

Solidarity Syllabus – April 2018

Campus Solidarity

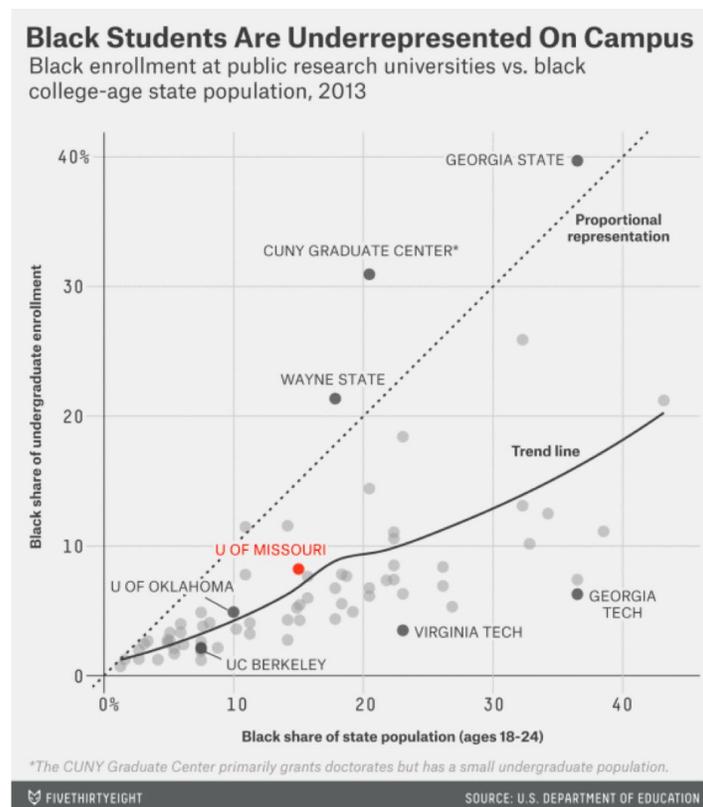
The April 2018 episode of *Solidarity Is This*, “Campus Solidarity,” is live! Host Deepa Iyer speaks with [Eesha Ramanujam](#), a recent graduate of Northeastern University and campaign researcher at [Color Of Change](#), and [Shigeru Nic Sakurai](#), Acting Director at the University of Maryland’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Equity Center.

The conversation explores the current landscape of organizing and solidarity in higher education. We ask: (1) What are the needs that students are facing? (2) How do campus activists and administrators influence campus infrastructure and the broader climate in order to advance meaningful diversity, inclusion, equity, and solidarity?

The syllabus for this month’s podcast contains an overview of information related to college campuses.

Racial breakdown on college campuses

According to [FiveThirtyEight](#), Black students are consistently underrepresented at **public research universities**, regardless of region, and the gap “tends to widen in states that have a higher percentage of black residents.”



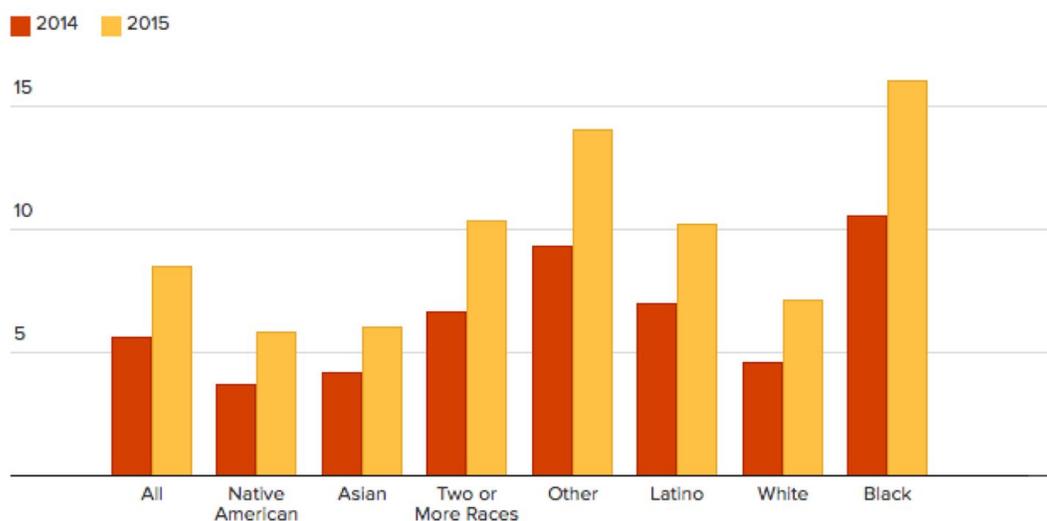
- Almost half of all **Hispanic students** attend a community college or public two-year school, [the highest percentage](#) of any racial subgroup. Among [25- to 29-year-olds](#), only 15% of Hispanic students hold a bachelor's degree.
- In 2014, [only a quarter](#) of 18- to 24-year-old **Native students** aged 18 to 24 were enrolled in a degree-granting college or university – the lowest rate of any racial group.
- **Asian students** are [demographically overrepresented](#) at selective colleges, but “they are underrepresented relative to the applicant pool.” 2010 was the first year that institutions reported **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander** enrollment separately from Asian enrollment. In 2014, “three times as many Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander undergraduate students were enrolled at for-profit institutions compared with white students.” (U.S. Dept. of Ed)

Campus Activism

In 2015, UCLA's annual [CIRP Freshman survey](#) "found that interest in political and civic engagement has reached the highest levels since the study began 50 years ago." found that almost 1 in 10 incoming freshmen expected to participate in student protests while in college.

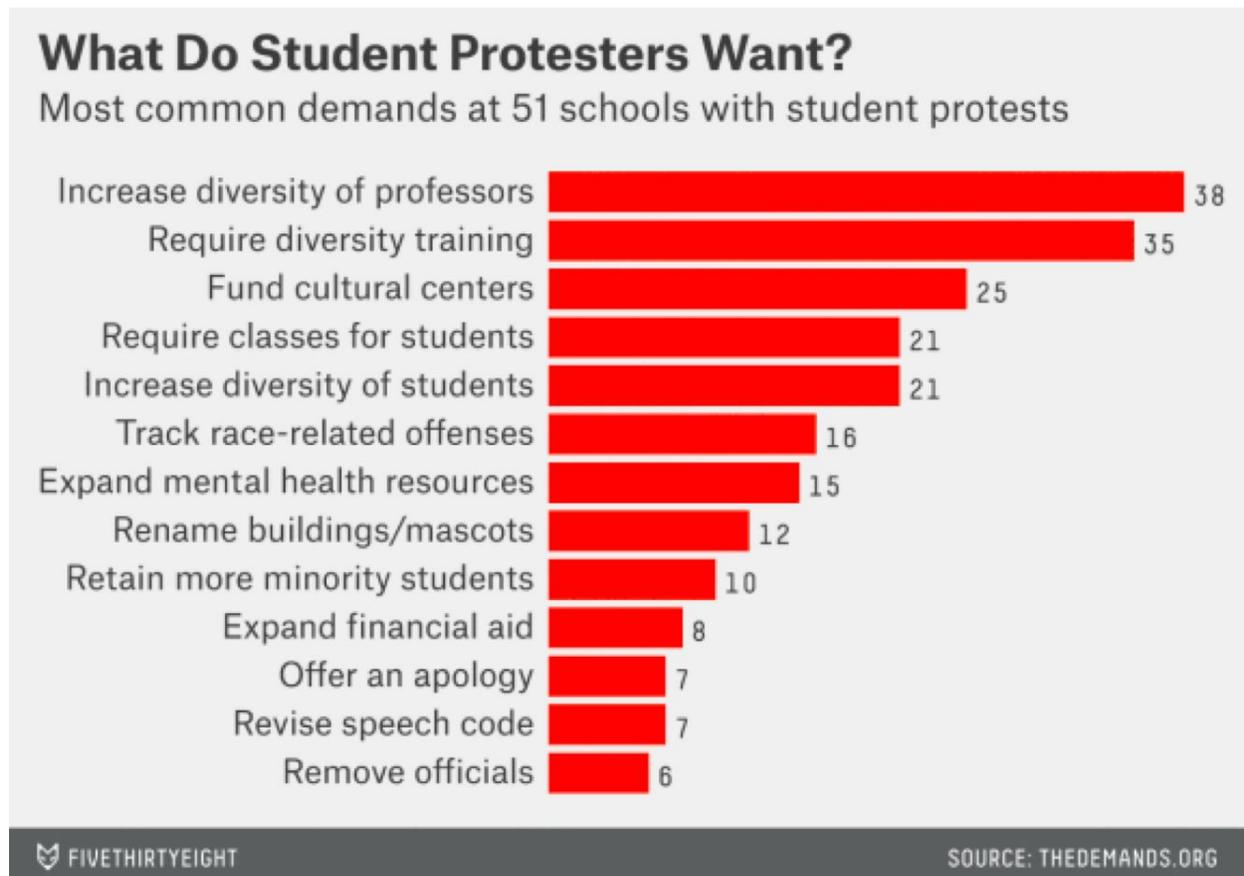
Expectations of Participating in Student Protests and Demonstrations, by Race/Ethnicity

Percentage of students that marked "a very good chance" of participating



Source: [Higher Education Research Institute](#) | [Get The Data](#) | [Embed](#)

This polling occurred before many large protests in 2015. That year, more than 80 colleges and universities across the country witnessed student protest movements [pushing back against racism](#) on campus. Campus demands were compiled at www.thedemands.org, and FiveThirtyEight broke down the most common demands in this chart:



According to the NYT, “an estimated half of all college students [struggle with food insecurity](#), even at elite flagship universities.” While college tuition costs have spiked, the wealth of most American families is on the decline, and colleges are offering less and less financial aid per student – leading to more and more students struggling with food insecurity. In 2017, students at Spelman and Morehouse staged a hunger strike to address food insecurity on college campuses, and organizations like [Swipe Out Hunger](#) and [campus food pantries](#) are working to fight this issue.

Diversity Initiatives

In November 2016, the Department of Education under the Obama Administration [published a report](#) titled “Advancing Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education,” which focused on how diversity initiatives on college campuses across the country seek to increase equity and inclusion.

Many colleges and universities now include explicit language about diversity and inclusion in their strategic plans and allocating funds to achieving these initiatives – like closing achievement gaps, hiring more faculty of color across all levels, and implementing cultural competency training.

- The University of Mississippi, The University at Albany, Southwestern University, The University of Michigan, and The University of Maryland, College Park all put forth diversity goals in their strategic plans and/or mission statements.
- The University of Illinois at Chicago, The University of Texas at Austin developed initiatives to recruit and retain underrepresented faculty. Columbia University has invested more than \$85 million in such efforts, with dedicated research grants and awards for “faculty who contribute to the diversity goals of the university.”
- The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, UT-Austin, and Rutgers University have all implemented programs which seek to recruit and mentor underrepresented high school students in their surrounding communities.
- Universities like Brown University, California State University-Fullerton have dedicated spaces and affinity groups for students of color, undocumented students, LGBTQ students, and more.

While some colleges, like the [University of Wisconsin-Madison](#), have hired staff trained to provide counseling services for minority populations, a wide range of [student activists have been demanding](#) better mental health services for students of color.

Since 2015, an increasing number of colleges and universities are giving students the option to [choose their own gender pronouns](#) during registration, including gender-neutral pronouns like ze.

Sanctuary Campus Movement

By the end of 2016, [over 30 colleges and universities](#) had adopted a range of sanctuary policies, which differ [for each campus](#).

The immigrant rights group Movimiento Cosecha helped organize the #SanctuaryCampus movement and walkouts. In conjunction with Harvard Law, Cosecha helped develop a [FAQ about the sanctuary campus movement](#) and what steps universities can take to protect undocumented students.

- The FAQ includes language from Harvard University, the University of Denver, University of Pennsylvania, and the University of California as a model for sanctuary campus policies.

These campuses refuse to allow ICE agents on campus without a warrant, extend financial aid and legal aid support services to undocumented students, and prohibits campus police from asking about immigration or citizenship status.

APRIL CALL TO ACTION!

On April 25, 2018, the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in *Hawaii v. Trump*, also known as one of the Muslim ban cases. The Trump Administration promulgated the Muslim and refugee bans a few weeks after inauguration in January 2017. Virtually every federal court has found the Muslim ban to be unconstitutional, anti-Muslim in its intent, and running afoul of a president's authority on immigration matters. As the United States Supreme Court takes up the case, please raise your voices to say #NoMuslimBanEver.

If you are in DC, join us in front of the Supreme Court to say #NoMuslimBanEver – find full details about the rally and the National Day of Action [here](#). If you won't be in DC, find a local event near you or organize your own! You can also request a guide to learn about best practices to organize and build power to resist the Muslim ban [here](#). Learn more at: <https://www.nomuslimbanever.com/>.

Gratitude to Shelby House for researching and developing the content for the April 2018 Solidarity Syllabus.