



Intercultural Capital – Vancouver campus

	Vancouver 2012/13
% of students whose close friends are mostly dissimilar in terms of culture, language and/or ethnicity.	33%
% of students reporting that coming to UBC has increased the diversity in their circle of friends, in terms of culture, language, ethnicity or life experiences.	58%
% of students who feel making friends from different cultures and backgrounds has enriched their lives.	69%

Description

The following metrics speak to students’ ability to make friends across social and cultural difference, as described in the intercultural understanding mid-level strategic plan. It looks at the responses of three questions that specifically measure the Intercultural (Social) Capital of students, a component of Intercultural Fluency, partly defined as social capital across social and cultural diversity.

Undergraduate Experience Survey.

1. Most of my close friends are similar to me in terms of cultural, linguistic and ethnic background.
Scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and Not Applicable.
2. As a result of coming to UBC, my circle of friends is more diverse in terms of culture, language, ethnicity or life experiences.
Scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and Not Applicable.
3. Making new friends at UBC from different cultures and backgrounds from my own has enriched my life.
Scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and Not Applicable.

NOTE: this question was not asked at the Okanagan campus.

Person with lead responsibility for this metric: Director, VPS Portfolio Initiatives

Data collection will be from: Undergraduate Experiences Survey

Date: Academic year

Explanation of Results

UBC Vancouver students in general report to having close friends that are similar to themselves, in terms of cultural, linguistic and ethnic background.

- 48.9% of students report to having mostly close friends that are similar, in terms of cultural, linguistic and ethnic background; conversely, 33% of students report to having mostly close friends that are dissimilar, in terms of cultural, linguistic and ethnic background.

This is consistent with recent literature (Rude, 2012), indicating that students’ circles of friends become increasingly more similar with each year of university education.

The majority of UBC Vancouver students report having more diverse circles of friends as a result of coming to UBC, and that this has enriched their lives:

- 58% of students report to Agree or Strongly Agree that as a result of coming to UBC, their circle of friends is more diverse in terms of culture, language, ethnicity or life experiences.
- 69% of students report to Agree or Strongly Agree that making new friends at UBC from different cultures and backgrounds from their own has enriched their life.



UBC students generally perceive there to be value in having more diverse circles of friends, and a slight majority report that UBC has made this possible. Despite social and cultural diversity of UBC's student population, students' close friends are generally similar to themselves.

Recommended Action:

UBC is currently developing a mid-level strategic plan around intercultural understanding that will, in part, support the further development of intercultural awareness among students. Through faculty and student intervention, and existing promising practices in the classroom, efforts are underway to leverage the diversity of students to enrich the learning experience.

Best/promising practices around fostering intercultural capital do exist on campus and could be further modelled across campus and in the classroom. It is clear that intercultural capital does not grow on its own and requires intent and design, especially as part of the classroom experience. As the desired end result are high-quality peer relationships between students, student solutions should be sought.