

2015-2016 Community Safety and Climate Survey Brief Overview

Washburn University (WU) is committed to providing an academic environment where students feel safe and empowered to report incidents that may compromise their safety to University officials. Research has found sexual assault is often under-reported and there are negative consequences to individuals who experience sexual assault. A survey was developed using the survey instrument of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, and additional questions as requested by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The purpose of the Washburn University Community Safety Survey was to measure the campus climate related to sexual assault at Washburn University to identify intervention strategies (e.g., training, policy development) to reduce or eliminate the incidence of sexual violence on Washburn University's campus. It is important to note that of the random sample of 1,800 Washburn University students, only 168 students completed or partially completed the survey for an overall response rate of 9.3%. Due to the low response rate, it is not appropriate to generalize the answers provided by a respondent sample of 168 to Washburn University's population of 5,877 students.

Key Findings:

- Of the 150 respondents who answered the questions related to the general climate, 91% of respondents indicated they felt safe on campus and 92% felt that faculty and administrators respect what students think, treat students fairly, and are genuinely concerned about students' welfare.
- 136 of the respondents answered the questions related to sexual violence (assault) training. Respondents answering this question indicated a higher level of agreement that Washburn University would protect the person making a report of sexual violence from retaliation, that college officials handle incidents of sexual violence (assault) in a fair and responsible manner, and that they feel valued in the classroom/learning environment.

- Of the respondents who had received sexual harassment/sexual assault prevention training (n = 63), a majority (57%) indicated the training was very or moderately useful.
- Approximately 74% (n = 129) either agreed or strongly agreed that if they or a friend were sexually assaulted they would know where to go to get help. However, only about 40% (n = 128) knew the Title IX Coordinator or how to contact her.
- 10% of respondents indicated a personal experience with sexual assault (violence). Of those (n = 12), 83% of those incidents occurred off-campus. None of these respondents reported the incident through the University's formal procedures.
- There were significant differences between men and women's response patterns to questions about leadership, policy, procedure, bystander attitudes and behavior statements. For example, men tended to feel safer on campus, while women tended to believe that sexual violence was more of a problem and that they needed to learn more about it and had to think more about sexual violence. Men believed the university is more supportive, a report would be taken more seriously by campus officials, and the reporting procedures are fairer. Women tended to believe the university responds too slowly and that it is less likely that corrective action would be taken.
- There were gender differences on the bystander questions as well. For example, men were more likely than women to report unwanted sexual behavior after confronting the offender or someone using force to engage in sexual activity. Women were more likely than men to allow personal loyalties to affect the reporting of sexual assault, confront others using alcohol to get sex or attempting to have sex with someone who is intoxicated.

The survey demonstrated that training was effective in influencing positive attitudes toward the complaint process and the likelihood someone would report an incident to a campus authority. Less than half of the survey participants knew who the Title IX Coordinator is or how to contact the Title IX Coordinator to file a complaint.

It is important to continue training initiatives to dispel rape myths and to improve bystander intervention in cases of sexual assault. At this time about 14% of the campus community (employees and students) receive sexual harassment/violence prevention training. A goal of 75% of the campus community should be established to ensure that a large number of the campus community has received training related to the prevention of sexual harassment/sexual violence.

The survey indicated that half of the students who reported experiencing sexual violence reported the incident to a roommate or a close friend and did not report the incident to a campus authority. Based on this result, it is important to provide bystander training so that the campus community will be equipped to appropriately advise individuals who may report a sexual assault to them on the reporting procedures and support resources available to the victim/survivor and how to access those resources. There are plans underway to initiate a bystander training program during the spring 2017 semester. In addition to the bystander training program an online training program for students will be implemented in the fall 2017 semester. Employees currently receive sexual harassment/sexual violence training online initially upon hire and every three years thereafter. In addition to current training efforts (e.g., Title IX training sessions, online employee training, online student employee training, and healthy relationships training), adding the online student training sexual violence training *Not Anymore* and the Bystander training programs should achieve the 75% training goal.

Plans are in place to revise and distribute the Community Safety and Climate survey again during the fall 2017 semester. This will provide information on the effectiveness of the training and any associated culture changes when compared to the results of survey conducted during the 2015-2016 academic year. The fall 2017 survey will be marketed to ensure that the campus is aware of the survey in hopes of improving the response rate without introducing response bias.

The results of the 2015-2016 survey will be discussed on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at the Gender Brown Bag. If you are unable to attend this Gender Brown Bag session and you would like to schedule a time to discuss the survey, contact Dr. Pamela

Foster, Equal Opportunity Director/Title IX Coordinator, at 785-670-1509 to schedule a meeting.