

**Reducing Racism:  
Proactive Measures to Mitigate Racialized Microaggressions in College Classrooms**

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**Executive Summary**

In the fall of 2017, students in Sociology/Anthropology 371 conducted research on racial microaggressions (MAs) in the classroom and curricula at St. Olaf College. We sent an anonymous online survey to 2,844 and received 718 responses (25.2%). Standard guidelines suggest a sampling ratio of 30% for a population of 1,000; for our slightly larger population, a response rate of 25.2% is appropriate (Neuman 2012:167).

Prior studies of racism in college classrooms have identified patterns of racialized MAs and their damaging impacts which undermine the goals of higher education institutions, endanger the wellbeing of students of color, and the hinder the full engagement of all students in dialogue and critical inquiry. However, scholarship has focused on MA terminology, targets, enactors, and responses, without specifically addressing ways that professors and institutions can proactively limit the occurrence of MA in classrooms.

Our research focuses on this gap by addressing two main questions:

1. What actions do professors take in classrooms to limit or prevent racial MAs and frequently, and what are students' views of their effectiveness?
2. How effective have initiatives *outside* of the classroom, such as Sustained Dialogue and DiversityEdu, been in limiting or preventing racial MAs *inside* the classroom?

The most important results of our research are the following:

1. Overall, students perceive actions taken by the professor *inside* the classroom to be more effective in limiting classroom MAs than actions taken *outside* of the classroom.
2. A majority of students surveyed (53.4%) report not being in a course in which the professor used the term microaggression (53.4%) or initiated a discussion on how to respond to MAs (66.7%), at least not by week 12 of the semester of this study.
3. While departments varied in their discussions of or use of the term "microaggression" in class, it appears that no department does these things frequently.
4. Respondents view professor-initiated discussions of racism as the most effective proactive action, and these discussions are more often focused on class materials and less often connected to campus or societal events.
5. The majority of respondents perceived outside-the-classroom proactive responses to be at least somewhat effective, with the exception of DiversityEdu Training and its Follow-Up Dialogues, which the majority of students reported as "not at all effective".

Based on our research, we offer four recommendations:

1. Increase the frequency of all of the professor-initiated proactive responses included in our survey, as respondents found them generally effective but infrequent.
2. Increase professor-initiated discussions of racism in relation to class materials and to campus and societal events, as students view these actions to be the most effective.
3. Create an in-person course that explicitly addresses issues of racism and MAs, and integrate this content into curriculum across the campus.
4. Evaluate professors' inclusion of proactive measures to reduce MAs in the classroom, using items in the end-of-the-semester student course evaluations.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

American colleges and universities aim to foster environments where all students engage in the critical inquiry and dialogue needed in a diverse society. Ideal classroom environments allow students to actively and honestly engage with challenging issues while protecting both students and professors from psychological or emotional harm (Holley and Steiner 2015:49). However, many predominantly white institutions (PWIs) fall short of this ideal. Studies of racism in college classrooms have identified patterns of racial microaggressions (MAs) and their damaging impacts, which threaten the foundational goals of higher education, the wellbeing of students of color, and the full engagement of all students in dialogue and critical inquiry. Recently, St. Olaf has focused attention on ways to serve its new generation of students through curricular and pedagogical innovation. Supported by the *To Include is To Excel* grant, these efforts seek to promote excellence, inclusion, and equity in the classroom and curricula. It is vital that St. Olaf acknowledges and works to remedy the ways that racism operates within the classroom and curricula in order to achieve these goals. Our research builds on this by focusing on institutional and professorial proactive measures to mitigate racial MAs in the classroom, with the goal of identifying ways in which the institution can effectively address racism in the classroom and curricula.

### Introduction to Racial MAs in Classroom Environments

As proposed by the institution's "STOGGoals," students should graduate from St. Olaf with skills necessary for responsible interpersonal, civic, and global engagement, including being able to understand, learn from, and respect difference. Acknowledging and working to eliminate racial MAs is integral to achieving this goal. Our research investigates instances of racism in classroom environments, both covert and overt. These forms of racism are often classified as racial MAs, defined as "unintentional and intentional insults in the form of verbal, behavioral, or environmental "indignities" (Minikel-Lacocque 2013:435). MAs encompass the following subtypes: 1) "microassaults," which include combative, ill-intentioned, verbal or nonverbal racial disparagements, 2) "microinsults," the often unintentional, insensitive expressions that convey assumptions based on another's racial identity and disregard or belittle another's racial background, 3) "microinvalidations," or expressions that dismiss the lived experiences of people of color, and 4) "environmental MAs," or MAs that manifest in an environment or at a systemic level (Sue et al. 2007:274-275). By addressing racism as it manifests in racial MAs, we can better comprehend and ultimately mitigate racism itself (Minikel-Lacocque 2013:435).

MAs in higher education classrooms have been part of the focus of a growing body of research on racism in educational contexts. Scholarship on such MAs has specifically focused on the taxonomy of MAs, environments in which MAs occur, and to whom and by whom MAs are enacted. However, little existing research addresses the ways in which college professors and students can effectively and *proactively* respond to MAs in classroom environments. Our research focuses on this gap.

The limited existing literature related to proactive responses to MAs centers on three primary themes. First, this literature has focused on classroom environments, exploring ways to create environments conducive to healthy and constructive dialogue, in which all students are supported in achieving this goal. Second, this literature has focused on pedagogical methods, examining ways to create positive classroom environments by reducing and preventing occurrences of MAs. Discussions of pedagogical methods include professors' preparation for and methods of approaching class as well as effective classroom practices and actions, grounded in a sense of honesty and vulnerability (Roberts and Smith 2002:295). Third, this

literature has focused on discussion frameworks, examining effective and constructive frameworks for transformative and meaningful classroom discussion, and identifying the responsibilities of both students and professors in navigating the classroom environment.

### **Proactive Responses: The Role of Classroom Environments**

Existing literature cites professors as the most influential contributors in classroom environments, as their actions play a central role in creating a supporting learning environment (Holley and Steiner 2005:50,59). When asked to describe a classroom in which they felt safe, students listed more characteristics of their instructors' behavior than any other type of descriptor (Holley and Steiner 2005:59). Such characteristics include "encouraging," "approachable," and "non-judgemental," qualities that elicit classroom discussion that includes all participants, does not avoid conflict, encourages students to share their own experiences, and challenges students' personal views while welcoming and supporting discussion (Holley and Steiner 2005:59-60). Thus, it is vital to examine the role that professors play in shaping classroom environments. These positive characteristics serve as a good starting point for developing future institutional assessments, and they should be explored for their particular relevance to the St. Olaf community.

As Harper(2010) emphasizes, professors are not the only actors involved in creating constructive classroom environments; institutions must acknowledge broader patterns of racism in their classrooms and curricula and work to address them. Institutionalized racism occurs on college campuses when there is a lack of acknowledgement, awareness, and response by an institution to the reality of racism both inside and outside the classroom. While individual actions play a role in perpetuating racism, and needs to be addressed, racialized campus environments and need attention at the institutional level in order to foster constructive classroom environments for all students (Harper 2012:18). Thus, institutions should focus on finding and implementing solutions at an institutional rather than individual level. Harper thus concludes that the creation of ideal classroom environments is not solely the responsibility of those within the classroom, but also of students, professors, the institution, and the institution's leaders as they all seek to optimize the learning experience and environment of students on campus (Harper 2012:18).

### **Proactive Responses: The Role of Pedagogical Methods**

A second major component of the literature on proactive responses to MAs centers on pedagogical methods that can be implemented to create and maintain constructive classroom environments. An important determinant of professors' pedagogical methods is the training they receive for structuring their classroom environments, as previous literature recommends some form of training in order to be better prepared to address MAs when they occur (Harwood, et al. 2015:16). Others suggest, more specifically, that professors engage in critical self-reflection regarding their own past experiences with racism so they can actively participate in a "conscious interruption of racism" and help prevent racial discomfort in the classroom (Kohli 2008:181). Facilitating a classroom environment free of racial MAs requires thoughtful preparation and self-reflection on the part of professors.

Scholarship on classroom pedagogy highlights the value of facilitating students' contributions to the classroom environment. For example, one transformative pedagogical framework seeks to elicit students' consciousness of issues surrounding racism. The goal of this framework is to expose students to race-related materials in the classroom and engage them in writing assignments and discussion with peers regarding their experiences with racism. Professors can

facilitate this by promoting “free self-expression,” where students are allowed to share their own ideas and experiences in healthy and constructive ways in the classroom, ultimately resulting in constructive “self-reflection” (Dhillon et al. 2005:78). Through this process, students gain the skills and knowledge to confront their own stereotypes and biases about other groups of people (Dhillon et al. 2005:78).

To promote effective learning in college courses that address diversity, scholars recommend intentionally structuring these classes with a focus on cooperative learning. By fostering a collaborative learning environment in which students work in teams on course material, relative power dynamics between professors and students dwindle, and students are held responsible for their own learning (Roberts and Smith 2002:294-296). As students engage with new ideas, they experience new affective reactions, necessitating the management of emotions. Professors need to be aware of this and aid students in processing these emotions when engaging with personal experiences of racism and MAs (Roberts and Smith 2002:291). The approach of Roberts and Smith is very similar to the transformative pedagogical framework proposed by Dhillon et al., as both recommend that class time encompass engagement with culturally diverse material where students learn from each other and develop a better understanding of relevant issues together.

### **Proactive Responses: Navigating Discussion Frameworks**

When discussing the pedagogical tools needed to limit the occurrence and impacts of racial MAs in the classroom, we must consider the effects these tools have on the climate of dialogue in academic settings. Discussions of race and racism are difficult yet crucial for limiting the occurrence of racial MAs in the classroom. In fact, the first step in limiting the presence and impact of racism on college campuses is to facilitate explicit discussions of racism itself (Minikel-Lacocque 2013:435). In acknowledging the difficulty of navigating the topic of racism and MAs, Holley and Steiner raise an important point about “productive” discussions. They explain that productive discussions do not necessarily require that all students be comfortable or that the discussion avoid conflict (Holley and Steiner 2005:3). Rather, discussions of difficult topics such as racism require confrontation and acknowledgement of emotionally challenging experiences. Unfortunately, discussions of race and racism often result in a higher frequency of MAs. Yet to prevent further MAs from occurring, it is vital that these discussions occur in environments that are both welcoming and respectful of students from diverse, multicultural backgrounds.

Prior scholarship elaborates on how to create constructive frameworks for discussion of racism. These methods fall into three main categories: sensitive actions by professors, increased multicultural competence of professors, and programming outside of the classroom. As discussed above, a professor’s pedagogical approach is key to establishing a healthy and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel comfortable sharing personal experiences and being vulnerable. Researchers at the University of Illinois identify specific tools that professors should utilize for discussion. For example, the ability to “defuse rancor” in heated conversations refers to having the knowledge necessary to facilitate dialogue and challenge stereotypes, and having the humility necessary to acknowledge one’s own personal biases (Harwood 2015:16). Many sources also noted that establishing guidelines or rules prior to discussion can be extremely helpful in maintaining an atmosphere of respect and trust – necessary attributes to prevent MAs from occurring (Garibay 2015:9). The impact of training for professors *outside* of the classroom on race-related discussions *within* the classroom is additionally important, suggesting the expansion of intergroup dialogue, multicultural advocacy, and cultural competency (Harwood 2015:16). While these strategies may be effective in mitigating racial MAs in the classroom, existing literature on such strategies lacks specific details on how these

workshops or trainings would take place. We hope to address this shortcoming through our research, by identifying concrete steps that can be taken to develop and implement activities outside of the classroom that limit racial MAs inside the classroom.

Patterson-Rivera (2014) identified similar value in programming for professors, particularly aimed at increasing multicultural competencies. Training professors to better acknowledge and understand cultural differences that exist among students enables them to be more equipped to facilitate discussions, prevent racial MAs from occurring in their classrooms, and stop committing MAs themselves *if applicable* (Patterson-Rivera 2014:63). Ultimately, combating MAs in classroom discussions requires creating a space in which students can *productively* address differences and diversity, with the goal of increasing understanding and empathy (Harper 2012:16).

Scholarship on proactive responses to MAs emphasizes the actions that *professors* can and should take, with some attention to outside-the-classroom trainings and initiatives. The three themes present in existing literature on professors' impacts on Mas – classroom environments, pedagogical methods, and discussion frameworks – inform our research. Drawing from these themes, we investigate two research questions:

1. What actions do professors take in classrooms to limit or prevent racial MAs, how frequency do these actions occur, and what are students' views of their effectiveness?
2. How effective have initiatives *outside* of the classroom, such as Sustained Dialogue and DiversityEdu, been in limiting or preventing racial MAs *inside* the classroom?

## METHODS

We conducted this research at St. Olaf College, a small private liberal arts college in southern Minnesota. We collected our data using an anonymous online survey sent to 2,844 students and available online for 10 days. The survey included Likert-scale questions where students selected the number of times they had experienced or observed certain events, questions where students selected all applicable responses, and open response questions for students to describe their experiences and suggestions for dealing with MAs. The survey consisted of questions that were combined from several research groups, each exploring a different aspect of MAs in the classroom and racism in the college curriculum. Additionally, we developed the survey questions with consideration of the experiences and input of students who participated in an exploratory focus group.

## Variables

In investigating the presence, frequency, and effectiveness of proactive responses to racialized MAs in the classroom, we examined variables related to students' perceptions of constructive and healthy classroom environments. We conceptualized *proactive responses* to include actions taken by students, professors, and the institution that work to limit the occurrence and mitigate the impact of racialized MAs within a classroom environment. Our research investigated two main categories of proactive responses: actions of professors *within* the classroom and institutional and non-institutional programs implemented *outside* the classroom. (This conceptualization is broad enough to encompass, for example, Sustained Dialogue and the Collective for Change on the Hill.) Thus, our key variable was the creation of, and students' perceptions of, classroom environments in which MAs are less likely to occur and to cause damaging effects. In conceptualizing a "*safe*" classroom, we drew on the definition from Holley and Steiner, who frame this as an academic environment in which students are willing and able

to “participate and honestly struggle with challenging issues,” thereby protecting both students and professors from psychological or emotional harm (2015:49). In conceptualizing this ideal classroom for our research, we more specifically defined “psychological or emotional harm” as stemming from racial MAs in the classroom. Thus, for the purpose of our research, we defined a safe classroom environment as one in which students are willing and comfortable to participate and to engage with issues of racism, and in which the occurrence and impact of racial MAs is mitigated.

To investigate our first research question, regarding professors’ actions inside the classroom, we developed two distinct survey questions: one to assess the *presence and frequency* of specific actions, and the other to determine students’ perceptions of the *effectiveness* of these same actions. The survey included a definition of racial MAs designed by other research teams studying MA types and frequencies. Our first question focused on actions that took place during fall semester 2017. We provided a list of five actions professors could take to mitigate the occurrence and impact of racial MAs in the classroom, based on prior literature and input from our focus group participants. Examples of these actions include initiating discussion of racism in regards to class material, using the term “microaggressions,” and establishing guidelines for addressing racism in class. We asked respondents to select the number of courses in which their professors had taken those actions, using a scale of 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 or more classes, making our response categories both mutually exclusive and exhaustive. Our second question invited more subjective data, as we asked respondents to draw from their experience at St. Olaf to assess the effectiveness of these same five actions in limiting the occurrence of racial MAs in classrooms. We used a 5-point Likert scale to measure students’ perceptions, with response categories ranging from “extremely effective” to “not effective at all.”

We also examined the extent to which students’ perceived programs or entities implemented *outside* of the classroom as effective in helping to prevent MAs *inside* the classroom. We conceptualized the variable *outside of the classroom* measures to include programming, student organizations, or institutional/structural initiatives outside of the classroom that may help limit MAs and improve the racial climate on campus. The measures at St. Olaf we chose to assess were Sustained Dialogue, Diversity Edu training, the follow-up dialogue sessions in residence halls that discussed the DiversityEdu training, the summer Task Force on Institutional Racism, the Working Group for Equity and Inclusion, the Collective for Change on the Hill, and student advocacy (other than the Collective for Change). We used another 5-point Likert scale to measure students’ perceptions, with response categories ranging from “extremely effective” to “not effective at all,” and an additional option of “Not applicable (I haven’t experienced this or don’t know about its effectiveness.)” We then excluded “effectiveness” responses from students who indicated that they were not in a position to assess the effectiveness of the outside-of-the-classroom programs and entities.

Our demographic questions informed our understanding of key attributes of our sample. The most important characteristic was students’ racial/ethnic identity, as this allowed us to compare perceptions of classroom safety by white students and students of color. We also included an open-ended question at the end of the survey, inviting students to list any further input, including recommendations they have for proactive measures to limit the occurrences of MAs in the classroom.

## Validity and Reliability

In constructing our research questions and survey, we worked to ensure that our measures were both valid and reliable. Measurement validity is determined by how closely conceptual definitions (such as ideal classroom environments and proactive responses) are matched by operational definitions (such as specific actions of the professor and programming outside of the classroom, as listed on a survey) (Neuman 2012:123). We worked to achieve face validity and content validity to ensure the closest fit between our conceptual and operational definitions. Face validity is defined as a judgment by informed members of the scientific community that the operational indicators actually measure the concept (Neuman 2012:123). To achieve this, we used logical measures, outside literature, and review from peers and our professor, Ryan Sheppard. Content validity assesses the extent to which the entirety of the conceptual definition is represented by the operational indicators (Neuman 2012:123). We completed the recommended steps to achieve content validity: we thoroughly defined the concept of proactive measure, including aspects such as classroom environment, actions of professors, and institutional programming, and we then developed indicators on our survey questions that draw from all parts of our definition, ensuring that we were addressing the entirety of our concept (Neuman 2012:123).

We also worked to ensure the reliability, or dependability and consistency, of our measures, with the goal of eliciting repeated, stable responses when experiences don't change (Neuman 2012:121). To do this, we established clear, concrete examples of our conceptual definitions of proactive responses and safe classrooms, to eliminate confusion for respondents. We worked to provide the most precise levels of measurement possible, using ordinal 5-point Likert scale response categories, with "not applicable" options, and a ratio level question on the frequency of professors' relevant actions, in 0 to 4 or more classes. Due to the limited space on our survey, we were unable to use multiple indicators, as would have been ideal. However, the overlap between our survey questions and those of the other research teams provides increased reliability. We also improved reliability by pilot-testing our survey on other students and incorporating detailed feedback from our professor before launching our survey.

## Sample and Sampling Procedures

Because our research sought to identify the proactive actions and initiatives that St. Olaf College and its professors take to mitigate MAs in the classroom, as well as the effectiveness of such measures, we wanted to ensure that we attained a sufficiently large and representative sample of students. We disseminated our anonymous survey to prospective respondents electronically through email and an online survey tool to our target population of all students on the St. Olaf campus (excluding students on off-campus programs and students in SOAN 371), a total of 2,844 students. We received 718 (25.2%) responses. Standard guidelines suggest a sampling ratio of 30% for a population of 1,000; for our slightly larger population, a response rate of 25.2% is appropriate (Neuman 2012:167). Of the 649 respondents who provided their gender identification, 59.5% (427) identified as females and 29.0% (208) as males, with 1.9% (14) respondents identifying as non-binary and 0.4% (3) identifying as transgender. In terms of class year, 25.2% (181) expect to graduate in 2021, 25.5% (183) in 2020, 21.3% (153) in 2019, and 20.1% (144) in 2018. Also, of 636 respondents who identified their race or ethnicity, 65.6% (471) of respondents identified as white, 7.9% (57) Asian or Asian American, 5.2% (37) Multiracial, 2.8% (20) Latinx or Hispanic, 1.5% (11) Black or African American, 0.4% (3) American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.1% (1) Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Additionally, 5.0% (36) of respondents identified as international students.

## Ethics

Our research centers on a complex issue, requiring extended ethical reflection and training. One of our first tasks in conducting our research was to inquire about and conform to the St. Olaf institutional review board (IRB) guidelines concerning our type of research. This is a required process for research at colleges and universities that includes human participants (Neuman 2012, 63). We also completed an online ethics training module that included segments on history and ethical principles, assessing risk, privacy and confidentiality, and informed consent. This training equipped us with the necessary principles for ethical research design.

Ethical concerns also surround our use of a focus group. In our focus group, we asked students to explain their experiences with racialized MAs in the classroom. This called for students to reconjure their emotionally stressful experiences from the past and to be vulnerable in relaying their experiences and opinions. With this in mind, we incorporated an introduction in our discussion, which was a crucial component, highlighting focus group guidelines and participant protection (Drake 2013: 5). This included further information on the research topic and on why we were asking questions about MAs, as well as a statement that participants were welcome to refrain from answering any questions. We also detailed relevant issues of consent and confidentiality, making it clear that while we as moderators will not share their information outside the focus group space and that we ask all participants to maintain confidentiality, we could not control what other participants might share. We considered the benefits of homogeneity and ensured it within the focus group by only having students without faculty to limit power imbalance. We were additionally cognizant of the unbalanced ratios of students of color on campus at St. Olaf, a predominantly white institution. As it can be difficult for students of color to feel comfortable sharing their experiences in a focus group with mostly white students, we prioritized the comfort and safety of students of color throughout the focus group process.

We used a survey to gather data from students about both students and professors on our campus. We recognized that the language of the survey would be an extremely important aspect to tackle carefully. When creating our survey questions, we carefully avoided false premises, emotional language, and ambiguity or vagueness (Neuman 2012, 175-178). For example, we asked students to determine the effectiveness on a proactive measure explicitly on its ability to limit or prevent MAs from occurring inside the classroom, in accordance to the definition of MAs provided above in the survey. Being cognizant of the impact that language regarding racism and MAs can have allowed us to conduct the survey in a manner that prioritized the mental and emotional health of the students.

We also ensured respondents' privacy and informed consent. We, the researchers, did not have access to respondents' identities, and we informed all possible respondents that their identities would not be revealed to us. When directly quoting responses from students in the survey, we removed any content that could possibly identify the respondent. We also informed prospective respondents about the topic of our survey and that they were free to skip any questions or to decline to take the survey, and that answering survey questions would signal their consent to participate in the research. In addition, we informed respondents of opportunities to learn about the results of the research at a public poster session.



## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

### Research Question 1a: Frequency of Professors' Proactive Actions

In order to identify tangible ways that professors can work to limit and prevent racial MAs inside the classroom, we identified five specific actions, based on input from our focus group discussion and prior literature, as shown in Table 1. We asked respondents to report the frequency with which they had observed these actions so far during the semester of the survey (first eleven weeks)..

*Table 1: Perceived frequency of professors' actions in the classroom to limit or prevent the occurrence of racial microaggressions*

	<b>0 courses</b>	<b>1 course</b>	<b>2 courses</b>	<b>3 courses</b>	<b>4 or more courses</b>
<b>Discussed guidelines for how to address racism in class, such as expectations for classroom conduct regarding racism, how to respond to racist questions and comments, etc.</b>	46.1%	25.4%	15.2%	7.3%	6.0%
<b>Initiated discussion of racism regarding class materials, such as in readings, film, plays, or music</b>	21.4%	34.7%	24.7%	13.0%	6.1%
<b>Used the term microaggression, as related to the course and its material</b>	53.4%	31.3%	10.6%	2.7%	1.9%
<b>Initiated discussion of microaggressions in the classroom, such as what they are and how to respond to them</b>	66.7%	22.7%	6.3%	2.9%	1.5%
<b>Initiated discussion of racism in response to campus events and/or societal events such as elections and public protests</b>	40.9%	32.5%	17.2%	4.8%	4.5%

\*Note: For univariate frequency values for each item, please see Appendix A.

As Table 1 indicates, students reported that they experienced these proactive measures in the classroom infrequently. A majority of respondents reported they had not experienced two of the measures in any class during the semester, and a plurality reported they had not experienced an additional two measures.

Nearly half (46.1%; 309/670) stated that none of their professors had discussed guidelines for how to address racism in class. We found no statistically significant relationships between this measure and other variables such as target/observer status, race/ethnicity, year in school, etc.), and so we do not discuss it further in our analysis. However, we recommend that more professors establish guidelines regarding racism in courses across campus, especially since prior scholarship confirmed this as an effective way for professors to set the tone and environment for their classes (Garibay 2015:9). Additionally, we believe that further research should be conducted regarding methods to increase the frequency and effectiveness of this measure at St. Olaf.

### Frequency of Professorial Actions: Discussions of Racism in the Classroom

Prior literature notes that the first step in limiting the impact and presence of racism on college campuses is to allow for discussion of racism itself (Minikel-Lacocque 2013:435). Professors play a unique and powerful role by facilitating these discussions and helping students engage with themes of racism and how to address it. Our research examined professor-initiated

discussions of racism in the classroom, asking students about the number of courses in which their professors initiated these discussions, both in relation to class materials and in response to campus and/or societal events.

### *Univariate Analysis*

Our univariate analysis indicated that professor-initiated discussions of racism in the classroom occur most often in relation to *class material*, and less often in relation to *campus and/or societal events*. Further, students report that discussions of racism regarding class materials occur in more of their classes than all other professor proactive actions listed in our survey. As shown in Table 1, respondents reported that the majority of professors' proactive actions occurred in few of their classrooms during the first eleven weeks of the semester of the study; four of the five proactive actions listed had the highest number of responses for "0 courses." For each of those four actions, approximately half of the respondents (with percentages ranging between 40.9% and 66.7%) had not experienced these actions in any of their classes. However, "1 course" had the highest number of responses for "initiated discussion of racism regarding class materials" with a plurality of 34.7% (232/668). Regarding professors' initiation of discussions of racism in relation to class materials, 21.4% (143/668) of respondents had not experienced this in any of their courses, while a large majority, 78.5% (525/668) had experienced this in at least one courses. For professor-initiated discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events, 40.9% (272/667) of respondents had not experienced this in any of their courses, while 59% (394/667) of respondents reported this to occur in at least one of their courses.

Therefore, our data indicate that professors are more likely to initiate discussions of racism in regards to class materials than in response to broader campus and/or societal issues. However, this may be impacted by events outside of class, such as the anti-racism events in Spring 2017. As one student noted, "classes last semester had significantly more discussion on race and microaggressions." Our survey asked students specifically about the frequency of professors' proactive actions in relation to the *current* semester, not spring semester of the prior year; if we had, we speculate that our results would show a higher reported frequency of professors initiating discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events.

Our survey respondents conveyed a desire to have *more* classroom discussions of racism and MAs. For example, one respondent stated, "It should be required by professors to have at least one class devoted to discussion about microaggressions and racism." Another respondent emphasized that "A lot of the MAs I have witnessed occur outside the classroom in friend groups, but I think learning to understand and combat microaggressions and racism in general needs to start in the classroom." Discussions of racism in the classroom provide an opportunity for students and faculty alike to grapple with issues of racism that manifest in classroom environments as well as in the larger community and society. Thus, we recommend increasing the number of courses in which professors initiate discussions of racism *both* in relation to class material and to campus and/or societal events.

### *Bivariate Analysis*

To investigate whether respondents' class year is related to reported frequency of professor-initiated discussions of racism, we conducted a Chi-square test of independence (Kendall's tau-c), comparing the reported frequency of professor-initiated discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events and respondents' class year. We found a significant interaction ( $X^2(12)=.079$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $p=.009$ ) between these variables, with juniors (6.6%; 10/151) and

sophomores (6.1%; 11/181) more likely than seniors (2.8%; 4/142) and first years (2.3%; 4/175) to report this type of discussion happening in 4 or more courses during the semester of our study. As evidenced in Table 1, half of first year respondents (50.9%; 89/175) reported this type of discussion was not happening in any of their courses, in contrast to reports from sophomores (38.7%; 70/181), juniors (34.4%; 52/151), and seniors (40.1%; 57/142). Interestingly, one respondent pointed out the lack of discussions of racism in lower-level music classes that underclassmen are likely to take: "Class discussion in early-level music courses is often far-removed from race issues, as they are talked about more frequently in upper level courses." It is possible that this pattern lack of discussions of racism regarding campus and/or societal events in lower-level courses may extend across campus. However, we found no significant relationship between respondents' class year and the reported frequency of professor-initiated discussions of racism *in relation to class material* ( $p=.143$ ).

We also investigated whether and how respondents' academic major is related to the reported frequency of professor-initiated discussions of racism. For this analysis, we grouped the response categories for the frequency of these discussions into two categories: 0 courses and 1 or more courses. First, we examined the frequency of discussions of racism connected to class materials by various major groupings. For each major division (Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Social Sciences, Fine Arts, Humanities, Interdisciplinary and General Studies), we compared students who *did* and *did not* have a major in that division. This approach to comparison was necessary because many St. Olaf students have more than one major. We calculated a Chi-square test of independence (Cramer's V) comparing the reported frequency of professor-initiated discussions of racism *in relation to class material* and whether a respondent was a Natural Sciences and Math (NSM) major or not, and found a significant interaction ( $X^2(1)=.155$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Non-NSM majors (84.8%; 257/303) were more likely than NSM majors (72.2%; 174/241) to report this type of discussion occurring in 1 or more courses during the semester of study. We conducted the same test using the group of NSM majors *excluding* psychology majors and again found a significant interaction ( $X^2(1)=.145$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $p=.001$ ). It appears that chemistry, biology and physics majors (83.2%; 303/364) are even less likely to report this type of discussion occurring in one or more courses. When conducting a Chi-square test of independence (Cramer's V) comparing this professor action and whether a respondent was a Fine Arts major, we found a significant interaction ( $X^2(1)=.088$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $p=.041$ ). Interestingly, Fine Arts majors (85.7%; 108/126) are more likely than Non-Fine Arts majors (77.3%; 323/418) to report this type of discussion occurring in 1 or more courses. However, we found no significant relationship between the frequency of professor-initiated discussions of racism in relation to class material and whether a respondent was a Social Science ( $p=.951$ ), Humanities ( $p=.130$ ), or Interdisciplinary and General Studies ( $p=.065$ ) major.

Second, we analyzed frequency of discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events compared to the same groupings of majors. When calculating a Chi-square test of independence (Cramer's V) comparing the frequency of professor-initiated discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events and whether a respondent was an NSM or major, we found a significant interaction ( $X^2(1)=.201$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Similar to the frequency of discussions of racism in regards to class materials, Non-NSM majors (70.1%; 211/301) are more likely than NSM majors (50.4%; 122/242) to report this type of discussion occurring in 1 or more of their courses. We also found a significant relationship ( $X^2(1)=.105$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $p=.014$ ) between reported frequency of professor-initiated discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events and whether a respondent was a Fine Arts major. Also like discussions of racism in regards to campus materials, Fine Arts majors (70.6%; 89/126) are more likely than non-Fine Arts majors (58.5%, 244/417) to report this type of discussion occurring in 1 or more of their courses. We found no significant relationship between the frequency of this type of

discussion and whether a respondent was a Social Science ( $p=.051$ ), Humanities ( $p=.416$ ), or Interdisciplinary and General Studies ( $p=.173$ ) major.

Many respondents expressed that classroom discussions of racism are of paramount importance yet they reported that these discussions of racism are largely absent in the natural sciences and math classes. As one respondent stated: "I think more courses should include discussing racism and current events because it does pertain to every subject in some shape or form.... [yet] science and math classes ... do not talk about such problems." Still, some respondents expressed uncertainty about the compatibility of these types of discussions with certain types of classes and departments. As one stated, "I think discussions on race and ethnicity are very important to have, but it's difficult for me to see how those discussions can be incorporated into class material, unless the class has a specific focus on the subject of race and ethnicity," and another respondent mentioned that, "in science classes, race usually isn't brought up simply because it doesn't relate as easily to the topic." The following comment by a respondent brings together the aforementioned concerns and findings:

"In certain classes, mostly natural science classes, I feel it's difficult to talk about racism *because it doesn't necessarily coincide with topics in class...* I think it is harder to bridge that gap between those very different topics. And as someone who is a natural science major, majority of my classes focus on very scientific factual objective topics and so I am *not nearly as exposed to discussions of racism as those in other majors....* Or maybe could be something the school can improve on, a policy change of some sort."  
(emphasis added)

Prior literature cites professors as key contributors in classroom environments, as their actions play a central role in creating a learning environment that is conducive for students (Holley and Steiner 2005:50,59). Further, to effectively limit racial MAs in classrooms, and mitigate their effects when they do occur, classroom discussions of race and racism are crucial. The respondent's quote above addresses the possibility that fewer discussions of racism occur in natural science classes because of a lack of alignment between course content and these discussions. Because of the content of science classes, for example, students may simply not be as exposed to discussions of racism, as compared to in sociology/anthropology classes. This respondent also points to the fact that change must occur at an institutional level in regard to class material and discussion. Thus, we recommend that St. Olaf College, as an institution, take steps to create a framework in which professors are expected and trained to initiate more discussions of racism in their classes, and that the training focus especially on ways in which these types of discussions can be integrated into courses in departments across divisions, such as in the natural sciences and math, and increased in first-year and sophomore courses.

### **Frequency of Professorial Actions: Use and Discussion of the Term Microaggressions**

While previous literature emphasizes the value of pedagogical preparation for professors to address MAs when they occur, we chose to investigate two measures that could be implemented by professors to *proactively* prevent MAs: using the term microaggressions regarding the course and its material, and initiating discussion of MAs in the classroom, such as what they are and how to respond to them. Professors play an instrumental role in shaping the dynamic of class discussion in ways that can limit or prevent racial MAs from occurring, as evidenced by students' perceived effectiveness of the actions mentioned above. A respondent deftly described this discussion dynamic, noting:

"The class that I have experienced the most microaggressions in is also the only one that attempts to discuss race and racism. I think that some people accidentally make microaggressions when attempting to talk about some of the issues of race that come up in class discussions. *I believe that in a safe, supportive, and educational*

*environment, there is somewhat of a necessity to be able to make those mistakes as long as the others in the class and the professor correct them because it is a part of the learning experience and it is important to allow those discussions.” (emphasis added)*

We surveyed respondents on the frequency and effectiveness of two actions explicitly related to MAs to investigate whether students perceived they could be effective in achieving this environment.

### *Univariate Analysis*

Our results indicate that professors infrequently use the term microaggression, and even more rarely initiate a meaningful discussion of the term within the context of course materials. As shown in Table 1, over half of respondents reported that they had not had a class in which the professor used the term microaggression (53.4%; 358/670) during the first eleven weeks of the semester of this study, and two-thirds reported that they had not experienced a professor initiating discussion of MAs in the classroom (66.7%; 444/666). Of the five proactive measures analyzed, these two items were most skewed, as both had a total of less than 4% of responses falling in the “3 courses” and “4 or more courses” categories. It appears that professors are more likely to engage in general discussions of racism than in the specifics of racial MAs. The frequencies reported by students in our study may be lower than they would have been during the prior spring semester, due to the events on campus that prompted frequent discussions of race in classrooms. A respondent noted this possibility in the free response section of the survey, stating, “For context, classes last semester had significantly more discussion on race and microaggressions. On the whole, they were fairly productive, though frequently became “preachy” rather than conversational.” While it may be fair to assume professors want to avoid “preachy” conversations about MAs, the lack of use of the term altogether may inhibit productive discussion. We recommend this gap be rectified by professors.

### *Bivariate Analysis*

In order to investigate in which departments or classes professors are more likely to use the term microaggression or initiate discussion about it, we examined the relationship between frequency of these two items and respondents’ majors and class years. We found no statistically significant relationship between respondents’ class year and their reported frequency of use of the term MA ( $p=.439$ ) and reported frequency of initiated discussions of the term ( $p=.158$ ), most likely due to the low number of students who reported experiencing these actions in the first place. Based on the mean index scores for each class year (see “Mean of Frequency Index of Professor Actions by Graduation Year” in the Appendix), we concluded that professors of upper level classes are more likely to include proactive measures in their courses, but that the use of the term or discussion of MAs is similarly infrequent regardless of class year or course level.

To more closely investigate the relationship between professor actions and class year, we ran partials and Chi-square tests for both variables and respondents’ racial/ethnic identity, holding class year constant. By examining this relationship with the reported frequency of microaggression-related items grouped into categories of “0 courses” and “1-4 or more courses” within each class year individually, we found the only statistically significant relationship to be between students of color and white respondents in the class of 2018 ( $X^2(1)=4.582$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The majority of students of color in the class of 2018 who responded reported a professor-initiated discussion of MAs in at least one of their courses (52.4%; 11/21) while the majority of white students in the class of 2018 who responded did *not* report experiencing these same

discussions (71.4%; 80/112). This disparity may indicate that senior students of color who responded are more likely to enroll in courses in which professors engage in dialogue on MAs, or that senior students of color feel more comfortable sharing experiences or reflections that would cause the professor to initiate such discussions.

We identified a larger difference in reported frequency of these MA-related actions for respondents with Natural Science and Math (NSM) and Social Science (SS) majors, with no statistically significant relationship found for students who reported having a major in the Fine Arts ( $p=.269$ ), Humanities ( $p=.735$ ), and Interdisciplinary General Studies ( $p=.314$ ). A statistically significant *negative* relationship was noted between NSM majors and non-NSM majors ( $X^2(1)=18.107$ ,  $p<.01$ ), with 61.6% (149/242) of NSM majors reporting that *none* of their professors had used the term microaggressions, as compared to 43.2% (131/303) of non-NSM majors. A similarly low frequency was found for professors initiating discussion of MAs, as 70% (170/240) of NSM majors reported 0 courses that included this discussion ( $X^2(1)=6.809$ ,  $p<.01$ ). When excluding psychology majors from the NSM major grouping, this distinction was even greater: 76.7% (138/180) of chemistry, biology and physics majors reported that they had *not* experienced a professor initiating a discussion of MAs ( $X^2(4)=18.543$ ,  $p<.01$ ).

We also noted a statistically significant *positive* relationship between use of the term MA and whether students were Social Science (SS) majors or non-SS majors, as 38.1% of SS majors (56/147) reported not experiencing a professor using the term microaggression in the semester of the study, almost 20% lower than the rate for non-SS majors (56.3%; 224/398) ( $X^2(1)=14.213$ ,  $p<.01$ ). The majority of SS majors (61.9%; 91/147) reported having at least one course in which the professor used this term. While the majority of SS majors (51.7%; 76/147) reported not experiencing a discussion of MAs in their courses, this was, again, about 20% lower than the percentage of non-SS majors who also reported not experiencing this measure (69.7%; 276/396).

We cannot infer *course* frequency from *major* frequency, due to the fact that a student's entire course load is typically not within their major discipline, but we speculate that the above-average frequency of the use of the term microaggression reported in SS courses and below-average frequency reported in NSM courses is likely because SS courses more commonly include material related to themes of race and MAs, while NSM course materials (except in psychology) rarely include such themes. This does not preclude NSM courses from this discussion, however; we recommend that professors in these disciplines make a concerted effort to include discussions of MAs, regardless of a supposed "lack of overlap" with course material. Respondents also noted this gap. As one stated::

"I think that it is important to talk about race, stereotypes, microaggressions etc. in classes from all majors...*the majority of classes he has taken during college are science and math classes and these classes do not talk about such problems.* I know it is difficult to incorporate these discussions into departments such as physics, but I think it is incredibly *important to make sure that students in these departments participate in these kinds of discussions because the classes they take do not offer these viewpoints.*" (emphasis added)

We thus recommend that professors of all disciplines be trained in the tools necessary to lead meaningful, constructive discussion of microaggressions, including discussions of what MAs are and how to respond to them. Due to the variations in data noted above, perhaps this training could focus on NSM disciplines, and include input from professors in the social science departments.

## Frequency of Professors' Proactive Actions: Overall



Figure 1: Frequency of professors' actions index histogram

Looking more generally at the overall frequency of these actions, we created an index by summing each respondent's reported experience of the professor actions listed in our survey to better gauge how often these measures might be experienced across campus and in how many courses. The index totaled a respondents' score based on all five professor items. The lowest possible index score was 0, indicating that a respondent had not experienced any of these measures in any classes during the first 11 weeks of the semester of this study. The highest possible score was 20, indicating the respondent had experienced all of the measures in 4 or more courses. Among the respondents, 14.8% (98/660) of respondents had a score of 0, 52.5% of respondents (347/660) had scores between 0 and 5, 24.8% (164/660) had scores between 6 and 10, 6% (39/660) had scores between 11 and 15, and 2% (12/660) had scores between 16 and 20. The index scores were right skewed, which is reinforced by the low mean score of 4.66 for the index, indicating low experience of professors' proactive responses in the classroom. For a complete table of index values, see Appendix A. This low frequency overall reflects the low frequency of each item individually, noted in Table 1.

We were curious to see if class year and/or major might influence the frequency with which students experience professors engaging in the proactive measures that we described above. To investigate, we ran a Kruskal-Wallis H Test to compare the mean scores of the index of students' experience of professors' proactive measures in the classroom to the different class years. We found this relationship to be significant ( $H(3)=10.981, p<.05$ ), indicating that the groups differed from each other. Analysis revealed that juniors were most likely to experience professors' proactive measures with a mean of 5.27, followed by sophomores, seniors, and then first years. (See Table 2 below). It is interesting that seniors are the second least likely to experience professors engaging in proactive measures. We do not know the reason why, but it would be interesting to conduct further research to see if this is due to their upper level courses assuming that they have already discussed MAs and racism in other courses, or if seniors might

be taking lower level courses – similarly to first-years – in order to complete graduation requirements and are therefore less exposed to proactive measures concerning MAs and racism.

*Table 2: Respondents' mean score on index of professors actions by class year*

<b>Class Year</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>First-Year</b>	4.05	3.768	173
<b>Sophomore</b>	5.13	4.640	177
<b>Junior</b>	5.27	4.076	150
<b>Senior</b>	4.18	3.691	142
<b>Total</b>	4.66	4.108	642

We next wanted to see if there is a relationship between respondents' overall reported frequency experiences of professors' actions and respondents' majors. We found that Natural Science and Math (NSM) majors are less likely than non-NSM majors to take classes where professors conduct proactive measures as described in Table 1. We conducted a Mann-Whitney U test to compare the mean score for experiencing a professor conduct a proactive measure between NSM majors and non-NSM majors and found a significant difference between the two groups. The mean score for NSM majors was significantly lower (mean of 3.95) compared to non-NSM majors (mean of 5.55;  $U=26699$ ,  $p<.05$ ). On the other hand, Social Science (SS) majors are more likely than non-SS majors to experience professors' proactive measures. We conducted a Mann-Whitney U test to compare the mean scores for experiencing a professor conduct a proactive measure between SS majors and non-SS majors and found a significant difference between the two groups. The mean score for SS majors was significantly higher (mean of 5.44) compared to non-SS majors (mean of 4.62;  $U=24254.5$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Additionally, Interdisciplinary and General Studies (IGS) majors are also more likely than non-IGS majors to experience professors' proactive measures. We conducted a Mann-Whitney U test to compare the mean scores between IGS majors and non-IGS majors and found a significant difference; the mean score for IGS majors was significantly higher (mean of 5.91) compared to non-IGS majors (mean of 4.71;  $U=11059.5$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Finally, there was no statistically significant relationships for the mean scores of Fine Arts or Humanities, when compared to majors not in those disciplines. (See Appendix A for more information)

However, while we found statistical significance between the mean scores for those with certain majors and those without those majors, there are several factors that should be noted in interpreting these results. First, we recognize that the groupings of majors into certain disciplines are constructed in a way to help organize institutional resources but may include departments with different focuses and pedagogical methods; for example, both SOAN, Exercise Science, and Economics are in the same Social Science discipline grouping, but generally pursue distinct lines of inquiry. As a result, certain departments might include some of the professors' proactive actions more frequently than others in their same discipline, yet this information is not visible since the disciplines are being analyzed as a whole for the frequency of these items. Secondly, students across campus are more likely to take a course in certain departments than others, due in part to GE requirements. For example, all students are required to take at least two religion courses before graduating. In contrast, most students are not taking courses from departments such as Russian and Latin/Classics, so students are less likely to report data from these latter departments regardless of what is occurring within them. Lastly, while we did find a statistically significant difference between respondents' experiences of professor actions based on their majors, it is important to note that the mean scores of the experienced frequency of these measures are low overall. The highest mean score is 5.91 (of IGS majors), yet the highest potential score is 20. Thus, while IGS and SS majors may be



slightly more likely to experience professors' proactive measures, all students are still not experiencing these measures very frequently.

### Research Question 1b: Perceived Effectiveness of Professors' Proactive Actions

*Table 3: Students' perceived effectiveness of professors' actions in the classroom to limit or prevent the occurrence of racial microaggressions*

	Not at all effective	Moderately Effective	Highly Effective
<b>Discussing guidelines for how to address racism in class, such as expectations for classroom conduct regarding racism, how to respond to racist questions and comments, etc.</b>	10.4%	52.8%	36.8%
<b>Initiating discussion of racism regarding class materials, such as in readings, film, plays, or music</b>	6.7%	40.9%	52.4%
<b>Using the term microaggression, as related to the course and its material</b>	17.3%	52.4%	30.3%
<b>Initiating discussion of microaggressions in the classroom, such as what they are and how to respond to them</b>	15.9%	46.0%	38.1%
<b>Initiating discussion of racism in response to campus events and/or societal events such as elections and public protests</b>	9.4%	37.8%	52.8%

\*Note: For univariate frequency values for each item, please see Appendix A.

In order to investigate students' perceptions of the effectiveness of each item listed above, we asked respondents to report, based on their experience at St. Olaf *so far*, the effectiveness of each action in limiting or preventing MAs using a Likert-scale, from "very effective" to "not effective at all." Importantly, all students were asked this question, regardless of whether they reported experience of the items so far during the semester of this study. So, perceptions of effectiveness may be determined based on direct experience at St. Olaf, discussion with peers who had experienced these items, or hypothetical assessment of the items. For purposes of our analysis, we grouped these responses into categories of "not at all effective," "moderately effective," and "highly effective." (For the grouped table, with individual frequency values for each item, see Appendix A).

### Effectiveness of Professorial Actions: Discussions of Racism

In addition to examining the frequency of professor-initiated discussions of racism, we also asked students about their perceived effectiveness of such discussions in limiting or preventing the occurrence of racial MAs.

#### *Univariate Analysis*

As is shown in Table 3, the majority and plurality (for one case) of respondents described these professors' actions as either "moderately effective" or "highly effective" in limiting or preventing the occurrence of racial MAs in classrooms. This confirms our proposal that these actions are in fact *proactive* actions. Importantly, respondents perceived professors' initiation of discussions of racism (both in relation to class material, and campus/societal events) to be more effective than the other professor actions. As seen in Table 3, professor-initiated discussions of racism regarding class materials (52.4%; 344/657), as well as in response to campus and/or societal events (52.8%; 343/650) received the highest frequency of "highly effective" responses as compared to other professor proactive actions listed in our survey; less than 40% of respondents perceived the other listed professor proactive actions to be "highly effective." Thus, professor-initiated discussions of racism, whether they are in connection to class materials, or in

response to campus and/or societal events, stand out in their comparatively high perceived effectiveness.

### *Bivariate Analysis*

To examine whether respondents' class year was related to their perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism, we calculated a Spearman rho correlation coefficient for the relationship between class year and perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism in relation to class material. We found a weak, positive, non-significant correlation ( $r=.061$ ,  $p=.125$ ), indicating no linear relationship between the two variables. Respondents' class year is not related to perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism in relation to class material. However, we calculated a Spearman rho correlation coefficient for the relationship between class year and perceived effectiveness of professor initiated discussions of racism *in response to campus and/or societal events* and found a weak, positive correlation ( $r=.118$ ,  $p=.003$ ), indicating a significant linear relationship between the two variables. This indicates that, the higher a respondents' class year, the more likely they are to perceive this measure to be effective. To further examine this relationship, we ran partials, with major and race/ethnicity. However, cell counts were too low in most of the items, therefore not allowing for a legitimate Chi-square test.

We then investigated if and how respondents' race/ethnicity was related to their perceived effectiveness of discussions of racism. However, we found no significant relationship between these variables when we calculated a chi-square test of independence (Cramer's  $v$ ) (in relation to class material:  $p=.308$ ; in response to campus and/or societal events:  $p=.258$ ). Thus it appears that respondents' of a particular race/ethnicity (whether respondents were white or students of color) did not perceive the effectiveness of either type of these discussions of racism differently. We ran partials to further investigate these findings, attempting to control for both major and class year. Regardless of further grouping to try to achieve a legitimate tests, cell counts were too low.

*Table 4:* Collapsed percentages of students' experiences of microaggressions in the classroom, as a Target, Observer, or Neither

Reported experience of MA	Percent
Target	9.6%
Observer (not also target)	29.0%
Neither	60.0%

We investigated whether respondents' experience with MAs was related to their perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism in the classroom. As presented in Table 4, 60.0% (411/685) of our survey respondents reported having neither been targeted nor observing a MA, 9.6% (66/685) of respondents reported that they had been the target of a microaggression, and 29.0% (208/685) reported having observed (and not targeted by) a microaggression.

When testing for statistical significance between respondents' perceived effectiveness of professors' proactive actions and experience with MAs, we conducted a chi-square test. We grouped the variable about respondents' experience with MAs in two ways: first, respondents who have experienced an MA (target or observer) versus those who have not, and second, targets of MAs versus those who have not been targets of MAs. We calculated a chi-square test of independence (Cramer's  $V$ ) comparing whether respondents' had experienced an MA (as a target or observer) or not (neither target nor observer), and perceived effectiveness of

professor-initiated discussions of racism in relation to class materials, and found no significant interaction ( $p=.056$ ). Respondents who said they were the target of an MA and/or observed an MA are no more or less likely than respondents who said that they had not experienced or observed a MA to perceive professor-initiated discussions of racism in relation to class materials as effective or ineffective. However, we found a significant interaction when calculating a Chi-square test of independence comparing whether respondents' had experienced an MA (target or observer) or not (neither target nor observer), and perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events ( $X^2(4)=.165$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Respondents who said they were the target of an MA and/or observed an MA (28.0%; 71/254) were more likely than respondents who said that they had not experienced or observed a MA (16.8%; 65/386) to perceive professor-initiated discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events as "extremely effective" in limiting or preventing racial MAs.

To look further into the relationship between respondents' experience (or lack thereof) of MAs (whether they have been a target/observer, or neither) and their perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism in the classroom, we ran partials and Chi-square (Cramer's V) tests of independence for both variables and respondents' race/ethnicity, holding this constant. First, we regrouped the response categories for perceived effectiveness from five groups, to three groups: "not at all effective," "moderately effective," and "highly effective." We found the only statistically significant relationship to be between white students and perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events ( $X^2(2)=.144$ ,  $p=.05$ ). White students who have experienced MAs (64.7%; 108/167) were slightly more likely than students of color who have experienced MAs (54.2%; 32/59) to perceive this type of discussion of racism to be "highly effective." Further, white students who have experienced MAs (64.7%; 108/167) are more likely than white students who have not experienced (been targeted or observed) an MA (50.2%, 140/279) to perceive such discussions in response to campus and/or societal events to be "highly effective." Similarly, students of color who have experienced MAs (been targeted or observed) (54.2%, 32/59) were more likely than students of color who have not experienced an MA (42.2%, 27/64) to perceive this type of discussion as "highly effective."

We also ran partials and Chi-square tests of independence (Cramer's V) for both variables and respondents' major, holding this constant. We found a statistically significant relationship to exist between Social Science (SS) majors and non-SS majors, and perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events ( $X^2(2)=.146$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Interestingly, non-SS majors who have experienced a MA (whether targeted or observed) (63.4%, 97/153) were more likely than SS majors and have experienced a MA (55.6%, 35/3) to perceive this type of discussion as "highly effective." Running another partials and Chi-square test of independence (Cramer's V), we also found a statistically significant relationship to exist between Humanities majors and non-Humanities majors, and perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism in response to campus and/or societal events ( $X^2(2)=.144$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Non-humanities majors who have experienced a MA (targeted or observed) (62.0%, 101/163) were only slightly more likely than humanities majors who have experienced a MA (59.3%, 32/54). Lastly, we calculated a chi-square test of independence comparing whether respondents' were a target or not of a MA, and perceived effectiveness of professor-initiated discussions of racism, and found no significant interaction (in relation to class materials:  $p=.368$ ); in response to campus and/or societal events: ( $p=.098$ ). Respondents who have been the target of a MA, and those who have not been targeted, are no more likely to perceive either type of discussion of racism as effective or not. We tried to run partials against race/ethnicity, as well as major, but all cell counts were too low and thus the test was not legitimate.

Many respondents reported that discussions of racism must be present in campus courses. One respondent highlighted their positive experience with classroom discussions of racism: “I have one class this semester where racism, and other forms of discrimination, are frequently discussed, and people in the class feel comfortable sharing. More classes should definitely do this.” However, there must be careful consideration of *what exactly* it means to “discuss” racism, by whom these conversations are dominated, and for whom these conversations exist. Another respondent said: “I’ve noticed that discussions on race are almost always catered to the white students on campus,” and another: “I did not sign up to listen to a bunch of white people talk about race and racism, led by a professor who I believe is not the most qualified to do so.”

The following respondent brought to attention the conflict that can be experienced when trying to broaden discussions of racism in the classroom in extending from the scope of class materials to contemporary issues of racism in larger society:

“As the only person of color in the class, I feel extremely uncomfortable in having these abstract discussions about racism with a bunch of white people (and a white professor). *The discussion often fails to be related to the modern day. In our discussions I try to relate things in our readings to current racism, but feel as if my comments are “out of place” since everyone else, including the professor, only talk about things in terms of the readings. This allows the racism to be discussed in an abstract sense without relating it to the people in the classroom.*” (emphasis added)

In light of our results, and these students’ stories, it is clear that professor-initiated discussions of racism in the classroom, if conducted effectively, are necessary and impactful for constructive classroom environments that engage with issues of racism. Professors have the power to create classroom environments in which students and professors themselves can engage in challenging and critical discussions of race and racism. Further, prior literature notes this important role of the professor in facilitating discussions of racism that have the ability to mitigate the impacts of and prevent the occurrences of racial MAs in classrooms. Yet, as noted in prior literature, it is important that these discussions occur in environments that are both welcoming and respectful of students from diverse, multicultural backgrounds to prevent further MAs from occurring (Holley and Steiner 2005:3). Thus, it is necessary to create and ensure, at an institutional level, that there is sufficient training and expectations for professors to initiate and facilitate these discussions to the best of their abilities. One respondent noted the need for professors to be trained to deal with tension that will inevitably arise in discussions of racism: “I think some classroom discussions can lead to some conflict, especially when dealing with race, gender, sexuality, etc. I think It would be very beneficial to have professors trained in on how to de-escalate these situations.”

Students’ effective and meaningful engagement with issues of racism while at St. Olaf have implications for post-graduate life. Further, discussions of racism in the classroom are important in realizing St. Olaf’s “STOGGoals.” Throughout their lives, students should engage in critical discussions of race and racism and work to actively challenge racism in its many forms. Thus, we must be providing undergraduate classroom environments conducive to providing student with such skills and habits. Both types of professor-initiated discussions of racism (in relation to class materials, and in response to campus and/or societal events), are perceived to be very effective by students in limiting racial MAs. Overall, all professors’ proactive actions that we listed in our survey were generally perceived to be effective. If these proactive actions are effective, as students perceived them to be, it is recommended that we increase their frequency.

## Effectiveness of Professorial Actions: Use and Discussion of the Term Microaggressions

### *Univariate Analysis*

Based on the results from our second survey question (see Appendix B), we also investigated students' perceived effectiveness of the two professorial actions explicitly related to the term microaggression. These results are generally positive: the majority of respondents described both use of the term microaggressions (52.7%, 336/641) and initiation of discussion on this term 46.0% (295/641) to be "moderately effective." However, students reported these two items to be "not at all effective" at a disproportionately high rate compared to the other three proactive professor actions. Thus, while it appears that the majority of students perceive these microaggression-related actions to be effective, fewer students had experienced them at all during the semester of this study, leading to lower overall perceptions of effectiveness. We considered that the effectiveness of these items perhaps would be reported as higher if their frequency also increased.

### *Bivariate Analysis*

We found no statistically significant relationship between respondents' class year and their perceived effectiveness of the use of the term microaggressions ( $p=.161$ ) and of the initiation of discussion of MAs ( $p=.077$ ). Additionally, we found no statistically significant relationship between respondents' racial/ethnic identity and their perceived effectiveness of the use of the term microaggressions ( $p=.996$ ) and of the initiation of discussion of MAs ( $p=.191$ ). These results are possibly due to the low number of respondents who reported experiencing these measures. However, there was a statistically significant relationship between whether a student reported experiencing a racial microaggression, as either a target or observer, and both the use of the term microaggression ( $X^2(4)=12.961$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and initiation of discussion of the term ( $X^2(4)=9.549$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The majority of all respondents students, regardless of whether they reported actually experiencing a microaggression, claimed both items to be "somewhat effective." Importantly, students who reported experiencing a microaggression were more likely to describe both actions as "very" and "extremely" effective. However, 20.8% (79/380) of respondents who reported *never* experiencing or observing a racial microaggression described this action as "not at all effective," a percentage approximately two times higher than that of students who reported experiencing a microaggression. Reported effectiveness of professors initiating discussion of MAs followed a similar pattern, as 19.0% (72/379) of students who reported not experiencing a microaggression claimed it to be not at all effective.

Overall, all respondents, regardless of their experiences of MAs, perceive these actions to be effective, confirming that students believe these are, in fact, proactive responses. However, there is still room for improvement. However, as noted in Appendix A, there is a large variation in departments in which students have experienced the highest frequency of MAs; this is an institutional problem that cannot be pinpointed on one or two "problem" departments. Even when racism is mentioned in the classroom, the specifics of racial MAs are rarely discussed meaningfully, or even mentioned at all.

Additionally, it appears that while students perceive these actions to be effective, professors often accomplish them in a manner students believe to be insufficient or ineffective. If professors are better equipped to engage in discussions of racial MAs, the perceived effectiveness of the actions may also increase. If professors have the tools to initiate effective discussion of MAs *prior* to when they occur, they will better be able to limit or prevent the occurrence and impact of these racial MAs. Because initiating discussion of MAs was described

by as “moderately effective” by the highest frequency of respondents but occurred the least frequently of any of the actions, we recommend that institutional actions be taken to address this gap. We recommend the implementation of training for professors on how to initiate proactive discussions of these racial MAs, including what they are, how to address them, and how to limit their occurrence. Therefore, while individual actions play a role in the perpetuation of racial MAs and need to be addressed, racialized campus environments also need attention at the institutional level in order to create classrooms that feel safe at an individual level (Harper 2012:18).

From all of the data that we analyzed concerning both the frequency and effectiveness of professors’ use of proactive measures in the classroom, it is clear that the measures can be very effective when done correctly. Thus, we recommend that the frequency of these measures across campus should be increased as professors also learn to how to better engage with and integrate discussions of MAs and racism into their classrooms. It is vital for professors to begin this action both to better educate students but also to serve as role models for students in how to address and handle MAs when they occur in the classroom. One student eloquently expressed this in the open response section of our survey, “The onus needs to be on the professors to inform their students to call out, and how to call out both them and fellow students when micro-aggressions occur. Students are often scared to confront authority, but when professors open up the discussion, students might be more likely to speak up.”

## **Research Question 2: Perceived Effectiveness of Outside-of-Classroom Initiatives**

We additionally investigated students’ perceived effectiveness of outside-of-classroom initiatives to see whether students believed that these actions influence the occurrence and limiting of MAs in the classroom. We investigated seven initiatives and asked respondents to report their perception of the effectiveness of each action in limiting or preventing MAs that occur in the classroom using a Likert-scale, from “very effective” to “not effective at all.” Students also had the option of responding that they had not experienced or did not feel comfortable assessing the effectiveness of each initiative.

### **Overall: All Outside-of-Classroom Initiatives**

#### *Univariate Analysis*

Our results in Table 5 below show that the proactive measures initiated outside of the classroom were perceived by the plurality of students to be more effective in mitigating the occurrence and impact of MAs in the classroom than not with the resounding exception of DiversityEdu Training and DiversityEdu Follow Up Dialogues. As seen in Table 5, over 50% of participants responded that Sustained Dialogue, the Task Force on Institutional Racism, the Working Group for Equity and Inclusion, The Collective for Change on the Hill, and student advocacy other than The Collective for Change on the Hill were generally either “slightly effective”, “very effective”, or “extremely effective.” In contrast, over 50% of all respondents assessed that DiversityEdu Training and DiversityEdu Follow-Up Dialogues were either “slightly effective” or “not at all effective”.

Table 5: Students' perceived effectiveness of measures taken outside of the classroom to limit or prevent the occurrence of racial microaggressions

<b>Outside-of-Classroom Initiatives</b>	<b>Not at All Effective</b>	<b>Slightly Effective</b>	<b>Somewhat Effective</b>	<b>Very Effective</b>	<b>Extremely Effective</b>
<b>Sustained Dialogue</b>	9.5%	16.5%	31.3%	29.6%	13.1%
<b>DiversityEdu Training</b>	36.8%	36.5%	21.0%	4.4%	1.4%
<b>DiversityEdu Follow Up Dialogue</b>	42.7%	29.0%	20.1%	6.7%	1.5%
<b>Summer Task Force on Institutional Racism</b>	16.7%	28.0%	33.1%	19.3%	2.9%
<b>Working Group on Equity and Inclusion</b>	20.1%	27.6%	28.7%	20.4%	3.2%
<b>The Collective for Change on the Hill</b>	9.1%	13.7%	31.6%	29.2%	16.3%

\*Note: For univariate frequency values for each item, please see Appendix A.

### *Bivariate Analysis*

We wanted to investigate any significance of the perceived effectiveness of the outside-the-classroom measures listed. We conducted an independent samples t-test to compare the mean extraversion score of race/ethnicity, and, interestingly, found no significance between the groups; the closest we came to finding statistical significance was for the item DiversityEdu Training, with a p-value of 0.057. Based on this data, we can infer that students of color assessed the effectiveness of the items listed similarly to white students. We calculated a Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient for the relationship between the items listed in Table 5 and class year and found a moderate positive correlation test running items by class year. We found statistical significance for the following items: Sustained Dialogue ( $r(12)=-.231$ ,  $p<.05$ ), Summer Task Force for Institutional Racism ( $r(12)=-.168$ ,  $p<.05$ ), and the Working Group on Equity and Inclusion ( $r(12)=-.187$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

Sustained Dialogue sessions last occurred on St. Olaf campus during fall and spring semesters for the 2016-2017 academic school year. Sustained Dialogue sessions have not continued into our current semester (2017-2018), yet freshmen have a higher frequency in assessing the effectiveness of Sustained Dialogue. No current freshmen students have participated in sustained dialogue activities at St.Olaf. Perhaps we are at fault for not clearly conveying in the survey that Sustained Dialogue was a program at St. Olaf rather than general informal discussions. We also acknowledge the possibility that freshman students may be somewhat familiar with Sustained Dialogue, as it is a national program; yet results would be more significant if those individuals actually participated in the program in the context of St. Olaf specific issues.

Both the Task Force on Institutional Racism and the Working Group on Equity and Inclusion are initiatives enacted in response to the events that happened during spring semester of the 2016-2017 academic school year. The lowest frequency of students (by year) to assess the effectiveness of both initiatives were Freshmen students. This is likely because they were not present when these initiatives were first surfacing and may not understand these initiatives in the same context as upperclassmen.

Table 6: Students' perceived effectiveness of measures taken outside of the classroom to limit or prevent the occurrence of racial microaggressions

	<b>"No, I have not experienced this or do not feel comfortable assessing its effectiveness"</b>
<b>Sustained Dialogue</b>	34.5%
<b>DiversityEdu Training</b>	1.3%
<b>DiversityEdu Follow Up Dialogue</b>	47.6%
<b>Summer Task Force on Institutional Racism</b>	45.0%
<b>Working Group on Equity and Inclusion</b>	44.8%
<b>The Collective for Change on the Hill</b>	24.7%
<b>Student Advocacy Work (Other than the Collective for Change)</b>	38.4%

\*Note: For univariate frequency values for each item, please see Appendix A.

As seen in Table 6, it is also important to acknowledge that of the participants who took the survey, a considerably significant portion of them revealed that they had not experienced or that they did not feel comfortable to adequately assess the effectiveness of nearly all of the measures we have listed. The exception of this is DiversityEdu Training, as all students were required to complete this Training module. From the results in Tables 5 and 6, we gather that there should be more of a focus on the frequency and effectiveness of *professor-initiated* proactive responses to MAs to more effectively understand MAs and their impact in the classroom. The outside-of-class initiatives, while equally important, are more appropriate for assessing and addressing how racism functions in the whole of campus climate. These initiatives impact a larger variety of aspects across the school, besides just the classroom climate, and should thus be analyzed more holistically.

The Collective for Change on the Hill is a valuable student-led initiative whose demands last spring helped to push many other outside-the-classroom initiatives to the surface, including the Task Force on Institutional Racism, and the Working Group for Equity and Inclusion. As seen in Table 5, the Collective had the highest frequency of "extremely effective" responses (16.3%), with response rate for the other categories generally mirroring those of Sustained Dialogue. The Collective for Change on the Hill has impacted St. Olaf on a larger scale than simply classroom climate; the initiative and its members have significantly helped to raise awareness of the many issues surrounding the topic of racism and push for institutional changes like the ones presented in our research.

## **Outside-the-Classroom Initiatives: DiversityEdu and Follow Up Dialogues**

### *Univariate Analysis*

It is important to note that students were the most aware of DiversityEdu out of all the proactive measures that have been taken outside-the-classroom, since all students were required to complete this training module; only 1.3%, 9/718 of respondents said that they could not assess the effectiveness of this measure as seen in Table 6 above. However, it had one of the highest frequencies of being seen as "not effective" by respondents with 36.8% (243 /661) of respondents saying that it was "not effective at all" and 36.5% (241/661) of respondents saying that it was only "slightly effective" (see Table 5). This belief was echoed in the free response section of our survey, with 10 students explicitly commenting on DiversityEdu. The majority of these students (9/10) expressed that DiversityEdu was a start at best, but that the content was not adequate enough in addressing racism on St. Olaf's campus. One student mentioned that "DiversityEdu was a failure because it was too easy to dismiss." As a solution for this problem,



various students recommended having an in-person session to discuss issues about racism on St. Olaf campus, though other students gave various important perspectives about the structure of this proposed course. (See Appendix C for specific comments and recommendations from students.)

The first step in moving forward from DiversityEdu Training was the DiversityEdu Follow Up Dialogue sessions that were conducted in student dorms across St. Olaf campus. This Dialogue initiative had both the highest rate of respondents saying that they had not experienced its effectiveness or did not feel comfortable assessing its effectiveness (47.6%, 342/717 as shown in Table 6 above) and, for those who assessed its effectiveness, it had the highest rate of being seen as not effective at all (42.7%, 140/328 as shown in Table 5 above). In evaluating why respondents felt uncomfortable in assessing the effectiveness of this initiative and why it may not have been very effective, the timeline for the dialogues should be considered. In our survey response section, one student said that “Diversity edu’s [sic] dialogues were not advertised enough. I didn’t know they were happening until they had already happened.” It is possible that multiple respondents shared this sentiment. DiversityEdu Follow Up Dialogues were first announced via email from student dorm ACs on October 30, 2017, two days before the DiversityEdu Training was due for completion by all St. Olaf students. A follow up email was sent out about the dialogue sessions by Joshua Lee on November 2, 2017, the day of the event. In contrast, DiversityEdu Training was first advertised on August 30th during summer break. If the Follow Up Dialogue sessions were similarly advertised well in advance, perhaps there would have been a higher level of participation and a different and potentially more positive assessment of their effectiveness. Therefore, inadequate advertisement may have influenced why the follow up dialogue sessions were not seen as effective and additionally why the highest frequency of students felt that they could not adequately assess their effectiveness.

### *Bivariate Analysis*

We looked at DiversityEdu Training and DiversityEdu Follow Up Dialogues to see if their perceived effectiveness was influenced by students’ class year because the extent of students’ exposure to proactive initiatives to help limit MAs in the classroom may differ due to the length of time that they have attend St. Olaf and therefore influence their perception of these initiatives’ effectiveness. We calculated a Spearman’s Rho correlation coefficient for the relationship between the DiversityEdu Follow Up Dialogues and class year and found a negative correlation ( $r = -0.182$ ,  $p = .001$ ). First-years’ mean score of perceived effectiveness of the measure was the highest with a mean of 1.27, with each successive class year decreasing in their perception of its effectiveness (see Appendix A). This may be due to upperclassman respondents having spent more time at St. Olaf and having more experience of the initiatives that the college has pursued in the past, and therefore having a more defined opinion of whether initiatives that the college takes would or would not be effective in the long run.

We also compared respondents’ perceived effectiveness of these initiatives between students who identified as targets/observers of MAs in the classroom and students who said that they were neither witnesses nor targets of MAs to see if one group was more likely to see either initiative as less effective. We calculated a Chi-square test of independence between students who reported as Target/Observers or Neither and perceived effectiveness of DiversityEdu Training and found a significant interaction ( $\chi^2(4) = 14.143$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Students who reported experiencing MAs viewed DiversityEdu Training to be less effective than students who had not experienced MAs in the classroom. 42.1% (110/261) of Target/Observers viewed DiversityEdu Training as “not at all effective” compared to 32.7% (128/391) of students who did *not* report experience with MAs perceiving DiversityEdu as “not at all effective” (see Appendix A). This

may be due the very broad and basic definition of “diversity” that DiversityEdu utilized. This information is already very familiar to students who experience and can identify acts of racism and/or MAs in the classroom. In contrast, students who typically are not targets of MAs or may not notice them when they occur may have found the information in DiversityEdu to be more effective since they might not have been very familiar with those concepts prior to completing DiversityEdu Training.

Ultimately, all of the college’s outside-the-classroom initiatives were found to be at least somewhat effective with the exception of DiversityEdu and its Follow Up Dialogue sessions. However, students generally found professors’ proactive actions in the classroom to be more effective than proactive actions that occur outside the classroom. So, while these initiatives are highly important, the main focus for developing proactive measures to limit the occurrence of MAs should be on the classroom, what happens in it, and what actions within it are successful. As a result, we recommend the creation of an in-person course that explicitly addresses issues of racism and MAs. This recommendation stems from the comments left by many students who took the survey. For example, one student said, “A bare minimum should be an in-person class rather than an online activity. I think that there should be a required, dialogue based course that involves the diversity edu *[sic]* material in addition to a more extensive education on race and racism.” In addition to an external course regarding racism and MAs, we recommend that *all* classrooms across disciplines better integrate this material into their curriculum so as to mitigate the occurrence of MAs and racism. This will provide students with a solid background and experience with engaging with MAs and racism, especially in the classroom.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Our research focused on the proactive measures that both professors and the institution can take to prevent racial microaggressions from occurring within the classroom and to mitigate their impacts when they do occur. We found that students reported a generally low frequency of the five professor actions listed in our survey, particularly in regards to use and discussion of the term microaggression. While this frequency varies slightly among departments and disciplines, this frequency is generally low across the institution. However, students were quite positive in their perceptions of the effectiveness of these items. Particularly, students who reported experiencing MAs (either as a target or observer) found were more likely to report that use and discussion of the term MA, as well as discussions of racism in regards to campus and societal events were highly effective. In regards to outside-of-class initiatives, students perceived all of them to be generally effective, with the exception of DiversityEdu and its Follow-up Dialogues.

Our research had a number of strengths and limitations. In particular, our research addresses a gap in prior literature that we perceive to be both glaring and necessary to be addressed. With our focus group discussion and input from a variety of professors and administrators on campus, our research and findings are particularly relevant and specific to the St. Olaf community, yet may be generalizable to the Midwest liberal arts community. Additionally, our sample size was consistent with standard guidelines for a population of this size, meaning that our results are generalizable to the general student population at St. Olaf.

A primary limitation of our research is our positionality as an all-female research team that also experiences and enacts MAs (including throughout the research process). Due to the scope of our research we were unable to investigate MAs that occur outside the classroom, despite substantial reports from survey respondents and focus group participants that MAs occur quite frequently in other spaces on campus (such as dormitories, the Caf, extracurricular activities, etc.).

We recommend future research occur on the role that students play in the classroom and actions they can take to limit or prevent MAs from occurring. Additionally, research on professors' perceived frequency and effectiveness of these same actions would complement our research on students' perceptions.

Based on this research, we make the following recommendations to St. Olaf College and to the To Include is To Excel grant:

1. Increase the frequency of all the proactive actions that we listed in our survey by training professors on what microaggressions are and giving them the tools necessary to initiate meaningful, constructive discussion of racism and microaggressions in the classroom.
2. In particular, we recommend increasing professor-initiated discussions of racism in relation to class materials and to campus and societal events as students perceived these actions to be the most effective in limiting the occurrence of microaggressions in the classroom.
3. Create an in-person course that explicitly addresses issues of racism and microaggressions. Based on the literature we have read concerning pedagogy for discussion of challenging and sensitive material, we recommend that this course is organized in a way that prioritizes team-based discussion and instruction. Additionally, we call on professors of all disciplines to integrate this content into curriculum across the campus to most effectively ensure that students of all majors have experience with this content.
4. We recommend that professors be evaluated in end of the semester student course evaluations based on their inclusion of relevant proactive measures, including but not limited to: initiating discussions of racism in regards to class materials, initiating discussions of racism more generally and in regards to current events and students' experiences.

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## Appendix A: Additional Research Results

### *Research Question 1a: FREQUENCY of Professors' Actions*

Students' perceived frequency of professors' actions in the classroom to limit or prevent the occurrence of racial microaggressions

<b>Professor Proactive Measures Frequency</b>	<b>0 courses</b>	<b>1 course</b>	<b>2 courses</b>	<b>3 courses</b>	<b>4 or more courses</b>
<b>Discussed guidelines for how to address racism in class, such as expectations for classroom conduct regarding racism, how to respond to racist questions and comments, etc.</b>	46.1% 309/670	25.4% 170/670	15.2% 102/670	7.3% 49/670	6.0% 40/670
<b>Initiated discussion of racism regarding class materials, such as in readings, film, plays, or music</b>	21.4% 143/668	34.7% 232/668	24.7% 165/668	13.0% 87/668	6.1% 41/668
<b>Used the term microaggression, as related to the course and its material</b>	53.4% 358/670	31.3% 210/670	10.6% 71/670	2.7% 18/670	1.9% 13/670
<b>Initiated discussion of microaggressions in the classroom, such as what they are and how to respond to them</b>	66.7% 444/666	22.7% 151/666	6.3% 42/666	2.9% 19/666	1.5% 10/666
<b>Initiated discussion of racism in response to campus events and/or societal events such as elections and public protests</b>	40.9% 272/667	32.5% 217/667	17.2% 115/667	4.8% 32/667	4.5% 30/667

### Statistics for Index of Professor Actions

<b>Valid Number</b>	660
<b>Missing Number</b>	58
<b>Mean</b>	4.66
<b>Median</b>	4.00
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	4.087

### Index of Professor Actions

<b>Valid Score</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
0	98/660	14.8%
1	69/660	10.5%
2	59/660	8.9%
3	72/660	10.9%
4	59/660	8.9%
5	88/660	13.3%
6	54/660	8.2%
7	30/660	4.5%
8	27/660	4.1%
9	27/660	4.1%
10	26/660	3.9%
11	8/660	1.2%
12	5/660	0.8%
13	11/660	1.7%
14	5/660	0.8%
15	10/660	1.5%

16	1/660	0.2%
17	0/660	0.0%
18	1/660	0.2%
19	1/660	0.2%
20	9/660	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	660	100%
<b>Missing (99)</b>	58	N/A
<b>Total</b>	718	N/A

Kruskall-Wallis H Test for Index of Frequency of Professors' Actions and Graduation Year

Kruskall-Wallis H	Degrees of Freedom	Asymptotic Significance
10.981	3	0.012

Mean of Frequency Index of Professor Actions by Graduation Year

Graduation Year (planned)	Mean Score on Index of Professor Actions	Standard Deviation	N
2021	4.05	3.768	173
2020	5.13	4.640	177
2019	5.27	4.076	150
2018	4.18	3.691	142
<b>Total</b>	4.66	4.108	642

Mann-Whitney U Test Statistics for Index of Frequency of Professors' Actions and Natural Science and Math Majors or Not

Mann-Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
26699.000	.000

Mean of Frequency Index of Professor Actions by Natural Science and Math Majors or Not

NSM Major or Not	Mean Score on Index of Professor Actions	Standard Deviation	N
Yes	3.95	3.874	239
No	5.55	4.143	299
<b>Total</b>	4.84	4.099	538

Mann-Whitney U Test Statistics for Index of Frequency of Professors' Actions and Social Science Majors or Not

Mann-Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
24254.500	.008

Mean of Frequency Index of Professor Actions by Social Science Majors or Not

SS Major or Not	Mean Score on Index of Professor Actions	Standard Deviation	N
Yes	5.44	4.067	145
No	4.62	4.094	393
<b>Total</b>	4.84	4.099	538

Mann-Whitney U Test Statistics for Index of Frequency of Professors' Actions and Interdisciplinary and General Studies Majors or Not

Mann-Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
11059.500	.010

Mean of Frequency Index of Professor Actions by Interdisciplinary and General Studies Majors or Not

<b>IGS Major or Not</b>	<b>Mean Score on Index of Professor Actions</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Yes</b>	5.91	3.886	58
<b>No</b>	4.71	4.109	480
<b>Total</b>	4.84	4.099	538

Chi-Squared Test of Frequency of Professor-Initiated Discussions of Racism in relation to Class Materials Major (NSM or not)

<b>Pearson Chi-square (Cramer's V) value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Approximate Significance</b>
.155	1	.000

Chi-Squared Test of Frequency of Professor-Initiated Discussions of Racism in relation to Class Materials Major (Fine Arts or not)

<b>Pearson Chi-square (Cramer's V) value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Approximate Significance</b>
.088	1	.041

Students' Reported Frequency of Professor-Initiated Discussions of Racism in relation to Class Material by Major (NSM or not and SS or not)

<b>Number of courses in which professor use the term microaggression</b>	<b>NSM majors reporting "Yes"</b>	<b>SS majors reporting "Yes"</b>
<b>0 courses</b>	27.8% (67/241)	20.9% (31/148)
<b>1 or more courses</b>	72.2% (174/241)	79.1% (117/148)

Crosstabulation of Frequency of Professor-Initiated Discussions of Microaggressions by Respondent's Race/Ethnicity, Holding Constant for Class Year

<b>Graduation Year (planned)</b>	<b>In how many courses did the professor initiate discussion of MA?</b>	<b>Students of Color</b>	<b>White Students</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2021</b>	<i>0 courses</i>	59.1% (26)	69.5% (73)	66.4% (99)
	<i>At least 1 course</i>	40.9% (18)	30.5% (32)	33.6% (50)
<b>2020</b>	<i>0 courses</i>	58.8% (20)	68.8% (95)	66.9% (115)
	<i>At least 1 course</i>	41.2% (14)	31.2% (43)	33.1% (57)
<b>2019</b>	<i>0 courses</i>	69.2% (18)	64.8% (70)	65.7% (88)
	<i>At least 1 course</i>	30.8% (8)	35.2% (38)	34.3% (46)
<b>2018</b>	<i>0 courses</i>	47.6% (10)	71.4% (80)	67.7% (90)
	<i>At least 1 course</i>	52.4% (11)	28.6% (32)	32.3% (43)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<i>0 courses</i>	59.2% (74)	68.7% (318)	66.7% (392)
	<i>At least 1 course</i>	40.8% (51)	31.3% (145)	33.3% (196)

Students' perceived frequency of professors' use of the term microaggression by relevant majors

<b>Number of courses in which professor use the term microaggression</b>	<b>NSM majors reporting "Yes"</b>	<b>SS majors reporting "Yes"</b>	<b>All majors reporting "Yes"</b>
<b>0 courses</b>	61.6% (149)	38.1% (56)	51.4% (280)
<b>1 course</b>	24.4% (59)	41.5% (61)	32.3% (176)
<b>2 courses</b>	10.7% (26)	15.0% (22)	11.4% (62)
<b>3 courses</b>	1.7% (4)	4.1% (6)	3.1% (17)
<b>4 or more courses</b>	1.7% (4)	1.4% (2)	1.8% (10)

Students' perceived frequency of professor initiating discussion of microaggressions by relevant majors

<b>Number of courses in which professor use the term microaggression</b>	<b>NSM majors reporting "Yes"</b>	<b>SS majors reporting "Yes"</b>	<b>All majors reporting "Yes"</b>
<b>0 courses</b>	70.8% (170)	51.7% (76)	51.4% (280)
<b>1 course</b>	20.0% (48)	33.3% (49)	32.3% (176)
<b>2 courses</b>	5.0% (12)	10.2% (15)	11.4% (62)
<b>3 courses</b>	2.9% (7)	3.4% (5)	3.1% (17)
<b>4 or more courses</b>	1.3% (3)	1.4% (2)	1.8% (10)

*Research Question 1b: EFFECTIVENESS of Professors' Actions*

Students' perceived effectiveness of professors' actions in the classroom to limit or prevent the occurrence of racial microaggressions

<b>Professors' Proactive Action Effectiveness</b>	<b>Not at all effective</b>	<b>Slightly effective</b>	<b>Somewhat effective</b>	<b>Very Effective</b>	<b>Extremely Effective</b>
<b>Discussing guidelines for how to address racism in class, such as expectations for classroom conduct regarding racism, how to respond to racist questions and comments, etc.</b>	10.4% 67/644	16.0% 103/644	36.8% 237/644	26.1% 168/644	10.7% 69/644
<b>Initiating discussion of racism regarding class materials, such as in readings, film, plays, or music</b>	6.7% 44/657	11.4% 75/657	29.5% 194/657	37.1% 244/657	15.2% 100/657
<b>Using the term microaggression, as related to the course and its material</b>	17.3% 111/641	18.1% 116/641	34.3% 220/641	20.9% 134/641	9.4% 60/641
<b>Initiating discussion of microaggressions in the classroom, such as what they are and how to respond to them</b>	15.9% 102/641	14.4% 92/641	31.7% 203/641	24.6% 158/641	13.4% 86/641
<b>Initiating discussion of racism in response to campus events and/or societal events such as elections and public protests</b>	9.4% 61/650	10.2% 66/650	27.7% 180/650	31.4% 204/650	21.4% 139/650

Chi-Squared Test of Perceived Effectiveness of Professor-Initiated Discussions of Racism in response to Campus and/or Societal events and Experience with MAs (Target or Observer versus neither)

<b>Pearson Chi-square (Cramer's V) value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Approximate Significance</b>
.165	4	.002



## Research Question 2: Outside-of-Classroom Initiatives

Students' perceived effectiveness of measures taken outside of the classroom to limit or prevent the occurrence of racial microaggressions

Outside-of-Classroom Initiative	No, I have not experienced this or do not feel comfortable assessing its effectiveness
Sustained Dialogue	34.5% 248/718
DiversityEdu Training	1.3% 9/718
DiversityEdu Follow Up Dialogue	47.6% 342/718
Summer Task Force on Institutional Racism	45.0% 323/718
Working Group on Equity and Inclusion	44.8% 165/718
The Collective for Change on the Hill	24.7% 165/668
Student Advocacy Work (Other than the Collective for Change)	38.4% 257/669

Students' perceived effectiveness of measures taken outside of the classroom to limit or prevent the occurrence of racial microaggressions

Outside-of-Classroom Initiatives	Not At All Effective	Slightly Effective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Extremely Effective
Sustained Dialogue	9.5% 40/419	16.5% 69/419	31.3% 131/419	29.6% 124/419	13.1% 55/419
DiversityEdu Training	36.8% 243/661	36.5% 241/661	21.0% 139/661	4.4% 29/661	1.4% 9/661
DiversityEdu Follow Up Dialogue	42.7% 140/328	29.0% 95/328	20.1% 66/328	6.7% 22/328	1.5% 5/328
Summer Task Force on Institutional Racism	16.7% 58/347	28.0% 97/347	33.1% 115/347	19.3% 67/347	2.9% 10/347
Working Group on Equity and Inclusion	20.1% 70/348	27.6% 96/348	28.7% 100/348	20.4% 71/348	3.2% 11/348
The Collective for Change on the Hill	9.1% 46/503	13.7% 69/503	31.6% 159/503	29.2% 147/503	16.3% 82/503

*Other Important inputs:*

Sustained Dialogue (formed this fall) \* Graduation Year (Planned) Crosstabulation

	2021	2020	2019	2018	Total
Not at all effective	10	15	7	6	38
Slightly effective	16	18	14	19	67
Moderately effective	31	32	38	28	129
Very effective	49	29	24	19	121
Extremely effective	25	14	10	6	55
Total	131	108	93	78	410

The summer Task Force for Institutional Racism \* Graduation Year (Planned) Crosstabulation

	2021	2020	2019	2018	Total
<b>Not at all effective</b>	10	16	12	18	56
<b>Slightly effective</b>	11	24	33	29	97
<b>Moderately effective</b>	16	34	31	32	113
<b>Very effective</b>	9	23	17	15	64
<b>Extremely effective</b>	4	4	2	0	10
<b>Total</b>	50	101	95	94	340

The Working Group on Equity and Inclusion (formed this fall) \* Graduation Year (Planned) Crosstabulation

	2021	2020	2019	2018	Total
<b>Not at all effective</b>	3	18	14	20	65
<b>Slightly effective</b>	15	23	35	23	96
<b>Moderately effective</b>	17	30	24	29	99
<b>Very effective</b>	10	24	16	19	69
<b>Extremely effective</b>	4	5	2	0	11
<b>Total</b>	59	100	91	90	340

Spearman's Rho Test of Perceived Effectiveness of Sustained Dialogue and Graduation Year

<b>Correlation Coefficient</b>	<b>Significance (2-tailed)</b>
-.231	0.002

Spearman's Rho Test of Perceived Effectiveness of Task Force on Institutional Racism and Graduation Year

<b>Correlation Coefficient</b>	<b>Significance (2-tailed)</b>
-.168	0.027

Spearman's Rho Test of Perceived Effectiveness of The Working Group on Equity and Inclusion Sessions and Graduation Year

<b>Correlation Coefficient</b>	<b>Significance (2-tailed)</b>
-.182	0.014

Mean of Perceived Effectiveness of DiversityEdu Follow-Up Dialogues by Graduation Year

<b>Graduation Year (planned)</b>	<b>Mean Score of Perceived Effectiveness of Follow-Up Dialogues</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>2021</b>	1.27	1.153	93
<b>2020</b>	.93	1.026	88
<b>2019</b>	.79	.833	77
<b>2018</b>	.73	.908	62
<b>Total</b>	.96	1.019	320

Cross Tabulation of Perceived Effectiveness of DiversityEdu Training by Target/Observer of Microaggressions Grouped versus Neither

	<b>Target/Observer</b>	<b>Neither</b>
<b>Not At All Effective</b>	42.1% 110/261	32.7% 128/391
<b>Slightly Effective</b>	38.7% 101/261	35.3% 138/391
<b>Somewhat Effective</b>	15.7% 41/261	25.1% 98/391
<b>Very Effective</b>	2.7% 7/261	5.1% 20/391
<b>Extremely Effective</b>	0.8% 2/261	1.8% 7/391
<b>Total</b>	100% 261/261	100% 391/391

Chi-squared Test of Perceived Effectiveness of DiversityEdu Training and Target/Observer of Microaggressions Grouped versus Neither

<b>Pearson Chi-square value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance</b>
14.143	4	0.007

*Other important frequencies:*

Collapsed Frequencies of Students' Experiences of Microaggressions in the Classroom, as a Target, Observer, or Neither

<b>Reported experience of MA</b>	<b>Frequency &amp; Valid Percent</b>
<b>Target</b>	9.6% 66/685
<b>Observer (not also target)</b>	29.0% 208/685
<b>Neither</b>	60.0% 411/685

*Significant Results:*

*[By Major:]*

Chi-squared Test of Perceived Effectiveness of Use of Term of Microaggressions (Grouped) and Social Science Majors

<b>Pearson Chi-square value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance</b>
14.213	1	0.000

Chi-squared Test of Perceived Effectiveness of Discussion of Microaggressions (Grouped) and Natural Science Majors

<b>Pearson Chi-square value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance</b>
6.809	1	0.009

Chi-squared Test of Perceived Effectiveness of Discussion of Microaggressions (Grouped) and Social Science Majors

<b>Pearson Chi-square value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance</b>
15.227	1	0.000

Chi-squared Test of Perceived Effectiveness of Discussion of Microaggressions (Grouped) and Natural Science Majors, EXCLUDING Psychology Majors

<b>Pearson Chi-square value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance</b>
18.543	4	0.001

*Experience of MA:*

Chi-squared Test of Perceived Effectiveness of Discussion of Microaggressions and Reported Experience of Microaggression(s)

<b>Pearson Chi-square value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance</b>
9.549	4	0.49

Chi-squared Test of Perceived Effectiveness of Use of the term microaggressions and Reported Experience of Microaggression(s)

<b>Pearson Chi-square value</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance</b>
12.961	4	0.011

## Appendix B: Survey Questions

1-During this fall semester, select the number of courses in which your professor has taken the following actions.

- a. Response categories:
  - i. Discussed guidelines for how to address racism in class, such as how to behave and how to respond to each other's comments and questions
  - ii. Initiated discussion of racism within class materials, such as in readings, film, plays, or music
  - iii. Introduced and explained the term microaggressions, as related to the course and its material
  - iv. Initiated discussion of microaggressions in the classroom, such as what they are and how to respond to them
  - v. Initiated discussion of racism in response to campus events and/or societal events, such as elections and public protests
- b. Response options:
  - i. 0 courses
  - ii. 1 courses
  - iii. 2 courses
  - iv. 3 courses
  - v. 4 or more courses

2-In your experience at St. Olaf (not only this semester), how effective are the following actions taken by professors for limiting or addressing racial microaggressions in classrooms?

- c. Response categories:
  - i. Discussing guidelines for how to address racism in class, such as how to behave and how to respond to each other's comments and questions
  - ii. Initiating discussion of racism within class materials, such as in readings, film, plays, or music
  - iii. Introducing and explained the term microaggressions, as related to the course and its material
  - iv. Initiating discussion of microaggressions in the classroom, such as what they are and how to respond to them
  - v. Initiating discussion of racism in response to campus events and/or societal events, such as elections and public protests
- d. Response options:
  - i. Very effective
  - ii. Somewhat effective
  - iii. Barely effective
  - iv. Not at all effective
  - v. Not applicable (I have not experienced this)

3-How effective do you believe the following groups and activities outside of the classroom are in helping to prevent racial microaggressions from occurring in the classroom?

- e. Response categories:
  - i. Sustained Dialogue
  - ii. DiversityEdu training required for students
  - iii. The follow-up hall dialogue sessions about the DiversityEdu training
  - iv. The summer Task Force on Institutional Racism
  - v. The Working Group on Equity and Inclusion (formed this fall)
  - vi. The Collective for Change on the Hill
  - vii. Student advocacy work (other than the Collective for Change on the Hill)

## Appendix C: Relevant Responses from Students

### *Student Recommendations:*

1. "I think that something more needs to be done other than Diversity.edu. I think that was a very watered down form of diversity training, and diversity isn't necessarily the answer for combating racism. People who are racist can still complete that course and feel good about themselves. I think that the mandatory training of faculty and staff is a step in the right direction. I also think that representation is a hugely effective mode for change, and there needs to be an increase of professors of color on campus."
2. "I think it's important that racism and microaggressions be addressed on campus, but also the prevalence of white privilege. This wasn't covered at all in the diversity.edu training, and is especially relevant given the largely white St. Olaf body."
3. "A lot of people aren't going to say that in front of a professor but have no problem saying it in front of their peers, and honestly I think more courses should include discussing racism and current events because it does pertain to every subject in some shape or form."
4. "A lot of the micro aggressions I have witnessed occur outside the classroom in friend groups, but I think learning to understand and combat microaggressions and racism in general needs to start in the classroom, and while some departments and faculty are making good efforts, others are not."
5. "More training options for allies."
6. "I think incorporate more diversity discussion in class and not through online training."
7. "More wellness events that can try to focus on racism and mental health etc or events that talk about microaggressions in residence halls or skits by the theatre department. People should be more aware of what microaggressions are if not people do not realize the harm they have just witnessed or done."
8. "It is not acceptable to ask people of colour to teach others about microaggressions because it is not their responsibility and there needs to be more a system where if you say something racist, you have to go through an education programme that is better than Diverity.edu."
9. "I think Diversity Edu was a failure because it was too easy to dismiss and too forced upon us at the same time. The discussions afterwards were much better. The largest problem is that the ones who need this training most are the ones that care least. I think if we had something similar to Week One for freshmen where we all sat in tables in Skoglund, it would be a much more productive experience."
10. "In certain classes, mostly natural science classes, I feel it's difficult to talk about racism because it doesn't necessarily coincide with topics in class. That's not to say that talking about racism is not important in those classes, but that conversation just hardly comes up. I think it is harder to bridge that gap between those very different topics. And as someone who is a natural science major, majority of my classes focus on very scientific factual objective topics and so I am not nearly as exposed to discussions of racism as those in other majors. That may be something I, as a student, can improve on. Or maybe could be something the school can improve on, a policy change of some sort."
11. "I believe that St. Olaf, as a whole, needs to admit that there is a racism problem on this campus. That is the first step- Not forming a committee to decide whether or not there is racism, or if racism is experienced by students, and not repeating the school's inclusion and diversity initiatives over and over again through PDA, who at this point feels like just a talking head for the administration, and a scapegoat for the rest of the college's failure to provide a safe environment for their students. There is racism on this campus. It's explicit, it's pervasive, it's personal, it's institutional."

12. "Being in the GE Task Force has been valuable, but also terrifying, because a lot of the professors share their true opinions (being around other professors) and certain professors commit a lot of microaggressions. There needs to be a way to report professors, and students need to know that the administration will address the issues with the professor. There's a feeling of hopelessness, especially with professors who are on tenure, when you hear microaggressions from them and know that they'll never get in trouble for it/they'll get to keep perpetrating racism in the classroom for years to come."
13. "It should be required by professors to have at least one class devoted to discussion about microaggressions and racism."
14. "Having taken a first-year writing course titled Race and Power ... I strongly believe all students (especially underclassman) should take a class that focuses on critical race theory and works by racially/ethnically marginalized groups."
15. I think some classroom discussions can lead to some conflict, especially when dealing with race, gender, sexuality, etc. I think It would be very beneficial to have professors trained in on how to de-escalate these situations (particularly for discussion heavy classes). I had a professor in the past who didn't address a microaggression that happened in the classroom, so instead a student stepped in. I think it might have been more productive if the professor had addressed the problem.

*Regarding personal experience with microaggressions:*

1. "There are probably a lot of white students coming to St. Olaf who are just like I was: well-intentioned, good-hearted, trying to be inclusive, and unknowingly privileged. What I didn't (and they don't) realize is how differently people of color experience the world, how our privilege affects our current status (economic, etc.), how our subconscious biases manifest as actions. The only thing changed my mind was learning for myself what privilege is, what microaggressions are, HEARING for myself the voices of black people and people of color sharing their experiences and perspectives. All of this I heard with an open heart and a mind willing to learn. It forced me to humble myself and critically examine myself-- my thoughts, actions, and biases-- which continues to be hard to do. .... For everyday people--we present evidence. We teach, but we do not blame. We show them the truth so that they can sympathize and change their ways/beliefs of their own volition. Learning occurs when people make connections with prior knowledge, building upon existing schema in their brains. Simply telling people what to believe isn't going to do anything, especially if it makes people feel defensive about their morality."
2. "Last spring, while the Collective was organizing protests, our Public Health class had discussions about racism on campus during class time. One of my small group members, an international student of color, related a story where she was asked in another class to give the "African American perspective" on the American Civil War/legacy of slavery in America. I am lucky to have one class this semester where racism, and other forms of discrimination, are frequently discussed, and people in the class feel comfortable sharing. More classes should definitely do this. Taking this survey made me realize that while I haven't really observed any microaggressions in my classes this semester, that's probably partly due to my identity as a white person. I don't have to constantly think about my race and possible microaggressions to my person like my peers of color have to, so I'm certain I miss a lot of microaggressions happening around me."