

# Being a Minority on a Majority Campus: Checklist of Stressors and Barriers

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**GOAL:** To identify stressors and barriers to success that racial or ethnic minority students face on a majority campus.

**TIME REQUIRED:** At least fifteen minutes. Five minutes to complete and ten minutes to discuss.

**MATERIALS:** Copies of the Checklist and pens/pencils for each participant.

**PHYSICAL SETTING:** A room where participants can sit and write comfortably and can speak to one another in a discussion.

**PROCESS:** Distribute the Checklists and have participants complete them. Use the Checklist as a stimulus for a discussion about the challenges of being a minority on a majority campus. This checklist and discussion may also be used with role plays, scenarios, or to present a problem solving model.

**SOURCE:** This exercise and checklist was developed by Judith Holder, Barbara Eldredge, and Jeff Brooks-Harris while they were involved in the Minority Programming Team, Counseling Center, Southern Illinois University.

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## Checklist of Possible Stressors and Barriers

Please place a check on the space next to the item number if you have experienced a situation similar to the one described.

- 1. A professor seems uncomfortable around you when you ask a question after class (because of your race, disability, nationality, or sexual orientation).
- 2. You feel alienated, lonely, or isolated on campus because of being a minority.
- 3. You do not feel connected to the university environment as a whole.
- 4. You speak or look different than most students on campus.
- 5. You think that one or more of your professors think that minorities don't measure up intellectually.
- 6. Now that you are in college you wonder if you have the study skills to successfully make it in college and graduate.
- 7. You avoid asking for help from a professor because you think they won't help; meanwhile you feel anxious about getting further behind.
- 8. You have heard other students make derogatory comments or jokes about your own racial or ethnic group.
- 9. You are among the first generation of your family to attend college.
- 10. You feel uncomfortable on campus because most of the faculty and staff members are of a different race.

\_\_\_ 11. You are afraid that you won't be treated fairly by a university staff member (e.g., resident advisor, financial aid) because of your race.

\_\_\_ 12. You are told that you were only admitted to an academic program because of affirmative action guidelines.

\_\_\_ 13. You believe that you were not hired for a job because of your race or ethnicity.