

# W&M Geology Department Student Climate Survey 2018

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PUBLIC REPORT

PREPARED AUGUST 2019

# Purpose of the survey

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Students are at the heart of what we do in the W&M Geology Department. We want to make sure that everyone feels welcome in our community.

To explore how we can best achieve that aim, **we conducted a survey of all students, including alumni, enrolled in Geology courses in the past five years.**

1. In the first section, we asked a series of demographic questions so that we could identify **what aspects of our programming are working well, and less well, for specific groups of people.** We asked about why students did or did not declare a Geology major/minor.
2. In the second section, participants were invited to answer questions that concerned issues of climate and inclusiveness in our courses and classrooms.

**The results of this survey will tell us how we are doing and help us determine what changes are needed.**

# Key points and next steps

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## **Thank you to everyone who participated!**

- Respondents (N=249) included current Geology majors/minors and recent alumni, and current non-majors who had taken a geology course

## **Key results**

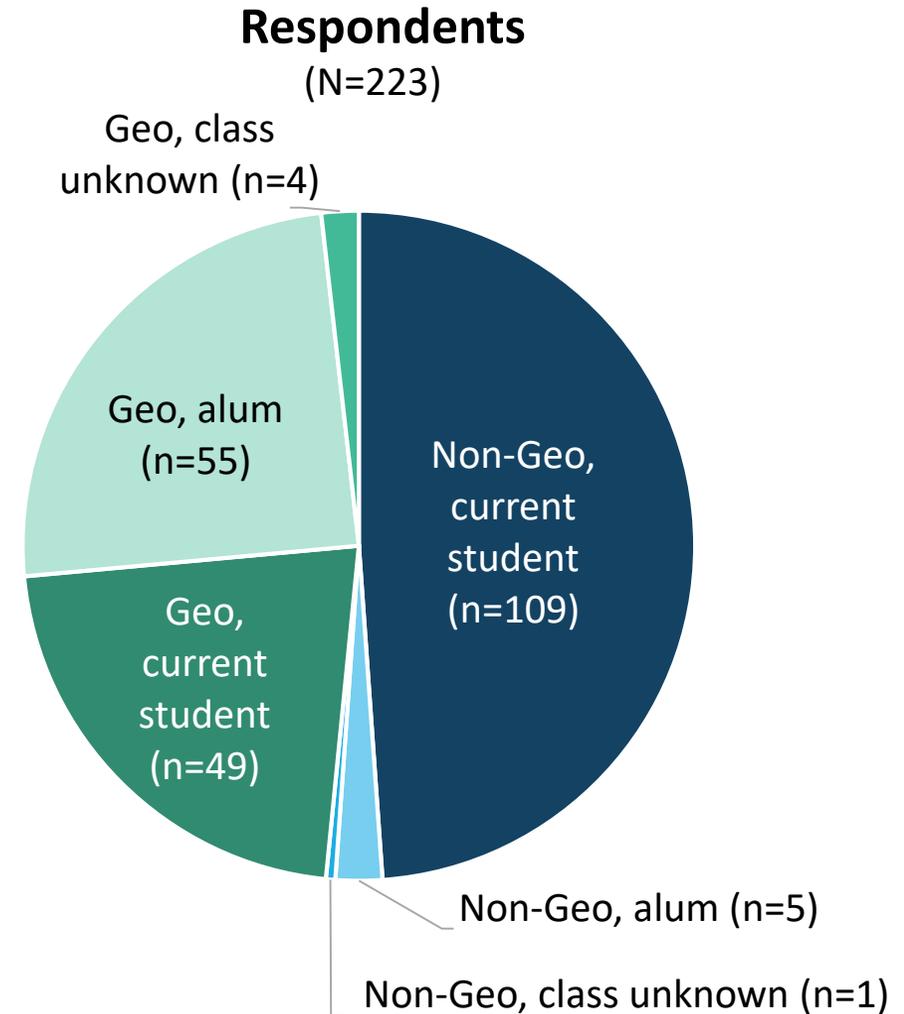
- Very high levels of satisfaction with the climate within the department with respect to inclusion, the sense of community among the students, civility, and the supportiveness of the faculty
  - Geology Department was rated better than W&M in general
- There are a small fraction of students for whom we could do more
- Some dissatisfaction with the racial/ethnic diversity of the faculty
- Few instances of inappropriate behavior reported, typically between students
- High levels of mentorship within the department, including student peer mentorship

## **Next Steps**

- Continue to foster a culture of inclusiveness
- Increase transparency of opportunities within the department
- Improve student access to career programming, field work, and research opportunities
- Work toward increasing representation

# Participants

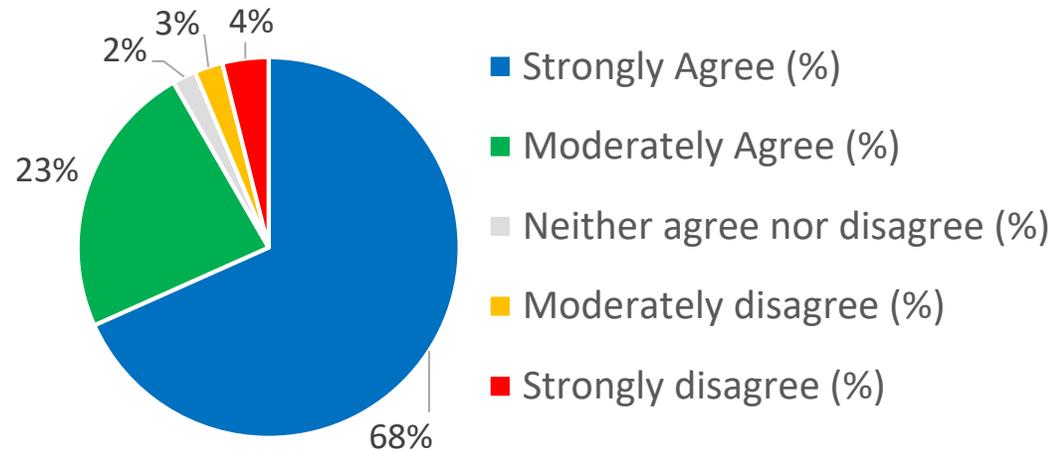
- The survey was sent to...
  - **Recent alumni (145):** Majors/minors who graduated from 2013-2017
    - Sent Spring & Fall 2018
    - **55** respondents → 38% response rate
  - **Current majors/minors (75):** Declared as of Spring 2018
    - Sent Spring & Fall 2018
    - **49** respondents → 65% response rate
  - **Non-majors (1512):** Students enrolled in W&M geology courses FA14 – SP18
    - Sent Fall 2018
    - **115** respondents (incl. 5 alumni) → 8% response rate
- 199 respondents finished the survey → 80% completion rate



# Climate with respect to diversity and inclusion

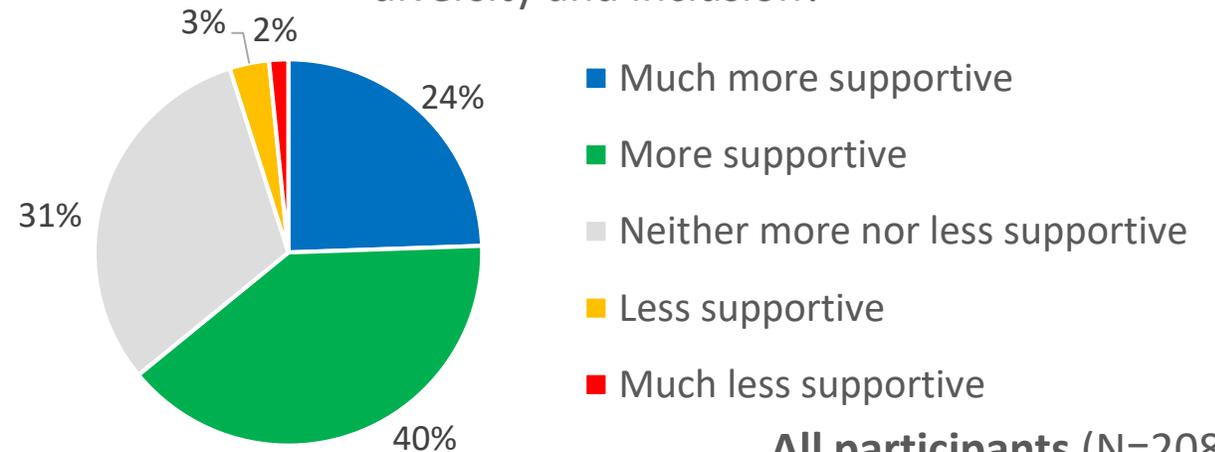
Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements that relate to the **W&M Geology Department**:

## I feel/felt comfortable with the overall climate



All participants (N=208)

## How does the **W&M Geology Department** compare w/ the rest of the **W&M campus community** with respect to diversity and inclusion?



All participants (N=208)

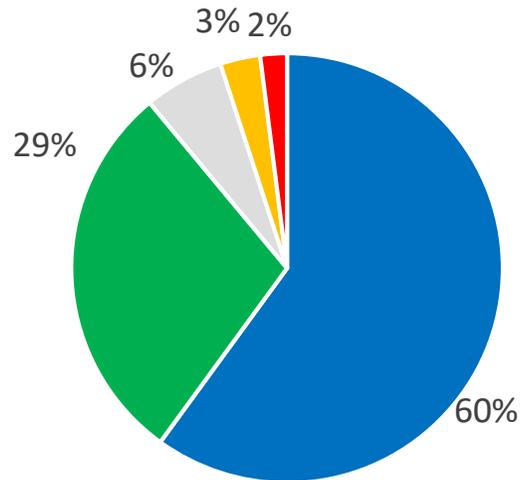
Similar levels of agreement for:

- “The department creates a welcoming and inclusive environment for all people.”
- “The department creates an environment for the open expression of ideas and opinions.”

# Satisfaction with diversity of faculty & students

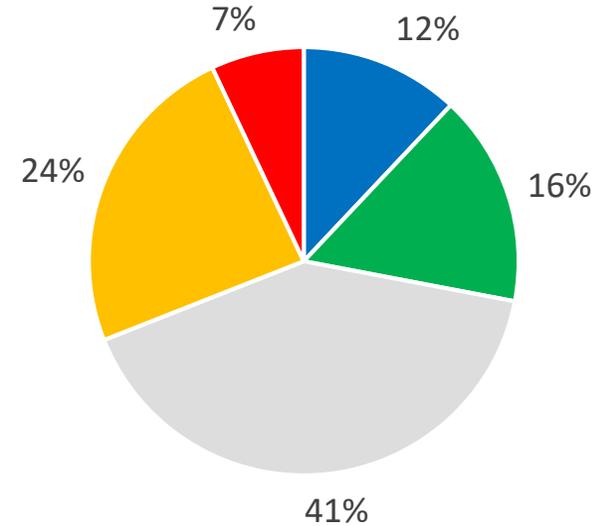
Legend: ■ Very satisfied (%) ■ Satisfied (%) ■ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (%) ■ Dissatisfied (%) ■ Very dissatisfied (%)

### Gender diversity of faculty



Satisfaction w/ gender diversity of **students** was somewhat higher (70% very satisfied, 19% satisfied)

### Racial/Ethnic diversity of faculty



Satisfaction w/ racial/ethnic diversity of **students** was somewhat higher (15% very satisfied, 28% satisfied)

# Faculty supportiveness

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- **All participants** were asked about supportiveness of faculty at **W&M in general**
- **Geology majors/minors** were also asked about supportiveness of faculty in the W&M **Geology Department**
- W&M Geology faculty are extremely supportive. For **every** category\* ...
  - >75% of respondents rated the Geology faculty “very supportive” or “extremely supportive”
  - No student reported that the Geology faculty were “not at all supportive”
  - Satisfaction with the supportiveness of Geology faculty was greater than satisfaction with supportiveness of W&M faculty in general

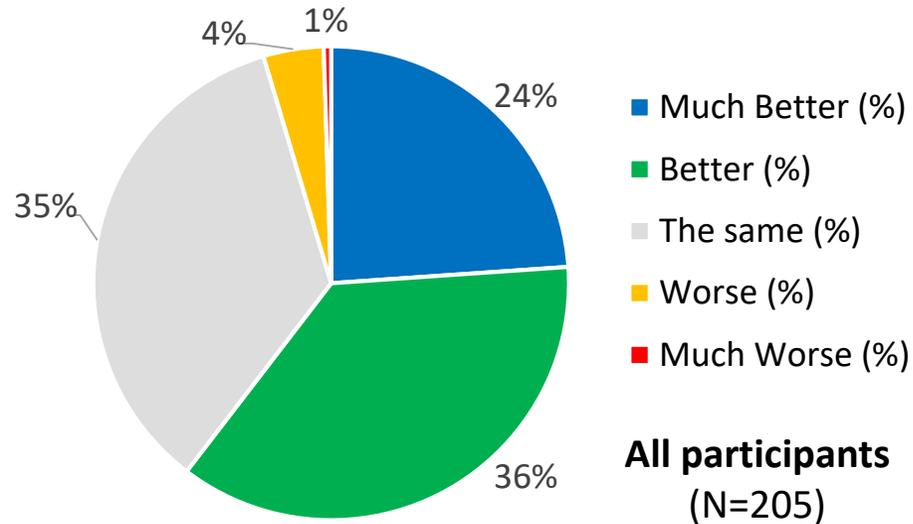
## \*Categories:

- Students from all racial and ethnic backgrounds,
- Students from all religious/faith backgrounds,
- Students from all socioeconomic backgrounds,
- Students who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community,
- Students with disabilities (including neurodiversity),
- International students, and
- Me personally (in office hours and one-on-one meetings)

# Civility & Inappropriate Behavior

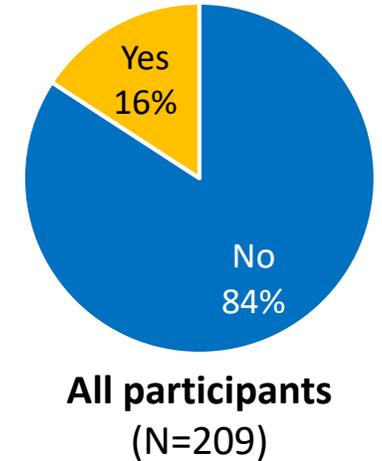
“Civility is being courteous, respectful, and polite. Incivility is defined as rude and discourteous comments or behaviors.”

How does/did the W&M **Geology Department** compare with the rest of the **W&M campus** community, with respect to **incivility**?



“Inappropriate behavior is defined as improper actions in the way people conduct themselves, with respect to other people's gender identity, race, age, religion, political beliefs, etc.”

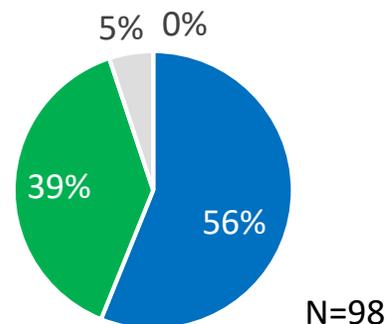
“During your time in the **W&M Geology Department** have you **observed** (i.e., something that happened to someone else) and/or **experienced** (i.e., something that happened to you) inappropriate behaviors or comments from faculty, staff, or students?”



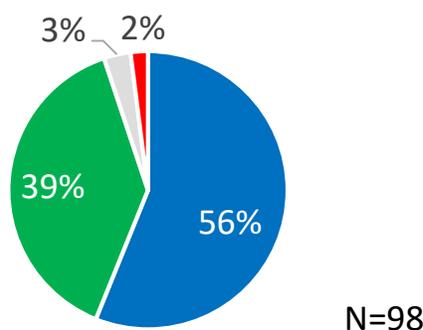
## Geology majors/minors (N=98)

“To what extent are/were the following professional development opportunities accessible to you in the W&M Geology Department?”

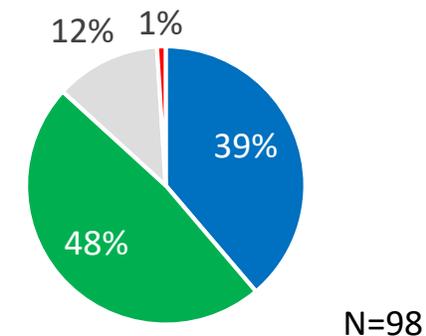
Attending fieldtrips



Departmental seminar series (i.e., seminars by scientists from other institutions)

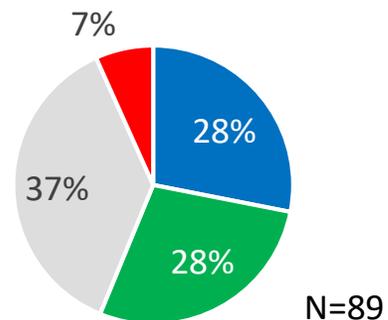


Departmental brown bag series (i.e., seminars by other students)

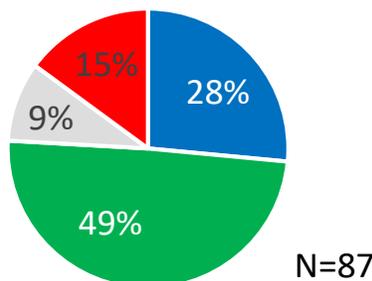


■ Accessible and I attend regularly (%) ■ Accessible and I attend occasionally (%) ■ Accessible but I choose not to attend (%) ■ Not accessible (%)

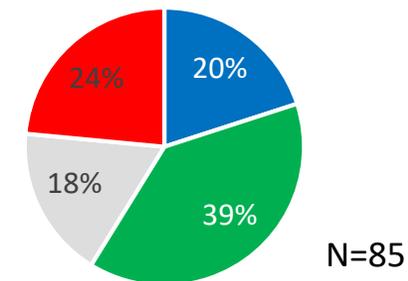
Attending/presenting at a conference



Workshops focusing on skills in academia (applying to graduate school, etc.)



Workshops focusing on career skills (resume writing, applying for jobs, etc.)



# Open responses

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**“What suggestions do you have to make the W&M Geology Department more accessible to all students?” (N=45)**

- Increase faculty diversity
- Ask for and use pronouns & preferred names
- Communicate skills & career opportunities one can get from geology
- Increase opportunities to participate in workshops/seminars on grad school, employment after graduation & professional skills
- Offer more cross-listed or interdisciplinary courses
- Have more events to show off the department
- Advertise opportunities within the department (e.g., funding for field trips and conferences) better
- Provide more opportunities/accommodations for peers with disabilities

**“What else would you like us to know about your experiences in the W&M Geology Department with respect to climate and inclusiveness?” (N=67)**

- Overwhelmingly positive comments describing the geology community as inclusive, welcoming, friendly, open, accommodating, supportive, etc.
- Most of the specific suggestions for improvement were also mentioned under the previous question
- Students expressed appreciation for the effort we are putting into fostering an inclusive community

# Questions? Comments?

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Please contact us with any questions, comments or concerns about this survey:

Department Chair: Rowan Lockwood (rxlock@wm.edu)

Diversity & Inclusion Committee Chair: Becky Jirón (rljiron@wm.edu)

Or feel free to talk to *any* of the Geology faculty