Remaking the Climate for Graduate Education: DECADE

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UC Irvine

What is DECADE: *Diverse Educational Community and Doctoral Experience*

**Purpose** *to transform climate for graduate education by 2020 at UC Irvine.*

Funded *by U.S. Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) to Graduate Division, Fall 2010*

Objectives *include improving recruitment, retention and completion of under-represented minorities in doctoral programs; reach equivalent diversity of grad and undergrad programs by 2020*

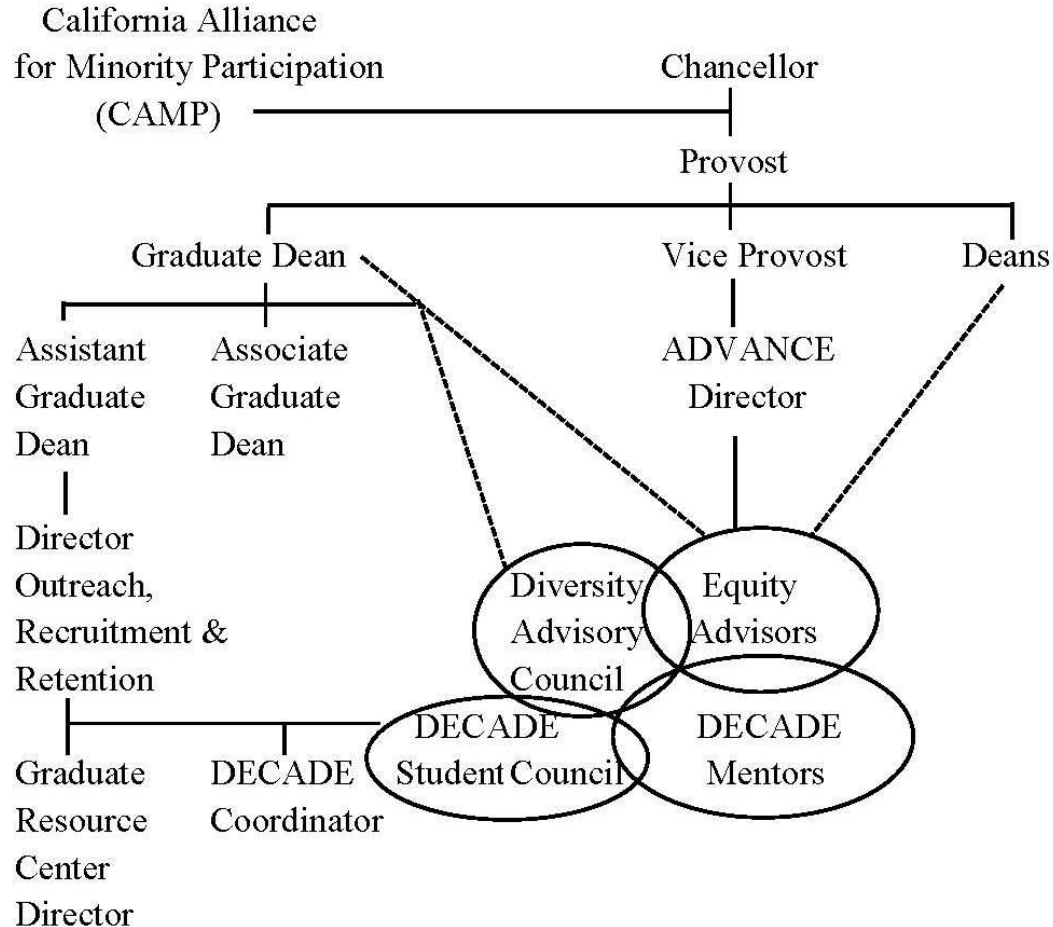# Loss if Diversity in the Doctoral Pipeline at UC Irvine
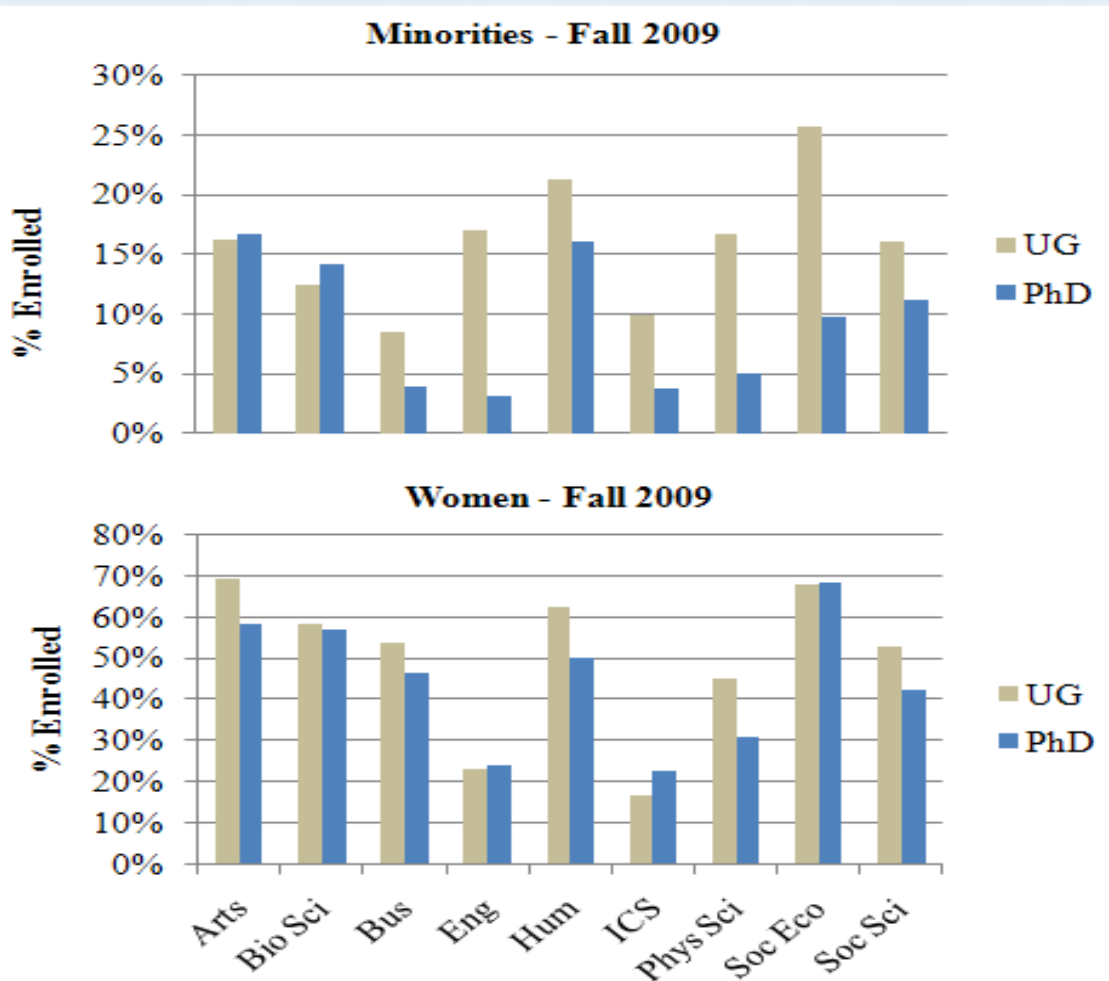
Structure of DECADE

❖ Modeled on AGEP and ADVANCE Programs: institutional change based on changing attitudes of faculty and graduate students.

❖ Peer-to-peer engagement to promote a more inclusive culture from graduate admissions through program milestones to degree completion.

❖ Equity Advisor coordinates DECADE faculty mentors.

School-based and organized in relation to individual doctoral programs:

❖ Present data to and share best practices with graduate program admissions committee

❖ Collaborate with school Equity Advisor and Associate Dean in improving school-wide climate

❖ Share professional development programming at the Graduate Resource Center and the DECADE seminar series and workshops

❖ Meet quarterly with school DECADE student council
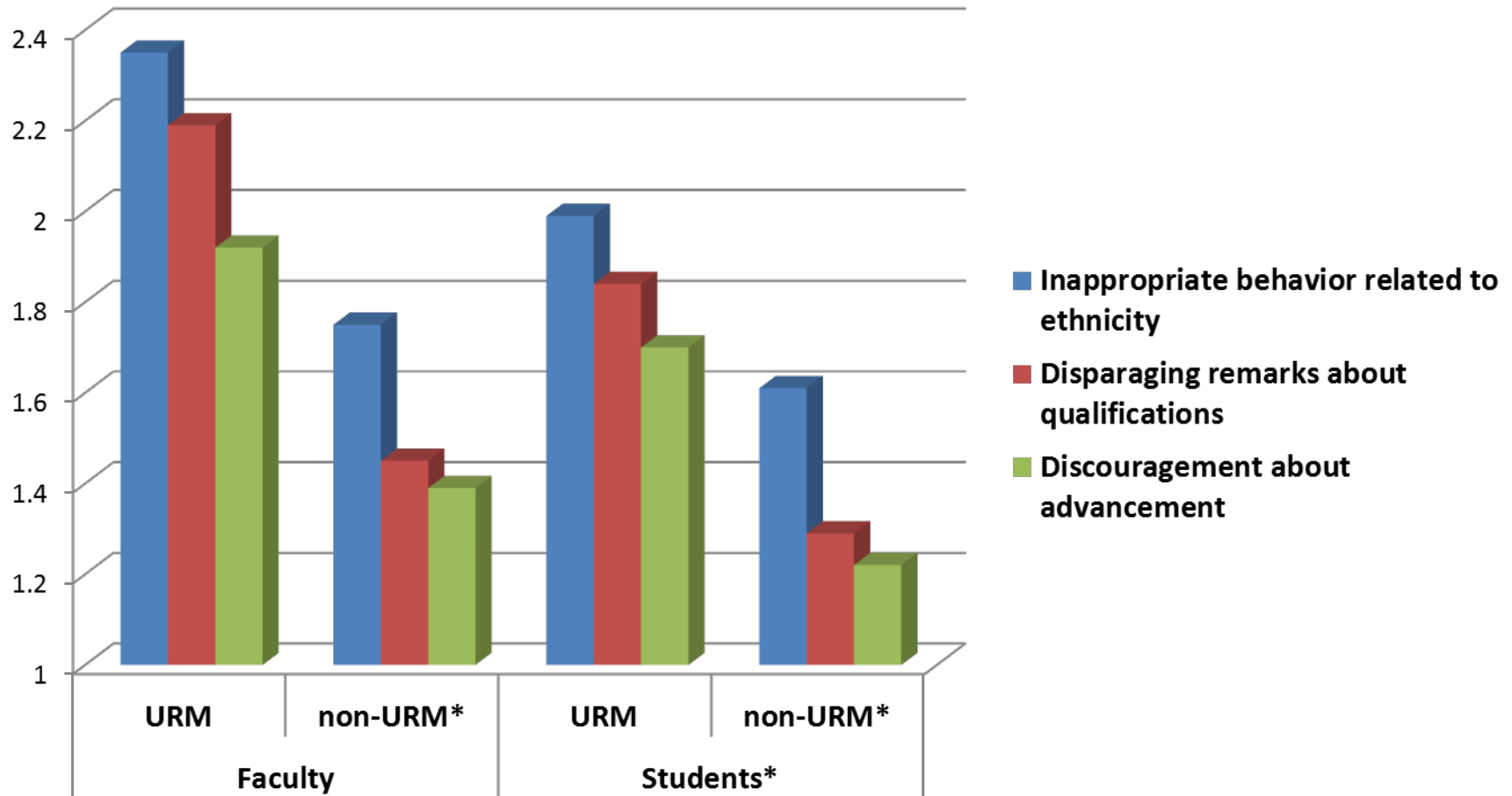
2010 Campuswide Climate Survey

	Total	Respondents	%
Faculty			
Total	**1056**	**263**	**24.9**
Male	722	153	21.2
Female	334	108	32.3
URM	123	26	21.1
Graduate students			
Total	**4875**	**1058**	**21.7**
Male	2860	493	17.2
Female	2015	560	27.8
URM	577	228	39.5

Significant sex differences in experiences relating to *gender*
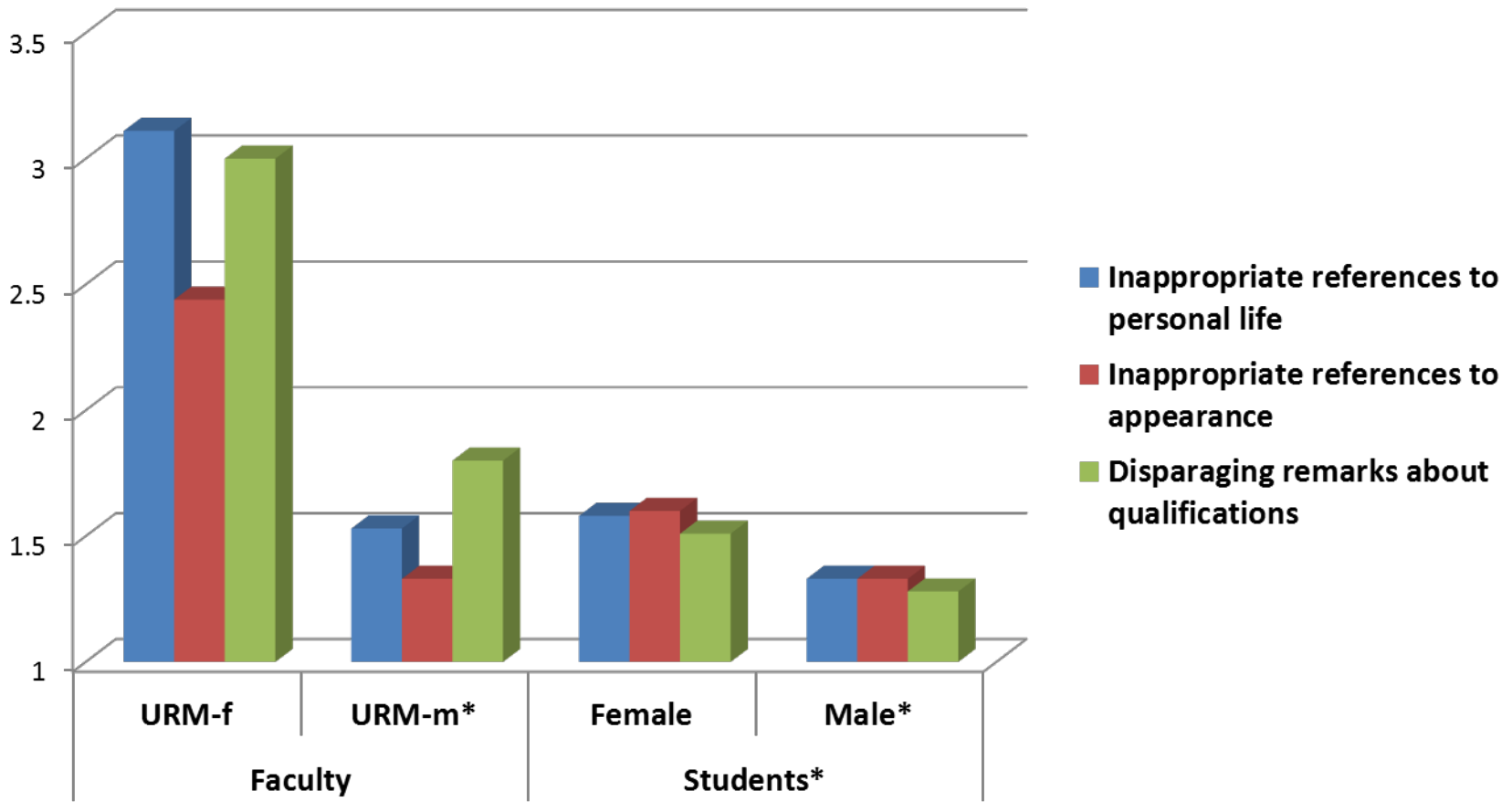
Significant differences in experiences relating to *race/ethnicity*

Hypotheses

Racial climate may affect graduate students' attitudes toward diversity and this effect may differ by underrepresented minority (URM) status.

H1: Peer attitudes about diversity have a positive effect on individual attitudes.

H2: Peer attitudes about institutional diversification efforts have a positive effect on individual attitudes.

H3: The greater the proportion of URM students in a school, the more positive the individual attitudes.

Hierarchical Linear Model

Dependent Variable
Factor scale for student's agreement with the positive attributes of diversity

Variables of interest
School concentration of URM students and faculty
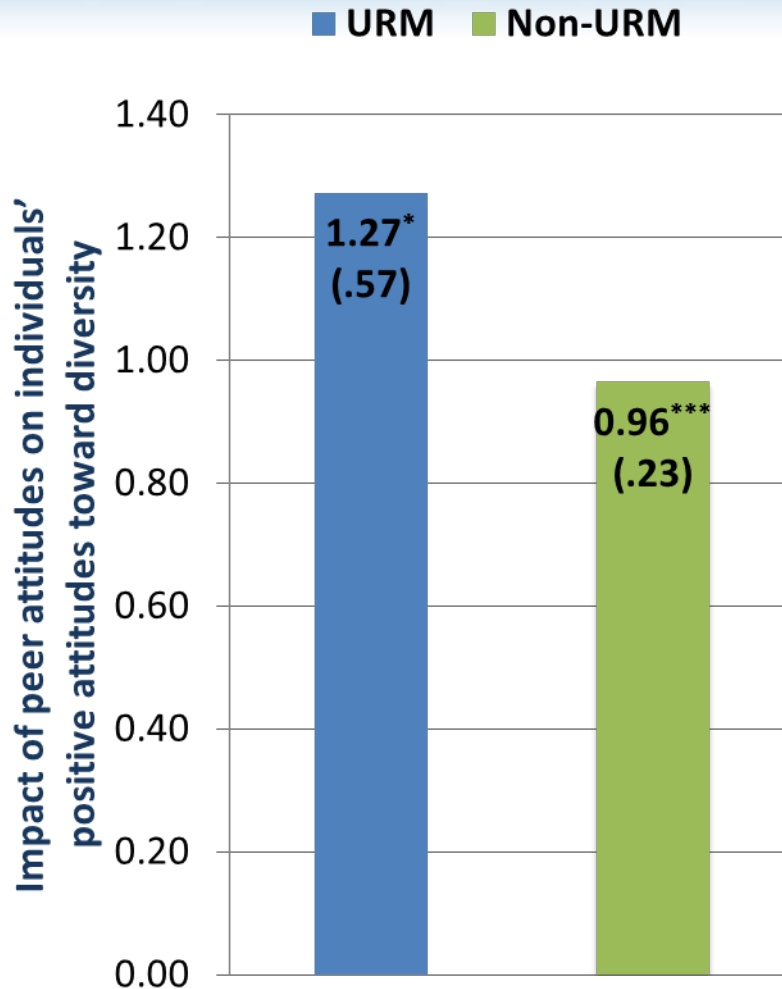Peer attitudes about the positive attributes of diversity
Peer attitudes about institutional diversification efforts

Controls
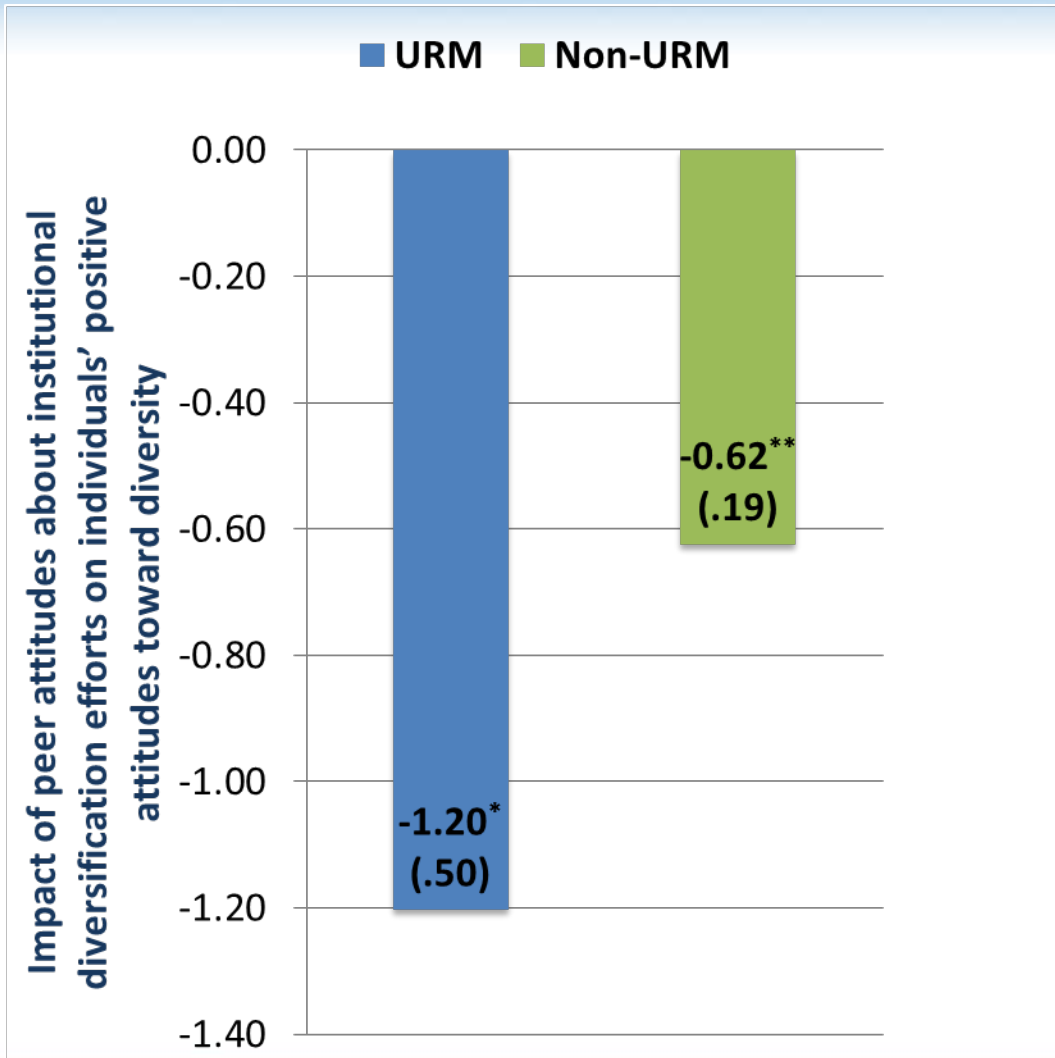gender, years at university, and individual beliefs about URM qualifications

School-wide perceptions of diversity matter more for URMs than non-URMs

Being surrounded by peers who affirm diversity matters for Non-URMs and even more for URM graduate students.

School-wide focus on diversification efforts has a negative association with individual attitudes

Students are less inclined to have positive attitudes toward diversity when surrounded by peers who strongly believe that institutions should be responsible for creating diverse student bodies.

The number of URMs in a school is not associated with individual attitudes on diversity
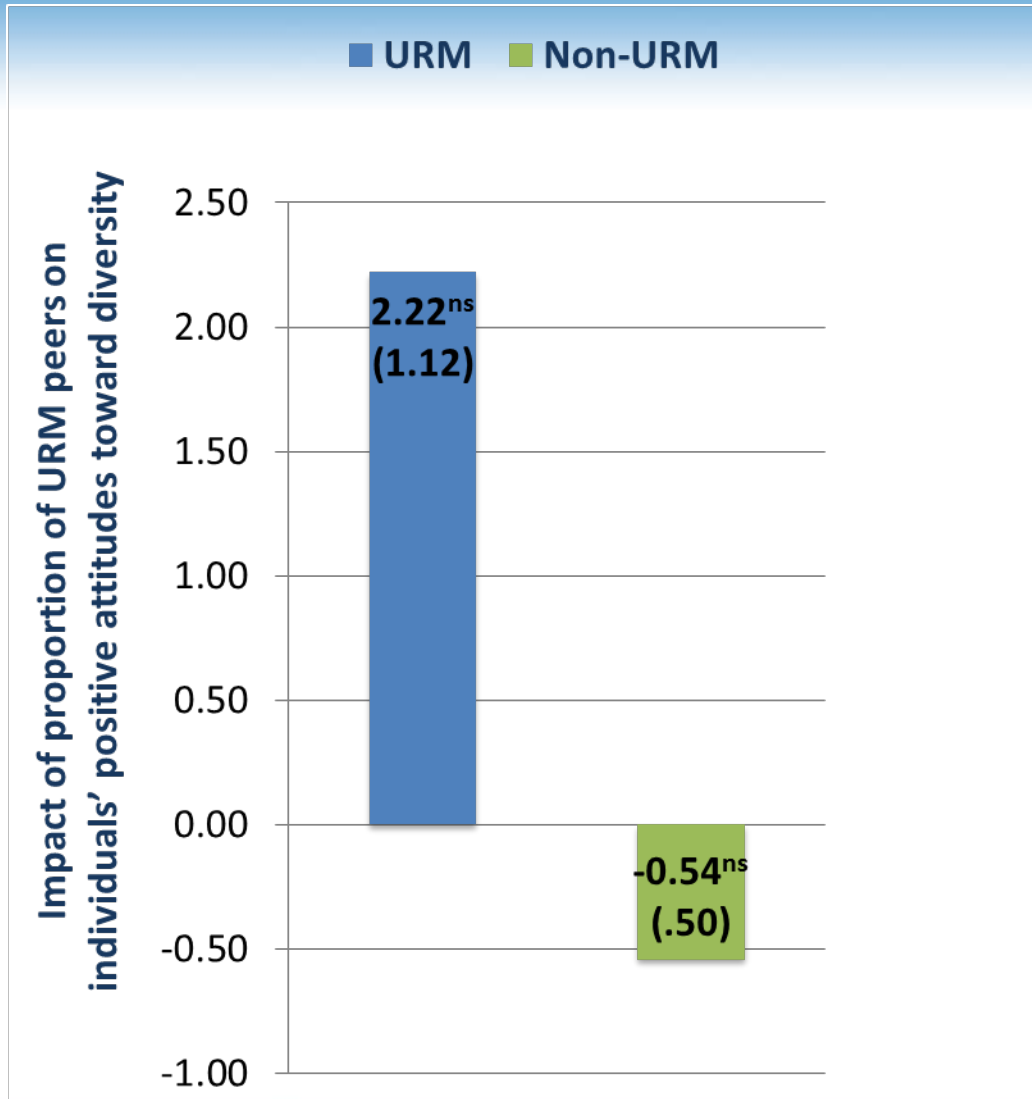
School climate seems to be more critical for individual student's beliefs than is the proportion of URM peers.

Qualitative Analysis: Implications

❖ In addition to creating supportive educational experiences for all students, positive and affirming campus climates are important in fostering healthy attitudes about diversity within the student body.

❖ While administrators continue to encourage diversity at all levels of graduate education, attention should also be given to school-level attitudes and the effect these attitudes have on the experiences of individual students.

❖ How diversity is talked about within academic units, especially with regard to creating and maintaining diverse environments, may shape individual attitudes more than previously thought.

Research Questions

❖What are faculty's perceptions regarding diversity and diversification efforts on campus?

❖Are there differences across sex, URM status, or faculty status?

Methods

❖ Conducted qualitative data analysis with *Dedoose*.

❖ Dominant themes were selected based on frequency counts.

❖ Patterns were identified by comparing emerging themes and combining similar themes.

❖ **Note**: Chi Square tests were conducted for each variable. Variables are significant at *p <0.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
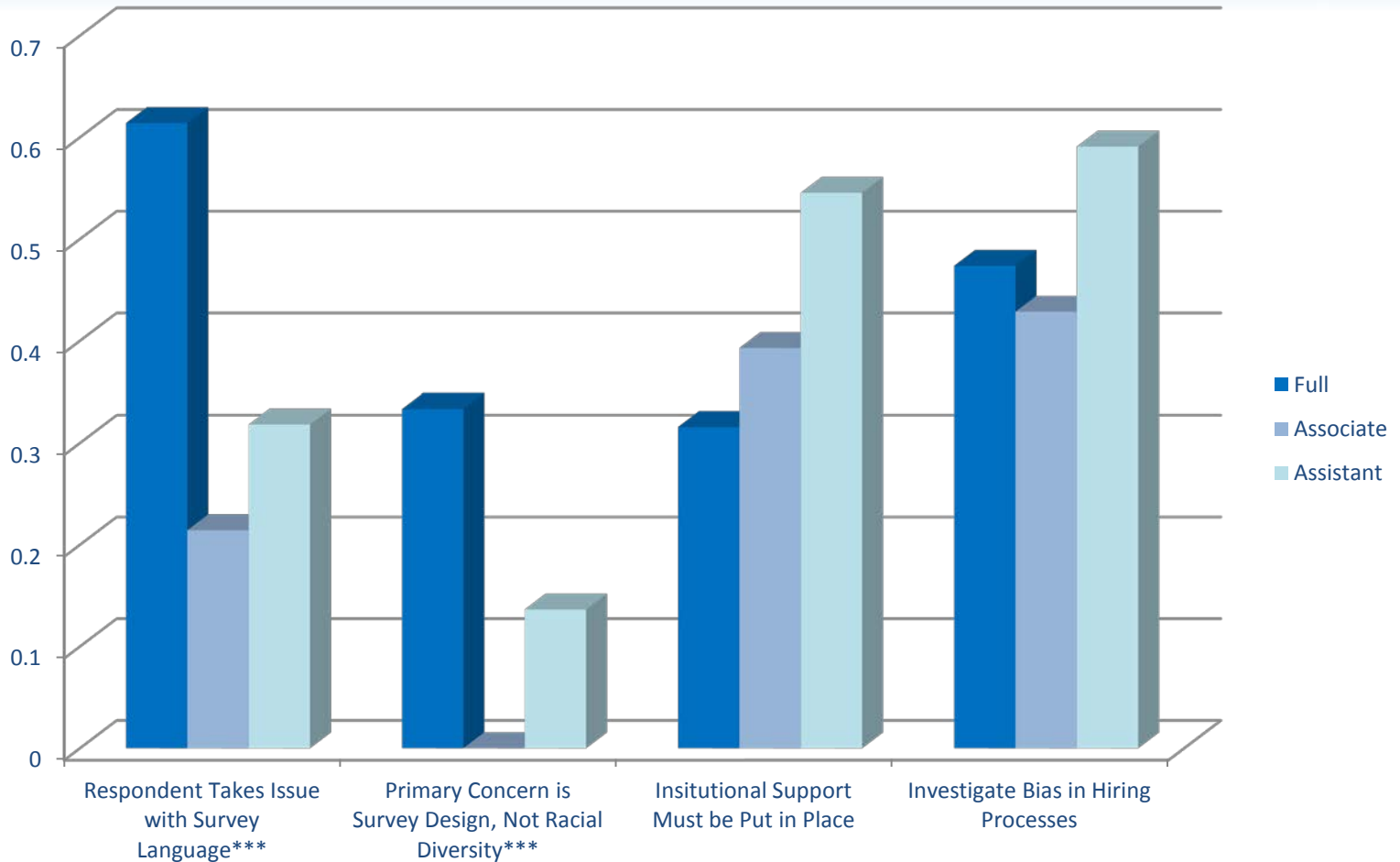
URM and Non-URM Respondents' Views Diverge on Barriers to Institutional Diversity
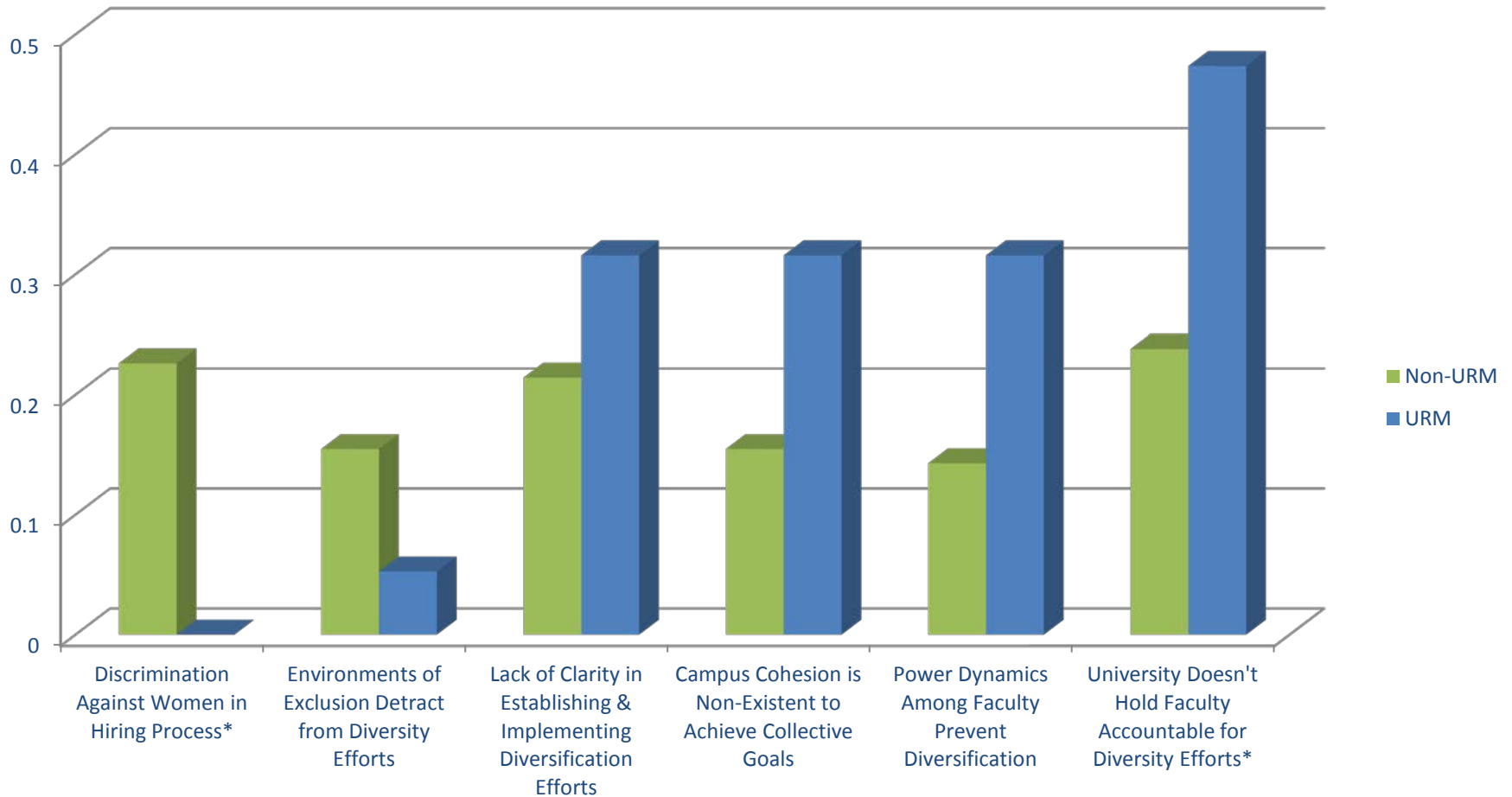
Men Contrast "Merit" with Diversity and Women Argue for Institutional Change
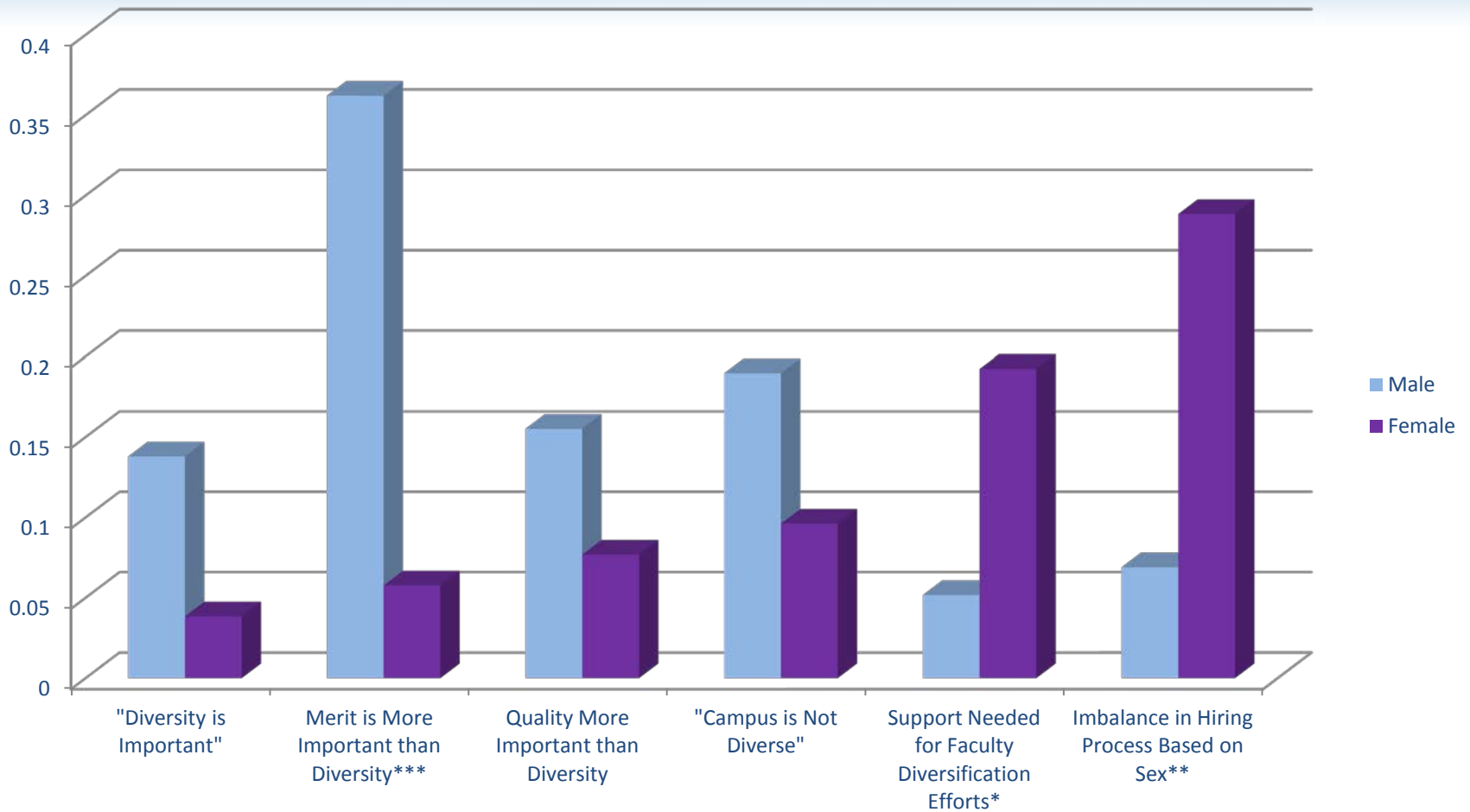
Quantitative Analysis: Implications

- ❖ Non-URM respondents more likely to describe barriers in diversification efforts than action steps.
- ❖ URMs more likely to argue for greater institutional accountability in implementing diversification efforts.
- ❖ Men more likely to argue that diversity is important, but that diversity should not come at the expense of the university's quality.
- ❖ Women more likely to point out a need for campus administration to support and hold faculty accountable.
- ❖ Senior faculty tend to avoid the topic of racial diversity and instead take issue with survey format.
- ❖ Junior faculty recommend specific changes for institutional reform.

2011-12 Speaker Series

❖ **Erwin Chemerinsky (Dean, UCI School of Law)**
Talk & panel discussion: *The Law Concerning Diversity in Higher Education: The Myths and Realities*

❖ **Carlos Grijalva (Associate Dean, UCLA Graduate Division)**
Presentation & panel discussion: *Diversifying Graduate Programs: Best Practices for Graduate Recruitment and Admissions*

❖ **Frances Leslie, Susan Coutin, Doug Haynes, Carrie Carmody**
Presentation & panel discussion: *Perceptions of Diversity at UCI: 2010 DECADE Climate Survey Free Response Analysis*

❖ **Marta Tienda (Demographic Studies, Princeton)**
Talk: *Diversity, Equity and the Courts: Measuring Success with Moving Metrics*
Panel discussion: *Promoting Equal Opportunity and Success in Graduate Diversity*

Overall Ratings of Speaker Series

How would you rate the event/workshop on the following areas:	Mean (SD)
The quality of the information received	3.70 (.57)
Engagement and interest level	3.74 (.62)
How well your expectations were met	3.55 (.70)
Usefulness of the session	3.50 (.72)
Overall quality	3.61 (.56)

1= Poor; 2=Fair; 3= Good; 4=Excellent

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Mean (SD)
The benefits gained from attending the session made it worth my time	3.81 (.56)
The information I learned in the session could be easily implemented in the school and/or community	3.32 (.67)

1= Disagree; 2= Somewhat disagree; 3= Somewhat agree; 4= Agree

Graduate Admission and Recruitment Tips

❖ Recruitment tips distributed to the campus (i.e. Associate Dean's and DECADE Mentors)

❖ Best Practices for Admissions Review
- Beware the GRE
- Undergraduate Institution
- Prior research

❖ Best Practices for Recruitment
- Faculty contact
- Funding
- Competitive Edge Summer Preentry Opportunity

DECADE Mentor
Graduate Diversity Awards

❖ The Graduate Division sent out a call in Winter 2012 seeking proposals to provide appropriate support to graduate students from groups that have been historically underrepresented in graduate education. The goal is for these and all students to feel welcome and thrive in their studies at UC Irvine.

❖ Only DECADE Mentors were eligible to submit proposals.

❖ Total number of submitted proposals: 12

❖ Total number of awardees: 6

❖ Total funds requested: $285,514.22

❖ Total amount funded: $107,300.00

Sample Funded Projects

Sample Project #1

Proposer: Derek Dunn-Rankin

Academic Unit: Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

Award Amount: $30,000.00

Description: Empowering Women for Experimental Research with Fabrication Skills

Sample Project #2

Proposer: Scott Rychnovsky

Academic Unit: Department of Chemistry

Award Amount: $25,000.00

Description: The "Prime and Propel Program" for increasing chemistry graduate student diversity using a model from the POSSE program.

DECADE Student Councils

❖ **Central and School-based Councils**
- Address climate and diversity issues through programming that promotes an inclusive campus culture for graduate students.

❖ **DECADE Press**
- Quarterly publication written by graduate students as a resource for fellowships, events, student accomplishments, and networking.

❖ **Logo Contest**
- In spring 2012, graduate student submitted logo entries to brand DECADE.
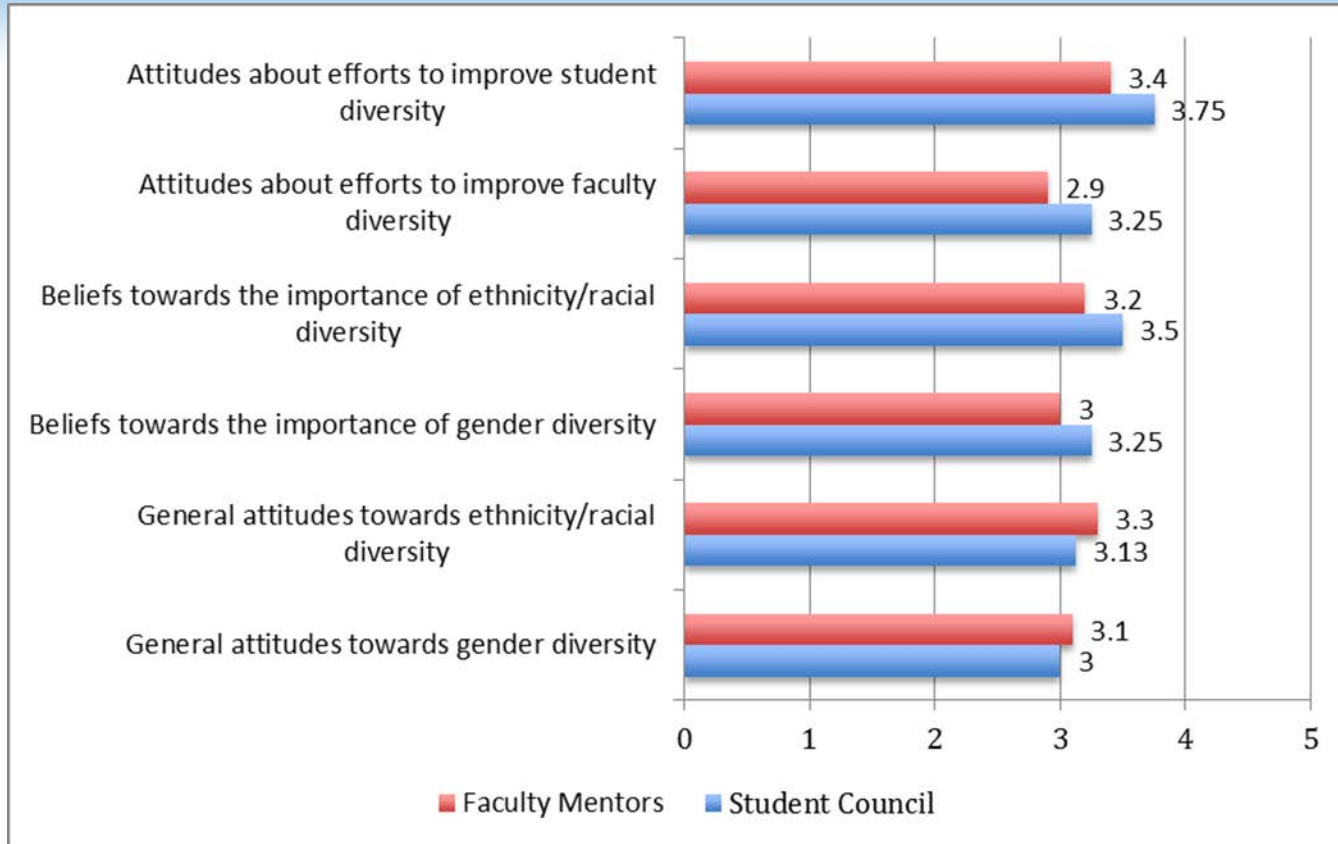
❖ **DECADE Student Travel Awards**
- Provides funding to support travel to conferences offering professional development opportunities
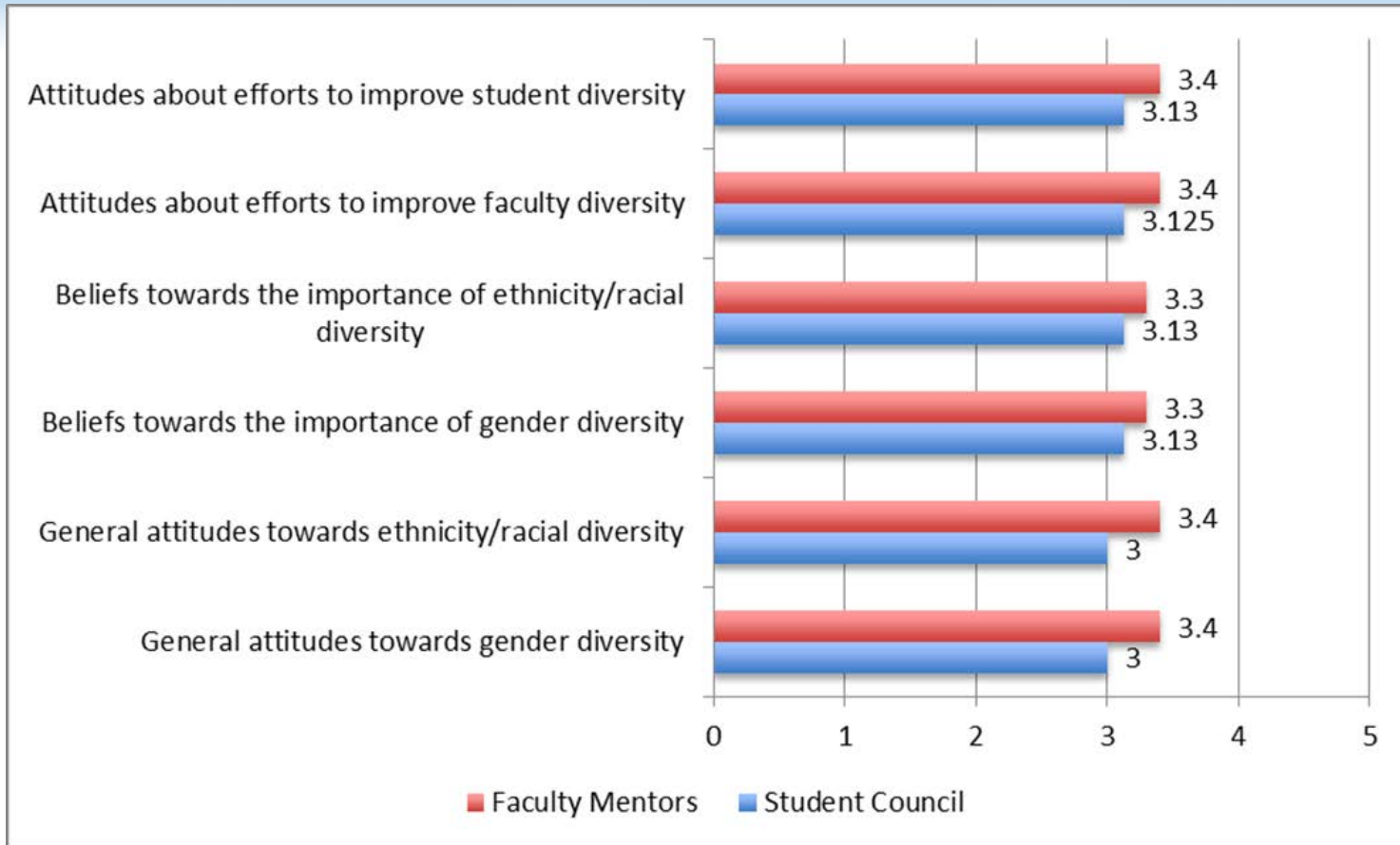
UCI faculty attitudes and beliefs about diversity

1= Much less Accepting; 2= Slightly Less Accepting; 3= No Change; 4=Slightly More Accepting; 5=Much More Accepting

UCI student attitudes and beliefs about diversity

1= Much less Accepting; 2= Slightly Less Accepting; 3= No Change; 4=Slightly More Accepting; 5=Much More Accepting

New Student Enrollment: Fall 2011

School	% Female			% Underrepresented Minorities		
	2007 - 2010	2011	Percent Change	2007 - 2010	2011	Percent Change
Non-STEM	50.4%	56.3%	11.7%↑	12.3%	14.7%	19.5%↑
STEM	32.8%	29.7%	9.5%↓	7.2%	9.7%	34.7%↑
Total	39.6%	40.2%	1.5%↑	9.2%	11.7%	**27.2%*↑**