



# Final Project

GATE Fellowship 2017-2018

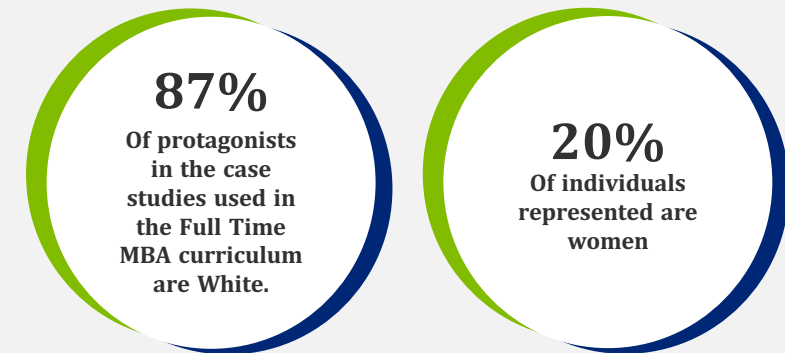
Fatima Saya

# Executive Summary

In Fall 2017, the Rotman School of Management welcomed its most diverse Full Time MBA class ever, with 70% of students born outside of Canada, and women making up 40% of the class. The school year also saw the launch of Rotman on Inclusion; the school's first-ever diversity and inclusion week, cohort-wide diversity and inclusion training, a conference on the topic of Universal Design, and a faculty-led project aimed at coding the demographic makeup of case protagonists in Full Time MBA courses. Despite this progress, there have been discussions among students about the Core Curriculum and the extent to which it succeeds at integrating gender-related content.

“ **Leading People in Organizations felt overly focused on macho finance cases** even though the protagonists of the two I most readily recall were female. Also in LPO, I found it alienating that the first couple of cases with female protagonists called the women by their first names, whereas as the first couple of cases with male protagonists called the men by their last names. In Negotiations, the prof [sic] seemed **resistant to discussing issues of gender** in his discipline, almost as if he didn't want to acknowledge the female experience as being different. This was not helpful; **I still feel like I have a large knowledge gap** on how women in negotiations can do better, and I think the male contingent of the class was poorly prepared on this front”

- FT MBA Student



Findings above reported in Rotman Equity Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) Committee Report 2015-2017 (January 2018)

As such, this project seeks to better understand how and to what extent Rotman is succeeding at integrating diversity-related content into the Core Curriculum according to MBA Full Time students. Using survey data collected from 86 respondents, this report outlines findings related to two key questions:

1. To what extent is it important that course content in the MBA Core Curriculum reflect the experiences of diverse groups?
2. To what extent did course content in the MBA Core Curriculum reflect diversity?

### *The Survey covered*

11 Core MBA Courses

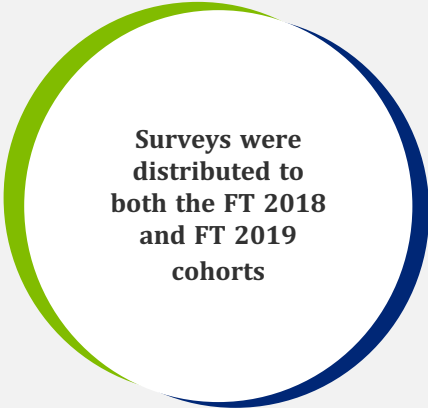
8 Diversity Categories or Types

86 Full Time MBA Students

67% self-identify as men

32% self-identify as women

*and includes responses from*



Surveys were distributed to both the FT 2018 and FT 2019 cohorts

There is increasing interest at MBA schools to make diversity and inclusion more than a side-show. Harvard Business School, for example, recently launched a course on the history of African American business and entrepreneurship, and is developing a whole new series of cases to increase representation of marginalized groups, including women. In light of these developments, it is hoped that the results of this survey can serve as a baseline for improvements to the MBA Core Curriculum.

*Survey results are presented in three parts:*

**1**

**Diversity Matters: Do students care?**

**2**

**Diversity in the Classroom: How does Rotman fare?**

**3**

**Mind the Gap: Does Rotman meet expectations?**

## *Key Findings:*

- I** The extent to which students consider it important that course content reflect diversity is mediated by course subject and whether courses are perceived as qualitative- or quantitative-focused.
- II** Respondents who self-identify as men see the inclusion of gender-related course content as less important than those who self-identify as women.
- III** Respondents tend to see the inclusion of content surrounding diverse industries or markets as more important than gender diversity.
- IV** According to respondents, all courses included at least some type of diversity-related content as part of coursework.
- V** Respondents who self-identify as men tended to overstate the extent to which course content reflected the experiences of diverse genders compared with those respondents who self-identify as women
- VI** Although there are differences between student expectations and the extent to which courses actually presented diversity-related content, responses to the two questions followed similar trends.

# Detailed Findings

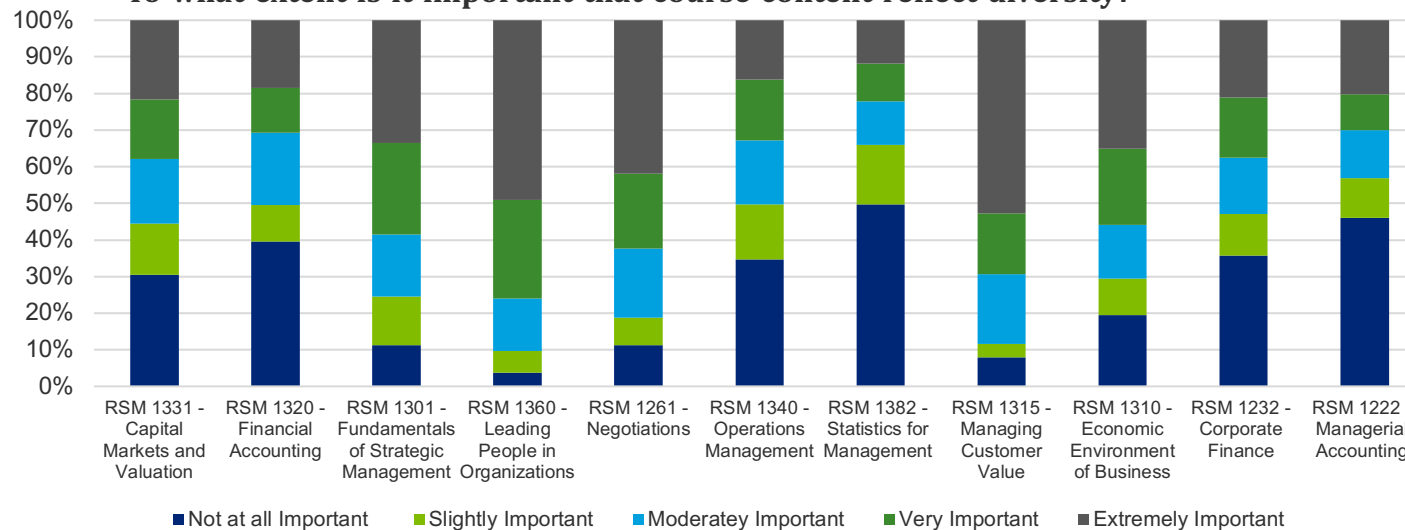


Diversity Matters: Do students care?



The extent to which students believe it important that course content reflect diversity is mediated by course subject. Survey respondents seem to see it as more important that diversity be reflected in the curriculum in certain courses over others.

To what extent is it important that course content reflect diversity?



“ I don't think my experiences are relevant to all of the core course content, especially in topics like corporate finance and accounting, where we are learning formulas and mechanics. That said, I do think there could be more room for the inclusion of female leadership in courses like LPO and Strategy. Negotiations was particularly challenging as I felt my questions about gender differences were not fully addressed.”  
- FT MBA Student

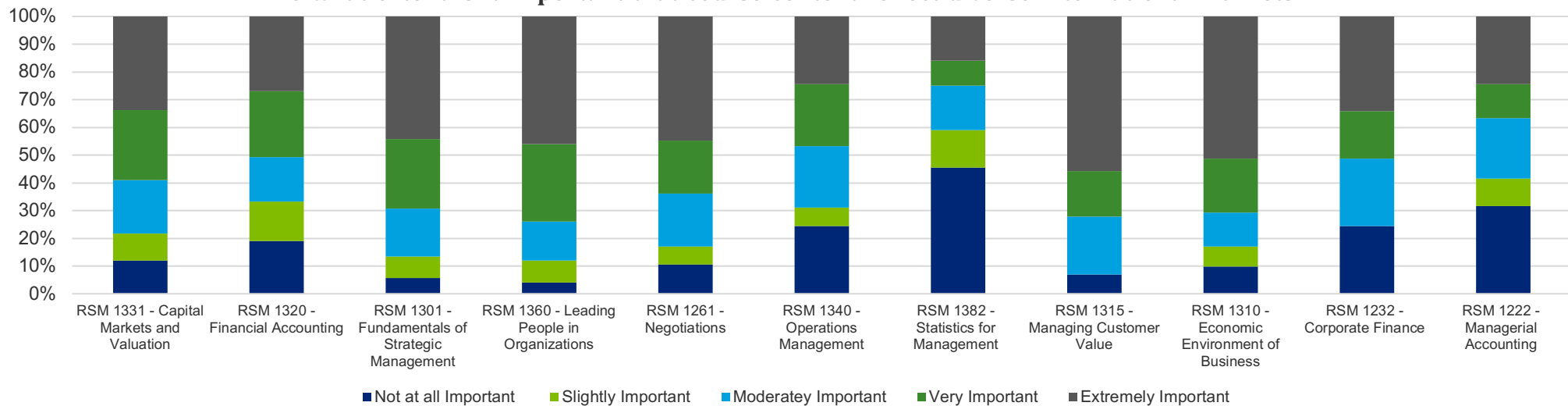
Average “importance” scores are detailed below (Extremely Important = 5)

RSM 1331	RSM 1320	RSM 1301	RSM 1360	RSM 1261	RSM 1340	RSM 1382	RSM 1315	RSM 1310	RSM 1232	RSM 1222
2.84	2.60	3.56	4.12	3.74	2.65	2.18	4.03	3.42	2.76	2.47

**26%**  
Average share of respondents in each course who believe it unimportant that course content reflect diversity

The extent to which survey respondents believe it important that course content reflect diversity also depends on the *type of diversity* in question. For example, more students see it as *extremely important that* content reflect diverse international markets than diversity more generally.

To what extent is it important that course content reflect diverse international markets?



**RSM 1310** – While **35%** of respondents consider it extremely important that content in Rotman’s Economic Environment of Business course reflect diversity more broadly, **51%** consider it extremely important that the course reflect diverse international markets.



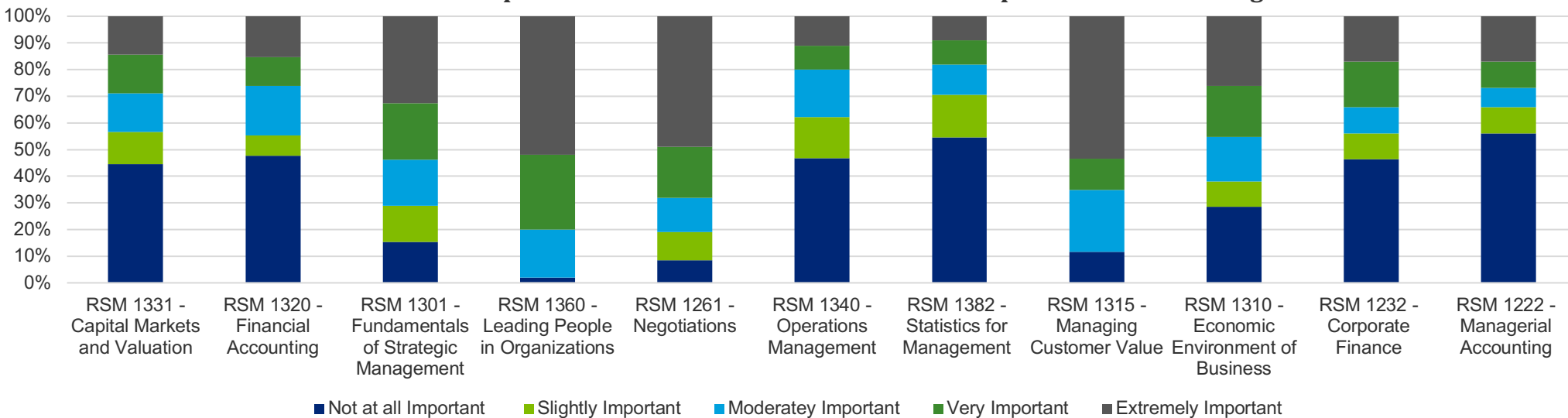
**RSM 1360** – In the Core leadership course, Leading People in Organizations, **46%** of respondents consider it extremely important that course content reflect diverse international markets, while **49%** see it as extremely important that the course reflect diversity generally.



**RSM 1340** – **24%** of student respondents believe it unimportant that course content in Operations Management reflect diverse international markets, while **35%** of respondents consider it unimportant that the course reflect diversity across all categories under review.

However, when asked specifically about the extent to which it is important that course content reflect the experiences of diverse genders, responses are more mixed. There is greater variability between course subjects, and responses are mediated by respondent gender.

**To what extent is it important that course content reflect the experiences of diverse genders?**



**RSM 1315** – Respondents consider it almost as important that content in Managing Customer Value reflect the experiences of diverse genders (53%), as diverse international markets (56%).



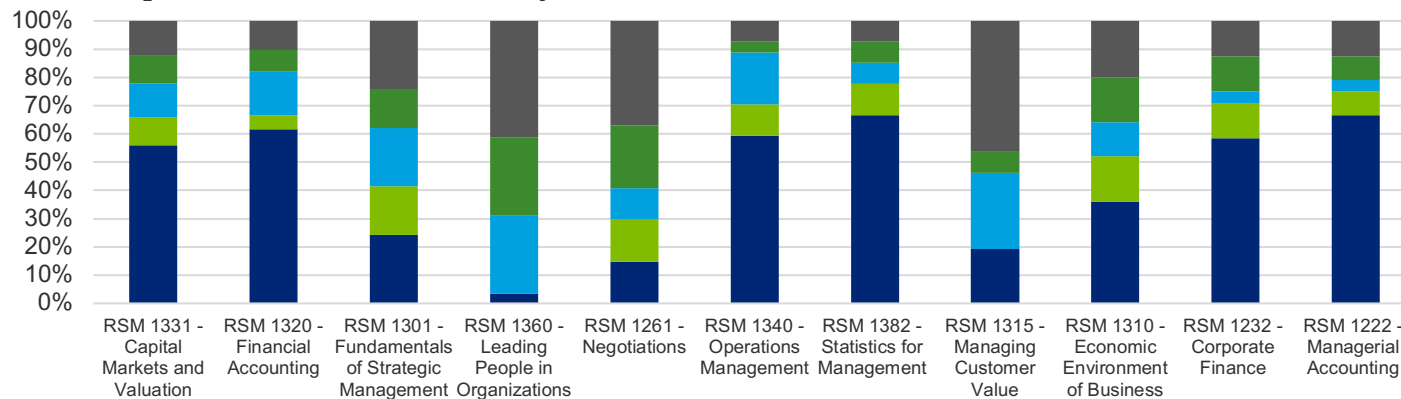
**RSM 1360** – 98% of respondents see it as at least moderately important that course content in Leading People in Organizations reflect the experiences of diverse genders.



**RSM 1340** – While 52% of student respondents believe it extremely important that course content in Fundamentals of Strategic Management reflect diverse industries, only 33% of respondents consider it extremely important that course content reflect the experiences of diverse genders.

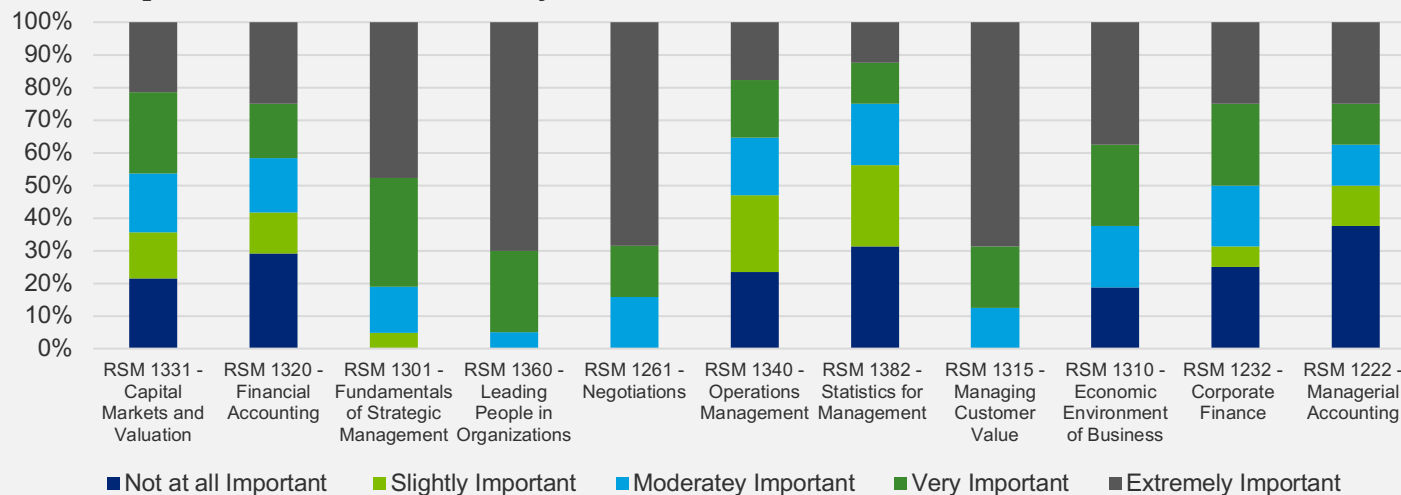
When asked about the extent to which they consider it important that course content reflect the experiences of diverse genders, respondents who self-identify as men see the inclusion of gender-related course content as less important across all course subjects than respondents who self-identify as women.

### Respondents who self-identify as men



On average, 43% of respondents who self-identified as men consider it unimportant that course content reflect the experiences of diverse genders.

### Respondents who self-identify as women



37% Average portion of women respondents see it as extremely important that course content reflect diversity.

■ Not at all Important ■ Slightly Important ■ Moderately Important ■ Very Important ■ Extremely Important

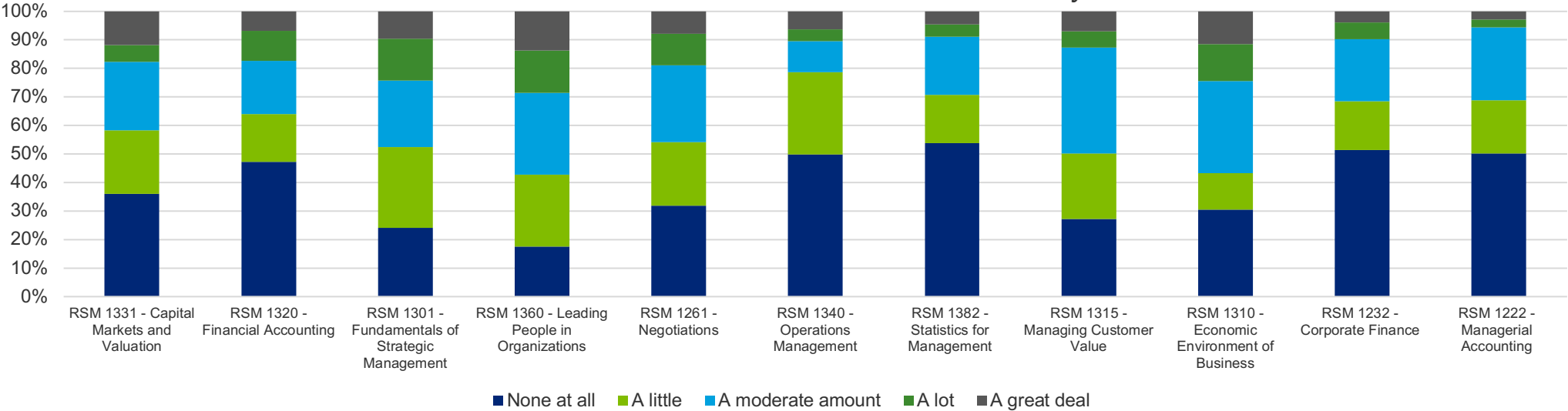


2

Diversity in the Classroom: How does  
Rotman fare?

Survey results show that many courses in the MBA core included at least some diversity-related content in cases, readings, assignments, class discussion or group work. Responses did, however, vary according to course subject, as well as the type of diversity-related content in question.

To what extent did course content reflect diversity?



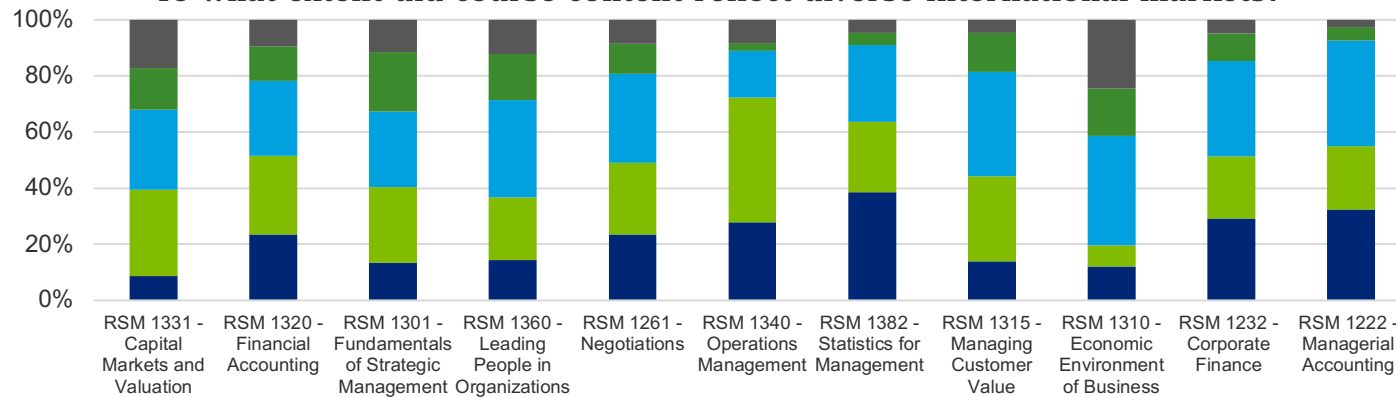
Average response for each course are detailed below (None at all = 1)

RSM 1331	RSM 1320	RSM 1301	RSM 1360	RSM 1261	RSM 1340	RSM 1382	RSM 1315	RSM 1310	RSM 1232	RSM 1222
2.35	2.12	2.57	2.82	2.41	2.84	1.89	2.42	2.62	1.94	2.79

**38%**  
Average share of respondents in each course who think course content did not reflect diversity

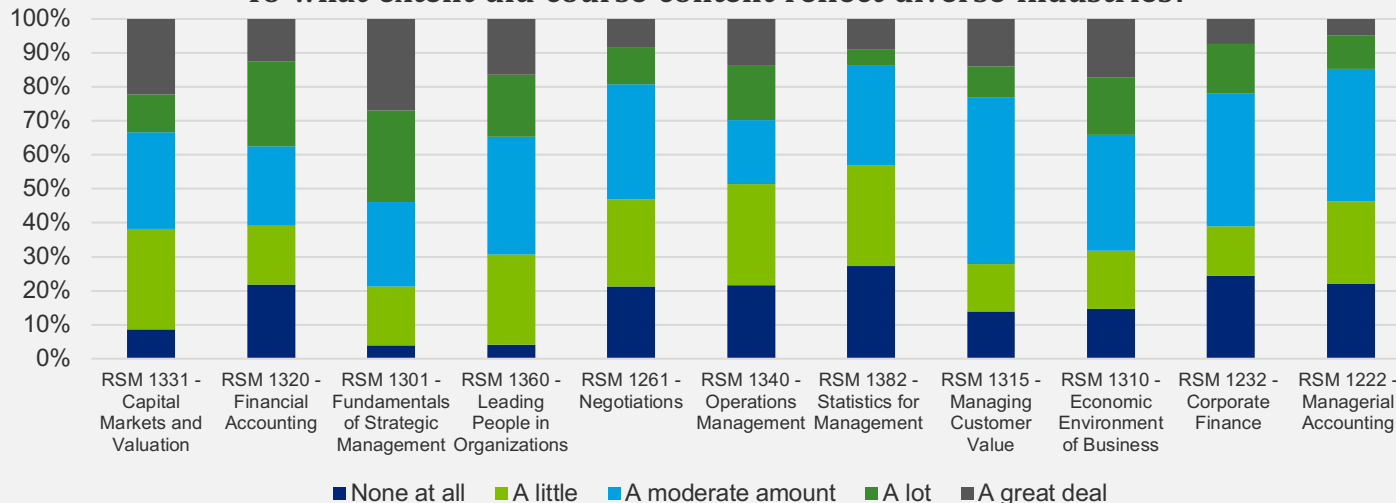
According to a majority of students, all course content reflected experiences in diverse international markets, as well as those in diverse industries to some extent.

**To what extent did course content reflect diverse international markets?**



**“ Most of the focus, material, case studies come from the US, which is not very representative of international markets** (given that the 40% of the students are international and will in a lot of case go back home) or Canadian.”  
- FT MBA Student

**To what extent did course content reflect diverse industries?**

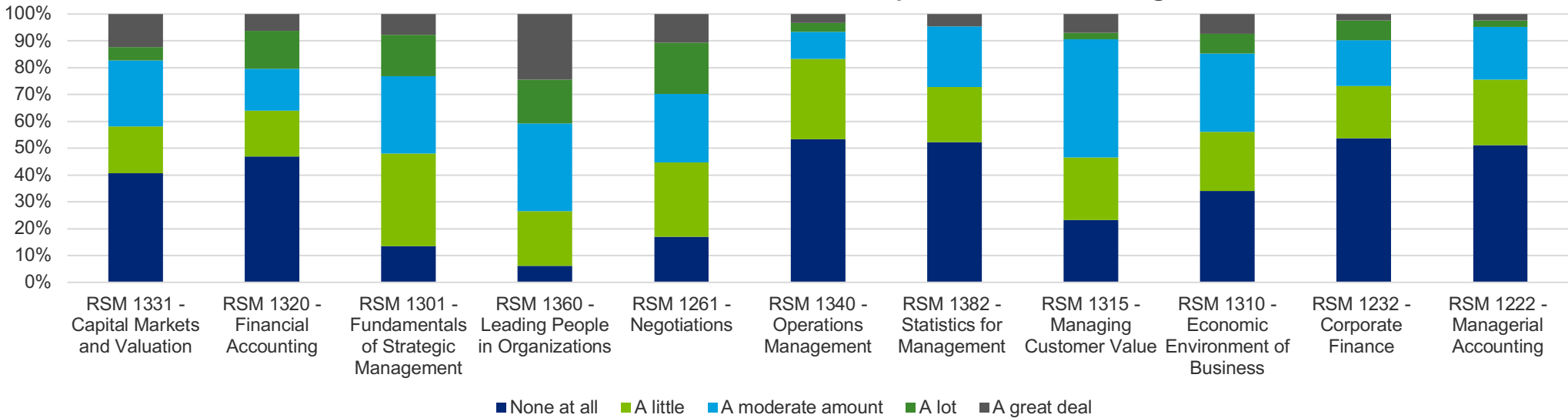


RSM- 1301


According to respondents, **Fundamentals of Strategic Management** did the best job of reflecting diverse industries: 96% hold that the course reflected this particular type of diversity at least “a little”

However, student respondents hold that courses failed to reflect the experiences of diverse genders.

To what extent did course content reflect the experiences of diverse genders?



 **RSM 1232** – 46% of respondents maintain that no content in Rotman’s Corporate Finance course reflected the experiences of diverse genders.












 **RSM 1360** – 73% of respondents hold that the Leading People in Organizations course reflected the experiences of diverse genders at least a moderate amount.

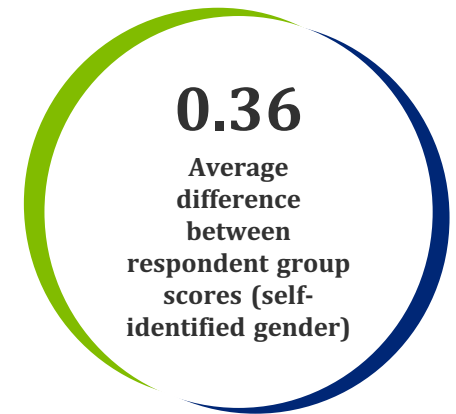
 **RSM 1261** – 17% of respondents said that course content in Managerial Negotiations did not at all reflect the experiences of diverse genders.














In fact, average responses for each course demonstrate a trend of poor representation of gender diversity more generally and respondents across both genders tend to agree. Although, respondents who self-identify as men tended to overstate the extent to which course content reflected the experiences of diverse genders – in comparison to those respondents who self-identify as women.

### Respondents who self-identify as men

RSM 1331	RSM 1320	RSM 1301	RSM 1360	RSM 1261	RSM 1340	RSM 1382	RSM 1315	RSM 1310	RSM 1232	RSM 1222
										
2.52	2.24	2.74	3.00	2.65	2.92	2.01	2.49	2.63	2.28	3.00



### Respondents who self-identify as women

RSM 1331	RSM 1320	RSM 1301	RSM 1360	RSM 1261	RSM 1340	RSM 1382	RSM 1315	RSM 1310	RSM 1232	RSM 1222
										
2.03	2.12	2.58	2.28	2.07	2.35	2.00	2.30	2.28	1.96	2.51

- 1 – None at all
- 2 – A little
- 3 – A moderate amount
- 4 – A lot
- 5 – A great deal

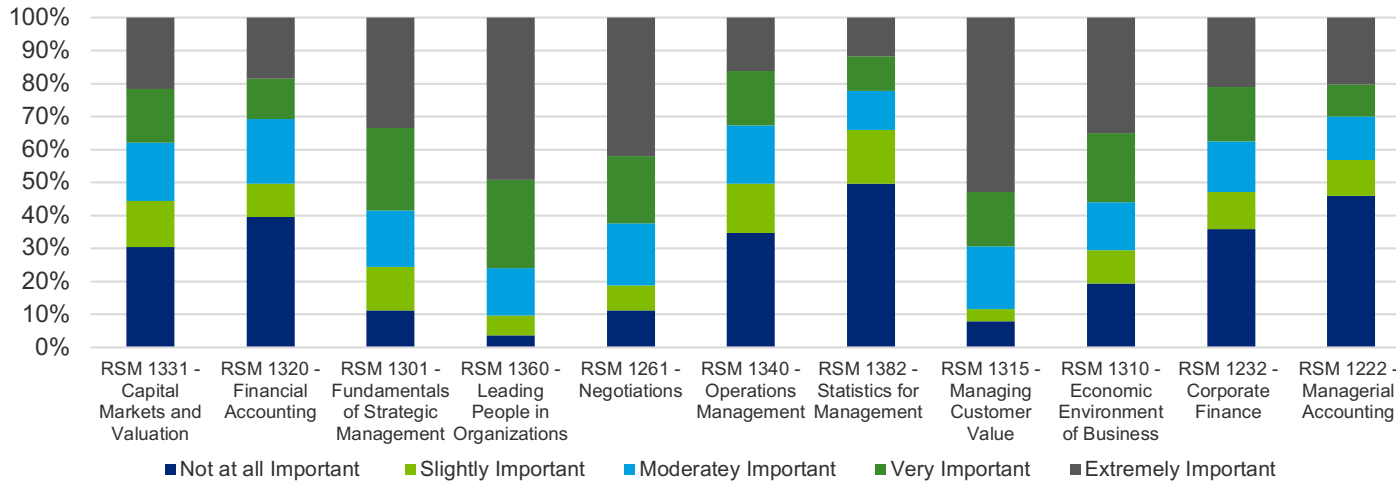


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Mind the Gap: Does Rotman meet expectations?

There seems to be a pattern with respect to respondents' ratings of the importance of diversity-related course content and the extent to which this content was covered in actual classes.

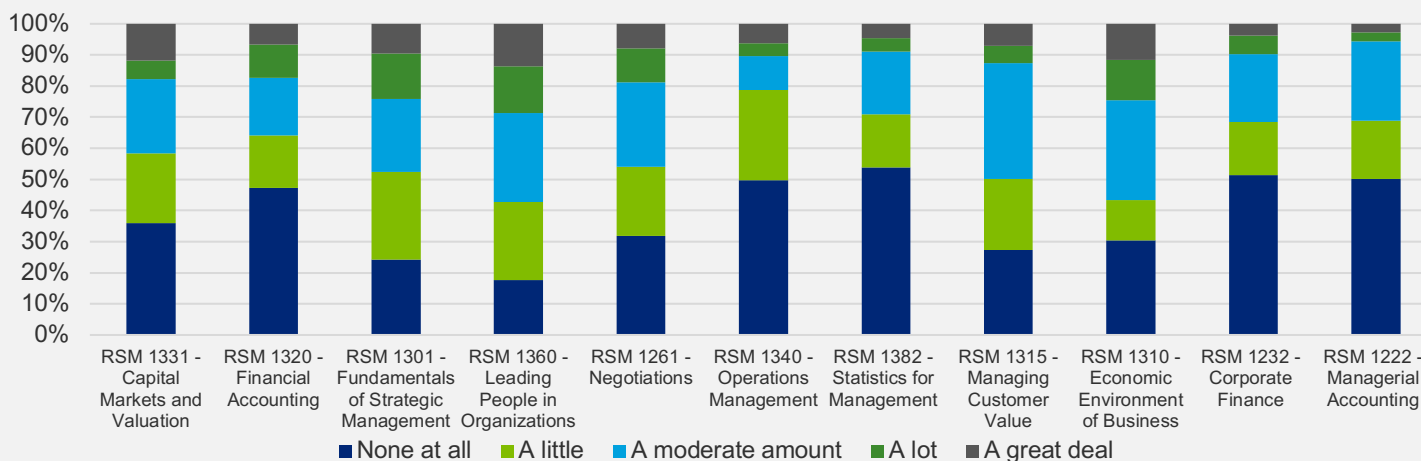
### To what extent is it important that course content reflect diversity?



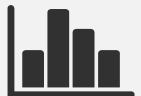
96% of respondents consider it at least slightly important that course content in RSM 1360 – Leading People in Organizations reflect diversity – the highest proportion of all courses reviewed. Similarly, 82% of respondents held that the course reflected at least a little diversity-related content; more than any other course.



### To what extent did course content reflect diversity?

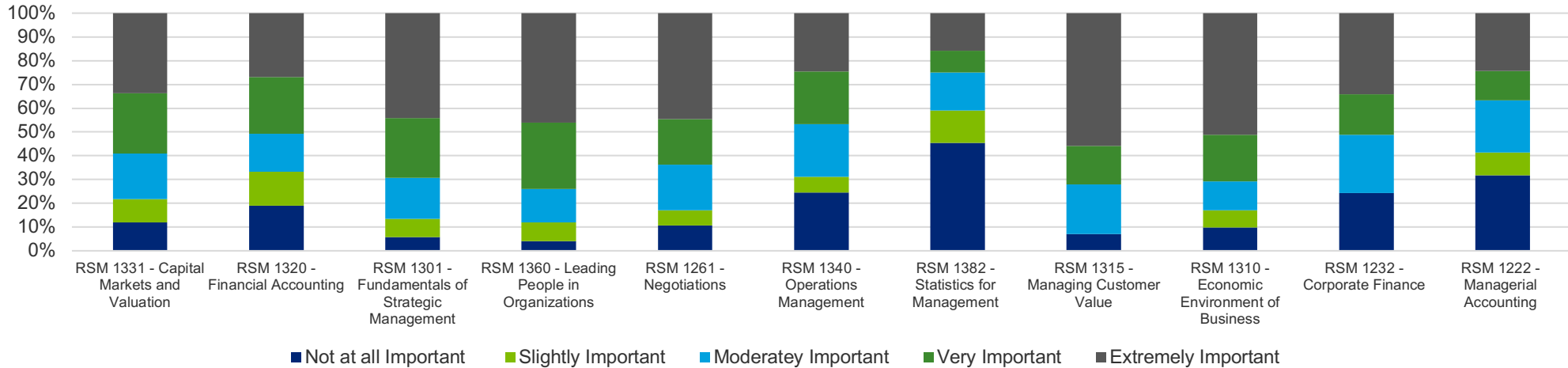


This trend also held for RSM 1382 – Statistics for Management: 54% of respondents see the inclusion of diversity related content as unimportant, and 50% held that the course content did not reflect diversity at all – the highest proportion of any course.

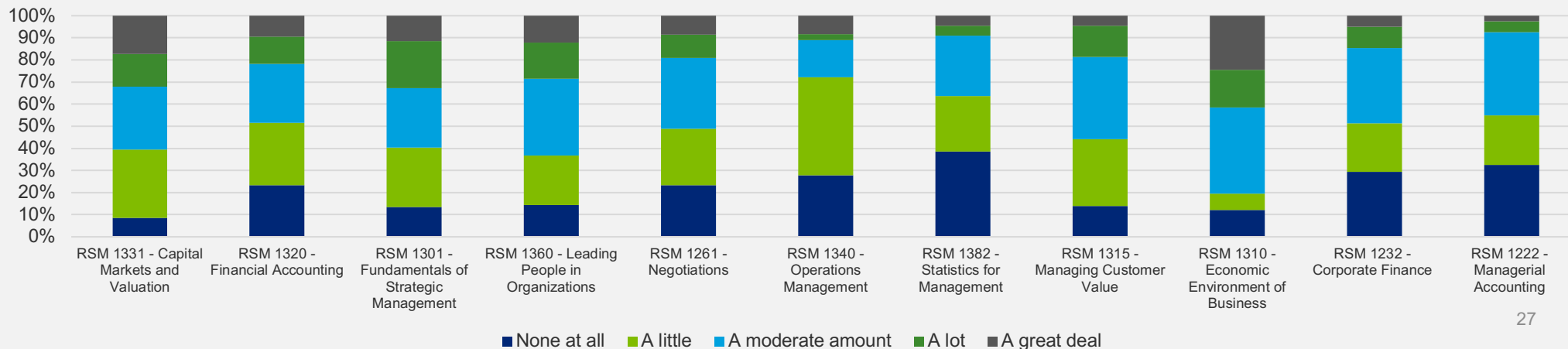


This trend is also clear for specific types of diversity. By and large, courses where student respondents feel it most important that content reflect diverse international markets are the same courses that included more of it.

**To what extent is it important that course content reflect diverse international markets?**

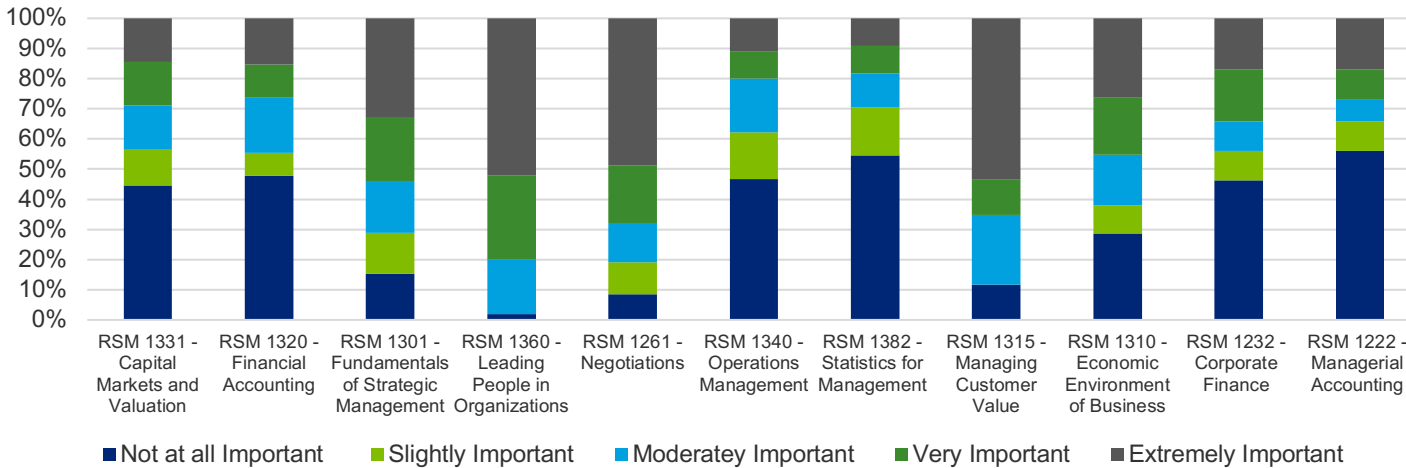


**To what extent did course content reflect diverse international markets?**



Similarly, there seems to be agreement among respondents that the courses where reflecting the experiences of diverse genders is thought to be least important are also those that reflected these experiences the least.

### To what extent is it important that course content reflect the experiences of diverse genders?



The six courses with the largest proportion of respondents who believe it unimportant that course content reflect the experiences of diverse genders are the same five courses where course content seemed to reflect this type of diversity least. In addition, it is important to note that these six courses are those with a quantitative focus.

### To what extent did course content reflect the experiences of diverse genders?

