

# QCNR Taskforce for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

## Report to the QCNR Faculty and Staff

QCNR Retreat, 18 August 2021

### Taskforce Members:

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**Background:** In the summer of 2020, national events related to race relations and racism in the U.S. led QCNR students to address inquiries to the QCNR Dean’s Office on the College’s responsibilities to address DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) concerns. Associate Dean Claudia Radel responded with the announcement that the College would convene a DEI Taskforce, which she would chair. This Taskforce was established and first met in Fall 2020. Membership included representation of faculty from the three departments, as well as representation from staff and the graduate and undergraduate student bodies. The Taskforce met monthly once in the fall semester and then throughout the spring semester (2021). Activities included a review of QCNR student and faculty demographics and sub-group discussion of student recruitment with the QCNR Academic Service Center (ASC). The Taskforce also held a series of confidential, facilitated listening sessions with QCNR graduate students from underrepresented groups in the College.

**Primary Recommendations:** As a result of Taskforce discussions and activities, the Taskforce recommends the following actions for immediate and short-term implementation:

1. Establish a QCNR standing committee to bring DEI issues to the attention of College faculty and leadership on a regular and on-going basis. Without permanent attention to these issues, it is difficult to maintain the efforts needed to achieve progress. Progress is likely to be slow/incremental, and QCNR needs an entity that can keep DEI issues on the College and departmental agendas and provide for lines of communication among the departments and with the students. This standing DEI committee could be chaired by the Associate Dean or could be chaired by another faculty member provided with adequate recognition (teaching or service release). Member terms can be flexible to the needs of the committee and its members but should aim for continuity of some members from year-to-year. Composition should continue to include the representation profile of the Taskforce and should include the Associate Dean if that individual is not chairing. Composition might also include participation by the College-designated faculty advisor for first-generation students. The chair for this committee should participate regularly in the monthly meetings of the USU-wide DEI collaboration group established as a part of the USU President’s diversity initiative:  
<https://www.usu.edu/president/initiatives/diversity-and-inclusion/>
2. Create a web presence for this committee and associated efforts. Communication and transparency of College efforts in this area is important, including to potential students. A web presence can also allow for the sharing of resources with staff and faculty to encourage a climate of shared responsibility and professional development, as opposed to a climate of

regulatory compliance. Research on DEI issues in organizations, including in higher ed, suggests that a compliance environment is less effective than organization cultural shifts.

3. Include DEI issues in QCNR departments' upcoming departmental activities related to scheduled faculty searches. This might include participating in search committee training offered by the USU Office of Equity, requesting DEI statements as a part of applications (with guidance provided to applicants), and following other best practices throughout the advertising, applicant screening, interviewing, and hiring phases.
4. Incorporate a Land Acknowledgement in College and Departmental celebrations. USU is currently developing a framework for Land Acknowledgement as a part of the President's Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce, with review by tribal and Indigenous Nation leaders in the community. The use of land acknowledgements recognizes and respects Native American peoples as the original stewards of USU land, contributing to a sense of belonging for faculty, students, and staff with ties to Native American groups. <https://www.usu.edu/today/story/usu-launches-land-acknowledgment-working-group-to-draft-statements-for-campuses>
5. Begin breaking out enrollment data by race/ethnicity and sex whenever reviewing college and development enrollment data. Adopting a regular practice of reviewing our disaggregated student enrollments, at the undergraduate and graduate levels, will elevate the visibility of members from under-represented groups and increase our awareness of trends. In addition to race/ethnicity and sex, data are available on first-generation student status. Some dimensions of underrepresented-ness are not currently available in the USU data, including disability status, non-binary or transgender identity, and sexual orientation, and issues important to inclusion and belonging for members of these groups should not be over-looked despite current data limitations.

**Additional Recommendations:** The Taskforce recommends additional actions for the College and Departments to explore implementing in the future. We expect that these recommendations might change or expand with the activities of a standing college DEI committee.

- Develop a college-endorsed best-practices guide for faculty searches.
- Explore opportunities for clustered diversity-oriented faculty searches or graduate fellowships across departments that can highlight diversity goals and create a cohort effect (even if small).
- Advocate for including DEI activities within new role statements, including for Dean and Department Head positions, and for allowing faculty with existing role statements to amend if they so choose.
- Establish expectation that faculty address DEI efforts and related professional development in some way in their self-assessment statements and packages for promotion and tenure.
- Set a College-wide expectation of transparency with respect to processes and criteria used for allocating any "flex" funds for raises.
- Develop a set of strategies for targeted recruitment of graduate and undergraduate students from underrepresented groups.
- Encourage use of imagery in public relations and recruitment materials that conveys a diverse community and fosters a sense of belonging.

- Develop mentoring resources for faculty to improve inclusive mentoring practices and skills.
- Develop instructional material for use in all ENV5/WATS/WILD 2000 sections (as a key early experience for QCNR undergraduates) that helps establish and foster an inclusive climate for students and a sense of belonging.
- Explore interest in the establishment of a college student, or faculty + student, group for specific or plural underrepresented group identities or affinities, to facilitate belongingness.
- Designate a specific College point person for student, staff, and faculty concerns and questions related to DEI.

**A Decade of Demographic Trends in Student Enrollments:** Attached to this report are screenshots from USU’s Office of Analysis, Assessment, and Accreditation (AAA Office) visualization tool for fall student enrollments over a 10-year period (2011-2020), capturing students whose first major is in QCNR. The nature of these data limits examination of underrepresented-ness to only two dimensions in this report, race/ethnicity and sex. Status as a first-generation college student is also available but is not examined in detail here, other than to note that QCNR had 27% of enrolled undergraduate students designated as first-gen in 2020, compared to 22% at USU (and the College has had percentages greater than those of the University as a whole, across the full 10-year period). Listening sessions with graduate students indicates the importance of other dimensions of identity difference in the experiences of QCNR students. These other dimensions include sexual orientation, non-binary or transgender identities, and status as a parent (especially for some of our women graduate students). In examining the demographic data, we are also unable to access insight into how intersecting identity differences shape the lived experiences of our students, all of whom have multiple identities (e.g., as a White Lesbian woman, or as a Hispanic straight man).

The QCNR undergraduate student enrollments disaggregated for race/ethnicity show varying improvement. In 2011, 8.4% of QCNR majors were students of color (Asian-American, Black, Hispanic, Native American or Alaska Native, Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander, multi-racial) or non-resident alien (international), while in 2020, 11.1% of majors were. This recent figure can be compared to the percent of all USU undergraduate students, 13% in 2020. The largest non-White group are students who identify as Hispanic or Latinx, and for the last five years, the percent of majors in this category has been steady at 6-7%. By department in 2020, 13% of majors in ENV5 were students of color or international. This figure was 7.1% for WATS and 10.7% for WILD, indicating room for progress. The undergraduate student enrollments disaggregated by sex show that women’s enrollments (at 54%) have now surpassed men’s enrollments in the College. There has been a steady increase in the percentage of women students over the 10-year period, increasing from 38% to 54%. Examination of enrollments by department shows similar trends but with women as a percent of WATS majors still under parity (45%). For USU, 55% of all enrolled undergraduate students in Fall 2020 were women.

Student enrollments in QCNR graduate programs have diversified over the period. The proportion of graduate students of color (including international students) has gone from 9% in 2011 to 14.7% in 2020 (20.6% in ENV5, 22.3% in WATS, 8.3% in WILD, and 14.5% in NR—which includes the MNR degree and the Graduate GIS and NEPA Certificates). For the College, the largest proportion of students in this group in 2020 were students who identify as Hispanic/Latinx (7.8%, or more than half). The year 2020 was a shift from prior years (2012-2019), when the largest proportion were international students. The percent women increased from 40% (2011) to 51% (2020) for the College overall, but differences are evident at the departmental level. ENV5 experienced women as a majority in their graduate programs

throughout the period, with 59% women in 2011 and 53% women in 2020 and a high of 76% in 2016. WATS saw an increase in women as a percent of their graduate students, from 38% (2011) to 56% (2020), while WILD has had more modest growth from 40% to 49%. The graduate programs “housed” at the College-level, or in “NR” (the MNR degree and the Graduate GIS and NEPA Certificates), have seen strong growth in the percent of women, going from 30% in 2011 to 50% in 2020. The comparison to USU may be less relevant for graduate students, as recruitment occurs at the program level. USU overall had 19.4% of its enrolled graduate students classified as non-White or international, and had 57% classified as women.

**Demographic Trends in the Faculty Body:** Examining faculty demographics over a longer period (2006-2020) provides important information but has some limitations. The Banner data from the AAA Office do not include federal- and state-cooperator faculty, and faculty categorized as “unknown” remains a meaningful number. In addition, with relatively small numbers, percentages can vary significantly from year-to-year with departing faculty, open lines, and new hires. Nonetheless, important trends emerge. The percent of women in the QCNR faculty body has increased from 19% in 2006, to 36% in 2020 (38% in ENVS,<sup>1</sup> 43% in WATS, 31% in WILD, and 50% in the Dean’s Office). The percent of faculty of color in the College, on the other hand, has decreased over time from 10% in 2009 to 5% in 2020 (the race data from 2006-2008 show most faculty categorized as “unknown” and are ignored for this report). In addition, the faculty of “unknown” race in QCNR (2% in 2009; 5% in 2020) by in large are not faculty of color. Furthermore, examination of the percent of White faculty (not even accounting for “unknown”) confirms this negative trend in the proportion of faculty of color, with faculty categorized as White increasing from 88% (2009) to 90% (2020).

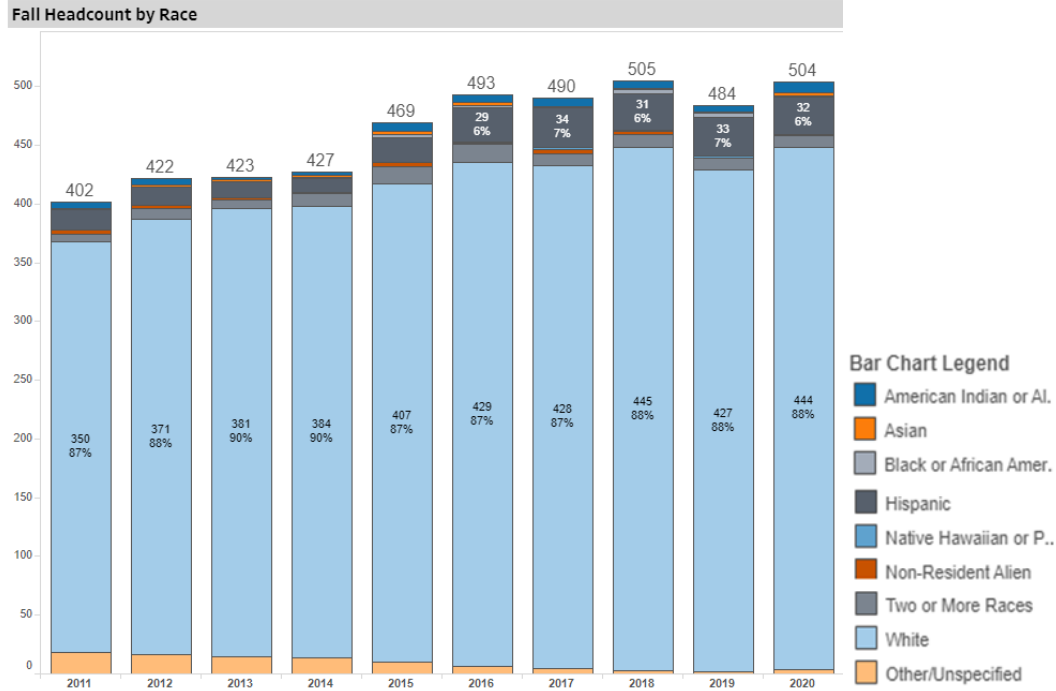
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<sup>1</sup> Categorizing Associate Dean Claudia Radel in ENVS in 2020, instead of in the Dean’s Office, changes the percent of women in ENVS to 41%.

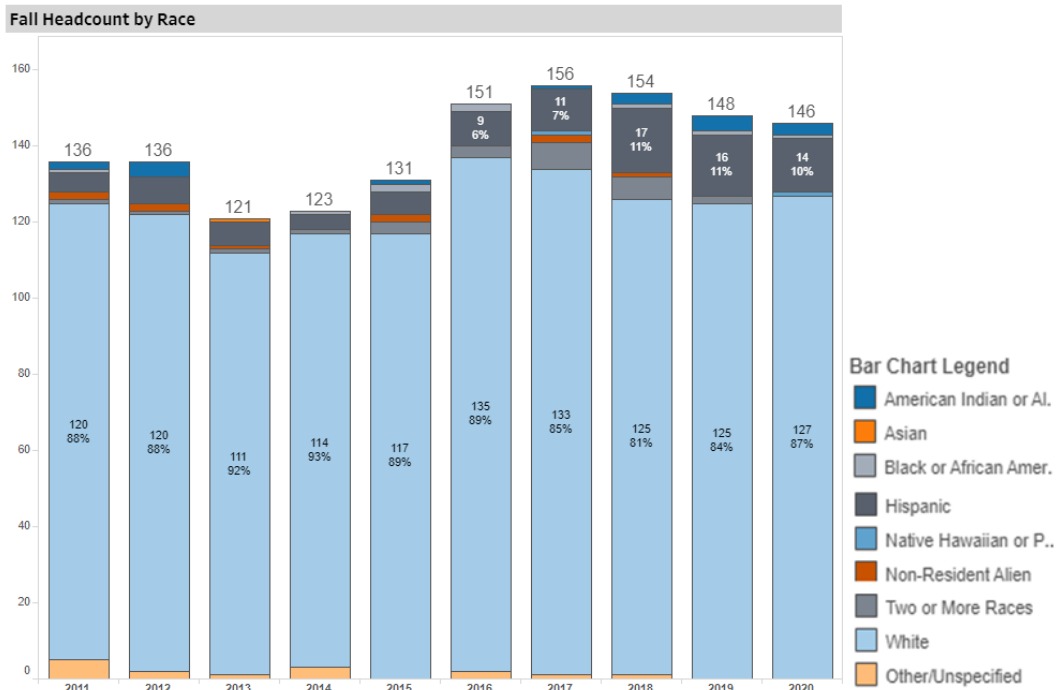
# Our Student Body: Trends in Race and Sex (Source: USU AAA, Banner data)

## Undergraduate Fall Enrollments (students majoring in QCNR)

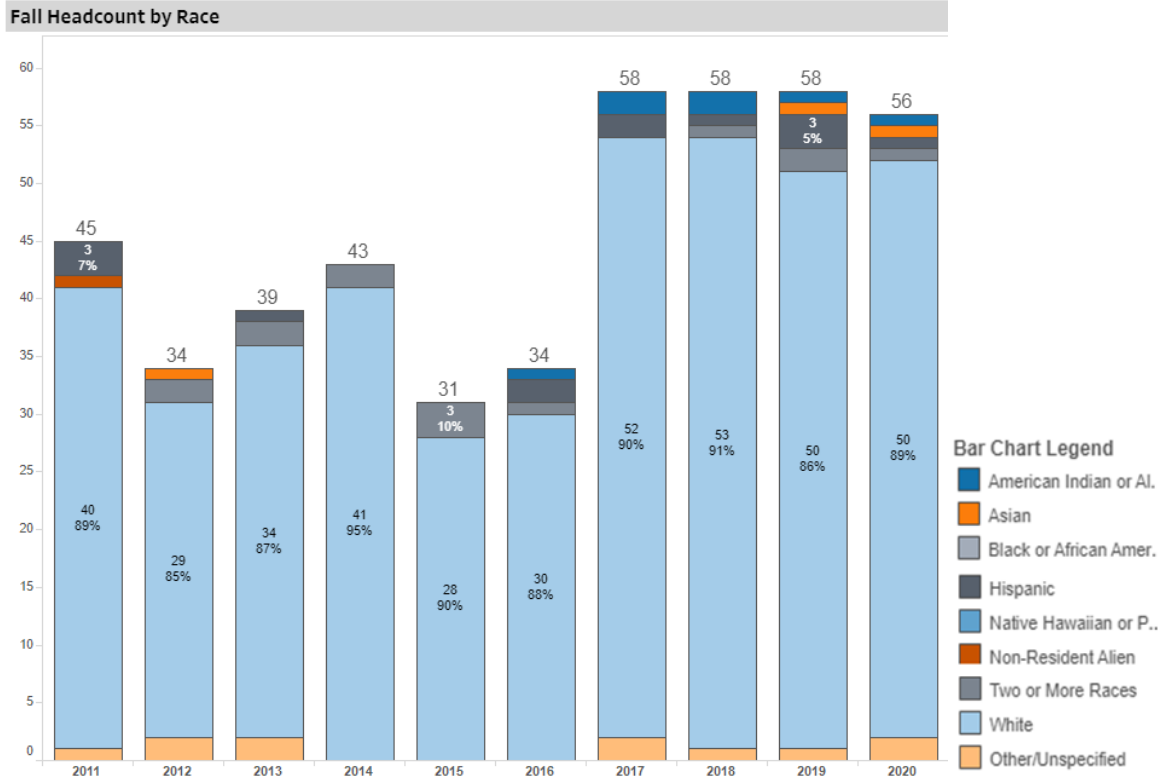
### QCNR Undergraduates, Race



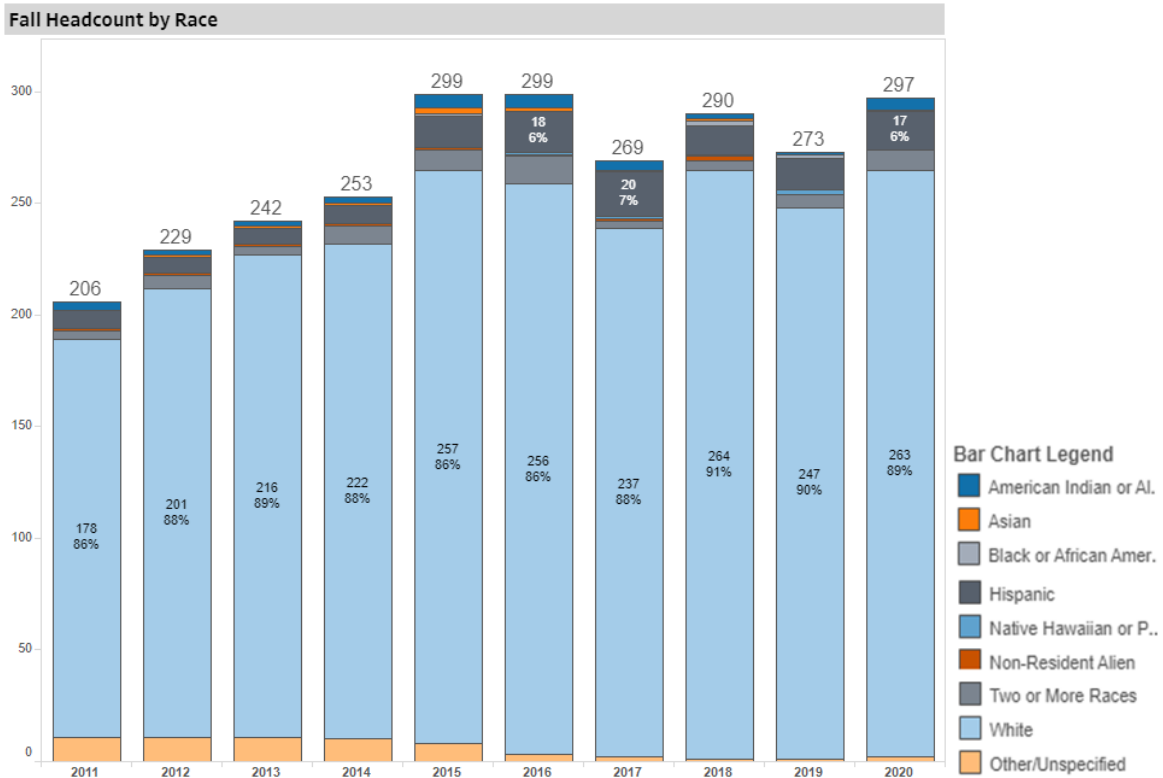
### ENVS Undergraduates, Race



## WATS Undergraduates, Race

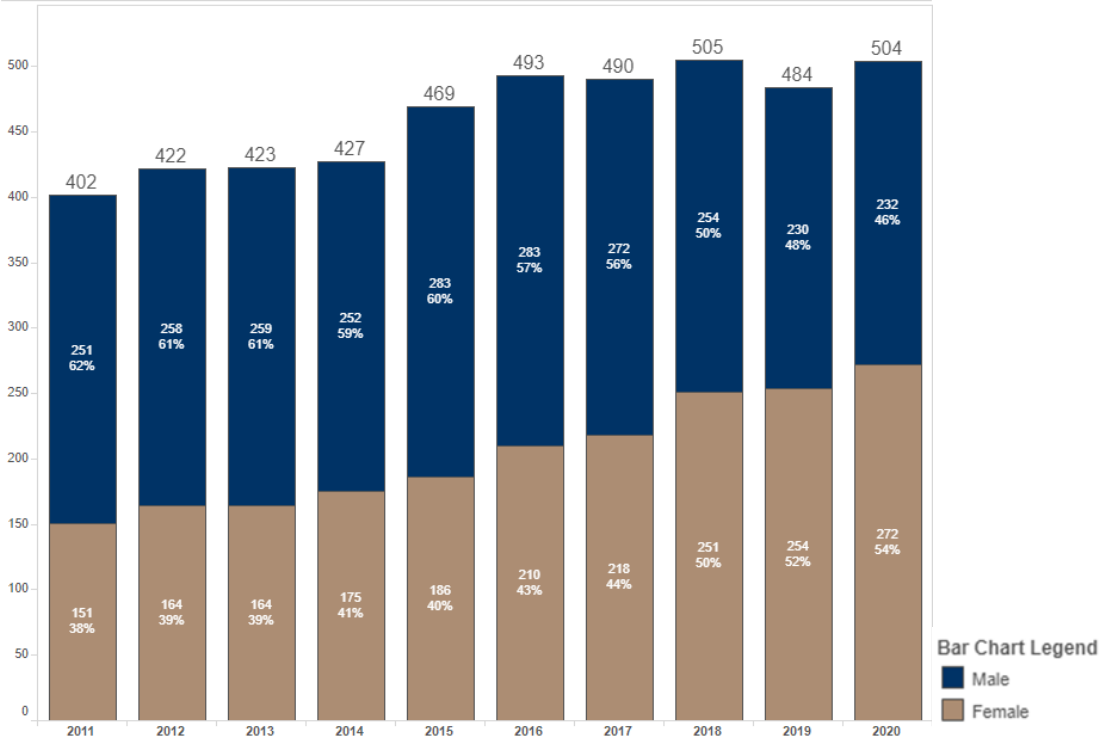


## WILD Undergraduates, Race



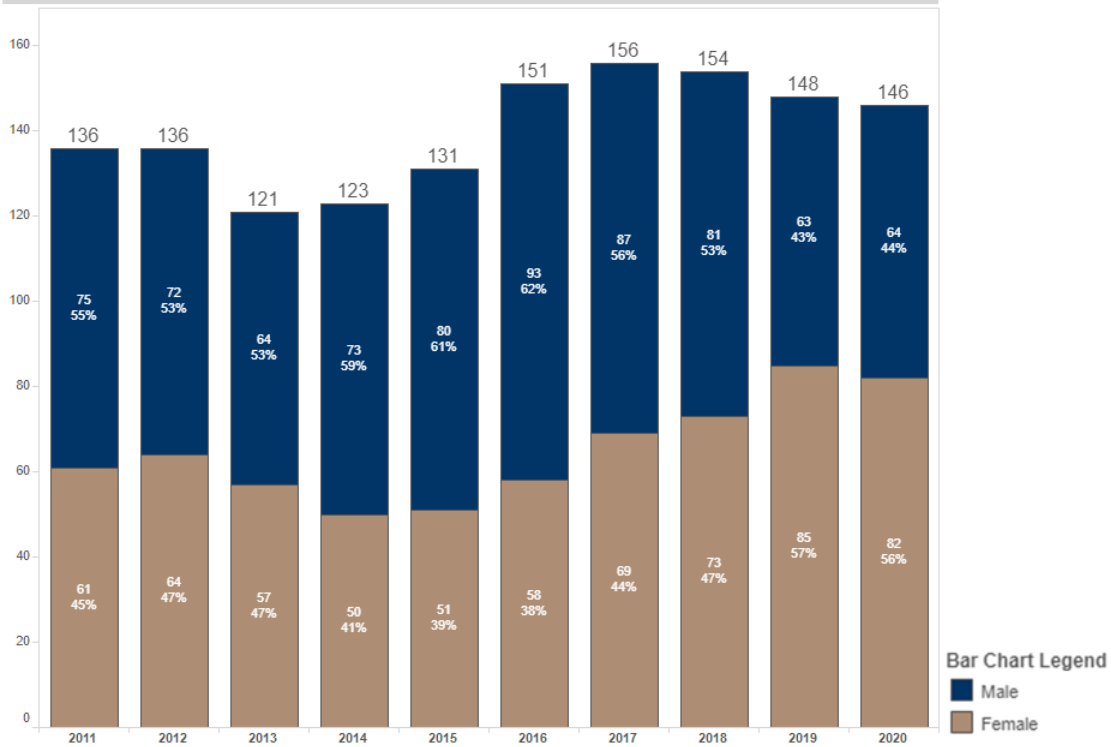
## QCNR Undergraduates, Sex

Fall Headcount by Gender



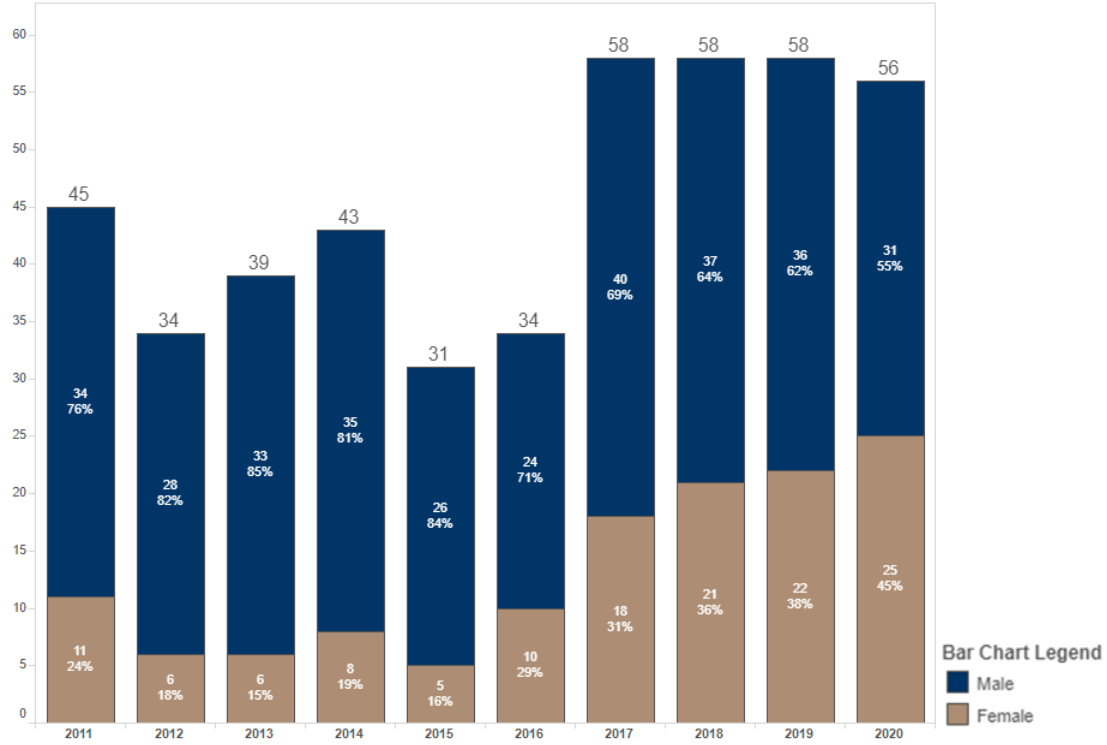
## ENVS Undergraduates, Sex

Fall Headcount by Gender



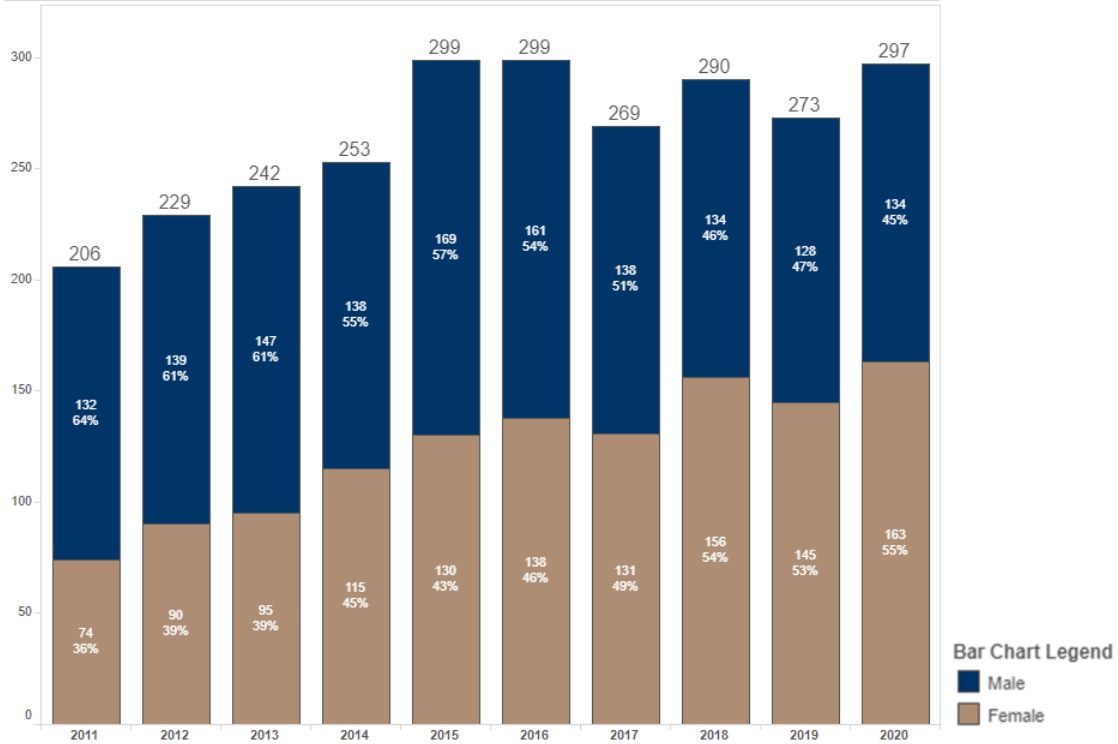
## WATS Undergraduates, Sex

Fall Headcount by Gender



## WILD Undergraduates, Sex

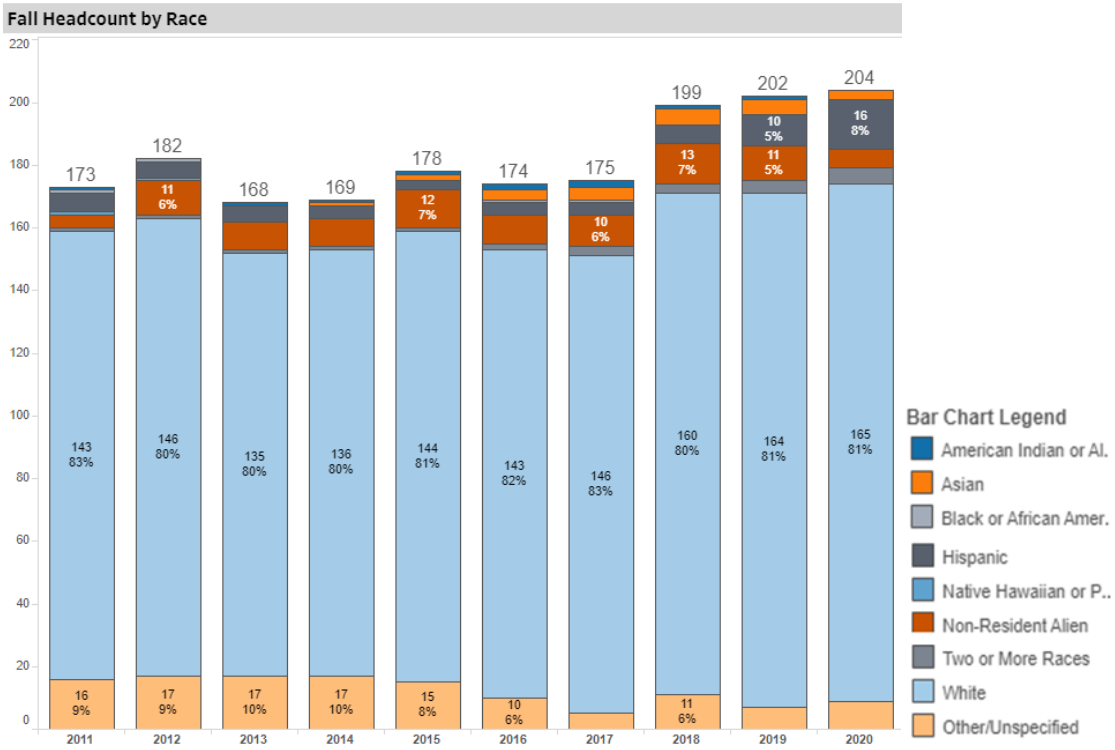
Fall Headcount by Gender



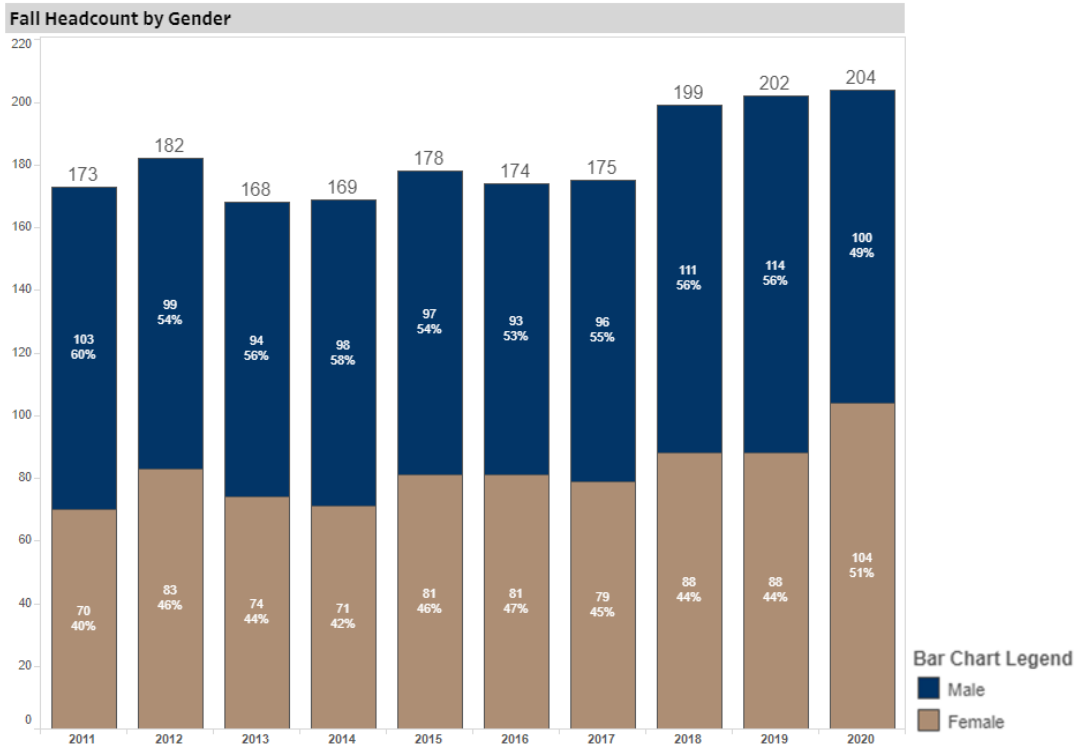


# QCNR Graduate Student Fall Enrollments (Grads enrolled in at least one credit)

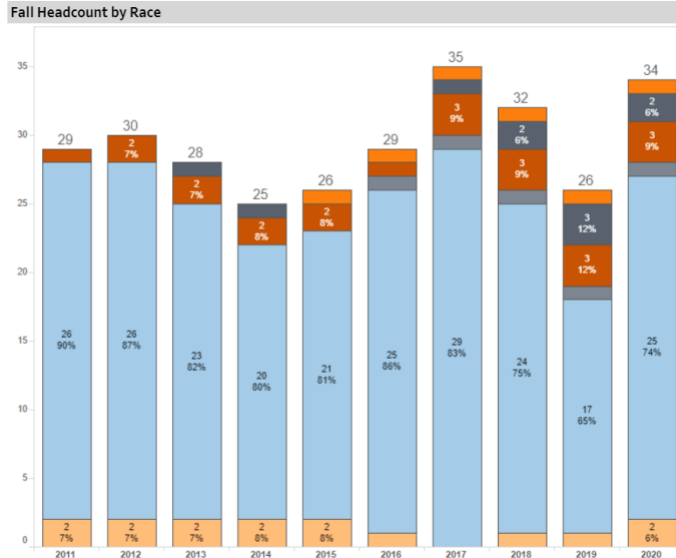
## QCNR Grad Students, Race



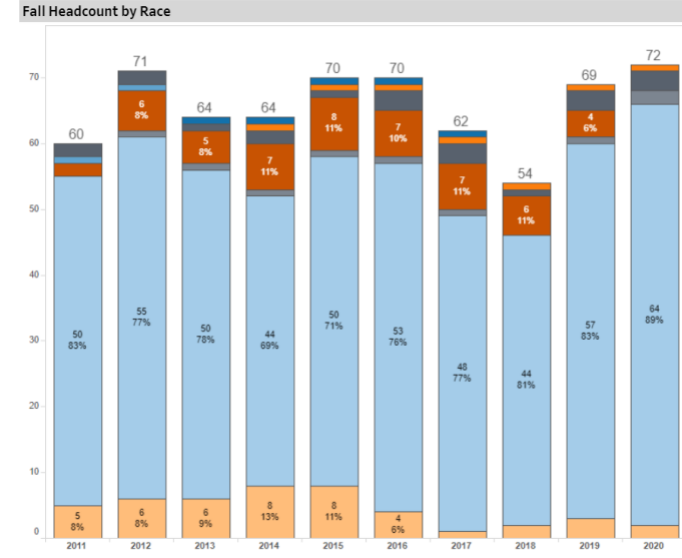
## QCNR Grad Students, Sex



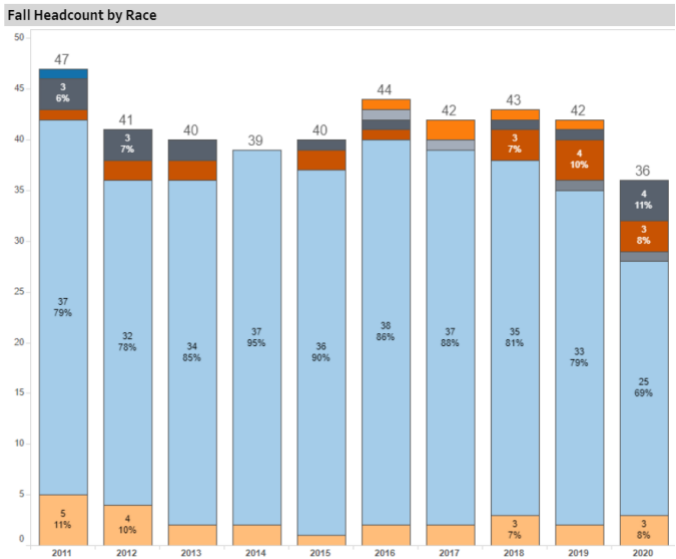
### ENVS Grad Students, Race



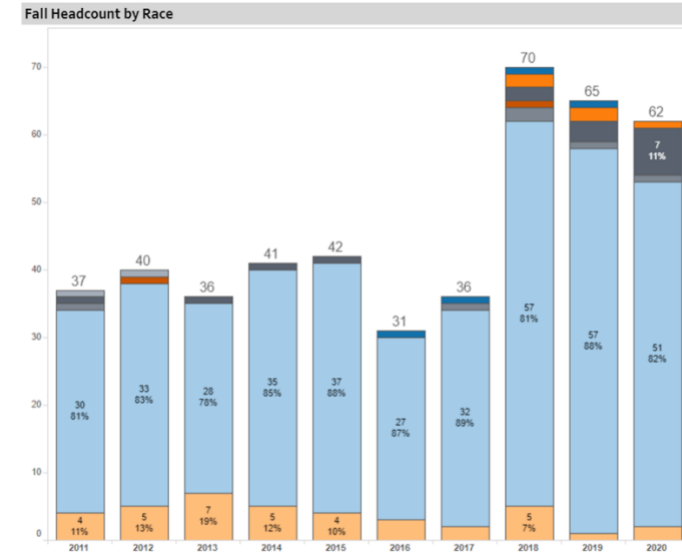
### WILD Grad Students, Race



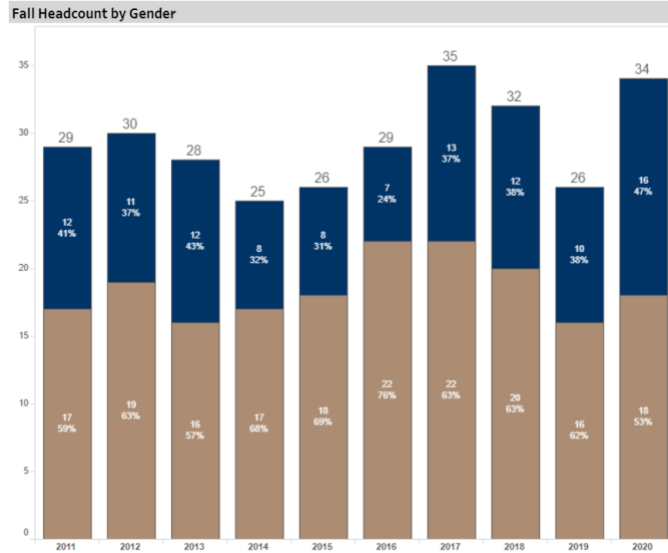
### WATS Grad Students, Race



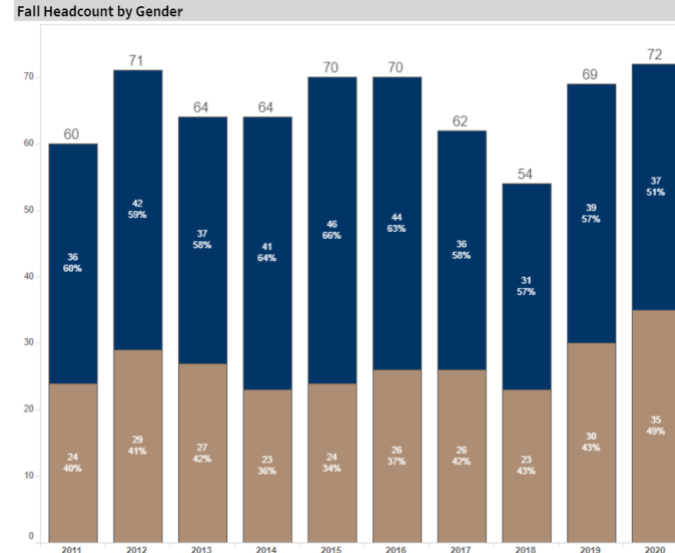
### NR Grad Students (MNR, GIS Cert ...), Race



### ENVS Grad Students, Sex

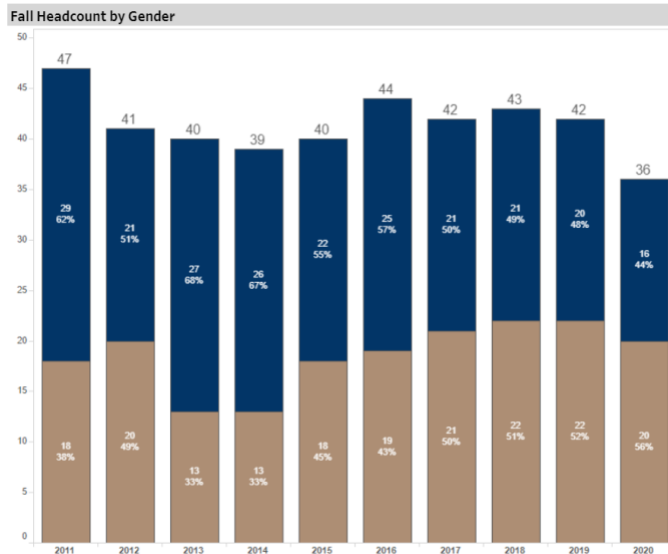


### WILD Grad Students, Sex

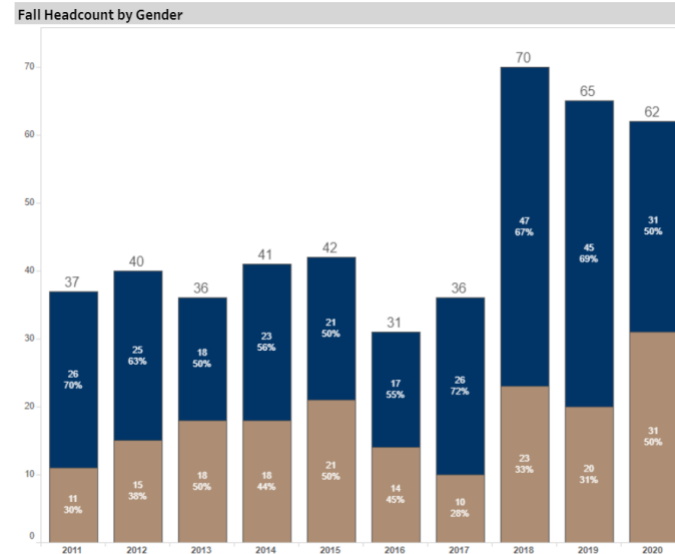


Bar Chart Legend  
■ Male  
■ Female

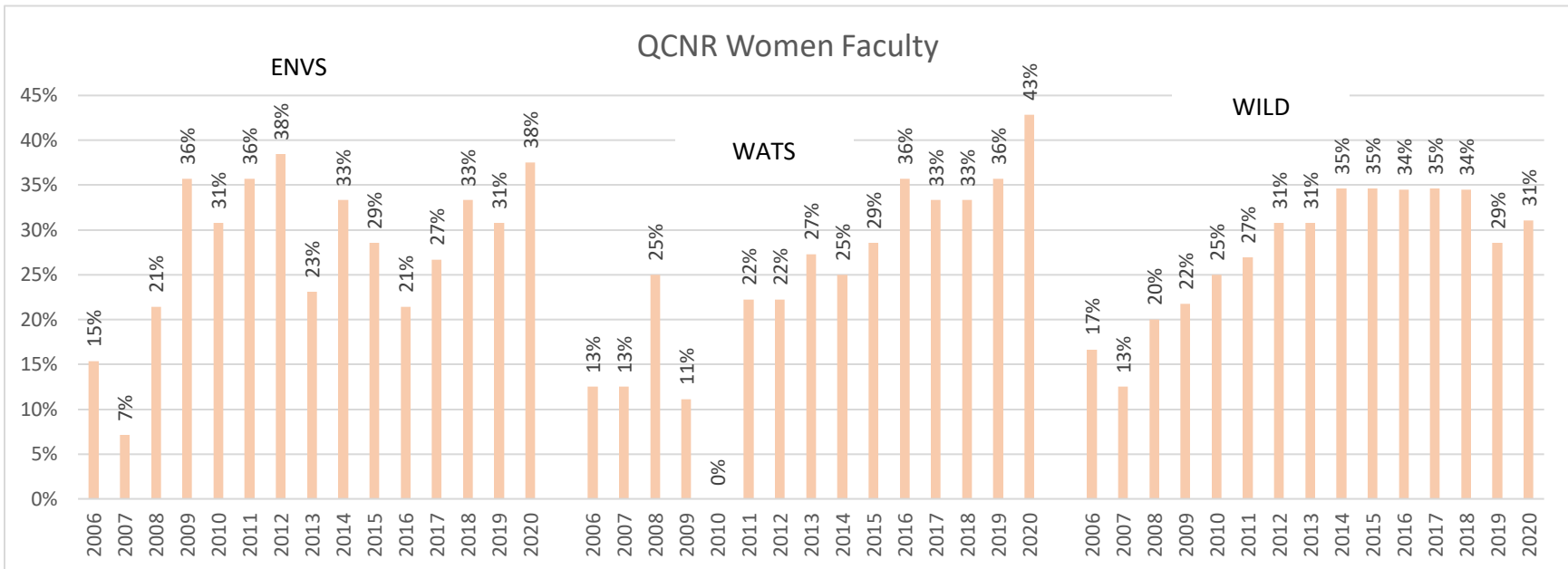
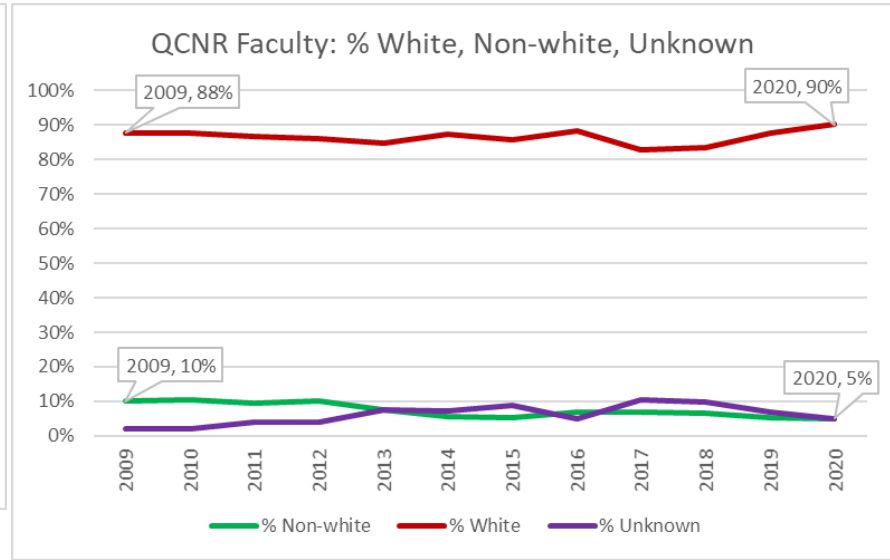
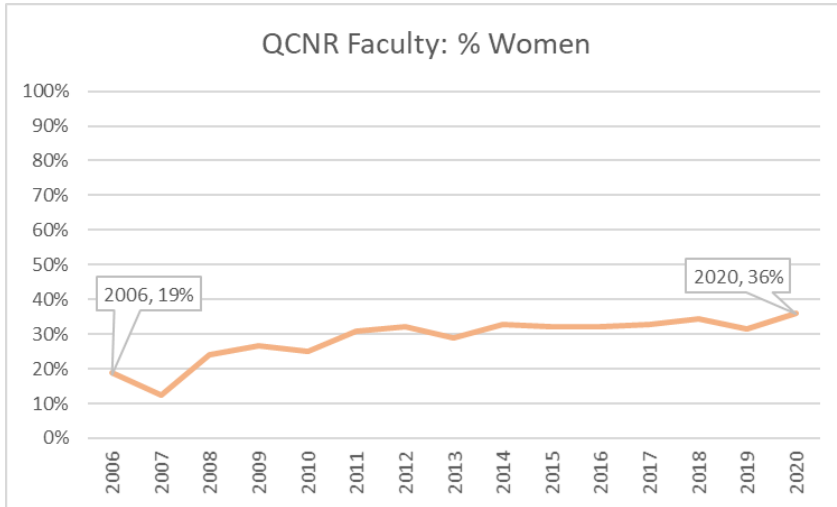
### WATS Grad Students, Sex



### NR Grad Students, Sex



# Our Faculty Body: Current Profiles for Race and Sex (Source: USU AAA, Banner data)



### Departmental Faculty: Women & Men

