

## The City University of New York: Sexual Violence Campus Climate Survey

CUNY's Sexual Violence Campus Climate Survey was an online, anonymous survey that could be taken on smartphones, tablets or desktops. The instrument was designed with Snap Surveys Software. The survey, which took 10-20 minutes to complete, was sent to approximately 270,000 enrolled students at 22 CUNY colleges.

On March 28, 2016, students received emails from their Presidents explaining that on the following day students would be receiving an email containing a link to the CUNY Sexual Violence Campus Climate Survey. The Presidents' emails explained the importance of the survey and encouraged participation. On March 29, 2016, the survey was sent to approximately 270,000 CUNY students. Students also received multiple reminder emails throughout the survey's four-week administration.

The survey was open from March 29, 2016 through April 21, 2016 (four weeks). During the first week, every day, there was a drawing for 15 MetroCards worth \$65 each. During the second week, every day, there was a drawing for seven \$65 MetroCards. During the third and fourth weeks of the survey, each day there was a drawing for two MetroCards worth \$65. In total, the survey was open for four weeks and there were 182 MetroCard winners.

There were 31,927 responses. Of those, 30,296 students were 18 years of age or older and 30,001 respondents agreed to participate. The response rate was approximately 11 percent.

The campus climate assessment was drafted by a design team; members included CUNY administration, faculty and staff with expertise in the study of sexual violence, relevant federal and state law, compliance, survey research and policy analysis. There was also a 17-member advisory board charged with reviewing drafts of the survey instrument and providing comments to the design team. The advisory board was composed of faculty, administration and staff with expertise in public health, public safety, relevant state and federal law, compliance, student advocacy, counselling, and student affairs. The advisory board had both campus and central office representation.

In designing the survey, we reviewed survey instruments that had been administered at more than 100 colleges and universities and used many of the questions found in these surveys. In addition, we were mindful that our campus climate assessment contain questions that captured information on the 11 topic areas required by New York State's *Enough Is Enough* statute.<sup>1</sup>

The design team also modified commonly used questions and wrote questions not seen in other surveys in order to capture the unique experiences of CUNY students. CUNY is the largest urban public institution in the country and the experiences of CUNY students differ in many ways as compared to most of the students in the surveys that had already been published. The vast majority of CUNY students do not live on campus; they commute, primarily by public transportation, to and from school. Fraternities and sororities have a minimal presence on CUNY campuses and only a very small number of our students participate in athletics. Many CUNY students hold jobs off campus and CUNY offers many evening programs and classes.

In addition, the design team and the advisory board were especially interested in gaining a better understanding about the relationship between sexual violence and academic engagement. We expanded the intimate partner violence (IPV) prevalence section of the survey to include questions about the impact of IPV on academic engagement.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Education Law Article 129-B, as added by Chapter 76 of the Laws of 2015, Section 6445.

## **Limitations of the Analysis**

- Because the survey was anonymous, was not a random sample and was purely voluntary, it is likely that there is some self-selection among the respondents.<sup>2</sup> In addition, it is possible that there may be some duplicate entries. Therefore, these results are not generalizable to the larger CUNY student population.
- Of the 30,001 responses, only 18,470 (approximately 60%) identified a “home campus.”<sup>3</sup> As a result, the data cannot be reported by college.
- As a result of a very low number (185) and percentage (<1 percent) of students who identified (in total) as transgender female, transgender male, gender non-conforming or other, it is not possible to report on these students as a separate category or use gender identity for group comparison purposes.
- In regard to sample representativeness, there was a sizeable over-representation of female and under-representation of male responses.

## **This report is organized into the following sections:**

- I. Response Rate and Representativeness of Sample
- II. Campus Climate
- III. Campus Involvement
- IV. Information and Resources
- V. Knowledge of Policies, Procedures and Resources
- VI. Affirmative Consent
- VII. Training and Bystander Intervention
- VIII. Prevalence
  - a. Harassment
  - b. Stalking
  - c. Non-consensual Touching
  - d. Non-consensual Penetration
  - e. Intimate Partner Violence
- IX. Location of Incident

Appendix A: Charts and Tables

Appendix B: Survey Instrument

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout this report the term “respondent” is used to identify students who answered survey questions. For purposes of this report, the term “respondent” should not be confused with the legal term used to describe a person who is alleged to have committed an unlawful act.

<sup>3</sup> Students were asked: “Which CUNY college is your home campus?” Almost 40% of the survey respondents skipped this question.

## Response Rate and Representativeness of Sample

### 2016 Campus Climate Survey: Student Profile\*

		Survey Sample	Total CUNY**
Respondent Sample, Age and Consent Eligible	N	30,001	245,279
	%	100.0	100.0
Gender Identity	N	28,633	245,279
Female	%	70.4	57.0
Male	%	28.6	43.0
Transgender Female	%	0.1	---
Transgender Male	%	0.1	---
Gender Non-conforming	%	0.6	---
Other	%	0.1	---
Sexual Orientation	N	28,445	---
Bisexual	%	5.8	---
Gay	%	1.9	---
Heterosexual/Straight	%	86.0	---
Lesbian	%	1.4	---
Queer	%	0.9	---
Questioning	%	1.2	---
Asexual	%	0.9	---
Other	%	1.8	---
Race/Ethnicity <sup>1</sup>	N	28,574	245,279
American Indian or Alaskan Native	%	1.1	0.3
Asian	%	24.8	20.3
Black or African American	%	20.6	26.2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	%	0.7	---
White	%	22.9	21.8
Hispanic or Latino/a	%	31.6	31.4
Other	%	5.8	---
Age	N	27,762	245,279
Average Age	Mean	25	24
25 Years and Older	%	32.3	26.6
Transfer Status <sup>2</sup>	N	21,587	---
CUNY-native	%	62.0	---
Within-CUNY Transfer	%	26.2	---
Non-CUNY Transfer	%	16.8	---
Degree <sup>3</sup>	N	30,001	274,357
Associate	%	28.9	36.1
Baccalaureate	%	48.7	53.3
Graduate	%	14.0	10.6
Unknown	%	8.4	---

\*Source : Please note that this profile is based on an underlying dataset that includes complete and partial responses as well as a certain amount of duplicate entries due to the anonymous nature of the survey. Each profile indicator is provided with its corresponding N, reflecting the total number of valid (non-missing) responses for the indicator; indicator percentages are based on valid responses for that indicator.

\*\*Source : 2015 CUNY Undergraduate Student Profile ([http://www2.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/media-assets/ug\\_student\\_profile\\_f15.pdf](http://www2.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/media-assets/ug_student_profile_f15.pdf)); except where noted, Total CUNY figures represent undergraduate students only.

<sup>1</sup> Race/Ethnicity: Multiple-response question, totals exceed 100%. Race/Ethnicity categories under Total CUNY are mutually exclusive and total 100%.

<sup>2</sup> Transfer Status: Multiple-response question, totals exceed 100%.

<sup>3</sup> Degree: This multiple-response question was recoded to allow for one valid response per respondent. For respondents with more than one degree level reported, their lowest level was recoded as one of three degree levels; "certificate", "other", and "missing" values were all recoded as "unknown." For Total CUNY, data is based on Fall 2015 Undergraduate and Graduate Enrollment, including non-degree students.

## I. Campus Climate

A high percentage of CUNY students say that they feel respected and safe on their campuses. Further, a similarly high percentage say that they trust their college to do the right thing in situations involving sexual misconduct. We observed negligible to very modest differences between females and males as well as between undergraduate and graduate students. (See: Appendix A, Chart 1.)

## II. Campus Involvement

Club membership and CUNY employment, were reported by more students than other campus-involvement items. Participating in CUNY intercollegiate or intramural athletics, being a member of a fraternity or sorority, or a member of student government were the campus-involvement items with lowest participation rates.

## III. Information and Resources

Students were provided with a list of both on-campus and off-campus resources and were asked: “If you experienced sexual violence on campus, where would you go for information and help?” Survey respondents were more likely to identify on-campus resources for **information**: 83 percent of the respondents said they would go to their campus or CUNY Title IX webpage, 64 percent said that they would go to the campus Title IX coordinator, and 60 percent said that they would go to a campus women’s/men’s center. When asked “If you experienced sexual violence on campus, where would you go for **help**?” students were more somewhat more likely to go to off-campus resources. More than eight out of ten respondents identified the local police/district attorney (81%) and a hospital with a SAFE center (81%) as the top two resources for help. Seventy-six percent of survey respondents said that they would go to campus public safety and 76 percent said that they would go to a campus counselor.

The only resource on the list that was selected equally for both information and help was campus women’s/men’s centers. (See: Appendix A, Chart 2.)

## IV. Knowledge

Almost half of the survey respondents (45%) said they were “not at all knowledgeable” about the formal procedures on their campus for reporting an incident of sexual violence. Female respondents answered “not at all knowledgeable” at higher rates than males, with a difference of ten points (47% v. 37%). Graduate respondents said “not at all knowledgeable” at higher rates than undergraduates did, with an 11-percentage point difference (54% v. 43%). (See: Appendix A, Chart 3.)

Furthermore, a high percentage of CUNY students said that they are not knowledgeable about the role and responsibilities of a Title IX coordinator. Thirteen percent of survey respondents said that they were very familiar or familiar while 71 percent said that were not at all familiar with the role and responsibilities of a Title IX coordinator. (See: Appendix A, Chart 4.) Seventy-eight percent of the respondents said that did not know if there was a Title IX coordinator on their campus and 55 percent

said that they were not sure how to get information about the role and responsibilities of a Title IX coordinator. Little or no differences were found between female and male respondents as well as between undergraduate and graduate respondents.

When students were asked: “In regard to an incident of sexual violence, how familiar are you with the difference between CUNY’s procedures and the criminal justice process?” almost six out of ten students (59%) said that they were not at all familiar. Seventeen percent of the survey respondents answered familiar or very familiar.

#### V. **Affirmative Consent**

Three out of ten survey respondents said that they were very familiar or familiar with CUNY’s policy on affirmative consent. Almost four out of ten (39%) said that they were not at all familiar with the policy. (See: Appendix A, Chart 5.) However, when CUNY students were provided with hypotheticals and asked how likely they would conduct themselves in a manner consistent with affirmative consent, the overwhelming majority consistently said likely or very likely. (See: Appendix A, Chart 6.)

#### VI. **Bystander Intervention**

CUNY students consistently expressed a high degree of likelihood to help or intervene in situations involving sexual violence with little or no difference by gender or degree. (See: Appendix A, Chart 7.)

#### VII. **Training**

Students were asked if, since coming to CUNY, they had participated in at least one training on sexual violence. Twenty-eight percent (N=5,624) of all students responding to the question (N=20,201) said that since coming to CUNY they had participated in one or more trainings or information sessions. Of these students, 66 percent (N=3,672) said that they had participated in at least one training or information session in the past 12 months.

The students who had participated in the past 12 months were asked about the topics covered in their trainings. The topic most frequently covered was affirmative consent. The concept least likely to be covered was the role of the Title IX coordinator. (See: Appendix A, Chart 8.)

#### VIII. **Prevalence**

##### A. **Sexual Harassment**

Students were asked about their experiences in the past 12 months with three different kinds of sexual harassment:

- Has anyone made inappropriate sexual comments in writing, verbally or electronically?

- Has anyone made you feel like you were being bribed with some sort of reward or special treatment to engage in sexual behavior or made you feel like you were being threatened with some sort of retaliation for not agreeing to engage in sexual behavior?
- Has anyone viewed or distributed images or recordings of your private sexual activity or nakedness without your consent?

Nineteen percent (N=4,076) of respondents to the harassment questions reported at least one sexual harassment incident within the past 12 months. There was a sizeable difference between women and men (23% v. 8%).

Overwhelmingly, the most common form of sexual harassment reported was inappropriate sexual comments, with 18 percent of the respondents (N=3,847) saying that they had experienced this sometime in the past year. Eighty-one percent (N=3,104) of those reporting inappropriate sexual comments in the past 12 months said that they were CUNY students at the time of the incident.

Three percent (N=591) of survey respondents reported feeling like they were being bribed with some sort of reward or special treatment to engage in sexual behavior or feeling like they were being threatened with some sort of retaliation for not agreeing to engage in sexual behavior. Seventy-three percent (N=433) of those respondents were CUNY students at the time of the incident. One percent (N=233) of the respondents reported having images or recordings of their private sexual activity or nakedness viewed or distributed without their consent, with 68 percent (N=156) being a CUNY student at the time. (See: Appendix A, Chart 9.)

Survey respondents who were CUNY students at the time of the incident were asked if the person engaging in the harassment was enrolled in or employed by CUNY at the time of the harassment. Respondents reported that slightly more than one-quarter of the persons engaging in the harassment were enrolled in or employed by CUNY. Among those, students were overwhelmingly identified as the persons responsible for the harassment. (See: Appendix A, Table 1.)

## B. Stalking

Students were asked about their experiences in the past 12 months with three different kinds of stalking:

- Has anyone sent you unwanted phone calls, emails, voice, texts or instant messages, or posted messages, pictures or videos on social networking sites in a way that made you feel unsafe?
- Has anyone showed up or waited for you in a way that made you feel unsafe?
- Has anyone spied on you, watched or followed you either in person or using technology in a way that made you feel unsafe?

Fourteen percent (N=2,828) of the respondents to the stalking questions reported at least one stalking incident in the past 12 months with a sizeable difference between women and men (16% v. 6%).

The most common form of stalking reported was receiving unwanted communications or having phone calls, emails, voice, texts or instant messages, or posted messages, pictures or videos on social

networking sites in a way that made the respondent feel unsafe. Eight percent (N=1,716) said that they had experienced this form of stalking. Of those respondents, 78 percent (N=1334) said that they were CUNY students at the time of the incident.

Six percent (N=1333) of survey respondents reported that in the past 12 months someone showed up or waited for them in a way that made them feel unsafe with 79 percent (N=1052) being a CUNY student at the time of the incident. Five percent (N=1032) of respondents reported being spied on, watched or followed, either in person or using technology, in a way that made them feel unsafe. Eighty percent (N=830) of these respondents were CUNY students at the time of the incident. (See: Appendix A, Chart 10.)

Respondents who were CUNY students at the time of the stalking incident were asked if the person responsible for the stalking was enrolled in or employed by CUNY at the time of the incident. Again, the majority of incidents were committed by persons not affiliated with CUNY. However, where there was a CUNY affiliation, students were identified as the persons responsible for the stalking – almost nine out of ten times. (See: Appendix A, Table 2.)

### C. Non-consensual Sexual Touching

Students were asked if in the past 12 months someone touched them in a sexual way without their consent.

Seven percent (N=1482) of respondents to this question reported that they experienced non-consensual sexual touching at least once in the past 12 months. Of the respondents who reported experiencing non-consensual sexual touching in the past 12 months, 76 percent (N=1113) were CUNY students at the time of the incident. These students reported that:

- 26% (N=293) of the persons responsible for the non-consensual sexual touching were enrolled in or employed by CUNY at the time of the non-consensual sexual touching. Among these, 88 percent were students and nine percent were faculty members or instructors.
- 18% (N=195) of the incidents of non-consensual sexual touching involved force or threats of force.
- 17% (N=187) of the students were incapacitated and unable to give consent when the non-consensual sexual touching occurred.

Fifty-four percent (N=594) of the respondents who were CUNY students at the time of the non-consensual sexual touching said that they told someone about the incident. Of those who told someone, 86 percent told a friend and 33 percent told a family member. Six percent said that they told 911 or the local police and two percent told public safety.

Forty-two percent (N=456) of the respondents who were CUNY students at the time of the non-consensual sexual touching said that they did not tell anyone about the incident. These students were asked why they did not tell anyone about the incident. The five most common reasons given by respondents were:

1. I was worried that it was not serious enough to report. (55%)
2. I was ashamed or embarrassed. (34%)
3. I was worried that it was partly my fault. (28%)
4. I didn't want to get the person who did it in trouble. (21%)
5. I worried that others would not believe me or would blame me. (20%)

#### D. Non-consensual Sexual Penetration

Students were asked if in the past 12 months anyone penetrated them sexually without their consent.

Almost two percent (N=376) of the respondents to this question reported non-consensual sexual penetration at least once within the last 12 months. Of the respondents who reported an incident of non-consensual sexual penetration in the past 12 months, 72 percent (N=269) were CUNY students at the time of the incident. These students further reported that:

- 39% (N=104) of the incidents of non-consensual sexual penetration involved force or threats of force.
- 30% (N=80) of the students were incapacitated and unable to give consent when the non-consensual sexual penetration occurred.
- 28% (N=74) of the persons responsible for the non-consensual sexual penetration were enrolled in or employed by CUNY at the time of the incident. Among these, 89 percent were students, eight percent were faculty members or instructors and five percent were staff members.

Forty-six percent (N=121) of the respondents who were CUNY students at the time of the non-consensual sexual penetration said that they told someone about the incident. Of those who told someone, 89 percent told a friend and 26 percent told a family member. Ten percent said that they told 911 or the local police and three percent told public safety.

Fifty percent (N=134) of the respondents who were CUNY students at the time of the non-consensual sexual penetration said that they did not tell anyone about the incident. Respondents who did not tell anyone were asked why they did not tell anyone about the incident. The five most common reasons given by respondents were:

1. Worried that it was partly my fault. (51%)
2. Worried that it was not serious enough to report. (46%)
3. Ashamed or embarrassed. (46%)
4. Worried that others would not believe me or would blame me. (33%)
5. Worried my family/community would think it was my fault or react negatively toward me. (25%)

#### E. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Students were asked if in the past 12 months they had experienced intimate partner violence:

- Has a former or current romantic or sexual partner made physical threats to harm you or someone you love?
- Has a former or current romantic or sexual partner, pushed, shoved, slapped, punched, hit, kicked or physically harmed you in some other way?
- Has a former or current romantic or sexual partner kept track of you by demanding to know where you are and what you are doing?
- Has a former or current romantic or sexual partner withheld money from you or controlled how your money was spent?

Ten percent (N=2,036) of respondents reported that they had experienced at least one incident of IPV in the past 12 months. The most common form of IPV reported was having a former or current romantic or sexual partner who kept track of the respondent by demanding to know where they were and what they were doing with seven percent (N=1475) of respondents reporting. Of those respondents, 76 percent (N=1,118) said that they were CUNY students at the time of the incident.

Almost four percent (N=736) of the respondents said that a former or current romantic or sexual partner, pushed, shoved, slapped, punched, hit, kicked or physically harmed them at least once in the past 12 months. Seventy-four percent of these respondents (N=543) said that they were CUNY students at the time of the incident.

Two percent of survey respondents (N=448) reported that in the past 12 months on at least one occasion a former or current romantic or sexual partner made physical threats to harm them or someone they love with 71 percent (N=313) being a CUNY student at the time of the incident.

Approximately two percent (N=354) of respondents reported that on at least one occasion in the past 12 months a former or current romantic or sexual partner withheld money from them or controlled how money was spent. Of these respondents, 74 percent (N=262) were CUNY students at the time of the incident. (See: Appendix A, Chart 11.)

#### Intimate Partner Violence and Impact on Academic Performance

Of the respondents who reported that a former or current romantic or sexual partner kept track of them in the past 12 months by demanding to know where they were and what they were doing and who were CUNY students at the time (N=1118):

- 41% reported that the IPV prevented them from studying.
- 26% reported that the IPV caused them to miss or delay a test or prevented submitting an assignment on time.
- 20% reported that the IPV caused them to miss class or not be able to attend school for multiple days.
- 6% reported that the IPV caused them to leave school for a semester/term.

Of the respondents who reported that a former or current romantic or sexual partner physically harmed them within the past 12 months and who were CUNY students at the time (N=543):

- 33% reported that the IPV prevented them from studying.
- 28% reported that the IPV caused them to miss or delay a test or prevented submitting an assignment on time.
- 23% reported that the IPV caused them to miss class or not be able to attend school for multiple days.
- 8% reported that the IPV caused them to leave school for a semester/term.

Of the respondents who reported that a former or current romantic or sexual partner made physical threats to harm them or someone they love in the past 12 months and who were CUNY students at the time (N=313):

- 64% reported that the IPV prevented them from studying.
- 42% reported that the IPV caused them to miss class or not be able to attend school for multiple days.
- 45% reported that the IPV caused them to miss or delay a test or prevented submitting an assignment on time.
- 11% reported that the IPV caused them to leave school for a semester/term.

Of the respondents who reported that within the past 12 months a former or current romantic or sexual partner withheld money from them or controlled how their money was spent and who were CUNY students at the time (N=262):

- 48% reported that the IPV caused them to not have enough money to pay for school costs such as tuition, books, supplies or transportation.
- 24% reported that the IPV caused them to miss class or not be able to attend school for multiple days.
- 26% reported that the IPV caused them to miss or delay a test or prevented submitting an assignment on time.

Respondents who were CUNY students at the time of the intimate partner violence were asked if the IPV occurred because “you were attending college or devoting time to school.” Answering “yes” to this question were:

- 31% of students who reported that a former or current romantic or sexual partner withheld money from them or controlled how their money was spent;
- 28% of students who reported that a former or current romantic or sexual partner kept track of them by demanding to know where they were and what they were doing;

- 27% of students who reported that a former or current romantic or sexual partner made physical threats to harm them or someone they love; and
- 12% of students who reported that a former or current romantic or sexual partner physically harmed them.

(See: Appendix A, Chart 12.)

#### Where Did the Incident Occur?

On selected prevalence questions, where location was relevant, respondents who were CUNY students at the time of the incident, were asked where the incident occurred. By a sizeable difference, incidents were more likely to occur at locations not associated with CUNY. This is especially true with non-consensual sexual touching, non-consensual sexual penetration and intimate partner violence where more than eight out of ten incidents experienced by CUNY students occurred at locations not associated with CUNY. (See: Appendix A, Table 3.)

## **Acknowledgements**

**Jane Sovern**, Chair

Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel and Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs

### **Advisory Board**

**Michelle J. Anderson**, Chair

President, Brooklyn College

Vita Rabinowitz, Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost

Laurie Beck, Director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Vanessa Bing, Director of the Student Center for Women, LaGuardia Community College

Norma Cofresi, Director of the Counseling Center, Lehman College

Lynette Cook Francis, Vice President of Student Affairs, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Nicholas Freudenberg, Distinguished Professor, CUNY School of Public Health

Ebonie Jackson, Coordinator of the Women's Center, York College

Sylvia Kinard, Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator, Medgar Evers College

Annemarie Nicols-Grinenko, Ph.D., University Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs Office of Academic Affairs

Roberta Nord, University Director of Student Advocacy, Central Office Student Affairs

Rodney Pepe-Souvenir, University Title IX Coordinator, Central Office of Student Affairs

David Rivera, Associate Professor, Queens College and Co-chair, Center for LGBTQ Studies, CUNY Graduate Center

Yvette Santana-Prado, University Manager of Student Conduct, Central Office Student Affairs

Dawn Smallwood, Director of Public Safety for Administration, CUNY Central Office

Rachel Spellman, Coordinator, Office of Environmental, Health and Safety, and Risk Management, CUNY Central Office

Claudia Wald, Masters Student, Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College and Officer, University Student Senate

### **Design Team and Data Group**

Michelle Anderson, President, Brooklyn College

Laurie Beck, Director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

David Crook, University Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Nicholas Freudenberg, Distinguished Professor, CUNY School of Public Health

Victoria Frye, Associate Medical Professor, CUNY School of Medicine

Natalya Petroff, Research Analyst, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, CUNY Central Office

David Rivera, Associate Professor, Queens College and Co-chair, Center for LGBTQ Studies, CUNY Graduate Center