

THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES

Claremont Colleges' Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey FAQs

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

1. Why did you conduct a sexual assault and campus climate survey?

The Council of The Claremont Colleges, which consist of the presidents from each of the seven colleges, made the decision to participate in the HEDS survey because they felt that information provided by the survey, which was sent to approximately 8,000 graduate and undergraduate students enrolled at the seven Claremont colleges, would provide insight that will help the colleges work together to improve and expand current efforts to address this critical issue. In April 2014, the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault made a recommendation that all universities and colleges voluntarily conduct such climate surveys.

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

Each of the schools within the consortium reviewed various survey options, including creating their own and using the [template](#) provided by the White House Task Force. Ultimately we all recognized the value in 1) using an instrument tailored primarily to residential liberal arts colleges, 2) the important context provided by access to results from similar institutions and 3) the usefulness of the survey administration and data files being handled by HEDS, a consortium of private colleges and universities that collaboratively share, analyze, and use data of all kinds. This allowed an additional layer of anonymity for student respondents.

3. Why did all seven Claremont Colleges use the same instrument?

Due to the unique nature of our consortium, where our students not only take classes and socialize with one another, but also eat, live, and study collectively (including cross-registering for classes among the colleges), we are aware that climate and sexual assault issues exist not only at the institutional level, but also at the consortium level. This allows us to assess both areas and also to plan accordingly in the future for the student population as a whole.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

4. How and when was the survey administered?

Email invitations to take the electronic survey were sent to all students at each of the seven Claremont College campuses on Feb. 1, 2015, followed by three reminders. The survey closed on March 2, 2015.

5. Can I compare the 7C or undergraduate (UG) findings to those for my own campus?

While the seven Claremont institutions (also known as the 7Cs) and undergraduate responses may provide useful context when reviewing data from individual campuses, there are both methodological and ethical reasons why comparisons are not appropriate. Because both the 7C and UG findings contain responses from the individual campuses, it is not possible to make a statistical comparison between an individual institution's results and either comparison group. Additionally, the results of the survey are meant to help improve the campus climate across all of the colleges. Inter-institutional comparisons undermine our collective commitment to improvement.

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6. Why wasn't the HEDS comparative data for other schools included in the findings? 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 not identify participating HEDS institutions by name to any person or organization outside of the consortium.
- In any public presentations or dissemination of data from the survey on or off campus, HEDS institutions must not identify other HEDS institutions that participated in the survey or display the data from any single HEDS institution, even if that institution is not identified. In these settings, HEDS institutions should only present pooled data from other HEDS institutions or other comparison groups that contain at least five institutions.
- In deciding how to share HEDS peer data from this survey on campus, the HEDS primary contact agrees to do two things. First, the primary contact will be responsible for working with the senior leaders at her or his institution to identify the people on campus who need to see HEDS peer institutional data in order to respond effectively to the survey findings. Second, the primary contact and senior leaders will ensure that everyone who has access to HEDS peer data recognizes and accepts their obligation to prevent any public disclosure of participating institutions' identities and data.
- Finally, unlike with other HEDS surveys, HEDS institutions participating in this survey will not receive individual-level data from other HEDS institutions. Instead, they will receive only their own student-level data, which we will deprecate to preserve the anonymity of individual students.

In accordance with these rules, each campus within the Claremont consortium has expressly agreed to share the provided findings publicly.

7. Why are we sharing survey findings and not the full survey results?

The report is designed to share important findings from the survey that are relevant to all the schools, and start conversations on campuses as well as across them. Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of respondents was a key consideration in preparing the findings report. In areas where the number of respondents was small ($n = 5$) we will not make that information public. Individual institutions may decide to use that information internally in their planning and policy discussions.

8. 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 [Institution Name] or during off-campus events or programs sponsored by [Institution Name]. 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**:*

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- 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*

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

Yes, students were asked whether they experienced multiple incidents of sexual assault. Following that question, the instrument directed respondents to provide information with respect to one assault.

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

No, the findings report includes disaggregated results for all the demographic information made available to institutions. Due to the sensitive nature of this survey and to protect the anonymity of individual students, HEDS provided each school with deprecated student-level data files.

11. Why is there a category for another/missing gender?

The instrument contains three response options for the question about gender: man, woman and fill in. The category "another/missing gender" was created for two reasons. For one, the survey did not separate the students who filled in another gender from those who left the question blank (see information in question 6 about individually identifiable information). Second, there were differences in how the another/missing gender group responded to questions about campus climate and their reporting on unwanted sexual contact and incidents of sexual assault. Reporting findings for this group as a whole seemed valuable, particularly in relation to planning and the importance of having a joint response to this issue.

12. Why don't the percentages in the findings total to 100?

This was a difficult choice for the researchers who analyzed the survey data, but in the end there were two primary reasons. First, we believe that the missing/blank questions (questions to which respondents of the survey didn't provide a response to a particular question) may have meaning when discussing specific details and incidents of campus climate and sexual assault. Students may have left gender, class year, or even more sensitive questions about incidents related to sexual assault blank because they felt they were maintaining their anonymity and/or due to the difficult nature of the topic and/or the question posed. Second, we felt it was important to maintain consistency in reporting. While some of the questions about campus climate, information and education may not have been sensitive or required anonymity, this survey used the

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same methodology throughout the analysis. In most cases this made very little difference – a tenth or hundredth of a percentage.

13. 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 allowed the respondent to choose all of the responses that applied. For those questions, the response provided was divided by the number of students who said “yes” they had been sexually assaulted while on campus or while off campus during an event or program sponsored by their institution.

14. What about the written comments? Why aren't those included in the analysis?

To maintain the privacy of the respondents, The Claremont Colleges did not request these in the 7C file because many of them are individually identifiable, or at least could be if the campus was known. Again, as much as possible, we have attempted to withhold sharing information that would allow identification of individuals in an effort to protect their individual privacy – a key factor in getting more students to respond to this survey.

15. Why do some institutional reports leave out information on the nature of sexual assault?

Respondents at both graduate institutions reported an incidence rates for sexual assault and attempted sexual assault below 1%. The low number of incidents prevented reporting of additional specific characteristics or nature of the attack to protect student anonymity.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

16. Where can I find data for individual campuses within the Claremont Consortium?

Individual schools results can be found on their Title IX pages. Links to those pages are provided on the 7C website <http://7csexualmisconductresources.claremont.edu/>

17. 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 the Association of American Universities (AAU) also has a webpage with results from over 150,000 students: <https://www.aau.edu/Climate-Survey.aspx?id=16525> . However, 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.

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

<http://7csexualmisconductresources.claremont.edu/>