

## 2024 Campus Sexual Misconduct Campus Climate Survey Fact Sheet

On August 6, 2021, the Illinois Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Act (IPSVHEA) [110 ILCS 155/1](#) was amended to mandate that all institutions of higher education annually conduct an anonymous sexual misconduct climate survey to assess students' experiences, outcomes regarding their experiences, and perceptions of sexual violence and collegiate culture. The law called for the creation of a Task Force on Campus Sexual Misconduct Climate Surveys to develop the survey instrument and implementation guidelines. In July 2023, the Task Force completed its report and base survey recommendations, which were adopted by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in October 2023. The Task Force recommended that institutions file the survey for the first time in Spring 2024.

In compliance with this law, Northwestern University launched the Task Force's Campus Sexual Misconduct Climate Survey in Spring 2024 to 25,706 students, including undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, and to students who withdrew from the University during the 2023-2024 academic year. The survey was available from March 28, 2024 to April 19, 2024. 1,699 students responded to the survey for a 6.6% response rate. As required by law and to support full transparency, the survey results are available on the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance (OCR) website at <https://www.northwestern.edu/sexual-misconduct/about-us/il-sexual-misconduct-survey-responses-northwestern-university-2024.pdf>

Despite the survey's low response rate, the experiences of individual respondents provide valuable insights. Here are some of OCR's key takeaways from survey respondents:

- 63.6% of survey respondents reported that they would support a person making a report of sexual misconduct. When asked a hypothetical question regarding how friends/peers would react if the student respondent experienced sexual misconduct, 69.3% of survey respondents believed a friend/peer would help them get information about coping with the experience, and 75.3% of survey respondents believed the friend/peer would demonstrate understanding of the experience.

- 60.0% of undergraduate<sup>1</sup> and 49.1% of graduate/professional student respondents indicated they knew where to get help on campus should they or a friend experience sexual misconduct.
- Student respondents reported significant knowledge of the resources available on campus specifically related to sexual misconduct, with 80.5% reporting knowledge of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), 68.4% reporting knowledge of Northwestern University Police Department (NUPD), 61.7% reporting knowledge of the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance, 55.7% reporting knowledge of the Center for Awareness, Response and Education (CARE), 50.1% reporting knowledge of the Women’s Center, and 37.1% reporting knowledge of Religious and Spiritual Life.
- 17.0% of undergraduate respondents and 6.7% of graduate/professional student respondents indicated that they had experienced an act of sexual violence during the last 12 months.
- 2.5% of undergraduate respondents and 3.3% of graduate/professional student respondents reported that they had experienced an act of intimate partner violence during the past 12 months.
- 19.2% of undergraduate respondents and 12.1% of graduate/professional student respondents responded that they had experienced stalking during the past 12 months.
- With regard to sexual and gender-based harassment:
  - 65.3% of undergraduate respondents and 45.2% of graduate/professional student respondents reported that during the past 12 months they had been in a situation in which someone treated them “differently” because of their gender or sex (e.g. mistreated, slighted or ignored); displayed, used, or distributed sexist or suggestive materials; made offensive sexist remarks, put them down or was condescending to them because of their gender or sex; or repeatedly told sexual stories or jokes that were offensive to them.
  - 51.4% of undergraduate respondents and 30.5% of graduate/professional student respondents reported that during the past 12 months they had been in a situation in which someone made unwelcome attempts to draw them into a discussion of sexual matters; made offensive remarks about their appearance, body, or sexual activities; made gestures or used body language of a sexual nature which embarrassed or offended them; made unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship with them despite their efforts to discourage it; continued to ask them for dates, drinks, dinner, etc. even though they said “No”; touched them in a way that made them feel uncomfortable; or made unwanted attempts to stroke, fondle, or kiss them.

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<sup>1</sup> The Illinois Sexual Assault and Misconduct Survey did not include a question on student careers (i.e., graduate students vs. undergraduates). However, a career-based variable was derived using respondent age, based on the fact that less than 4% of undergraduate students at Northwestern are 23 or older. Therefore, respondents indicating their age to be between 18 and 22 were categorized as undergraduates, and respondents indicating their age as 23 or older was categorized as graduate/professional.

- 16.4% of undergraduate respondents and 5.9% of graduate/professional student respondents reported that during the past 12 months they had been in a situation in which someone made them feel like they were being bribed with a reward to engage in sexual behavior, made them feel threatened with some sort of retaliation for not submitting to sexual advances, treated them badly for refusing to have sex, or implied better treatment if they submitted to sexual advances.

OCR, CARE, and other University offices will review the climate survey results and data to determine how to strengthen awareness of the University's policies, procedures, and resources available to students who experience sexual misconduct. OCR and CARE will continue to strengthen training and resources for students and what constitutes sexual and gender-based harassment under University policies. The University will continue to offer events and education on sexual misconduct awareness and prevention, bystander intervention, and other related topics. As required by law, the University will administer the campus climate survey again in Spring 2025.