URGE Demographic Data for Amherst College

This is what was found by AC Mammoths at Amherst College on demographic data as well as stated goals for representation, and/or proposals to collect and report demographic data.

- We gathered the following information about Amherst College demographics:
  - Faculty and staff demographics are not available on the College’s webpage. The Administration is presently compiling those data. However, a range of diversity and inclusion information and College resources can be found at: [Amherst College Diversity and Inclusion Information](#).
  - As of 2018, the College reported the following faculty demographics as part of its reaccreditation report: Of the college’s instructional faculty 18 percent identify as persons of color (Asian-American, Black, LatinX, or Native American), and 3 percent are from countries outside the United States.
  - Our Geology Department has eight faculty, of whom 3 are in or nearing phased retirement. Of the other 5, all are tenured or tenure track; 2 are women; 2 are BIPOC.
  - [Amherst College Student Demographics](#) are reported here.
  - Geology Department student demographics, compared to College-wide student data, are summarized in the following charts. [Note: Native American/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students comprise <1% of all populations reported in these charts and therefore were not plotted.]

![AMHERST COLLEGE GEOLOGY DEPARTMENT ENROLLMENT DATA](#)

*2000-2020 by five-year average based on self-reported racial identities reported as a % of each group total that is represented by the demographic of each chart.*

![LATINX STUDENTS](#)

![BLACK STUDENTS](#)

![MULTI-RACIAL STUDENTS](#)
Our most specific demographic data gathered regard our geology students and geology majors. Those data are comparable to the data reported by the AGU on US Undergraduate Geoscience Degrees (included in the first chart below) with respect to percentage of the total over the years 2010-2020.

Publicly stated goals on demographics or increasing representation:

**College mission statement:** Amherst College educates students of exceptional potential from all backgrounds so that they may seek, value, and advance knowledge, engage the world around them, and lead principled lives of consequence. Amherst brings together the most promising students, whatever their financial need, in order to promote diversity of experience and ideas within a purposefully small residential community.

**College website statement:** Diversity is a natural condition of the modern world. And, not coincidentally, it is a foundational part of an Amherst education. We believe that a great intellectual community should look like the world, and with every incoming student, that community comes to life here.

**Department website statement:** Geology is a science in which anyone can find their place and explore their interests. Because the earth is complex and vast in both time and space, Geology is inherently a collaborative field and most geologists know that scientific progress is fueled by the broadest participation possible.
○ We did not find measurable goals explicitly stated for achieving representation at Amherst College, except the broad sentiment that the College should reflect the world around it in terms of its diversity.

● Policy or proposed policy for collecting demographic data at your organization:
  ○ Much of the information about long-term trajectories (graduate school, terminal degree, careers) is not systematically collected for our students, but is only anecdotally known, relying on the institutional memory of the faculty. It might benefit us to include a systematic data collection process (as part of a periodic poll of alumni) to regularize this type of data collection and to make mentorship connections with our alumni. Attempts to collect post-graduate information from our alumni as part of a 2016 Department Self-Study met with only moderate success.

● What did you learn about other organizations (or in general) while investigating demographic data?
  ○ Our department mirrors the national trend -- that participation by LatinX students has increased over the last decade but there has been no progress on graduating black students.
  ○ In contrast, the participation of women reflects the national demographic well.
  ○ While Asian-Americans are not considered an under-represented demographic in STEM, they are underrepresented in Geosciences (see: https://www.essoar.org/pdfjs/10.1002/essoar.10500088.1 and https://earth.stanford.edu/news/qa-what-does-it-mean-be-asian-american-geosciences#gs.v5fgj8).
    Our data revealed that we have very little success in attracting and retaining Asian-American students in the Geology Department.