ELON UNIVERSITY

THE ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER & MIDDLE EASTERN NORTH AFRICAN
Task Force Report

Prepared by:
Haya Ajjan, Qian Xu, George Dou, Nicole Filippo, Raj Ghoshal, Wen Guo, Yuko Miyamoto, Barjinder Singh, Glenn Scott & Jonathan Su

Submitted to:
President Connie Ledoux Book and Vice President & Associate Provost for Inclusive Excellence Randy Williams

02.15.23

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

C0-CHAIRS

Haya Ajjan, Associate Dean of the Martha & Spencer Love School of Business,
Professor of Management Information System & Gordon Professor of Entrepreneurship
Qian Xu, Professor of Strategic Communications & Associate Director of Undergraduate Research

MEMBERS *(in alphabetical order)*

Amy Allocco, Associate Professor of Religious Studies
Caroline Blanchard '17, Former Senior Coordinator of Alumni Engagement
George Dou, Assistant Director, Center for Race, Ethnicity & Diversity Education
Nicole Filippo '04 G'18, Communications Manager, Love School of Business
Raj Ghoshal, Associate Professor of Sociology
Kiah Glenn, Former Assistant Director, Center for Race, Ethnicity & Diversity Education
Wen Guo, Assistant Professor of Art Administration
Melody Harter, Program Assistant, Center for Leadership
Xuan Huynh '24, Undergraduate Student, Finance
Trung Huynh-Duc, Director of Catholic Life
Aishwarya Jayashankar '22, Undergraduate Student, Finance & Business Analytics
Yuko Miyamoto, Associate Professor of Biology
Glenn Scott, Associate Professor of Journalism
Barjinder Singh, Associate Professor of Management
Jonathan Su, Assistant Professor of Engineering
Pamela Winfield, Professor of Religious Studies

SPECIAL SUPPORT

Carla Fullwood, Director of Inclusive Excellence Education and Development
Kelsey Lam, College Success Advisor, Emily K Center
Windi Sasaki, Director, Asian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern and Desi American
Center at UC-San Diego

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Charged with composing recommendations on how to build community and empower the Asian Pacific Islander (API) and Middle Eastern North African (MENA) population at Elon University, the API and MENA Task Force sought to learn more about these groups and their Elon experiences.

Originally titled the API Task Force, we expanded the Task Force's name from solely API to include Elon members who identify as Middle Eastern or North African and may not identify as API or West Asian.

The API community at Elon is small – 4.1% of undergraduates, about 2.3% of graduate students, 6.9% of faculty, and less than 1.0% of staff. While the API community is not generally considered underrepresented in higher education, it has encountered and still faces challenges, particularly related to stereotypes like the model minority myth, forever foreigner syndrome, discrimination, microaggressions, and national increases in anti-Asian rhetoric and hate crimes since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

API is a broad label. At Elon, limited data is available on the API and MENA community for review. That includes an absence of any information on MENA individuals, scarce information about the API population beyond numerical representation, and limitations in Elon's racial classification categories. The API and MENA category contains multiple subgroups who do not share the same history, culture and experiences.

In addition to examining Elon data, the Task Force reviewed API and MENA initiatives at peer and aspirant institutions and conducted a survey and focus groups with API and MENA students, faculty, staff and alumni. Survey questions and topics discussed during focus group sessions related to the participants' overall Elon experiences; safety, both on-campus and in the local community; university communication and messaging about diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and anti-racism efforts; campus culture and climate; and curriculum and classroom environment. Additional topics emerged from focus groups, with responses on campus practices in admissions, recruitment and New Student Orientation, as well as issues specific to international faculty and international students.

Main concerns arising from the Task Force's research revolved around support for and visibility of API and MENA students, faculty and staff on campus; the process for sharing information about Elon's bias reporting system and confirmed incidents of bias and discrimination on campus; representation and authenticity in admissions events and publications/marketing materials; dealing with microaggressions and tokenism; and DEI curricular and co-curricular programming.

Our recommendations range from support and mentorship for API and MENA students, to creating spaces for MENA community building, to establishing an Employee Resource Group and API and MENA Alumni Network, to requiring bias training for supervisors and managers, to

increasing communication on confirmed acts of bias and discrimination along with outcomes.

Based on the survey and focus group findings, we include several recommendations around revising the Global Experience course to best serve students in their global citizenship journey, providing resources for faculty to infuse their courses with API and MENA references and topics, and increasing employees' cultural competencies to understand the API and MENA community and the differences within it, as well as how to avoid tokenizing API and MENA students and colleagues.

We also highlight ways Elon can support international faculty and international students as they experience issues related to being international, including faculty managing the stressful process of obtaining and maintaining their immigration status and students needing transportation support to meet basic life needs and for engagement with the local community.

Moving forward, in order to better serve the API and MENA community, the university needs to collect more data in order to better understand these Elon members' experiences. This includes evaluating the classifications the university uses and exploring why API students leave Elon at higher rates than other groups.

BACKGROUND

Asian Americans continue to be the fastest growing racial group within the United States (Eligon, 2020). Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, reports indicate an increase in anti-Asian rhetoric, racist incidents, scapegoating, and hate crimes targeting Asians, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The advocacy coalition Stop AAPI Hate compiled 3,795 reports of anti-Asian hate incidents across the U.S. from March 2020 to February 2021 (Jeung et al., 2021). Types of discrimination reported included verbal harassment, shunning, physical assaults, and potential civil rights violations, including workplace discrimination and physical exclusions from establishments and transportation (Jeung et al., 2021).

Anti-Asian hate crime in 16 of America's largest cities increased 149% in 2020, according to data compiled by California State University's Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism. Asian Americans who have experienced racism have had heightened symptoms of depressions, anxiety, stress, and physical symptoms (Liu et al., 2021). According to the Pew Research Center, about 8-in-10 Americans say it is more common for people to express racist views about people who are Asian than before the pandemic (Ruiz et al., 2022).

In Boldly Elon, Elon University's strategic plan for 2030, one of the four core themes, *Thrive*, centers on building a healthier and more diverse, equitable and inclusive community, where all students, faculty and staff experience belonging and well-being.

To aid Elon's efforts in understanding the needs of Asian Pacific Islander (API) students, Thida Kim '21 conducted a meta-analysis focusing on the college experiences of API students during her executive internship in January 2021. Part of Kim's research highlighted common obstacles API students in the U.S. face including microaggressions, such as "all Asians look alike," "you people always do well in school," and "Asians are the new Whites and do not face discrimination" (Kao, 2019), as well as the model minority myth. Elon's Division of Inclusive Excellence defines microaggressions as "everyday verbal, nonverbal and environmental

> About 8-in-10 Americans say it is more common for people to express racist views about people who are Asian than before the pandemic.
>
> Pew Research Center

slights, snubs or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their group membership."

For Asian American students, the model minority myth assumes that Asian Americans have a strong work ethic, and are innately intelligent and motivated; therefore they do not need student support services (Kao, 2019). The model minority concept, developed during and after World War II, posits that Asian Americans were the ideal immigrants of color to the United States due to their economic success (De Leon, 2020). However, many recent immigrants from Southeast Asia, including Vietnam and Cambodia, are first-generation, low-income students attending community colleges, and they can be among the undocumented students known as Dreamers, who are struggling to stay in college (Mangan, 2022). The model minority myth also does not align with historical cases of discrimination against Asian Americans stemming from the "Yellow Peril" movement, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, 1923's *United States vs. Bharat Singh Thind* case which stripped Asian Indians of naturalization rights, the Immigration Act of 1924, and Executive Order 9066 which led to the WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans from the West Coast.

To better understand the experiences of API population at Elon, President Connie Ledoux Book and Vice President and Associate Provost for Inclusive Excellence Randy Williams formed the API Task Force. Recognizing that the API label is broad – including all people of Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander ancestry, who trace their origins to the countries, states, jurisdictions and/or the diasporic communities of these geographic regions – the Task Force sought to include Elon members who identify as Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) and may not identify as API or West Asian, resulting in renaming the Task Force to the API and MENA Task Force.

Beginning in fall 2021, the Task Force researched API and MENA initiatives at peer and aspirant institutions, reviewed campus data available on API and MENA communities, examined the reports of previously studied affinity groups, and conducted quantitative and qualitative research on the experiences of API and MENA students, faculty, staff and alumni. Based on its research, the Task Force developed recommendations for building community and empowerment within the API and MENA communities and improving their Elon experiences.

A CLOSER LOOK AT API & MENA DATA AT ELON

INFORMATION ON ELON'S API AND MENA POPULATIONS

Already-existing data provided some information about the API community at Elon. We examined this data with attention to useful prior findings and to identify gaps in knowledge that would shape our own investigation. These prior data sources included statistical information on Elon's undergraduate, graduate, faculty, and staff API populations, of which public summaries are available in Elon's Institutional Research Fact Book (https://www.elon.edu/u/administration/institutional-research/fact-book/, especially p. 26, 39 and 56) and via Elon's Diversity Dashboard. Other important sources were the Institutional Research and Assessment Office; the Center for Race, Ethnicity and Diversity Education (CREDE); the Global Education Center; and the Office of Human Resources.

LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING DATA

Before presenting prior data, we note three limitations: (1) the absence of any information on MENA individuals; (2) scarce information about Elon's API population on topics beyond numerical representation; and (3) absence of ethnic disaggregation within Elon's racial categories.

First, Elon has thus far followed the existing U.S. Census convention of classifying MENA individuals as white, meaning we lack institutional data on this group. This absence is significant given that several million Americans are of MENA descent, that MENA Americans often face discrimination and exclusion, and that the U.S. Census bureau is considering adding a MENA category to the 2030 Census (Wang, 2022).

Second, existing data on Elon's API community is mainly quantitative and representational, usually focusing on numbers of students or faculty, and sometimes on representation in different experiences or outcomes. The data does not provide richer details on quality of life, experiences of inclusion or discrimination, or similar topics.

Furthermore, current data on the API community at Elon is only collected within the broad categories of "Asian" and "Pacific Islander," which further perpetuates the model minority myth and the misconception of Asian and Pacific Islanders as monolithic groups. For example, Elon's Diversity Dashboard presents aggregate data on graduation and retention rates that places all Asian students in the same group. Aggregate data presents an oversimplification and problematic view of these communities by misrepresenting ethnic groups (such as Southeast Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) as the same as other ethnic groups with higher levels of academic success and socioeconomic status. Furthermore, other disaggregated data points show disparities across different API ethnic subpopulation in income levels, poverty levels, and language (Museus & Kiang, 2009).

Third, Elon's public data for identifying individuals by race uses nine categories in which classification as part of one category precludes classification in another, even though the categories are not logically exclusive. This yields errors in some population estimates. For instance, the most-commonly cited figure of a 2.3% Asian undergraduate student body (https://www.elon.edu/u/administration/institutional-research/fact-book/, p. 26) is

certainly an undercount because any student who is classified as *Two or More Races* (2.8% of Elon's undergraduates) or *International/Nonresident* (2.1%) is automatically excluded from this version of the Asian category. A deeper dive into existing data allowed us to partially surmount this problem, as explained below, though some caveats remain.

DATA ON NUMERICAL REPRESENTATION

Subject to the above limitations, existing evidence supports several conclusions about numerical representation.

First, a full count that surmounts the single-group classification problem finds that API students represent 4.1% of Elon's undergraduates and about 2.3% of graduate students, an underrepresentation relative to their 7.6% share among American college students (United States Census Bureau, 2018). We arrived at these figures thanks to the data provided by Elon's CREDE which allowed us to examine up to three racial identifications per student, rather than being constrained to a single option per student. Here, 261 undergraduates, or about 4.1% of undergraduates as of Fall 2021, chose *Asian* and/or *Hawaiian/Pacific Islander* as an identity. While we did not have individual-level multiple-option data for graduate students, group-level data using the nine-category system classified 1.5% as *Asian* and 0.0% as *Pacific Islander*, along with 1.0% as *Two or More Races* and 1.3% as *Nonresident*. If we assume that rates of single-race vs. multiple-race and *International* identification are roughly similar in undergraduates and graduate students, this yields a total estimate for Elon's API graduate students share of about 2.3%.

Second, there is no evidence of underrepresentation among faculty as 6.1% of Elon's faculty that identify as Asian. For faculty that identify as *Pacific Islander*, they represent 0.49% of faculty in the nine-category system (https://www.elon.edu/u/administration/institutional-research/fact-book/, p. 56). The actual share may be slightly higher given the points above. By comparison, the estimates of the API population share among U.S. adults are typically in the 5 to 6% range.

Third, representation among full-time staff is extremely low, with only 0.8% of staff identifying as *Asian* and the small shares in the two other potentially overlapping groups.

Fourth, among undergraduates, about two-thirds (68.0%) of Asian students identify solely as *Asian*, while about a third (32.0%) also identify with another group. While seven students selected *Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander* ancestry, this was always in conjunction with Asian identity, never alone. Only 32 students, or 12.0% of the API total, were classified as *International*. Among these 32 students, only China (10 students) and Japan (5 students) were frequent countries of origin.

Last, we lack any prior data on MENA representation.

DATA ON PARTICIPATION, INCLUSION AND OUTCOMES

Existing institutional data provide some information on API participation in Elon life and outcomes. Table 1, compiled by Elon's Division of Inclusive Excellence, summarizes relevant information for our API-only undergraduate population.

Table 1. Snapshot of Elon API Undergraduate Student Data

	Elon	ALANAM*	API-only*	White
Top 3 majors, Fall 2021	Finance, Strategic Communications, Psychology	Psychology, Finance, Marketing	Finance, Psychology, Computer Science	Finance, Strategic Communications, Psychology
Top 3 home states, Fall 2021	NC, MA, NJ	NC, NJ, VA	NC, NJ, VA	NC, MA, NJ
First-Generation, Fall 2021	7.6%	20.0%	10.2%	4.8%
Median Cumulative GPA	NA	3.36	3.52	3.53
Retention 1st to 2nd Year, 2020-21	88%	88%	94%	88%
Graduation (6-year)	83%	79%	69%	84%
Alumni Participation, 2019-20	23%	27%	21%	23%
First 9-Months Employment, 2019-20	68%	66%	74%	69%
Going to Grad School, 2019-20	17%	16%	13%	16%

This table includes information on students classified as Asian or Pacific Islander, but excludes International and Two or More Races students, who make up about a third of the full API population. ALANAM = African American/Black, Latinx/Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American/Alaskan Native, Multiracial. Data source: Elon Division of Inclusive Excellence.

Several points here are worth noting. First, our API students are similar to Elon students from other racial/ethnic groups in many ways, including their leading home states, majors, combined employment and graduate school attendance rate upon graduation, and more. Second, there is a discrepancy between API students' very high first-year retention (and fairly high GPAs) and their low six-year graduation rate. Third, Elon's API students are twice as likely as White students to be first-generation college students, but half as likely as other ALANAM students.

Separate data from Institutional Research suggests gaps between API undergraduate students and others in signature aspects of study at Elon by graduation. While API students participate in internships and leadership experiences at near-identical rates to Elon's average, there are large disparities in API undergraduates' participation in global engagement (57.0% for API students vs. 76.0% Elon overall), undergraduate research (13.0% API vs. 23.0% for Elon overall), and service-learning (61.0% API vs. 83.0% for Elon overall).

BENCHMARKING OF ELON'S API & MENA INITIATIVES

The Task Force identified and researched several peer and aspirant educational institutions that are engaged in meaningful and informative work with respect to representation and inclusion of their API and MENA population. We agree that culture, climate and circumstances at Elon are unique, and the initiatives undertaken by the peer and aspirant institutions cannot, in their entirety, be mapped onto Elon. However, we hope these findings act as a blueprint for Elon as it undertakes this important work.

The Task Force reviewed a total of 18 institutions on the Elon 2020 list of peer and aspirant institutions: Bucknell University, Butler University, College of William & Mary, Drake University, Lehigh University, Loyola University, Tulane University, University of Richmond, Valparaiso University, Villanova University, Boston College, Emory University, Georgetown University, Rice University, Vanderbilt University, Wake Forest University, University of Notre Dame, and Furman University.

NOMENCLATURE

We found that most universities (see Table 2) use the term AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) or API. We also observed other terms used such as APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American), with Desi standing for local or indigenous. Importantly, we observed that membership to these identity groups/ organizations at most institutions is open to all members of the community.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Use of Charter. Based on the research, we discovered that none of the peer/aspirant institutions has a formal charter in place for the API and MENA community/identity groups.

Composition and Leadership. Within peer and aspirant institutions, membership to API and MENA affinity groups constitutes faculty, staff and students. In some cases, (e.g., Tulane and Emory), the Asian affinity group is mostly student run with a strong participation from alumni. At some institutions (e.g., Wake Forest) financial support is offered to affinity groups and organizations to carry out operations and organize events.

Impact of COVID-19. Consequent to COVID-19, hatred against Asian community increased within the U.S. and worldwide, and several institutions deployed measures to safeguard the interests of their Asian population. For example, at Tulane and Wake Forest, after the Atlanta metro spa shootings in March 2021 where eight people, including six Asian women were killed, there was a strong need for increased institutional support for the API group, to which the institutions responded positively. Also, as hate crimes against Asians grew, structures were put in place, and faculty, staff and students were encouraged to report incidents of bias and hatred via anonymous reporting lines.

TABLE 2. PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES AT PEER & ASPIRANT INSTITUTIONS

Institutions	Terminology/Group	Programs and Initiatives
Bucknell University	AAPI and APIDA	•Common Ground is a five-day student-led retreat dedicated to exploring topics relating to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender in order to build greater acceptance. •Civil Rights Alternative Spring Break Trip is where students explore civil rights history by visiting historical sites, places, museums and interacting with key players. •T.E.A.M. Peer Mentor Program pairs students from underrepresented backgrounds with older peer mentors to establish supportive relationships and aid the transition.
Butler University	API	•Asian & Pacific Islander Alliance is a student body that seeks to empower and educate and to provide a sense of community for Asian & Pacific Islander students on campus,.
College of William & Mary	Asian Student Council	•Asian Student Council serves as the umbrella organization and there are 12 other associations/organizations that operate under its auspices.
Drake University	South Asian Student Association (SASA); Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA)	•There are two separate associations that serve South Asian and Chinese populations.
Lehigh University	Asian Cultural Society	•Asian Cultural Society is a student- and alumni-led organization to spread Asian Cultural Awareness and to celebrate Asian cultural diversity at Lehigh Campus.
Villanova University	AAPI	•Villanova has a dashboard that breaks out students, staff and faculty by race with clear numbers.
Boston College	AHANA (African, Hispanic, Asian and Native American)	•Faculty who identify as AHANA play a vital role in the Boston College community and are important resources. They pursue cutting-edge scholarship. They teach innovative classes in a wide range of subjects and serve as mentors and advisors.
Emory University	AAPI and APIDA	•Emory has an Asian Cultural Center, a space dedicated to serving Emory's Asian and Asian American communities and as an informal gathering place for students, faculty, and alumni to celebrate the distinct cultural heritages and learn about shared histories and identities.
Georgetown University	Asian American	•AASA (Asian American Student Association) is a political, educational, and cultural organization that aims to serve the Asian American community at Georgetown University.
Rice University	API	•Chao Center for Asian Studies is the premier research hub for faculty, students and post-doctoral scholars working in Asian studies at Rice. •Asian Pacific American Student Alliance strives to promote unity in the community by educating students and raising consciousness about the unique and shared historical, cultural and sociopolitical experiences of the Asian Pacific Islander American community.

Tracking Development and Progress. Tulane adopts an interesting approach to track the performance of their affinity groups and organizations by way of decolonizing the structures. This is achieved by having an advisor of the affinity group/organization who is not from the same race and through emphasis on bridging the gap between communities – promotion of partnership between communities and groups/organizations, exploration of intersections and commonalities between groups, and joint organization of community events. Similarly, at Emory, the focus is also on intersectionality. At other universities, the tracking of progress is based on admission numbers and events organized.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Lumping of subgroups. An important issue that surfaced in our research is the lumping of first-generation Asians and second- and third-generation Asian Americans into one category. There are inherent differences between these groups in terms of wealth inequities and challenges faced. Grouping them in one category undermines understanding their unique issues. Similarly, "Asian" constitutes several subgroups, like Indian, Filipino, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, etc., which necessitates creating capacities that are adept in dealing with the issues faced by various subgroups.

Mobilization of Asian Student and Staff Recruitment. To mobilize recruitment of Asian students, some universities have instituted a No Loan Policy Program, while others have focused on recruitment from the West Coast and offered spousal support through creation of institutional support resources.

To recruit and retain Asian students, some schools (e.g., Tulane and Emory) rely on mentoring and the creation of structures/spaces where Asian students feel psychologically safe. At Emory, the Asian Student Center (ASC) serves Asian and Asian American communities and provides an informal gathering place for students, faculty, and alumni to celebrate their distinct cultural heritages and learn about shared histories and identities. On the flip side, we also found that despite the repeated requests from Asian students, there has been a consistent lack of choices in course offerings that focus on Asian and South Asian studies. Additionally, there are orientation programs organized by the campus DEI groups.

Interactive Dashboard. The Office of DE&I at Villanova University has an interactive dashboard that illustrates the profiles of students, staff, and full-time and part-time faculty members. These profiles not only offer a quick comparison of demographics of a given population across differ semesters with information on sex, race/ethnicity, but also provide information on graduation and student retention trends.

Dedicated Spaces. We also noticed that some schools (e.g., Vanderbilt and Emory) are working towards establishing dedicated spaces for faculty and staff who identify as Asian and Pacific Islander, where the API community feels safe to discuss, share issues and concerns pertaining to experiences related to racism, well-being, immigration, etc.

METHOD OF RESEARCHING LIVED EXPERIENCES AT ELON

After benchmarking our peer and aspirant institutions and examining the overall Elon data for API and MENA communities, we conducted a survey and follow-up focus groups to understand the lived experiences of Elon API and MENA faculty, staff, current students and alumni.

SURVEY

The survey was conducted online via Qualtrics from February 15 to March 10, 2022. Given that the focus of this Task Force is on the lived experiences of the API and MENA people at Elon, we decided to only recruit participants who either self-identify or are identified by Elon University as API and MENA. The Task Force obtained the email lists for current API Elon students from the CREDE, current API faculty and staff members from the Office of Human Resources, and API alumni from the Office of Alumni Engagement. An email invitation to participate in a survey was sent to 58 faculty and staff members and 261 students from the Task Force co-chairs. A modified version of the email invitation was sent to 336 alumni through the Office of Alumni Engagement. Given that Elon currently does not track MENA identity, we had to rely on word-of-mouth and personal connections to disseminate the survey to people at Elon who identify as MENA. We also encouraged the receivers of the email invitations to forward them to anyone they know who self-identify as API and/or MENA.

The survey asked participants to indicate how they were connected to Elon University (e.g., current students, alumni, staff, and faculty). All participants answered several common questions about their overall experiences at Elon University. Based on their indicated connections to Elon, they then answered additional sets of questions specifically related to their selected roles.

The survey included both close-ended and open-ended questions. These questions addressed participants' engagement, sense of belonging, perceptions of available resources, perceptions of safety on campus and in the local community, as well as recommendations for improving campus culture.

A total of 104 participants completed the survey. Among them were 50 undergraduate students, 2 graduate students, 20 faculty members, 4 staff members, and 28 alumni (Figure 1). Those who completed the survey and left their emails entered a random drawing to win one of five $40 Amazon e-gift cards.

FOCUS GROUPS

To gain further insights, we carried out seven focus group sessions between April 22 and May 6, 2022 - three with current students, three with faculty and staff members, and one with alumni. For faculty, staff and students, we offered both in-person and online sessions via Zoom. For alumni, an online Zoom session was provided to accommodate widely dispersed locations.

Participants were recruited based on the lists used for the survey, as well as through word-of-mouth. A total of 26 participants (13 current students, 3 faculty members, 4 staff members and 6 alumni) participated. Each participant

received a $15 Amazon e-gift card upon the completion of the session.

Each session lasted an hour and included seven main questions about the overall experience of being an API and MENA student/faculty/staff/ alumni, perceived multicultural climate, presentation of self, obstacles, recommendations on improving campus culture, perceived differences between domestic and international students, and any harassment and/or discrimination experienced at Elon. A protocol with the same list of questions was used for all focus group sessions, although the wording and the order of questions varied slightly to fit the specific roles of participants (i.e., faculty/staff, students and alumni).

Task Force members served as moderators and notetakers for these focus group sessions. Training was done for the moderators to ensure consistency across different sessions. After the focus groups were completed, the moderators and the notetakers went through the notes and

Figure 1. Respondents by Number

How are you currently connected to Elon University?
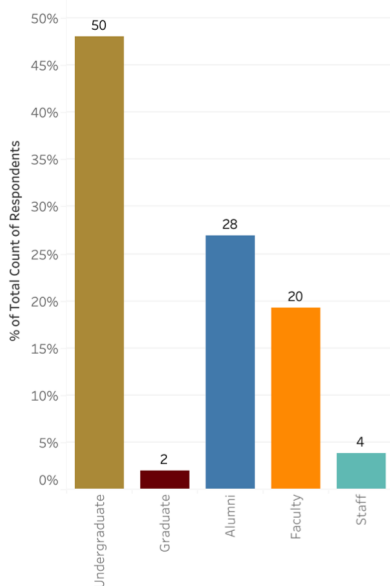
transcripts to identify salient themes that emerged across the sessions.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Among those who completed the survey, 38.5% of the students (including both undergraduate and graduate students) self-identified as East Asian, followed by South Asian (15.4%), Southeast Asian (13.5%), multi-racial (9.6%), Middle Eastern (7.7%), and Pacific Islander (3.8%). Others did not indicate their subgroups.

Half of the alumni respondents self-identified as East Asian (50.0%), followed by Southeast Asian (10.7%), South Asian or Indian (7.1%), Middle Eastern (7.1%) and Pacific Islander (3.6%).

The majority of the faculty and staff respondents self-identified as East Asian or South Asian (75.0%), followed by Middle Eastern (12.5%) and multi-racial (12.5%).

The majority of the surveyed students (69.2%) grew up in U.S. and have lived in U.S. since birth (61.5%), while half of the surveyed alumni (50.0%) grew up in U.S., and close to two-fifths (39.3%) have lived in U.S. since birth. In contrast, 37.5% of the surveyed faculty and staff have lived in U.S. since birth, with more than half (54.2%) having lived in the U.S. for more than 10 years. Most of the responded current students (73.1%) and the alumni (60.7%) considered themselves as domestic, whereas about half of the responded faculty and staff considered themselves as international.

To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, we did not track the demographic information of the focus group participants. All the alumni participants in the focus group graduated from Elon within 10 years (i.e., young alumni).

FINDINGS FROM STUDENTS

Out of 52 student survey responses, 50 were from undergraduates, and the student focus groups were fully undergraduates. Graduate students' survey responses are combined with those from the undergraduate student participants and reported together. All the findings and quoted comments are from the undergraduate participants.

PERCEPTION OF THE OVERALL EXPERIENCE AT ELON

About three-quarters of the 50 undergraduate and two graduate respondents were satisfied with their overall experience at Elon, and a substantial majority were positive that they could be themselves.

- 73.1% of the student respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am satisfied with my overall experience at Elon University" (Figure 2).
- 80.8% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel I can be myself at Elon University" (Figure 3).
- 57.8% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "When at Elon University, I felt free to express my ideas even if they differ from others" (Figure 4).

Despite the shared Asian identity, students in the three focus groups expressed their wide range of cultural backgrounds and hybridity when it came to identifying as Asian. The majority were from the United States; a few were international students who arrived from other countries. The students generally agreed that API and MENA students at Elon lack visibility and representation on campus. Their small but diverse population is

little understood. They are often stereotyped. To counter that, API and MENA student leaders – many of whom took part in these focus groups – noted that their efforts to build community have required huge investments of work and emotional labor to advocate for fellow students and to organize events on their own. They deeply support Elon's DEI initiatives but worry that formal, sometimes repetitive, presentations built around difficult discussions may not lead to the goal of promoting wider and deeper relationships among students. They would encourage more informal activities that bring people together to allow students of various ethnic identities to get to know one another.

A common theme was that students, starting in their first years, are regularly monitoring how they feel in terms of ethnicity and culture and how they are seen and accepted at a predominantly white institution (PWI). They shared a general sense that non-API and non-MENA students did not talk to them meaningfully, especially about being Asian, and too often overlooked them. By their senior years, they felt closer to a level of comfort with themselves and others.

SAFETY

Although most of the student participants indicated that they felt physically safe on Elon's campus in both the survey and the focus groups, they were less certain about their safety while off campus in Alamance County. Although most haven't experienced racial or cultural identity-related overt harassment, close to half have experienced related microaggressions with close to one-third having heard of disparaging

comments directed at others. More than half of the participants were aware of the bias reporting at Elon. However, only less than two-fifth of them were satisfied with the bias reporting process.

- 76.9% of the surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel physically safe at Elon University." Another 9.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed (Figure 5).
- Less than half (40.4%) of the surveyed students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel physically safe when I am off-campus and in the general area of Alamance County." Of the rest, 28.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 26.9% said they "neither agree or disagree" with the statement (Figure 6).
- 17.3% indicated having experienced overt harassment related to racial or cultural identity with 15.4% selecting "maybe" toward this question (Figure 7).
- 44.2% indicated having experienced microaggression related to racial or cultural identity, while 9.6% chose "maybe" toward this question (Figure 8).
- 32.7% have heard of instances of race or ethnicity related disparaging comments directed at somebody else while at Elon. Students were mentioned most frequently as the ones making disparaging comments about race and/or ethnicity, followed by faculty and residents in the local community (Figure 9).
- 25.0% either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement "I did not know there was a process for reporting bias," while 53.8% either strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed with this statement (Figure 10).
- Only 38.5% either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I was satisfied with the process for reporting acts

of bias or discrimination." 26.9% showed somewhat disagreement or strong disagreement with this statement, with 23.1% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (Figure 11).

Despite prominent news reporting on episodes of violence against Asian people over the past couple of years, the focus group participants did not focus much on personal safety, though some did bring up episodes on campus streets when passing drivers blaring loud music yelled at them out of a vehicle's window. "That was definitely scary," one female student reported.

COMMUNICATION AND MESSAGING ABOUT DEI AND ANTI-RACISM

While the majority of the students who participated in this survey believe Elon is effectively pursuing a commitment to inclusion for all, they echoed sentiments of alumni survey-takers in their concerns that Elon is not including API and MENA identities in those efforts. Students were split on whether Elon satisfactorily shares information related to acts of bias or discrimination.

- 57.7% of the surveyed students either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Elon University is effectively pursuing a commitment to inclusion for all its community members regardless of their age, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/express, socioeconomic status, etc." 17.3% somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement and another, 15.4%, did not agree or disagree (Figure 12).
- 42.3% of the surveyed students somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement

Elon University clearly communicates that API and MENA identities are included in its overall efforts to be an inclusive community." A significant percentage, 30.8%, somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed (Figure 13).

- 44.2% of the surveyed students somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed on whether the University appropriately shares information related to acts of bias and discrimination. 28.8% were in agreement and a similar 15.4% did not agree or disagree (Figure 14).
- 28.8% of the surveyed students strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed and 28.8% of them strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement that the university effectively responds to acts of bias and discrimination (Figure 15).

In focus groups, students said they are aware Elon is addressing DEI issues and is starting to pay more attention to API and MENA students. But these students are not satisfied yet, seeking more efforts to develop a multicultural campus spirit that brings students together and includes them. "Four years ago, this was not a conversation. Elon has really grown." Said another: "I credit the students for holding the administration accountable."

In terms of programming to promote DEI principles, the students agreed they would like the university to design "less stressful" ways to learn about DEI through more low-stakes, authentic experiences rather than through "more-of-the-same" lectures and formal discussions. By engaging with students of various backgrounds in activities, one participant said, "It's almost like you're educating yourself on a more local level without having to face severe consequences. The only way to learn and be, I guess, more engaged in conversations regarding DEI is to just learn from experience."

Students appreciate the work done by CREDE but also suggested that more representation, attention and support are needed from CREDE for API and MENA communities and the Asian-Pacific Student Association (APSA). They had lots to say here. One participant, an organizer with APSA, offered this status report: "What we really hope most of all, other than the success of APSA, is a better relationship with CREDE and clear communication, transparency. Sometimes it looks bad because they are a department. We are a student-run organization. You know, we get our money from SGA; they have their own funds, I guess. And so, to us...we feel unseen sometimes...We have to try harder than we should be to be seen and supported, and I guess more so than other cultural orgs." A few students wished CREDE had a staff member who identified as Asian.

Although APSA has become an effective student organization advocating for API students, focus group participants noted that student leadership in the community has not been consistently strong over the years, and support to build a leadership pipeline barely exists. Noted one student: "There seems to be a vacuum of student leadership sometimes in a sense that our community is so small." Added another: "Mentorship is really important, but if we don't have representation or we don't have visibility, how does that affect our community's ability to have student leaders?"

CAMPUS CULTURE AND CLIMATE

While a majority of student survey respondents reported a sense of belonging, slightly more than a quarter of them indicated a need to change who they were in order to fit in.

- 57.7% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel a sense of belonging at Elon University." 21.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed and 17.3% neither agreed or disagreed (Figure 16).
- 53.8% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel that I fit in at Elon without having to change who I am," while 26.9% either disagreed or strongly disagreed and 15.3% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (Figure 17).

In focus groups, this was a popular topic. Generally, students recognize that in Elon's stratified social world, Asian students are not as visible or granted as much credit as many would like. The dominant White culture, notably including fraternity and sorority life at Elon, can leave them out. "Within specific cultural groups, there is a lot of self-segregation," explained one student. "And it seems really insular." One Asian student said she dropped out of a sorority after realizing that members never tried to get to know her. Another student who joined a sorority said she felt like she lost some grasp on her own culture while taking part. "It's just hard to physically enter a space when it wasn't like what my other friends were doing."

To counter that, students spoke of aspirations for Elon to cultivate a more inclusive campus atmosphere with staff and faculty members who support activities that intentionally nurture growth and development among students. Some of the

focus group respondents were leaders of student groups such as APSA, and they proudly noted the progress they've made building and welcoming fellow Asian students into a community in which people can feel comfortable to be themselves. One of the shared messages of the focus groups was that everyone, including the administration, can do more to sustain multiculturalism, where the backgrounds and contributions of all students are valued, starting from the moment when students first arrive on campus.

Students did share some positives. One noticed that dining halls now occasionally offer Asian-style noodles, a small bow to her interests. An international student said she was pleased with the interest her classmates have shown in her culture, which she said parallels her interest in theirs.

The group discussion highlighted the ways that students identify to different degrees as Asian. Said one participant: "We have transracial adoptees; we have multicultural people. We have just Asians from several different countries, international students, people who are very close in racial standing, and then others who are more comfortable with their cultural standing. So, across the Asian community, we are very diverse."

Some students came from population centers where many residents shared Asian backgrounds. Others came from rural towns that lacked any familiarity with Asian culture. "I grew up in rural North Carolina where there were no Asians but me," said a student whose White parents adopted her from East Asia. "When I got here, I saw more Asian people. I was just happy to see them." Another student had an opposite reaction: "When

I arrived, I thought, 'Oh my God, I'm the only person who looks like me at Elon.'"

ADMISSIONS, RECRUITMENT AND NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

In focus groups, students were keenly aware of the aspirational practice of depicting a school as diverse through photographs. In fact, some of these participants have been called repeatedly to serve as Asian role models for Admissions recruitment materials. Some liked being asked more than others. All were concerned with the authenticity of portraying Elon as having more API and MENA students than in reality. One student said she was surprised in her first year to discover much less diversity than she expected. "This is not to hate on Admissions," lamented a different student, "but there is so much tokenization." Another quipped: "It feels like there is a standard email, and my name is personalized asking me to do something for Admissions." Offered a third student: "I know that these Admissions activities are performative. I realize why they pick pictures of someone from all types. If they didn't, I wouldn't see me. I just don't know my way around it."

Beyond the constructed photo sessions, students urged Elon to rethink some of its methods for reaching new students during orientation sessions. In one focus group session, students remarked that the message of inclusiveness during New Student Orientation was offered once but never re-emphasized. Very soon, she said, students had split into predictable racial/cultural groups. She saw this as a missed chance. "So much is going on. It just needs to have more inclusivity and more attention."

> "I know that these Admissions activities are performative. I realize why they pick pictures of someone from all types. If they didn't, I wouldn't see me. I just don't know my way around it."

CURRICULUM AND CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Satisfaction with the academic experience. Students in focus groups shared a general sense that Elon could be offering more courses centered on Asian issues or including learning units that delve into cases involving API and MENA people and cultures. Some students mentioned Elon should offer more instruction in Asian languages. This came up as well in feedback during Elon's Lunar New Year event. One student paused to note that Elon has improved recently in inviting more Asian American guest speakers to campus.

Students pointed out their eagerness to see and work with API and MENA faculty members as cultural familiarity can yield comfort and lead to closer ties with professors. Students, though, noted differences between the larger number of

with domestic faculty who identify as Asian or Middle Eastern. Students said they often did not feel as connected with professors from other countries who tended to be more distant in style. "When I interact with my international professors, there seems to be that disconnect. It just becomes a very transactional professor-student thing where I can't really build some sort of mentorship relationship outside of the class that helps to foster my education."

Sometimes, being the only – or one of a few – Asian student in a classroom can be a bit troubling, students noted, especially if instructors ask students to explain how they, as representatives of an entire group, feel about certain points or news events involving Asian people. Visibility is at issue here, too, especially in cases when API and MENA students, perhaps displaying cultural traits of deference or modesty, don't receive equal attention. At times, students say, they sense that they are overlooked in classroom activities and feel awkward speaking up. One student said she sits in the front row in classes because of her eyesight and is frustrated when her professors look right past her. "I will raise my hand, and I don't know if they do that on purpose, but it's like they always ignore me to call on other students...That's not a nice feeling." One international student from Southeast Asia objected that, because she is soft-spoken and small, her teachers will sometimes assign her tasks even as they allow more aggressive American students to make their own choices. "I feel like just because I'm different, they are picking on me, signing me up without asking me first."

Improvement in multicultural competence. During a focus group session, students tagged the first-

> ## "I feel like just because I'm different, they are picking on me, signing me up without asking me first."

year Global Experience course as a missed chance, saying that in many cases (depending on the instructors) the course barely touches on global issues and fails to promote multiculturalism, which the students had hoped and expected. They saw the Global course as related with other first-year experiences and considered it an area for improvement. Students mentioned examples in which instructors taught variations on their disciplinary interests and mostly overlooked global values. An idea hatched by one group is to shift the course from the first year to later in students' four-year plans when they are more prepared to embrace multiculturalism as an aspect of global citizenship.

Challenges faced by international students. International students also wonder at times whether their teachers appreciate their efforts in a second language and the extra hours of study they invest in keeping up. One student explained that a professor wrote comments on her reading journal pushing her to dig deeper into the meanings of the text. "I really wanted her to know that English is not my first language, so sometimes even if I'm trying my very best, I still

can't do it," she said. But in a follow-up conversation, the teacher did not seem to care.

In focus groups, students were sensitive to the way international students are treated in class and out. Domestic students say they pick up occasional microaggressions such as overhearing a hallmate bantering about the "kung flu" or, worse yet, hearing classmates laughing in class while watching a video in which a speaker has a heavy Asian accent. They see even more episodes of racial or cultural bias aimed at those students studying at Elon who are from Asia. "I still get stared at every time I speak Mandarin," agreed a Chinese student.

Another troubling episode: An international student who aims to become an ESL teacher is disappointed whenever someone questions whether a non-native speaker can succeed at that – without pausing to recognize the clear advantages in having also learned English as a second language. One student pointed out an implicit bias in the way that international students from Europe are often more socially accepted than API and MENA students. "They get so much more respect than the Asian students," she noted. "People say to them, 'You have a cool accent,' instead of, 'What did you say?'"

> "I still get stared at every time I speak Mandarin."

FINDINGS FROM ALUMNI

PERCEPTION OF THE OVERALL EXPERIENCE AT ELON

Most alumni survey respondents were satisfied with their overall experience at Elon, were able to be themselves, and perceived the freedom to express their ideas even if they were different from others while at Elon.

- 89.3% of the alumni respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I was satisfied with my overall experience at Elon University" (Figure 2).
- 75.0% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt I can be myself at Elon University" (Figure 3).
- 78.6% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "When at Elon University, I felt free to express my ideas even if they differ from others'" (Figure 4).

SAFETY

Physical safety. Although most of the alumni participants indicated that they felt physically safe on Elon's campus in both the survey and the focus group, they were concerned with physical safety while being off campus in Alamance County.

- 78.6% of the surveyed alumni either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt physically safe at Elon University" (Figure 5).
- Only less than half (42.9%) of the surveyed alumni either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt physically safe when I am off-campus and in the general area of Alamance County." The rest either chose "neither agree or disagree" or "disagree" towards this statement (Figure 6).

In focus groups, several alumni referred to Elon as "a bubble" in terms of safety and said that Burlington and Alamance County in general "[are] nothing like Elon." Although the alumni respondents did not perceive the local community surrounding Elon as super adverse, they had heard instances of their API and MENA peers being shouted at or being stared at on the streets or in the store in Alamance County.

Harassment, disparaging comments and microaggression. Among the surveyed alumni, only a small number indicated having experienced overt harassment related to racial or cultural identity while at Elon University. However, half of the surveyed alumni indicated that they had experienced racial or cultural identity-related microaggression while at Elon. Close to two fifths have also heard of instances of disparaging comments made toward others at Elon.

- 14.3% indicated having experienced overt harassment related to racial or cultural identity with 25.0% selecting "maybe" towards this question (Figure 7).
- 50.0% indicated having experienced microaggression related to racial or cultural identity, while 10.7% chose "maybe" towards this question (Figure 8).
- 39.3% have heard of instances of race or ethnicity related disparaging comments directed at somebody else while at Elon. Students were mentioned most frequently as the ones making disparaging comments about race and/or ethnicity, followed by faculty and residents in the local community (Figure 9).

The findings from the survey were further corroborated by the focus groups. Although none of the focus group participants mentioned any overt harassment directed towards themselves, many mentioned microaggressions they had experienced or heard about towards their API and MENA peers while at Elon. Some of them mentioned they did not realize those comments or behaviors towards them should be considered microaggression until they gained more knowledge about DEI and anti-racism in graduate school or professional fields after graduating from Elon.

Bias reporting. More than two-fifths of the alumni survey respondents were not fully aware of the existing bias reporting system at Elon. More than half of them were unsatisfied with how to report bias or discrimination.

- 42.9% either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement "I did not know there was a process for reporting bias" (Figure 10).
- Only 21.4% either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I was satisfied with the process for reporting acts of bias or discrimination." Others either showed various levels of disagreement or neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (Figure 11).

COMMUNICATION AND MESSAGING ABOUT DEI AND ANTI-RACISM

While the majority of the alumni who participated in this survey believe Elon is effectively pursuing a commitment to inclusion for all, most do not believe that Elon clearly communicates that the API and MENA identities are included in those efforts. When it comes to the way in which the

University communicates incidents of bias or discrimination and how the University's response to acts of bias or discrimination, alumni were dissatisfied in general.

- 57.1% of the surveyed alumni either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Elon University is effectively pursuing a commitment to inclusion for all its community members regardless of their age, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/express, socioeconomic status, etc." (Figure 12).
- Only 25.0% of the surveyed alumni either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Elon University clearly communicates that API and MENA identities are included in its overall efforts to be an inclusive community" (Figure 13).
- Only 21.4% of the surveyed alumni agreed (by either selecting "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree") that the University appropriately shared information related to incidents of bias and discrimination when they occur (Figure 14).
- Only 17.8% of the surveyed alumni either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that the university effectively responded to acts of bias and discrimination. 42.9% neither agreed nor disagreed with it (Figure 15).

CAMPUS CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Most alumni survey respondents indicated a sense of belonging as a student, but over half indicated a need to change who they were in order to fit in.

- 82.1% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt a sense of belonging at Elon University" (Figure 16).

- Only 42.9% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt that I fit in at Elon without having to change who I am," while the rest either disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (Figure 17).

This finding is further corroborated by what we learned in focus groups. One alum said, "I had a lot of trouble feeling a sense of belonging at Elon, which is funny because that is what they market - bELONg - and I felt a lack of belonging, unless I was code-switching."

Multiple alumni participants felt they had been tokenized on campus, in and out of the classroom. They reported feeling like they had to represent their entire community. For example, one participant mentioned, "It is good to have API and MENA individuals to drive the conversation about what needs to be discussed and learned, but they should not be used as token students… They should not have to lay out their trauma or experiences in order for other to learn from them."

> "I had a lot of trouble feeling a sense of belonging at Elon, which is funny because that is what they market - bELONg - and I felt a lack of belonging, unless I was code-switching."

Alumni also demonstrated strong disappointment with how Greek Life has dominated social life and separated people on campus. They suggested Elon should provide more diverse campus life opportunities to better unite people with diverse cultural backgrounds. For example, one mentioned, "Unfortunately, the culture of the university is kind of dictated based on how the Greek system works in terms of social life…the Greek system has a huge role in separating people that are in the 'other category.'" Another said, "…while a lot of other students at school...they were part of sororities and fraternities...I did not particularly identify with a lot of my classmates and friends who were involved in them."

ADMISSION, RECRUITMENT AND NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

At the time when this Task Force began collecting information in fall 2021, only 4.1% (261 students) of undergraduate populations at Elon University identified as Asian and/or Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Only 32 of these API students were international. Elon lacks data on MENA representation for the student body. The admissions process and the cohort of admitted students each year strongly dictates the campus culture. As one mentioned in the focus group, "Culture derives from students. If Elon continues to have high acceptance rates of predominantly White folks, I think you will continue to see that culture."

API and MENA alumni shared how they believed Elon strongly prioritized diversity during the admissions process, especially during a diversity-focused admissions weekend, but that the picture Elon painted wasn't an accurate representation of what they experienced as a student. One said, "I

really enjoyed that weekend, but it wasn't, you know, a mirror to my actual experience." This sentiment was also shared in the 2015 report of the Presidential Task Force on Black Student, Faculty and Staff Experiences at Elon: "Black students respondents also report unmet expectations after seeing fewer students of color and sensing less repetition of them upon enrollment than what they experienced during Phoenix Fusion Weekend" (p. 13).

CURRICULUM AND CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Satisfaction with the academic experience. Most participants indicated satisfaction with the academic experience provided by Elon University. They expressed appreciation for the close connection with faculty and the deep mentorship provided by them. Several participants particularly mentioned how their professors helped them learn more about their own racial and cultural identity through the mentored undergraduate research experience. For example: "It was nice to have professors that actually encouraged me to be myself," and "[My mentor] did a lot of research in the country where I was from. I felt that I gained more understanding of my own identity through doing research with her."

Improvement in cultural competence needed for all students. They looked forward to more open discussion about racial/ethnic biases and the relevant implications in classrooms. They also emphasized the importance of avoiding generalizing API and MENA people as one undifferentiated group both in classroom settings and on campus. They expressed desires for Elon to improve the cultural competence of all students to better understand and appreciate the diversity in the world, as well as in their home countries or states.

From firsthand experience, many Elon students grew up in monolithic communities and do not understand the implication of their biases," one alum shared. Another said, "Please include cultural competencies in your curriculum. All of the curriculum. No matter the major." A third said, "If possible, get a map of where all students are from up on the [university] website. This will get the others to have self-awareness that we have students from all over the world. It is at least to feel secure if all students have been recognized..."

More DEI and anti-racism education needed in curriculum. Most participants strongly called for adding more DEI-focused courses and infusing DEI and anti-racism widely into disciplinary courses. These courses are not only important for majority students to better understand DEI and anti-racism but also critical for underrepresented students to master the language and be proficient at discussing and interpreting their own experiences. Statements included: "I went to xxx for grad school…[with their curriculum], I learned what actually happened in my experience at Elon and how to describe what my feelings were at that time;" "We didn't have, I didn't have the language to talk about it [bias and discrimination] and that also put me in a position where I felt like that I had to teach other students;" and "I think that it [DEI and anti-racism curriculum] increases people's awareness, vocabulary, and willingness to talk about it. And I think it provides empathy and fosters the idea that other people have different experiences."

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SUCCESS

Networking. Stronger networking for API and MENA communities emerged as one of the most prominent themes about infrastructure for

success. Specifically, the alumni pointed out the lack of an Elon API and MENA alumni network. They wanted to connect with other API and MENA alumni and expressed strong interests in connecting with the current API and MENA students. The top two activities they would like to engage in with the current students are helping with career development and mentoring. "We could serve as resources to them [current students] as they're navigating their time through college," and "if they ever need to talk to us [alumni] about anything at or about Elon, we can provide support and information," one participant said.

Reflecting upon their own experiences at Elon, the alumni believed offering and/or facilitating more intentional networking opportunities would be helpful for API and MENA students to connect with each other. One participant commented, "I believe intentional networking opportunities that do not make people feel forced will help connect API and MENA community members...there needs to be intentional creations of safe spaces to allow these students to create their own community and do not feel so lonely in the university."

Student organizations, student employment work experience, faculty mentorship, and the residential living experience emerged as top approaches for building a network of support at Elon.

Diversity in faculty and staff. As mentioned in the focus groups, the representation of API and MENA faculty and staff members across different departments and programs matters to API and MENA students. Alumni said they noticed the lack

> "Representation matters. When it comes to counseling, faculty, and staff, just having an Asian face makes a huge difference."

of API and MENA supporting staff on campus in general and particularly in student health and counseling services. They suggested to add clinicians with diverse cultural backgrounds and/or expertise in intersectionality, racism, and discrimination. An alum shared: "That doesn't always feel so safe for people to talk to White therapists. I would suggest having clinicians of every color and even some focusing on intersectionality, racism, discrimination, etc." Another said, "Representation matters. When it comes to counseling, faculty, and staff, just having an Asian face makes a huge difference."

Challenges faced by international students. Several challenges have been mentioned by API and MENA international alumni. One is the lack of access to get around the Elon-Burlington area. Unlike most domestic students, they did not have

a U.S. driver's license or a personal vehicle. The lack of public transportation and the limited schedule of Elon bus made it hard for them to live through the first couple of semesters at Elon. One mentioned, "The access to do anything was quite a shock [upon arrival at Elon]. It was never easy to get around." Another said, "There is no convenient public transportation in the Town of Elon or Burlington. I pretty much stayed on campus the whole time unless a friend gave me a ride."

Another challenge concerned building personal connections upon arrival. They felt lonely and missed home a lot during holidays and breaks. However, they also showed great appreciation for the Local Friends program for international students. One alum commented, "I can't even describe in words how much of a support [this program] provided for me emotionally." Another mentioned that "those personal connections were one of the reasons why I stayed and why I was able to love Elon…"

"those personal connections were one of the reasons why I stayed and why I was able to love Elon…"

FINDINGS FROM FACULTY & STAFF

PERCEPTION OF THE OVERALL EXPERIENCE AT ELON

The majority of faculty were satisfied with their overall experience at Elon and were able to be themselves while at Elon. Staff satisfaction was generally lower.
- 85.0% of the faculty respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am satisfied with my overall experience at Elon University" (Figure 2).
- 25.0% of staff agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am satisfied with my overall experience at Elon University" (Figure 2).
- 65.0% of faculty and 50% of staff either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt I can be myself at Elon University" (Figure 3).

Faculty focus group participants spoke highly of their respective department's overall environment and the supportiveness of their colleagues at Elon. In contrast, staff focus group participants reported a more uncomfortable environment as well as a sense of isolation. They attributed this both to the low overall numbers of API and MENA staff as well as differences in faculty and staff recruitment. Faculty recruitment is often international while staff recruitment tends to draw from a local pool which reflects the underlying demographics of central North Carolina. Information about staff demographics may not be as well tracked as faculty/student demographics.

SAFETY

Physical safety. Although most of the participants indicated that they felt physically safe on Elon's campus in both the survey and the focus group, they were somewhat concerned with physical safety while being off campus in Alamance County.
- 100.0% of the surveyed faculty and staff either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt physically safe at Elon University" (Figure 5).
- 70.0% of the surveyed faculty and 75.0% of the surveyed staff either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt physically safe when I am off-campus and in the general area of Alamance County." The rest either chose "neither agree or disagree," "disagree" or "strongly disagree" towards this statement (Figure 6).

The theme of feeling discomfort due to Elon's location came up in the focus group as well. One participant noted they felt more welcome at their previous institution and also felt that in Burlington "it's really hard for [locals] to accept other cultures."

Harassment, disparaging comments and microaggressions. Among the faculty surveyed, a quarter (25.0%) indicated having experienced overt harassment related to racial or cultural identity while at Elon University. No staff responded to this question in the survey. However, 45.0% of faculty and 100.0% of staff respondents indicated they had experienced racial or cultural identity-related microaggressions while at Elon. Close to 70.0% of faculty and 66.6% of staff witnessed instances of disparaging comments made toward others at Elon.
- 25% of faculty and half of staff indicated

having experienced overt harassment related to racial or cultural identity with 5.0% of faculty and none of staff selecting "maybe" toward this question (Figure 7).

- 45.0% of faculty indicated having experienced microaggression related to racial or cultural identity, while 15.0% of faculty chose "maybe" toward this question (Figure 8).
- 100.0% of staff respondents reported having experienced microaggressions related to racial or cultural identity (Figure 8).
- 70.0% of faculty and 75.0% of staff have heard of instances of race or ethnicity related disparaging comments directed at someone else at Elon (Figure 9).

The findings from the survey were further corroborated by the focus groups. Faculty participants, in general, did not report overt harassment. Faculty members did, however, report occasional interactions, which did not necessarily rise to the level of an official bias report, that they would like to have space to discuss with fellow API and MENA colleagues.

In focus groups, multiple staff members reported experiencing microaggressions and incidents based on their racial and cultural identities. One staff member reported that while they felt senior staff strongly support DEI, that message does not necessarily filter down to middle levels of management. One focus group member said: "There's a mismatch [between senior staff's emphasis on DEI] and being told by my colleagues that 'you're the problem.'"

Bias reporting. Roughly two-thirds of the faculty and three-quarters of the staff who responded were aware of the existing bias reporting system

at Elon. While only 15.0% of faculty and 25.0% of staff expressed dissatisfaction with the current bias reporting system, many respondents (45.0% of faculty and 50.0% of staff) reported ambivalence.

- 35.0% of faculty and 25.0% of staff either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement "I did not know there was a process for reporting bias" (Figure 10).
- 40.0% of faculty and 25.0% either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement "I am satisfied with the process for reporting acts of bias or discrimination." However, 45.0% of faculty and 50.0% of staff respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement (Figure 11).

"There's a mismatch [between senior staff's emphasis on DEI and] being told by my colleagues that 'you're the problem.'"

COMMUNICATION AND MESSAGING ABOUT DEI AND ANTI-RACISM

The vast majority of faculty agree that Elon is effectively pursuing a commitment to inclusion

for all, but fewer believe that Elon clearly communicates that API and MENA identities are included in those efforts. Faculty were less satisfied in the way in which the University communicates incidents of bias or discrimination and how the University's responds to acts of bias or discrimination.

In contrast, half of staff respondents believed that Elon's pursuit of inclusion is effective, and fewer believed that API and MENA identities were included. Only a quarter of staff respondents believed that Elon's response to reports of bias or discrimination were effective, and half of staff respondents responded that they do not report acts of bias or discrimination due to fear of retaliation.

- 85.0% of the surveyed faculty and 50.0% of staff either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Elon University is effectively pursuing a commitment to inclusion for all its community members regardless of their age, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, etc." (Figure 12).
- Only 40.0% of the surveyed faculty and 25.0% of the surveyed staff either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Elon University clearly communicates that API and MENA identities are included in its overall efforts to be an inclusive community" (Figure 13).
- 80.0% of the surveyed faculty and 50.0% of the surveyed staff did not believe (by selecting either "strongly disagree," "disagree," or "neither agree nor disagree") that the University appropriately shared information related to acts of bias and discrimination (Figure 14).
- 20.0% of the surveyed faculty and 25.0% of

the surveyed staff somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that the university effectively responded to acts of bias and discrimination (Figure 15).

Faculty focus group participants – particularly those who have been at Elon for several years – noted they believed the campus climate has improved significantly for the API and MENA population. As a focus group respondent noted: "I think the Elon community as a whole -- students and faculty-staff -- everything is very inclusive … because one of the main focuses of Elon is to produce and grow a globally minded citizen."

Staff focus group participants reported being told they are "not underrepresented because [they are] Asian" and that they believed that they had to remain quiet due to fear of retaliation. "As staff, it's very different, because you were told to use your voice and self-advocate, and that was not accepted in my area. And then you're very beat down and you're the only one, and you go to HR and there's nothing." One staff member added, "Supervisors go through no training, no checkpoints, so there are lots of things that can happen [especially when] there's high turnover."

CAMPUS CULTURE AND CLIMATE

A majority of the faculty felt a sense of belonging at Elon University, but fewer felt that they fit into Elon without having to change who they were. Staff, however, did not feel as strongly that they belonged. Fewer staff said that they fit into Elon without changing who they were.

- 75.0% of faculty either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt a sense of belonging at Elon University." In contrast, only 25.0% of staff reported feeling a sense

of belonging (Figure 16).

- 70.0% of faculty and 25.0% of staff either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I felt that I fit in at Elon without having to change who I am," while the rest either disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (Figure 17).

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO THE INTERNATIONAL POPULATION

A significant international population has immigration/visa needs, which present an ongoing stressor. One international faculty member said that "research/ teaching/ service" was joined by "immigration," as being equivalent stressors. Legal services regarding immigration remain difficult, and this is exacerbated by the individual nature of each person's immigration status.

A focus group participant shared: "I've been thankful to be in the department that has been very supportive, very, very supportive...but one aspect where I did face challenge was when applying for the immigration green card...just because how Elon functions and how you can talk/not talk to people who make things run." Another faculty member stated, "I wanted to show appreciation for my colleagues, including the previous chair and dean, but I guess it's not about the school or department. It's about the system. I've heard that there have been improvements over the years but...I also heard from some other international faculty, especially junior faculty members, that they still encounter challenges, and I wanted to speak up for them. As junior faculty, you want to stay in your lane. It's hard for them to speak for themselves."

"I've heard that there have been improvements over the years but...I also heard from some other international faculty, especially junior faculty members, that they still encounter challenges, and I wanted to speak up for them."

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Task Force's research and the findings from the online survey and focus groups, we propose the following recommendations for building community and empowerment within the API and MENA communities and improving their Elon experiences.

CAMPUS CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Data

- Reassess the classifications used by the university. Offer students, faculty and staff the option to select MENA as an identity, rather than maintaining the current system which does not provide any option for self-identification as MENA.
  - Allow additional ethnic identification options for all students, faculty and staff at Elon.
- Develop visibility and representation of the API and MENA community by collecting better data to understand their specific experiences.
  - Disaggregate existing data related to retention, graduation rates, and other metrics of student, faculty and staff success.
  - Continue to approach data gathering and analysis through a data disaggregation-lens utilizing the newly collected data regarding ethnicity and MENA identification. Allow for data disaggregation on other factors such as income or SES, if possible.
- Continue to monitor first-year retention rate and six-year graduation rate for all API and MENA students.

- Investigate the notably lower rates of global engagement, undergraduate research, and service-learning participation for API students compared with the entire student population.

Support

- Continue equal on-campus support for API and MENA students and activities as for other cultural groups.
- Provide safe spaces to encourage API and MENA students to create their own cultural groups and organizations to facilitate a sense of community.
- Continue to provide financial support for API and MENA students to celebrate their cultural traditions, as well as festivals/holidays for both religious and non-religious purposes, which could also provide opportunities for other students to learn about API and MENA culture.
- Promote more representation and inclusion of API and MENA students in CREDE to build a sense of welcome and belonging.
- Support and maintain representation and inclusion of API and MENA staff in CREDE to facilitate a sense of welcome and belonging.
- Support and mentor API and MENA students to seek leadership roles on campus.
- Seek to counter or modify the perceived exclusionary culture of fraternity and sorority life on campus.
- Create more opportunities for underrepresented students (including API and MENA students) to build their on-campus connections that can continue post-graduation.
- Build and enhance spaces for the MENA community so that students, faculty, and staff can feel a sense of belonging.

Faculty and Staff

- Encourage ongoing DEI and bias training for faculty and staff members, including attention to differences among cultures and behavioral norms of the API and MENA communities, as well as how to avoid tokenism - singling out an API and MENA member to speak on behalf of the entire API and MENA community - and microaggressions.
- Recruit counselors/therapists with API and MENA background or sufficient cultural knowledge to understand the racial and cultural identities of API and MENA students.
- Support API and MENA staff members in student-facing roles to help students feel a stronger sense of belonging and representation on campus.
- Bolster recruitment of API and MENA faculty and staff members. Ensure their presence is included across a variety of programs, departments and committees/councils.
  - Invest in efforts to both retain API and MENA faculty and staff and assess the retention rates of API and MENA faculty and staff.
- Create professional development opportunities focused on API and MENA staff to foster a leadership pipeline for higher-level positions.
- Establish and support an Employee Resource Group (ERG) dedicated specifically to the API and MENA community.
- Reevaluate teaching practices within Global First-Year courses to reflect more conversation and less lecture.

SAFETY

- Continue to monitor campus reports and student perceptions with a focus on safety issues for API and MENA students, staff and faculty.
- Maintain/encourage sensitivity among security personnel, faculty and staff to ensure the safety, welfare and rights of API and MENA students who, through cultural practices, may be hesitant to ask for help or call attention to their distress. This may require additional bias training.
- Investigate reasons why students are hesitant to use the existing bias reporting system. Revisit and evaluate system/process by using feedback from API and MENA students in addition to other students.
- In collaboration with CREDE, create a mechanism for students, faculty and staff to address and share information and concerns about incidents of bias and discrimination, including microaggressions that do not rise to the level of formal reporting.

DEI APPROACHES

- Design student activities involving more "casual inclusiveness" and joy in addition to hosting formal lectures and discussions. Invite students to take part in social actions intended to address DEI issues and to reduce nervousness about participating in formal discussions. As one student said, "Small things can go pretty far."
- Require intercultural competency and bias training for those in supervisory or managerial roles and hiring committees.
  - Include topics relevant to the API and MENA communities, such as the model minority myth, perpetual foreigner syndrome, erasure of other non-mainstream Asian ethnic groups (e.g., East Asian Privilege), conflation of Asian and Pacific Islander, and so on.

- Identify additional peer and aspirant institutions that are working to advance DEI for API and MENA students, such as AANAPISIs, that Elon can partner with or learn from.

COMMUNICATION AND MESSAGING ABOUT DEI AND ANTI-RACISM

- Increase communication to the campus community reporting on confirmed acts of bias and discrimination along with campus review and outcomes.
- Further publicize (beyond the Inclusive Excellence website) the bias reporting system process.
- Enhance efforts to ensure API and MENA students and alumni are represented in the campuswide DEI efforts.
- Include information on the bias and discrimination process in the New Student Orientation schedule.

ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT

- Include API and MENA students in admissions videos and materials in roles equivalent to those of students of other backgrounds.
- Increase admissions rate of both international and domestic API and MENA students to meet/exceed national rates.
- Reassess diversity-focused admissions events to ensure students receive an accurate and authentic representation of the experiences of Elon students.
- Incorporate a focus on DEI and anti-racism during admissions events.
- Develop more merit-based scholarships to bolster and serve the needs of API and MENA students.

- Be aware of perceptions of tokenism in deploying a small set of API and MENA students repeatedly to serve as models and spokespeople on behalf of diversity. Strive for authenticity.
- Monitor and assess Elon's efforts in recruiting API and MENA students. Evaluate the geographic areas and high schools Elon admissions counselors visit.

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

- Enhance discussions during New Student Orientation to foster an inclusive environment (e.g., microaggressions, bias, reporting, etc.) with a goal of creating a pipeline to extend those conversations beyond Orientation Weekend.
- Review New Student Orientation and first-year activities to encourage students to genuinely get to know those from other cultures, races, backgrounds. Create more exercises that bring students of varying backgrounds together to meet and share their personal stories.
- Offer more support and opportunities for international students to join in campus events with fellow new students to avoid feeling separated from non-international students during orientation.
- Encourage domestic students to build mutual respect with international students, faculty, and staff (e.g., accept and embrace various accents, dialects, and languages).

CURRICULUM, CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Explore revisions to the Global Experience course to ensure the promotion of global citizenship and multiculturalism.
- Consider whether the required Global Experience course would be more relevant to student learning as an upper-division offering rather than a first-year foundation course.
- Infuse DEI and anti-racism into disciplinary courses for all majors in addition to the standalone courses or discussions in classrooms.
- Provide more training and resources (including financial support) for faculty to teach equity and inclusion, such as cultivating equitable and inclusive space of discussion, contextualizing DEI and anti-racism in teaching materials, cultural awareness for classroom, etc.
- Include improving intercultural competence as one of the high-impact practices offered at Elon or examine how to integrate it into each of the five Elon Experiences.
- Offer designated DEI courses with topics related to API and MENA people and communities in the Elon Core Curriculum.
- Explore possibilities of offering instruction in additional languages from Asia and the greater Middle East.
- Encourage faculty to include in their courses references to Asia, the Middle East and diaspora experiences from those regions through case studies, examples, readings, guest speakers, etc. to ensure the regions and their people are visible to students, when relevant.
- Provide support and encouragement for faculty, such as through the Center for Teaching & Learning, to infuse their courses with lessons on API and MENA topics/references.
- Build cross-disciplinary synergies for developing DEI and anti-racism curriculum, especially those related to API and MENA culture and languages.
- Consider co-teaching strategies in cases where one or both instructors could bring their expertise on Asian or Middle Eastern issues into the classroom.
- Increase the cultural competency of faculty and staff to understand the differences within API and MENA communities and avoid tokenizing API and MENA students and colleagues.

NETWORKING

- Collaborate with Office of Alumni Engagement to create the Elon API and MENA Alumni Network.
- Collaborate with the Student Professional Development Center to establish an API and MENA mentorship (formal or informal) program to connect API and MENA alumni and students.
- Provide financial support for API and MENA students to attend and engage in events and activities organized by local API and MENA communities/groups.
- Find a faculty and an administrator champion on-campus to help build API and MENA communities.
- Build a parent network to support fundraising for API and MENA.
- Encourage and support API and MENA faculty and staff to participate in the faculty-in-residence program or become faculty affiliates for first-year API and MENA students.

SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL COLLEAGUES

- Ensure improved oversight and communication with legal services to support international faculty in the highly stressful process of obtaining and maintaining their immigration status.
- As a matter of equity, build consideration of a faculty member's time-consuming immigration processes into diversity training for department chairs and members of the Promotion & Tenure Committee.
- Build stronger connections within the campus API and MENA community – involving people who identify as domestic or international – to encourage contact and to foster relationships across departments.

SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- Provide transportation support for international API and MENA students to meet basic life needs as well as for engagement with the local API and MENA community.
- Evaluate the Elon Express usage and student perception/feedback of this resource.

REFERENCES

De Leon, A. (2020, April 8). *The long history of US racism against Asian Americans, from 'yellow peril' to 'model minority' to the 'Chinese virus.'* The Conversation. Retrieved from https://theconversation.com/the-long-history-of-us-racism-against-asian-americans-from-yellow-peril-to-model-minority-to-the-chinese-virus-135793

Jeung , R., Horse, A. Y., Popovic, T., & Lim, R. (2021, May 20). *Stop AAPI Hate National Report (3/19/20 – 2/28/21)*. Stop AAPI Hate. Retrieved from https://stopaapihate.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Stop-AAPI-Hate-Report-National-v2-210830.pdf

Kao, C. I. (2019). *Asian American Student Engagement on College Campuses* (dissertation). ProQuest LLC, Ann Arbor, MI. Retrieved from https://search.proquest.com/openview/dd7441566d34158a1189de548c297f7d/1?cbl=18750&diss=y&pq-origsite=gscholar

Mangan, K. (2022, May 10). Race on Campus: Busting the 'Model Minority' Myth. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/race-on-campus/2022-05-10?cid=gen_sign_in.

Museus, D. S., Kiang, N. P. (2009). The Model Minority myth and how it contributes to the invisible minority reality in higher education research. In S. D. Museus (Ed.), *Conducting research on Asian Americans in higher education: New Directions for Institutional Research* (no. 142, pp. 5-15). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ruiz, N. G., Edwards, K., & Lopez, M. H. (2022, May 9). *One-third of Asian Americans fear threats, physical attacks and most say violence against them is rising*. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/04/21/one-third-of-asian-amwww.ericans-fear-threats-physical-attacks-and-most-say-violence-against-them-is-rising/

United States Census Bureau. (2018, December 11). *More than 76 million students enrolled in U.S. schools, Census Bureau reports.* https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2018/school-enrollment.html

Wang, H. L. (2022, February 17). The U.S. census sees Middle Eastern and North African people as white. Many don't. *National Public Radio.* https://www.npr.org/2022/02/17/1079181478/us-census-middle-eastern-white-north-african-mena

APPENDIX

Figure 1. Respondents by Number

How are you currently connected to Elon University?
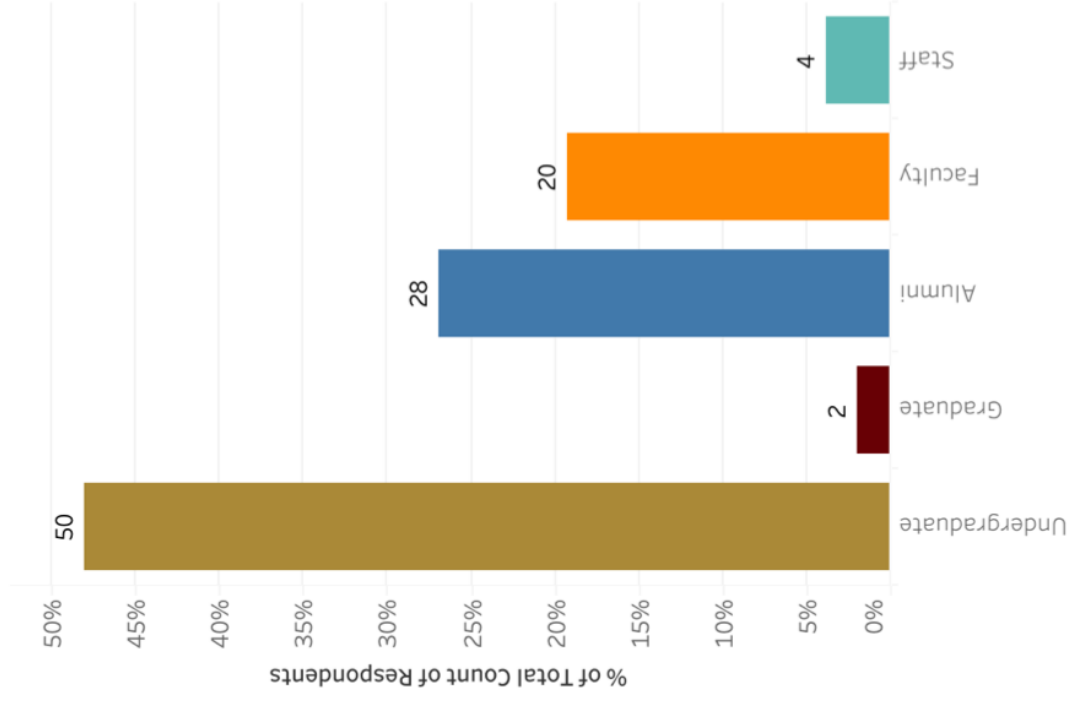
Figure 2: Satisfaction with the overall experience at Elon University
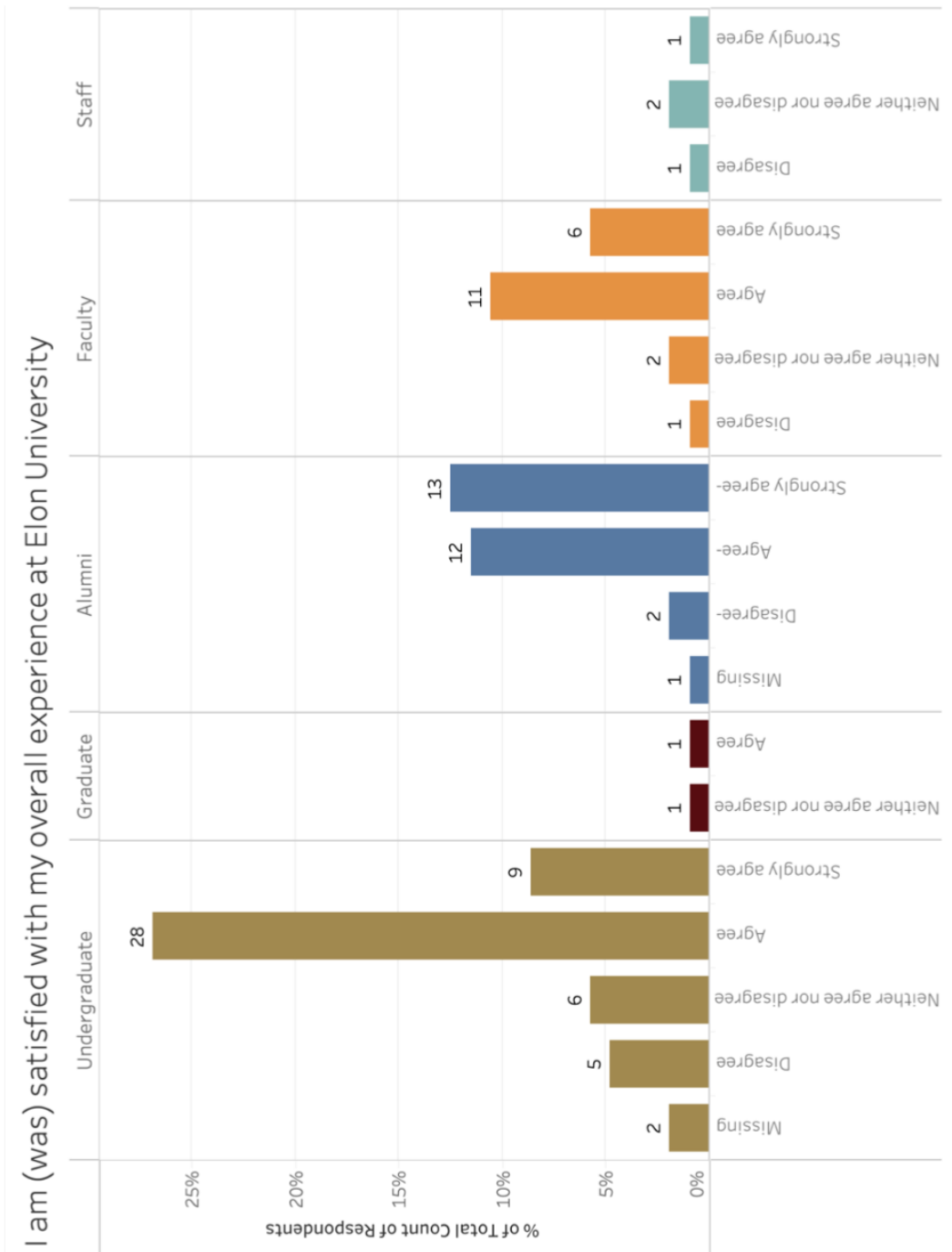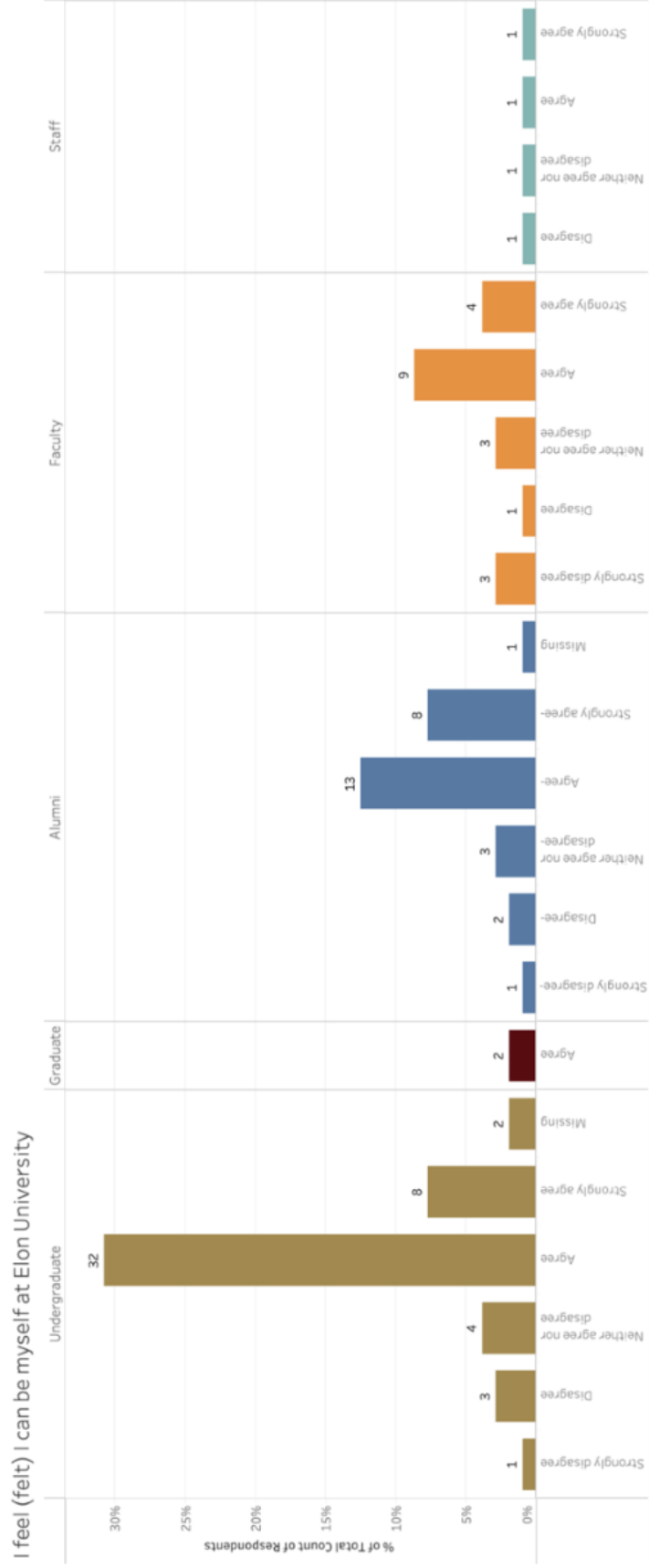
Figure 3. Being myself at Elon University

Figure 4. Expression of ideas

When at Elon University, I feel (felt) free to express my ideas even if they differ from others'.
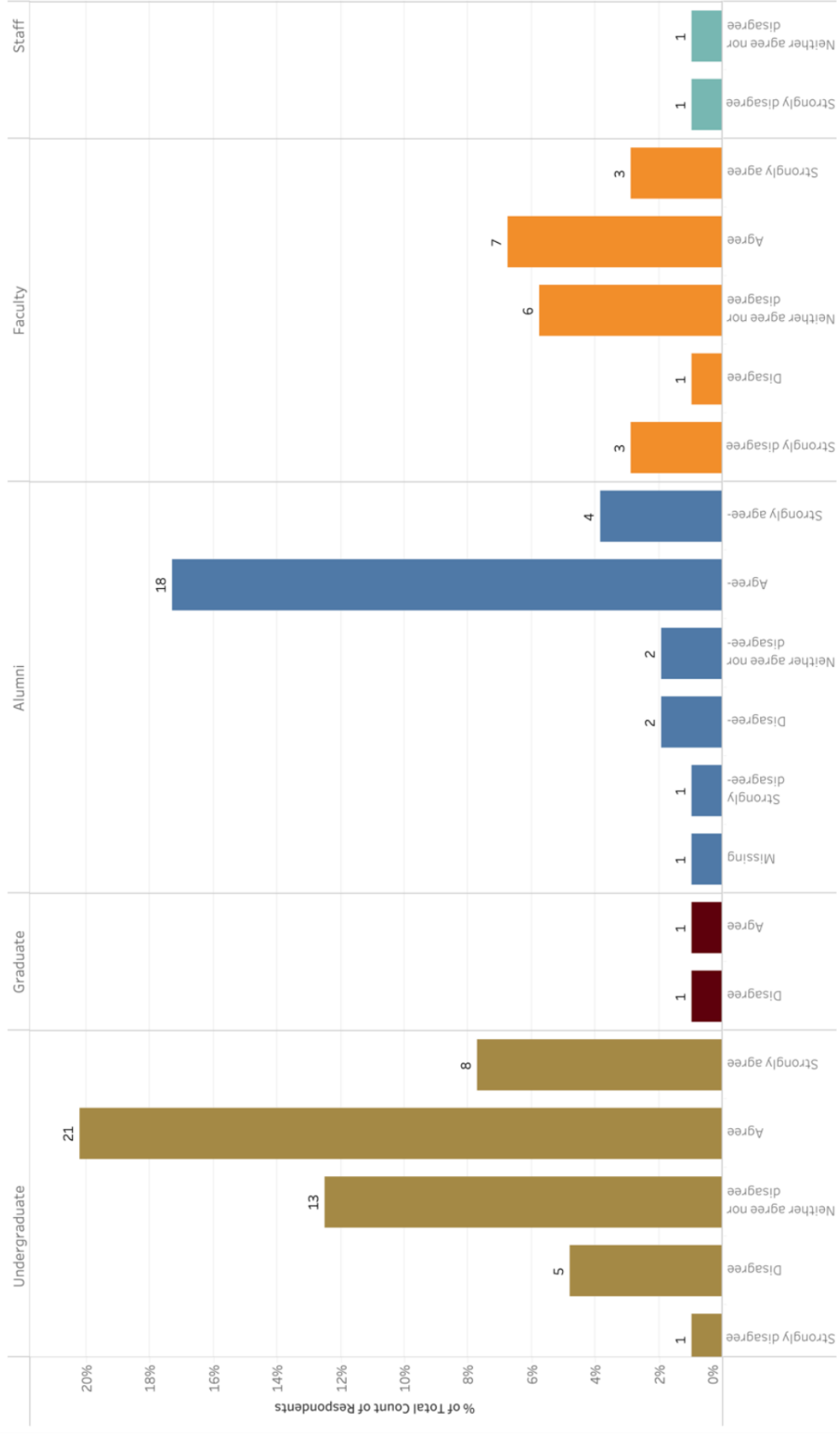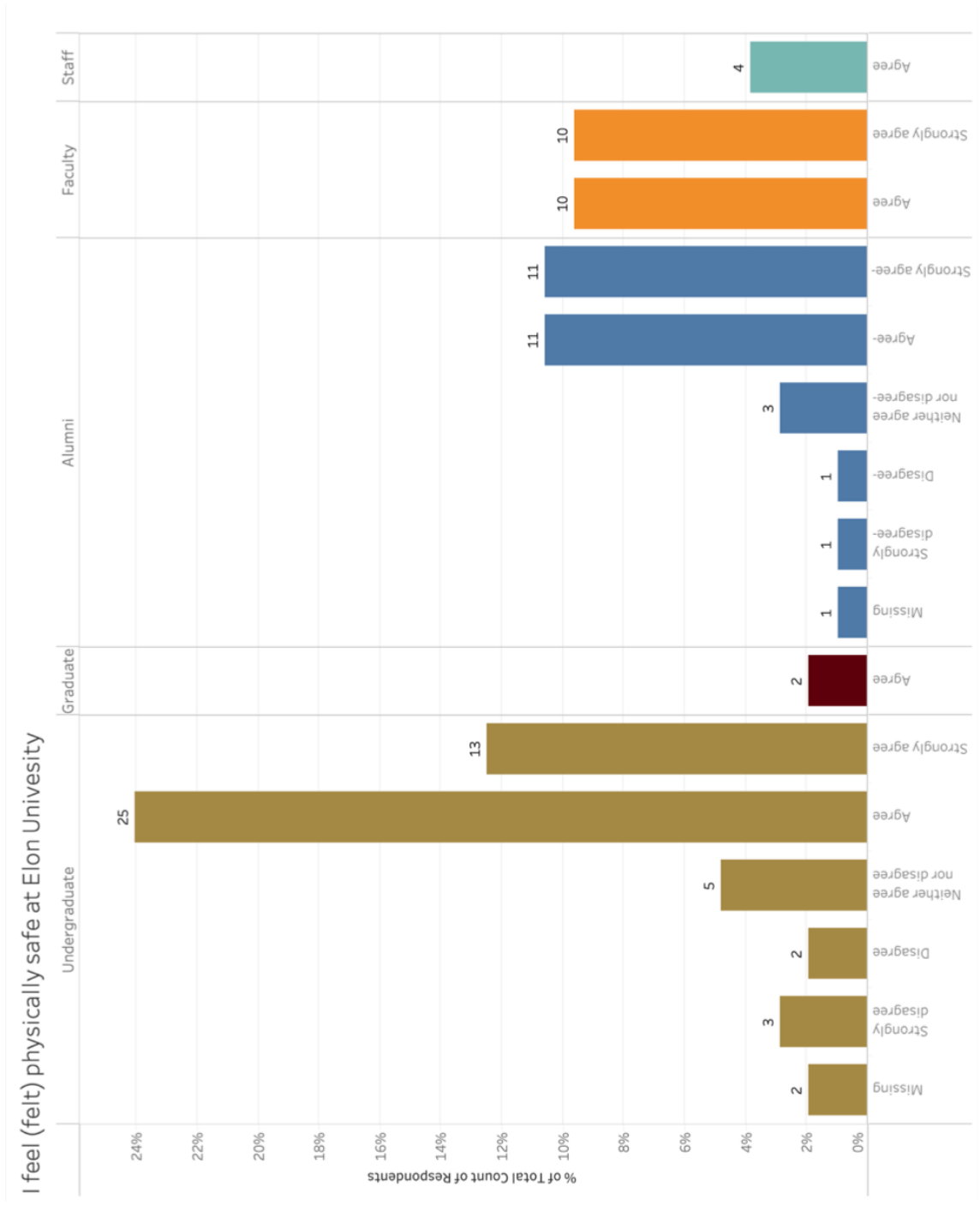
Figure 5. Physical Safety on Campus

I feel (felt) physically safe at Elon Univesity

Figure 6. Physical Safety off-campus

When at Elon University, I feel (felt) free to express my ideas even if they differ from others'.
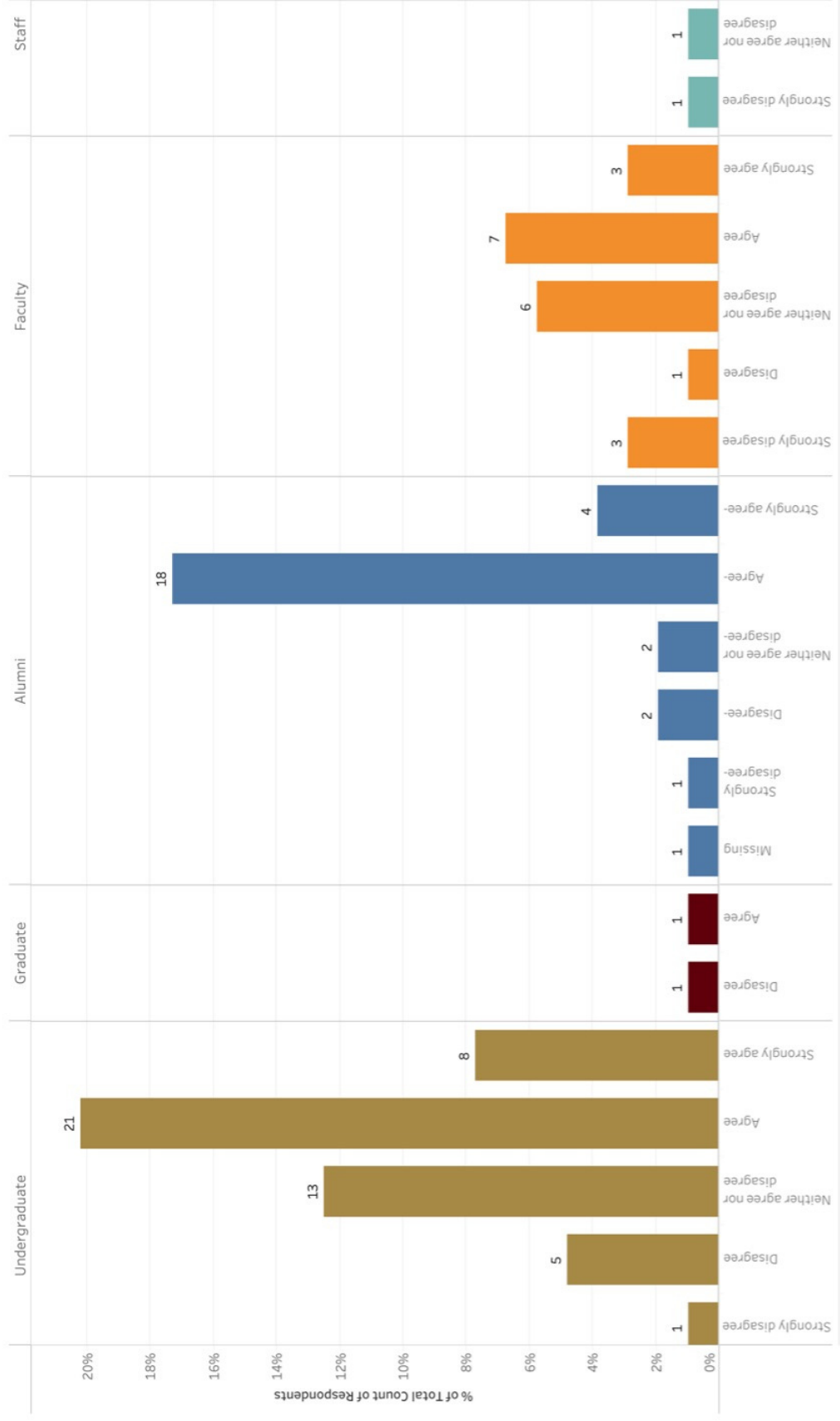
Figure 7. Overt Harassment at Elon University

Have you experienced overt harassment while at Elon that seemed
related to your racial/cultural identity?

Figure 7. Overt Harassment at Elon University

I feel (felt) physically safe when I am off-campus
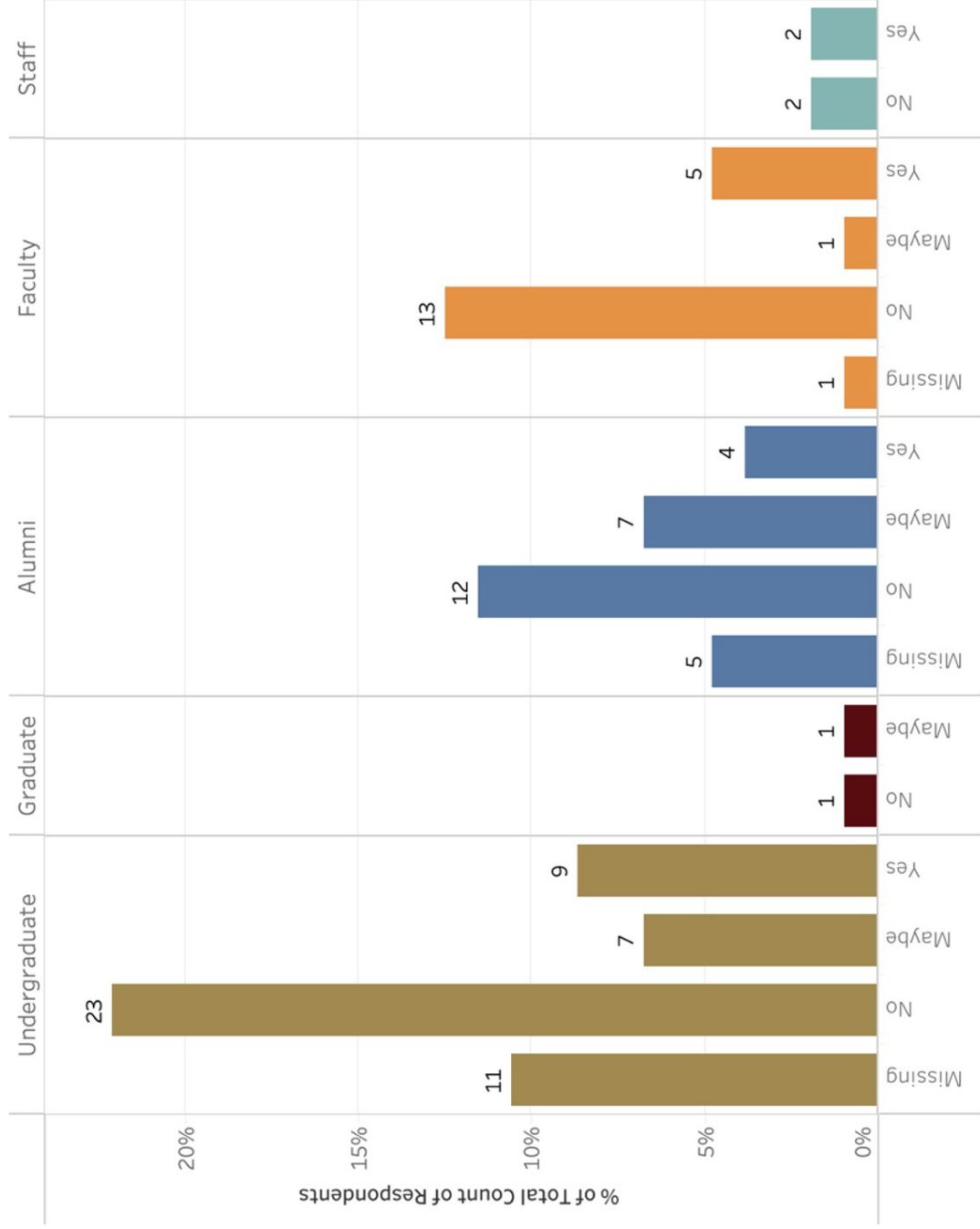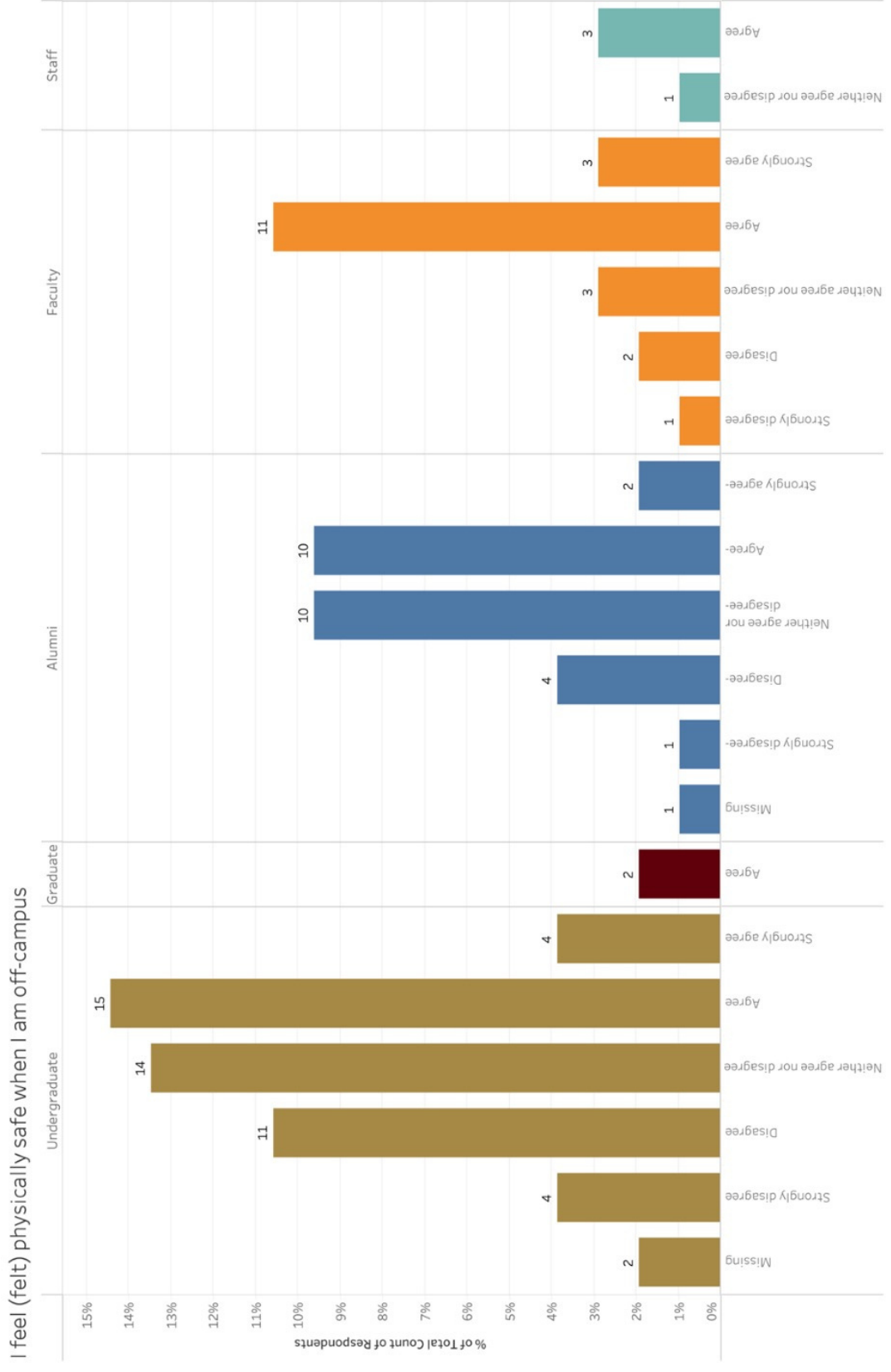
Figure 8. Experience of Microaggression

Have you experienced subtle microaggressions at Elon that seemed related to your racial/cultural identity?"
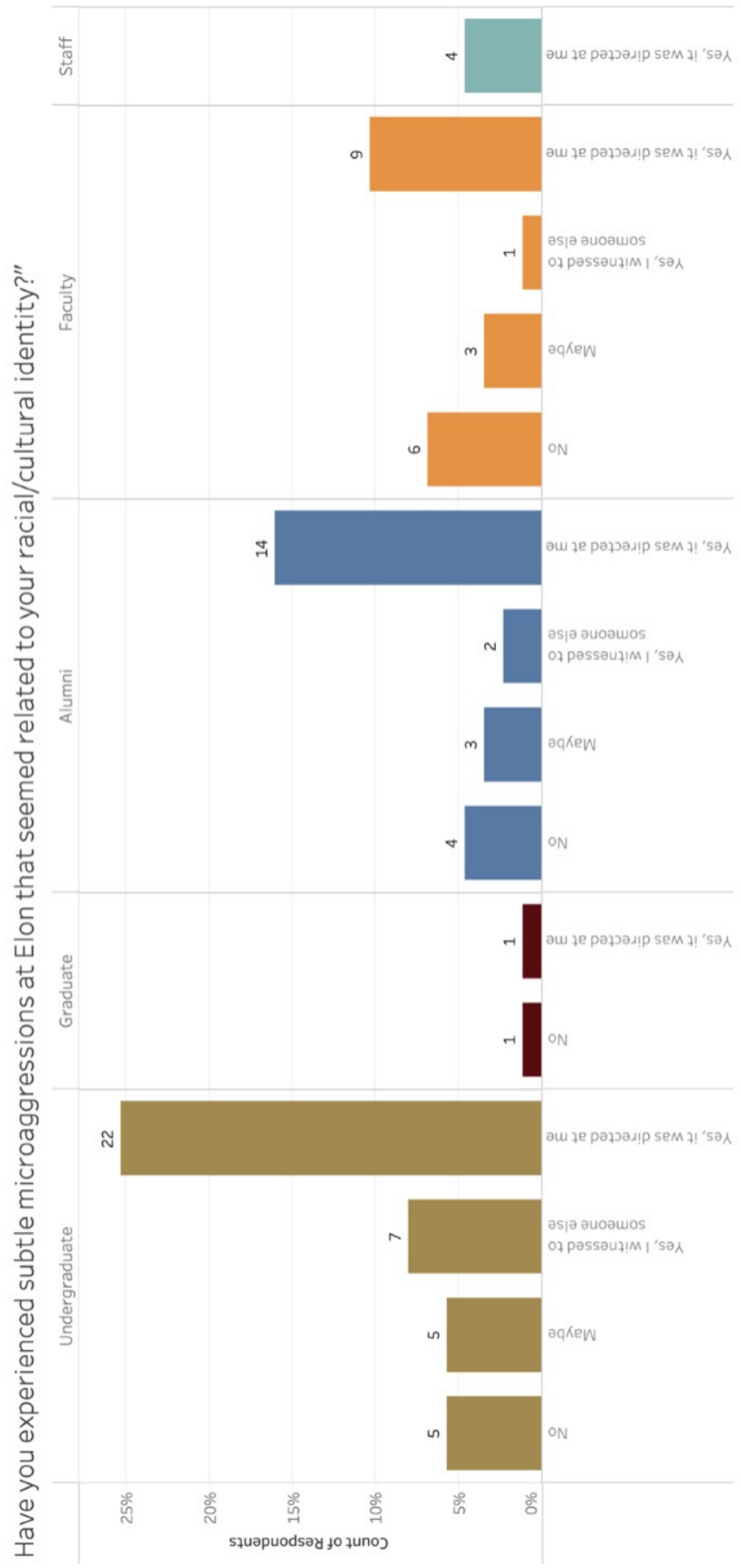
Figure 9. The Source of Disparaging Comments

Have you been told by someone else at Elon of an instance where disparaging comments regarding race or ethnicity directed at someone else (not you)? [Check all that apply]
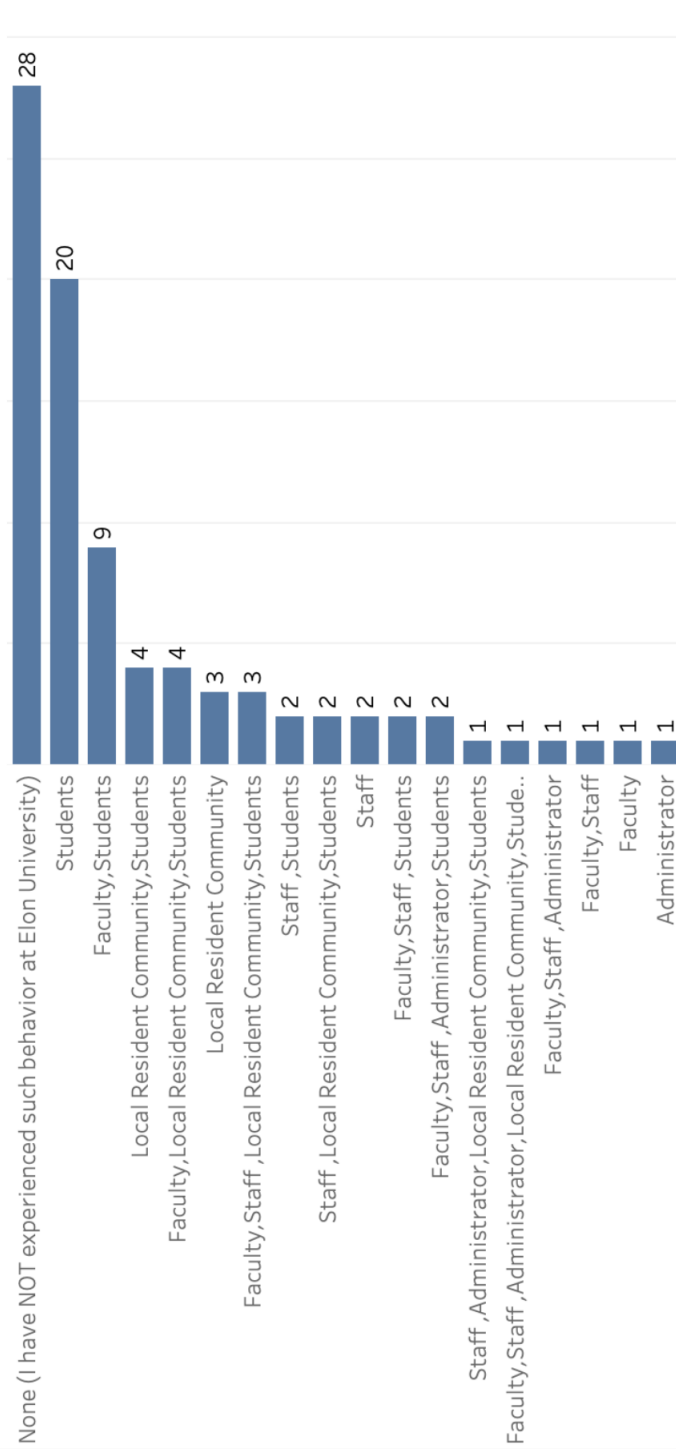
Figure 10. Knowledge of the Process of Reporting Bias

I did not know there was a process for reporting bias.
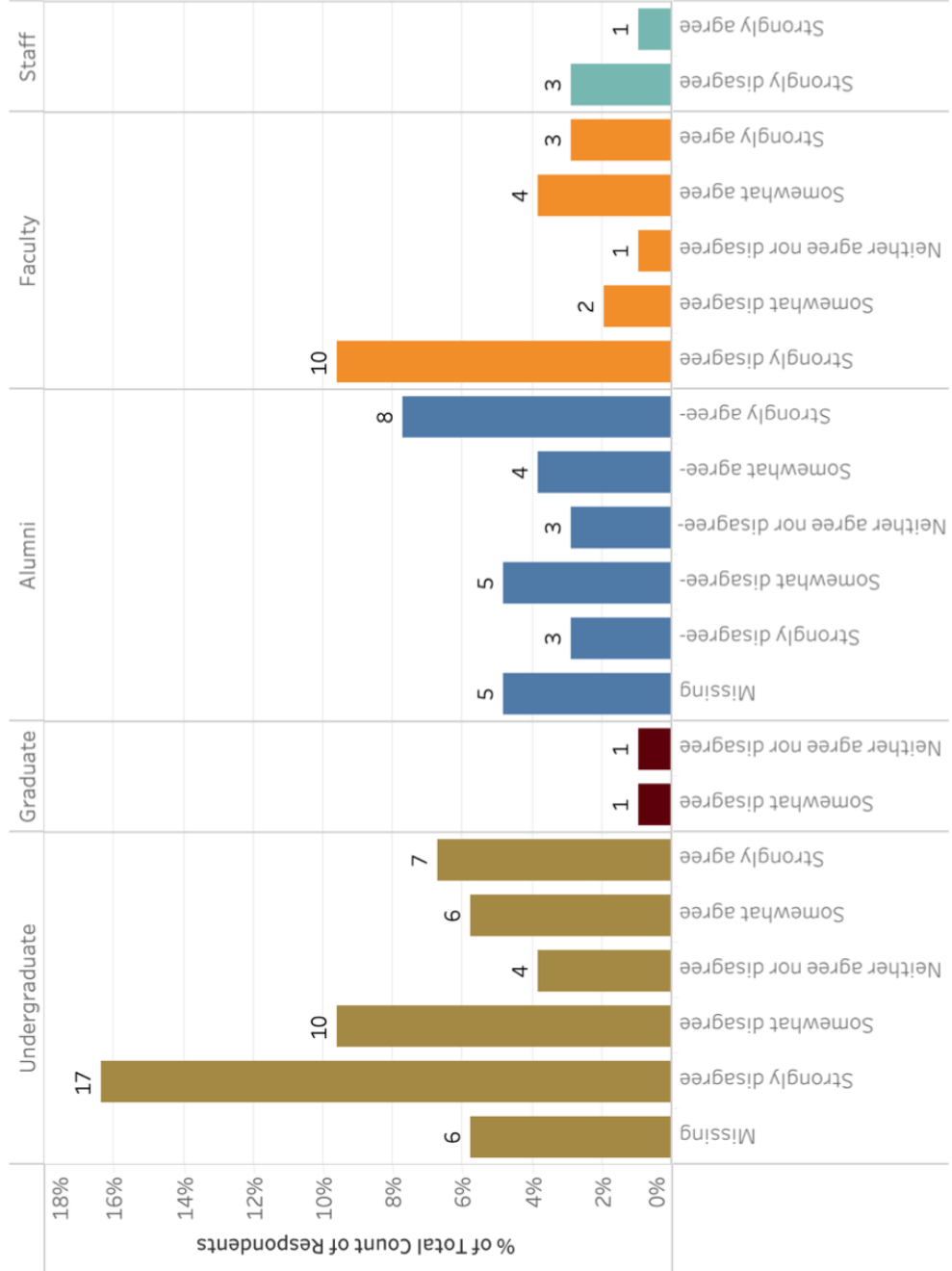
Figure 11. Satisfaction with the Process for Reporting Acts of Bias or Discrimination

I am (was) satisfied with the process for reporting acts of bias or discrimination.
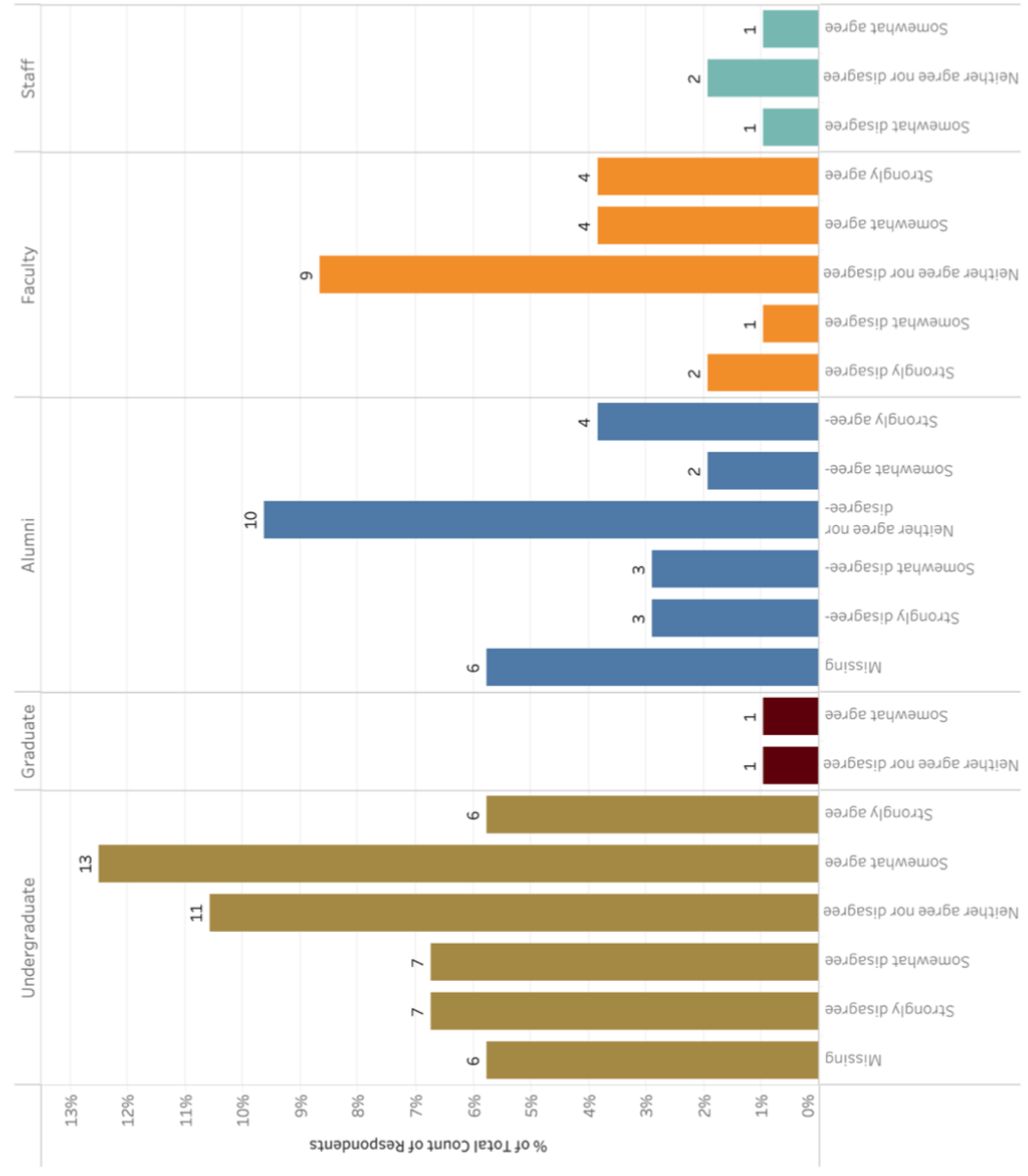
Figure 12. Commitment to Inclusion

Elon University is effectively pursuing a commitment to inclusion for all its community members regardless of their age, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/express, socioeconomic status, etc.
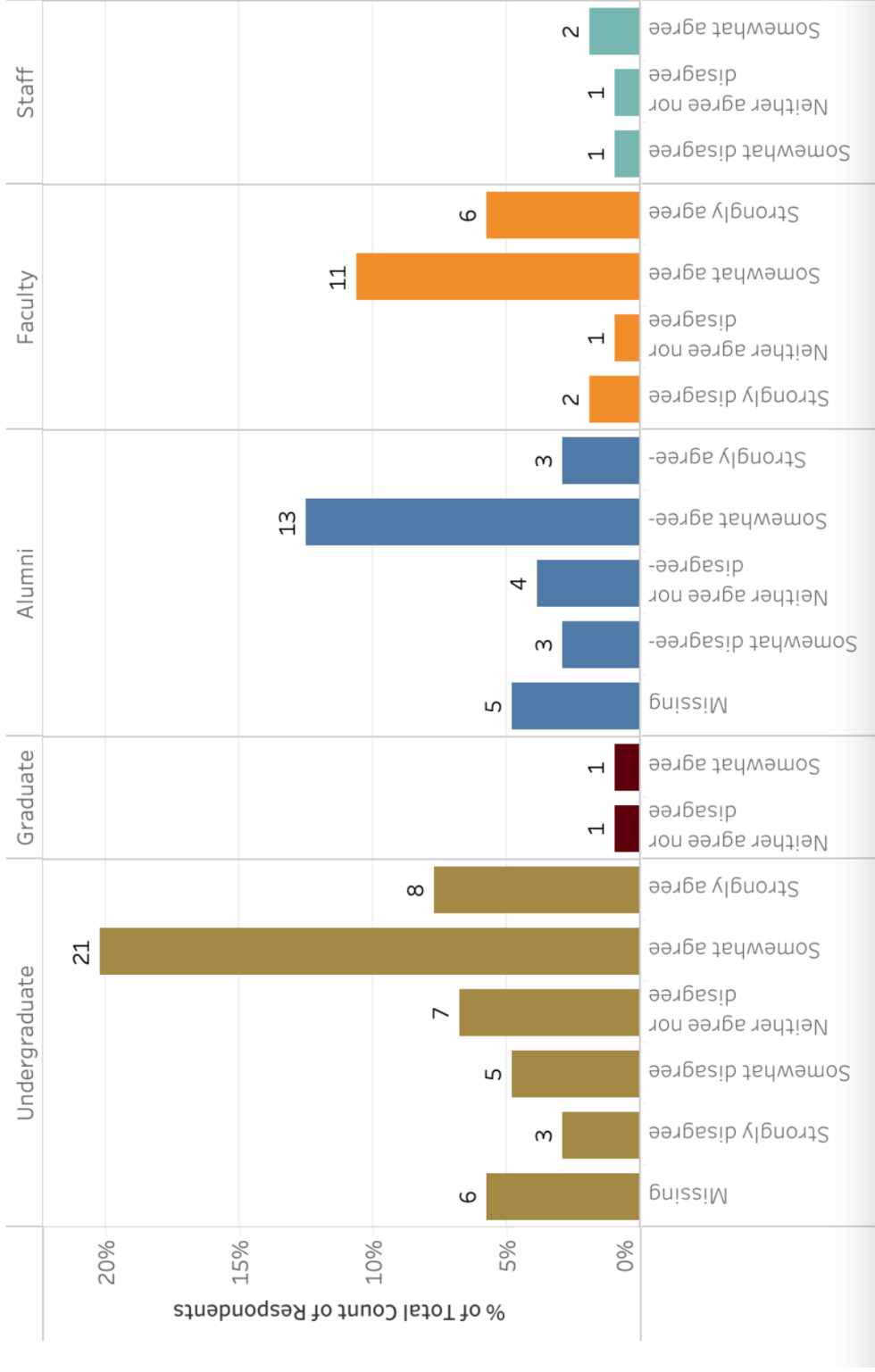
Figure 13. Communication of Overall Efforts to Be an Inclusive Community

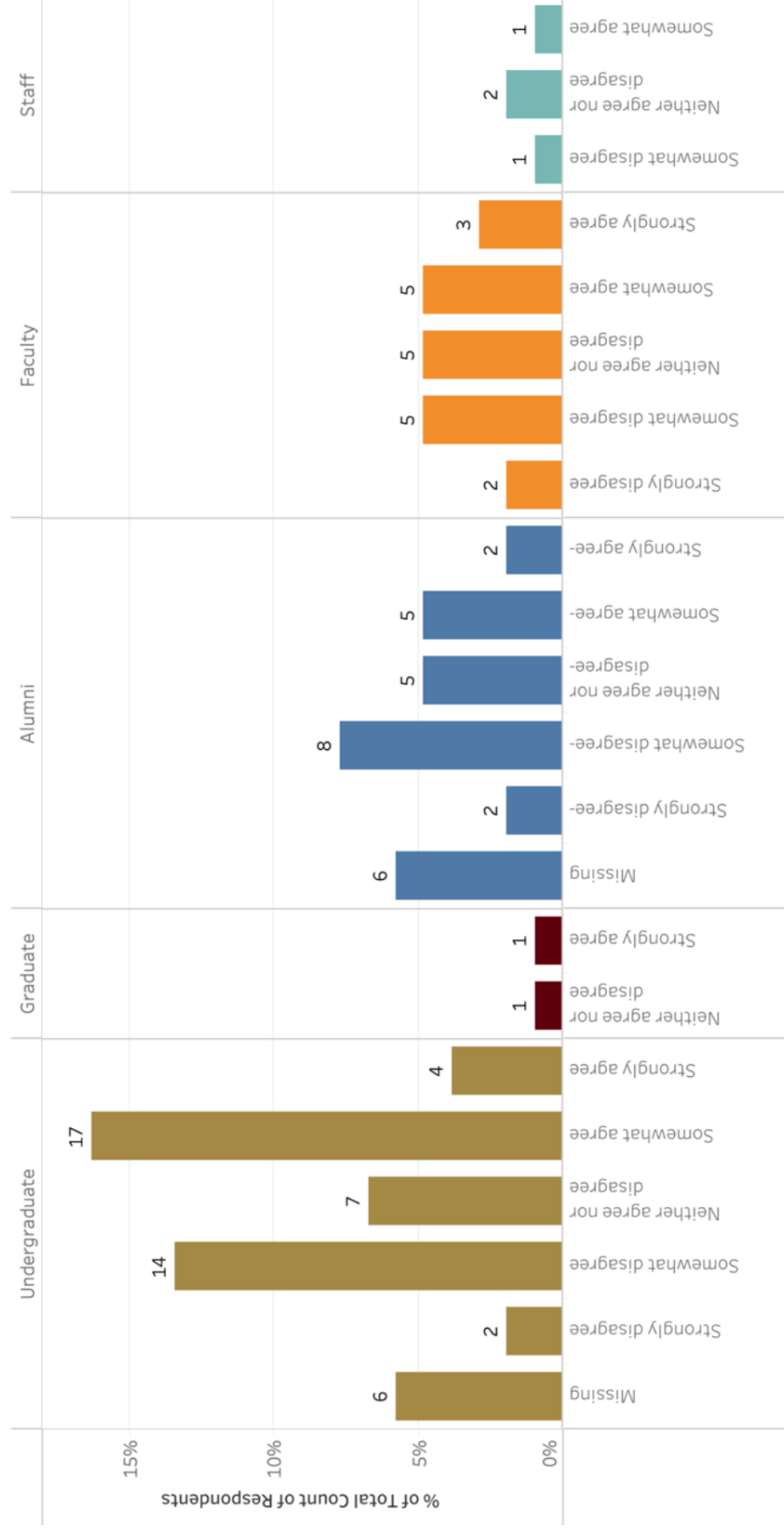Elon University clearly communicates that API and MENA identities are included in its overall efforts to be an inclusive community.

Figure 14. Information Sharing About Incidents
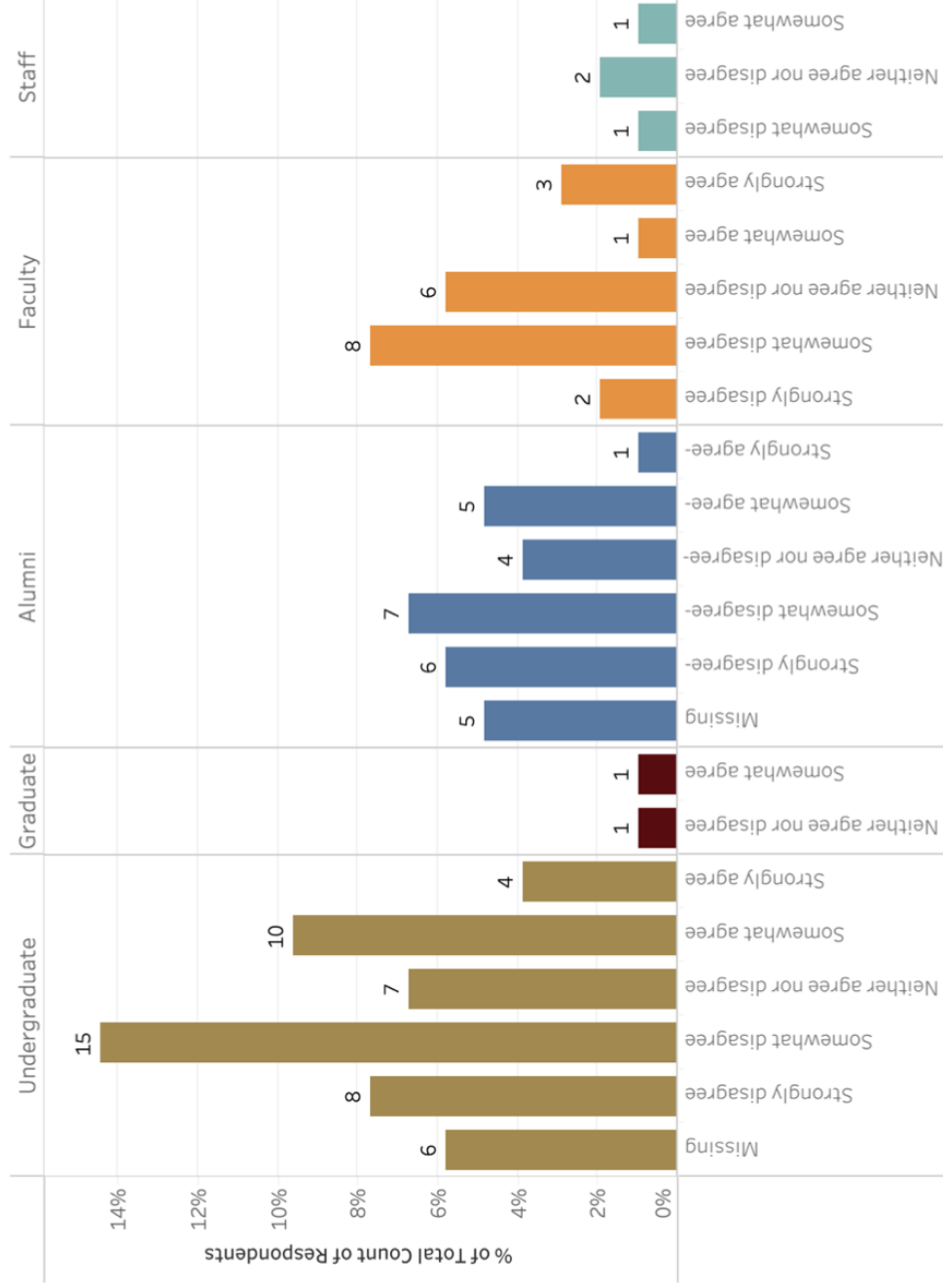
Figure 15. Response to Acts of Bias and Discrimination

Elon University effectively responds (responded) to acts of bias and discrimination.
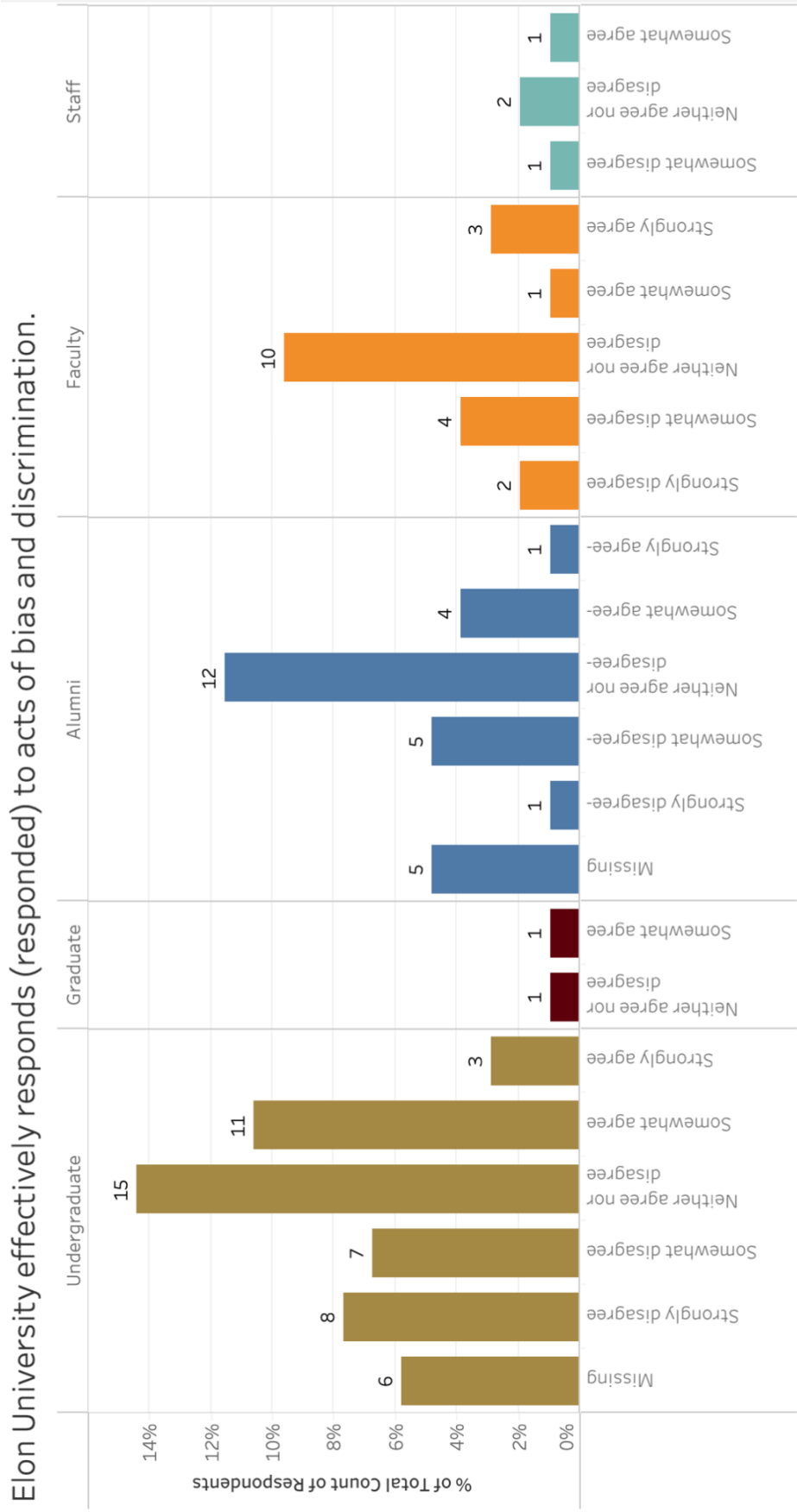
Figure 16. A Sense of Belonging

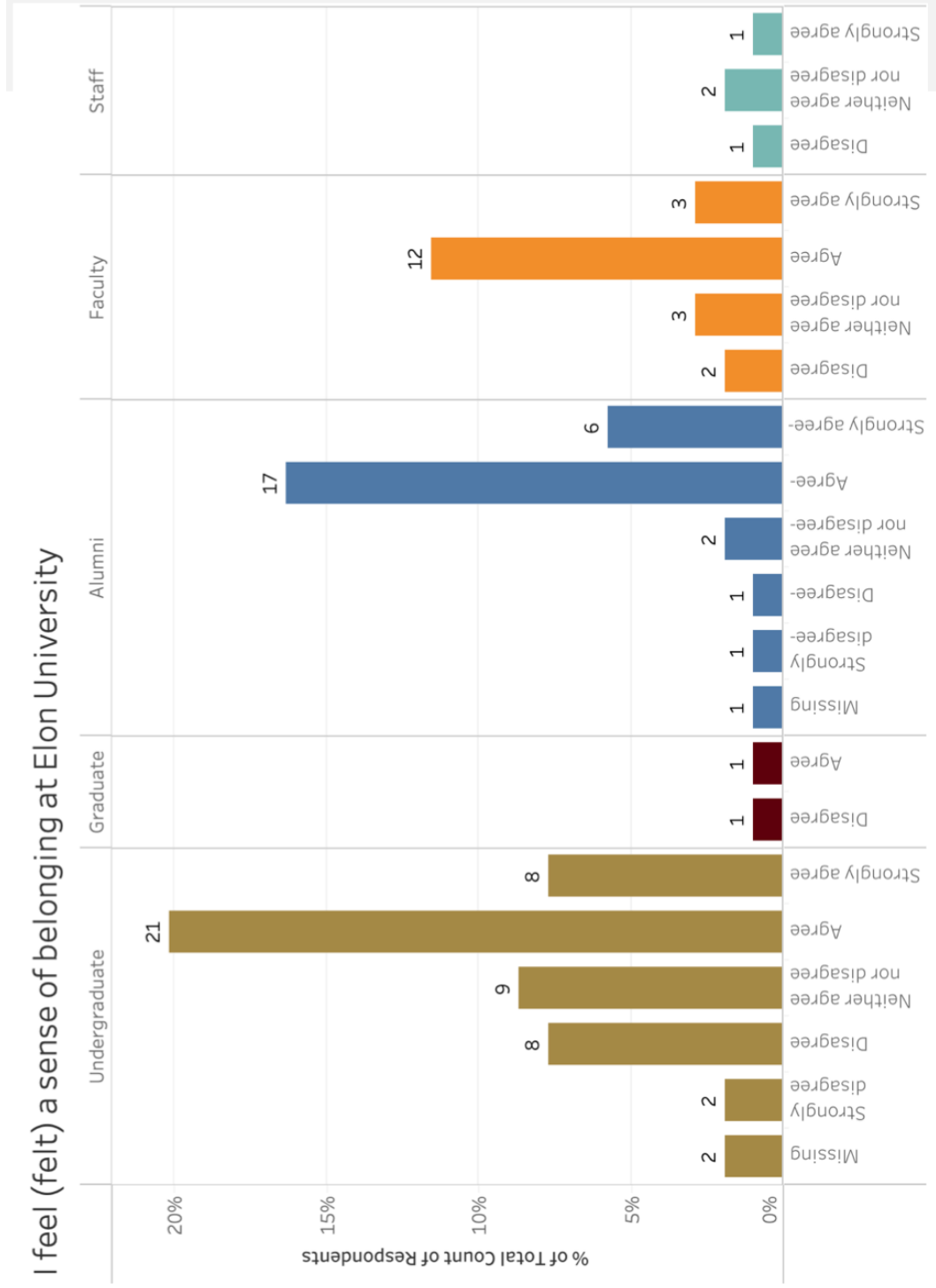I feel (felt) a sense of belonging at Elon University

Figure 17. The Need to Change Who I AM to Fit at Elon

I feel (felt) that I fit at Elon without having to change who I am.