

## *2016 Sexual Conduct and Campus Climate Questionnaire Results Overview*

### **Content and Participation in Survey**

The University of Notre Dame administered its third climate survey between October and November 2016.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the survey was to assess the knowledge, perceptions, and experience of Notre Dame students in relation to sexual assault, other sexual misconduct, dating or domestic violence, stalking, and other conduct that creates a sexually hostile environment. The survey instrument was developed by Notre Dame, though several questions were included from surveys utilized at peer institutions. Differences in the survey instrument itself, timing, and question sequence render survey result comparisons across institutions difficult.

All enrolled students (12,227) were invited to participate in the survey, and 45% (5,493) completed the survey. Response rates were higher for female students, first-year students, sophomore students, and students who lived on campus at the time of the survey administration.<sup>2</sup> The survey was administered by the Office of Strategic Planning & Institutional Research, which oversees all of Notre Dame's institutional and consortium survey participation. Individual student responses are kept strictly confidential.

### **Student Perspectives and Knowledge**

Students' knowledge of University policies and their understanding of consent remained stable or improved compared to the 2015 survey. 99% of students agreed it is important for students to understand what constitutes conduct related to sexual assault, other sexual misconduct, dating or domestic violence, stalking, and other conduct that creates a sexually hostile environment.

93% of students were very to somewhat familiar with the University's policy related to Sexual Assault, but only 76% of students were at least somewhat familiar with the University's Stalking policy. 90% of students correctly responded that intoxication is not an excuse for failure to obtain consent. 83% of students at least somewhat agreed that Notre Dame's policies regarding sexual misconduct and sexual assault are clear, which is a 10% increase from 2015. 77% percent of students at least somewhat agreed that Notre Dame's policies regarding dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking are clear, which is a 9% increase from 2015.

Students largely were aware of reporting and safety resources on campus. An opportunity exists to further educate students about possible courses of action, as only 65% of students were aware that they may pursue a complaint through the University Conduct Process and/or pursue a criminal complaint.

### **Impressions of University Response**

Students reported varied impressions of the University's response to incidents of sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating or domestic violence, stalking, or conduct that creates a sexually hostile environment.

88% of students reported that the University response to sexual assault is somewhat to very effective. 85% and 86% of students reported the University response as somewhat to very effective related to conduct that creates a sexually hostile environment and sexual misconduct respectively. Student written responses cited concerns about prevalence of sexual misconduct and conduct that creates a sexually hostile environment in large group situations on and off-campus. Students also urged continued transparency on all topics.

Only 1% of students reporting participated in the University's Administrative Investigation or Administrative Hearing processes that occur as a result of an official report to the University of sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating or domestic violence, stalking, or other conduct that creates a sexually hostile environment. Satisfaction with the impartiality, timing, and outcome of administrative investigations and

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<sup>1</sup> The first survey was administered in 2012 and the second was administered in 2015. The Committee for Sexual Assault Prevention (CSAP) identified themes and made recommendations from the 2015 survey, which were shared with the University community.

<sup>2</sup> The survey results have not been weighted to account for non-respondent bias.

university conduct process for these students was bifurcated across all dimensions, with some of the small number of students satisfied and others dissatisfied.

### **Student Engagement and Prevention Efforts**

Most students (94%) at least somewhat agreed that they trusted their friends would watch out for them. 91% of students at least somewhat agreed that they are aware of strategies to intervene if a situation had potential for sexual assault, which is a 10% increase from 2015. 22% of students reported that a fellow student had disclosed an experience with sexual assault at some time in their life. 86% of whom reported providing personal support and empathy and 40% reported referring their fellow student to resources. 94% of students felt the University's prevention efforts were somewhat to very effective. Bystander intervention training is now mandatory for all incoming students.

### **Personal Experiences of Sexual Assault, Sexual Misconduct, Dating or Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Other Conduct that Creates a Sexually Hostile Environment**

Students' self-reported instances of personal experiences with sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating or domestic violence, stalking, and other conduct that creates a sexually hostile environment while a student at Notre Dame demonstrate significant concerns that appear comparable to peer survey results and national studies, and appear relatively stable compared to students' personal experiences reported in 2015. Personal experience questions related to dating or domestic violence and stalking were newly added in the 2016 survey instrument. Questions related to personal experience with sexual assault and sexual misconduct were expanded. Students indicated sexist remarks about women (67%), men (45%), and individual body or appearance (58%) are prevalent instances of sexual harassment in social situations in our community. A deeply troubling 5% of females and 1% of males indicated they had personally experienced non-consensual sexual intercourse (including any type of penetration) while a student at Notre Dame. A concerning 21% of female students and 4% of male students indicated they had personally experienced other forms of non-consensual sexual contact. 14% of all students indicated they had experienced some form of non-consensual sexual intercourse or non-consensual sexual contact while a student at Notre Dame. 1% of all students (1% of female students and 1% of male students) reported that they had experienced dating or domestic violence. 1% of students reporting experienced stalking behaviors (1% of male students and 3% of female students).

Students who experienced stalking behavior indicated the highest rates of reporting to the University (17%) compared to students who experienced non-consensual sexual intercourse (10%), dating, or domestic violence (8%), or non-consensual sexual contact (8%). Students cited several reasons they chose not to report an incident to the University. Most cited personal reasons included: wanting to forget about the incident, reluctance to get the perpetrator in trouble, not being sure that what happened constituted an offense, and blaming themselves for what happened. Students also often cited they were not sure that reporting would solve anything and did not want to go through the University process. Opportunities exist to further educate students about policies and how the University will respond to reports of sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating or domestic violence, stalking, and other conduct that creates a sexually hostile environment.

Even one instance of harm to a member of our community is too many, and Notre Dame will continue to adopt policies and develop programs designed to reduce these incidents. Student responses to the personal experience questions suggest that Notre Dame, like other institutions, experiences underreporting of sexual assault and sexual misconduct. The University remains committed to alleviating barriers to reporting and encouraging students to report any of these instances.

For further questions about the survey results, please contact the Deputy Title IX coordinator in the Division of Student Affairs ([CampusClimateReportFeedback@nd.edu](mailto:CampusClimateReportFeedback@nd.edu)).