



# **SUSTAINED DIALOGUE**

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## INSTITUTE

**THE SUSTAINED DIALOGUE CAMPUS NETWORK**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

**NETWORK EVALUATION RESULTS**

**2016 – 2017**

**Prepared July 2017**

## WHAT ARE THE STAKES?

According to the National Survey of Student Engagement's 2016 report (NSSE):

**Nationally, only 40% of college seniors are having discussions with people of different races or ethnicities from themselves very often.**

- But, that's understandable. A lot of campuses aren't racially diverse. We can't expect people to have conversations across race if there isn't anyone of a different race around.

What about other diversity and identity markers?

- **It's actually worse. Only a little more than 1 in 3 seniors are having conversations across economic background, religious background, or political views very often.**

And the trend is actually that some of these things go down. **Without an intervention, seniors have discussions around race less frequently than first-years do.**

**We prove below that Sustained Dialogue is the intervention that changes that.**



## NOTABLE QUOTES

- “By seeing how other people's values and experiences influenced their viewpoints through their personal experiences, I found myself finding common ground with people I've always shut out before.”
- “It offers a great community on campus and guarantees that once a week I can have a deep, meaningful conversation with people who inspire and challenge my beliefs.”
- “This class taught me about topics I need to talk about. In the past I would just avoided such conversations, but now I know I can talk about these topics.”
- “I learned from people who felt differently from how I did, and rather than dismissing them as uninformed or wrong, I was able to listen deeply to really understand where they were coming from and why they felt the way they did.”
- “This class really changed me.”
- “By the end, my group had fostered an amazing sense of community and vulnerability. This is my favorite thing about SD - that over the course of a few months, a group of strangers can grow to know and one another deeply. This is amazing!!”
- “It's really changed my perspective on life and the world I'm living in.”
- “This course teaches you to be a better person, especially in everyday life.”
- “Sustained Dialogue has changed my entire life and prompted me to think critically and carefully in my day to day life about my own biases and beliefs. I have been challenged to listen harder when I disagree, not just in dialogue, but everywhere.”
- “As people shared their experiences with me, I became aware that I didn't know as much as I thought I did. It certainly changed me.”
- “I never knew how to talk about religion or race with other people, and this class taught me how to approach these conversations. I have a lot of personal takeaways from this course.”

## TALKING POINTS

*All results included on pages 5-9 of this report are statistically significant to  $p < 0.05$*

After participating in Sustained Dialogue, respondents are **significantly more likely** to:

- Think critically about the experiences of others and how they can be improved
- Feel comfortable talking about their experiences and identities in front of a groups of their peers
- Try to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective
- Examine the strengths and weaknesses of their own views on a topic or issue
- Raise awareness about local or campus issues
- Organize others to work on local or campus issues
- Organize others to work on state, national, or global issues
- Have discussions with people who are different from them in terms of:
  - Religious beliefs and economic background

Respondents are **significantly less likely** to:

- Rate their college as welcoming to all students

After participating in Sustained Dialogue, respondents are **significantly more able** to

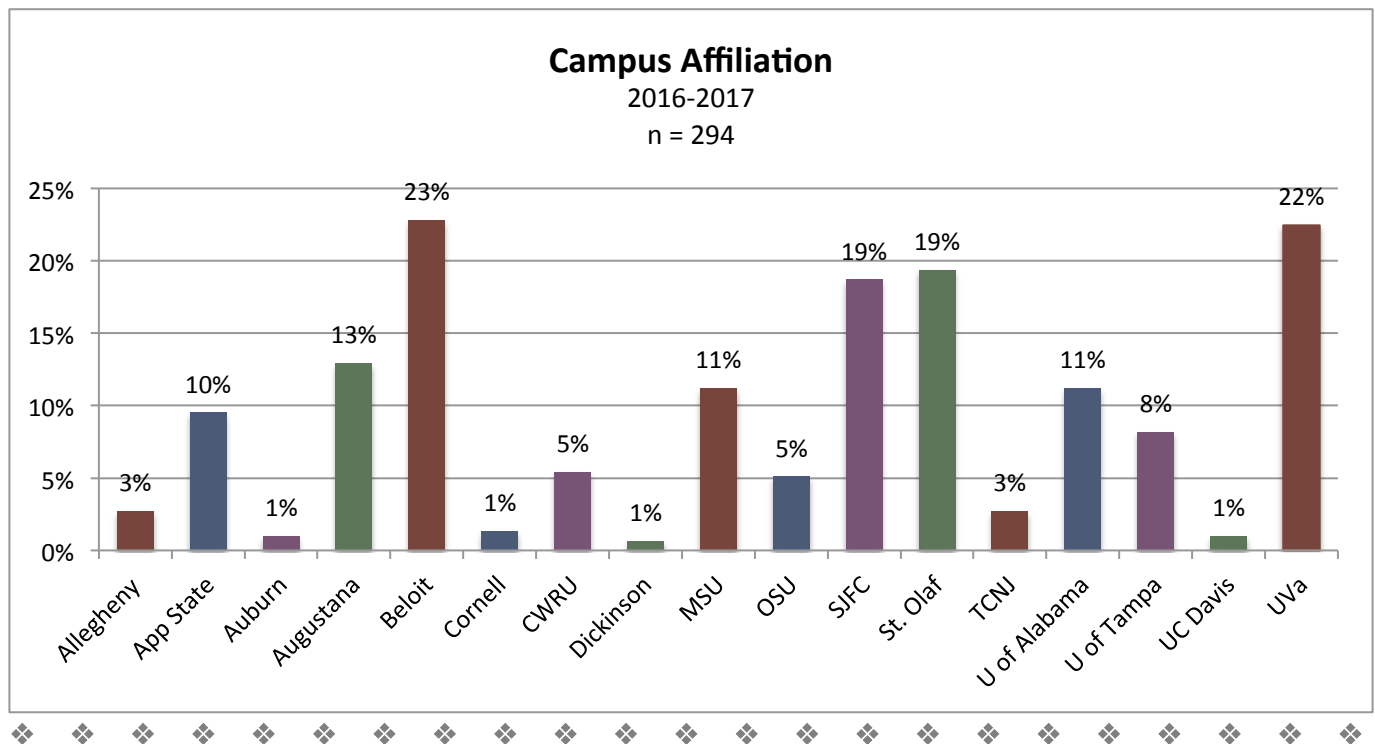
- Resolve conflicts that involve bias, discrimination, and prejudice
- Lead a group where people from different backgrounds feel welcomed and included
- Explain the college climate towards diversity, issues that arise between students, and why issues persist

After participating in Sustained Dialogue, respondents demonstrate **significantly more urgency** to improve awareness, intergroup relations, and campus inclusiveness around issues relating to:

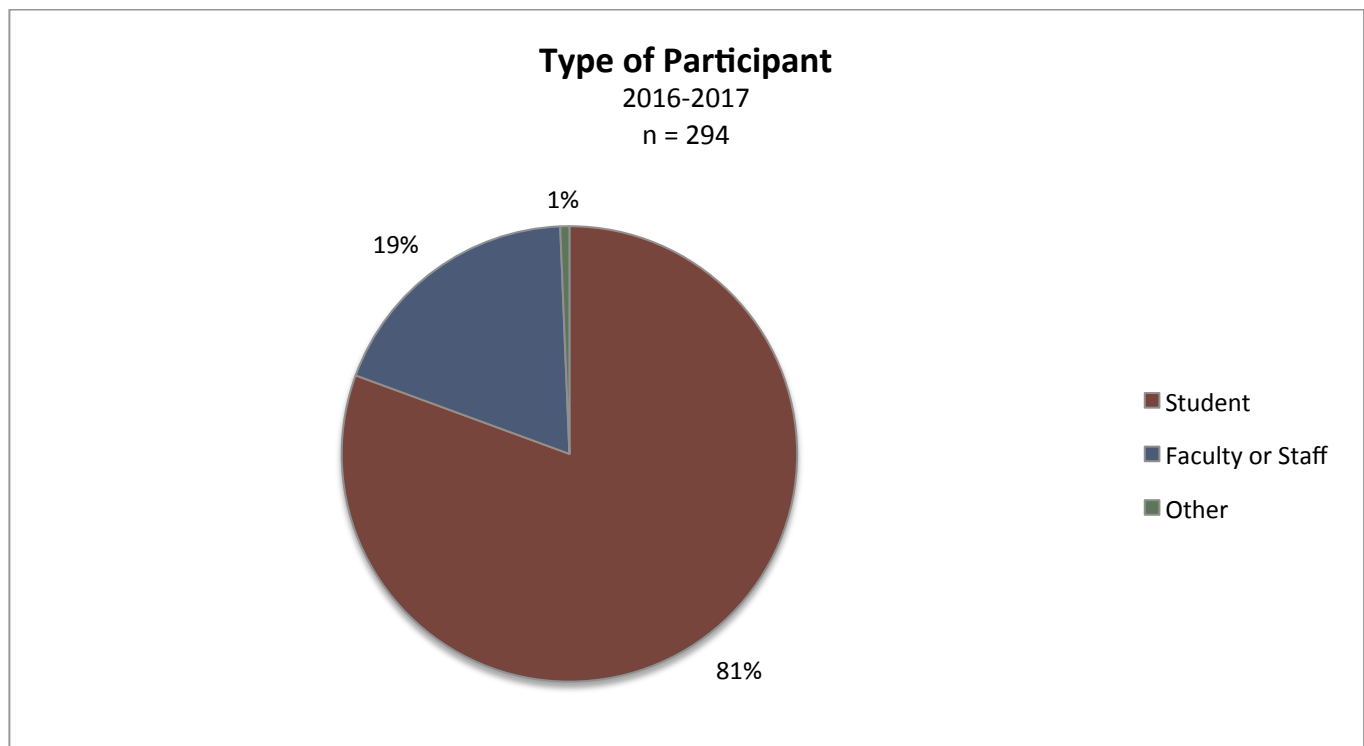
- Ability/disability, gender, international student body, mental health, and race/ethnicity



## 1. Campus Affiliation:



## 2. Type of Participant:



**3. Rate your level of agreement with each statement:***Indicates a statistically significant result to  $p < 0.05$ \**

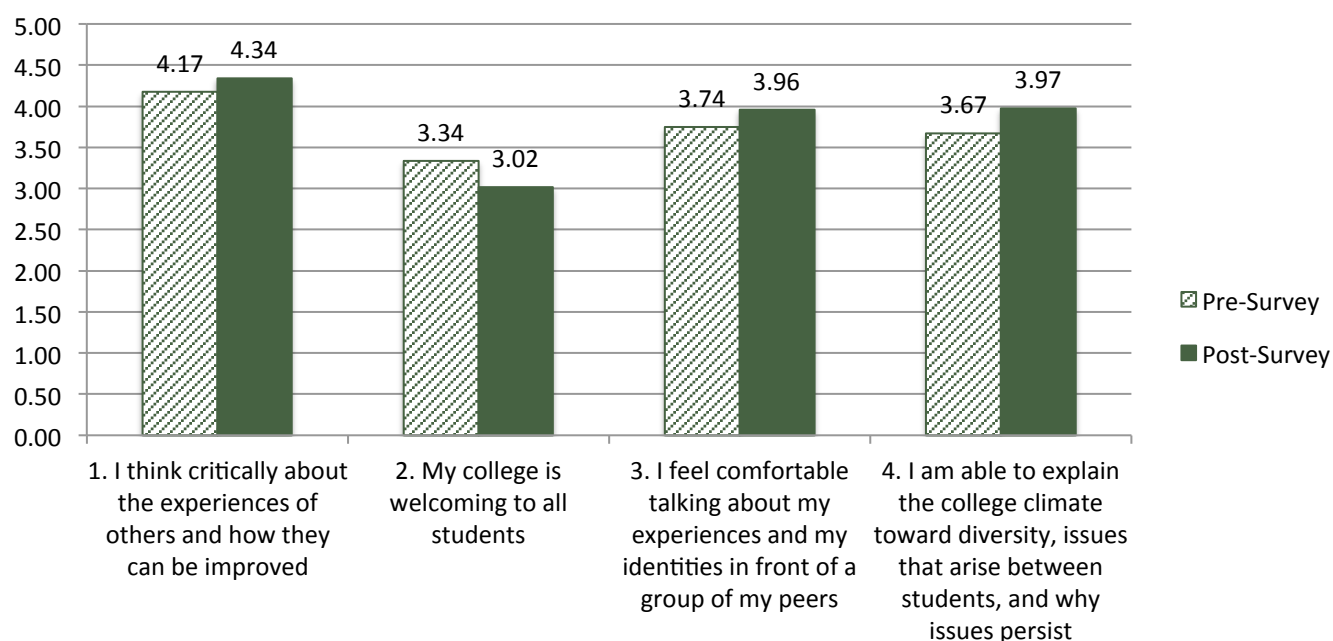
	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Out of
1. I think critically about the experiences of others and how they can be improved	4.17	4.34*	5
2. My college is welcoming to all students	3.34	3.02*	5
3. I feel comfortable talking about my experiences and my identities in front of a group of my peers	3.74	3.96*	5
4. I am able to explain the college climate toward diversity, issues that arise between students, and why issues persist	3.67	3.97*	5

**Rate your level of agreement with each statement:**

Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

2016 - 2017 Sustained Dialogue Campus Network

n = 294

**Talking Points:**

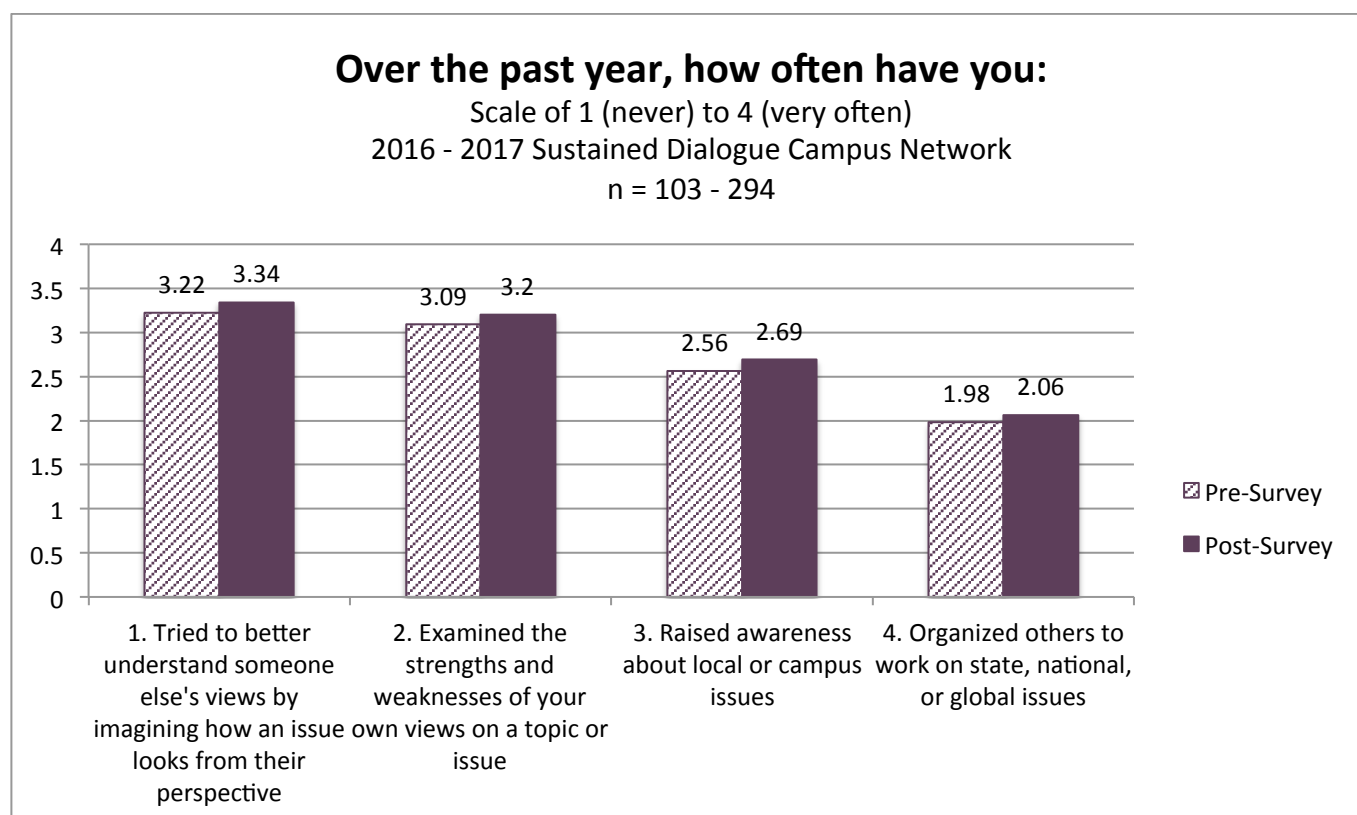
- After participating in Sustained Dialogue, respondents are **significantly more likely** to:
  - “Think critically about the experiences of others and how they can be improved,”
  - “Feel comfortable talking about their experiences and identities in front of a groups of their peers.”
- After participating in Sustained Dialogue, respondents are **significantly more able** to:
  - “Explain the college climate towards diversity, issues that arise between students, and why issues persist.”
- Respondents are **significantly less likely** to rate their college as “welcoming to all students.”

**4. Over the past year, how often have you:**

*Indicates a statistically significant result to  $p < 0.05$ \**

The following question comes from the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE)

	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Out of
1. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective	3.22	3.34*	4
2. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	3.09	3.20*	4
3. Raised awareness about local or campus issues	2.56	2.69*	4
4. Organized others to work on state, national, or global issues	1.98	2.06*	4

**Talking Points:**

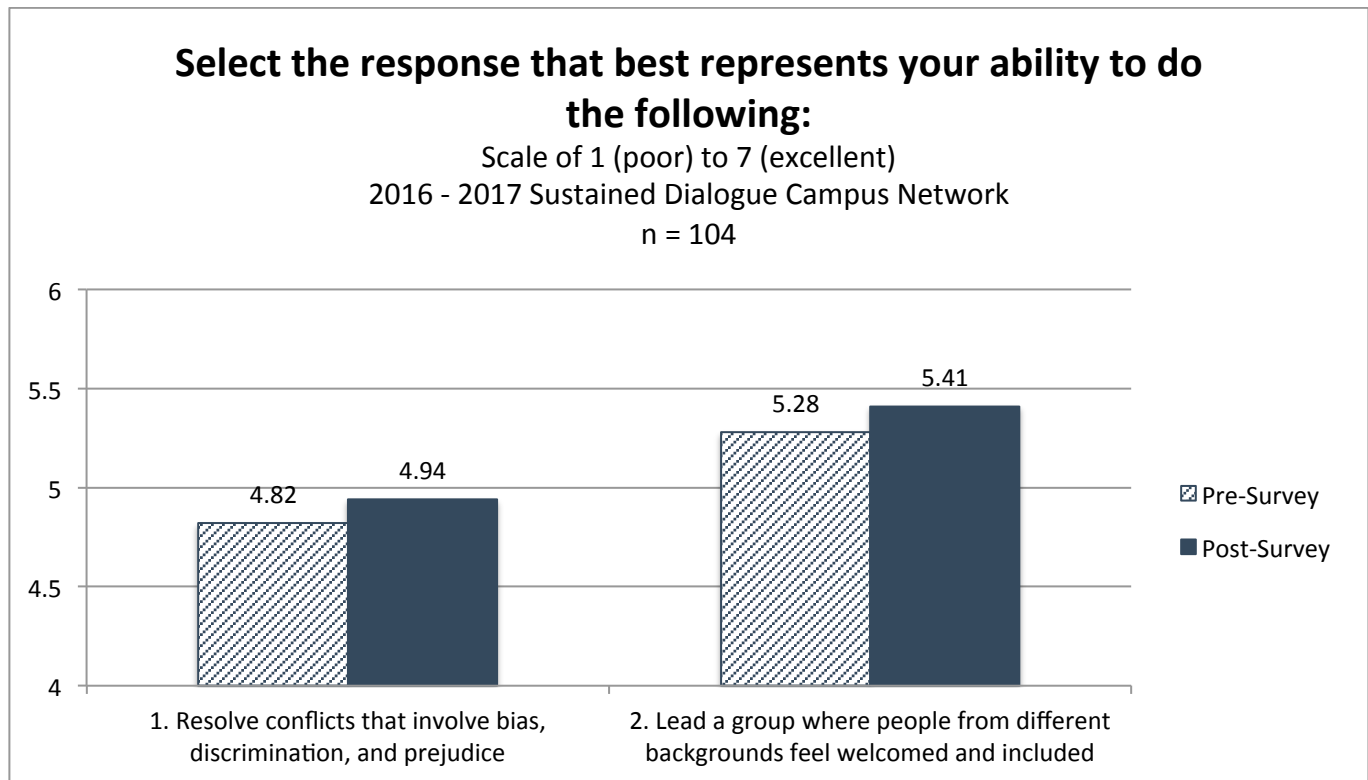
- After participating in Sustained Dialogue, respondents are **significantly more likely** to:
  - **“Try to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective,”**
  - **“Examine the strengths and weaknesses of their own views on a topic or issue.”**
  - **“Raise awareness about local or campus issues,”** and
  - **“Organize others to work on state, national, or global issues.”**



**5. Select the response that best represents your ability to do the following:***Indicates a statistically significant result to  $p < 0.05$ \**

The following question comes from the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE)

	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Out of
1. Resolve conflicts that involve bias, discrimination, and prejudice	4.82	4.94*	7
2. Lead a group where people from different backgrounds feel welcomed and included	5.28	5.41*	7

**Talking Points:**

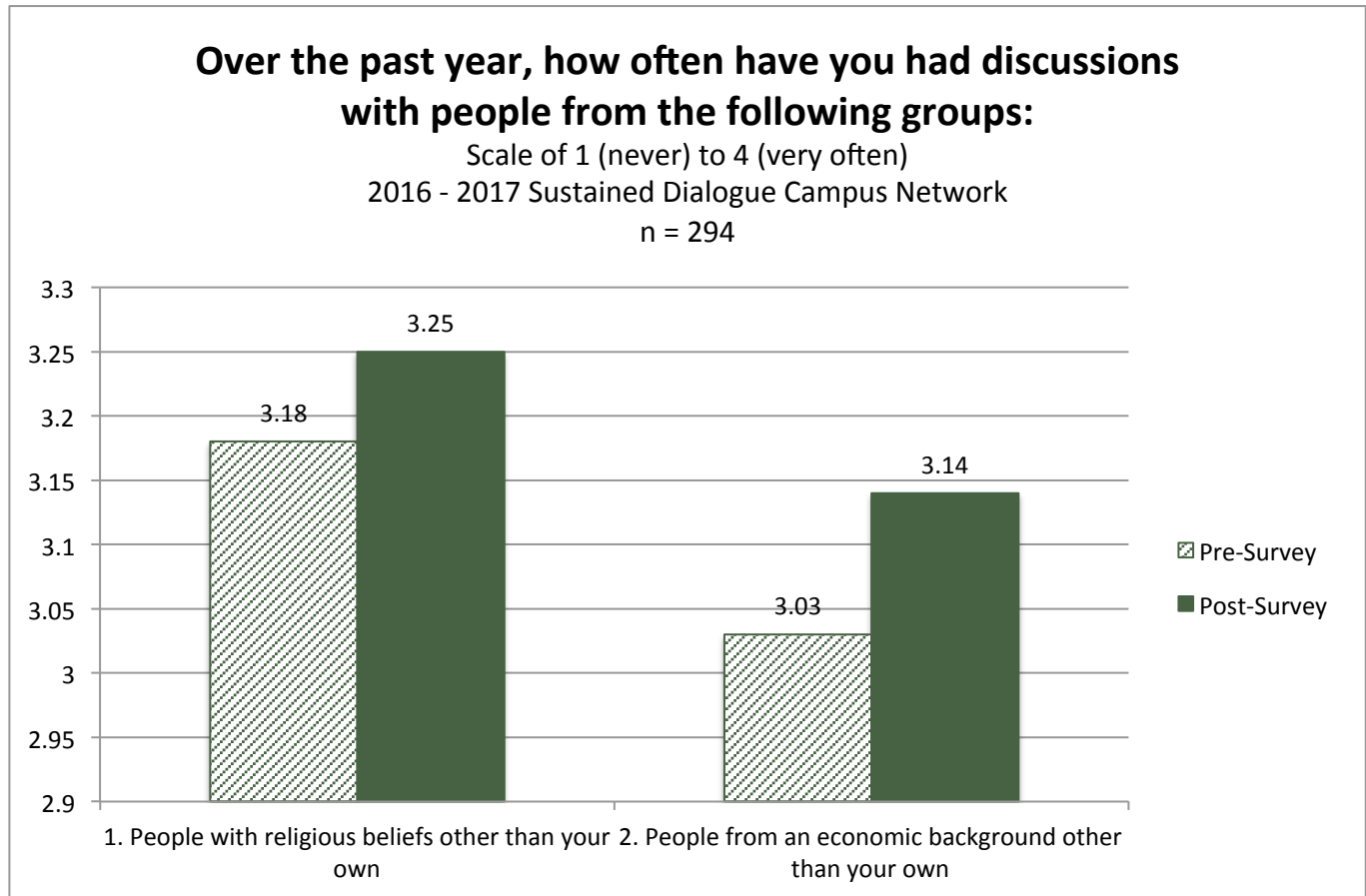
- After participating in Sustained Dialogue, respondents are **significantly more able** to:
  - “Resolve conflicts that involve bias, discrimination, and prejudice” and
  - “Lead a group where people from different backgrounds feel welcomed and included.”



**6. Over the past year, how often have you had discussions with people from the following groups:***Indicates a statistically significant result to  $p < 0.05$ \**

The following question comes from the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE)

	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Out of
1. People with religious beliefs other than your own	3.18	3.25*	4
2. People from an economic background other than your own	3.03	3.14*	4

**Talking Points:**

- After participating in Sustained Dialogue, respondents are **significantly more likely** to have discussions with people who are different from them in terms of:
  - Religious beliefs and Economic background.**





**7. Please indicate to what extent you believe there is a need to improve awareness, inter-group relations, and campus inclusiveness for each of the following:**

*Indicates a statistically significant result to  $p < 0.05$ \**

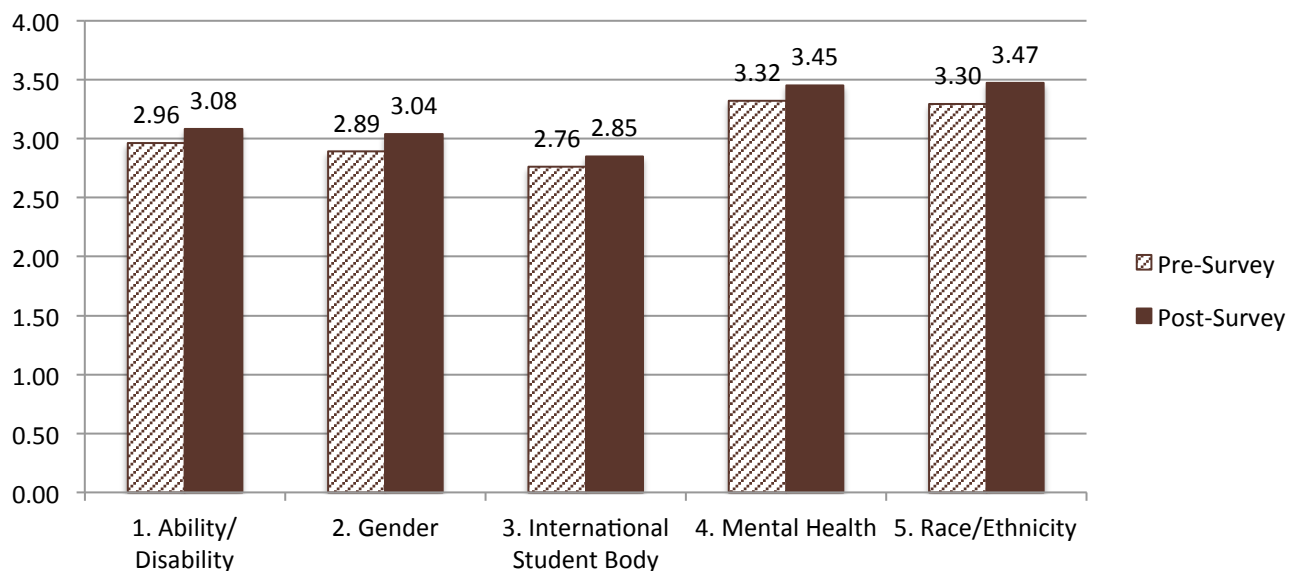
	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Out of
1. Ability/Disability	2.96	3.08*	4
2. Gender	2.89	3.04*	
3. International Student Body	2.76	2.85*	
4. Mental Health	3.32	3.45*	4
5. Race/Ethnicity	3.30	3.47*	4

**To what extent do you believe there is a need to improve awareness, inter-group relations, and campus inclusiveness for:**

Scale of 1 (not a need) to 4 (an urgent need)

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n = 294

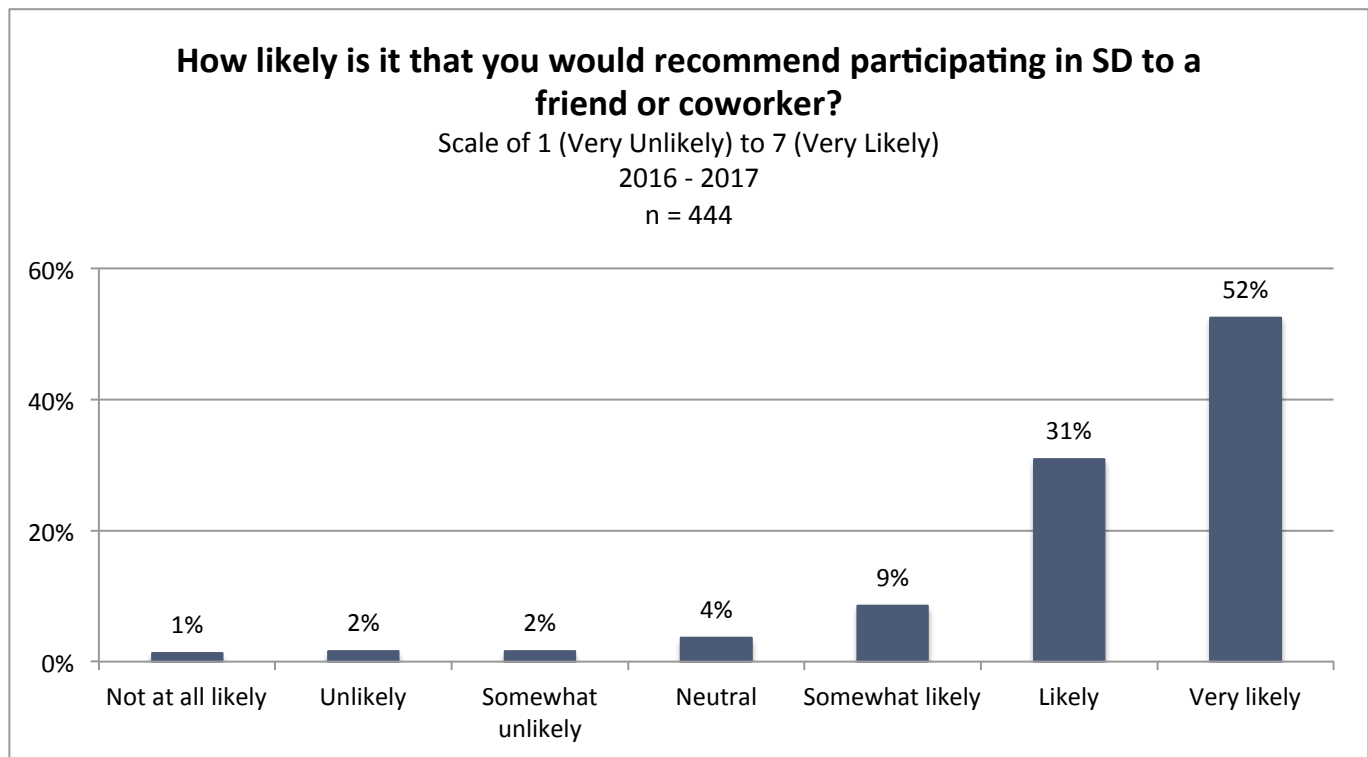


**Talking Points:**

- After participating in Sustained Dialogue, respondents demonstrate **significantly more urgency** to improve awareness, intergroup relations, and campus inclusiveness around issues relating to:
  - Ability/disability, Gender, International Student Body, Mental health, and Race/ethnicity.**



## 8. How likely is it that you would recommend participating in Sustained Dialogue to a friend?



### Talking Points:

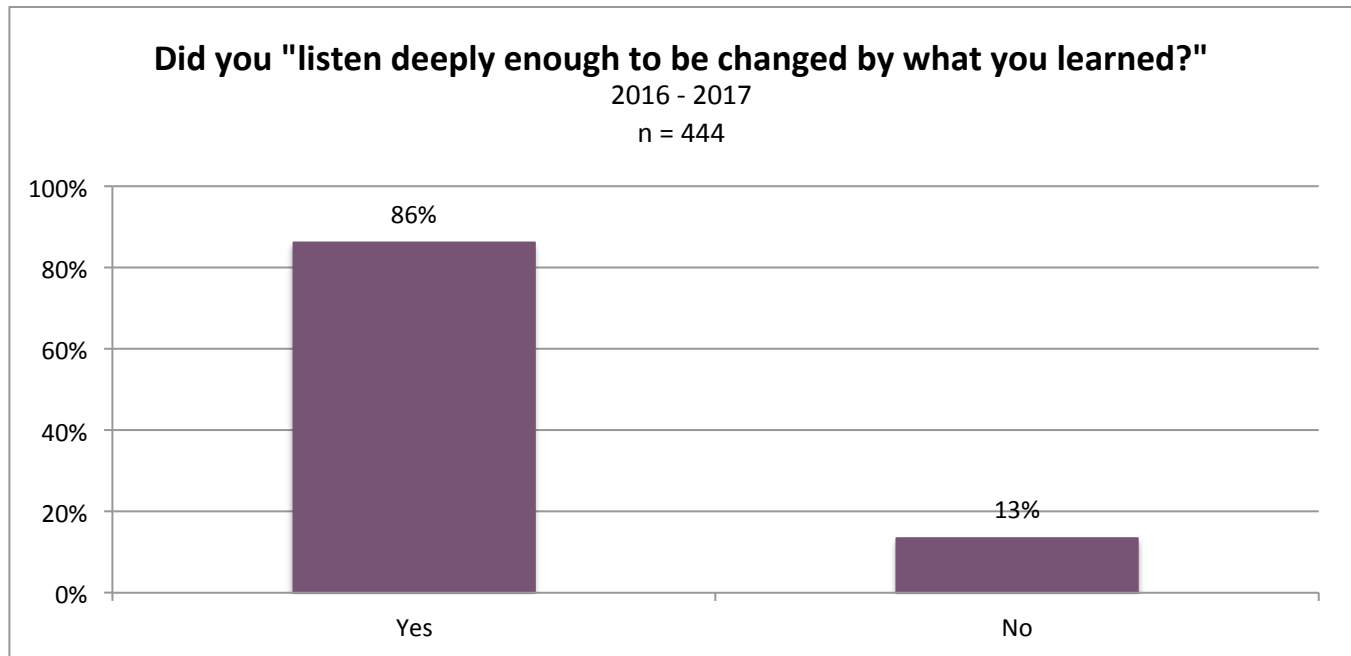
- **83% of respondents are “likely” or “very likely” to recommend SD to a friend or co-worker.**
- Only 5% are at all unlikely to recommend SD.

### Quotes:

- “Sustained Dialogue is everything.”
- “It’s really changed my perspective on life and the world I’m living in.”
- “SD has changed my entire life and prompted me to think critically and carefully in my day to day life about my own biases and beliefs. I have been challenged to listen harder when I disagree, not just in dialogue, but everywhere.”
- “Sustained Dialogue has been helpful for me in understanding critical issues that shape people’s perspectives of issues on campus.”
- “SD has been one of the most challenging and perspective changing activities I have engaged in during college. If every student took 1.5 hours a week to listen to their fellow students and expand their perspectives, the University would be a drastically different, more inclusive place.”
- “I did not know before SD a lot of the perspectives of my peers who are from different ethnicities or races or SES. Now, I am more aware of some of their issues on campus that I wasn’t before.”
- “I really enjoyed the opportunity to gain new insight and perspectives from new people. It taught me a lot about myself and others, and helped me not only grow as a leader, but gain meaningful knowledge my school, its students, and society at large.”



**9. Sustained Dialogue defines dialogue as "listening deeply enough to be changed by what you learn." Did you experience this type of dialogue?**



**Quotes:**

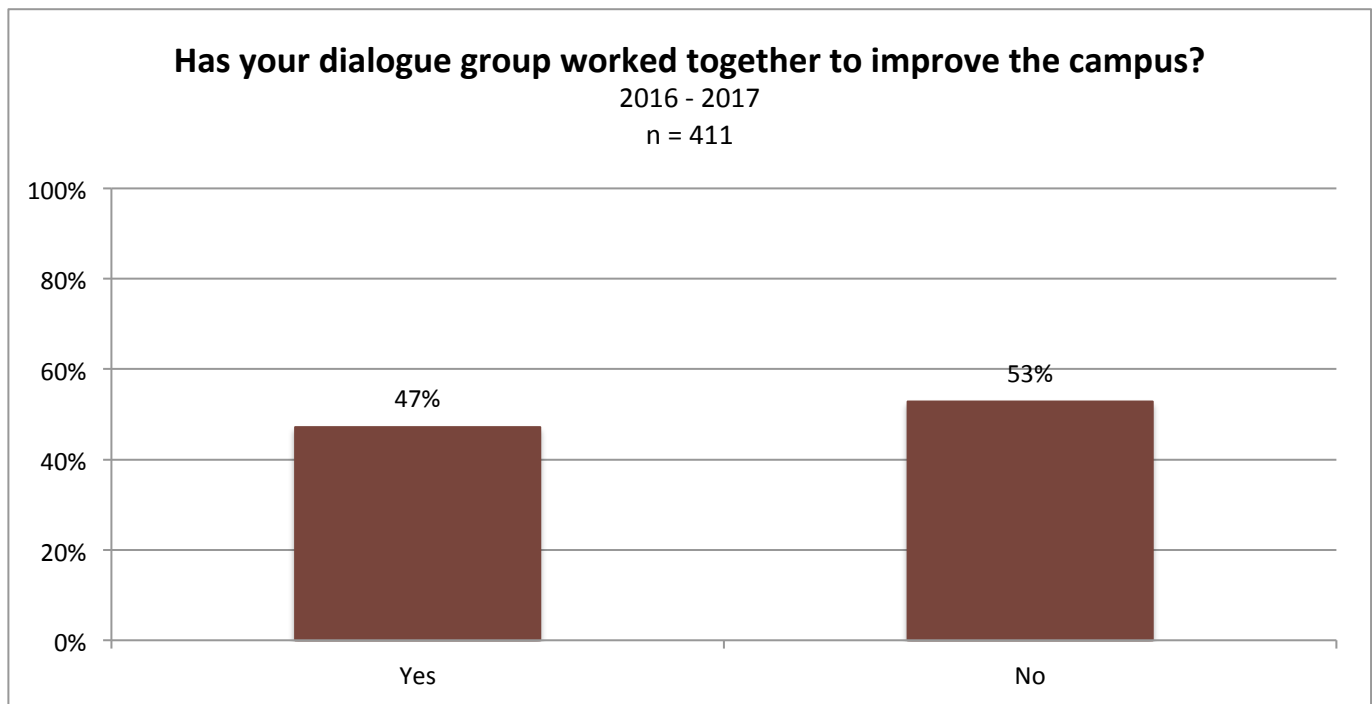
- "All of the dialogues that my group conducted this semester brought diverse perspectives and experiences to light. The intimacy with which these experiences were shared has stuck with me."
- "For me it was two-fold. First was hearing others work through their perspectives and in some cases, their painful experiences and realizations. Second was being vulnerable myself in a space where I am not accustomed to feeling unguarded and exposed."
- "I learned not to judge people because of who they are or where they come from."
- "It was consoling to understand that my own experiences are shared by other people in other units across the campus, lessening the concern that issues I experience are a product of my personal weaknesses or incompatibilities."
- "As people shared their experiences with me, I became aware that I didn't know as much as I thought I did. It certainly changed me."
- "I learned that oppression stems from anywhere and to all people. I also learned that each person's experience with it has left them feeling invalidated by society. Oppression is also a lot closer than I realized."
- "I learned that I can't judge others just because they're not speaking and opening up. I also learned that I could trust and open up to strangers in ways I never would have imagined."
- "I learned from people who felt differently from how I did, and rather than dismissing them as uninformed or wrong, I was able to listen deeply to really understand where they were coming from and why they felt the way they did."



**10. What, if anything, was most meaningful to you about your experience in SD this year?**

- “Learning to treat others as INDIVIDUALS rather than the groups they identify with, orient themselves to, or “appear” to be a part of.”
- “For a while I had a really hard time not feeling like I knew enough or could articulate enough about social issues, but this helped me realize that isn't the point, and no matter where I'm at right now I'm further than I was.”
- “Finding common ground and hearing the intimate, beautiful things that people wanted to share about themselves.”
- “Being able to be vulnerable about my own experiences and emotions was exceptionally healing. Learning from others' vulnerability, and forming connections through that vulnerability, was amazing.”
- “The sense that I was capable to be vulnerable and honest about several of my identities without fear of judgment or discrimination. It was reassuring to know that despite differences we could all respect one another's space and identities.”
- “So many things! The people I met and the relationship that we built. The passion it ignited in me to try to make a difference in students’ lives even if it's just something as simple as being a person that will listen to them without judgment or bias.”
- “The deep connections, and willingness to engage so honestly.”
- “By then end, my group had fostered an amazing sense of community and vulnerability. This is my favorite thing about SD - that over the course of a few months, a group of strangers can grow to know one another deeply. This is amazing!!”

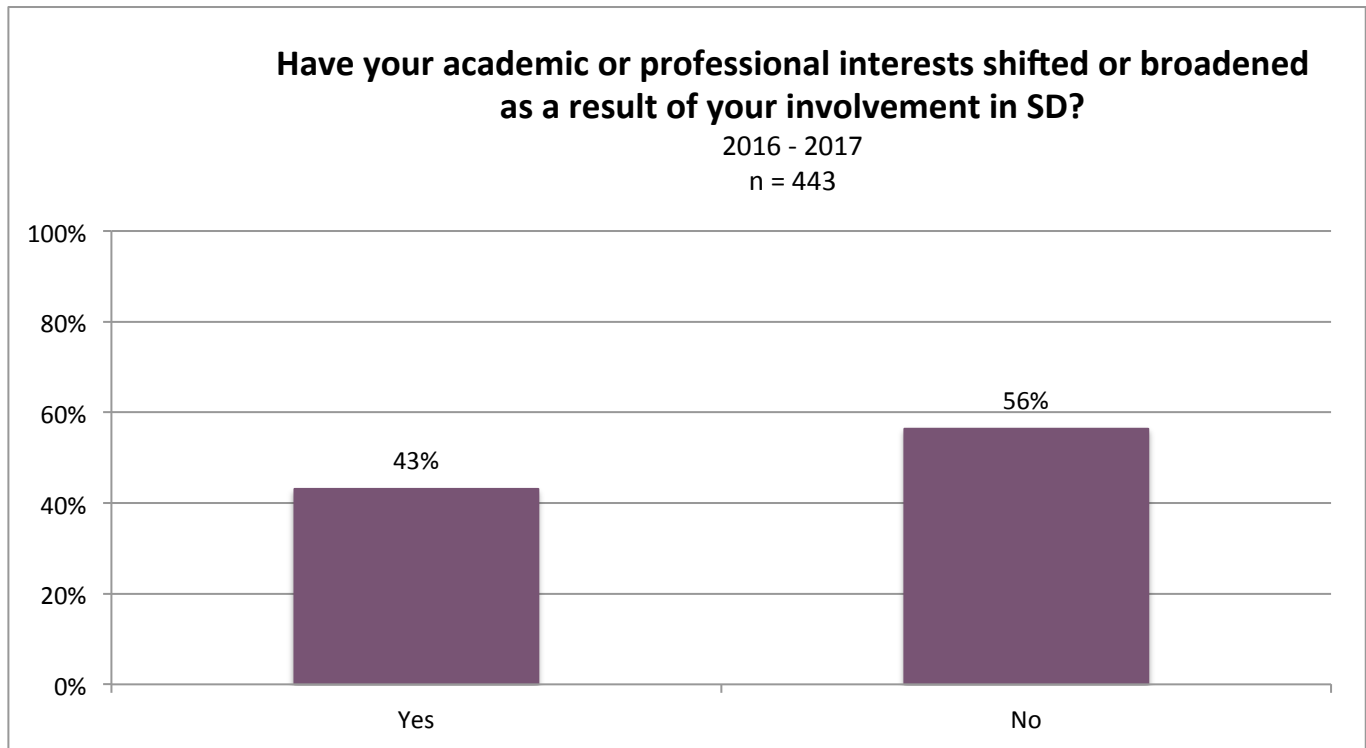


**11. Has your dialogue group worked together to improve the campus?****Examples of action projects:**

- “We hosted our 2nd annual police dialogue event this year and collaborated with our student government and black student association to do so. The event reached over 200 students and police officers.”
- “Implementing the sharing of resources on campus to first-year students from Peer Mentor/Community Advisor groups to address gaps in understanding for students in different socioeconomic statuses.”
- “We created a film “We Are Rochester”. It was a successful event--brought people from campus and ROC city professionals/students together to talk about meaningful topics across difference during event, and now film can be used as training tool for student orientation, faculty/staff development.”
- “We hosted a “Casual Conversations” event: it was well attended (80 people) and written feedback suggests meaningful conversations occurred about difficult topics across differences (students, faculty, and staff brainstormed ways to address everyday -isms on campus).”
- “We came up with a program in which we asked the students, ‘What makes you feel safe?’ We also asked additional questions such as: What can people do to make you feel safe? What would say to someone who makes other people feel unsafe? etc. Student responses were displayed along the hallway for people to see and reflect on their answers.”
- “We are hosting a session during our Winter Symposium to provide more info about people's decision to join/not join Greek life. We hope to help people feel comfortable with their choice.”



**12. Have your academic or professional interests shifted or broadened as a result of involvement in SD? If so, how?**



**Quotes:**

- “I think it would be impossible to participate in SD and not have your interests change.”
- “As an hourly employee that does pretty menial office tasks, being part of SD has made me realize that even though my job isn't rewarding I can, as an employee, participate in something that is, and gain a lot of personal and professional pride in what I'm doing.”
- “Considering changing my major to sociology & public health so I can help change the world.”
- “I am a graduate student in statistics, but after SD I think I want to read more about social issues and be well informed about what's going on in the world as a whole.”
- “I have been toying with the idea of going into law. That option seems a lot more likely because I want to help people to have a great life.”
- “I was never involved on campus until I signed up for S.D. groups. After being in a group where many staff and faculty were present, I envisioned myself working on challenging topics that effected strangers to myself. I have always been involved with talking through issues within my circles however, I never thought I would have the chance or be up to have a position of change.”
- “I'm interested in the science field and I think issues of race, disability, and socio-economic background are important aspects to consider.”
- “I've shifted toward an interest in social philosophy in my academic work, & trying to understand the social conditions that underlie a lot of the issues we face on campus & in society.”



## SUSTAINED DIALOGUE

— CAMPUS NETWORK —

Partner Campuses			
Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia)	Ahfad University for Women (Sudan)	Allegheny College	Appalachian State University
Auburn University	Augustana College	Beloit College	Case Western Reserve University
Center College	Cleveland State University	Colby-Sawyer College	Cornell College
Cuyahoga Community College	Denison University	Dickinson College	Duke University
Elon University	Earlham College	Green River College	Haramaya University (Ethiopia)
Hollins University	Jimma University (Ethiopia)	Lawrence University	Makerere University (Uganda)
Montana State University	Ntnl University of Science & Technology (Zimbabwe)	Northwestern University	Notre Dame University
Princeton University	Roger Williams University	Scripps College	Sinclair Community College
St. John Fisher College	St. Olaf College	Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville	The College of New Jersey
The Ohio State University	University of Alabama	University of California at Davis	University of Cape Town (South Africa)
University of Denver	University of Khartoum (Sudan)	University of Nebraska, Omaha	University of North Carolina, Greensboro
University of Southern California	University of Tampa	University of Virginia	

***For more information on the Sustained Dialogue Campus Network, visit [www.SustainedDialogue.org](http://www.SustainedDialogue.org) or contact [info\[at\]sustaineddialogue.org](mailto:info[at]sustaineddialogue.org)***