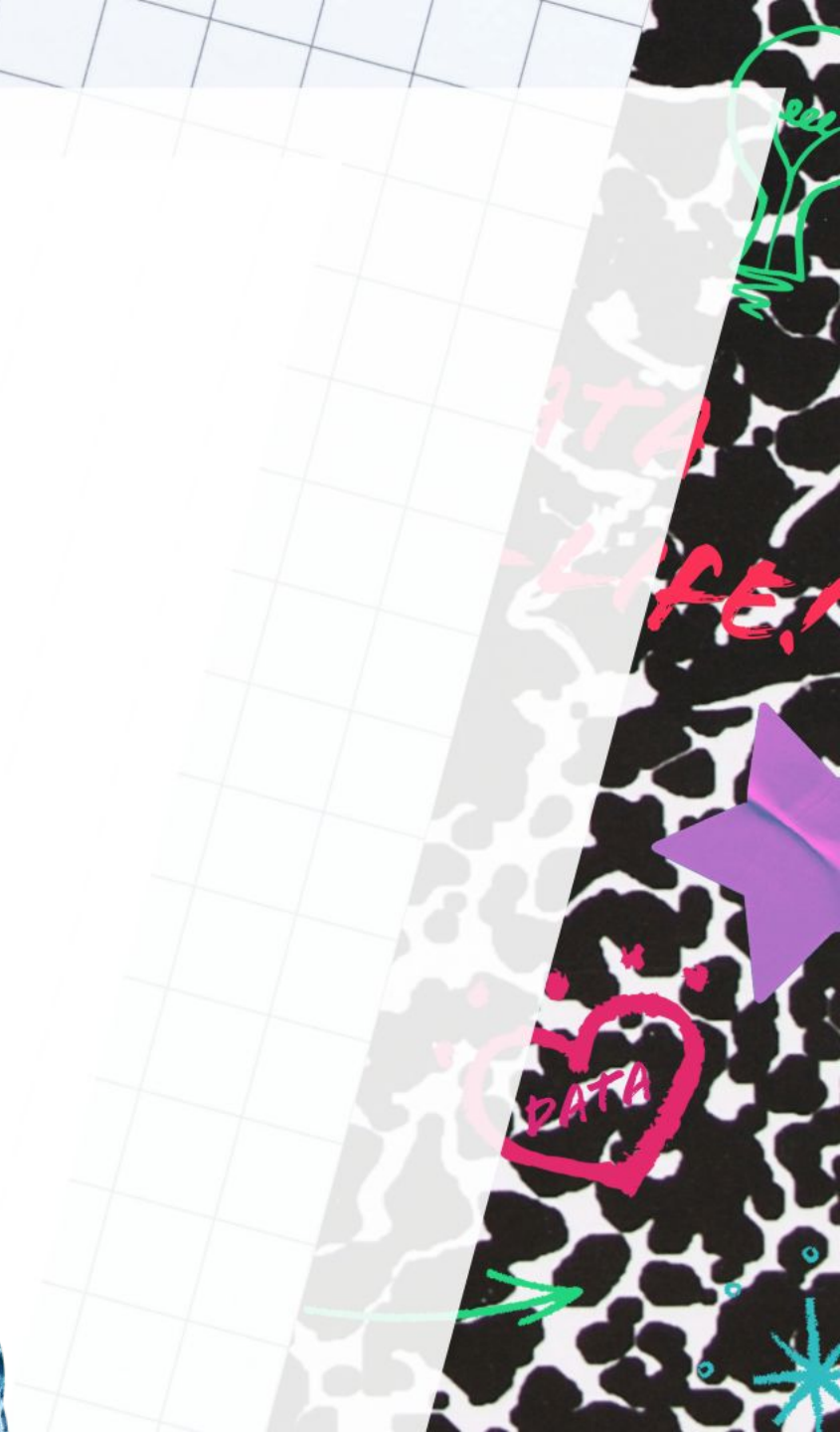


Belonging Matters: Creating Connections with Data



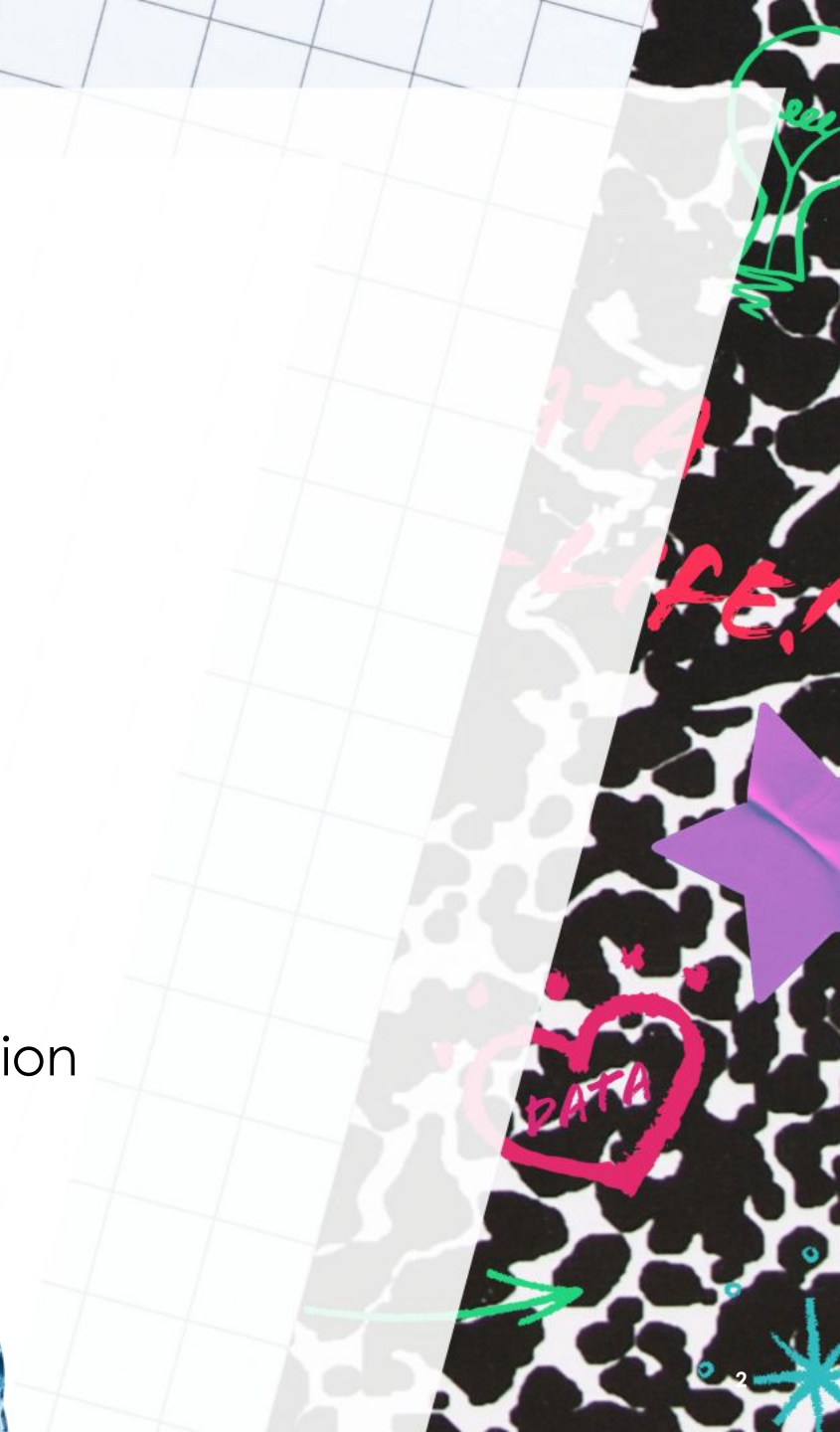
Weber State Data Teams

Weber State Data:

- Office of Student Success Analytics
- Institutional Research
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Information Technology (IT)

Goals:

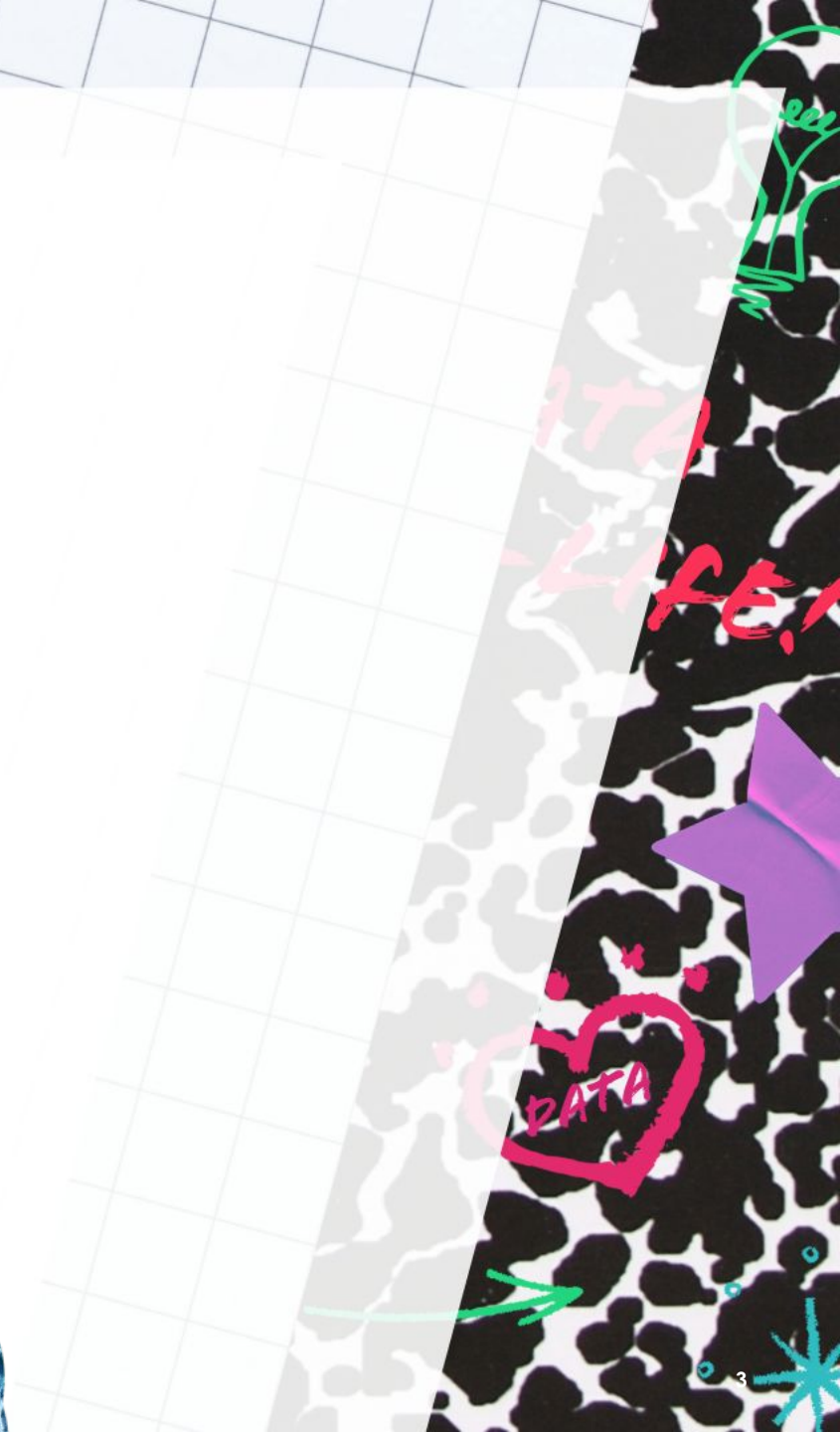
- Serve WSU **faculty and staff**
- Provide **high-quality** data resources, tools, and education
- Empower teams to make **data-informed decisions**



Learning Objectives

- Understand **student belonging in higher education**
- Explore **strategies for enhancing student belonging**
- **Interpret and utilize** data from the Student Belonging

Dashboard



AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN'S SENSE OF BELONGING

AT PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTIONS
IN THE MOUNTAIN WEST



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LA CROSSE **UW**

Student Affairs Administration and Leadership

June 2024

CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION



College persistence and success of students based on racial or ethnic factors have been the subject of much research worldwide.



Black students lag behind White peers in performance and retention

Boutte, 2022

Weir, 2016

Racial disparity is most evident in post-secondary education.



PROBLEM BACKGROUND

CHALLENGES FOR BLACK MEN IN PWIS



Negative racial stereotyping

01

Hyper-surveillance

02

Racial microaggressions

03

Increased attrition rates

04

HISTORICAL CONTEXT



Racial disparity in access to education for African Americans dates back to the emancipation period when enslaved people were denied education

Stern & Axinn, 2018

Social contexts within PWIs still impact the experiences of Black men, fostering feelings of impostorism despite the end of segregation

McGee et al., 2021

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Black undergraduate men struggle to develop a sense of belonging in the racially harsh climates of PWIs.



MAIN CHALLENGES



01 Racial segregation

02 External factors beyond student control

Racial
marginalization

Hostile college
environments

Lack of social support
(Brooms, 2019)

03 Internal factors within student control but implicit

Development of racial identity

Feelings of dissatisfaction and
disidentification (Lewis et al., 2000)

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY



PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Describe how African American junior or senior college men at five PWIs in the Mountain West state **developed a sense of belonging** and its impact on their campus experiences.

KEY AREAS OF EXPLORATION



- ▶ Participants' perceptions of how racism affects their academic and social experiences.
- ▶ Impact of racial marginalization on student experiences, academic performance, perseverance, and sense of belonging.
- ▶ How students' sense of belonging developed considering their personal stories, identities, and pre-college characteristics.
- ▶ The role of racial identity awareness in shaping interactions with peers and faculty, differentiating between ordinary and structural marginalization.
- ▶ How a sense of belonging impacts college adjustment and conformity to social and formal structures.
- ▶ The quality and impact of social support systems like AAHi and other Black clubs on improving the sense of belonging.
- ▶ Factors that contribute to the successful completion of studies and graduation, establishing a basis for future research.

CHAPTER II:

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS



▶ Strayhorn's Model of College Student Identity Development

Focus on sense of belonging as essential for student success.

2019

▶ Cross and Fhagen-Smith's Black Identity Development Model

A lifespan perspective on Black identity development.

1996

▶ Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson's White Racial Consciousness Model

How White individuals perceive their racial identity and its role in perpetuating or mitigating racial inequality.

1994

▶ Phinney's Theory of Racial and Ethnic Identity Development

The stages of ethnic identity development, particularly for minority groups.

1989

PRACTICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

African American men face more difficulty graduating from PWIs compared to their peers from other racial groups

Blosser, 2019; Britt, 2014;
Harper et al., 2004

African American students are 20% less likely to graduate than White students

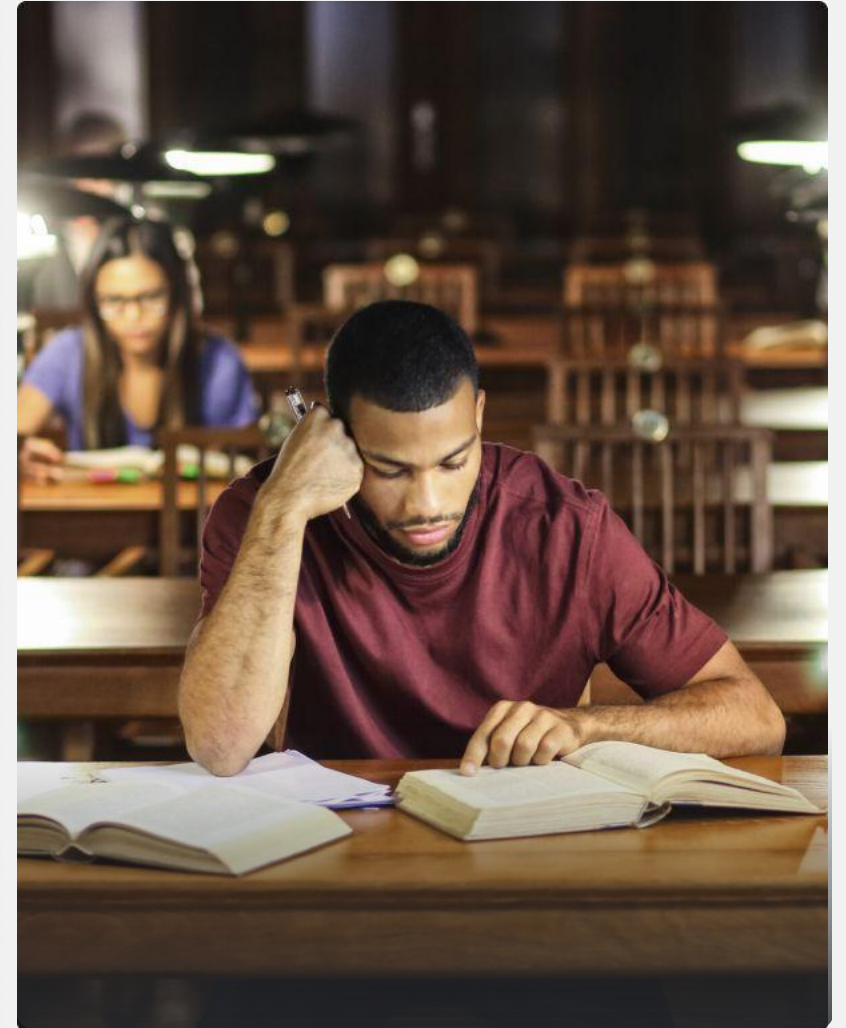
Cabrera et al., 1999

Race influences college leadership and perpetuates Whiteness in college politics

Harper & Kezar, 2021

Racial bias exists in experiences of Black students

Blosser, 2019



FACTORS PROMOTING SENSE OF BELONGING



Inclusive campus climates



Adaptive coping mechanisms



Institutional social support



Black Men Initiative Programs

EFFECTS OF MARGINALIZATION ON BELONGING

Disidentification:

Students feeling detached and less connected due to negative racial experiences

Steele, 1997

Social Dissatisfaction:

Expressing discontent with the campus climate and social interactions, leading to decreased persistence

Lewis et al., 2000

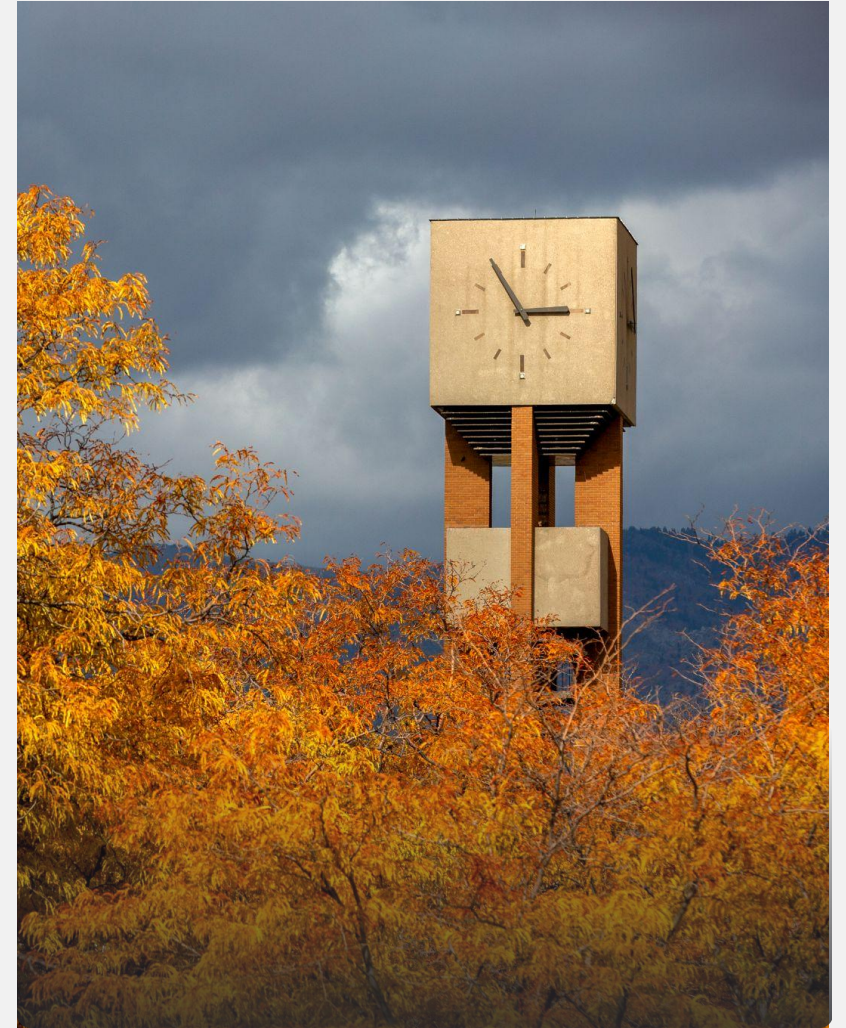
Hostile Environment:

Feeling unsafe, unwelcome, or targeted due to their race, impacting their well-being and academic engagement

Smith et al., 2007, 2016

CHALLENGES

1. Systemic and Structural Barriers
2. Representation and Visibility
3. Cultural and Social Challenges
4. Interpersonal and Microaggressions
5. Academic Environment

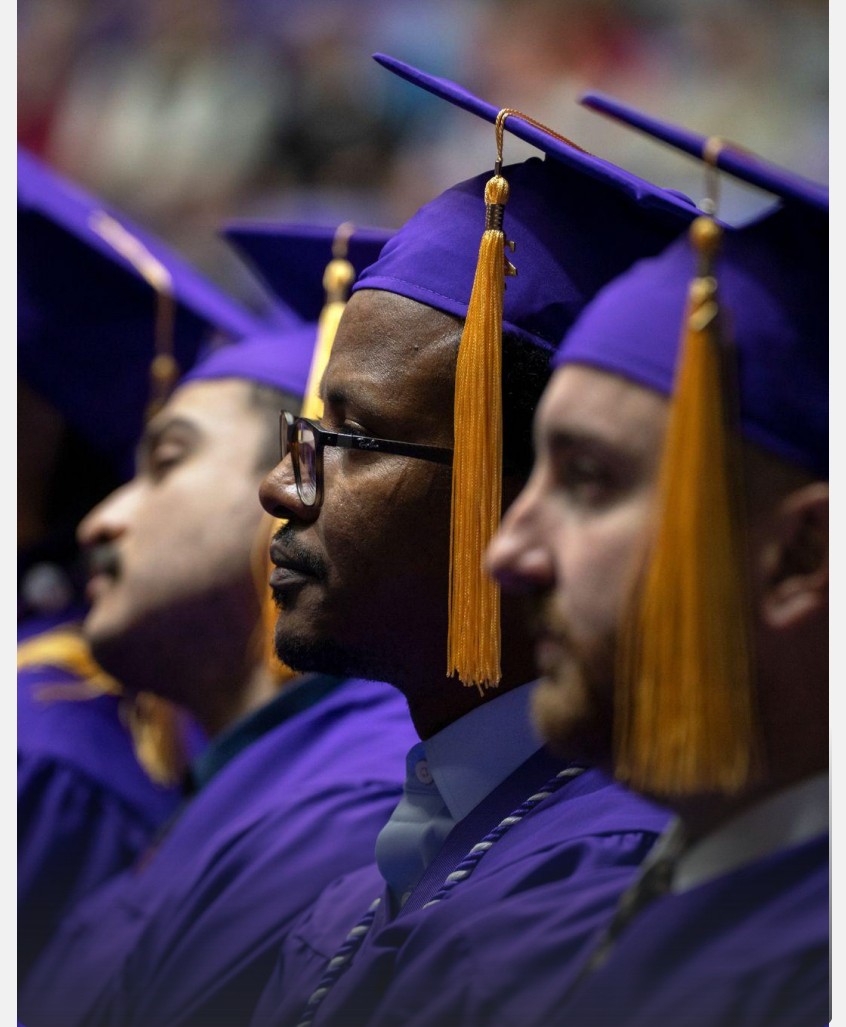


STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES

1. Personal Resilience and Adaptation

2. Building Relationships and Community

3. Leveraging Institutional and External Support



SUGGESTIONS

1. Enhancing Institutional Support
2. Improving Campus Climate and Culture
3. Promoting Diversity and Representation
4. Supporting Personal and Academic Development



CONCLUSION



African American men at predominantly White institutions face challenges that impact belonging and success.

Institutional efforts, like targeted support and inclusive environments, are key to positive experiences.

Addressing these challenges can improve retention and graduation rates.

Future research and policy should focus on replicating successful strategies and promoting systemic changes for equity and inclusion.

[Link to References](#)



WSU Student Belonging Dashboard

[Student Belonging \[Tableau\]](#)

The Student Belonging dashboard is built using data from the Student Belonging survey, focusing on 10 key questions about how students feel at WSU. For each question, students respond twice: first to rate how important the topic is, and then to share how it applies to their personal experience at WSU. This survey is administered three times a year at the end of each semester.

Keywords: [Satisfaction](#)



Activity: Four Groups

1. **Director** of the Student Support & Resource Center
Seeking to understand belonging among **different age groups** (i.e, 25+)
2. **Associate Dean** in the College of Arts and Humanities
Seeking to understand belonging for **first-generation** students (including FAFSA Complete)
3. **College Success Team** for the College of Science
Seeking to understand belonging for **students within our major** (including Race/Ethnicity)
4. **Academic Advisor** in the College of Health Professions
Seeking to understand belonging for **male students** (Breakout filter for Gender)



Activity: Look for Insights

- For the target **student group**:
 - + **Look for the gaps** between students' importance and belonging measures
 - + Anything that **stands out** about this group? **Any insights?**
 - + Any **other filters** that could be used?
- **Brainstorm** ideas for increasing/maintaining feelings of belonging in your target student group:
 - + Any current programs, activities, or **outreach measure** that are helping
 - + Any ideas to help **increase or maintain** feelings of belonging



Activity: Share Out

1. **Director** of the Student Support & Resource Center
Seeking to understand belonging among **different age groups** (i.e, 25+)
2. **Associate Dean** in the College of Arts and Humanities
Seeking to understand belonging for **first-generation** students (including FAFSA Complete)
3. **College Success Team** for the College of Science
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How did we do?

Thanks for attending this Love Data Week session.

Your candid feedback is appreciated.

