

Living Environments and Student Engagement: Research Study Results

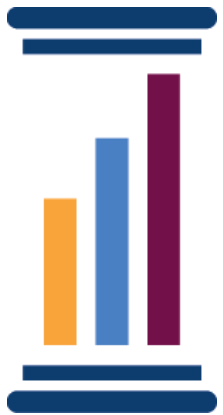


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Indiana University School of Education**

ACUHO-I Conference

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Overview

- Review of literature
- Brief introduction to NSSE
- Overview of Living Environments questions
- Current Study
 - Sample
 - Analysis
- Findings
- Discussion
- Q & A



What do we know about on-campus living?

Historically, research found positive effects of living on campus

- Belonging
- Involvement & Engagement
- Openness to diversity
- Persistence
- GPA

(Astin, 1985; Blimling, 1993; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2010; Pike, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991)

The residence hall environment is “perhaps the single most consistent within-college determinant of the impact of college.”

(Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 611)



Building Design

- Different residence hall designs can have an impact on student interactions
- Different roommate situations can impact levels of peer belonging
- Both on- and off-campus facilities offer a number of amenities
- On-campus facilities typically offer educational programming and college personnel.



The positive effects of living on campus “are typically the result of *purposeful, programmatic* efforts to integrate students’ intellectual and social lives during college”

(Astin, 1985; Blimling, 1993; Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999; Brandon, Hirt, & Cameron, 2008; Dumford, Ribera, & Miller, 2015; Kolstad, 2015; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2010; Owens, 2010; Palmer, Broido, & Campbell, 2008; Pike, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991)

(Terenzini and Pascarella, 1997, p. 178)

Peer Influence

Peer influence is an important factor in student success.

(Astin, 1993; de Araujo and Murray, 2010; Dumford, Ribera, & Miller, 2015)



“Finally, the single most important environmental influence on student development is the peer group. By judicious and imaginative use of peers groups, any college or university can substantially strengthen its impact on student learning and personal development”

(Astin, 1993, p. xxii).

Complicating the Picture

Recent studies emphasized that the effects of living on campus can vary across student subpopulations and different institutional types.

(Harwood, Hunt, Mendenhall, & Lewis, 2012; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Schudde, 2011; Strayhorn and Mullins, 2012; Turley & Wodtke, 2010)



African American, Asian American, Latino, and Native American students experienced over 70 distinct racial microaggressions while living in residence halls.

(Harwood, Hunt, Mendenhall & Lewis, 2012)

Limitations of Current Research

Extant research

- **General distinctions (on/off campus; commuters/residents)**
- **Particular programs (learning-living community, first-year seminar)**
- **Specific residence hall types (first-year students only)**

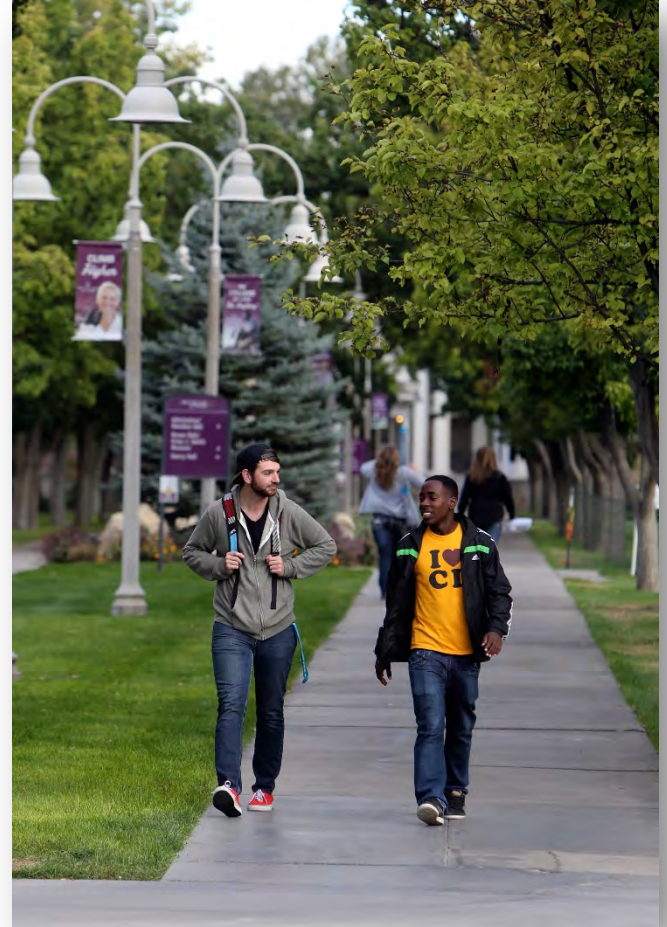
Lacks layered distinctions

- **On/off campus**
- **Proximity to campus**
- **Programs available**
- **Amenities available**
- **Staff and personnel available**
- **Roommates**

Our Purpose

Which factors of a student's living environment are related to engagement?

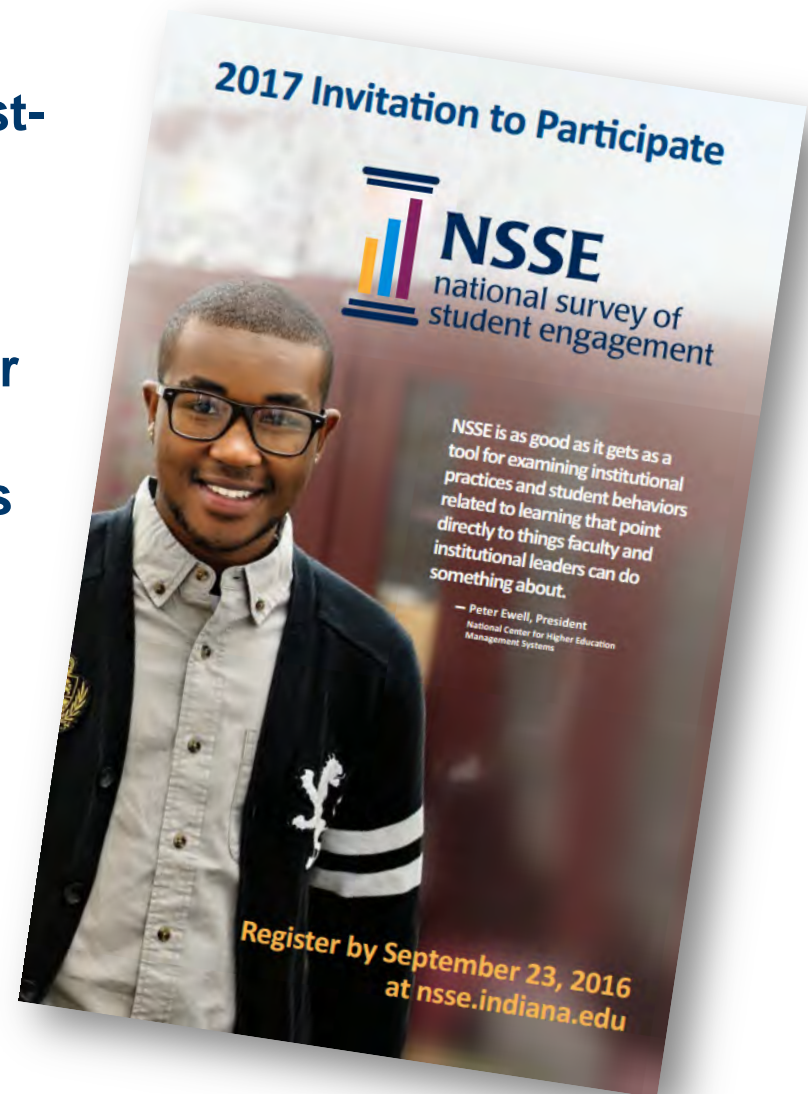
How do students living on and off campus perceive their living environments?



Methods

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

- Large-scale, multi-institutional survey administered annually to first-year and senior baccalaureate seeking students
- Asks students questions about their engagement in educationally purposeful in-class and out-of-class activities
- Focus on diagnostic & actionable information
- 10 Engagement Indicators and 6 High-Impact Practices



Engagement Indicators

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Engagement Indicators</i>
Academic Challenge	Higher-Order Learning Reflective & Integrative Learning Learning Strategies Quantitative Reasoning
Learning with Peers	Collaborative Learning Discussions with Diverse Others
Experiences with Faculty	Student-Faculty Interaction Effective Teaching Practices
Campus Environment	Quality of Interactions Supportive Environment

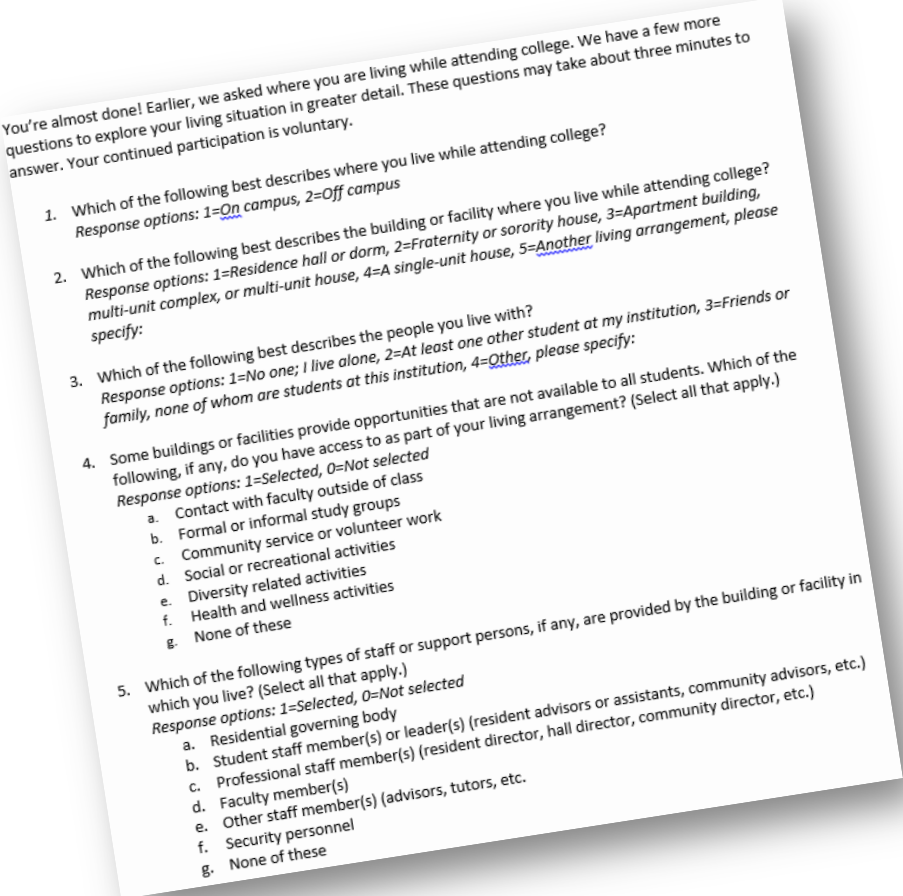
Key Variables

- Collaborative Learning
- Discussions with Diverse Others
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Quality of Interactions
- Supportive Environment
- Perceived co-curricular gains



- Working effectively with others;
- Developing a personal code of values and ethics;
- Understanding people of diverse backgrounds;
- Solving complex real-world problems;
- Being an informed and active citizen

Question Set: Living Environments



- Findings from 2013 & 2014 NSSE at 2015 ACUHO-I Annual Conference
- Based on feedback on our session we drafted an item set
- Items were reviewed by a number of survey design experts as well as ACUHO-I staff
- Items were appended to 2016 NSSE for select institutions
- Institutions had the opportunity to decline the items

Question Set: Living Environments

- You're almost done! Earlier, we asked where you are living while attending college. We have a few more questions to explore your living situation in greater detail. These questions may take about three minutes to answer. Your continued participation is voluntary.
1. Which of the following best describes where you live while attending college?
Response options: 1=On campus, 2=Off campus
 2. Which of the following best describes the building or facility where you live while attending college?
Response options: 1=Residence hall or dorm, 2=Fraternity or sorority house, 3=Apartment building, multi-unit complex, or multi-unit house, 4=A single-unit house, 5=Another living arrangement, please specify:
 3. Which of the following best describes the people you live with?
Response options: 1=No one; I live alone, 2=At least one other student at my institution, 3=Friends or family, none of whom are students at this institution, 4=Other, please specify:
 4. Some buildings or facilities provide opportunities that are not available to all students. Which of the following, if any, do you have access to as part of your living arrangement? (Select all that apply.)
Response options: 1=Selected, 0=Not selected
 - a. Contact with faculty outside of class
 - b. Formal or informal study groups
 - c. Community service or volunteer work
 - d. Social or recreational activities
 - e. Diversity related activities
 - f. Health and wellness activities
 - g. None of these
 5. Which of the following types of staff or support persons, if any, are provided by the building or facility in which you live? (Select all that apply.)
Response options: 1=Selected, 0=Not selected
 - a. Residential governing body
 - b. Student staff member(s) or leader(s) (resident advisors or assistants, community advisors, etc.)
 - c. Professional staff member(s) (resident director, hall director, community director, etc.)
 - d. Faculty member(s)
 - e. Other staff member(s) (advisors, tutors, etc.)
 - f. Security personnel
 - g. None of these

Topics include:

- Type of building or facility where students live
- Type of people with whom the student lives
- Opportunities available through the living place
- Types of staff or support persons provided by the living place
- Living-learning and thematic communities
- Perceptions of safety and community in the living place

Sample

36 bachelor's degree-granting institutions

4,604 First-year students (42%);

6,476 Seniors (58%)

Carnegie Classification	Number of Institutions
Doctoral Universities	6
Master's Colleges & Universities	10
Baccalaureate Colleges	18
Special Focus Four-Year	2
Total	36

Sample

		On campus	Off campus
Sex	Female	65%	66%
Race or ethnicity	American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%	1%
	Asian	4%	4%
	Black or African American	15%	9%
	Hispanic or Latino	9%	27%
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%
	White	60%	52%
	Foreign or Nonresident alien	4%	2%
	Two or more races/ethnicities	4%	3%
	Unknown	4%	2%
Class	First-year	64%	29%
	Senior	36%	71%

Sample

		On campus	Off campus
Major	Arts & Humanities	10%	7%
	Biological Sciences, Agric., & Nat. Res.	12%	9%
	Physical Sci., Math., & Computer Sci.	6%	4%
	Social Sciences	12%	9%
	Business	17%	18%
	Communications, Media, & Public Rel.	3%	2%
	Education	8%	10%
	Engineering	6%	6%
	Health Professions	15%	19%
	Social Service Professions	5%	7%
	All Other	5%	7%
	Undecided, undeclared	2%	1%
First-generation	41%	60%	
Part-time students	2%	22%	
Transfer (started elsewhere)	13%	47%	

Analysis

Correlational

- Relationship between aspects of the living environment and key forms of engagement
- Simple t-tests
- Effect sizes

Descriptive

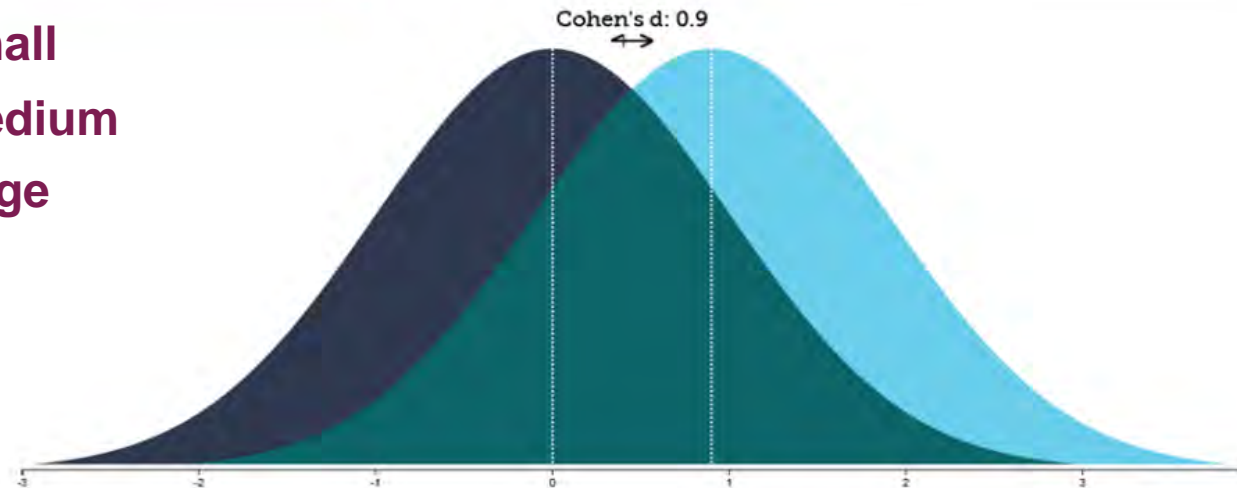
- Examining the percentage of students who reported “strongly agree”
- Comparing on- and off-campus students
- Further analyzed by selected demographics



Analysis

What is an effect size?

- Any measure of the strength of a relationship between two variables, often thought of as *practical significance*
- We use the mean difference divided by the standard deviation.
- We often discuss them in terms of broad categories like small, medium, and large.
- In our context, effect sizes ...
 - ... greater than 0.1 is small
 - ... greater than 0.3 is medium
 - ... greater than 0.5 is large



Results –
Relationship of Living Environment
with NSSE Key Variables

Which of the following best describes the building or facility where you live?

	First-year		Senior	
	N	%	N	%
Residence hall or dorm	2,341	51%	854	13%
Fraternity or sorority house	33	>1%	67	1%
Apartment building, multi-unit complex, or multi-unit house	617	14%	1,941	30%
A single-unit house	1,486	33%	3,431	53%
Another living arrangement	93	2%	141	2%

Which of the following best describes the people you live with?

	On campus				Off campus			
	First-year		Senior		First-year		Senior	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No one, I live alone	249	10%	285	20%	78	4%	438	9%
At least one other student at my institution	2,154	87%	1,042	73%	268	13%	883	18%
Friends or family, none of whom are students at this institution	72	3%	95	7%	1,724	83%	3,646	73%

Living-Learning Community

Relationship with key variables for first-year, on-campus students

	Effect Size
Collaborative Learning	.17 **
Discussions with Diverse Others	.11 *
Student-Faculty Interaction	.28 ***
Quality of Interactions	.06
Supportive Environment	.21 ***
Perceived co-curricular gains	.26 ***

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Access to Diversity-Related Activities

Relationship with key variables for first-year, on-campus students

	Effect Size
Collaborative Learning	.12 **
Discussions with Diverse Others	.15 ***
Student-Faculty Interaction	.14 **
Quality of Interactions	.22 ***
Supportive Environment	.34 ***
Perceived co-curricular gains	.37 ***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Contact with Faculty Outside of Class

Relationship with key variables for first-year, on-campus students

	Effect Size
Collaborative Learning	.02
Discussions with Diverse Others	.06
Student-Faculty Interaction	.17 ***
Quality of Interactions	.10 *
Supportive Environment	.20 ***
Perceived co-curricular gains	.18 ***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Reported Access to “None of these”

Relationship with key variables for first-year, on-campus students who had no access to the following: **study groups, faculty, community service, social activities, diversity activities, or wellness activities**

	Effect Size
Collaborative Learning	-.06
Discussions with Diverse Others	-.11 *
Student Faculty Interaction	-.13 **
Quality of Interactions	-.12 **
Supportive Environment	-.22 ***
Perceived Gains Items Applicable to Residence Life	-.17 ***

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Student Staff

Relationship with supportive environment for first-year, on-campus students

	Effect Size
Emphasis on providing support to help students succeed academically	.32 ***
Emphasis on using learning support services	.32 ***
Emphasis on providing support for your overall well-being	.32 ***
Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities	-.04
EI: Supportive Environment	.27 ***

Professional Staff

Relationship with supportive environment for first-year, on-campus students

	Effect Size
Emphasis on providing support to help students succeed academically	.24 ***
Emphasis on using learning support services	.25 ***
Emphasis on providing support for your overall well-being	.21 ***
Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities	.08 *
EI: Supportive Environment	.23 ***

Access to Study Groups

Relationship with supportive environment for first-year, on-campus students

	Effect size
Emphasis on providing support to help students succeed academically	.29 ***
Emphasis on using learning support services	.25 ***
Emphasis on providing support for your overall well-being	.19 ***
Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities	.19 ***
Supportive Environment (EI)	.30 ***

Results –

Perceptions of the Living Environment
for Students Living On and Off Campus

I feel physical safe in the building or facility where I live

100%

**Percentage First-Year, On-Campus
Responding “Strongly Agree”**

75%

50%

25%

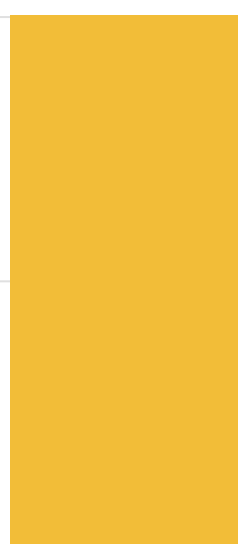
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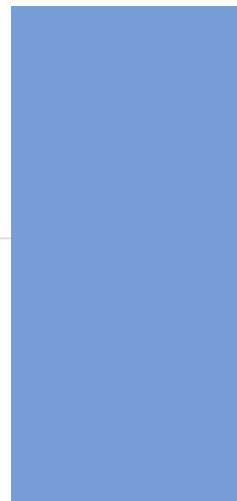
Asian



Black/AA

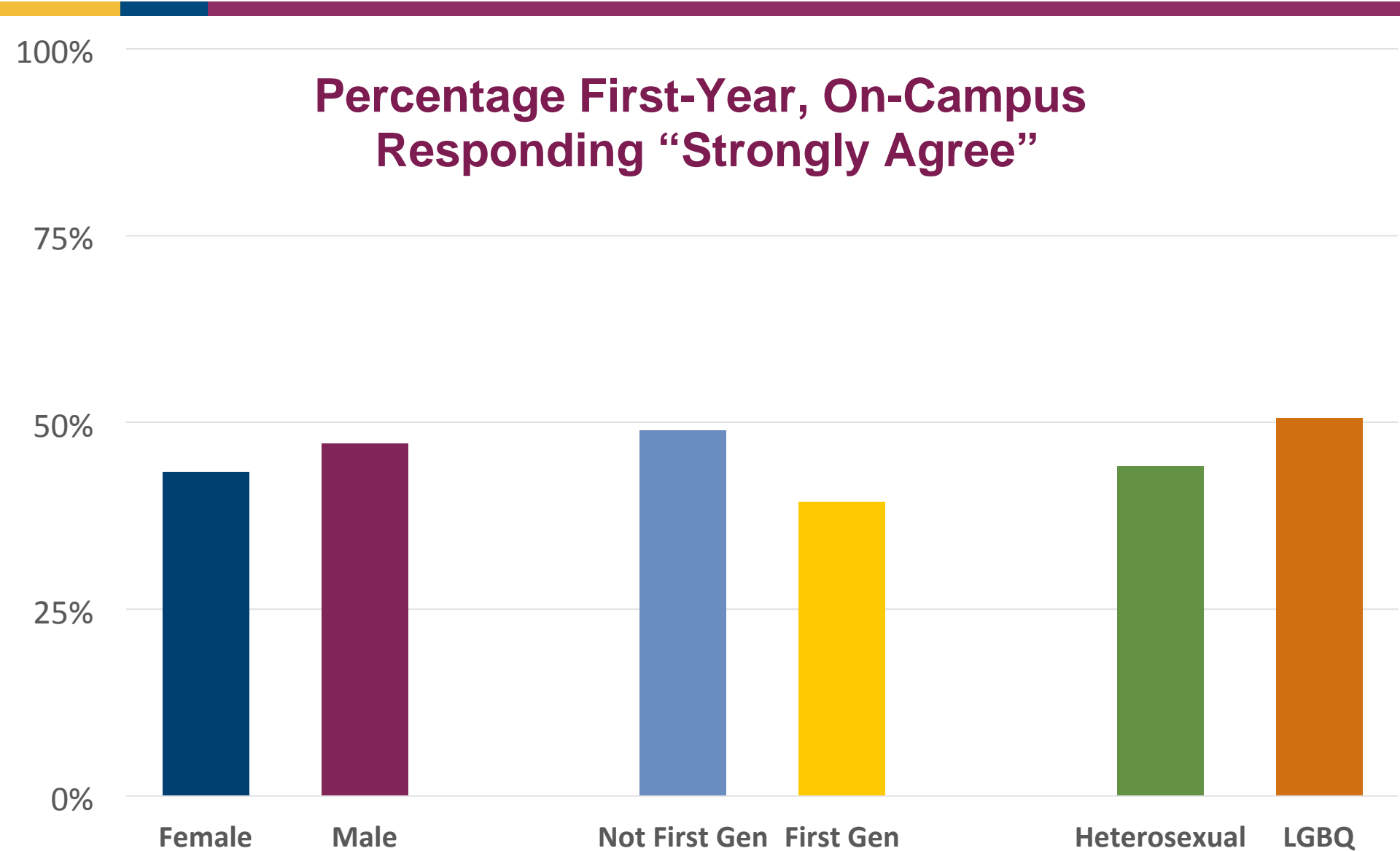


Hispanic/Latino



White

I feel physically safe in the building or facility where I live



I feel free from discrimination in the building or facility where I live

100%

**Percentage First-Year, On-Campus
Responding “Strongly Agree”**

75%

50%

25%

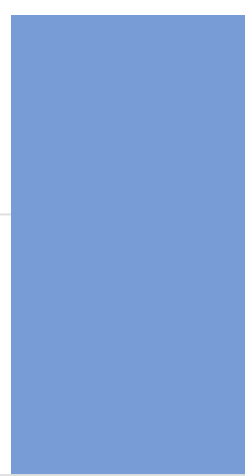
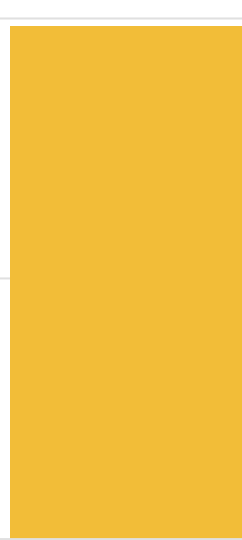
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Asian

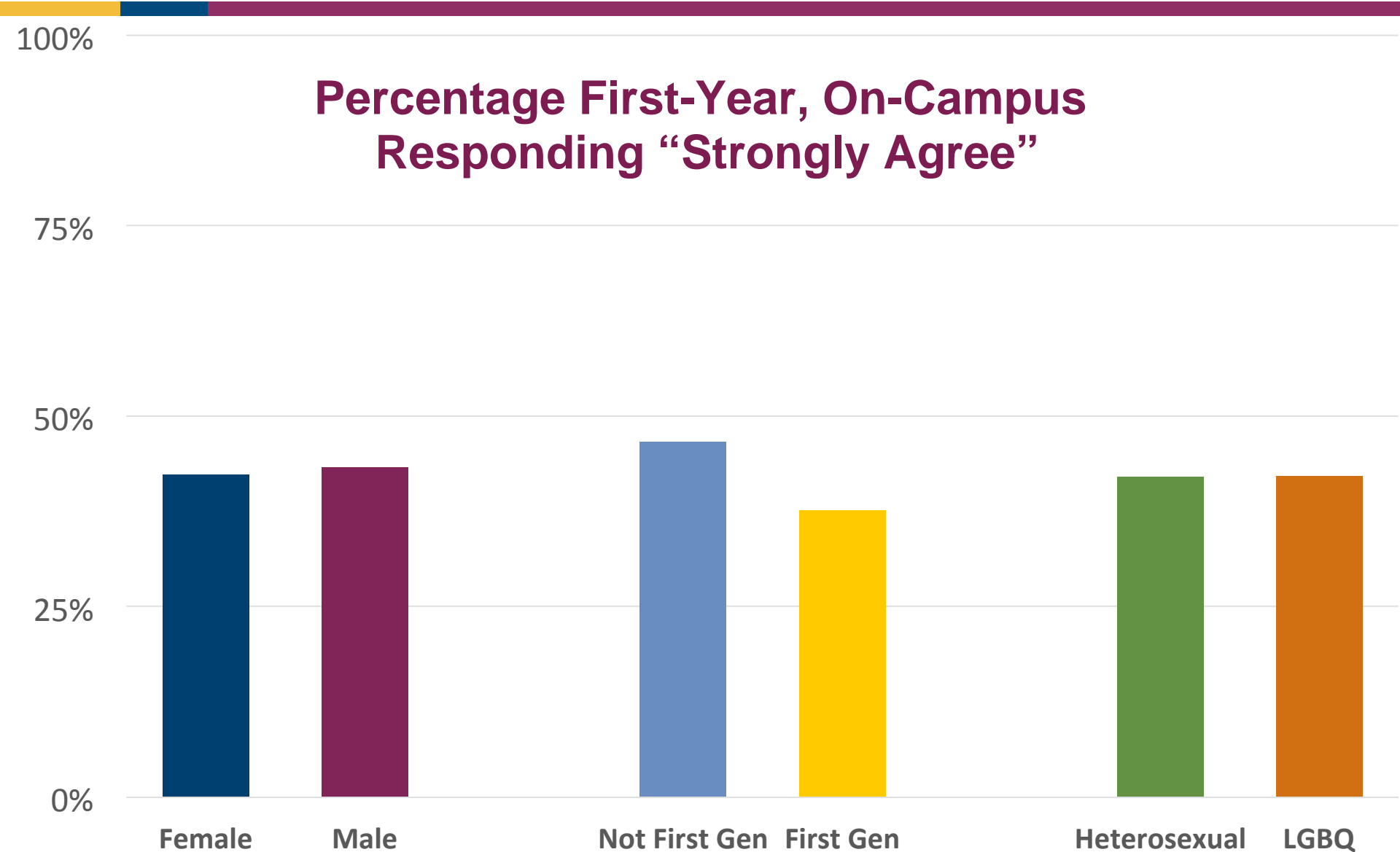
Black/AA

Hispanic/Latino

White



I feel free from discrimination in the building or facility where I live



I feel a sense of community in the building or facility where I live

100%

**Percentage First-Year, On-Campus
Responding “Strongly Agree”**

75%

50%

25%

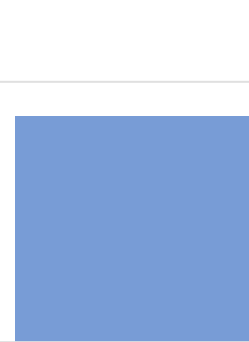
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Asian

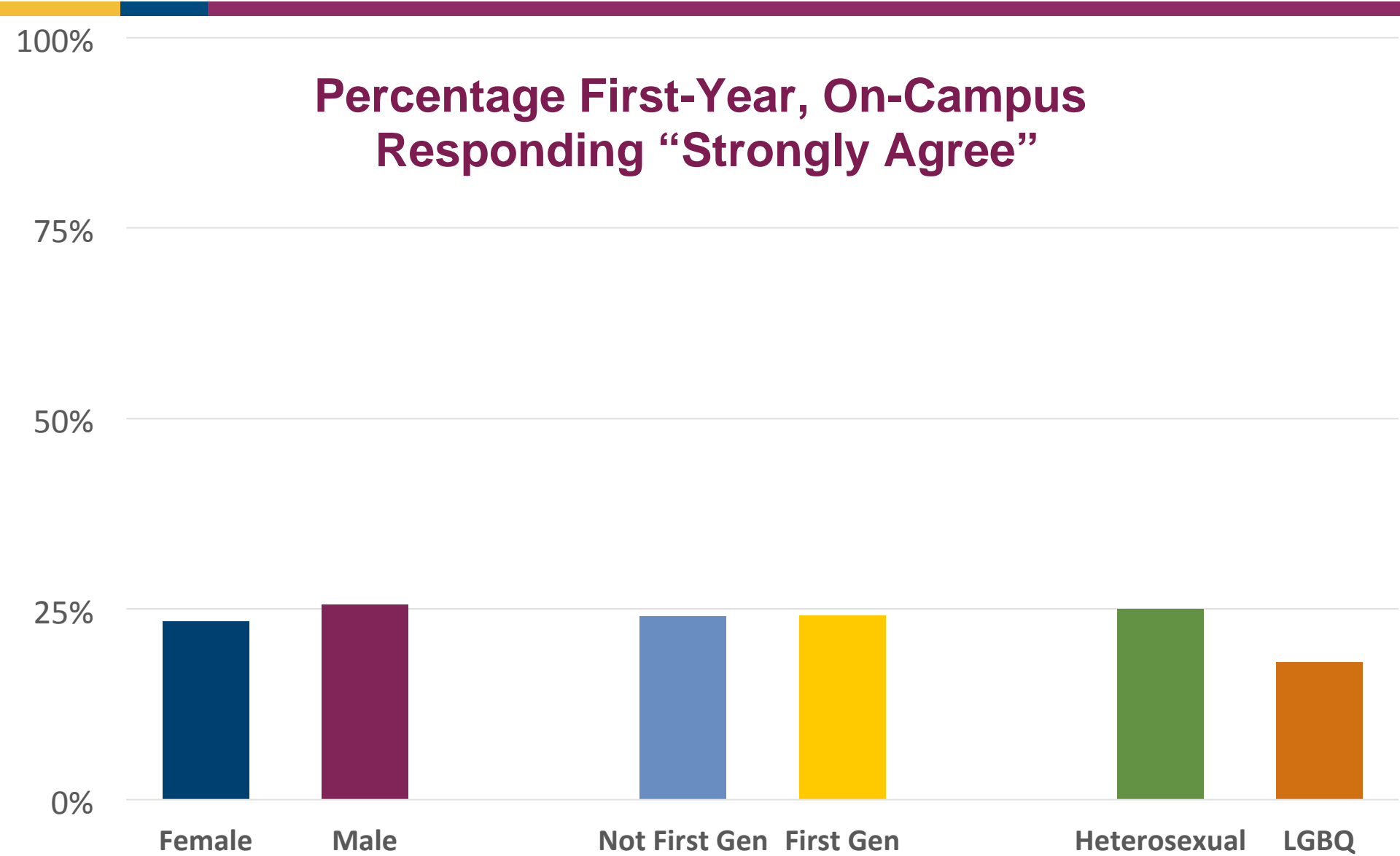
Black/AA

Hispanic/Latino

White



I feel a sense of community in the building or facility where I live



I feel academically supported in the building or facility where I live

100%

**Percentage First-Year, On-Campus
Responding “Strongly Agree”**

75%

50%

25%

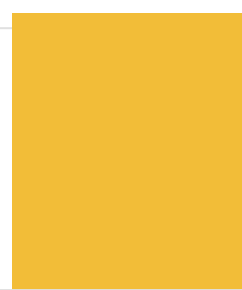
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Asian



Black/AA

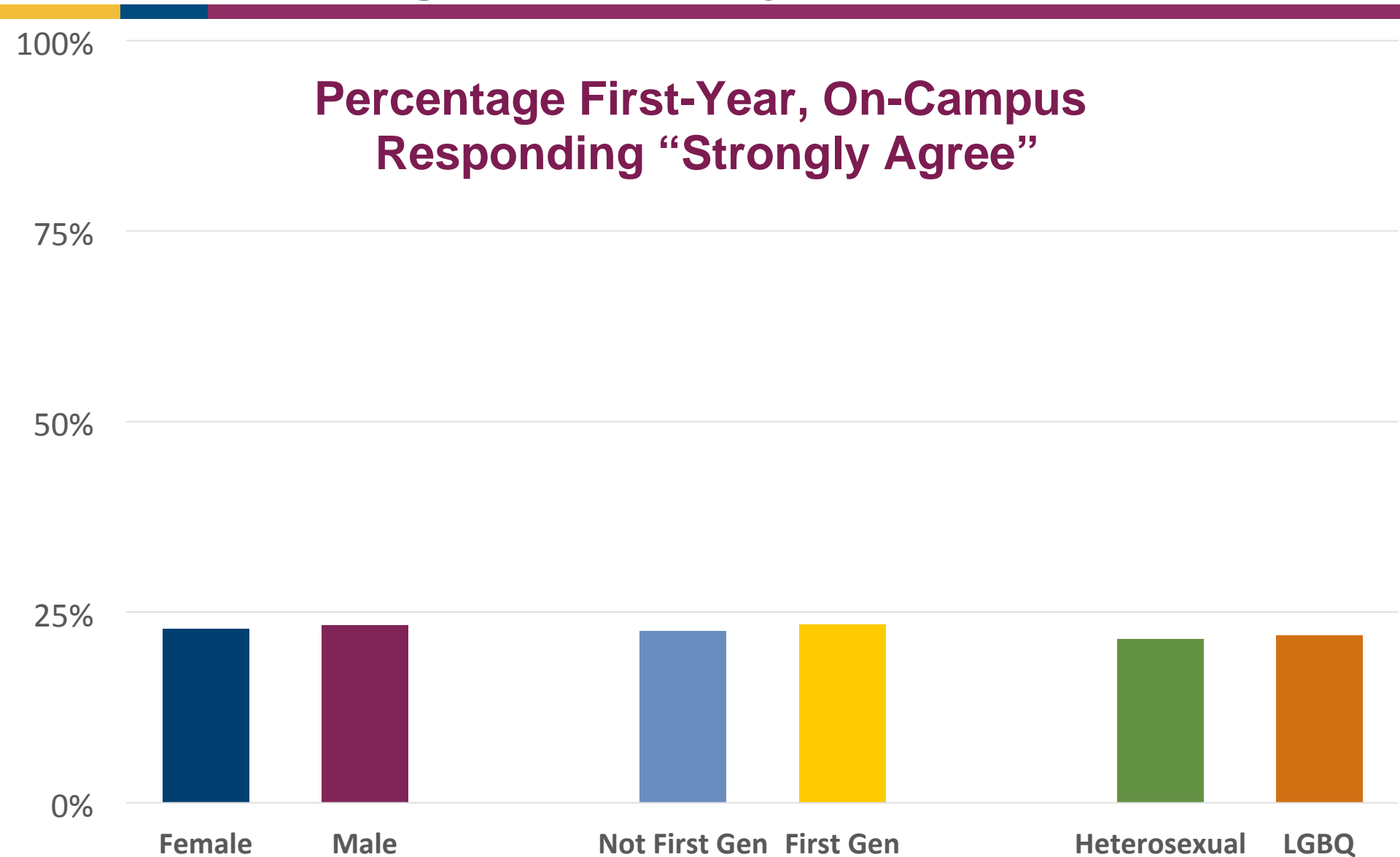


Hispanic/Latino



White

I feel academically supported in the building or facility where I live



Discussion/Areas for Future Research

- **Based on these findings, what are some surprises? Disappointments? Confirmations?**
- **What does this mean for your role on your campus?**



Further Discussion

For further discussion, please join us for another session this afternoon:

Living Environments Study: Implications for Research and Practice

1:45pm at 215 TCC-1st Yakima 2

Thank You

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