

# University of Connecticut

## Sexual Assault Campus Survey FAQs

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SURVEY AND THE RESPONSE RATE

**1. Why did you conduct a sexual assault and campus climate survey and why did you choose HEDS?**

A team of our administrators and researchers decided to participate in **The HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey** (HEDS) \* because we believed that information provided by the survey would provide important insights and information about how often our students have experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault, as well as other information that would help us both improve and expand our current collective efforts to address this critical issue. We followed the April 2014 recommendation of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault that all universities and colleges voluntarily conduct such surveys.

**The HEDS Survey** asks students about their perceptions of the campus's climate for unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault, their perceptions of how their institution responds to sexual assaults, and whether and how often they have experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault.

\*The Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) supports institutional research, institutional effectiveness, assessment, and the use of data to advance liberal education at private colleges and universities--  
<http://www.hedsconsortium.org>

**2. Why did you select the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) instrument?**

Our Director of the Office of Institutional Research, the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, and our Title IX office reviewed various survey options, including the idea of creating our own survey. Ultimately we all recognized the value in 1) using an instrument with strong validity and reliability, 2) the important context provided by access to results from similar institutions (which will be available to us in the fall) and 3) the usefulness of the survey administration and data files being handled by HEDS, a consortium of colleges and universities that collaboratively share, analyze, and use data of all kinds, giving our students an additional layer of protection for their anonymity of student respondents.

**3. How and when was the survey administered? Who responded?**

Invitations to take the electronic survey were sent to a randomly selected group of students in November of 2015. We used a random selection of students, across campuses and across undergraduates and graduates. **Stratified random selection** was used to draw a sample of students from our entire student population (undergraduates from Storrs, Regional, and graduate students from Storrs-based programs). The use of random selection increases the generalizability of our results, meaning that we used stratified random selection so that we were confident that our participants would better represent the larger group from which they were

drawn. Using random selection is the single most-important aspect of survey research. Our response rate was 25%, represented below, and we have strong confidence that the survey responses were representative of our student population at large.

	HEDS Responses in 2015-2016 Academic Year					Total
	Freshman /First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate Student or Other	
Storrs	232	281	210	233	179	1135
Avery Point	32	32	13	7	4	88
Hartford	28	20	10	6	9	73
Stamford	16	19	21	15	3	74
Torrington	11	7	3	3	0	24
Waterbury	31	30	16	20	5	102
Total	350	389	273	284	200	1496

**Gender**

	Count	Percent
Male	555	37.0
Female	924	61.6
Do not identify as either— (unknown)	20	1.3
	1499	100.0

**4. Why isn't the HEDS comparative data for other schools included in what you are reporting? Is it possible to review that information?**

No. When each institution agreed to use the HEDS instrument, they also agreed to the following HEDS rules regarding dissemination of survey results:

- We will receive comparative data from other large publics who used HEDS in the fall of 2016. We are not able to identify participating HEDS institutions by name to any other person or organization outside of the consortium.

- In any public presentations or dissemination of data from the survey on or off campus, we have agreed with the requirements of the use of the survey, that is that HEDS institutions must not identify other HEDS institutions that participated in the survey or display that data from any single HEDS institution, even if that institution is not identified. In these settings, HEDS institutions should present pooled data from other HEDS institutions or other comparison groups that contain at least five institutions and that is the data we will have in the fall.
- As noted, HEDS institutions participating in this survey will not receive individual-level data from to other HEDS institutions. Instead, they will receive only their own student-level data, which protects the anonymity of individual students.
- In accordance with these rules, the University of Connecticut expressly agreed to share only the provided findings publicly.

**5. How was sexual assault defined on the HEDS instrument?**

Survey respondents were provided with the following statement before being asked questions related to sexual assault:

*In the next set of questions we ask about experiences you may have had with sexual assault on campus at UConn or during off-campus events or programs sponsored by UConn. When we ask about sexual assault, we are referring to five specific types of sexual contact, which you **did not want** or for which you **did not give consent**:*

- 1) *Touching of a sexual nature (kissing you, touching of private parts, grabbing, fondling, rubbing up against you in a sexual way, even if it was over your clothes)*
- 2) *Oral sex (someone's mouth or tongue making contact with your genitals, or your mouth or tongue making contact with someone else's genitals)*
- 3) *Vaginal sex (someone's penis being put in your vagina, or your penis being put into someone else's vagina)*
- 4) *Anal Sex (someone's penis being put in your anus, or your penis being put into someone else's anus)*
- 5) *Anal or vaginal penetration with a body part other than a penis or tongue, or by an object, like a bottle or candle*

**6. Could students report more than one incident of sexual assault?**

Yes, students were asked whether they experienced multiple incidents of sexual assault.

**7. Is it possible to provide data for a specific groups by race and ethnicity or other demographic classifications?**

No, the findings report includes disaggregated results across all demographic information made available to institutions.

**8. Why do the percentages for some questions total to more than 100?**

Several of the survey questions related to unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault enabled the respondent to choose all of the responses that applied.

**9. What about the written comments? Why aren't those included in the data being released?**

To maintain the privacy of the respondents, the University of Connecticut did not include these because many of them are individually identifiable, or at least could be if a certain regional campus was known.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**10. How does this compare to national data?**

Many institutions have made their campus climate and sexual assault survey data publicly available. There is a data page on the White House website, <https://www.notalone.gov/data/> and on the Associate of American Universities (AAU) also has a webpage with results from over 150,000 students:

[http://www.aau.edu/uploadedFiles/AAU\\_Publications/AAU\\_Reports/Sexual\\_Assault\\_Campus\\_Survey/Fact%20Sheet%20for%20AAU%20Climate%20Survey%209-21-15.pdf](http://www.aau.edu/uploadedFiles/AAU_Publications/AAU_Reports/Sexual_Assault_Campus_Survey/Fact%20Sheet%20for%20AAU%20Climate%20Survey%209-21-15.pdf)

CNN Story on the AAU survey:

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/22/health/campus-sexual-assault-new-large-survey/>

It is important to note that in most instances, it is not possible to compare results across institutions unless the questions and response options are identical.

**11. Where can I find additional campus and local resources for sexual assault?**

Anyone with questions or thoughts about the climate survey or our ongoing prevention and response efforts may also contact our Title IX office at [titleix@uconn.edu](mailto:titleix@uconn.edu), (860) 486-2943. Also, UConn's comprehensive Title IX website ([www.titleix.uconn.edu](http://www.titleix.uconn.edu)) provides much more information regarding [resources](#), [reporting](#), [university policies](#), and [how to offer support](#) to those impacted.