ORANGE COMMUNICATIONS

Syracuse University – Final Client Report

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NOVEMBER 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Syracuse University is a private university with approximately 14,000 undergraduate students located in Syracuse, NY. We studied Syracuse University and its methods of communication with students at times of bias-related incidents on campus. After the #NotAgainSU protests, which began in November 2019, Syracuse University faced a great deal of criticism for the ways in which they communicated with the student body about topics regarding diversity, inclusion, and safety. We conducted research in a variety of ways including a focus group, survey, and quantitative and qualitative social listening. After our research, we concluded that Syracuse University should send weekly emails to the student body with updates on potential bias-related incidents with transparency about why they're sharing and/or withholding certain information. We would also recommend that Syracuse University develop a comprehensive resource and decision-making guide with a standard procedure for what to do when issues like this arise in the future. Our final recommendation is to revise the curriculum at Syracuse University to engage both students and faculty in discussions about diversity and inclusion.

PROBLEM AND OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Syracuse University is a private university that promotes learning through teaching, research, scholarship, creative accomplishment and service. Over the last 5 years Syracuse University has seen a myriad of hateful and racially biased incidents against students, and people, of color, leading to discontent and unease amongst the student population and the Syracuse community. There has been a lack of transparency from the university in response to issues regarding racial bias incidents when they occur. #NotAgainSU has found the administration complicit in covering up such incidents and believes they can do more to educate students about anti-racism. Additionally, #NotAgainSU is calling for more resources for minority students as well as education for the entire SU community. As a consequence of the issues on campus, there have been sit-in protests, and the hashtag #NotAgainSU was created in response to the series of hateful incidents. But most importantly, students of color feel uncomfortable and unwelcome in their own homes. The research will help the university determine how to make the campus community anti-racist and a more welcoming environment for all students. In addition, this will inform Syracuse how to appropriately react to student protests in the future.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Internal Factors

Accessibility to information (For The Media, 2020)

The university has a website dedicated to Syracuse news and contacts for media inquiries. In addition, there is a website users can access in order to see a timeline on the progress made and ongoing efforts in relation to diversity and inclusion commitments.

Big budget available (Fiscal Year 2020 Budget, 2020)

A greater portion of the budget can be allocated to diversity and inclusion, commitments or facilities dedicated to students of color and minority groups, or programs for students and faculty.

Brand recognition

Syracuse University is a well-known school with notable alumni and reputation, which helped the stories from students be heard on a larger scale.

Network (Syracuse University Alumni Association, 2020)

Syracuse University values the alumni network as well as the network with professionals in various fields, providing opportunities for students to connect through career fairs and guest speakers. This could aid students during times of need and be a resource to faculty as well.

Lack of educational commitment to diversity and inclusion (Campus Commitments to Diversity and Inclusion, 2020)

Students have felt that there could be changes made to the SEM 100 course, or other educational measures taken to start a conversation on sensitive topics.

Timeliness of response (Craner & Hayes, 2020)

Some students felt there was an issue with the timeliness of the administration's reports on the investigations.

DPS's response (Hippensteel, 2020)

Some students felt as though DPS's response lacked support toward them during their protests and that they weren't being transparent with their protocol, as some of it was prohibited from being disclosed.

Lack of diversity in leadership (Syracuse University's Board of Trustees, 2020)

Students may feel as though the school environment is less inclusive because of the lack of diversity they saw on campus, or feel like they weren't being represented.

External Factors

Competition (Compare Colleges, 2020)

There are hundreds of medium-large sized private universities available to potential students in the United States, or even globally. Most of them have not been in national news because of racist incidents. Any one of these competitors might look more appealing to a potential student for numerous reasons including inclusivity, safety, and student atmosphere.

National Media Coverage (Randle, 2019)

Throughout the #NOTAGAINSU student led protests, protestors were able to get in touch with national media networks including USA Today, Teen Vogue, The New York Times, BET, and CNN. These news networks are looking for a story, in this case it amplified the poor treatment of students of color. This did not reflect Syracuse University well nationally.

Continuous Hate Crimes and Racist Incidents (Meyer, 2020)

Syracuse University continuously has had hate crimes happen on campus each year, whether that be from students, professors or just guests passing through the community. In this instance, Syracuse is a microcosm of the entire United States in terms of civil unrest for the treatment of People of Color by institutions.

Existing Inequalities in Syracuse (Weiner, 2019)

Syracuse University is located in Syracuse, New York a city known for being one of the most racially divided cities in the country. Recent racial injustices across the country have

brought to light the privileges wealthy white institutions have taken advantage of in Black and Brown Communities.

SWOT Analysis

- Strengths
  - Accessibility to information (For The Media, 2020)
    - The university has a website dedicated to Syracuse news and contacts for media inquiries. In addition, there is a website that users can access in order to see a timeline on the progress made and ongoing efforts in relation to diversity and inclusion commitments.
  - Big budget available (Fiscal Year 2020 Budget, 2020)
    - A greater portion of the budget can be allocated to diversity and inclusion, commitments or facilities dedicated to students of color and minority groups, or programs for students and faculty.
  - Brand recognition
    - Syracuse University is a well-known school with notable alumni and reputation, which helped the stories from students be heard on a larger scale.
  - Network (Syracuse University Alumni Association, 2020)
    - Syracuse University values the alumni network as well as the network with professionals in various fields, providing opportunities for students to connect through career fairs and guest speakers. This could aid students during times of need and be a resource to faculty as well.
- Weaknesses
  - Lack of educational commitment to diversity and inclusion (Campus Commitments to Diversity and Inclusion, 2020)
    - Students have felt that there could be changes made to the SEM 100 course, or other educational measures taken to start a conversation on sensitive topics.
  - Timeliness of response (Craner & Hayes, 2020)
    - Some students felt there was an issue with the timeliness of the administration's reports on the investigations.
  - DPS's response (Hippensteel, 2020)
    - Some students felt as though DPS's response lacked support toward them during their protests and that they weren't being transparent with their protocol, as some of it was prohibited from being disclosed.

- ○ Lack of diversity in leadership (Syracuse University's Board of Trustees, 2020)
    - ■ Students may feel as though the school environment is less inclusive because of the lack of diversity they saw on campus or feel like they weren't being represented.
- Opportunities
    - ○ Two-Way Communication (U.S. Department of Education, 2016)
        - ■ SU can improve its relationship with the student body by establishing additional channels of two-way communication; for example, it could hold open forums for discussion.
    - ○ Diversity and Inclusion Curriculum (McMahon, 2020)
        - ■ Syracuse University should integrate more opportunities for students to learn about diversity & inclusion within the course curriculum at SU.
    - ○ Expand Multicultural Living and Learning Communities (McMahon, 2020)
        - ■ By doing so, BIPOC students may feel more comfortable with their living situation in residence halls on campus.
    - ○ Create additional scholarships for BIPOC students. (McMahon, 2020)
        - ■ This will help close the gap in financial disparities between white and BIPOC students.
        - ■ In addition, more scholarship opportunities may encourage more minority students to apply.
    - ○ Generate partnerships with organizations from different regions of the world (U.S. Department of Education, 2016)
        - ■ This will provide opportunities for new perspectives and ideas in regard to diversity & inclusion on SU's campus.
    - ○ Appoint additional individual(s) to oversee the implementation of diversity & inclusion initiatives. (McMahon, 2020)
- Threats
    - ○ Competition (Compare Colleges, 2020)
        - ■ There are hundreds of medium-large sized private universities available to potential students in the United States, or even globally. Most of them have not been on the national news because of racist incidents. Any one of these competitors might look more appealing to a potential student for numerous reasons including inclusivity, safety, and student atmosphere.
    - ○ National Media Coverage (Randle, 2019)
        - ■ Throughout the #NOTAGAINSU student-led protests, protestors were able to get in touch with national media networks including USA Today, Teen Vogue, The New York Times, BET, and CNN. These news networks are looking for a story, in this case, it amplified the poor treatment of students of color. This did not reflect Syracuse University well nationally.

- Continuous Hate Crimes and Racist Incidents (Meyer, 2020)
    - Syracuse University continuously has had hate crimes happen on campus each year, whether that be from students, professors, or just guests passing through the community. In this instance, Syracuse is a microcosm of the entire United States in terms of civil unrest for the treatment of People of Color by institutions.
- Existing Inequalities in Syracuse (Weiner, 2019)
    - Syracuse University is located in Syracuse, New York a city known for being one of the most racially divided cities in the country. Recent racial injustices across the country have brought to light the privileges wealthy white institutions have taken advantage of in Black and Brown Communities.

KEY PUBLICS

Our key publics' ages range from mainly 18-22 years old; however, some individuals are older if they are graduate students. The gender breakdown for Syracuse University is 54% female and 46% male students. The student body includes individuals from all 50 states and approximately 123 countries. Syracuse University students are typically unmarried, and some are in relationships. Students tend to have limited disposable income. Some students work part-time jobs when not in class, and typically make hourly wages. Syracuse students desire to receive a degree in their respective fields of study. Additionally, they want to learn and grow both personally and professionally, and eventually find a job. Students are interested in learning and growing as individuals. In addition, they are interested in meeting new people and forming connections. Students need a safe and supportive campus in order to flourish in their learning environment. Moreover, students need a place where they can be themselves and express their beliefs, ideals and preferences, freely. Students expect to go to school on a campus that is open and accepting. Additionally, they expect to be surrounded by professors and administrators who want to see them do well in their degree and beyond. Lastly, they expect to be prepared for a job and life after college.

Evan, 20

      Evan is a 20-year-old white male. He grew up in central New Jersey and is the youngest of two boys. He is studying nutrition and came to Syracuse because he was offered the opportunity to row on a Division I team. He has been rowing for over eight years. Evan enjoys the benefits of being a Student-Athlete on a large college campus.

      Evan had not been educated on Diversity and Inclusion before coming to Syracuse. Evan participated in Sem 100 and his mandatory diversity courses. Evan enjoyed these courses and chose not to take more beyond the requirements.

      Evan believes Syracuse has an overarching communication problem and was not pleased with the way they handled the #NOTAGAINSU movement. Evan was disappointed that so much discussion was left to the professors which took away from class time. He would have hoped for more community discussion through forums.

<u>Abby, 20</u>

      Abby is a 20-year-old white female. She grew up in central Maryland and is the youngest of her family with one older brother. She is a policy studies and international relations major and came to Syracuse to enjoy the extensive alumni network and to join Greek life.

      Abby had not had Diversity and inclusion training before coming to college. Abby participated in Sem 100 and has taken the mandatory diversity classes for her majors. She has also received training from being in Greek life and at her job. Abby enjoyed these courses and feels that her perspective on these issues has changed since her education.

      Abby was disheartened by the University's response to the #NOTAGAINSU movement. She was pleased that professors openly welcomed discussion of the current campus events. Abby attended protests and donated supplies when she could. She still does not think all the issues presented with racism on campus have been remedied.
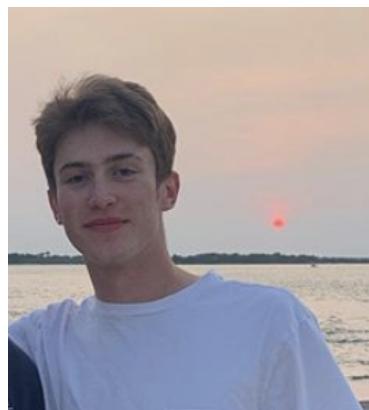
John, 20

     John is a 20-year-old white male from Long Island. He is the oldest of two boys. He is an economics major and came to Syracuse because of its campus and its distance from home.

     John had brief diversity training in his high school, but the majority of his education has come Sem 100. John has not had any other training yet but looks forward to learning more.

     John thought the University took too long to respond and thought it was confusing once it was released. He felt it was laughable as Syracuse boasts the number one communications school, yet the response was so lackluster. John feels the University's response disrupted his education but appreciated the professors being so understanding of the ongoing situations.

Courtney, 20

     Courtney is a 20-year-old white female from Marin County, California. She has one older sister, Lauren, who is three years older. Courtney is pursuing a bachelor of fine arts in studio arts, with a focus in ceramics, in the school of Visual and Performing Arts.

     Prior to her time at Syracuse University, Courtney had virtually no discussions about race and ethnicity incorporated into her education. She grew up in a very white and upper-middle-class area, and felt that these conversations were never made a priority. Courtney's first real experience with discussing D&I in an educational setting was in her SEM100 which she believes was a good start but there could have been more courses to further these important discussions.

During the #NOTAGAINSU movement, Courtney was shocked by the administration's lack of communication. Furthermore, she believes they could have put more protective measures in place to ensure students felt safe on campus. Going forward, Courtney hopes the SU administration is more open and honest about incidents that occur on campus, rather than sweep these issues under the rug, and make more of an effort to facilitate important conversations about race.

Casey, 20

Casey is a white female and is 20 years old. She grew up in Georgetown, Massachusetts, where she lived for 18 years with her mother, father and younger sister. Casey chose Syracuse University based on her interest in the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, where she is currently a junior studying advertising. Additionally, Casey is pursuing a minor in Information Management and Technology.

Prior to attending Syracuse University, Casey had little to no experience with conversations about race or diversity and inclusion. Presently, Casey is a member of the Eta Chapter of Alpha Xi Delta sorority where she received diversity and inclusion training and often has open conversations with her sorority sisters about race. In addition, she has had some discussions about race in her classes but feels these conversations should be a more foundational part of a college education.

In response to the #NOTAGAINSU movement, Casey thought that the school didn't do enough to condemn the racist incidents that took place. She felt that the school only addressed the issues once the movement gained momentum in the media. However, she believes that one

positive that came out of it was the students and faculty's ability to come together and support BIPOC individuals. In the future, Casey hopes students will educate themselves about these important issues, and that the school will be more open and honest when these incidents occur.

<u>Anna, 20</u>

Anna is a 20 year old female from Malden, MA, living in Syracuse, NY. She is a Citizenship and Civic Engagement and Political Philosophy major in her third year at Syracuse University. She is involved in Alpha Xi Delta and Alpha Phi Omega, and she volunteers as a part of her major. She gets her news primarily from New York Times, Boston Globe, and social media. She expects Syracuse University to create the diverse environment that they advertise and to help foster communities for BIPOC students. When there's a bias-related incident on campus she expects Syracuse University to notify the students and do everything they can to find the source of the problem.

<u>Carolyn, 20</u>

Carolyn is a 20-year-old female from Ridgefield, CT studying public health in her third year at Syracuse University. She regularly consumes media through streaming services and social media and she gets her news from social media. She expects Syracuse University to put in an effort to bring in more low-income students, and she suggested one way would be to utilize the POSSE program. When there are bias-related incidents on campus, she expects Syracuse University to immediately notify students of what happened and how their safety may be impacted.

<u>Olivia, 20</u>

Olivia is a 20-year-old female from Ossining, NY in her third year studying economics at Syracuse University in Syracuse, NY. She is involved in Alpha Xi Delta women's fraternity. She regularly consumes media via social media, streaming services, and the radio, and she gets her news from Twitter, CNN, and New York Times. She says she now has low expectations of Syracuse University in terms of diversity and inclusion because she's witnessed things being minimized and swept under the rug, but her expectations for students have been exceeded by the student body taking a stand and creating the #NotAgainSU movement.

Yuri, 20

Yuri is a 20-year-old female from Palisades Park, New Jersey. She's a third-year studying advertising at Syracuse University. Yuri is constantly interacting with social media and oftentimes uses it as a tool to communicate with others. She gets instant and quick news from platforms like Twitter, while also being subscribed to emails from the New York Times. She understands that she needs to fact-check information she finds on social media. In terms of diversity and inclusion at Syracuse University, she expects a more diverse enrollment of students and hopes to see more programs for people of all backgrounds to bond. She enjoys planning her future and expects her time at university to aid her in pursuing her goals.

Ina, 20

Ina is a 20-year-old female from Secaucus, New Jersey. She's a third-year student majoring in architecture. She consumes information from social media and online news outlets. Ina communicates with others mostly through text but prefers calling or in-person communication. She hopes Syracuse University would implement educational tools for the mission of diversity and inclusion on campus. She considers herself an open-minded person and wishes for the same with students and their interactions with each other.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To find the most preferred, effective channels for Syracuse University to utilize two-way communication most effectively with its key publics in a time of crisis.

2. To establish the best ways to enhance learning and training experiences for diversity and inclusion and educate on racism and inequality on Syracuse's campus.

3. Finding ways to remove systemic barriers and unconscious biases to diversity and inclusion at Syracuse University.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology

To achieve detailed answers to our research objectives, we used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods to better fit the needs of our client, Syracuse University. Within Qualitative research, we held a focus group with 9 participants to deepen our conversation about Syracuse University's communication methods and how effective they are. We also facilitated qualitative social listening with the use of Social Studio and analyzing responses on social platforms by using keywords of "NOTAGAINSU" and "Syracuse University." Quantitative methods included a Qualtrics survey that analyzed over 100 respondents' responses to 22 questions about diversity and inclusion and participation in NOTAGINSUevents. Another set of social listening was performed quantitatively by coding public opinion posted on social platforms.

Research Method 1: Focus Group

Sampling Frame: The sampling frame for the focus group includes both female and male Syracuse students both undergraduate and graduate who were current students during the Fall of 2019, whether on campus or abroad.

Rationale: Through the focus group interviews, we aimed to achieve a more nuanced understanding of the University's best communication practices, how the University can improve and how people participated in #NOTAGAINSU protests. We did so by encouraging participants to share their ideas on what had worked and what hadn't at the time of the incidents. We intended to create an open discussion in which students could share their perspectives and better understand their peers' sentiments regarding the campus climate.

Execution: The recruiting method we used was convenience sampling. We held the focus group on Zoom and it lasted for approximately 40 minutes. There were nine participants whose incentive was the opportunity to openly discuss issues on campus and the way the university communicates about them.

Data Analysis Method: The data analysis method we used was the qualitative content analysis method.

Research Method 2: Quantitative Social Listening

Sampling Frame: Our topic profile was Syracuse University and the keywords we used were diversity, inclusion, and D&I.

Rationale: We wanted to get data on Syracuse University, but wanted to specifically get information on Syracuse University's diversity and inclusion. We wanted to see what the overall sentiment was in terms of D&I and Syracuse University as well as how popular the conversation of D&I is surrounding Syracuse University, nearly a year after the initial #NotAgainSU protests.

Execution: We used Social Studio in order to conduct our quantitative social listening research. Our search criteria yielded a result including 45 social media posts across different platforms.

Data Analysis Method: The data analysis method we used was the Social Studio Sentiment Model and quantitative social listening

Research Method 3: Qualitative Social Listening

Sampling Frame: On November 3, 2020, we used the topic profile "Syracuse University" and keywords "diversity", "inclusion", and "D&I" to collect data in English from the United States.

Rationale: Using this method, we intended to observe the general sentiment regarding Syracuse University and the incidents that occurred in November. We were able to garner a more holistic understanding, as the sentiments didn't specifically pertain to diversity and inclusion, but the university itself. In addition, the collection of data wasn't limited to the current student body but was open to anyone sharing their opinions or perspectives about the University.

Execution: We used Social Studio to observe social media posts related to the bias-related incidents which took place on campus and the #NotAgainSU movement. Our search query yielded a total of 45 social media posts from September 6 through November 3.

Data Analysis Method: The data analysis method we used was the Social Studio Sentiment Model and qualitative social listening.

Research Method 4: Survey

Sampling Frame: The sampling frame for the online survey includes both female and male Syracuse students both undergraduate and graduate who were current students during the Fall of 2019, whether on campus or abroad.

Rationale: After the focus group we had an understanding of Syracuse University's greater communication issues. So, for the survey, we focused on research objective 3 and gathering data on diversity and inclusion issues on campus. This data will help us better

prepare a recommendation for our client about how to respond to a lack of diversity and inclusion in the future.

Execution: The recruiting method we used for our survey was snowball sampling. We launched our survey online via Qualtrics and it was 22 questions long. There was no incentive for participation and we got 135 responses.

Data Analysis Method: The data analysis method we used was Qualtrics Data Analysis.

RESULTS

Results & Analysis - Focus Group

Respondents Name	Respondents Age	Respondents year at Syracuse	Gender
Evan Kinter	20	Junior	Male
Abby Habrowski	20	Junior	Female
Rachel Della Pelle	20	Junior	Female
Jonathan Danilich	21	Junior	Male
Sydney Markson	20	Junior	Female
Sameeha Saied	21	Senior	Female
Laura Goldin	20	Junior	Female
Lily O'Connell	20	Junior	Female
Andrea Lan	20	Junior	Female

Theme One: The Effects on Students

Some students in our focus group expressed that the lack of diversity and inclusion efforts have negatively affected their learning experience, which they felt needed to be accommodated for. Sameeha said, "I also think you need to be able to create a safe space for marginalized identities because there are serious mental health repercussions when those measures are not put in place and then it makes it a lot more difficult to take advantage of your education and really engage with it." Similarly, Sydney expressed, "I just know that for me it was hard going to class because you know there could be a protest somewhere and it was hard because you want to participate but there were times I wanted to go to class. So it was kind of looming over, the situation kind of, what someone was saying before, which was hard." These

students found it difficult to balance their participation in both the protests and their academics, because the incidents took a toll on their mental health.

Theme Two: The University's Overwhelming Communication Problem

Secondly, some students attributed one of the issues to the university's difficulty communicating with the students in such a time of crisis. Sameeha said that "this was a very important issue that deserved very quick responses and very transparent attention and they weren't able to give it that because of the way that it ran before these things happened so I think they just need to be a lot better about being responsive and communicative with students." Even though most of them were willing to acknowledge the inevitable buffer due to the investigative process, as Sameeha mentioned, some thought the issue was that "they just never explained it and assumed everyone would know that and wouldn't be mad at them for the way they were going about it but I think they needed to tell people because we're college students and we don't know how investigations work, so making sure we at least know what's going on there so we're not getting angry when we don't see the email." Students would like to be updated frequently, even if that requires being transparent about the lack of information at the current time. Some felt that this was an issue because it wasn't made clear what was happening, furthering frustration and confusion.

Theme Three: Lack of Trust

Finally, some students expressed concern over the conflict between the university and the students, which also caused divisive relationships. Andrea said, "I think I hope that there's also more community and trust amongst the University and the students, because I feel like right now everything is really divided and students are really quick to be hypercritical of the things that the University is doing, and just understanding the fact that it is an institution and things take time to change but there is change happening so i hope that there is more of a sense of trust and community." Some felt that the divisive nature was due to the difference in priorities, and the lack of trust students had toward the university worsened. As Lily said, "I think it just showed some of the priorities of the university and their lack of respect for our voices as students on this

campus." As Andrea mentioned, things take time to change, and there needs to be a greater sense of community instead of being so quick to be hypercritical. This takes an effort on the side of the students to be patient and understanding, instead of adding fire to the fuel and further dividing relationships.

Three Interesting & Important Cases

1- Many students participating in the focus group saw the activism of #NOTAGAINSU as a good thing for the school as it opened the door for some important conversations and is hoping to make Syracuse a better place for all its students. Lily mentioned that it was an important learning experience for both the students and the university, especially on "how to handle situations and how to go about change." This was an interesting perspective because it took a less critical perspective on the university's responsibilities and acknowledged the good that has come out of this incident.

2. Some expressed the need for creating a sense of unity instead of making the relationship between students and the university more divisive than it already was. Andrea said that she felt as if "students are really quick to be hypercritical of the things that the University is doing," and emphasizes "the fact that it is an institution and things take time to change but there is change happening." She hopes "that there is more of a sense of trust and community." This was interesting and important because, even though she acknowledges it is an emotionally charged and sensitive issue, she recognizes the need for patience and time.

3. Students felt under duress during these protests and felt that their education was being disturbed because they were forced to choose between going to class, protesting, or both. Though some acknowledged that their professors were mostly understanding and flexible, some felt that there was a lack of standardization on their decisions. Abigail said, "a lot of my professors actually had excused absences or like they required no attendance for like the last two weeks of the first semester and the last week before Thanksgiving for students who wanted to participate in the protests. I thought it was really cool that they were so open to that." However, Sydney said

that "it was hard going to class because you know there could be a protest somewhere and it was hard because you want to participate but there were times I wanted to go to class." This is interesting because it indicates different experiences depending on the decisions of professors and highlights the need for a more unified response in terms of attendance.

Results & Analysis - Quantitative Social Listening
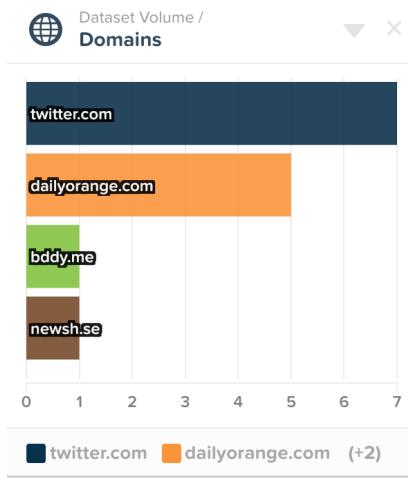
- Most mentions of #NotAgainSU are taking place on either Twitter (50%) or on the websites of campus publications like the Daily Orange (35%) or the Newshouse (7%). This graph portrays a significantly higher number of mentions on those platforms compared to others. This is likely due to the audience that most predominantly cares about the topic of #NotAgainSU are students at Syracuse University.
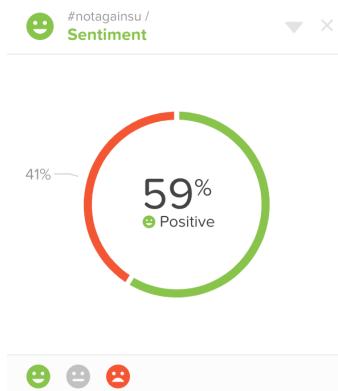
- There's a 59% positive sentiment for #NotAgainSU while there was a 41% negative sentiment. However, this data is slightly skewed, because there were posts being marked as "negative" sentiment when only six posts truly showed a negative sentiment towards things the university has done. This data shows that while the majority of sentiment is positive, there is still some negative sentiment in regard to #NotAgainSU. The remainder were posts about things that #NotAgainSU protestors have done or written.
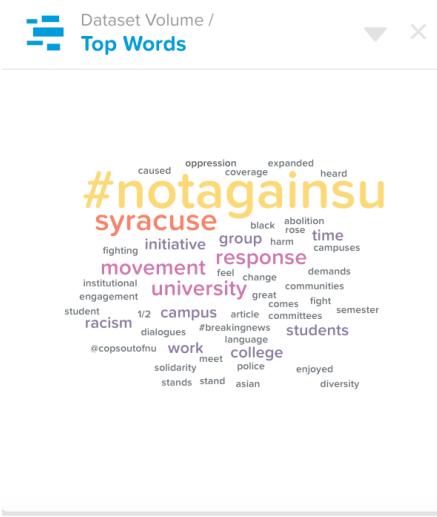
- These are the words most frequently used in posts about #NotAgainSU are movement, response, and university. The words that are larger and in color indicate those which were used the most often. 48 of the posts reviewed featured the term #NotAgainSU. There were also 11 posts mentioning "racism" and seven posts mentioning "initiatives." The data shows that most of the top words were used to be descriptive, detailing what the movement is doing rather than invoking a certain response to it.
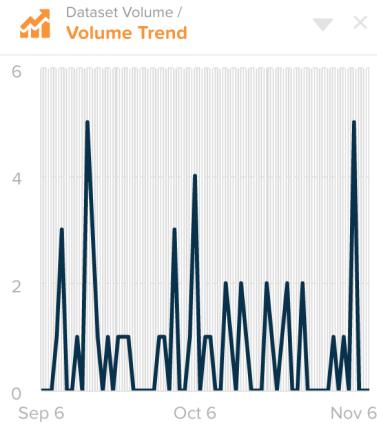
- We started tracking data on September 6th and tracked through November 7th. There was never a large spike in posts about #NotAgainSU or Syracuse University's diversity and inclusion issues. There was never a day with more than six posts about the topic, although there were two different instances where there were up to five posts in a day. One of these spikes took place on September 15th, when there was an article written and reshared across multiple platforms by the Daily Orange. The other instance was on November 6th, when #NotAgainSU supporters were using social media to show support for @CopsOutOfNU, a similar organization at Northwestern University in Chicago, IL. Thus, significant or related events prompt individuals to post more on social media.

Results & Analysis - Qualitative Social Listening

- Theme 1- Continued Activism: Although the bulk of the #NOTAGAINSU protests took place in the fall of 2019 the movement continues to spread their message in support of bettering SU to be more diverse and inclusive, but also recognizing organizations at other colleges and universities that need their support. This is important for Syracuse University to recognize because it is clear that the #NotAgainSU movement didn't end last year. The student body will likely continue to protest and hold the university accountable for the commitments it's made.

- Theme 2- Sem 100: Many students and organizations have called out SEM 100 as a lackluster introduction to diversity and inclusion, claiming it should do more for the student body. Syracuse University will want to pay attention to this because it's a threat to

the organization. If students continue to outwardly express their disappointment, that will result in bad press for the university, which is never a good thing. The best way to stop the criticism is to improve the curriculum of the course.

- Theme 3- Slow Moving Responses: Many social media users have called out Syracuse on their reluctance to adapt to the conditions agreed upon by both Syracuse Administration and the #NOTAGAINSU movement. Users stated their anger that many committees wouldn't be meeting this semester that would help foster implementation. The university should note this disappointment and find ways to transparently communicate about why things are moving slowly, as well as find ways they can reprioritize projects to get these initiatives completed.

- Interesting & Important Cases

Simon {BLM ACAB}   18d
@graffitihotdog

Michaela
@Michaela_Vivona
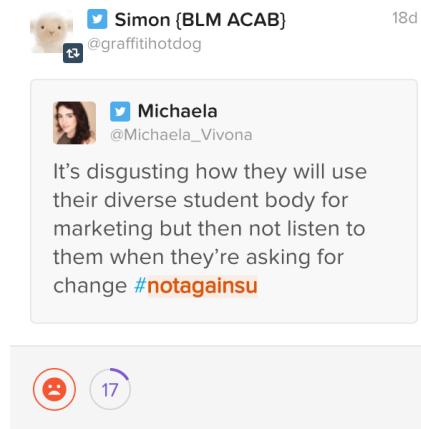
It's disgusting how they will use their diverse student body for marketing but then not listen to them when they're asking for change #notagainsu

17

In this Tweet, the user calls out Syracuse University for tokenizing minority students in order to make itself look better. It is important to be aware of this type of negative sentiment towards Syracuse University so it can respond to such concerns.

New content, not reviewed
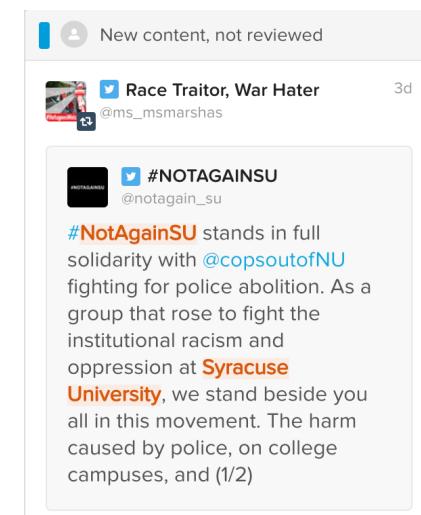
Race Traitor, War Hater   3d
@ms_msmarshas

#NOTAGAINSU
@notagain_su

#NotAgainSU stands in full solidarity with @copsoutofNU fighting for police abolition. As a group that rose to fight the institutional racism and oppression at Syracuse University, we stand beside you all in this movement. The harm caused by police, on college campuses, and (1/2)

This is a statement from the organizers of the #NotAgainSU movement. Although there are no active protests on the Syracuse University campus, the organization supports similar efforts at other schools. It is important to understand the organization's stance on related issues in order to gauge its opinions about the University, even while there are no protests.

SU Campus   7d
@SUcampus

We continue to progress on our commitments to our #NotAgainSU students, international students, Jewish students and Indigenous students. Here are updates to the Campus Commitments through Oct. 30: bddy.me/2JwwhPN

CAMPUS COMMITMENTS
syracuse.edu/commitments
S

This is a tweet from Syracuse University linking to the list of commitments they've made to improve diversity and inclusion on campus. It shows the university's mission to enact positive change on campus, taking student and faculty opinions into consideration. This message is important because it is inclusive of a variety of marginalized groups. Additionally, updating its commitments shows that SU is making changes to improve life on campus for all.

Results & Analysis - Survey

A total of 135 participants responded to our survey. 80 percent of survey participants are Syracuse University students. 70% of respondents were female and 77.9% identified themselves as white.

We asked participants their satisfaction with SU's response to the bias-related incidents.

Results:

Satisfaction with SU's Response to Bias-Related Incidents

Legend: Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied | Unsatisfied | Very Unsatisfied
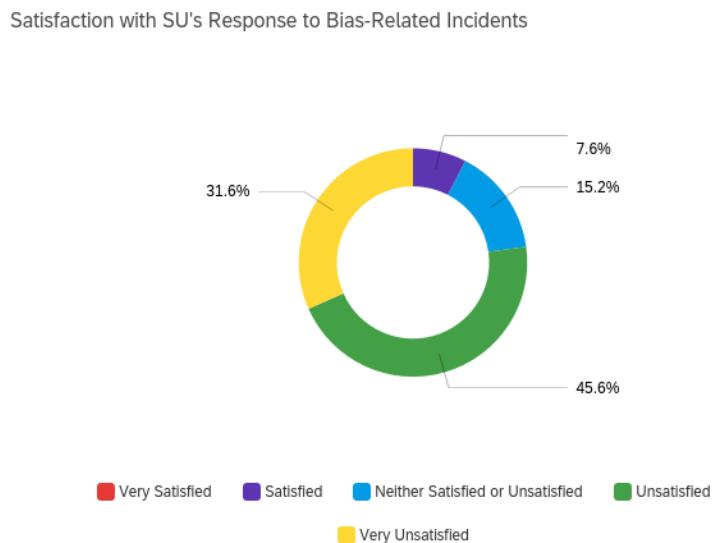
The graphic representation of our results shows that out of all of the respondents, no one was "very satisfied" with the university's response. Only 7.6% of respondents were satisfied with the response, while 15.2% had a neutral stance. Furthermore, the results indicate overall dissatisfaction, as 45.6% of respondents were unsatisfied and 31.6% of respondents were very unsatisfied. Understanding this data is necessary for the university in order to make positive changes going forward.

We asked participants to rank means of communication with the University in order of efficiency (Campus Pulse Surveys, Open Forums, Emails, Website Updates, Social Media).

Results:

Efficiency of Communication Methods

The data shows which methods students felt were the most effective modes of communication. Emails were ranked as the most efficient form of communication by 55.81% of respondents and were ranked second most efficient by 25.58% of respondents. Campus Pulse Surveys were ranked as the least effective form of communication by 32.56% of respondents and open forums were ranked as the least efficient by 32.56% of respondents. This can give Syracuse University future insight on the best, most effective ways to communicate with students about future bias-related incidents on campus.

We asked participants to indicate whether or not they agree with the following statements: I am safe on the Syracuse University campus; Syracuse University cares about my safety; Syracuse University has students' best interests in mind when making important decisions.
Results:

#	Field	Strongly agree		Agree		Somewhat agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
1	I am safe on the Syracuse University campus.	8.43%	7	36.14%	30	32.53%	27	8.43%	7	8.43%	7	3.61%	3	2.41%	2
2	Syracuse University cares about my safety.	9.64%	8	26.51%	22	38.55%	32	9.64%	8	7.23%	6	6.02%	5	2.41%	2
3	Syracuse University has students' best interests in mind when making important decisions.	2.41%	2	20.48%	17	25.30%	21	9.64%	8	25.30%	21	12.05%	10	4.82%	4

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Our data shows that many students do feel safe on the Syracuse University campus and believe that Syracuse University cares about their safety, but there is a greater distribution amongst respondents about whether or not the university has students' best interests in mind when making important decisions. 68.67% of students either agree or somewhat agree that they're safe on campus. Only 9.64% of students strongly believe that Syracuse University cares about their safety. 42.17% of students believe to some degree that the university does not keep students' best interests in mind when making important decisions.

We asked participants their opinions about the following statements: Diversity is important to SU administration; Diversity is important to SU students; SU is an inclusive environment for minority students.

Results:

#	Field	Strongly agree		Somewhat agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat disagree		Strongly disagree		Total
1	Diversity is important to Syracuse University administration.	10.81%	8	37.84%	28	21.62%	16	20.27%	15	9.46%	7	74
2	Diversity is important to Syracuse University students.	44.59%	33	37.84%	28	6.76%	5	9.46%	7	1.35%	1	74
3	Syracuse University is an inclusive environment for minority students.	2.70%	2	31.08%	23	21.62%	16	33.78%	25	10.81%	8	74

We asked "to what degree do you agree with the following statements" and it's evident from our data that Syracuse University students care about diversity & inclusion. However, respondents feel that the university neither prioritizes diversity nor creates an inclusive environment for minority students.

We asked participants to rate SU's response to bias-related incidents that took place.

Results:
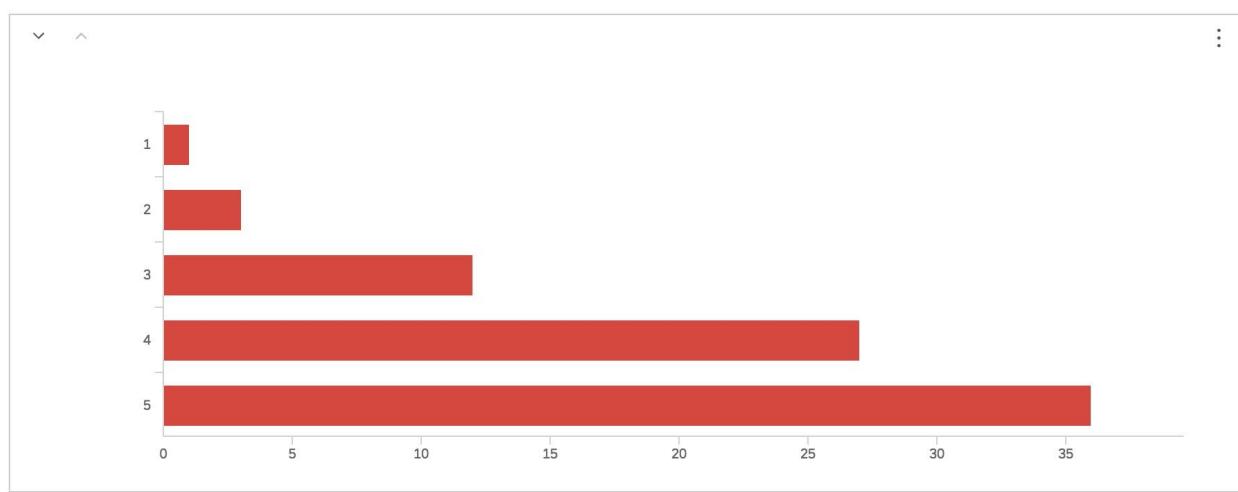
The results of this survey question indicate a majority of students feel that Syracuse University handled the protests poorly. Only one individual thought the university responded "very well" to the protests. This shows an overall dissatisfaction with the communication plan used by the administration.

Results & Analysis - Overall

   Overall, the results of our research endeavors have shown the strengths and weaknesses, not previously identified through secondary research, of Syracuse University's response to student-led protests such as #NOTAGAINSU. Themes across each data collection prove that Syracuse University students sometimes consider their well-being such as safety, mental health, the disruption of education, and diversity training, and whether or not the University, and administration, care. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the response time for Syracuse to communicate on these issues was too long, which contributed to the sentiment that Syracuse handled the protests poorly. Emails were chosen as the students' favorite form of communication from the school. Using these findings Orange Communications can now build a set of recommendations to help Syracuse in the future.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: We recommend weekly email updates on bias-related incidents. Students feel that communication from the university is weak when it comes to bias-related incidents and feel that email is the best way to communicate with the SU student body at large. We recommend weekly email updates on bias-related incidents on campus with a disclosure section saying "these are the details we can release to you in order to not compromise our investigation, but when we can release more details we will" with further links to privacy laws they have to follow in student investigations.

Recommendation 2: We recommend a comprehensive guide with resources and a decision tree as a plan proceeding bias-related incidents.

Students feel that their education was disrupted during the Fall 2019 Semester because the University was not equipped with a plan to accommodate for mental health concerns and time commitment to student protests. Students in the focus group cited the stress of wanting to be involved and not knowing what to expect in class, if they even had it. We recommend the University create a comprehensive guide to prepare to adequately handle student-run protests including, an influx of mental health resources that can be readily available to the student population, a decision tree on how to decide if classes are canceled, already created procedures on how to communicate with the student protestors and the rest of the student body.

Recommendation 3: We recommend a robust curriculum engaging both students and faculty to learn about D&I.

Our survey data showed that 44.59% of students strongly agree and 37.84% agree with the statement "diversity and inclusion are important to Syracuse University students," but don't feel their education has the appropriate execution of D&I. Only 2.7% of students strongly agreed with the statement, "Syracuse University is an inclusive environment for minority students." Therefore, there should be more diversity and inclusion training for staff and students as well as a bi-weekly educational newsletter. There should be a change to the curriculum that requires students and staff to learn more about diversity and inclusion in an engaging, informative way.

APPENDIX

Survey Questions and Results

1. Are you a student at Syracuse University?
   a. Yes
   b. No

#	Field		Choice Count
1	Yes	80.60%	108
2	No	19.40%	26
			134

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

2. How familiar are you with the bias-related incidents that took place in November 2019 and the #NOTAGAINSU movement?
   a. Very Familiar
   b. Somewhat Familiar
   c. Unfamiliar

#	Field		Choice Count
1	Very familiar	69.81%	74
2	Somewhat familiar	24.53%	26
3	Unfamiliar	5.66%	6
			106

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

3. Which of these best describes your situation in November 2019?
   a. Enrolled Student: On Campus
   b. Enrolled Student: Abroad
   c. Other

#	Field		Choice Count
1	Enrolled student; On campus	96.00%	96
2	Enrolled student; Abroad	2.00%	2
3	Other	2.00%	2
			100

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

4. How racially diverse do you think Syracuse is?

Very Diverse ----- Not at all Diverse

#	Field	Choice Count	
1	1	5.56%	5
2	2	23.33%	21
3	3	43.33%	39
4	4	23.33%	21
5	5	4.44%	4
			90

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

5. How much do you agree with the following statements?

a. Diversity is Important to the Syracuse University Administration.
   i. Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree

B. Diversity is Important to the Syracuse University Students.

   ii. Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree

   C. Syracuse University is an inclusive environment for minority students.

   iii. Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Diversity is important to Syracuse University administration.	11.00	15.00	12.77	1.15	1.31	90
2	Diversity is important to Syracuse University students.	11.00	15.00	11.87	1.01	1.03	90
3	Syracuse University is an inclusive environment for minority students.	11.00	15.00	13.12	1.07	1.15	90

6. Please Rank Syracuse's characteristics from strongest to weakest.

      a. Diversity of Thought
      b. Physical Safety
      c. Mental Health Resources
      d. Student Relations

#	Field	1	2	3	4	Total
1	Diversity of Thought	16.67% 15	17.78% 16	24.44% 22	41.11% 37	90
2	Physical Safety	25.56% 23	24.44% 22	32.22% 29	17.78% 16	90
3	Mental Health Resources	24.44% 22	22.22% 20	31.11% 28	22.22% 20	90
4	Student Relations	33.33% 30	35.56% 32	12.22% 11	18.89% 17	90

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

7. Rank the efficiency of these methods of communication with Syracuse University.

      a. Campus Pulse Surveys
      b. Open Forums
      c. Emails
      d. Website Updates
      e. Social Media

#	Field	1	2	3	4	5	Total
5	Social Media	19.77% 17	31.40% 27	19.77% 17	12.79% 11	16.28% 14	86
4	Website Updates	4.65% 4	20.93% 18	29.07% 25	23.26% 20	22.09% 19	86
3	Emails	55.81% 48	25.58% 22	8.14% 7	6.98% 6	3.49% 3	86
2	Open Forums	12.79% 11	8.14% 7	26.74% 23	26.74% 23	25.58% 22	86
1	Campus Pulse Surveys	6.98% 6	13.95% 12	16.28% 14	30.23% 26	32.56% 28	86

Showing rows 1 - 5 of 5

8. To what degree do you agree with the following statements

      a. I am safe on the Syracuse University Campus.

        i. Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree,
          Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree

B. Syracuse University cares about my safety.

ii. Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree,

Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree

C. Syracuse University has the students best interest in mind when making

important decisions.

iii. Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree,

#	Field	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
1	I am safe on the Syracuse University campus.	8.43% 7	36.14% 30	32.53% 27	8.43% 7	8.43% 7	3.61% 3	2.41% 2	83
2	Syracuse University cares about my safety.	9.64% 8	26.51% 22	38.55% 32	9.64% 8	7.23% 6	6.02% 5	2.41% 2	83
3	Syracuse University has students' best interests in mind when making important decisions.	2.41% 2	20.48% 17	25.30% 21	9.64% 8	25.30% 21	12.05% 10	4.82% 4	83

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree

9. How many events did you attend during the 2019-2020 school year at Syracuse University

related to the #NOTAGAINSU movement?

a. 0

b. 1

c. 2

d. 3

e. 4

f. 5+

#	Field	Choice Count	
1	0	34.18%	27
2	1	15.19%	12
3	2	13.92%	11
4	3	17.72%	14
5	4	8.86%	7
6	5+	10.13%	8
			79

Showing rows 1 - 7 of 7

10. How satisfied were you with Syracuse University's response to the #NOTAGAINSU movement?

Very Satisfied - - - - - Very Unsatisfied

#	Field	Choice Count	
1	1	0.00%	0
2	2	7.59%	6
3	3	15.19%	12
4	4	45.57%	36
5	5	31.65%	25
			79

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

11. How satisfied were you with Syracuse University's communication with students regarding bias-related incidents that took place in November 2019?

Very Satisfied - - - - - Very Unsatisfied

#	Field	Choice Count	
1	1	0.00%	0
2	2	8.86%	7
3	3	24.05%	19
4	4	25.32%	20
5	5	41.77%	33
			79

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

12. How do you think Syracuse University responded to protests in response to bias-related

incidents in November 2019?

Very Well - - - - - Very Poorly

#	Field		Choice Count
1	1	1.27%	1
2	2	3.80%	3
3	3	15.19%	12
4	4	34.18%	27
5	5	45.57%	36
			79

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

13. Do you have any additional comments about Syracuse University's response to the

bias-related incidents?

Do you have any additional comments about Syracuse University's response to...

No

Unfortunately, the circumstances which transpired required a lot of discussion in determining how to best solve the issues. The NotAgainSU movement wanted urgent solutions, and understandably so, but the university as a whole has to think about the consequences of its actions in the long term. So example, installing cameras into the dorms seems like a quick fix, but later on someone could claim an infringement of privacy. In terms of genuine solutions to the problems, there unfortunately isn't many. While we can expel and suspend racist students, that doesn't solve the racism, it just moves it elsewhere.

I think the University did a lot of damage control once national news media got a hold of the protests and string of bias-related incidents on campus, I'm not sure if they were trying to keep a good reputation or if they actually have minority groups best interests in mind.

What changed?

I literally have no idea what they're doing it feels like they're ignoring everything we're asking of them

14. What is your current age?

15. Which of the following best describes your gender identity?

        a. Male

        b. Female

        c. Non-Binary

        d. Prefer not to say

        e. other

#	Field		Choice Count
1	Male	27.85%	22
2	Female	70.89%	56
3	Non-Binary	0.00%	0
4	Prefer not to say	1.27%	1
5	Other	0.00%	0
			79

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

16. What is the highest level of education you have received?

        a. Some High School

        b. High School Graduate

        c. Some College

        d. Associate's Degree

        e. Bachelor's Degree

        f. Masters, Professional, or Doctoral Degree

        g. Other

        h. Prefer not to say

#	Field		Choice Count
1	Some high school	0.00%	0
2	High school graduate	13.92%	11
3	Some college; No degree	75.95%	60
4	Associate Degree	3.80%	3
5	Bachelor's Degree	6.33%	5
6	Master's, Professional, or Doctoral degree	0.00%	0
7	Other	0.00%	0
8	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
			79

Showing rows 1 - 9 of 9

17. What was your total household income

    a. Less than $25,000

    b. Between $25,000 and $50,000

    c. Between $50,000 and $75,000

    d. Between $75,000 and $100,000

    e. Between $100,000 and $150,000

    f. $150,000+

    g. Not sure

    h. Prefer not to say

#	Field		Choice Count
1	Less than $25,000	5.06%	4
2	Between $25,000 and $50,000	3.80%	3
3	Between $50,000 and $75,000	2.53%	2
4	Between $75,000 and $100,000	7.59%	6
5	Between $100,000 and $150,000	15.19%	12
6	$150,000+	24.05%	19
7	Not sure	24.05%	19
8	Prefer not to say	17.72%	14
			79

Showing rows 1 - 9 of 9

18. What State do you reside in?

#	Field		Choice Count
5	California	5%	4
6	Colorado	1%	1
7	Connecticut	1%	1
9	Florida	6%	5
13	Illinois	8%	6
14	Indiana	1%	1
19	Maine	1%	1
21	Massachusettes	6%	5
28	Nevada	1%	1
29	New Hampshire	3%	2
30	New Jersey	22%	17
32	New York	27%	21
38	Pennsylvania	6%	5
39	Rhode Island	1%	1
43	Texas	1%	1
46	Virginia	4%	3
47	Washington	1%	1
51	I reside outside the U.S.	3%	2
			78

Showing rows 1 - 19 of 19

19. How would you describe yourself? Please check all that apply.

    a. Native American or Alaska Native
    b. Asian
    c. Black or African American
    d. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
    e. Spanish, Hispanic, or Latinx
    f. White
    g. Not listed
    h. Prefer not to say

#	Field	Choice Count	
1	Native American or Alaska Native	0.00%	0
2	Asian	9.30%	8
3	Black or African American	2.33%	2
4	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
5	Spanish, Hispanic, or Latinx	9.30%	8
6	White	77.91%	67
7	Not listed	0.00%	0
8	Prefer not to say	1.16%	1
			86

Showing rows 1 - 9 of 9

Focus Group Transcript

Why did you choose to attend Syracuse University?

Jonathan D.: I chose to attend Syracuse University because I fell in love with campus on the visit and it was one of the better schools for what I wanted to study.

Andrea L.: My mom was an alumni so I was already familiar with the school and then the financial aid package they gave me

Evan K.: I came to Syracuse because I wanted to join the men's rowing team and that's pretty much it

Lily O.: Similar to Andrea, my sister went here a few years ago so I was familiar with campus and I think she really exposed me to the experiences here and it was something I fell in love with

Sydney M.: Similar to Jonathan's I visited a bunch of schools and this is the one I felt most in love with and comfortable with so I wanted to ED here

Rachel D.: I really liked the campus but also I wanted to go to communications school so once I got into Newhouse that was the main thing for me

Laura G.: I was unsure of what I really wanted to study and Syracuse had so many options of schools and majors so I felt like I wouldn't be trapped here and I felt like I'd have a good range of stuff to choose from.

Abigail H.: I came here and visited and I really liked the campus and I wanted to go somewhere far away from home and this was a perfect distance for me

Sameeha S.: I also wanted to go far from home and this was a nice sized school so I thought it was a good fit

Quality education?

Abigail H.: A well-rounded education like an even distribution of what you're learning

Lily O.: It's not just what you learn in the classroom but the experiences you have like an internship or a job or the connections you make on campus

Sameeha S.: Yeah I was gonna say opportunity

Jonathan D.: Yeah probably hands-on experience is the first thing I think of when I think of a quality education

D&I University Environment?

Andrea L.: Going to go somewhere to learn you should be surrounded by people with different backgrounds and diversity of thought is really important too so you can get the most out of your experience

Jonathan D.: I think because when you go out into the real world there's obviously going to be a lot of diversity in the real world so you have to prepare for what is real but also making sure everyone on campus is included is always very important with everything. With no diversity and inclusion there's no quality education in my mind

Sameeha S.: I also think you need to be able to create a safe space for marginalized identities because there are serious mental health repercussions when those measures are not put in place and then it makes it a lot more difficult to take advantage of your education and really engage with it

Lily O.: I think you maximize your education when you have a feeling of acceptance and being part of a community so like people were saying you have to feel like you are one in the community

Abigail H.: D&I also contributes to education and getting rid of people's ignorance especially if you come from a small town where there aren't a lot of different types of people and it's important for colleges to send their students out better educated on that topic.

University's Response to #NotAgainSU

Evan K.: It definitely wasn't the fastest response from the University which definitely led to some of the unrest and hopefully the university does better with that in the future

Sameeha S.: The university has a lot of issues with communication and it has for a long time and so this was a very important issue that deserved very quick responses and very transparent attention and they weren't able to give it that because of the way that it ran before these things

happened so I think they just need to be a lot better about being responsive and communicative with students

Sydney M.: I agree with the communications. I think that was one of the biggest parts. If they just spoke to us earlier than maybe things could've been resolved or at least the student body could've felt a little bit better or like they were doing something to stop these actions but we didn't get that and I think that was one of the hardest parts of the entire situation

Jonathan D: I wanted to talk about one example in particular was when the protestors were locked in Crouse-Hinds and DPS wouldn't let food in, that next morning the campus Twitter account was being very condescending to people who disagreed with that decision, which was a lot of people and I thought that was the absolute wrong way to go about it. I just remember that very vividly.

Lily O.: And going off that, I think it just showed some of the priorities of the university and their lack of respect for our voices as students on this campus. Especially with the Crouse-Hinds thing, I thought that was unbelievable so I think that was really eye-opening almost for me.

Abigail H.: I think that the whole time the university's response was based on trying to stop the movement and trying to corral it and trying to stop the bad press but wasn't addressing the issues that the movement was bringing about.

Andrea L.: I think something that I did appreciate though was the open forums that they had and how they would try to work with students to meet the demands that they had which they didn't really have to do but they did.

What could the University have done differently in response to bias-related incidents happening on campus?

Laura G.: One of the things they definitely should've done is just from the beginning they should've let everyone know what was going on. Towards the end, any sort of incident they would email us right, but I think towards the beginning a lot of it was being swept under the rug. I think if they had just started with that and started transparency right from the beginning a lot of issues, not necessarily would've been avoided but would have been handled better because everyone would've known what was going on and there wasn't much question about it.

Sameeha S.: I understand why they didn't always email us right away because in terms of the investigative process sometimes you can't do it, or you shouldn't, or you'll compromise the investigation. But I think making sure that people knew that, like they just never explained it and assumed everyone would know that and wouldn't be mad at them for the way they were going about it but I think they needed to tell people because we're college students and we don't know how investigations work, so making sure we at least know what's going on there so we're not getting angry when we don't see the email

Abigail H.: So going off of that, I think that they can't improve that process and make students more aware of when these things are going on. This might be a bad example but we've seen that this year Syracuse has a COVID dashboard and it's updated three times a week and it has a lot of information and I think that it's very easy for them to create a website or a way to keep everyone up to date on the bias related incidents that happen on campus because that is something that people are concerned about either when choosing to come to Syracuse or feeling safe on campus.

April K.: Just to update everyone, I think there is actually a website dedicated to the diversity and inclusion efforts and there's a progress report of everything that's going on. Not exactly of the incidents themselves but of what they are doing in order to mitigate situations

Andrea L.: Yeah, there was a task force or a whole department now and there's a separate form for bias related incidents and then they work with all of the other departments at Syracuse on campus to handle all of the different situations and reports that come in.

Do you think this is an adequate way for Syracuse to communicate about these incidents and be transparent or do you think there's other ways they could be doing that?

Sameeha S.: I feel like given the way these things are supposed to work it has to be give and take because they need to be able to still follow protocol to be able to catch people, so it seems like the most that they could do given that their end goal.

Sydney M.: I feel like the biggest problem that we as students had last year was that we just weren't sure if they were doing anything to stop the incidents, but I think if they're reporting that they're at least aware that there's something going on or that we could track something so that it doesn't ruin their investigation I think that it's a good step. Maybe there can be more things but right now I guess this is a big step for the school so it's what we can take for right now.

Lily O.: I think towards the end they have taken some big steps and have mitigated the problem but I think the issue was the lack of communication. It just came a little too late at the time, so yes they have the dashboard but that was many days and weeks into everything going on and the communication only started a week or two in, so I was just like "why are you doing this?". At that point it was just a little too late.

April: I know that one of the issues was with DPS's transparency and one of the reasons students were unsatisfied was because they weren't allowed to disclose their protocol but obviously they're following orders from higher-ups so it's not necessarily something that they can take executive control over and act as an independent person if you know what I mean, so in that case what do you think can be done to allow transparency in those situations because in the case that you need to follow protocol but at the same time ensure that there is a two-way communication

In terms of expectations, what kinds of expectations do you have for the future? And that can be short-term future or long-term future.

Lily O.: I think the hope is that they just continue to utilize each of the channels of communications that they set up last year, continue to listen to the students, and not necessarily follow every single demand, but acknowledge them and see some change with some of them. Like some people were saying there's obviously protocol they can't just change everything and say yes to everything but I think that's a good start.

Andrea L.: I think I hope that there's also more community and trust amongst the University and the students, because I feel like right now everything is really divided and students are really quick to be hypercritical of the things that the University is doing, and just understanding the fact that it is an institution and things take time to change but there is change happening so i hope that there is more of a sense of trust and community.

I'm going to go off one point you said really quick, do you mind clarifying - and obviously anyone else can answer as well. What do you mean in terms of the school being divided or there being a divided separateness?

Andrea L.: Um, sure. I just feel like, especially when things were really heated last semester, students were trying to get the Chancellor fired and I don't know I just felt like it was very sad to see - there was a lot of emotion involved . It was just kind of sad to see how divided the school was. I hope the feelings can go away and we are able to move forward from it, and we are able to improve together. I feel like it is really hard to make progress when there is fighting.

So I just have a quick question, earlier some of you said that the school was kind of lacking communication in general, so like not related to these bias incidents, do you think there's a bigger problem with the school's communication strategies?

Sameeha S.: Yeah, I think that they don't still (and they should have learned their lesson by now) but they still don't understand that students learn things and learn things quickly so they feel as though they need to have all of their ducks in a row before they can tell anyone anything but people end up finding out far in advance regardless. And then they just look like idiots because they haven't been saying anything for so long. So I think just like even if the University isn't finished with something or hasn't reached out the final stages of something, keeping students updated in that process, as opposed to the final product, would be really helpful because we would know things are going on whereas right now we don't until they are completely done. Like we were talking about before, it takes a long time for things to happen at this University, so we might not even see it, and we don't know that it's going on. We could be and we could be done before it's done anyway.

So in terms of when these incidents do occur, or last semester when there were the sit-ins and the protests, do you feel in any way that this takes away from the quality of education that you are receiving at Syracuse?

Sameeha S.: I feel like when things like that happen on campus, there is a general unrest across the board from everybody, and that becomes very tangible the longer that these things go on and the more intense they get. So I think that in terms of when your mental health isn't at its best you can't really learn as effectively. So I think that when things like that are going on they take a toll

on mental health and make it more difficult to be present during classes and to be retaining the information that you need to.

Lily O.: I think another part of learning too though, is that it was a big learning experience for both the students and University alike. So I think it's like how to handle situations and how to go about change, so we were talking about what makes a well-rounded education, I think it's like more than one thing that people took a lot from, that they can apply to things in the future.

Sydney M.: I just know that for me it was hard going to class because you know there could be a protest somewhere and it was hard because you want to participate but there were times I wanted to go to class. So it was kind of looming over, the situation kind of, what someone was saying before, which was hard. But also, I don't know about everyone else's experiences but the teachers I had tried to bring, um, what was going on on campus to the classes as well. So even though I couldn't go to the protests, I felt like I was learning something, like information about it in my class.

Abigail H.: A lot of my professors actually had excused absences or like they required no attendance for like the last two weeks of the first semester and the last week before Thanksgiving for students who wanted to participate in the protests. I thought it was really cool that they were so open to that. Another example is that I had a class in Crouse during the protests there and we couldn't get into our classroom for an exam because they had locked all of the doors for the protestors I guess. And it was something, I um, my professor was not upset at all, he worked through it very easily and no students were upset about that. So, I think that by that time, most people understood the importance of the movement so they were able to adjust quickly.

So does anyone else have any thoughts about how their education was impacted or is continued to be impacted by the #NOTAGAINSU movement or in general the school's lack of communication about these kinds of incidences?

Sydney M.: Um, I think that it's a give and take from the school and the students, I think that the students last year felt like they were entitled to know every single thing that's happening. But at the same time the school was trying to stop the incidents and then also having the student body being extremely angry, so I think the students need to realize that the school, I guess, is trigun to

work things out as well, even though it is really frustrating for us to watch because we want everything to be better. So, I think we need to have a give-and-take with the school.

So, obviously when we were, I'm guessing most of us are juniors and seniors, so when we were coming to school there was the Theta Tau incident the year before which originally we thought was an isolated incident. But, had something like the #NOTAGAINSU happened in the spring of your senior year, would you have reconsidered coming to Syracuse? Just remember there are no right or wrong answers, I'm just trying to gauge your opinions.

Sydney M.: I think that I still would have come because I think that #NOTAGAINSU was a really good thing because I think it showed that the students were able to speak their mind and there was change that came from it. I think that would make me want to go somewhere where the students were able to have a say and could speak freely.

Laura G.: I agree with that, I think that it's like obviously what the situation, whatever it may be, is a super big factor if i were a senior benign like woah that is not a good look. I don't know if I want to be there, it's more about how they respond to it, and with #NOTAGAINSU so much has happened since then, it shows, kind of like what Sydney said, it shows that the students actually care and if you want to be active in that way, you have the opportunity to, and make change because the students did during all of the protests.

Andrea L.: I think it just wouldn't have been as easy a decision as it was for me. I think a lot more thought and conversation would have had to gone into it. I think in the end I would have end up coming. It's a lot different for me because I am a white female on this campus and the attacks were not against me, I feel a lot more comfortable than some on campus I'm sure than some who were walking around campus at the time. But I think in the end I would have come because in the end there was a response from the University.

These have been great answers so far thank you guys. So does anyone else have anything else to say about this topic in particular, how your decision would have changed or been different had you been a high school senior last year? Does anyone else have anything to say, Jonathan we haven't heard from you in a while. Do you have anything to add?

Jonathan D.: Um, I don't think it would have impacted my decision in the end but it would have made me do a double take, but the end would have been the same. I tend to agree that hashtag notagain SU was a good thing. Personally I was a part of some of the protests on campus and regardless of some of the unrest I thought it felt like the campus community was coming together to fight against what was going on which was very wrong. I don't know how I would have felt being in Viginia and watching from a distance, I think a lot of the media was not getting the full story. But from my experience here it was a good thing. But it definitely would have made me think a little bit and do a double take about ya know is this a safe place to go.

Sameeha S.: I feel like it's really important to remember that the seniors this year were also going through a pandemic by the end so I feel like especially for seniors of color because I think this is a slightly different situation for people of color who want to come to campus otherwise. It's more something they have dealt with in the past and it would feel more like a chore to come to an environment where there are so many issues. And I think those protests were incredible but it's still for the people who were directly impacted by the things happening. I think it definitely still would have been a huge factor on whether or not they would feel safe and comfortable coming here and I think on top of a pandemic that makes a lot of people hesitant on whether or not they should go to college for this first year or not, like take a gap year instead. I feel like it definitely would have impacted a lot.

Absolutely, and then going forward is there any sort of specific initiatives the school could introduce to communication just as students that you feel would be important just so that both parties feel heard and that their opinions have been vocalized.

Jonathan D.: I'm not sure this is an effective strategy but I think it would have been nice to see a little more understanding from the school about why the protests were happening. It seemed like the language was more trying to stop this than understanding where the students were coming from. So, like I said I'm not sure that's an effective PR strategy but it would have been nice to see as a student.

Does anyone else have any ideas just in terms of improvement or ways communication can be improved?

Rachel D.: I think it's hard because there is obviously a lot of stuff that went on behind the scenes that made it unable for them to let us know what was but I think the fact that I was finding things out on social media instead of from the school about it. I think that making sure the student body is finding out everything at the same time and when they should be knowing about it. I know it's kinda hard because of everything that goes into that, I think just being as transparent as possible when they are able to I think is just the most important thing.

Laura G.: And going off of that I feel like when you find things out through social media people take that and run with it so there doesn't need to be a quick form of communication in order for the school to complete investigations I just think an open forum to let them know whats going on and questions comments concerns just to curb miscommunication. Like if I'm reading something online as much as I don't want to admit it I'm going to believe it or be like wow I should look into this or I should send this to a friend. I think just a forum when they are able to be transparent about what is going on will be better so there is no question about what is actually going on.

Sydney M.: I think that one of the biggest things for the school to understand is that the reason why it was so frustrating is because we as students felt like we kept saying "we need answers" and no one was really giving us anything. So I think that they just need to understand that by giving us little things here and there, or even an open forum or something, anything will make us feel better just to make it at least look like they're trying to investigate or something because obviously they can't give us every detail right when it happens, but just to understand where the students are coming from more.

Absolutely, thank you all for such amazing and well thought out answers. So, to summarize everyone's comments and ideas that you shared: Overall, there is a lack of transparency from the administration when these events have occurred, making it for a less comfortable environment, not really feeling like the administration is hearing out the student body and being straightforward with what is going on. In order to improve that, we can kind of establish new lines of communication and make sure both sides are feeling heard. Did I correctly summarize your comments in today's discussion?

Ok great, thank you all for coming today and sharing your opinions with me. I hope you enjoyed this discussion.

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