

HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey

IWU Summary Report

In 2014, the White House issued a Sexual Assault Task Force Report that made significant recommendations for addressing the college climate regarding sexual assault. One of the major recommendations was that institutions survey students to assess their campus climate for targeted educational and enforcement outreach. Illinois Wesleyan University is a member institution of the Higher Education Data Sharing consortium, a group of small colleges and universities that frequently share institutional data for benchmarking purposes. HEDS agreed to develop a sexual assault climate survey instrument to support member institutions and allow for benchmarking analysis. This is the first year for the administration of the survey. 57 institutions administered the survey. 54 were small private colleges with enrollment under 3,500 and will serve as our comparison group. Data was also provided by sex to review differences between male and female respondents. Sex differences are noted where differences existed in meaningful ways (more than 4 percentage points).

About the instrument: The survey contains four content sections as follows:

1. General Climate: Focus is on general trust, respect, fairness and community; perceptions of prevalence of sexual assault and institutional responsiveness.
2. Assessing Unwanted Sexual Contact and Sexual Assault: Focus is on personal experiences with sexual assault and harassment.
3. Context and Disclosure: Focus is on the context of specific incidents report in section 2.
4. Demographics

Demographics	
353 student respondents (19.2% response rate*)	
Sex: Women: 66.8% Men: 30.8%	Race/ethnicity: Asian: 5.4% African American: 3.1% White: 74.6% Latino/a: 4.9% International: 8%
Sexual orientation: Asexual – 6.9% Bisexual – 5.2% Heterosexual – 81.3% Gay/Lesbian – 1.8%	Class year: FY – 22.9% SO – 19% JR – 27.5% SR – 30%
Residential experience: Residence Hall: 50% Fraternity/sorority: 15.4% Off-campus (near): 28.5% Off-campus (far): 4.6%	

This response rate was consistent with our peer institutions that participated in the survey. However, this response rate may be too low to make strong policy or programmatic recommendations based entirely on these survey results.

General Climate:

Overall, students report experiencing a climate of respect, genuine concern for welfare, fairness, close community, and safety. Several questions reflected student safety and support:

Question/Prompt – responded “agree” or “strongly agree”	IWU	Peers
I feel safe on campus	90%	84%
Men: 95% Women: 87%		
There is a good support system for students going through difficult times.	72%	61%
Men: 67% (64% peers) Women: 74% (60% peers)		
Campus officials handle incidents in a fair and responsible manner.	58%	54%
I feel valued in the classroom	83%	84%
Men: 78% (85% peers) Women: 85% (84% peers)		
I feel like I am part of the IWU community.	77%	74%
Men: 74% (75% peers) Women: 80% (84% peers)		

Sex differences exist on several questions related to general climate of respect and inclusion. IWU men appear to feel less part of the community, less valued in the classroom (especially in comparison to male peers), and less support during difficult times than women do (in contrast to peers where men felt greater support than women). Additionally, men feel safer than women.

Students are less confident than students at peer institutions in several areas:

Question/Prompt– responded “agree” or “strongly agree”	IWU	Peers
IWU students are genuinely concerned about the welfare of other students	68%	72%
Campus officials do a good job protecting students from harm	59%	66%
Men: 63% Women: 58%		
Campus officials respond quickly in difficult situations	47%	55%

Prevalence of assault: Students believe the prevalence of sexual assault is low. In comparison to women, male students feel at much less risk for sexual assault, have more faith in institutional protections, and are more confident that peers would intervene.

Question/Prompt - responded “agree” or “strongly agree”	IWU	Peers
I believe the number of assaults at IWU is low	65%	51%
I do not believe that I or one of my friends is at risk at IWU	50%	45%
Men: 61% Women: 45%		
I believe students would intervene if they witnessed an assault	60%	61%
Men: 75% Women: 54%		

Responsiveness: Students are confident in University responsiveness. Not surprisingly, men reported greater confidence in investigation and accountability than women. Men also perceived greater levels of peer support for assault victims. Women’s perception that the University would take action against the offender is lower than men’s; however, both are higher than our peer institutions.

Question/Prompt - responded “agree” or “strongly agree”	IWU	Peers
Campus officials would take the report seriously	87%	81%
Campus officials would support and protect the person making the report	85%	73%
Campus officials would conduct a careful investigation	73%	65%
Men: 78% Women: 72%		
Campus officials would take action against the offender(s)	70%	59%
Men: 76% Women: 67%		
Students would support the person making the report	69%	67%
Men: 76% Women: 67%		

Educational outreach and effectiveness: Students report strong knowledge about sexual assault and are comparable to or better than peer institutions in that awareness. Overall, women report greater knowledge about sexual assault, processes and resources. Men are less aware of confidential resources and do not feel that sexual assault educational efforts are as helpful to them.

Question/Prompt	IWU	Peers
What sexual assault is and how to recognize it? Yes	85.7%	79%
How to report? Yes	65.7%	63.6%
Confidential resources? Yes	66.9%	62.6%
Men: 53.7% Women: 72.6%		
Procedures of investigating? Yes	42%	37.9%
Preventative steps? Yes	75.4%	72.9%
How much do you remember regarding education offered? All/most	66%	62%
How helpful was the information about sexual assault? Very/mostly	68%	64%
Men: 59% Women: 72%		

Assessing Unwanted Sexual Contact and Sexual Assault:

Unwanted sexual contact (Often or Very Often)

	IWU	Peers
Unwanted verbal behaviors	10%	7.7%
Unwanted non verbal behaviors	2.4%	1.6%
Unwanted brief physical contact	5%	4.2%
Responsible party: IWU student	93%	91%
Responsible party: Students from another institution	46%	27.9%
Attempted assault FY: 2.5%/2 SO: 7.5%/5 JR: 9.3%/9 SR: 8.5%/9	6.5%/23	7.4%

It is unclear why the IWU reports of unwanted sexual contact are higher than those of our peers. In terms of the perceptions of the prevalence of sexual assault, students perceive that the number of assaults is low relative to peers. However, the accounting for actual behavior indicates that we are higher than our peers.

Context and Disclosure

Completed sexual assaults: 23 students (21 women; 2 men) reported 44+ incidents (50% report more than one assault – 7 reporting two assaults, 2 report three assaults, and 3 reporting more than four assaults). Two people reported being assaulted by more than one person during their assault. One person reported being assaulted by a female. Same-sex assault was not assessed by the survey. Sex differences are not explored due to the small number of reports (only 2 male reports). According to campus Clery statistics, 12 sexual assault reports were made to the University during the four year time period covered by students responding to the survey.

Sexual Assault incidents

	IWU	Peers
Class year when incident occurred		
FR	39.1%/9	55.4%
SO	26.1%/6	23.1%
JR	21.7%/5	12.2%
SR	0	2.7%
Assailant		
IWU student	78.3%	87.4%
Student at another institution	8.7%	6.3%
Not a student	8.7%	2.8%
Relationship to assailant		
Stranger	30.4%/7	23.8%
Non-romantic friend/acquaintance	56.5%/13	57.2%
Casual date	30.4%/	16%
Assault characteristics		
Touching of a sexual nature	91.3%/21	88.4
Oral sex	21.7%/5	24.1
Vaginal sex	60.9%/14	40
Anal sex	4.3%/1	3.6
Object penetration	17.4%/4	8.5
Threat of force, coercion or intimidation	52.2%	32.8%
Use of physical force	56.5%	45.7%
Other person using alcohol	73.9%	72.8%
Other person using drugs	21.7%	17.1%
Victim drinking alcohol	82.6%	62.9%
Capacity to give consent – NO	60.9%	38.5%
Victim voluntarily taking drugs other than alcohol	4.3%/1	8.2%
Victim drugged without consent	4.3%/1	2.5%
Incident location		
IWU housing	65.2%/15	72.7%
Off-campus housing/not another university	17.4%/4	12.3%
Who did you tell?		
Close friend	78.3%/18	80.9
Roommate	43.5%/10	33.1
IWU counselor	30.4%/7	21.5
Parent or guardian	26.1%/6	20.5
IWU faculty/staff/administrator	21.7%/5	16.6
Romantic partner	17.4%/4	23.3
Private counselor	17.4/4	8.5
No one	17.4%/4	13.9
Police	0	3.8
Institutional reporting – YES (all 5 reports were from women)	21.1%/5	17.7%
Satisfaction with institutional reporting process and responsiveness – satisfied or very satisfied	80%/4	75%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 person marked “unsure” – 20%/1 		

Implications:

- Overall, students have a positive perception of campus climate regarding sexual assault and appear to understand how to report incidents. Students indicate significant confidence in institutional responsiveness and the seriousness of addressing this issue, particularly relative to our peers.
- *Visibility of Campus Security:* Survey results indicate that we are lower than our peers in perceptions related to caring about the welfare of students and protecting them from harm. Safety outreach programs and visibility of security officers may enhance this perception.
- *Timeliness of crisis responsiveness:* Concerns about timeliness of responsiveness suggest several things: first, we must shape the norms regarding reasonable responsiveness when our most frequent crises are weather-related (aka ice storm closure) and second, that the University must be vigilant in responding to all campus crises in a prompt manner in order to gain trust. We would like to see this response. agree and strongly agree, 65% or higher (currently 47%).
- *Peer interaction:* Students, particularly women, have less confidence in their peers appropriately responding to or intervening with a sexual assault. Questions about genuine concern for welfare and students supporting victims indicate that we should continue to improve our bystander intervention efforts and our empowerment of students regarding helping friends who are victims of sexual assault. It would be important to focus more on the social psychological phenomena/dynamics that prevent students from taking action in a level 2 bystander training program. In addition to Consent is Sexy, it may also be important to develop a catchy outreach campaign encouraging students to take action when they see a situation that may escalate to sexual assault or harassment. It may be helpful to reward students publicly who DO take action to show the value of intervening on a community level and to heighten awareness that peers are willing to intervene.
- *Guests/non-students:* The number of students reporting unwanted sexual contact from a non-student is higher than expected and higher than peer institutions (46% and 27.9%). As part of our risk management educational programs, we need to continue to encourage students to carefully monitor guests.
- *Incapacitation:* Incapacity to give consent was particularly high (60.9%) in comparison to peer institutions (38.5%). This finding has implications for the Alcohol Task Force and our sexual assault educational efforts, including bystander intervention.
- *Repeat assaults:* We were certainly concerned that 50% of those who responded that they were assaulted, shared that they were assaulted more than once. Although we understand this pattern may be related to post-traumatic stress and learned helplessness, we need to help educate friends and survivors to this pattern.
- *Reporting:* Sexual assault remains one of the most underreported crimes and this survey reflects that underreporting. Encouraging reporting is consistently emphasized on campus. In these survey results, only five students reported to IWU and zero reported to the local police. We need to continue to make reporting options visible and trustworthy for students. Students were more likely to report to an IWU counselor than their parents which is a reflection of strong counseling and consultation rapport and openness.
- *Support climate for men:* Men reported a general sense of lack of support during difficult times and feeling valued by and connected to the campus community. Men also report lower awareness about confidential reporting resources than women do. Men's outreach efforts should focus on general climate of support and knowledge of resources.
- *Risk reduction for LGBT students:* The HEDS consortium data indicated that students who identified as a sexual orientation besides heterosexual are more likely to be sexually assaulted than those who are heterosexual. The data did not indicate whether assaults were by same-sex assailants or not. Regardless, we need to make certain that our policies, supports, and educational efforts are inclusive of the needs of LGBTQ+ community.

Report distribution:

This report was shared with the campus community in the following ways/forums: President and President's cabinet, Campus Life Committee of the Board of Trustees, Bloomington Police Department, Student Senate, IWU Parent Board, University Council on Diversity Climate Assessment committee, and a faculty non-org. The report is available on the iwu.edu/notalone website.