

# Interfaith Diversity Experiences & Attitudes Longitudinal Survey: Time 2 Summary Report

## Overview

The Interfaith Diversity Experiences and Attitudes Longitudinal Study (IDEALS) examines the influence of interfaith engagement on student development during college. It explores how students' behaviors and attitudes change over time and the multi-dimensional nature of students' interfaith experiences. The University of Maryland is one of 122 partner schools nationally; of the students participating in the Time 2 administration 44% are enrolled at Public Institutions, 23% Private Nonsectarian Institutions, 18% Protestant Institutions, 9% Catholic Institutions, and 6% Evangelical Protestant Institutions.

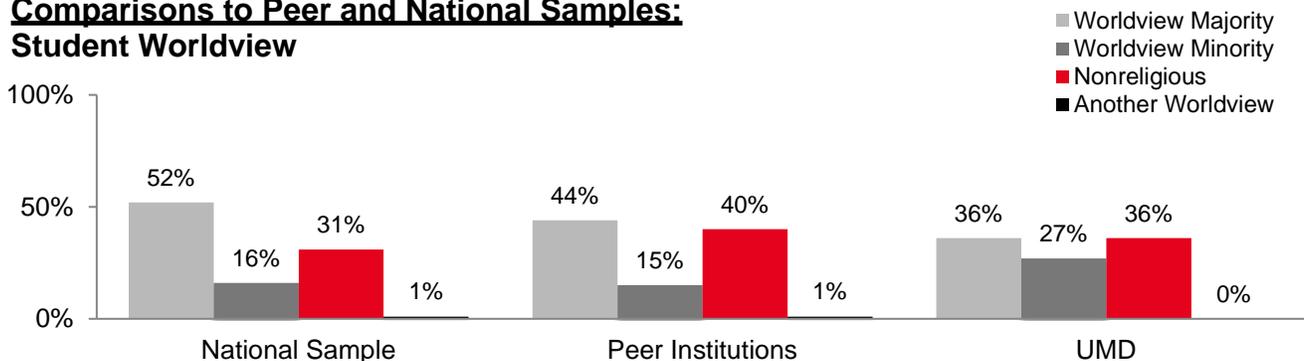
The Time 1 administration (fall 2015) was sent to 2,000 randomly selected new first-year students; 230 responded for an 11.5% response rate. The Time 2 administration (spring 2016) was sent only to students who completed Time 1; of these, 133 responded and completed at least 80% of the survey.

The IDEALS research team provided the University of Maryland with a summary report, comparing UMD student responses with responses of the national sample and students enrolled at a peer institution (15 Very High Research Activity institutions) as well as the individual UMD student responses. This report highlights key findings from the summary as well as explores evidence of growth across the first year.

## Findings

University of Maryland compared to Peer Institutions and the National Sample

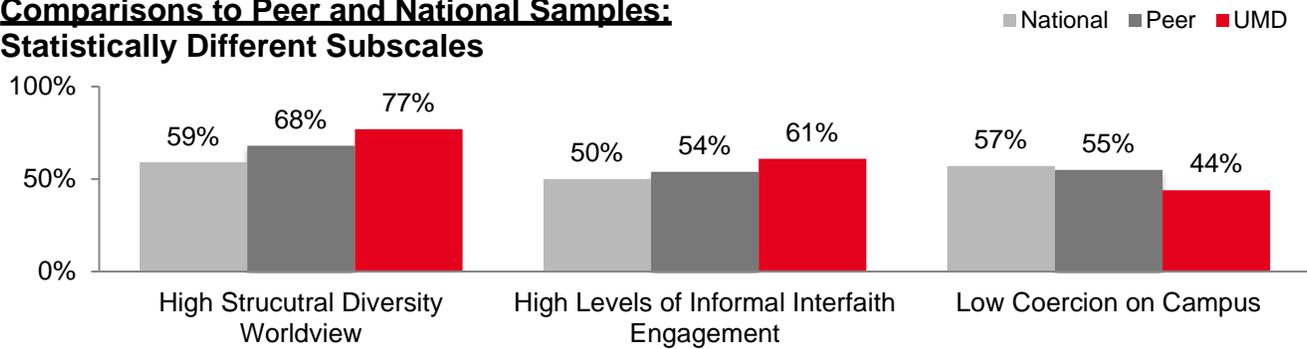
### Comparisons to Peer and National Samples: Student Worldview



Students at the University of Maryland indicate our student body may be more equally distributed than either our peer institution or the national sample among the following three groups: worldview majority, worldview minority, and nonreligious. This is primarily seen in our lower percentage of worldview majority students and higher percentage of worldview minority students.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Students reporting they practice Judaism are reflected in the worldview minority category.

**Comparisons to Peer and National Samples:  
Statistically Different Subscales**

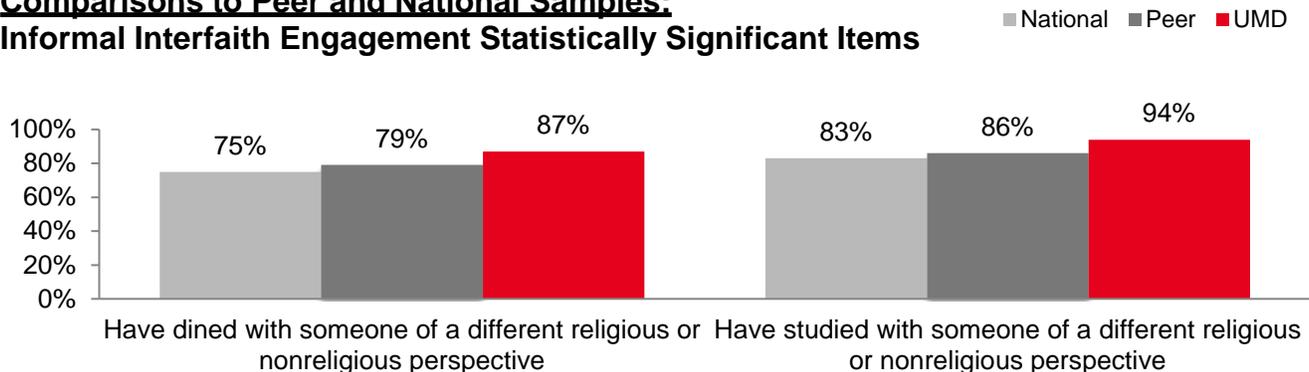


UMD respondents are more likely to agree with the following statements on the **Structural Diversity Worldview**<sup>2</sup> subscale than respondents at peer institutions and nationally:

- This campus is religiously diverse (87% v. 80% of peers and 69% of respondents nationally)
- I am satisfied with the degree of religious and nonreligious diversity on this campus (85% v. 75% of peers and 69% of respondents nationally)

As seen in the graph above, UMD students are more likely to report high levels of **Informal Interfaith Engagement**<sup>3</sup> compared to other students. Among UMD students, our peer institutions, and the national sample, those reporting high levels of informal interfaith engagement also report statistically higher scores on the **Global Citizenship**<sup>4</sup> and **Overall Pluralism**<sup>5</sup> subscales compared to students who engage less frequently in informal interfaith experiences. Two items on the Informal Interfaith Engagement scale which University of Maryland students differ from students at our peer institutions and the national sample are presented below.

**Comparisons to Peer and National Samples:  
Informal Interfaith Engagement Statistically Significant Items**



University of Maryland students are less likely to report a low score on the **Coercion on Campus**<sup>6</sup> scale (e.g., frequency with which students feel pressured by others on campus to change their worldview) than the national sample but not our peer group. Specifically, UMD respondents were more likely to report that they felt pressured to listen to others’ perspectives when they did not want to hear about them (22%) than respondents enrolled at peer institutions and nationally (both 15%).

<sup>2</sup> This scale is comprised of 4 items. Sample item: “This campus is religiously diverse.”

<sup>3</sup> This scale is comprised of 4 items. Sample item: “Socialized with someone of a different religious or nonreligious perspective.”

<sup>4</sup> This scale is comprised of 4 items. Sample item: “I am actively working to foster justice in the world.”

<sup>5</sup> This scale is comprised of 19 items. It includes some of the other scales mentioned in this report: Goodwill/Acceptance, Global Citizenship, Commitment to Interfaith Leadership and Service, etc.

<sup>6</sup> This scale is comprised of 4 items. Sample item: “Felt pressured to keep your worldview to yourself.”

## University of Maryland Student Growth and Development

Using the data provided by the IDEALS research team, the students included in this sample did not provide evidence of growth over their first year on the following scales:

- Self Authored Worldview
- Commitment to Interfaith Leadership and Service
- Global Citizenship
- Goodwill/Acceptance
- Appreciation of Interreligious Commonalities and Differences
- Overall Pluralism Orientation

There were a number of items on the survey intended to measure respondents' appreciative attitudes towards 13 different identity groups. Comparing student responses from the beginning and end of their first year, students reported statistically higher appreciation of the following identity groups:

- Atheists
- Evangelical Christians
- Jews
- Muslims
- Politically Conservative people
- Transgender people
- Buddhists
- Hindus
- Latter-day Saints/Mormons
- Politically Liberal people
- Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual people

Only two identities did not see a statistical increase in respondents' appreciative attitudes: people of a race different than my own and people from a country different than my own. These two groups had the highest appreciative attitude scores of any of the other identity groups on both the fall and spring administration of IDEALS.

## University of Maryland Student Comparisons by Identity

Comparisons were conducted between University of Maryland students of different identities. Selected highlights are presented below.

### *Political Leaning*<sup>7</sup>

One the Time 1 survey, students were asked to identify their political leaning<sup>8</sup>. Conservative, moderate, and liberal students were compared on each of the scales included on the survey. On most scales, there were no statistical differences by political leaning. Statistical differences exist on the **Coercion on Campus** scale and the **Goodwill/Acceptance**<sup>9</sup> scale. In both cases, conservative students reported a less desirable outcome (i.e., they reported more coercion on campus and lower goodwill/acceptance scores) than moderate or liberal students. There were no differences between moderate and liberal students on any scale.

### *Worldview*

Conducting the same analysis on the scales by aggregated worldview (majority worldview, minority worldview, and nonreligious) produced only one statistically significant result: the **Appreciation of Interreligious Commonalities and Differences**<sup>10</sup> scale. Nonreligious students had lower scores on this scale than worldview majority students. Worldview minority students were not different than either of the other two groups.

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<sup>7</sup> Caution should be used when interpreting results as there are only 19 students in the dataset who reported their political leaning was "conservative."

<sup>8</sup> This question was not asked on the Time 2 survey; respondents could have changed their political leaning their first year of college and this would not be captured in the available data.

<sup>9</sup> This scale is comprised of 4 items. Sample item: "Cultivating interreligious understanding will make the world a more peaceful place."

<sup>10</sup> This scale is comprised of 4 items. Sample item: "World religions share many common values."