

But, why are you offended?
**An examination of how microaggressions
foster anti-Blackness
in the workplace at UC Merced**

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What is a racial microaggression?

Racial microaggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group (Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, and Torino, 2007).

The background of the slide features a photograph of a modern, multi-story building with large windows, situated behind a body of water. A fountain with several jets of water is visible on the right side of the pond. The scene is captured in a bright, clear light, likely during the day.

The purpose of this research study

Determine if anti-Black microaggressions are present in the workplace among staff at UC Merced

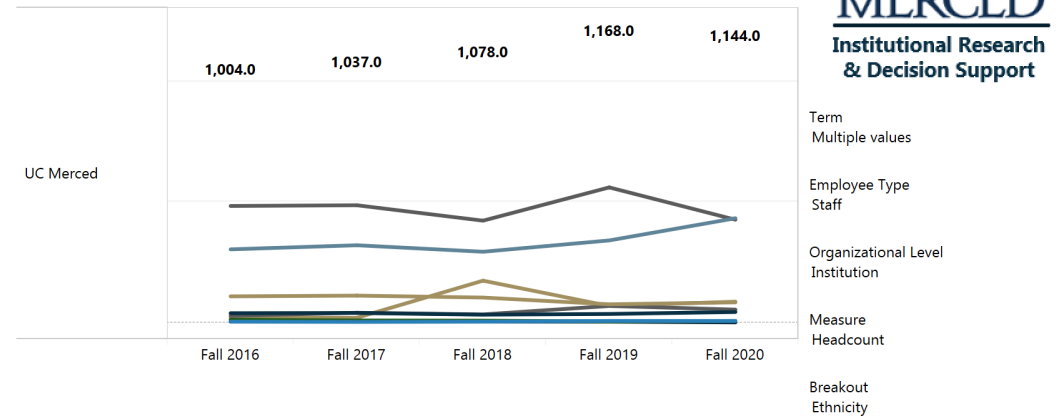
Gain an understanding of the lived experiences of Black staff at UC Merced who may have experienced microaggressions while at work at UC Merced

Share my findings with the UC Merced community and make recommendations to campus leadership

UC Merced Staff Demographics

- There are 44 Black/African American staff at UC Merced- out of 1,144 total staff.
- The percentage of Black/African-American staff has been stagnant- remaining at 3-4% since Fall 2016.

Staff Headcount by Institution by Ethnicity



Staff by Institution by Ethnicity

		Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	
Grand Total	Headcount	1,004	1,037	1,078	1,168	1,144	
	% of Total Headcount	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	FTE	942	971	1,006	1,097	1,115	
	% of Total FTE	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
UC Merced	African American	Headcount	39	40	33	36	44
		% of Total Headcount	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%
		FTE	38	38	33	34	44
		% of Total FTE	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%
	Asian	Headcount	109	112	104	76	84
		% of Total Headcount	11%	11%	10%	7%	7%
		FTE	103	104	102	68	82
		% of Total FTE	11%	11%	10%	6%	7%
	Hispanic	Headcount	304	321	294	341	433
		% of Total Headcount	30%	31%	27%	29%	38%
		FTE	284	297	279	323	417
		% of Total FTE	30%	31%	28%	29%	37%
International	Headcount	4	3	4	7	7	
	% of Total Headcount	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	

- Selected Breakout
- African American
 - Asian
 - Hispanic
 - International
 - Multi-Race
 - Native American
 - Pacific Islander
 - Unknown
 - White

Notes:

In Fall, 2020, methodology changes were made to gender and ethnicity categories; therefore, data may not be consistent with prior years.

Select term(s), then select employee type and organizational level. Finally, select a measure and breakout.

Hover over values for more information.

UC Merced Staff Demographics

The 3 classifications with highest numbers of Black/African American staff:

- **Management : 10**
- **Advising Services : 12**
- **Administrative/Personnel/ Budget Analysts: 5**

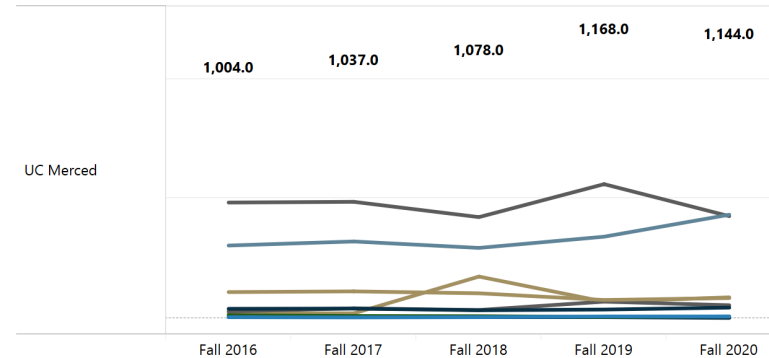
There are no Black/African Americans serving in Executive Leadership at UC Merced- *and never in the history of UC Merced* (as reflected in available data).

Employee Demographics

Faculty Demographics

Student Appointments

Staff Headcount by Institution by Ethnicity



Term
Multiple values
Employee Type
Staff
Organizational Level
Institution
Measure
Headcount
Breakout
Ethnicity

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Microaggressions at UC Merced Research Study Survey

Demographics

23 total respondents

86.9% of respondents identified as women

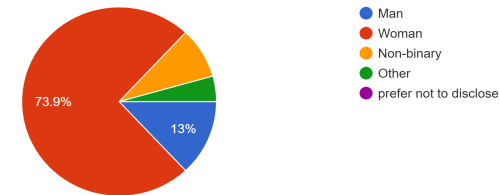
97% of respondents identified as Black/African American

1% Bi-Racial/African American
1% Afro-Latina
1% Cabo Verde

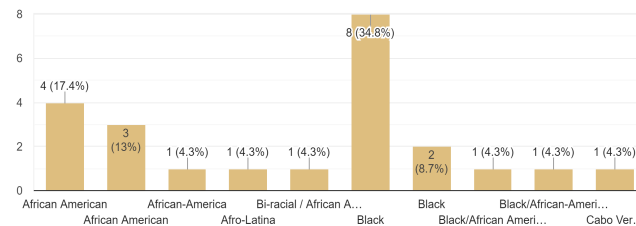
65.2% of respondents are exempt

17.4% Non exempt
13% Union represented
21.7% Non-Mgr
26.1% Managerial

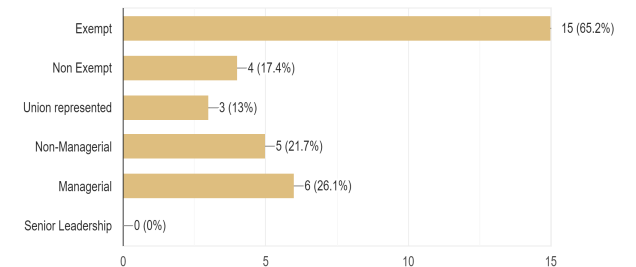
Please state your Gender Identity
23 responses



Please state your Ethnic/Racial Self-Identification
23 responses



Please select your Job classification (please check all that apply):
23 responses



Microaggressions at UC Merced Research Study Results

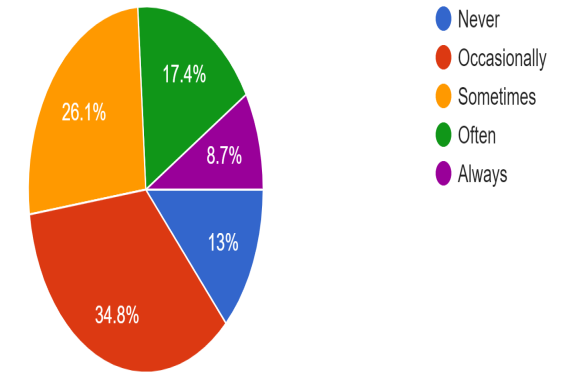
**87% of respondents
have experienced
microaggressions at
work at UCM**

**65.2% of respondents
report experiencing
microaggressions from
their supervisor and/or co-
workers**

**34.8% of respondents
report experiencing
microaggressions from a
faculty member and/or a
member of Sr. Leadership**

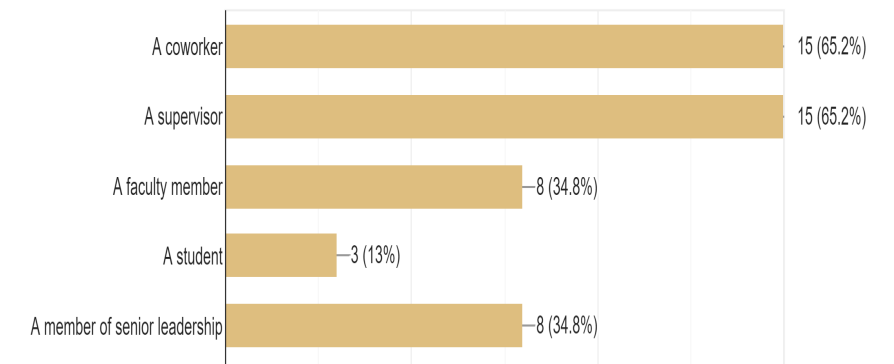
How often do you experience with microaggressions at work at UC Merced?

23 responses



Which of the following (check all that apply) have you experienced microaggressions from at work?

23 responses



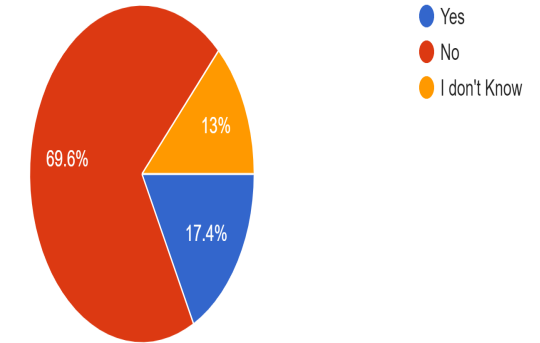
Microaggressions at UC Merced Research Results

**69.6% of respondents
feel their supervisor
lacks training on
microaggressions**

**60.8% of respondents
do not feel safe
reporting their
experiences to their
direct supervisor**

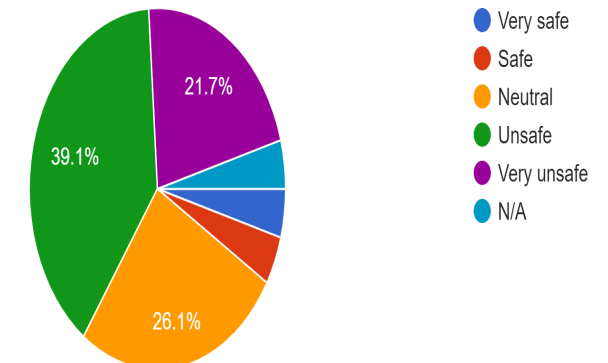
Do you feel that your supervisor(s) are effectively trained on understanding, detecting and stopping microaggressions in the workplace?

23 responses



How safe do you feel to share your experiences with microaggressions in the workplace with their immediate supervisors?

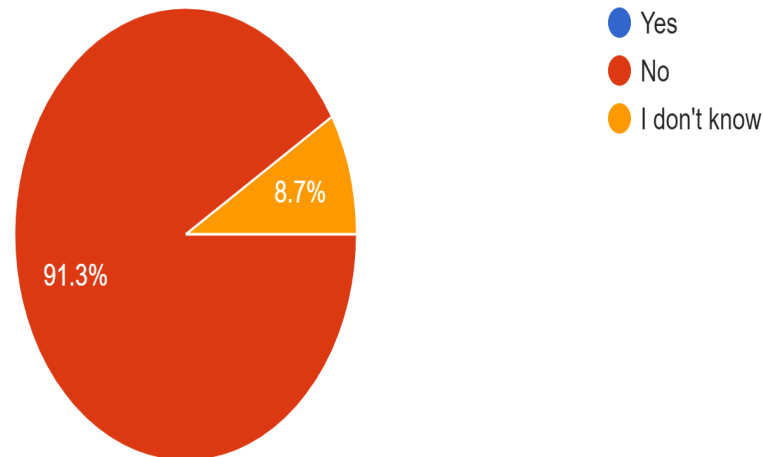
23 responses



Microaggressions at UC Merced Research Results

Do you feel that UC Merced provides appropriate and adequate training for staff, faculty, and leadership to prevent microaggressions and anti-Blackness from occurring in the workplace?

23 responses



**91.3 % of
respondents feel UC
Merced does not
provide adequate
training**

A window into the lived experiences of Black/African American staff at UC Merced

being called sassy or spicy

Being asked "are those collard greens?" ...when clearly I'm eating a salad.

I have repeatedly reported my concerns to HR and nothing was done. **Nothing.** If I had an opportunity to work somewhere I would.

Remarks such as, "oh it must be a Black thing!"

"You are so articulate"

Asked "can I touch your hair?"

Thank you for putting together this study. It really means a lot that I have space to talk about this.

Being subjected to gripes and coerced into disagreeing with Colin Kaepernick's kneeling protest from a supervisor two levels above me in front of a White co-worker

Asking if I watched the BET Awards, but not asking anyone who wasn't Black the same thing

my supervisor saying "I'm not racist, I have black friends" or "I'm color-blind"

asking me about my skin color and what I'm mixed with

being told I have an attitude or that I'm too direct

I think it would be nice to have some way to report these things, without the fear of losing our jobs or being labeled sensitive.

being called loud
Hair touching without permission (or asking to touch) multiple times from multiple people including my supervisor, everyone complimenting my hair anytime it changes from the usual style; I'm afraid to wear wigs or weaves because I've been asked if it's my real hair, people commenting how I grew my hair so fast when wearing braids.

I've always tried my best and always been very productive. I don't necessarily have race at the forefront of my mind all the time when I'm working, and I'm sure that my coworkers or dept leadership don't either. **It's just that whenever a racist or microaggressive incident happens, I remember all the others, and that sours my experience little by little.** When I've reported racist behavior about a supervisor to their supervisor, it wasn't handled correctly (or at all) and there was no public apology for wrongdoing. Due to lack of diversity in leadership, I don't think they think it's a problem. **It's also not my job to teach the fundamentals of race theory and not get paid extra or feel outcast because no one else can relate so I keep my head low**

Being told my laugh being too loud or asking me to keep laughing because they find it to be "so funny"

asking me about "the latest dance moves" because I "must know how to dance".

These are directly from department leadership: **Verbal attacks, Retaliation, Discrimination, Prison style micromanagement.**

Being told about the professionalism of my hair choices.

My supervisor saying I had an aggressive tone in an email. I had literally copied her language.

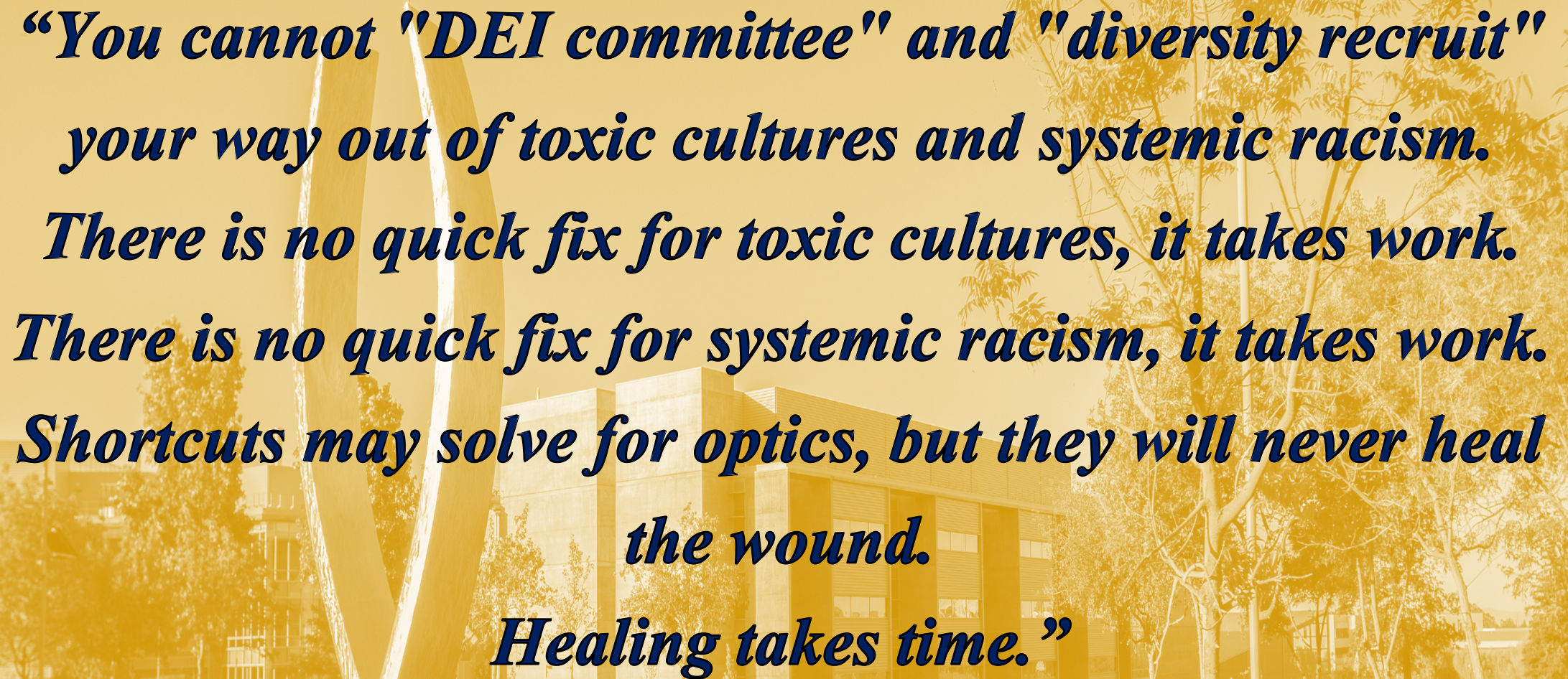
I am the only Black staff member in my office, and I have not yet experienced any microaggressions. I do hear from my Black peers in other departments that they have. Therefore, I believe Anti-Black microaggressions happen at UC Merced. I think when it comes to curriculum, leadership roles on campus, and the number of Black students & staff on campus, those are areas we need a lot of improvement to increase representation, equity, and inclusion.

I had an issue with my supervisor and our director to me that I was a "strong Black woman" as if my feelings didn't matter but my supervisor's did

Being told that they prefer my hair "more professional", and when I pushed back, I was told "don't be so sensitive".

Asking me if I supported BLM when that question wasn't poised to anyone else.

Comments related to my hair and whether it's real/can they touch it



***“You cannot “DEI committee” and “diversity recruit”
your way out of toxic cultures and systemic racism.
There is no quick fix for toxic cultures, it takes work.
There is no quick fix for systemic racism, it takes work.
Shortcuts may solve for optics, but they will never heal
the wound.
Healing takes time.”***

Recommendations



Acknowledge that Anti-Blackness exist in the workplace at UC Merced and that many Black/African American staff have experienced some form of pain or trauma as a result.



Actively engage in the specific recruitment of more Black/African Americans for staff, management and executive leadership positions.



Implement required annual cultural competency training of all staff at all levels that is tied to performance evaluations and includes a “pass-fail” test component



Create a clear and safe system for reporting anti-Black microaggressions in the workplace with follow up, feedback and resolution.



Create and implement a DEI certification program that would be required of all managers and supervisors to complete in order to serve in a management capacity



Create and implement required Crown Act Training for all staff

A large, modern building with a glass facade and a fountain in the foreground, overlaid with a semi-transparent white rectangle. The building has multiple stories and a prominent glass section. The fountain is active, spraying water upwards. The scene is set outdoors with trees and a clear sky.

Thank You