

2022 DEI REPORT

HOW FAR WE'VE COME AND WHERE
WE'RE GOING

REPORT BY LIBBY HOBBS AND
MADDY FRANKLIN



The Red & Black



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INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader,

Since The Red & Black was founded, it's prided itself on covering the Athens and University of Georgia communities. However, this coverage has not always fully represented the breadth and depth of each.

Historically speaking, The Red & Black has been predominantly white. This inspired us to not only examine our coverage but also the demographics in our newsroom. We want to ensure every person can find a place here and in what we produce.

Continuing our efforts in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion, we decided to create an annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion report. We were inspired by reports from other student newspapers like Syracuse University's The Daily Orange, which has been producing these kinds of reports for two years.

Our report will detail the demographics of our fall 2022 staff, board of directors and contributors.

In addition to looking internally, we looked externally and sought feedback from our readers through a readership survey. While the findings are not in this report, we used them to inform our goals and recommendations for the organization in 2023.

In the past, we have completed shorter write-ups but this is our first in-depth report. We hope it is not the last.

We strongly encourage leadership and the DEI Committee to produce an annual report such as this one after the fall semester and a brief write-up after the spring semester. Each semester, we strive to strengthen our connections with each other and our community. This calls on us to continue considering our position as a news organization and hold ourselves accountable.

Feedback is welcomed and appreciated. Direct all questions, comments and concerns to editor@randb.com.

Thanks,

Maddy Franklin | Editor-in-Chief fall 2022
Libby Hobbs | DEI Chair fall 2022

DEI COMMITTEE BREAKDOWN

In summer 2020, editors at The Red & Black began holding regular meetings about diversity and inclusion in the organization. This was the start of a committee to address organization-wide issues, which developed into a formal Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee in spring 2021.

The DEI Committee crafts initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion, hosts speakers, conducts workshops and reviews content. Its mission revolves around promoting the presence of all lived experiences, including but not limited to Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) within the organization.

Since its establishment, the committee has gathered semesterly staff and contributor demographics and other data. A special thanks to the spring 2022 committee, and spring 2021 Editor-in-Chief Sherry Liang for their contributions to this report.

The fall 2022 committee

Libby Hobbs | DEI Chair and Newsletter Editor

Ana Chirinos | Spanish Translator

Melanie Velasquez | Guides and Magazines Assistant Editor

Dawn Sawyer | Guides and Magazines Assistant Editor

Claire Han | Senior Account Executive

Andrea Gutierrez | Spanish Reporter

Micahya Costen | Outreach Manager

Nava Rawls | Board Liaison and Eat & Drink Editor

Maddy Franklin | Editor-in-Chief

Julia Walkup | Print Managing Editor

Dania Kalaji | Digital Managing Editor

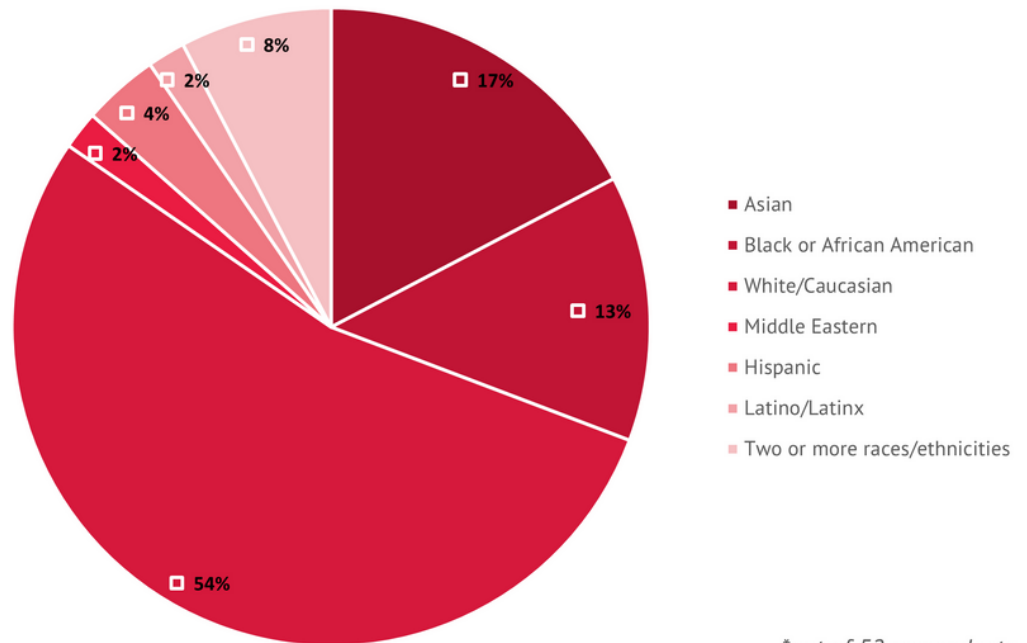
Rebecca Burns | Executive Director

Charlotte Norsworthy | Editorial Director

STUDENT STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

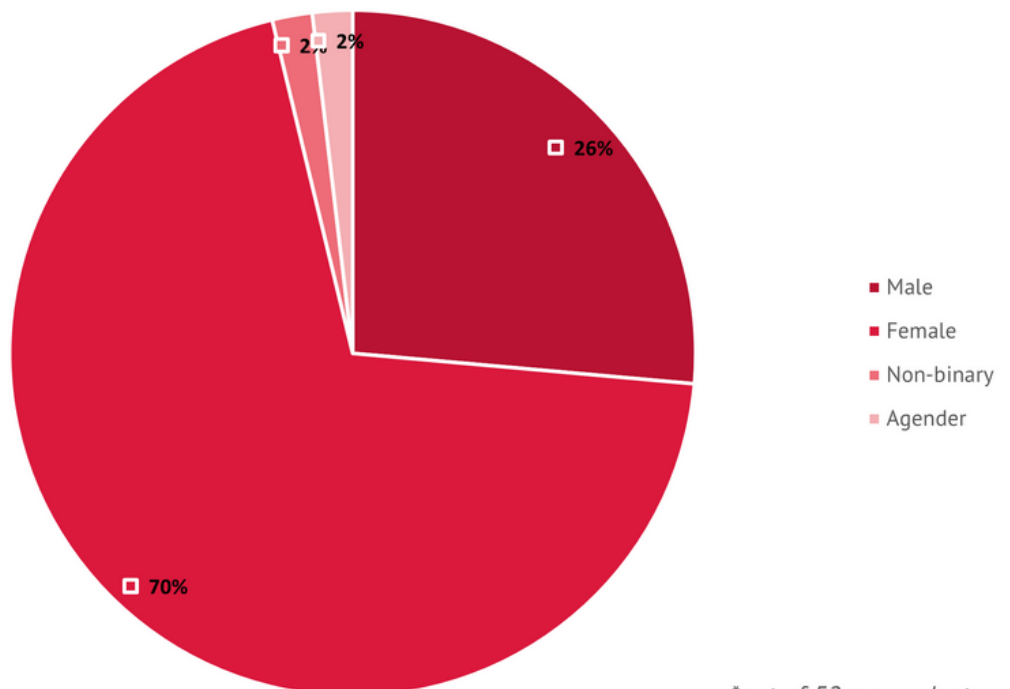
Note: Staff positions are paid, contributors are not. Contributors can apply to be on staff each semester.

Race & Ethnicity



**out of 52 respondents*

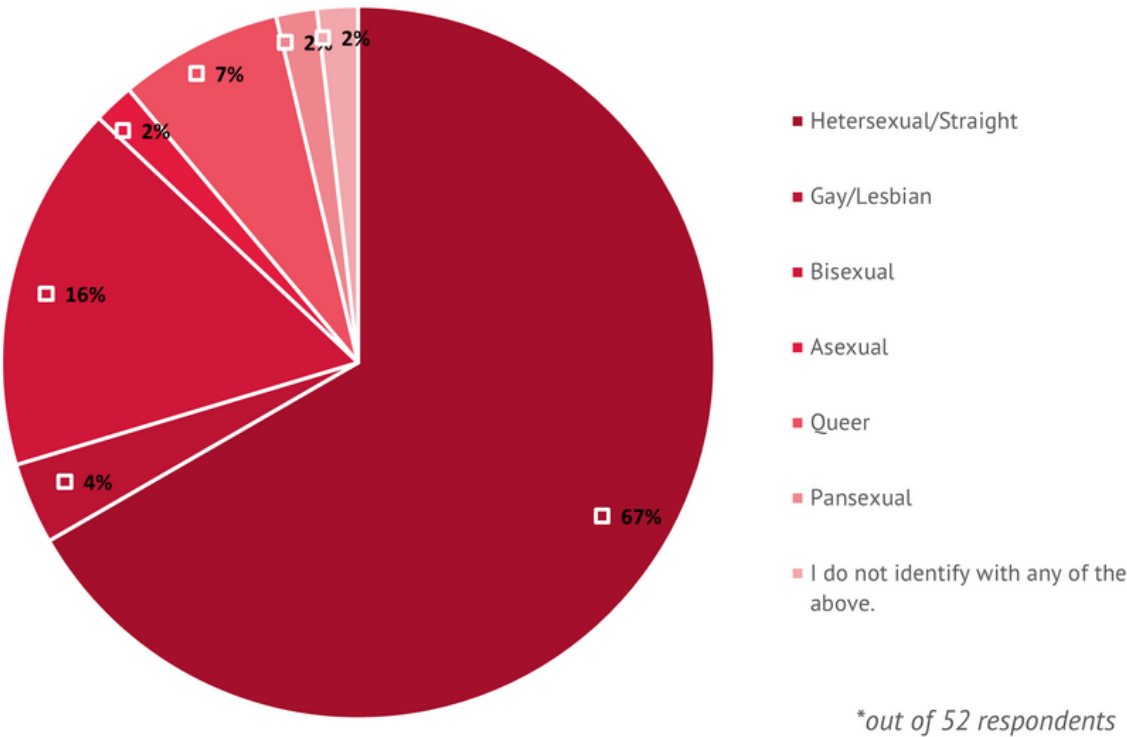
Gender Identity



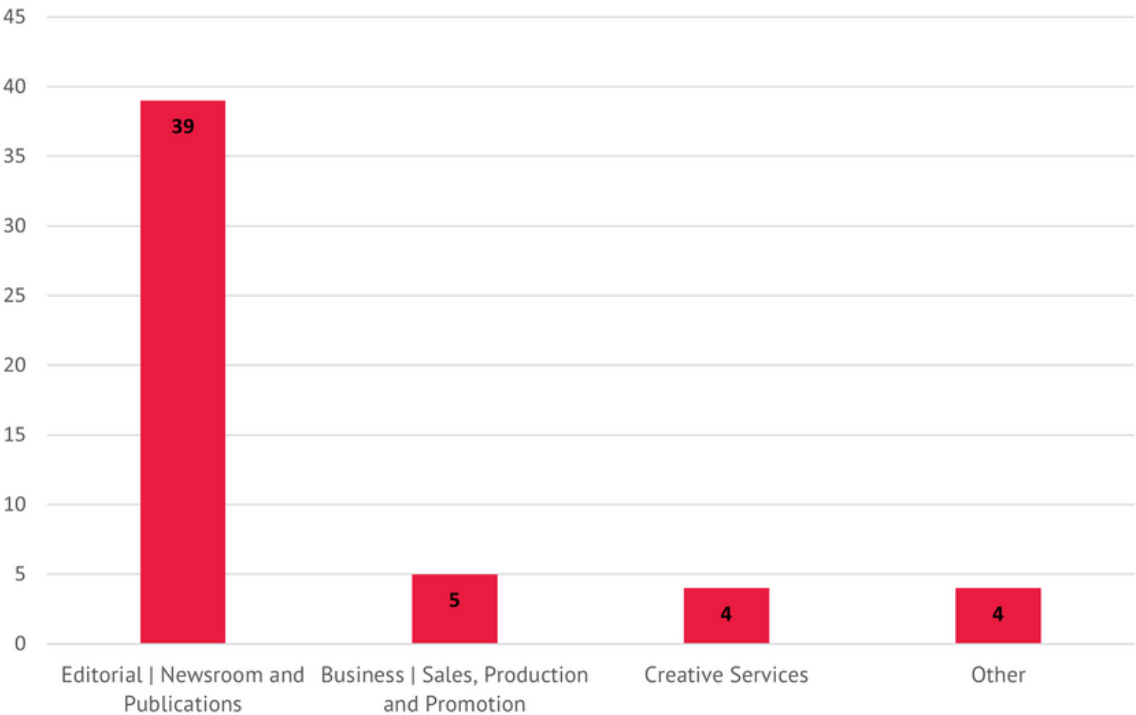
**out of 52 respondents*

STUDENT STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

Sexual Orientation

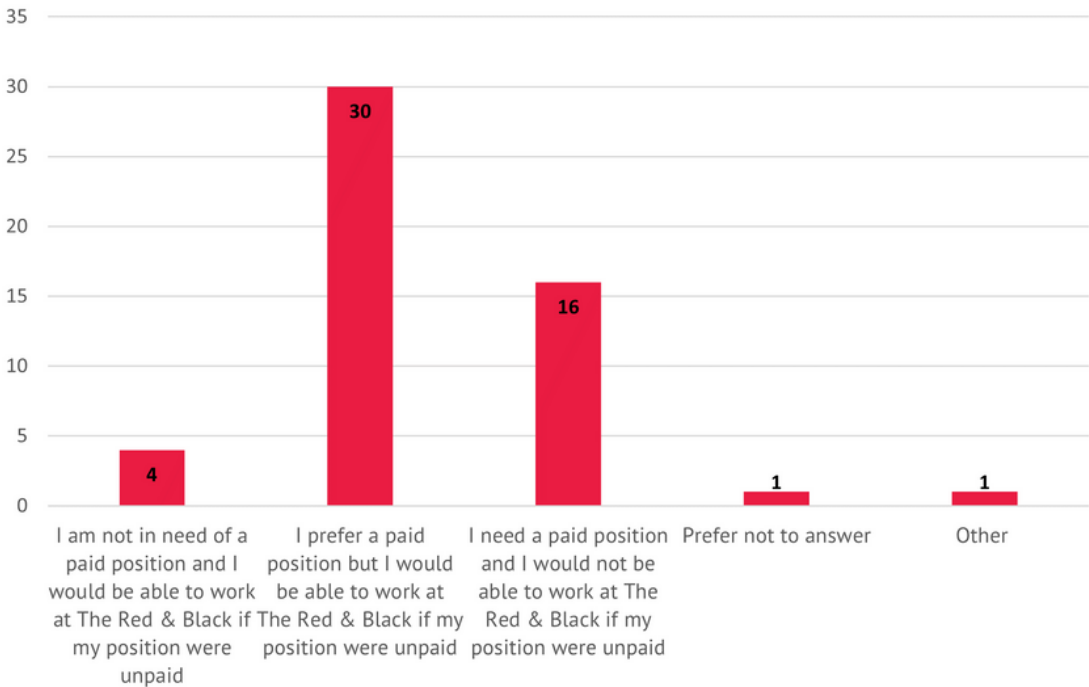


Area of R&B

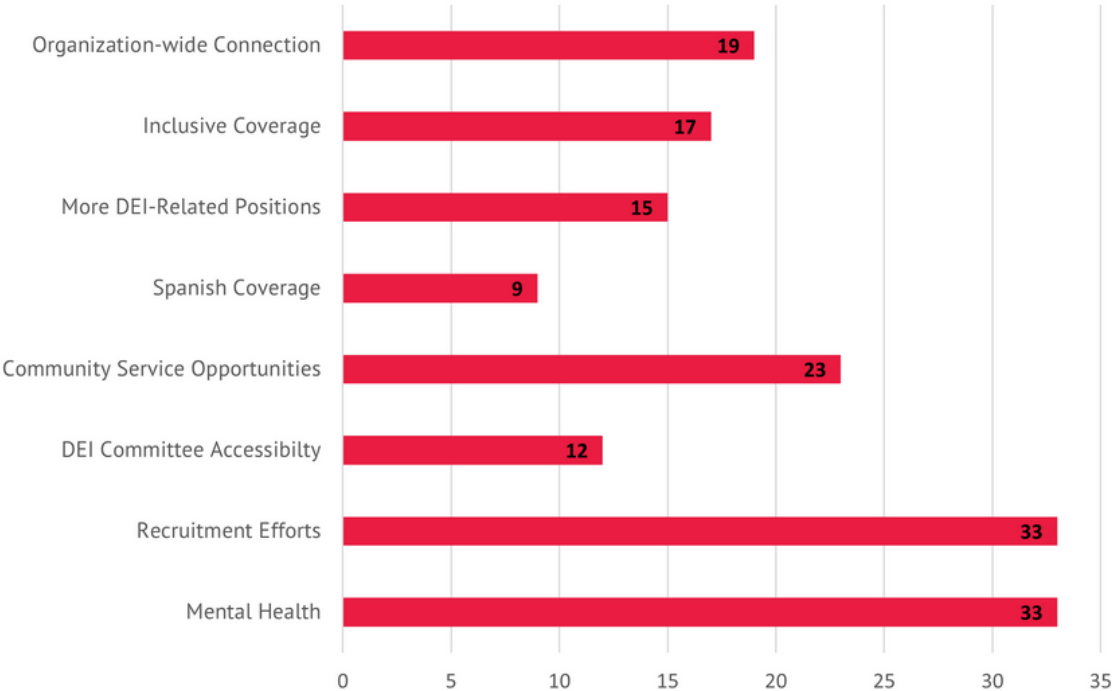


STUDENT STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

Pay Experience



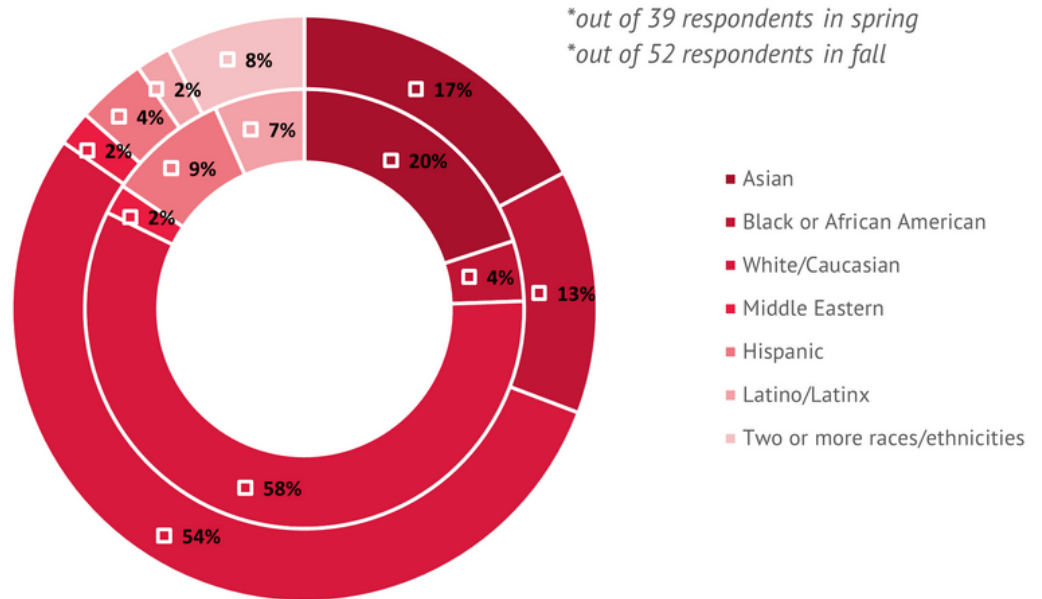
Top DEI Priorities



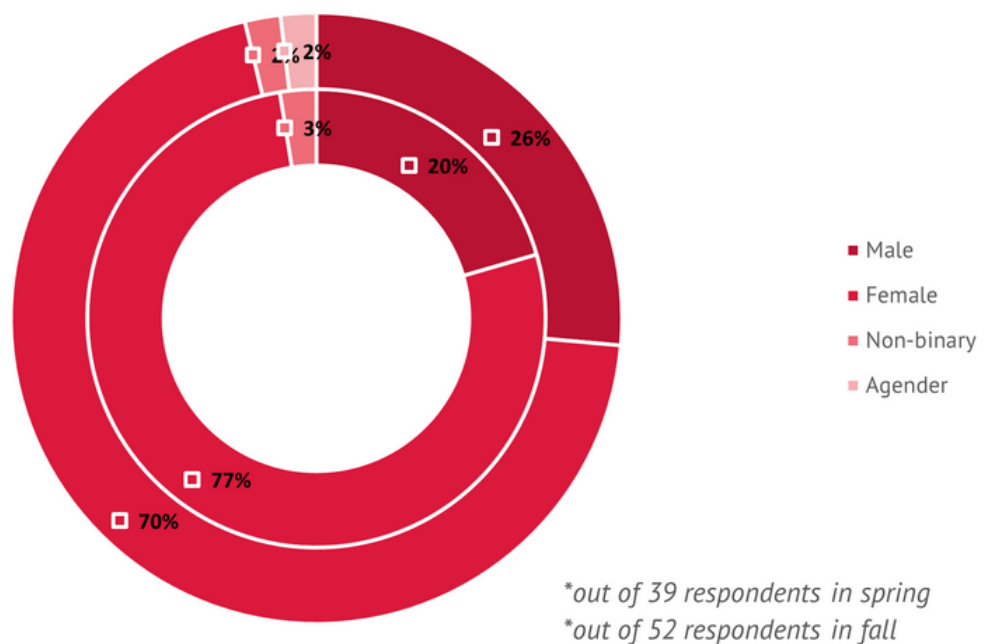
STUDENT STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

Fall vs. Spring 2022

Race & Ethnicity



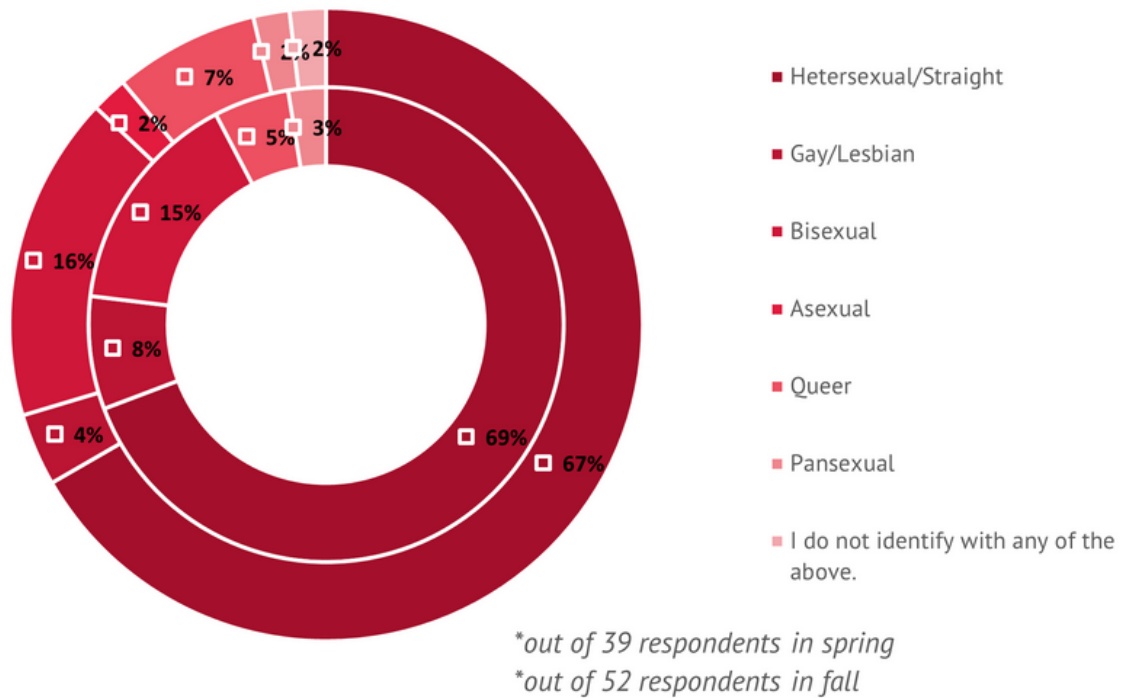
Gender Identity



STUDENT STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

Fall vs. Spring 2022

Sexual Orientation



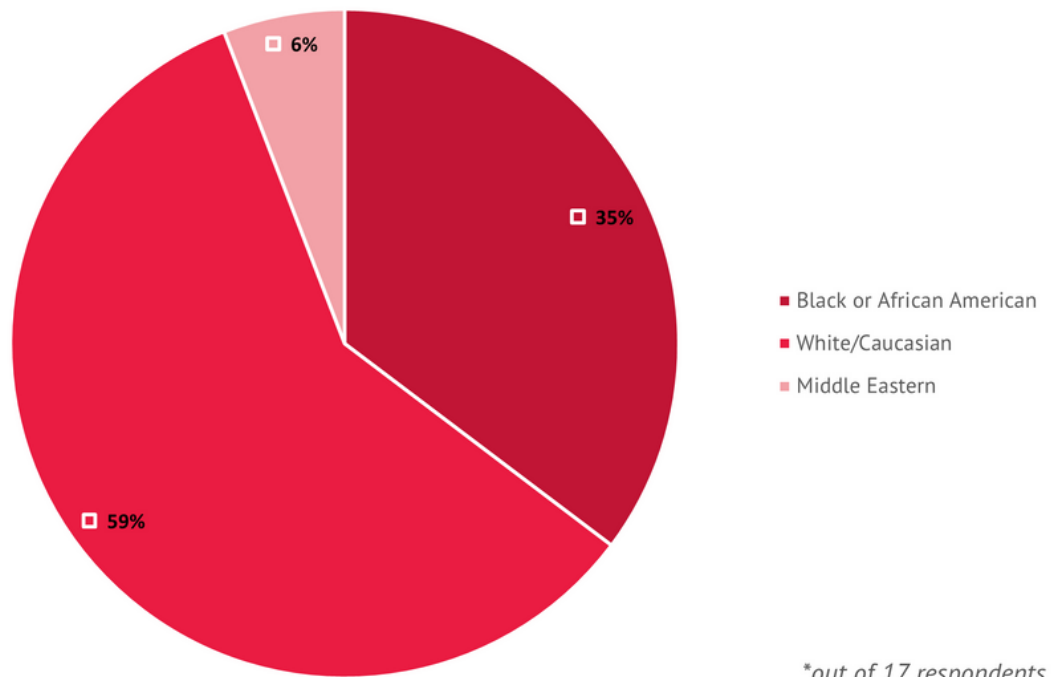
BOARD OF DIRECTORS DEMOGRAPHICS

Over the past five years, the board of directors of The Red & Black Publishing Company, Inc. has made a deliberate effort to increase the diversity of its members while also supporting the overall DEI efforts of the student and professional staff leaders at The Red & Black.

For more than a decade, the board membership includes two student positions – Editor in Chief and Student Ad Manager – and in 2021 the board voted to expand student representation with the addition of a student board DEI member, who co-chairs the board DEI committee with a non-student board member.

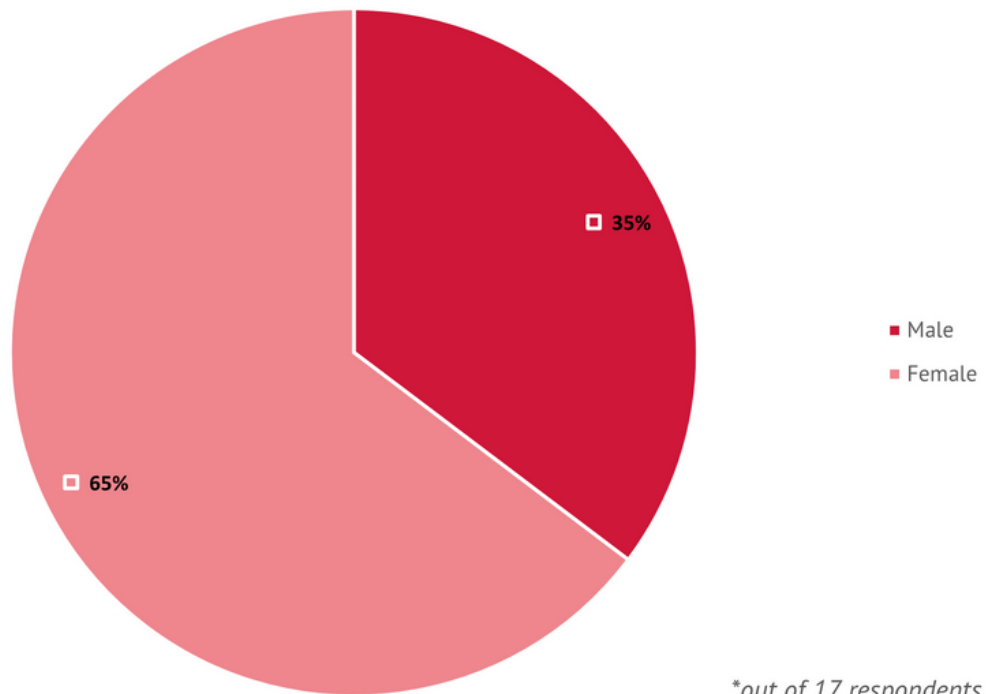
Starting in 2022, board members opted to track and report their demographics, following the guidelines set out by Candid, the nonprofit industry standard. In 2022 there were 19 board members; 17 of whom completed the survey.

Race & Ethnicity



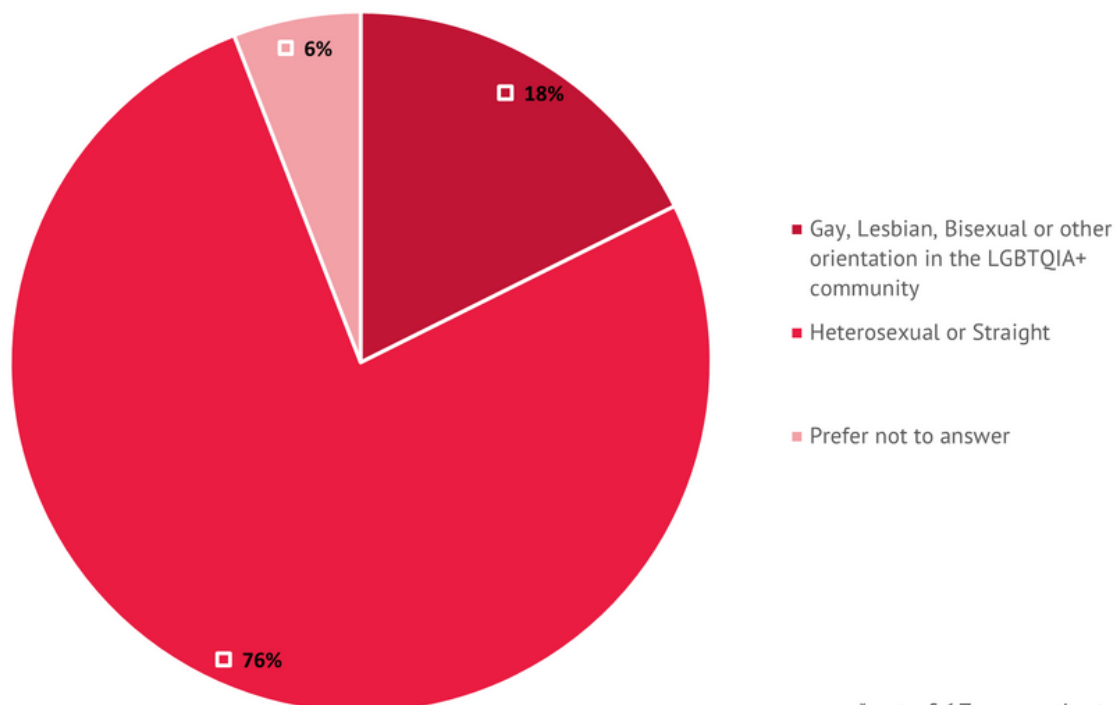
BOARD DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

Gender Identity



**out of 17 respondents*

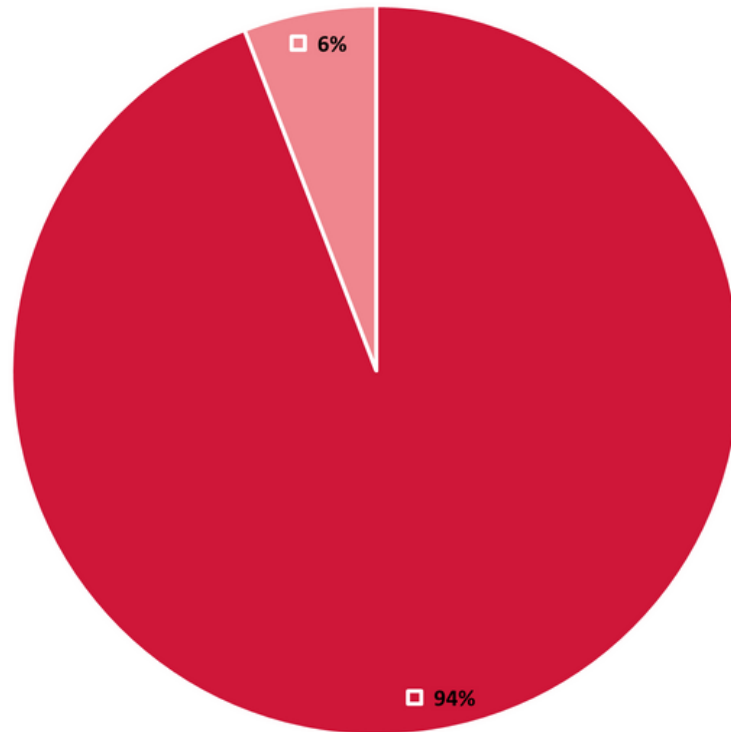
Sexual Orientation



**out of 17 respondents*

BOARD DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

Ability

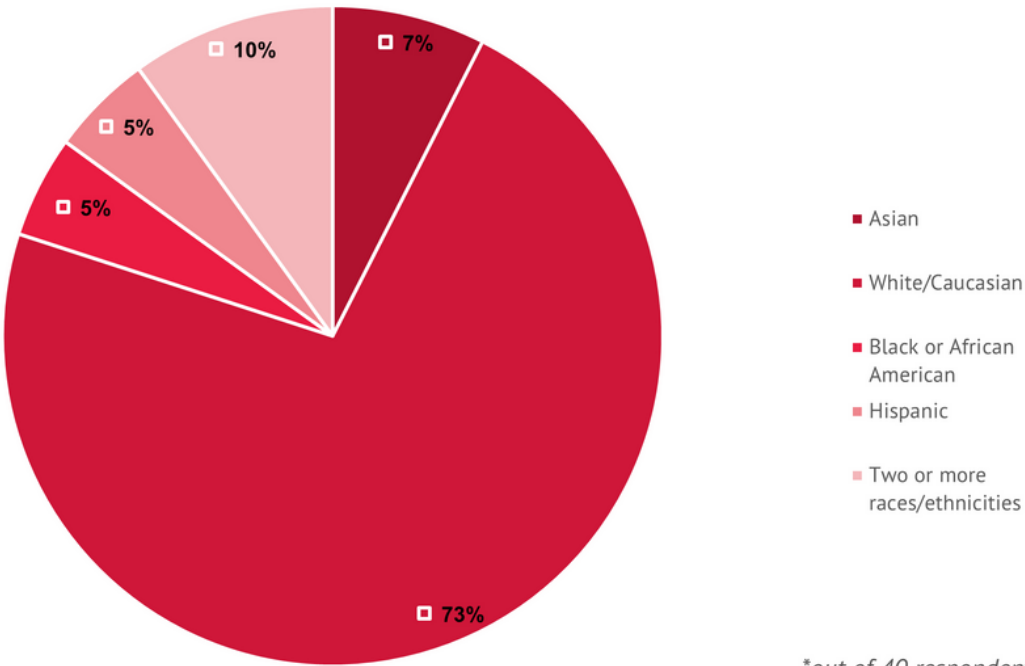


- A person without a disability
- Prefer not to state

**out of 17 respondents*

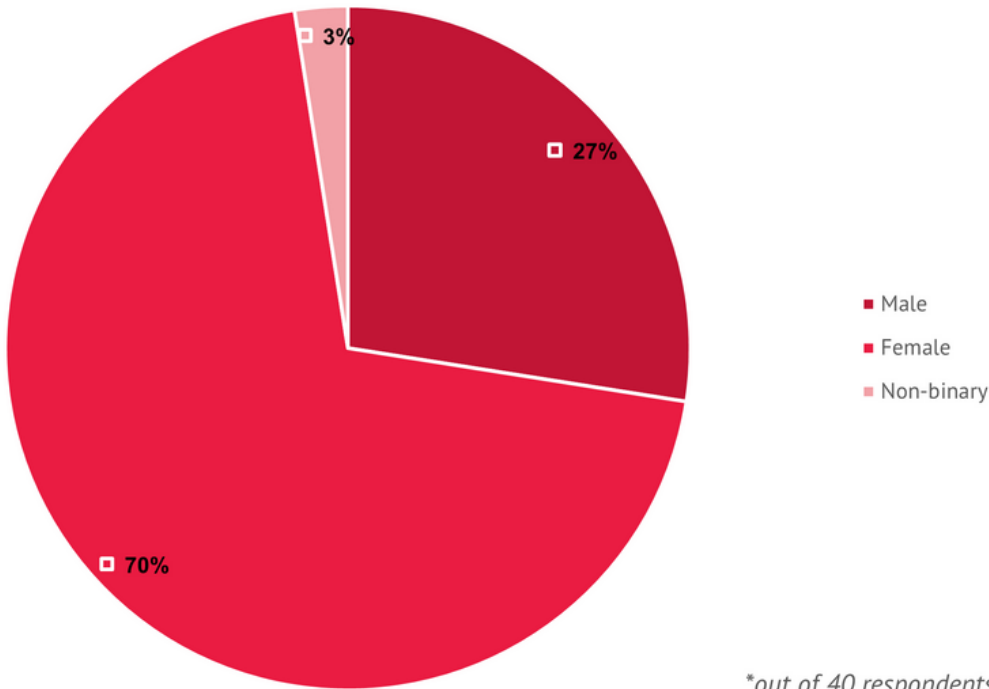
CONTRIBUTOR DEMOGRAPHICS

Race & Ethnicity



**out of 40 respondents*

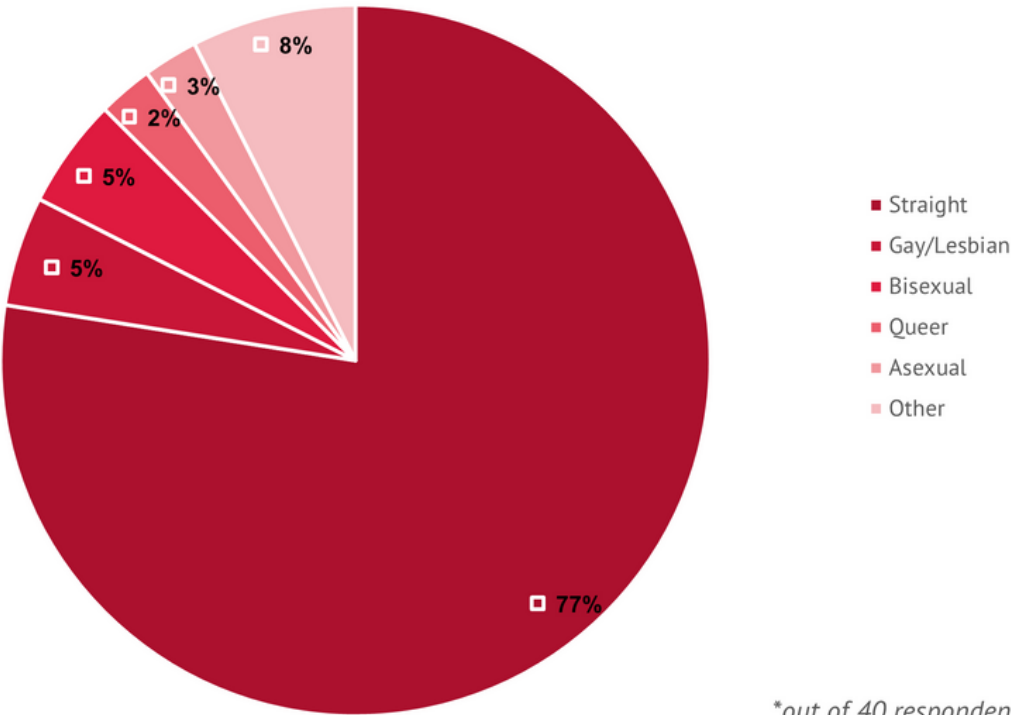
Gender Identity



**out of 40 respondents*

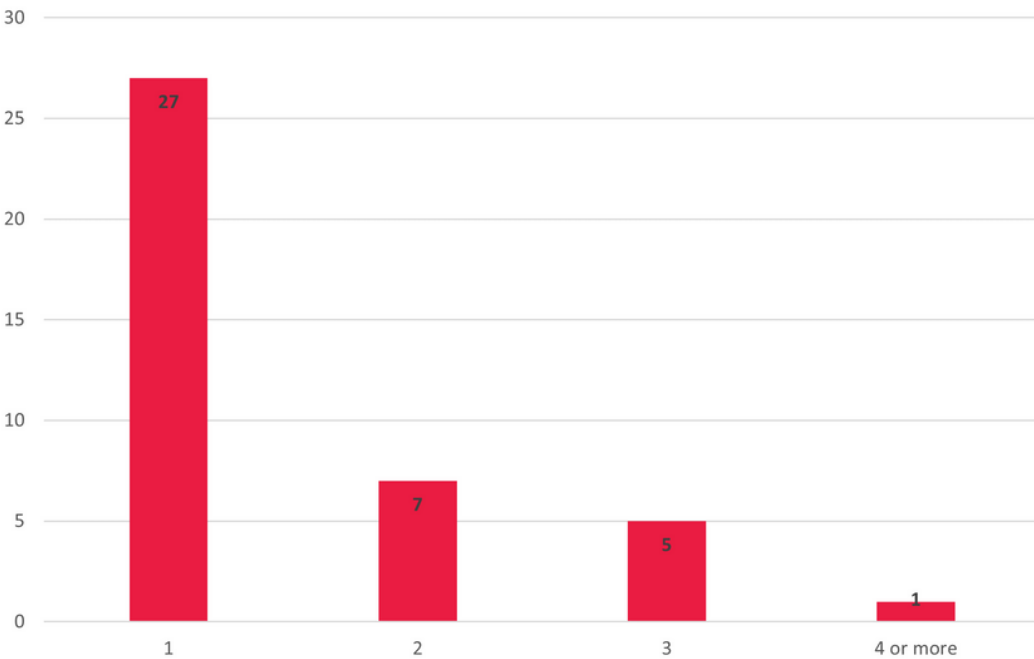
CONTRIBUTOR DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

Sexual Orientation



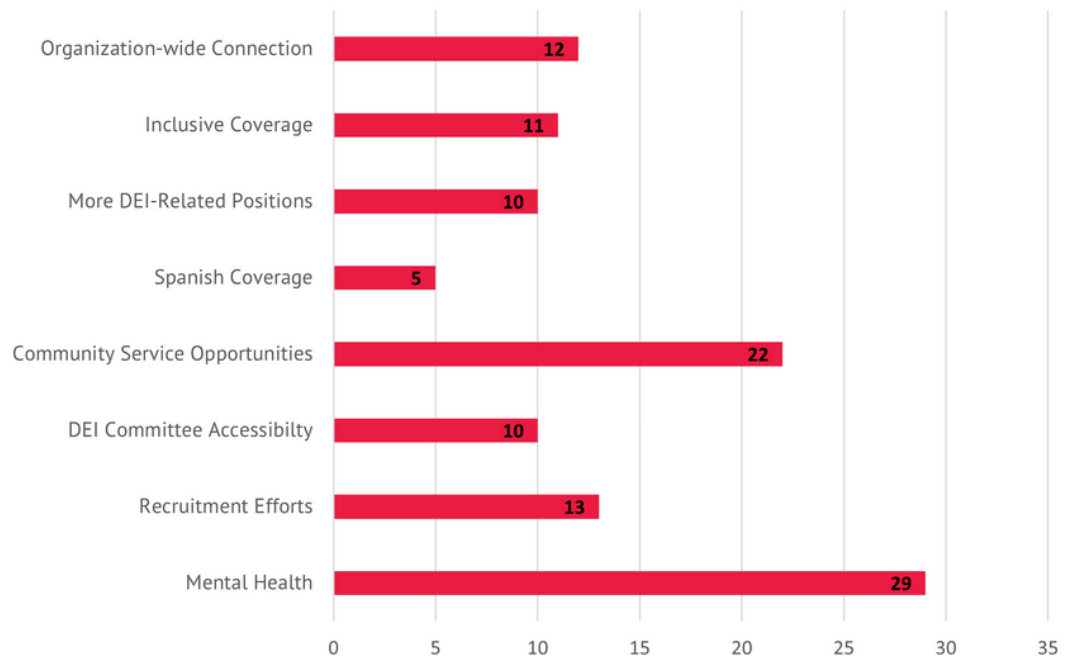
**out of 40 respondents*

Semesters at R&B



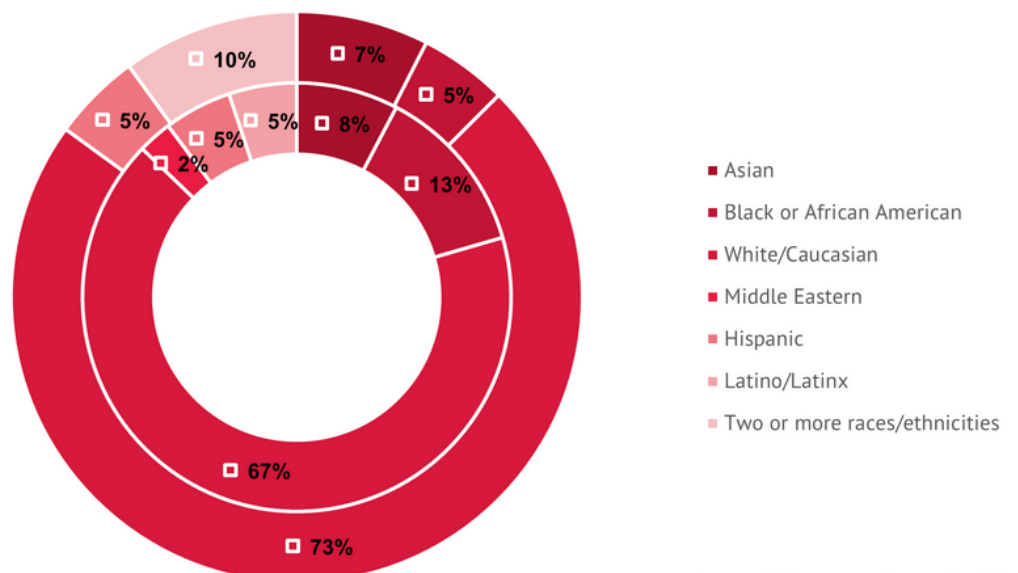
CONTRIBUTOR DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

Top DEI Priorities



Fall vs. Spring 2022

Race & Ethnicity

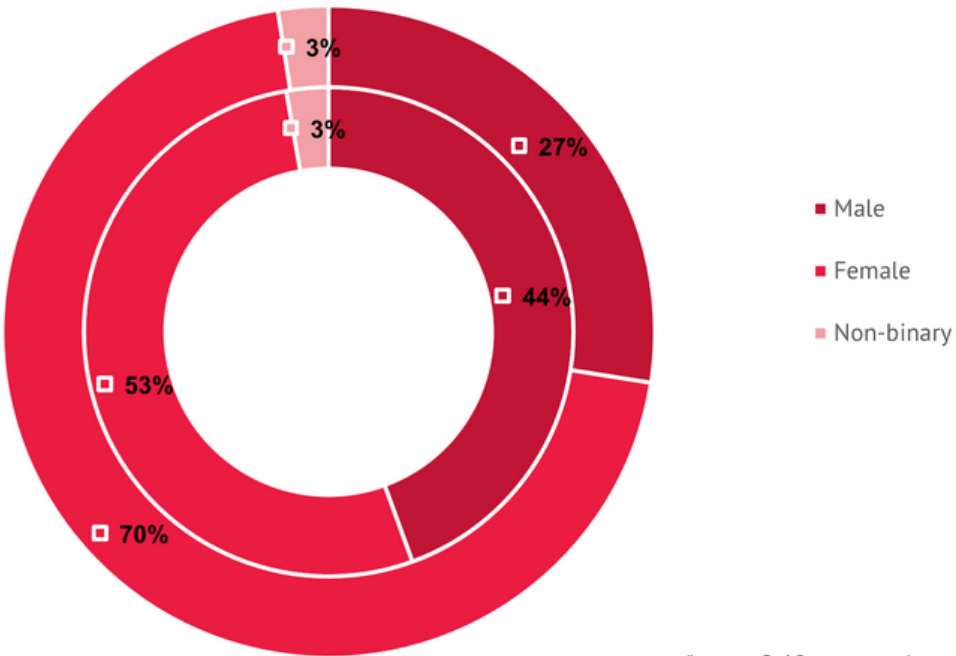


**out of 40 respondents in fall
out of 37 respondents in spring

CONTRIBUTOR DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

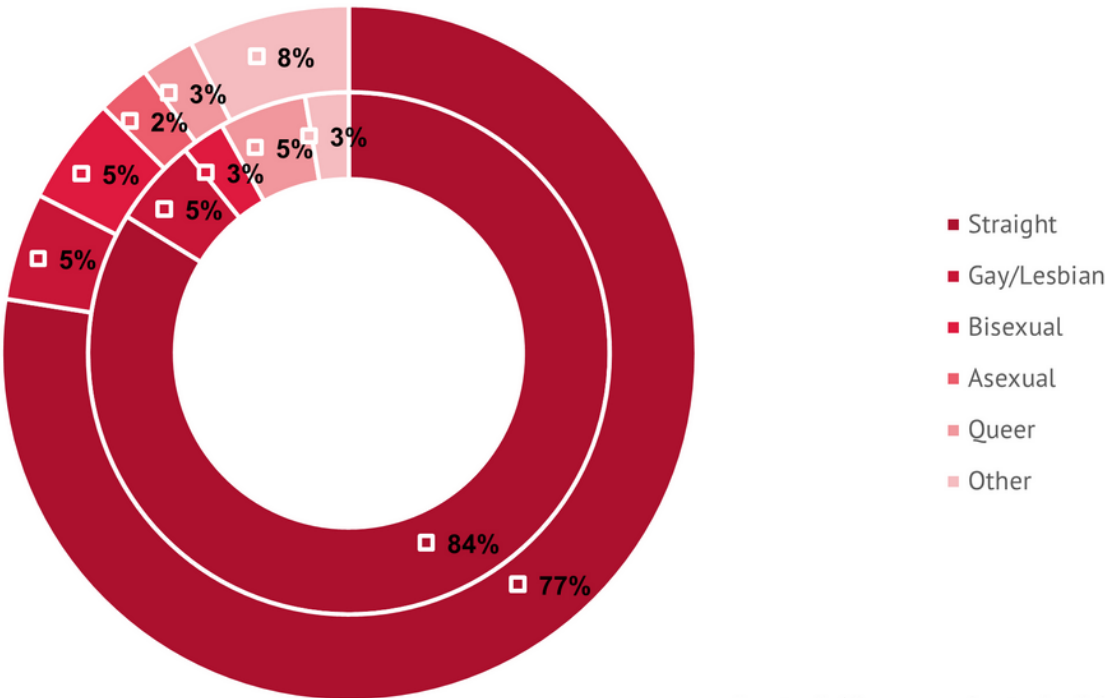
Fall vs. Spring 2022

Gender Identity



**out of 40 respondents in fall
out of 37 respondents in spring

Sexual Orientation



**out of 40 respondents in fall
out of 37 respondents in spring

PROGRESS UPDATES

From Libby Hobbs, 2022-2023 DEI Chair



As the fall 2022 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Chair, my goal was to connect the entire news organization — editorial, sales, creative services, promotions and professional staff — through service and community.

During the spring 2022 semester, the DEI committee led by Dania Kalaji formalized the Spanish Translator role in the newsroom, supplying regular Spanish-language content to our readers. The committee also built and introduced an internal Diverse Sources Database inspired by the NPR initiative of the same name.

Additionally, a DEI section with important holidays and inclusive language was added to the newsroom's style guide. The committee also completed a community outreach initiative by hosting a free, public mayoral debate ahead of the Athens Mayoral election in May 2022.

The fall 2022 committee team met for the first time in August and began a DEI representatives initiative. Each member of our committee connected our mission with the broader organization by being the pipeline of DEI-related communication at their respective desks. We hoped this would make DEI more accessible at The Red & Black.

We hosted our first workshop of the semester on responsible journalism in September. We discussed how best to approach people and sensitive subjects through both the interviewing and writing process. Additionally, I spoke about the DEI work at The Red & Black during a Georgia Scholastic Press Association event for high school students.

Coinciding with Hispanic Heritage Month, we expanded our Spanish-language coverage and desk in October. Not only did we volunteer at the University of Georgia's Latin American Ethnobotanical Garden but we relaunched our Red & Black Gives Back campaign to sponsor Athens' LatinxFest.

PROGRESS UPDATES CONT'D

Throughout November, The Red & Black donated over 130 cans of sweetened condensed milk to Turkeypalooza which helped provide Thanksgiving dinners for those who could not afford them. The Walk and Talks initiative was also launched, which allowed staff members to spend an hour outdoors with each other to clear their minds.

Finally, in December, the DEI Committee hosted Mary Frances Early, the first Black graduate from UGA, at The Red & Black's office for our last workshop of the semester. She shared stories about her time at the university, what prompted her to write a book, and how the media – including The Red & Black – engaged with her in the past.

This semester, we recorded the largest number of staff responses in our survey's history. Our semesterly paid staff and contributor surveys allowed us to collect more than just data for this DEI report. It also allowed us to gather feedback on what the DEI committee and leadership team can do better. This semester, we also expanded the survey to include those serving on the board of directors.

After analyzing and listening to this feedback, we've made our goals and recommendations for the year ahead.



GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase pay

The Red & Black is not unique in the fact that it runs on limited funds, but it is good to recognize that the pay offered to student staff could be preventing new people from joining. While all positions could benefit from a pay raise, the positions of DEI Chair and beat reporters were identified as most immediate.

Everyone is compensated for serving on the DEI Committee, but as seen since the creation of the committee, the pay of the DEI Chair is not equivalent to the amount of work that is asked of the chair. To further elevate the mission of the DEI Committee and emphasize its importance to the organization, we recommend that the DEI Chair pay is positioned closer to that of the editors and/or leadership positions. We believe this will help ensure that this role does not have to be combined with other roles in the newsroom, which can lead to burnout and exhaustion — something that people in positions related to DEI across industries have spoken out about.

Staffers that are paid to write, currently known as beat reporters, help contribute to the success of The Red & Black. They are often expected to write multiple stories a week while diving into their beat — all for very little pay, comparably to other positions in the newsroom. Again, this could be preventing people from applying for these roles. We recommend that the pay is increased to at least \$100 per pay period.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Revise staff and contributor survey

Our commitment to gathering the demographic data of our staff is clear. However, there are some key areas that the current surveys do not address. Socioeconomic status is only related to one question that asks about staffers' needs in holding a paid job, but there are no questions about how many jobs staffers may work outside of The Red & Black or whether the pay is used for essential living costs or supplemental income.

Additionally, there are no questions about the language abilities of staff or contributors nor whether they are in-state, out-of-state or international students. These questions are some examples of demographic data that help create a more well-rounded picture of The Red & Black, and better identify where the organization could use diversifying so that multiple communities are represented.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Create a stronger foundation for DEI

“I would love for DEI initiatives to be actively talked about by people other than the DEI Committee! I think it’s important that editors AND contributors AND other staff understand DEI and it’s mission, and I would love to see this become a regular part of pitches and source outreach,” said one of the respondents.

The DEI committee cannot be the only individuals held responsible to The Red & Black’s DEI standards. The entire news organization — student staff, student writers, professional staff board of directors — needs to be accountable.

For DEI to thrive and make progress at The Red & Black, there must be a foundation of staff and students who want to see progress. While the DEI Chair should be able to exist as a position outside of other editorial and leadership positions, the publication’s leadership must demonstrate and uplift visibility of DEI efforts. They should actively contribute and participate in the committee’s initiatives, as well as create their own.

Currently, DEI is passive at The Red & Black. We hope to have more social, service and workshop opportunities that will connect the news organization with DEI. As communication and participation with DEI increase among every individual, we believe DEI will become more active at The Red & Black.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish roles

Our DEI Committee was created by students and is run by students. It is difficult for DEI to gain consensus among every department in this organization because it started with editorial and must broaden to the whole organization.

We encourage The Red & Black to establish exactly what role it wants DEI to play in its coverage, organization and beyond. With the promotions team and Outreach Manager co-existing with the DEI committee for the first time, each position's responsibilities are unclear.

Specifically, the Outreach Manager position was created two years ago to make sure our organization was reaching out to diverse student groups and community organizations; as well as offering support to new recruits. Currently, we believe this role has been underutilized and could benefit from being brought more into the fold of the organization and especially the newsroom. This is a crucial role for building better relationships with the communities we serve.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Coverage and content

To increase The Red & Black's involvement in the community, we propose the return of monthly spotlights of a community member or UGA student who demonstrate a commitment to DEI in Athens or at UGA.

These monthly spotlights would be produced exclusively for The Red & Black's social media outlets. Each content desk would have the opportunity to briefly interview their nominated person and produce the spotlight themselves. Additionally, we hope each desk will produce one article a month that is exclusively sourced by people of color and pertains to DEI-related topics such as race, sexuality, gender, ability, etc. This will really help desks that have struggled to produce more substantial coverage of such subjects and topics, such as the sports desk.

Another important point of consideration involves the Spanish desk. It is our hope that this desk continues to grow in the coming semesters, and could see the return and addition of a Spanish Reporter and Editor. We feel the best way to engage with this community is to have the Spanish desk create content beyond translations. Until then, we encourage desk editors to communicate more with the Spanish Translator to identify articles that could and should be made accessible to the Spanish-speaking community. To do this, we recommend that a Spanish section be added to our digital budget and the number of articles per desk per week be standardized. If the number of articles exceeds what one person is capable of producing, we recommend the addition of another Spanish Translator.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Professional staff

Unlike the student staff that shifts each semester, The Red & Black's professional staff remains a consistent presence in the organization. Members of the professional staff are helpful resources for the students in their roles and offer guidance and assistance.

In terms of demographics, it's worth noting that the professional staff is entirely white. Currently, there is an opening for a Newsroom Adviser. We hope the hiring committee will take diversification of the staff into consideration in this decision.

Other areas of the organization

While DEI efforts may have began in the newsroom, it's important that it continues to extend beyond it and encompasses all departments of the organization. The DEI Committee consists of some members from other departments, but representation on the committee is skewed toward the newsroom. In fact, newsroom leaders – the Editor in Chief, Print Managing Editor and Digital Managing Editor – are all standing members of the committee and the DEI Chair is hired by them.

To address this lack of representation, we encourage the addition of the Student Ad Manager, who is an organizational leader equivalent to the EIC, to be a standing committee member. In addition, we advise communications, creative services and promotions to nominate a member from their respective team to be on the committee. We believe doing so will ensure the incorporation of specialized initiatives to benefit the entire organization.

CLOSING

To close out this report, we want to reiterate that the organization has made great progress in various ways since the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee's establishment, but there is still work to be done and we can always do better. We hope the continuation of this report and the consideration of our goals and recommendations will make The Red & Black a space that even more people will want to be a part of.

