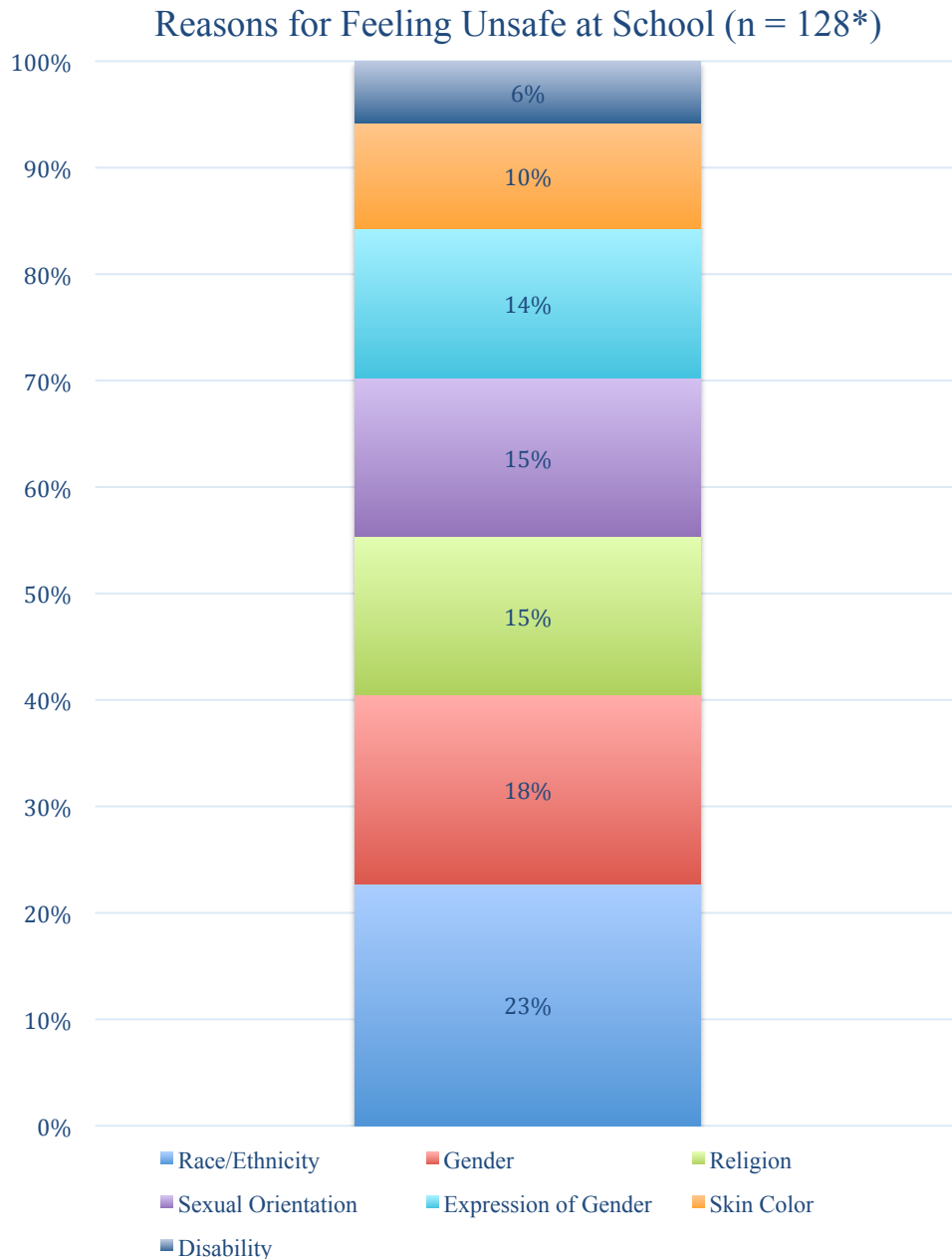
The final survey question regarding students’ perceptions of safety asked respondents to select the reasons why they felt unsafe at school. The response options included: their sexual orientation, their race/ethnicity, their gender, how they express their gender, their religion, their disability, and/or the color of their skin. Students were also provided an open-ended response option to allow for additional reasons not listed.

Overall, 77 percent of survey respondents did not choose a reason for feeling unsafe at school. Of those students that responded, 11 percent reported one reason for feeling unsafe at school, while another 12 percent reported two or more reasons for feeling unsafe in school. This multiple response pattern suggests that the concept of feeling unsafe at school is multifaceted and therefore cannot be captured by a single response option.



\*Students who provided only an open-ended response were included in the “No Response” category unless their open-ended response could be directly linked to an existing category

Below is a summary of the reasons why students felt unsafe at school. It is important to note, however, of the students that responded some chose more than one possible response, which is reflected below.



*\*The above categories are not mutually exclusive for the 128 student responses*

Lastly, the analysis of the open-ended responses (n = 43) revealed that students feel unsafe at school for various reasons. Some of the more prominent themes were feeling unsafe at school due to expressing their political views (n = 7), theft (n = 5), and mental health (n = 5). One student wrote, “People steal things such as large sums of money” and another student said, “People were stealing.” Other students mentioned, “Mental Illness,” depression, and anxiety. These responses may provide additional reasons to support why some students indicated feeling unsafe in the residence halls some days.

## **Verbal Expressions**

Students were asked numerous questions regarding various verbal expressions heard in school. The topic of remarks included: homophobic, sexist, racist, comments of “not acting masculine/feminine enough” and expressions such as, “That’s so gay.” For each topic, students were asked to rate how often they heard such remarks, whether or not they were spoken by students or by teachers/residence counselors/other school staff, where the remarks were being made, and how often either the students or teachers/residence counselors/other school staff were present and/or intervened. An overarching summary of these results is provided below.

In regards to the frequency of the above mentioned remarks (ex: How often do you hear ...?) students were provided the following response scale: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, or Frequently. Analysis indicated that sexist remarks along with comments like “That’s so gay” or expressions of “not acting masculine enough” seem to be the most prevalent. It is important to note that the majority of such remarks are being made primarily in the residence halls and hallways followed by the cafeteria and classrooms.

### How Often Do You Hear...?

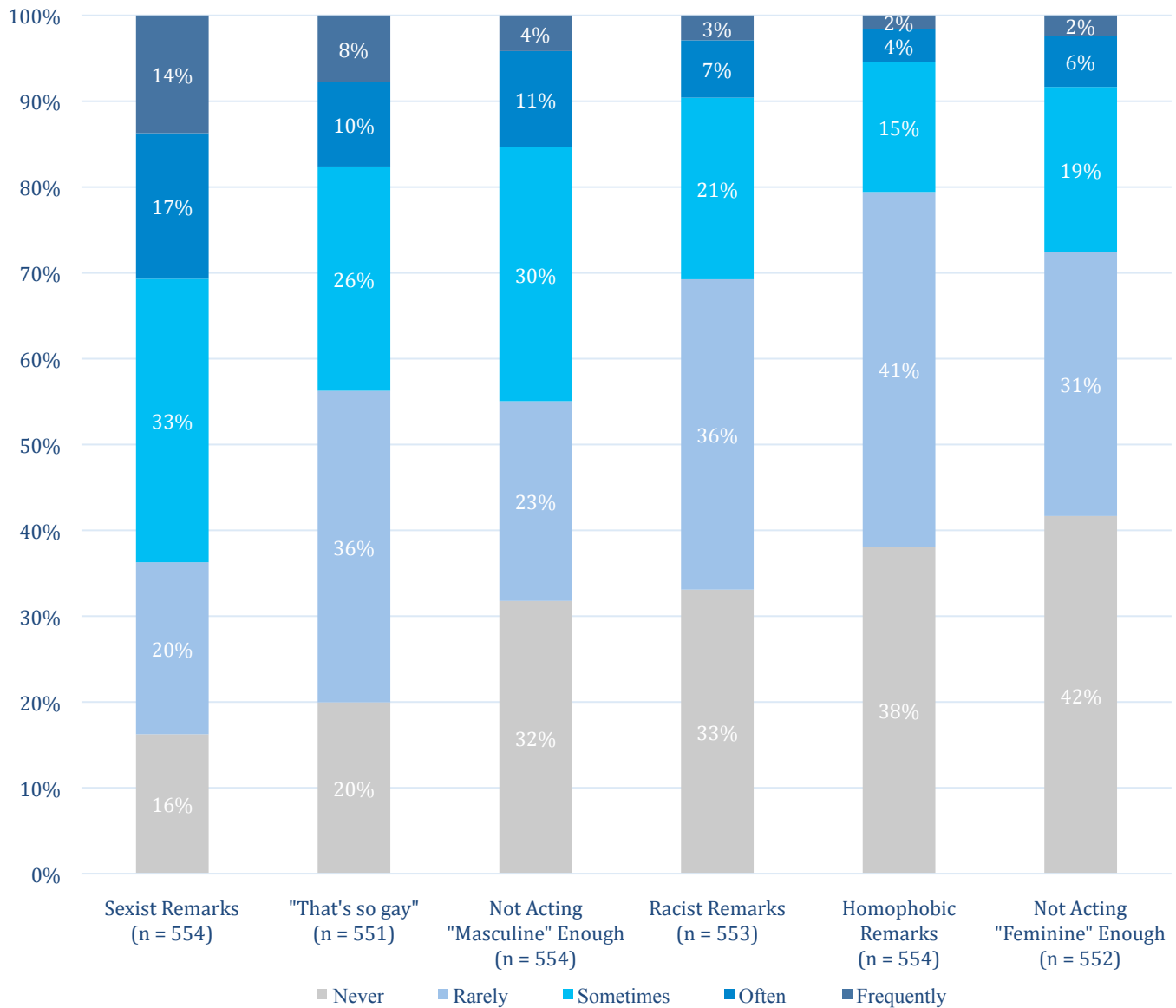


Table 5

How Often Do You Hear...?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	n
Sexist Remarks	90	111	183	94	76	554
"That's so gay"	110	200	144	54	43	551
Not Acting "Masculine" Enough	176	129	164	62	23	554
Racist Remarks	183	200	117	37	16	553
Homophobic Remarks	211	229	84	21	9	554
Not Acting "Feminine" Enough	230	170	106	33	13	552

When asked about the presence and intervention of students or teachers/residence counselors/other school staff (IMSA employees), the respondents could choose between Never, Some of the time, Most of the time, or Always. Data analysis of the IMSA employees revealed that teachers, residence counselors, or other school staff are Never or Sometimes present over 90 percent of the time that the remarks are being made, regardless of whether the remarks are homophobic, racist, sexist, or masculine/feminine in nature.

### How Often Are Teachers/Resident Counselors/Other School Staff Present?

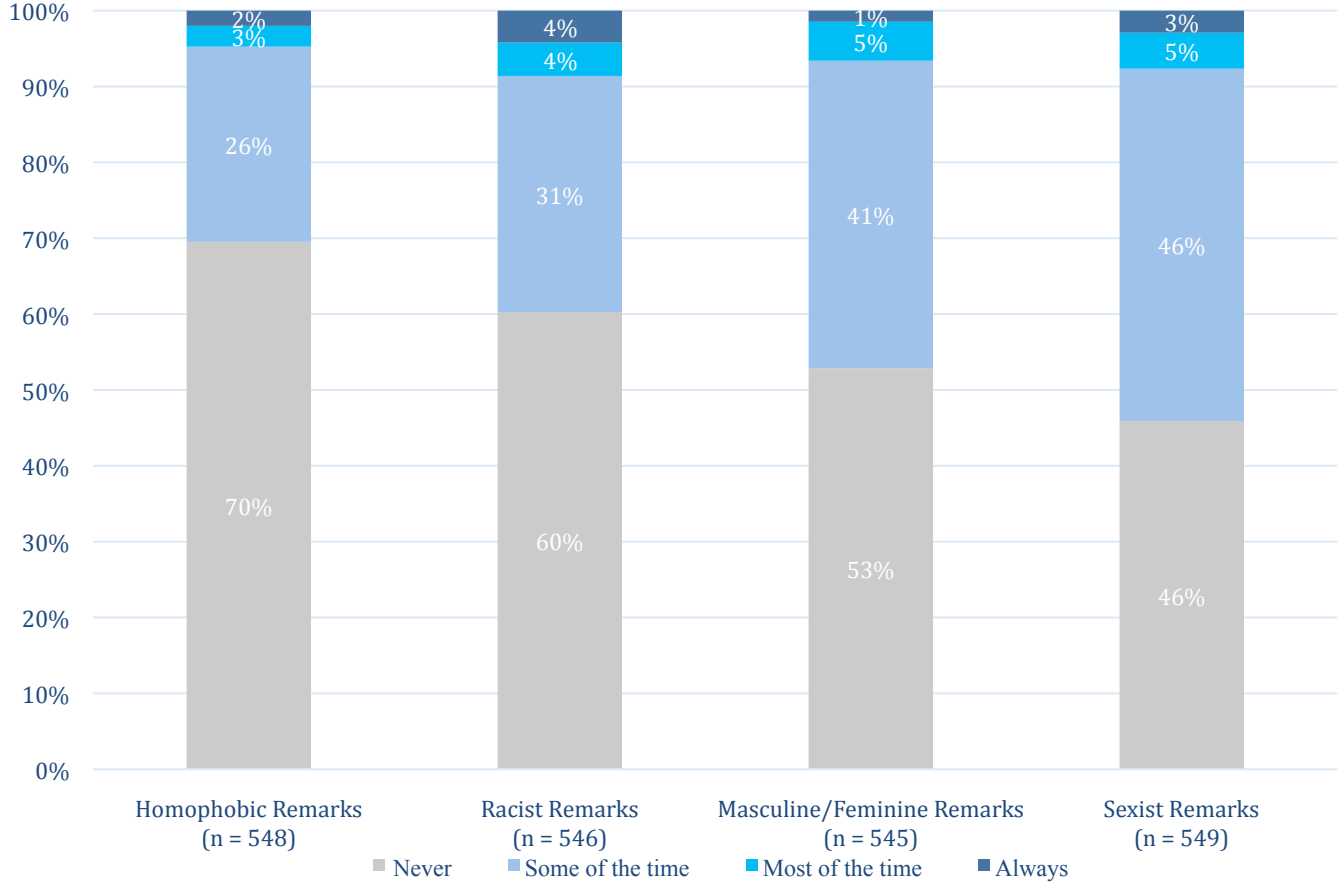




Table 6

How Often Are Teachers/Resident Counselors/Other School Staff Present?

	Never	Some of the Time	Most of the Time	Always	n
Homophobic Remarks	381	141	15	11	548
Racist Remarks	329	170	24	23	546
Not Acting "Masculine" Enough	288	221	28	8	545
Sexist Remarks	252	255	26	16	549

Furthermore, when IMSA employees are present for masculine/feminine or sexist remarks, approximately 70 percent either Never or Sometimes intervene. Likewise, over 55 percent of IMSA employees either Never or Sometimes intervene when they are present for homophobic or racist remarks.

### When Teachers/Resident Counselors/Other School Staff Are Present, How Often Do They Intervene?

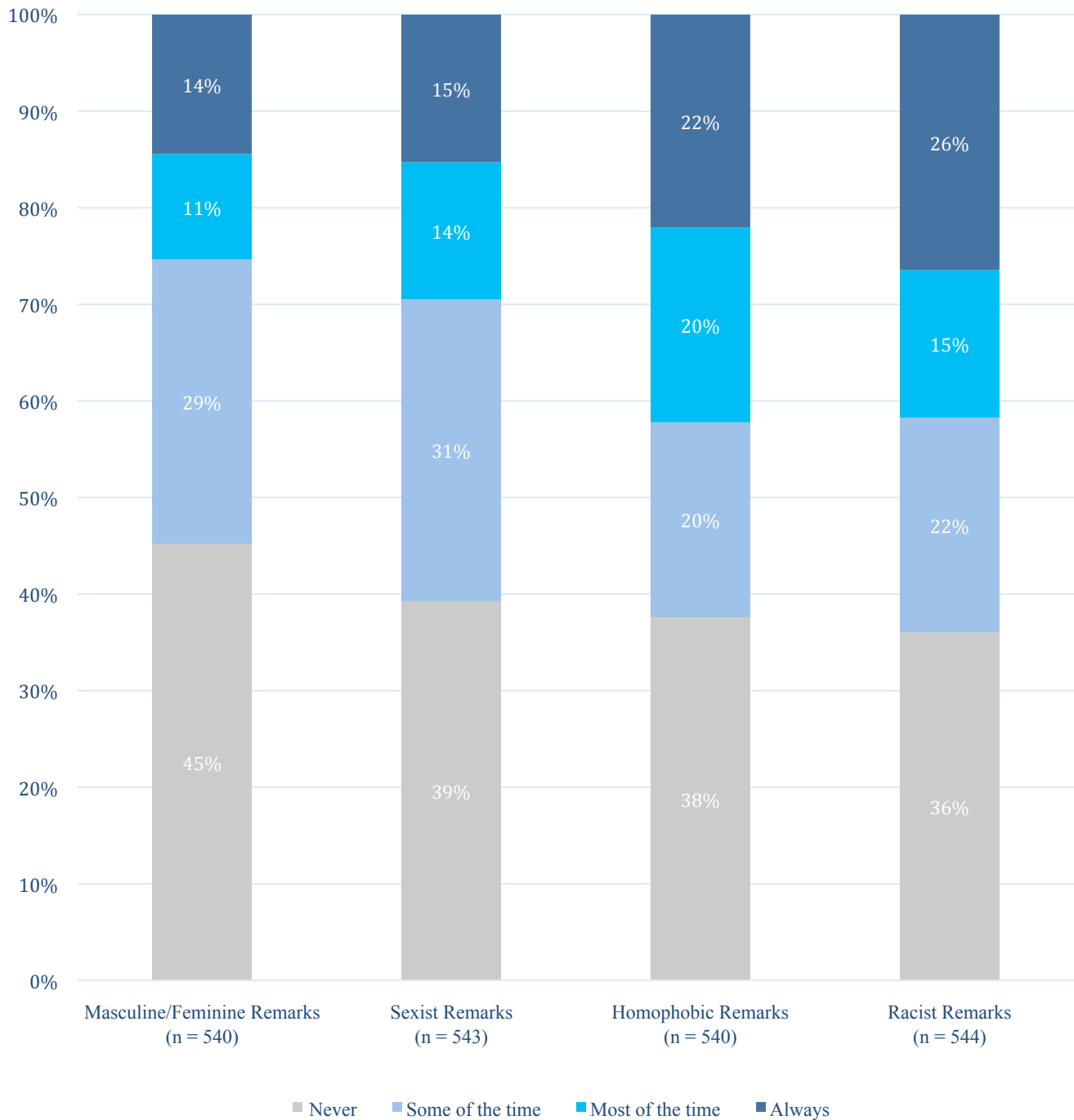


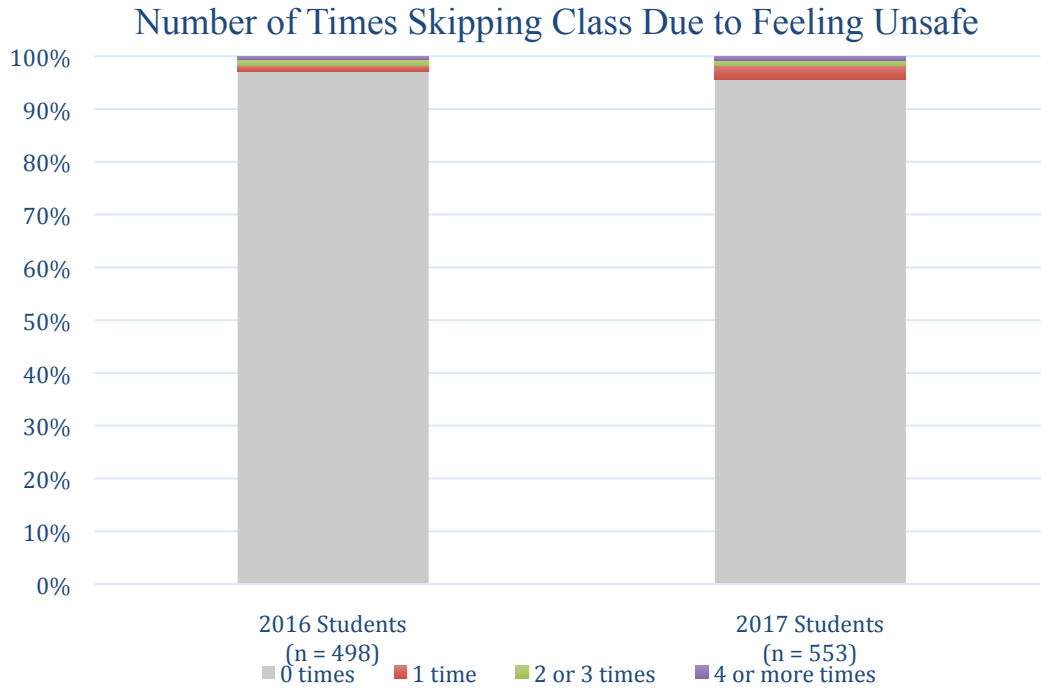
Table 7

When Teachers/Resident Counselors/Other School Staff Are Present, How Often Do They Intervene?

	Never	Some of the Time	Most of the Time	Always	n
Masculine/Feminine Remarks	244	159	59	78	540
Sexist Remarks	213	170	77	83	543
Homophobic Remarks	203	109	109	119	540
Racist Remarks	196	121	83	144	544

### **Comparison of 2016 and 2017 Results**

- Although not statistically significant, more students skipped class in 2017 compared to 2016 due to feeling unsafe in the classroom

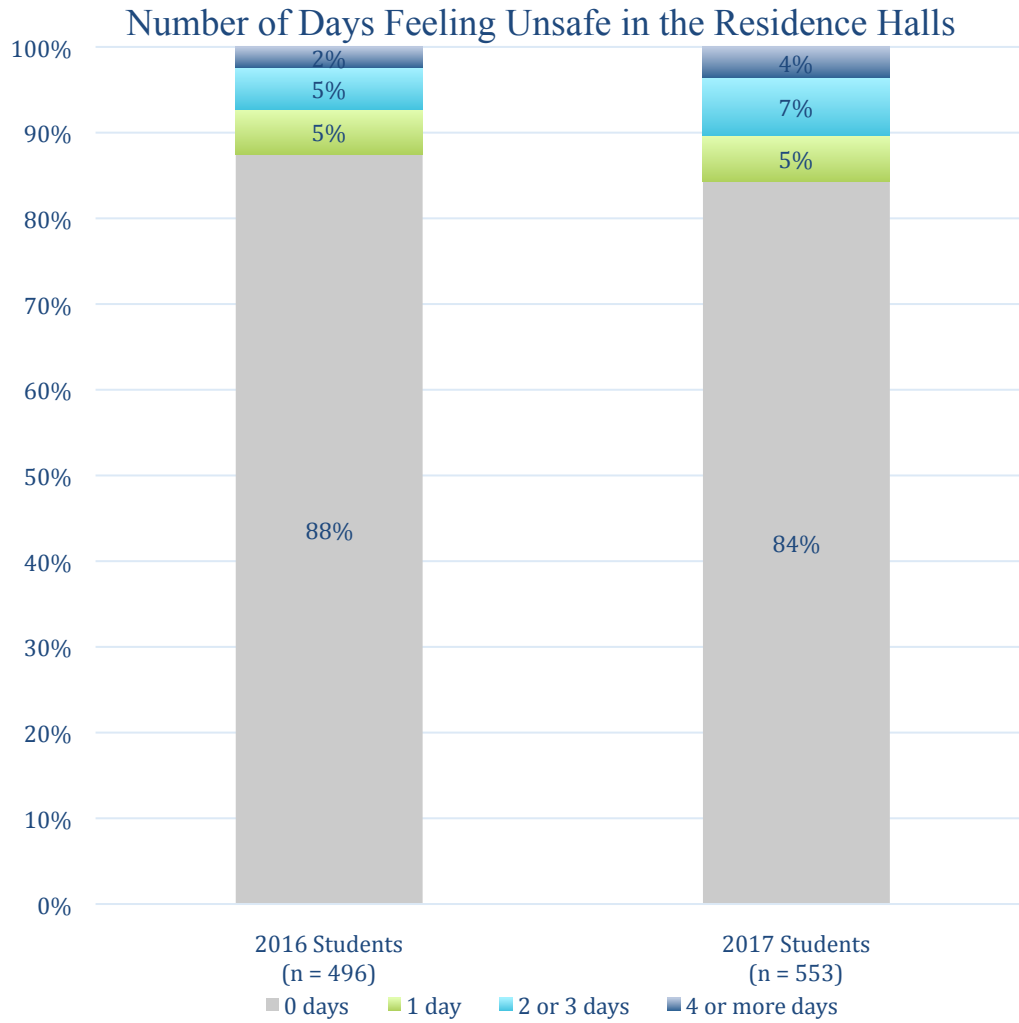


**Table 8**

**Classroom Environment by Year**

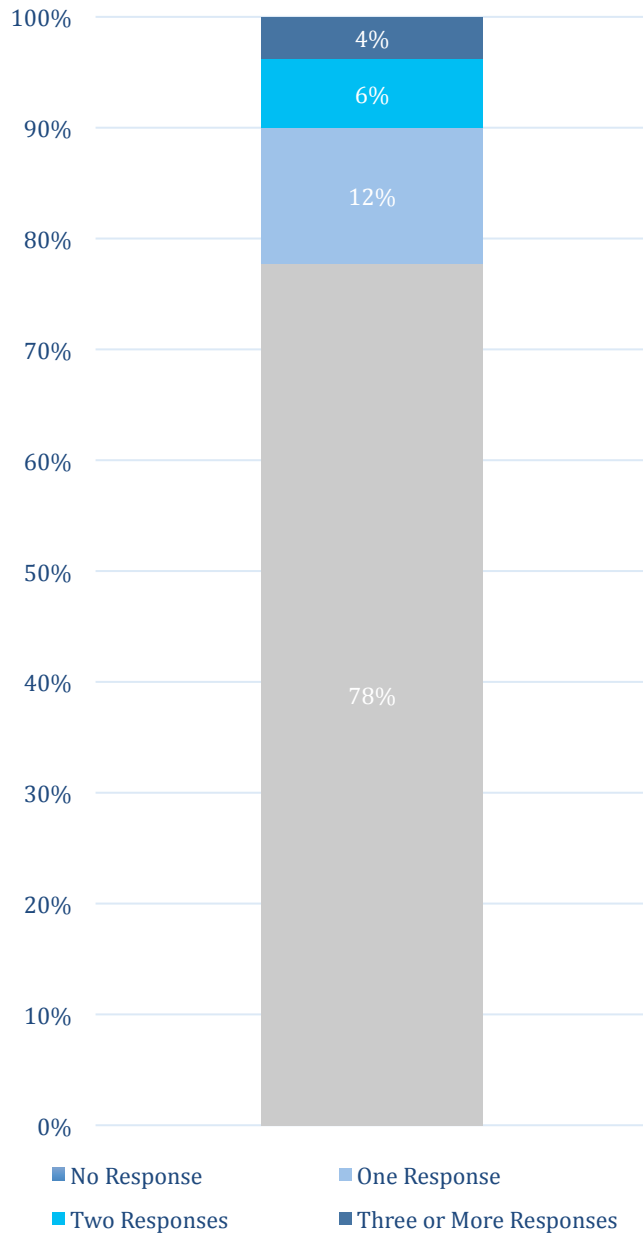
Year	Number of Times Skipping Class				n
	0	1	2 or 3	4 or more	
2016	484	5	6	3	498
2017	529	14	6	4	553
<b>Total</b>	<b>1013</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1051</b>

- Likewise, there were more days that students felt unsafe in the residence halls in 2017 compared to 2016

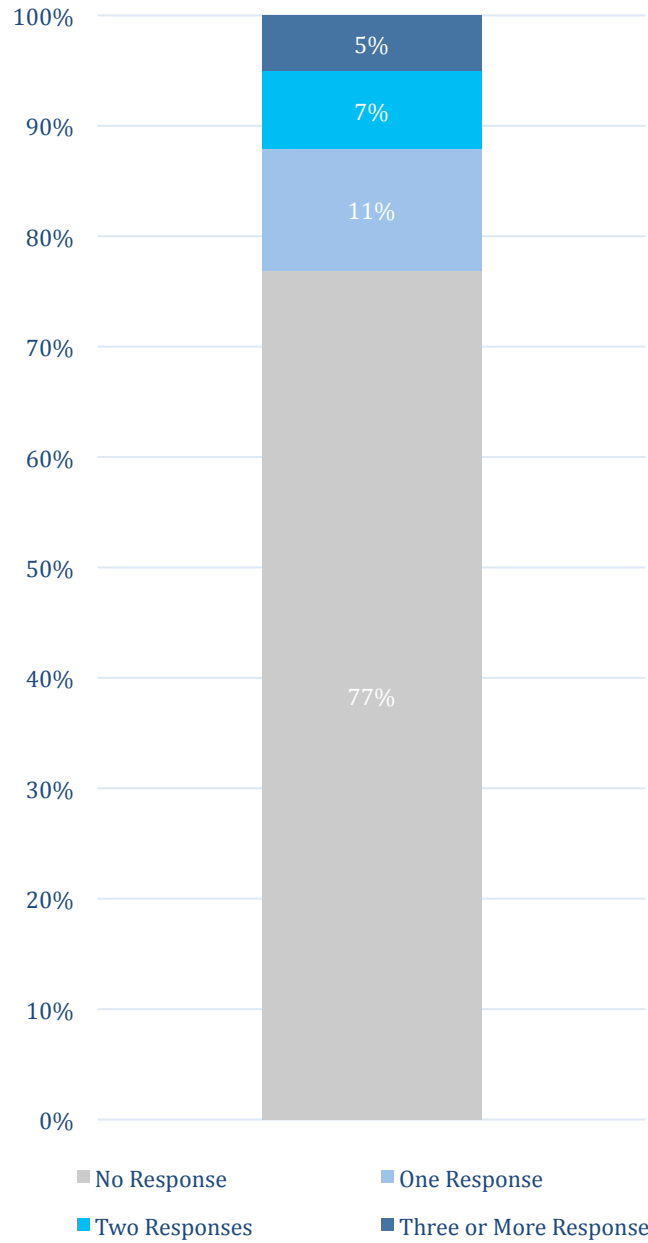


More students felt unsafe in school for various reasons in 2017 compared to 2016.

Why Do You Feel Unsafe at School -  
2016? (n = 502\*)

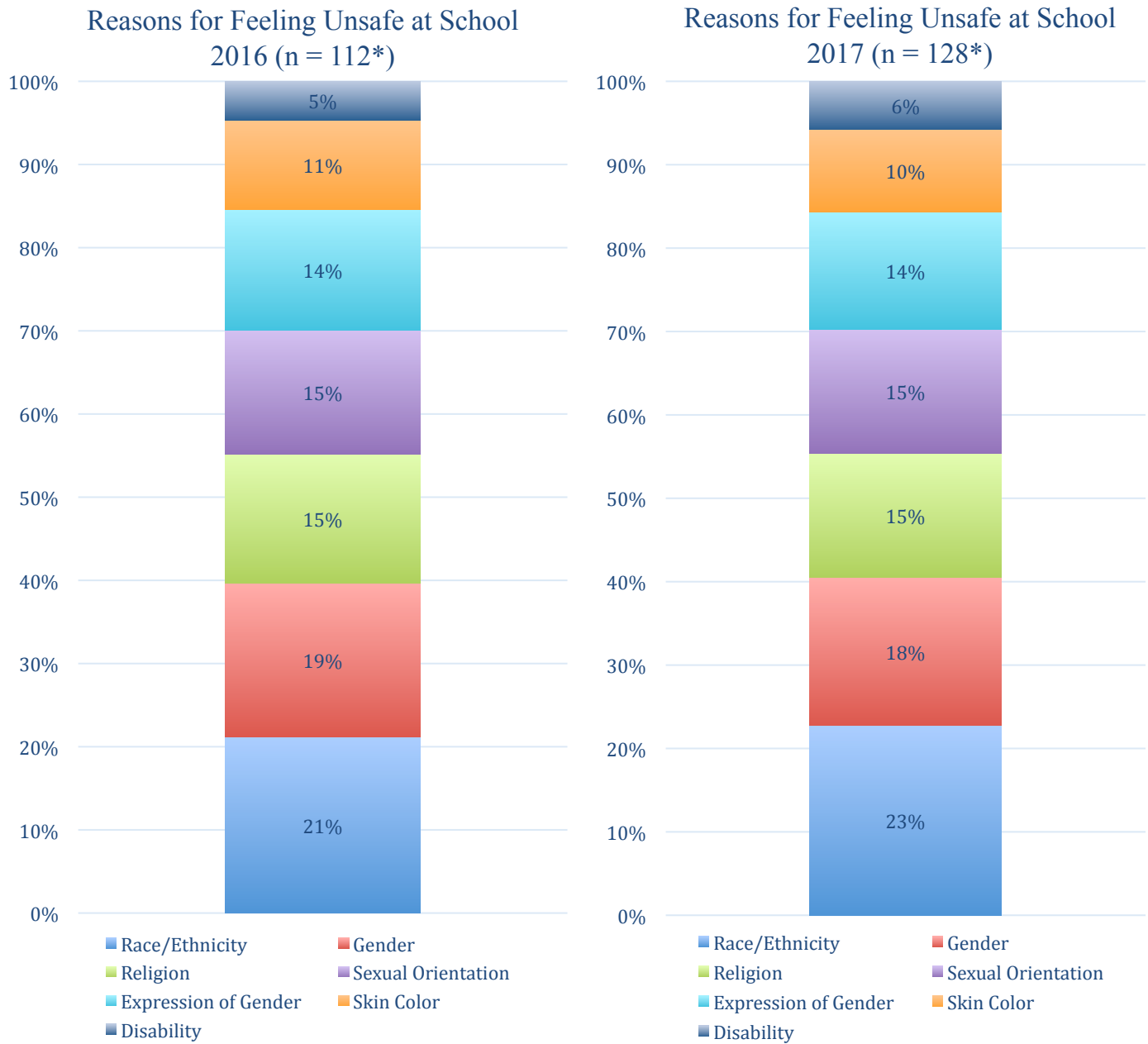


Why Do You Feel Unsafe at School -  
2017? (n = 554\*)



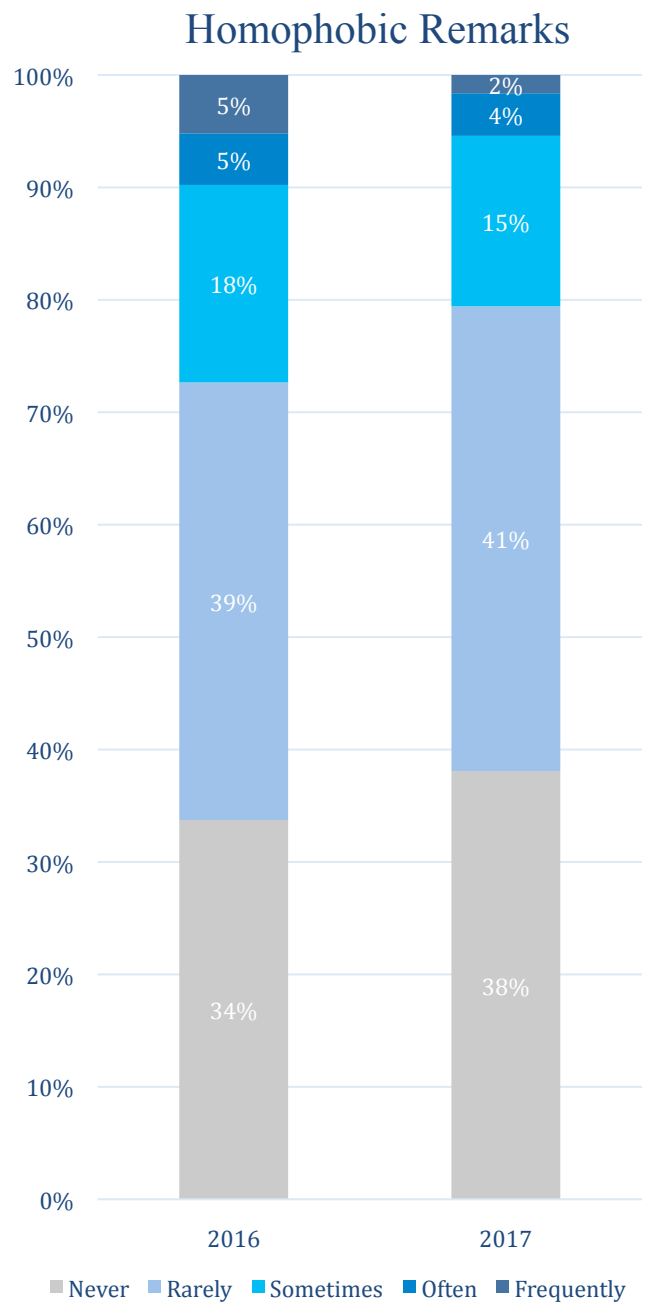
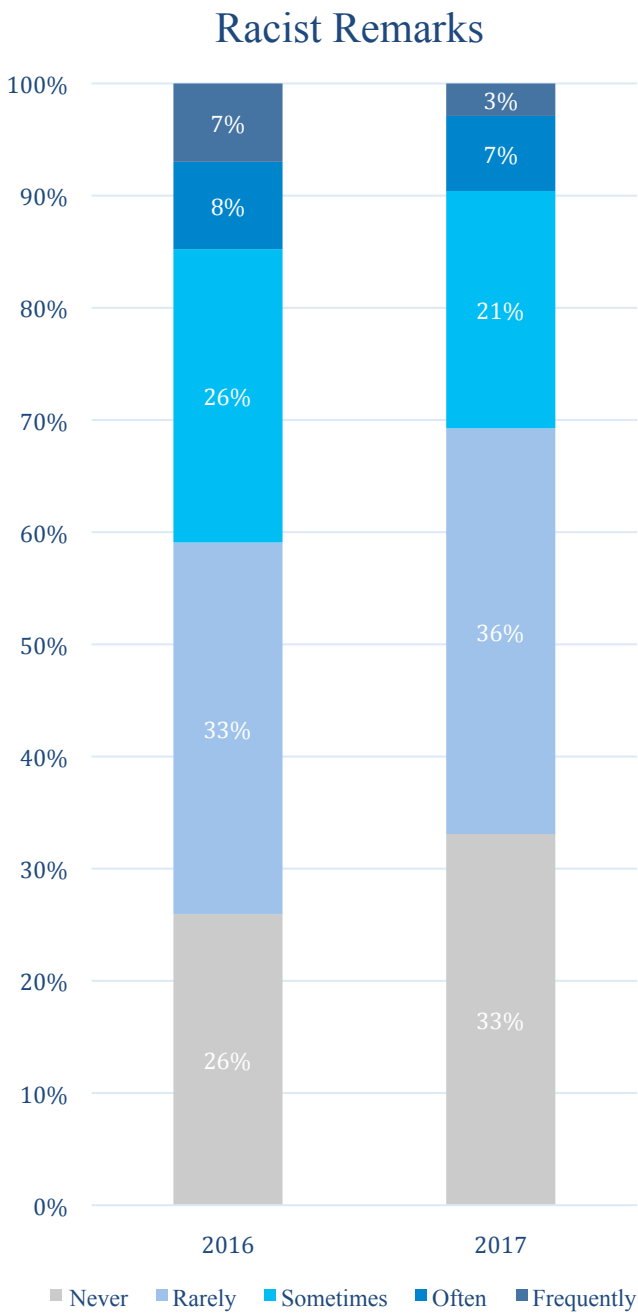
\*Students who provided only an open-ended response were included in the "No Response" category unless their open-ended response could be directly linked to an existing category

Regardless of year, the reasons why IMSA students feel unsafe at school are extremely similar, as seen below.



\* The above categories are not mutually exclusive for the 112 and 128 student responses, respectively

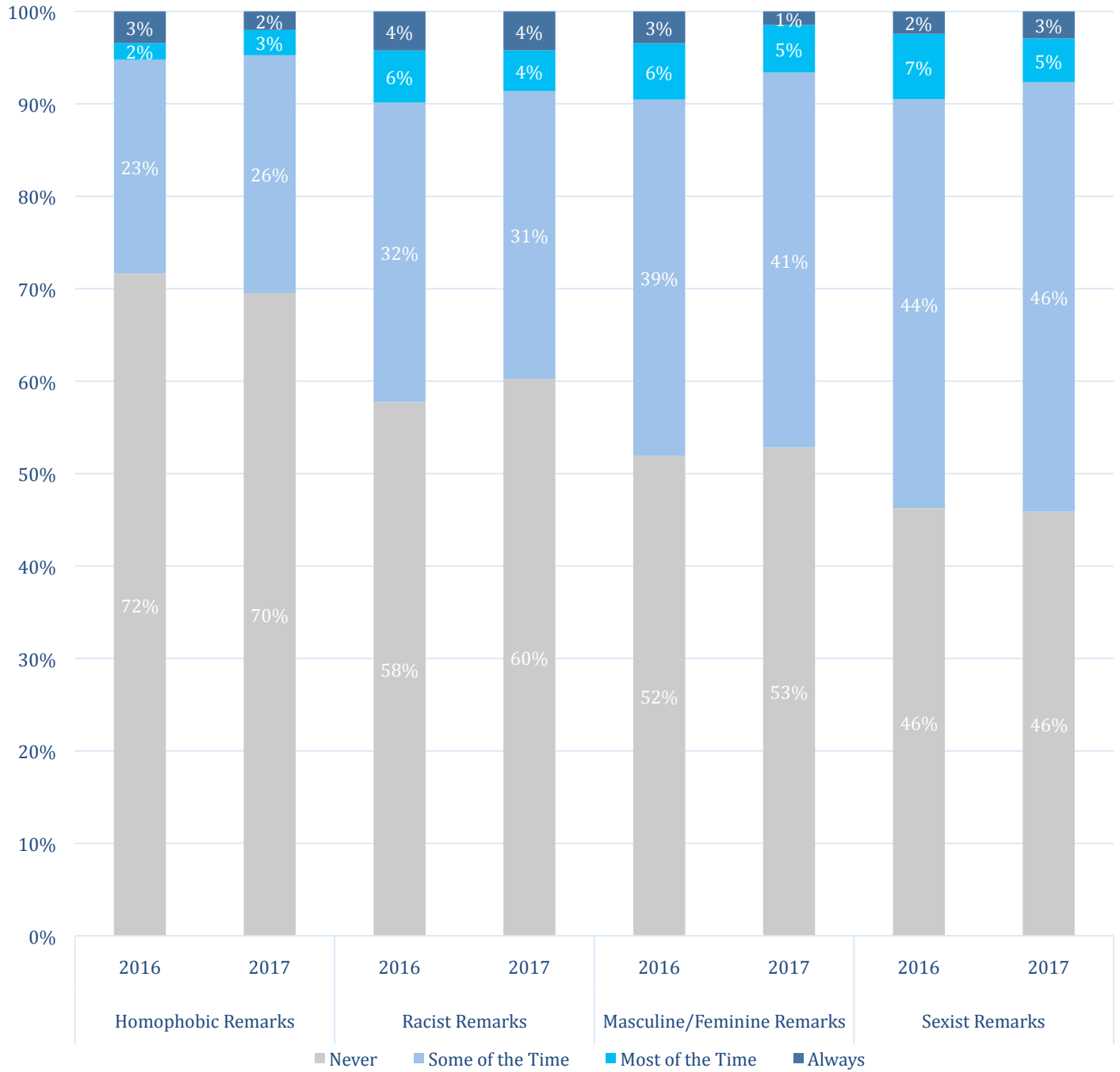
- The frequency of homophobic and racist remarks significantly decreased from 2016 to 2017 ( $p = .002$  and  $p < .001$ , respectively).
  - Sexist and masculine/feminine remarks also decreased from 2016 to 2017, but the difference was not found to be statistically significant
  - Racist remarks significantly decreased from 2016 to 2017 in all areas of the academy (Classes, Hallways, Bathrooms, Locker Rooms, Residence Halls, Buses, Athletic Field/Gym, Cafeteria, Old Café/1508, and Yard/School Grounds).





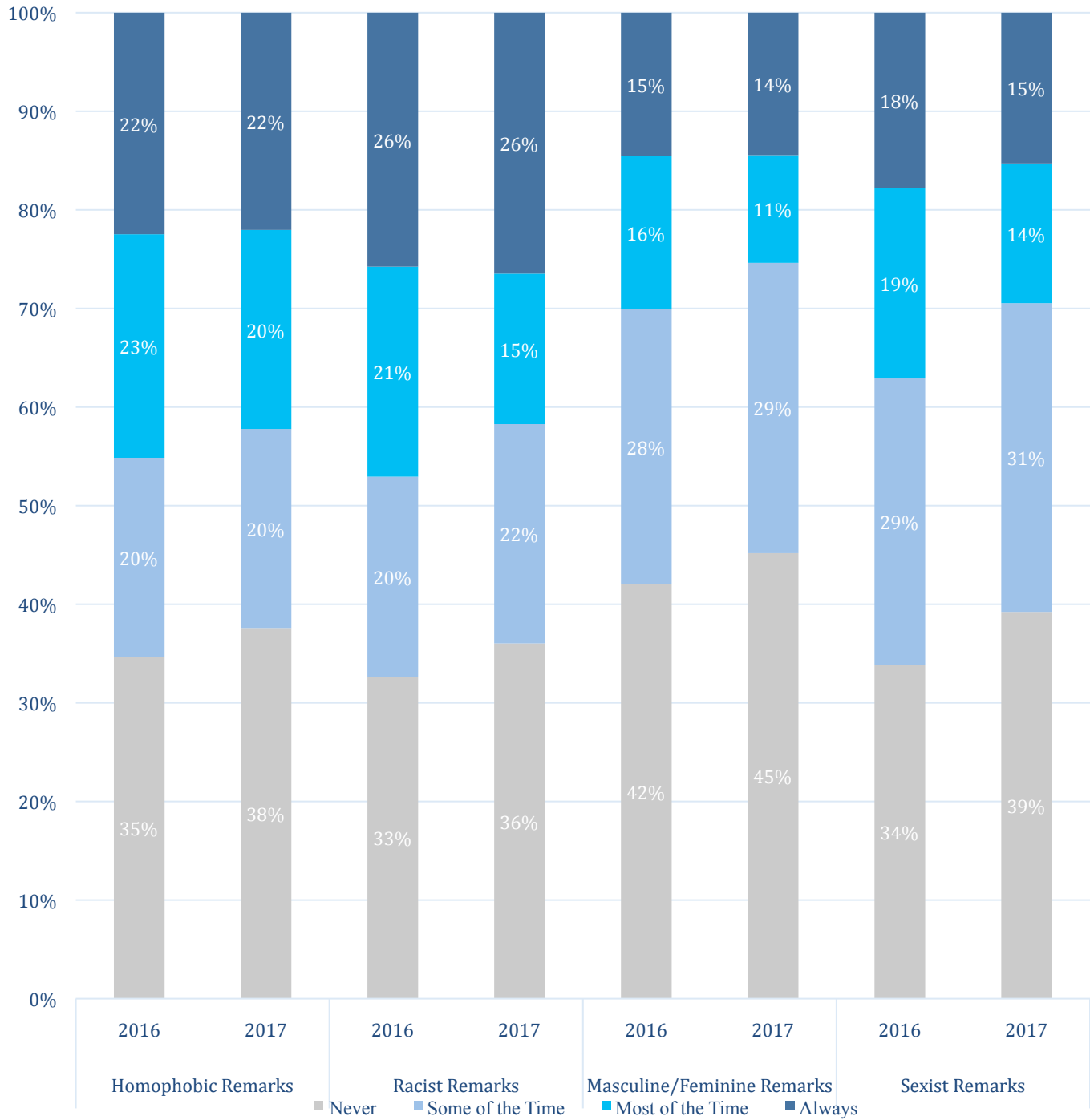
- IMSA employees (teachers/resident counselors/other school staff) were less likely to be present to hear the various verbal expressions in 2017 compared to 2016, although not statistically significant.

### Present to Hear Verbal Expressions



- Likewise, although not statistically significant, if IMSA employees were present to hear the verbal remarks, they were not as likely to intervene in 2017 compared to 2016.

### Intervention to Verbal Expressions



- In the case of sexist remarks, IMSA employees were significantly less likely to intervene in 2017 compared to 2016 ( $p = .022$ ).

## **Conclusion**

As a whole, there is evidence to suggest that the school climate present at IMSA is one that is safe for most grade levels, race/ethnicities, genders, and differences in sexual orientation.

It is important to note, however, that there was a significant difference in the number of times students identifying as black skipped class due to feeling unsafe compared to those identifying as Asian or White. Further exploration of these differences would provide more insight as to why students skip class, specifically those students identifying as Black compared to those identifying as Asian or White.

Secondly, students identifying as Black or “Two or More” felt unsafe significantly more days in the residence halls when compared to the Asian students. Likewise, Female and Non-Traditional students felt unsafe significantly more days in the residence halls compared to Male students. Additional research is warranted to examine why these groups of students are feeling unsafe within the residence halls on more days than their peers.

With regards to the verbal expressions, sexist remarks are still being heard more often compared to other verbal expressions, even though the frequency of sexist remarks decreased from 2016 to 2017. Moreover, there appears to be a need for teachers, resident counselors, and other school staff to be present in order to hear the verbal remarks being made. Additionally, when IMSA employees witness the verbal remarks, it is desired that more teachers, resident counselors, and other school staff intervene. Thus, it may be worthwhile to implement intervention training for IMSA employees to better equip all members of the IMSA community with knowledge on how to recognize and intervene in situations where verbal remarks are being made.