

# **Climate Surveys: Useful Tools to Help Colleges and Universities in Their Efforts to Reduce and Prevent Sexual Assault**

## **Why are we releasing information about climate surveys?**

Sexual assault is a significant challenge for colleges and universities nationwide, affecting the health, mental health, and academic success of students. Many schools are working to address sexual assault, but lack assessment tools to understand the scope or nature of the problem. Schools are looking to climate surveys to fill this gap in knowledge, and conducting regular climate surveys is a best-practice response to campus sexual assault.

However, surveys not based on science and best practices may not accurately measure the sexual assault problem at a given school. Universities may have both the capacity and the will to conduct meaningful climate surveys, but they might not be sure of where to start, how to conduct the survey, and what questions to ask. Given the demand for more information and the demonstrated value of climate surveys, this resource presents examples of climate survey questions that are among the best currently available and provides an outline of issues to consider when conducting a climate survey.

This document is divided into two chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of *how* to plan and conduct a climate survey. The second chapter describes and provides an example of an empirically informed survey based on best practices from the field. Campuses are encouraged to use both of these chapters to guide their work.

## **Why are climate surveys important for colleges and universities?**

We know from decades of research that victims rarely report sexual assault to law enforcement. Many victims do not even access formal services, like crisis centers. Thus, official statistics underrepresent the extent of the problem on any one campus. Further, campus response, intervention, and prevention efforts will be more successful if they are tailored to the needs of each campus community. Understanding other climate issues, such as students' knowledge about reporting policies and resources for victims, their attitudes about prevention, and their perceptions about how their community is addressing the problem of sexual violence, are critical pieces of information for improving campus responses.

Schools may see additional benefits from conducting climate surveys. For example, when campuses address sexual violence, victims may feel more comfortable coming forward and reported rates of assault might increase. This may enable campus or local law enforcement to deal with serial perpetrators, or help victims heal from the trauma they have experienced, enabling them to stay in school and feel confident in the school's handling of the assault.

## **What is the purpose of this document?**

This document aims to share key concepts and best practices for conducting a climate survey as part of a comprehensive effort to address sexual assault on campus. Many of the suggestions and guidelines offered in this resource pose crucial questions that schools need to ask when doing a climate survey. The approach described here is designed to yield data on campus sexual assault that are meaningful, reliable, and useful. Climate surveys can seem burdensome, but when done thoughtfully and effectively they yield valuable information that can contribute to the success of sexual assault prevention and response efforts.

This document has limitations because it cannot cover in detail how to address the specific needs of each school. Further, it cannot provide detailed training on data collection and analysis. Every school is different, and campus leaders will need to work with research experts to conduct a climate survey. Please note this document does not constitute legal advice, and institutions that implement a climate survey using the suggestions in this document may still be found to be out of compliance with federal law(s) (e.g. if the institution fails to effectively address a hostile education environment created by sexual misconduct).

## **What do we mean by a climate survey?**

This document is an overview of issues to consider when determining how to conduct a climate survey on campus. As described in this document, a climate survey examines *both* the amount of sexual assault occurring (prevalence or incidence) *and* perceptions of campus climate.

Perceptions of campus climate are attitudes among students, faculty, staff, and/or administrators about the campus atmosphere regarding sexual assault. In practice, perceptions of climate are measured in many different ways, including asking what members of the community think about factors like: the way the campus – including fellow students – responds to sexual assault; the viability of campus policies; how much campus leadership cares about sexual assault; and how safe students feel. Schools currently use a variety of climate surveys, but those surveys often focus only on perceptions of climate and do not measure prevalence or incidence of sexual assault.

We use the term “survey” to mean a standard set of items given to participants, usually in a questionnaire, to assess different aspects of campus climate. As discussed in this document, there are many issues to consider (including how the sample of participants is gathered) that must be considered in order to produce survey data that is trustworthy and useful. The set of campus survey questions included here represent current promising practices for measuring campus climate from previous studies. Additional research is planned to refine this set of questions as a best practice survey instrument.

## **What is the value of climate surveys?**

- Climate surveys can provide information about community perceptions, knowledge and attitudes relevant to sexual assault.
- Incident rates assessed via confidential or anonymous surveys can be another source of data about the extent of the problem.
- Regularly administering surveys can show changes over time, such as decreases in sexual assaults and increases in awareness or reporting.
- Surveys can provide information about the problem in a particular campus community, enabling schools to tailor prevention and response efforts.
- Conducting a climate survey can demonstrate the university's commitment to addressing sexual assault and build trust with students, faculty, parents, and others.

## **Is it possible to do a climate survey at my college, community college, or university?**

Universities and colleges are well positioned to do this work, either because of the research expertise on their own campuses or because of relationships they have with other campuses in their region with whom they can partner. Generating knowledge, cultivating learning among students, and using knowledge to improve student learning are core values for campuses, and they are values that align with the importance of climate surveys. Chapter 1 of this document provides information for campuses of different sizes, needs, and resources.

The sample survey in Chapter 2 was created from a review of peer-reviewed research and current campus practices. Survey questions represent the most promising practices in the field and are empirically informed. This means that, when possible, scales were selected from among those that appear in peer-reviewed research publications. When certain concepts were not well represented in peer-reviewed research, items were drawn from practice-based research (e.g. surveys that have been used on campuses in climate research and that demonstrate qualities of best practices for designing survey items).

# CHAPTER 1: GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING A CLIMATE SURVEY

## I. KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONDUCTING CLIMATE SURVEYS

### A. What Do You Want to Know?

Each community needs to set particular goals for their climate survey to guide what information they want to collect. The most important information to collect is about rates of sexual violence and knowledge of policies and resources. Campuses should identify the key individuals who will help define the goals of the survey.

This document includes examples of measures for assessing questions related to some of the most common goals of a campus climate survey: How many students have experienced sexual assault? How many know a friend who is a victim? In what context did the assault occur? How do students perceive campus leaders' trustworthiness? How do students perceive campus responses to sexual assault? How do they perceive campus safety? What do students know about campus policies and resources related to sexual assault? What sexual assault prevention education have they had? How many students report that they have been victimized? Do victims disclose their experiences and to whom? Where did these victimizations occur? What are students' attitudes about being helpful bystanders? These are organized into a core set of concepts that should be at the center of any campus' goals for a survey, along with additional modules that address topics that may be useful for some more specific campus goals. In preparing this document, we sought out example items that represent best practices in measuring victimization and climate and compiled an evidence-informed survey.

### B. What Resources Do You Have?

There are a range of methods that can be used to conduct a campus climate survey. Each has strengths and weaknesses, though a number of factors are important for gathering credible data (see discussion below). Campuses will want to do the best survey possible with the resources they have available. This requires first that campuses examine what resources they have available for the project: what campus faculty or research personnel are available to help with survey design, data collection and analysis? Will they conduct the survey as part of their regular job or for additional pay? Does the campus already have access to an online survey platform or will one need to be purchased? Will incentives such as a lottery for gift cards or prizes be offered to participants who complete the survey as an incentive for participation? These are a sample of the types of questions a campus climate survey committee should ask at the outset of planning for the survey.

### C. Are the Data Trustworthy?

Survey research methods can be quite complex and there are many factors that go into gathering data that are credible and useful. Below are key questions and issues to consider. These are not meant to be

exhaustive, but rather to provide some guidelines for a practical approach to climate surveys. Schools should prioritize gathering the best information within the constraints of available resources.

## II. CONDUCTING SURVEYS AND COLLECTING DATA

### A. Planning for the Survey

#### 1. Consultation and Technical Assistance

The aim for any survey is to collect high-quality data. In the planning process, campuses should identify technical experts with research training who can consult on all aspects of the survey, including design, sampling, data collection methods, data analysis, and report writing. This expertise can be found in a number of places.

- a. *Partnerships with faculty researchers on campus or with staff at a campus institutional research office.* **Strengths:** Local experts may be able to work on climate surveys as part of their regular service on campus. They are also easier to meet and talk with since they are located on campus. Their involvement demonstrates faculty and school commitment to understanding the problem of sexual assault on their campus. **Limitation:** As members of the campus community, they may not be able to be completely impartial or independent in reporting findings of the survey.
- b. *Regional partnerships.* Not all campuses have internal resources for conducting research. Therefore, states or regions should consider regional partnerships. For example, a survey could be located and hosted at a campus that has a survey center or faculty with survey expertise and offered to other campuses regionally. **Strengths:** Provides research resources for campuses that have fewer resources. This model can also allow for aggregate data to be collected for a region in the event that some schools do not wish to have specific data identified with their campus. **Limitations:** Technical experts are located off campus. Campuses in the regional partnership will have to reach agreement upon the goals of the survey and there will be less room for tailoring to individual campuses in the questions asked, and, possibly, in how the findings are reported.
- c. *Private research firms* can also be used to conduct surveys for campuses. **Strengths:** They serve as independent entities that are located outside the campus. They often have the specialized experience, methodology, and corporate capabilities to conduct these surveys using industry standards and best practices. **Limitations:** Using a private firm requires allocation of resources to pay their fees and their researchers may not know the unique issues on campus.

## 2. How Data Are Collected

Many different methods can be used for surveys, including in-person interviews, phone interviews, computer-assisted interviews, paper and pencil surveys, and online surveys. All are self-report, meaning that the information gathered depends on what respondents are willing to share. Beyond this, each has strengths and limitations and it is beyond the scope of this document to describe them all.

It is important to consider what methods will best reach the sample of participants you need, and what resources exist to support your choice. For example, it has become a challenge to get people to respond to phone surveys because technology allows people to screen calls easily.\* Interviews require personnel who are well trained to make the phone calls or conduct in-person interviews. Paper and pencil surveys may be easy to distribute in classes but may make privacy of research participants difficult to ensure if students sit near each other or if disclosing victimization results in answering more questions in a way that others in the room can notice. This method also requires resources for data entry. It is likely most practical for campuses to use online surveys. One advantage of using online surveys is that most students on college campuses use electronic communication such as email or texting and have access to computers. Having a list of student e-mails makes it much easier to identify eligible respondents and to distribute the survey link. With a complete roster of eligible students, you can invite all possible participants and have a basis for making appropriate adjustments for nonresponses. However, unless a system for tracking participation is developed, it is often possible for students to take the survey more than once. Further, to ensure confidentiality for participants, the survey needs to be programmed so that IP addresses are not collected and responses of individual students cannot be identified. Online surveys can be programmed so that students are directed to a different place to register for a lottery with incentives. This may discourage students from taking the survey twice but also protects students' confidentiality because their responses to the survey are not linked to their lottery entry. Campus surveys that have most recently appeared in the research literature used online surveys. Considerations when conducting an online survey include:

- a. Developing an online survey specific to the campus with a link sent to all students or a sample of students. Many online survey platforms exist that can be used and many campuses have access to these.

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\* The complexities of planning a phone survey with college students are beyond the scope of this document. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) uses a phone interview strategy that is quite comprehensive, though tailored for the general population rather than college students. <http://www.cdc.gov/violencePrevention/NISVS/index.html>

- b. Adding questions to a survey that is already being used on your campus. The strength of this approach is that it capitalizes on resources already available. The challenge is that there is likely little room for many questions to be added.
- c. Anticipating the possibility of multiple responders. Some individuals may try to take the survey more than once. There are techniques to work against this, such as requiring students to report their student ID number. This unique number could be used to prevent a student logging into the survey twice, or allow researchers to examine whether any students took the survey more than once. However, students may worry that researchers will be able to identify who they are and associate their names with their survey answers. This can make it less likely that students will take the survey. Software can be used to decouple the unique identifier from the survey results. Using this technique does not guarantee anonymity, but may help students feel more comfortable. Another option to maximize participation is NOT to ask for any identifying information, and assume that some individuals may take the survey more than once. In that case, campuses should work with research experts to address the statistical challenges of duplicative surveys.

### 3. Sample of Participants

A key aspect of whether you can trust the information your survey has gathered, and therefore whether your survey is useful as a foundation for policy and program development, is the sample of people who actually complete the survey. For example, it would be difficult to critique campus policies or conclude that prevention efforts were unhelpful for students on a campus if a survey asked questions of ten students, all of whom had just transferred from another school. Likewise, it would be difficult to have a full picture of victims of sexual assault if only men in their senior year on campus completed the survey. Below are a few key issues to consider, along with suggestions for how to address them. Again, this list is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to prompt discussion about sampling and encourage consultation with researchers as part of the campus survey process.

- a. *Representativeness.* For data to be most useful for decision-making and campus programming, the sample of participants who provide information in the survey needs to closely resemble the community of students on the campus. If your sample looks like only a certain segment of your campus population, then your findings will only pertain to that group rather than to students as a whole. A number of strategies can be considered.
  - i. Campuses have a finite number of students. One strategy involves a census by sampling the full population using an online survey and inviting all students to participate. Offering an incentive, such as a lottery for a gift certificate, increases participation and increases chances of a good census sample, though

research studies typically report that between 25% and 50% of students complete surveys.

- ii.** Even with a census approach, it is unlikely that all students will respond. Collect demographic information in your climate survey so you can assess how the students who took the survey compare to the population of students on your campus. This allows for more targeted recruitment if needed. Be careful, however, about how data will be reported so that small demographic groups on campus are not potentially identified by reporting of data. Nonresponse bias analyses should be conducted to examine underrepresentation of certain groups in the final sample of participants (see, for example, Krebs et al, 2009<sup>1</sup>). Data can still be useful but will need to be qualified in terms of what segments of your community they really describe.
- iii.** If it is impractical to get most students to complete the survey, then you will need to make a plan to draw groups of participants from across key demographic categories (gender, race, year on campus, major, etc.). Examine the plan for bias toward certain groups or away from others. Again, Krebs et al, 2009, provides an example of drawing a random sample of students from registrar enrollment lists.
- iv.** In some circumstances, you may be interested in understanding the experiences of a particular subgroup on campus and thus will oversample from this group. This has the advantage of improving the information obtained for that group, but presents some data analysis challenges if you are also putting all the data together to talk about the campus as a whole. That is, if certain groups are sampled at a higher rate than others, their impact on the overall estimate will be over-represented compared to how much of the population of students they make up, potentially introducing bias. For example, if you oversample women, given that we know women experience higher rates of sexual assault than men, your overall rate for the full survey will be higher than if the proportion of women in the survey had been similar to the proportion of women students on campus.
- v.** Ensure that survey tools and results are accessible to students with disabilities and English language learners, and conduct targeted outreach to those students in a manner they can understand.
- vi.** Consider advertising the survey and its importance to different subgroups of students who may be hard to reach.



- vii. Leadership is key – consider an invitation written by student and campus leadership, highlighting the importance of the survey and encouraging students to complete it.
- viii. If, in spite of all your efforts, your sample over represents some groups (through self-selection), or underrepresents others (through non-response by those groups), there are statistical techniques such as weighting adjustment that can be used. Consult with technical experts for data analyses as recommended above.
- b. *Size of sample.* If you choose to select a sample rather than interviewing the entire universe of students on campus (i.e. conduct a census), in general, the larger the sample, the better the data will be. Statistics performed on small sets of participants can be misleading. This is particularly true for trying to generate estimates of issues like sexual assault. You need a sufficiently large sample to generate enough examples of the problem so that follow up questions, like where the assault happened, can be meaningfully examined (e.g. it would be difficult to make any conclusions about where sexual assaults are occurring if your sample only included five assault victims).
- c. *Response rate.* This is an estimate of how many people actually took the survey, compared to everyone who was given the opportunity to do so. In general, the higher the response rate, the more trustworthy the data. Incentives for participation can be helpful in boosting response rates (though you want to identify incentives that appeal to all students, not just some subgroups). Also consider the timing of the survey. If it is given too close in time to other surveys on campus, students may feel over-surveyed and ignore requests to participate. Further, consider the length of your survey. Surveys that require a lot of time to complete may not generate high participation rates.
- d. *Results of the survey.* Sampling has important implications for data analysis and reporting. If your sample is small, your response rate is low, or the demographics of participants do not match the demographic patterns of your students overall, then it will be difficult to use the information as a marker of what is happening on your campus overall. Rather, it is more an indication of what a subgroup of students thinks or has experienced. Getting a representative and large sample of participants is a priority for climate surveys.

## **B. Conducting the Survey**

### **1. Consult with Your Institutional Review Board**

All survey teams must consult with your campus Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure your survey complies with ethical requirements. Working with your campus IRB

throughout the process is an important component of any survey or research project. Key ethical considerations the IRB addresses will include:

- a. *Age of research participants.* Some college students are not yet 18 years of age, which means they may not legally be able to provide consent to do the survey themselves.
- b. *Informed consent.* Participants will need to indicate their consent to participate in the survey and understand what that means. If participants are being asked for identifying information such as their student ID number, make sure the survey will not trigger mandatory reporting (either to law enforcement or to campus authorities) when students indicate victimization experiences.
- c. *Confidentiality of responses.* List in the IRB application all individuals who will have access to the survey data and insuring that data are reported in terms of aggregates that do not identify individuals or small groups on campus. Describe how and where the data collected will be stored, for how long, and if the data will ever be released as a public-use file. If so, what steps will be taken to eliminate the risk that any student information will be disclosed. Not releasing the file prevents others from verifying the findings and exploring other questions, but prevents any risk of disclosure. Disclosing a student's response either directly, or by putting together demographic information (probabilistic or indirect identification), could be extremely harmful.

## **2. Use Evidence-Informed Survey Measures**

Choose items and measures that have been carefully researched (see Chapter 2). In preparing this document, we selected example items that represent the most well-researched or well-used scales for this work to date. Thus, the example survey here represents a promising practice survey.

## **3. Choose an Appropriate Timeframe**

Choose the timeframe for your survey, preferably current academic year, past calendar year, or "since starting college."

- a. It can be difficult for people to remember beyond 12 months. The use of a calendar highlighting key dates such as the start and end of the semester, semester breaks, holidays, etc. might be useful in aiding recall and may be very practical for online surveys.
- b. You will want to use a limited timeframe if you hope to repeat the survey in future years and look at trends over time. If surveys are given in the future, surveys should be administered at the same time for each panel in order for estimates to be comparable.

- c. The current academic year is a good choice (if you survey later in the year) because it provides a boundary on the timeframe that is easy to remember. Students can use the start of the academic year as a memory marker and more accurately report incidents that happened just during that year.

## **C. Protecting Participants**

### **1. Ensure Participant Confidentiality**

- a. To feel comfortable being honest in survey answers, people must know they cannot be personally identified in the data. Schools should not use data to identify specific victims.
- b. Tell participants upfront how their responses will be used. Who will have access to the data? Will results only be reported in the aggregate? Will data be available to others for further analyses after initial reports are produced?
- c. Gather demographic data in a way that is not potentially identifying. While data on race/ethnicity is important, on some campuses it may unintentionally identify individual students. Therefore, schools should have a clear plan for who will have access to the data, where data will be stored, and how data will be analyzed and reported. Schools are encouraged not to report specific data for small groups that may be indirectly identified by demographic variables. For example, if there are a small number of non-traditional students on campus, reporting information on that group may risk those students being identified in the survey findings.
- d. If conducting online surveys, disable collection of IP addresses and date stamps.
- e. If any identifying information is collected, like student ID numbers, remove this information once duplicate responses have been removed from the dataset.
- f. Work with your campus Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB).

### **2. Protect Participants from Distress**

- a. Researchers often worry about whether questions about interpersonal violence may cause participants distress. A growing body of research, mostly with college students, indicates that participants, including victims, do not find being asked such questions distressing. Many report benefiting from research participation.<sup>2</sup> This should not detract from concerns that some participants may become distressed from questions. Survey instructions should remind students that they can choose not to answer questions and can discontinue participation. In fact, some students who experienced a sexual assault may choose to seek help or services after completing the survey.

Providing information about resources and where to get help is important to include in the survey (see below).

- b.** Provide an introduction to the survey that gives participants a preview that some of the questions they will be asked are personal and concern sexual behavior. Remind them that they can choose not to take the survey and can skip questions. Remind them why you are asking.
- c.** Provide all participants with debriefing information at the end of the survey, including lists of contact information for local and national resources, hotlines, and advocacy in case they wish to speak with someone further after completing the survey. This can include information on how to report allegations of sexual violence to appropriate campus officials or campus or local law enforcement. Even if the survey is designed to assess student knowledge of sexual violence policies and procedures, providing access to such policies after the survey can help ensure the dissemination of accurate information.
- d.** Sample introductory and debriefing language is in Chapter 2 of this document.

## **D. Using the Data**

### **1. Include on the Research Team Someone with Skills in Survey Data Analysis**

As noted throughout this document, survey research is doable but complex. Data analysis will need to involve examining the representativeness of the sample and conducting statistical weighting when needed. The research team needs at least one person who can carefully analyze the data and work with the team on interpretation. These individuals can analyze the data in accordance with the goals the team has identified for the survey, or determine which questions cannot be answered because of sampling limitations. A skilled data analyst will help ensure that findings reported are consistent with the data collected.

### **2. Make Clear Who Will Have Access to the Data and Where Data Will Be Stored to Protect Privacy of the Participants and Integrity of the Data**

Data that might contain any identifiable information must be carefully stored on password-protected devices and not on freely accessed networks. Typically, a few researchers in charge of data analysis have access to the data itself while other team members will be given aggregate numbers, summary statistics and analyses. Data are typically de-identified for data analysis as much as possible (for example, by removing student ID numbers once the dataset has been examined for duplicates). The Human Subjects Review Board (IRB) will want to know about and examine the qualifications of all individuals who will have direct access to the data.

### **3. Understand the Limits of Your Data**

There are many sources of error in survey research. Having clearly defined research questions and critical estimates outlined prior to conducting the survey will help to clarify what should be reported and how. What are the key estimates of interest? What key subgroups should be described (e.g. gender, race, class)? Researchers rely on what participants are willing to self-report and on enough participants being willing to complete the survey. There is the potential for duplicate surveys. Schools should acknowledge the strengths and limits of the data they have gathered and the implications of those limits for what the information tells us about the campus. Reports of climate data should include reflections on data quality and caveats about interpreting or comparing data. Schools need to understand that at times, some of their climate survey goals may not be met if their sample size or representativeness is inadequate. Untrustworthy data can do more harm than good in efforts to change campus climate.

### **4. Have a Plan for What Data Will Be Reported**

As noted above, data for some campus subgroups might not be reported if the groups are so small that data could be indirectly identifying. This can and should be known prior to conducting the survey and used to establish expectations for key stakeholders. Setting a reporting threshold means that some results may not be reported, including results that may pertain to subgroups in the population. A related issue concerns the reliability of estimates, including percentages, that may be calculated from the data. For example, you would never want to report out an estimate that is based on only one or two students. Some federal surveys do not report data from 20 or fewer sample cases.

### **4. Begin Partnerships around Messaging**

- a.** Climate surveys, if they are to be most useful to campuses, should be shared not only with key professionals on campus concerned with climate issues and sexual assault, but also with students and with the wider community. This will maximize the use of the data as a tool for awareness and change. It will also make it more likely that community members will participate in future surveys since they have been shown the value of the survey data.
- b.** It is critical that students believe that the survey is a tool to protect them and to ensure they have the opportunity to attend school in a safe and supportive environment. The administration can help get this message out through partnerships with student organizations (e.g. athletics, Greek life, etc.). Proactive messaging will help students see the value in participating.
- c.** Results of climate surveys can be worthwhile for schools because they help identify effective policies as well as policies that need to be revisited. Sharing the findings shows that the school takes the issue seriously. Use the survey results as an opportunity to

meet with students and student groups to share ideas for addressing issues and areas for growth revealed in the findings.

- d. Use examples from other schools that have worked with campus leadership to send a powerful and positive message about the role of climate surveys in a comprehensive approach to sexual assault response and prevention.<sup>3</sup>

## **5. Plan for Sustainability**

- a. It is advantageous to do climate surveys multiple times. This can show changes at a campus over time and be an indicator of whether policy and program changes are producing the targeted results.
- b. “Multiple times” can mean different things. It can mean a panel survey of the community every so many years, or it can mean following students over time during their college career. Schools can decide if they want cross-sectional panels of different students (every three or five years, for example,) or if they want to try to track students. The latter option is more complicated and resource-intensive and beyond the scope of the current document to describe.
- c. Repeating surveys during a student’s tenure on campus also reminds students that campus leadership takes sexual assault seriously, and that ensuring student safety and preventing violence require diligence and commitment by all members of the campus community.
- d. By approaching climate surveys in a way that is realistic given a school’s resources, the school can establish a plan for sustaining climate surveys over time and routinely using the findings of climate surveys to fine tune policies and programs related to sexual assault.

## **III. CONTENT OF CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEYS—ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS**

### **A. Introduction and Conclusion to the Survey**

1. Include an introduction to your survey that gives participants a preview of what you will ask and why you are asking. Remind them that they can choose not to participate or can choose to skip questions (see example in Chapter 2 of this document). Remind them why the information is important to campus safety. Let students know that no individual information will be disclosed, as the purpose of the survey is to provide a statistical description of the school climate and of key subgroups such a gender, race, school class, and age.

2. Think about how questions will be sequenced in your survey. Begin with a few questions on more neutral topics, and lead in to more sensitive questions about sexual assault. Initial questions can include demographics, such as year in school and gender, or general climate questions, such as knowledge of sexual assault policies.
3. Conclude the survey with resources for participants if they want to learn more about sexual assault or wish to speak with someone in an advocacy or resource position.

## **B. Assessing Number of Incidents or Victims Is Necessary to Assess Climate**

As previously noted, official statistics from formal response agencies underrepresent the extent of the problem on any one campus.

Assessing rates of sexual assault via confidential surveys provides a different snapshot of the extent of the problem, and if surveys are given over time using representative and large samples, they can show how the nature and scope of the problem change over time. The rate of sexual assault is one of the most important things for schools to measure.

When measuring sexual assault rates, it is useful to ask about violence the individual experienced, and the context in which incidents occurred.

There are two ways to measure the extent of the problem of sexual assault on campuses: prevalence and incidence.

1. **Prevalence rates** are a count of how many unique people have been victimized during a given period of time (e.g. one in four college seniors were raped during the first four months of the academic year). This is one of the easiest ways to understand the extent of the problem.
2. **Incidence rates** measure how many times assaults have occurred over a set period of time (e.g. how many times you experienced X during the first semester of this academic year). Some individuals may be assaulted more than once, so total incidents will likely exceed the total number of victims. It is easier to understand incidence rates when they are paired with a count of the number victims (prevalence). Further, it may be very difficult for some victims to recall the exact number of incidents that occurred in a specific period of time. Work with your faculty or research experts to ensure your survey gathers the information you need.

## **C. Climate Has Many Dimensions**

The campus climate survey example included in this document focuses on only the most critical aspects of understanding sexual violence on campus. Consider forming a work group to discuss whether measuring other aspects of climate in addition to the core elements would be helpful. Learning how many people are being victimized on campus is an essential element of a climate survey. Students' perceptions of campus climate are also important to examine. This is reflected in

perceptions of campus leadership’s responsiveness, how the campus would handle sexual assault and student safety, and the adequacy of training and resources. Knowledge of policies and resources indicates both the effectiveness of training and the extent to which students use sexual assault resources.

#### **D. Established Measurement Tools Can and Should be Used**

Validated and reliable survey tools exist and should be used when conducting a campus survey. This will ensure trustworthy data. It may also permit campuses to compare their data to other reports using the same measures. Questions that sound useful, but have not been evaluated for use in research, may not always result in information that is credible or helpful.

For example, decades ago it was common to ask about sexual assault by asking someone if they had ever been “raped.” This seemed a direct and honest way of understanding victimization rates. Researchers found, however, that few people labeled what happened to them as rape or were often unwilling to use that label on a research survey. People also had different definitions of rape. As a result, this resulted in underreports of rape and data that were neither precise nor accurate.<sup>4</sup> Researchers then designed questions that described behaviors that would constitute rape (and sexual assault more broadly) and asked participants if they had ever experienced those behaviors. These questions are, by nature, somewhat graphic, but there is substantial scientific evidence that they yield more accurate results. Through extensive evaluation, researchers – including the National Academy of Sciences and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – have validated these questions as the most effective and scientific means to assess whether someone has been raped or sexually assaulted.<sup>5</sup>

Across topics assessed below, an effort was made to choose measures that focused on behavior rather than hypothetical situations or perceptions, as these attitude measures are not always strongly related to actual behaviors. Further, questions were chosen based on current best practices, when available, or promising practices from the field. Overall, items gathering information about the number of victims are evidence based and have been used often in previous research. Climate perception questions represent more promising practices.

##### **1. Measuring the Extent of the Problem**

- a. Researchers often recommend measuring academic year prevalence of the problem: how many people report at least one victimization during the current academic year? This keeps the survey from becoming overly long. (To assess true incidence you need to ask how many times each type of victimization occurred for each person and ensure that each person takes the survey at about the same time during the academic year).
- b. Incidence and prevalence are critical information. Victimization surveys are really the only direct voice of the victim, all other accounts are crafted, sanitized and recorded through official records. The value of hearing directly from the victim cannot be understated.



- c. In peer-reviewed research, the most widely used and most researched tool is Koss' Sexual Experiences Survey. It can be used to measure victimization and perpetration. It includes questions across the spectrum of sexual violence.<sup>6</sup>
- d. The 2010 CDC National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey used similar behaviorally specific questions that were developed in consultation with a panel of experts.<sup>7</sup> This measure is similar to Koss' and very comprehensive. It was developed to be administered in an interview format.
- e. Krebs and colleagues conducted an NIJ-funded grant project, The Campus Sexual Assault (CSA) Study.<sup>8</sup> Their questions take a similar format as Koss' and were designed for online administration. The Krebs' measure is shorter than Koss', and is used as an example in Chapter 2 of this document. The answer format, however, does need to be programmed or formatted to link to follow up questions.
- f. Climate surveys may include measures of prevalence or incidence of other forms of harassment and discrimination.
- g. It should be noted that none of these measures provides collection of data that would permit evaluating whether the reported victimization was founded or unfounded.

## **2. Measuring Context**

- a. It is helpful to understand more about the context of victimization. This can be challenging since some participants may report more than one victimization experience on the survey and asking about each incident can be time consuming. Many surveys ask participants to answer follow-up questions based on choosing the most serious incident.
- b. Types of questions often include: gender of perpetrator; whether the perpetrator was known to the victim; whether the perpetrator was a student on the campus; whether the victim disclosed to anyone; and where the assault/harassment took place.

## **3. Measuring Disclosure and Reporting**

- a. Given that campuses seek to encourage greater reporting and to understand barriers to disclosure and reporting, including questions about disclosure can be helpful.
- b. The most researched measures in this area are of disclosure reactions by informal supports (e.g. Ullman's Social Reactions Questionnaire or Campbell's measure of secondary victimization by professional helpers). These are extensive measures that are not included here. Rather, brief measures of disclosure, reporting, and challenges to disclosure/reporting are used here and were taken from climate surveys already used by some schools.

#### **4. Measuring Perceptions of Climate**

- a.** More general measures of perception of climate appear often in research, though there is some disagreement among scholars about the best way to measure climate perceptions. Measures might include items about harassment and discrimination more broadly, as well as attitudes related specifically to sexual violence.
- b.** There are some validated measures of general organization climate in the organizational behavior literature. However, a review of many campus climate surveys reveals that campuses often create their own items, though there is similarity in what they choose to measure. There is, however, little discussion in campus survey reports about the constructs they are trying to measure or about research on their psychometric properties. We chose questions below that represent often used and promising practices from samples of climate surveys.
- c.** Other aspects of climate related to sexual violence include rape myth acceptance and bystander attitudes and behaviors.

#### **5. Measuring Knowledge of Policies and Resources**

- a.** We know from research that people are not always good at estimating or understanding what they know about a topic. People often think they know much more or much less than they actually do. Questions that directly assess their knowledge are better than perception questions.
- b.** Items should be simple and jargon free, have answer choices that are detailed enough to provide specific information, and do more than assess an individual's perceived knowledge about a policy. Sample Items were drawn from climate surveys done on college campuses and represent current best promising practices.

#### **6. Intimate Partner Violence**

- a.** Intimate partner violence (IPV), also known as relationship violence, dating violence, or domestic violence, is also a problem facing many college and university students. The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) was amended in 2013 to include domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. In response to the Clery Act changes, many schools are considering ways to address IPV on their campuses.
- b.** While included here as an optional module, schools are encouraged to measure IPV and use results to inform campus responses and determine needed resources.

## **CHAPTER 2: PROMISING PRACTICE EXAMPLES FOR A CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY**

**IMPORTANT:** The questions below are examples that represent the best available promising practices in climate surveys. Schools must work with faculty who have extensive research experience or other experts to customize a survey that works for their campus. If conducted without sufficient planning, a survey can measure nothing, give false results, or even harm campus efforts to address sexual assault. Some of the sample climate questions have not been validated, and this survey as a whole has not been validated. The Department of Justice is currently working toward validating the survey as a whole to produce an evidence-based survey. Please note this document does not constitute legal advice, and institutions that adopt these sample questions into their climate survey, in part or in whole, may still be found to be out of compliance with federal law(s) (e.g. if the institution fails to effectively address a hostile education environment created by sexual misconduct).

### **A. Sample Introductory Language:**

*Surveys need to begin by explaining to participants what kinds of questions they will be asked.*

This is a survey of the incidence of certain types of sexual and physical experiences in relationships on campus. The questionnaire takes about \_\_ minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary, and you may choose to skip questions or stop responding at any point. However, your cooperation would be greatly appreciated and would contribute to our understanding of a very important aspect of student life at Campus X. We are committed to ensuring a safe, healthy, and nondiscriminatory environment for our students and your participation in this survey will help us in our work to keep all students safe.

If you agree to participate, you can be assured that your responses are completely [anonymous or confidential]. Your responses will be reported in terms of groups of students rather than as individual cases. Your questionnaire has been assigned a number and will be referred to in terms of that number. You may stop your participation at any time, or choose not to answer particular questions without penalty. Some of the questions will ask about sexual and personal information. Some individuals might experience emotional discomfort while answering some of the questions. At the end of the survey you will be given information about resources should you wish to talk with someone further.

The principal investigators of this survey are \_\_\_\_\_ and can be reached at \_\_\_\_\_.

### **B. Sample Debriefing Form (for the end of the survey):**

*Surveys need to conclude with information and resources for participants.*

This is a survey of unwanted sexual experiences and relationship aggression on campuses around [Region/State]. The purpose of this survey is to answer the following questions: How often do these things happen on campus? What are the consequences and who do individuals experiencing these

things tell? How do students feel about the university's response to sexual assault? [Customize questions as appropriate.] Answers to these questions are important for developing policies and prevention tools to reduce the number of these incidents in our communities and to provide better support systems for people who have experienced them. The information you have given us will help us both understand the issue of interpersonal aggression on your campus and others in [Region/State].

We thank you for your willingness to participate. The information you have given us will be kept anonymous, as your name is not anywhere on the questionnaire and web data is stripped of any identifying computer related information before we receive the data.

All reasonable efforts have been undertaken to minimize any such potential risks, but you should know that any form of communication over the Internet carries a minimal risk of loss of confidentiality. If other individuals (e.g. partner, roommate) have access to your computer, they might be able to view your web browsing history, including a link to this survey. For information on how to delete your web browsing history, you can visit <http://www.computerhope.com/issues/ch000510.htm>

If you are concerned about any of the topics covered in this survey, or if you would like more information or reading material on this topic, please contact one of the resources below.

**For Relationship Violence:**

[Campus/Local Crisis Center]:

[State Hotline #]: \_\_\_\_\_

National: 1-800-799-SAFE

[www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)

Text "campus" to 22522

The principal investigators of this survey are \_\_\_\_\_. They can answer additional questions you may have about the survey.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

**For Sexual Assault:**

[Campus/Local Crisis Center]:

[State Hotline #]: \_\_\_\_\_

National: 1-800-656-HOPE

<https://ohl.rainn.org/online>

**C. Sample Warm-Up and Climate Questions:**

*Surveys need to lead in to questions about sexual violence slowly rather than right up front. Questions about demographics and general climate surveys are good lead-in questions and are useful to put first in a survey instrument.*

***Demographics***

*This information is important to collect so that you can determine how well the sample who responded to the climate survey represents the larger school sample you are drawing from.*

We will not report any group data for groups of fewer than five individuals that may be small enough to reveal identity. Instead, the researchers will combine the groups to eliminate any potential for identifiable demographic information.

1. What is your current gender identity?

Female            Male            Transgender Female            Transgender Male  
Genderqueer/Gender-nonconforming            Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your ethnicity (as you define it)?

Hispanic or Latino            Not Hispanic or Latino

3. What is your race (as you define it)? (mark all that apply)

American Indian or Alaska Native            Asian    Black or African American  
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander            White

4. Which term best describes your sexual orientation?    Bisexual            Gay            Heterosexual

Lesbian            Questioning            Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your current status? (Please mark only one)    First year student    Second year student

Third year student    Fourth year student    Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. What sex were you assigned at birth, meaning on your original birth certificate?

Female            Male

### ***General Climate Questions***

7. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements:<sup>9</sup>

Strongly Agree            Agree            Disagree            Strongly Disagree

- a. I feel valued in the classroom/learning environment.
- b. Faculty, staff, and administrators respect what students on this campus think.
- c. I think faculty are genuinely concerned about my welfare.
- d. I think administrators are genuinely concerned about my welfare.
- e. I feel close to people on this campus.
- f. I feel like I am a part of this college/university.
- g. I am happy to be at this college/university.
- h. The faculty, staff, and administrators at this school treat students fairly.
- i. I feel safe on this campus.

8. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements:<sup>10</sup>

Strongly Agree                  Agree                  Disagree                  Strongly Disagree

- a. College officials (administrators, public safety officers) should do more to protect students from harm.
- b. If a crisis happened on campus, my college would handle it well.
- c. The college responds too slowly in difficult situations.
- d. College officials handle incidents in a fair and responsible manner.
- e. My college does enough to protect the safety of students.
- f. There is a good support system on campus for students going through difficult times.

***Perceptions of Leadership, Policies and Reporting***

9. If someone were to report a sexual assault to a campus authority, how likely is it that:<sup>11</sup>

Very Likely                  Moderately Likely                  Slightly Likely                  Not at all Likely

- a. The university would take the report seriously.
- b. The university would keep knowledge of the report limited to those who need to know in order for the university to respond properly.
- c. The university would forward the report outside the campus to criminal investigators.
- d. The university would take steps to protect the safety of the person making the report.
- e. The university would support the person making the report.
- f. The university would take corrective action to address factors that may have led to the sexual assault.
- g. The university would take corrective action against the offender.
- h. The university would take steps to protect the person making the report from retaliation.
- i. Students would label the person making the report a troublemaker.
- j. Students would support the person making the report.
- k. The alleged offender(s) or their associates would retaliate against the person making the report.
- l. The educational achievement/career of the person making the report would suffer.

10. Have you received training in policies and procedures regarding incidents of sexual assault (e.g. what is defined as sexual assault, how to report an incident, confidential resources, procedures for investigating)?

YES NO

11. Have you received training in prevention of sexual assault?

YES NO

12. If yes, how useful did you think the training was?

Very Moderately Somewhat Slightly Not Useful

13. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements:<sup>12</sup>

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree/disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

a. If a friend or I were sexually assaulted, I know where to go to get help.

b. I understand [University]'s formal procedures to address complaints of sexual assault.

c. I have confidence that [University] administers the formal procedures to address complaints of sexual assault fairly.

## **E. Sample Questions Assessing Number of Victims of Sexual Violence**

*NOTE: be sure to select the appropriate timeframe for your survey. See discussion on page 16 (Chapter 1, Section III.D.1.a). Some of the terms used in this section are graphic. Through extensive evaluation, researchers have validated these questions as the most effective and scientific means to assess whether someone has been raped or sexually assaulted.<sup>13</sup> They are the best practice for insuring the collection of valid and useful data, and recent national reports are clear about the need to ask very descriptive questions about behaviors in order to measure experiences of sexual assault accurately.<sup>14</sup>*

This section asks about nonconsensual or unwanted sexual contact you may have experienced. When you are asked about whether something happened since [TIMEFRAME], please think about what has happened since [TIMEFRAME]. The person with whom you had the unwanted sexual contact could have been a stranger or someone you know, such as a family member or someone you were dating or going out with. These questions ask about five types of unwanted sexual contact:<sup>15</sup>

- a. forced touching of a sexual nature (forced kissing, touching of private parts, grabbing, fondling, rubbing up against you in a sexual way, even if it is over your clothes)
- b. oral sex (someone's mouth or tongue making contact with your genitals or your mouth or tongue making contact with someone else's genitals)
- c. sexual intercourse (someone's penis being put in your vagina)
- d. anal sex (someone's penis being put in your anus)

- e. sexual penetration with a finger or object (someone putting their finger or an object like a bottle or a candle in your vagina or anus)

The questions below ask about unwanted sexual contact that involved force or threats of force against you. Force could include someone holding you down with his or her body weight, pinning your arms, hitting or kicking you, or using or threatening to use a weapon against you.

Response choices are Yes/No followed by follow-up questions if Yes is selected.

- 14. Has anyone had sexual contact with you by using physical force or threatening to physically harm you? YES NO
- 15. Has anyone attempted but not succeeded in having sexual contact with you by using or threatening to use physical force against you? YES NO

The next set of questions ask about your experiences with unwanted sexual contact while you were unable to provide consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, drugged, drunk, incapacitated, or asleep. These situations might include times that you voluntarily consumed alcohol or drugs and times that you were given drugs without your knowledge or consent.

- 16. Since \_\_\_\_\_ (insert timeframe), has someone had sexual contact with you when you were unable to provide consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, drugged, drunk, incapacitated, or asleep? This question asks about incidents that you are certain happened. YES NO
- 17. Have you suspected that someone has had sexual contact with you when you were unable to provide consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, drugged, drunk, incapacitated, or asleep? This question asks about events that you think (but are not certain) happened. YES NO

### ***Follow-up Questions:***

Earlier you indicated that since TIMEFRAME, someone has had sexual contact with you by using physical force or threatening to physically harm you. The questions below ask about that experience.

- 18. When the person had sexual contact with you by using or threatening you with physical force, which of the following happened? Please check all that apply.
  - a. Forced touching of a sexual nature
  - b. Oral sex
  - c. Sexual intercourse
  - d. Anal sex
  - e. Sexual Penetration with a finger or object



Earlier you indicated that since TIMEFRAME, someone has had sexual contact with you when you were unable to provide consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, drugged, drunk, incapacitated, or asleep. The questions below ask about that experience.

- 19.** When the person had sexual contact with you when you were unable to provide consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, drugged, drunk, incapacitated, or asleep, which of the following happened? Please check all that apply.
- a. Forced touching of a sexual nature
  - b. Oral sex
  - c. Sexual intercourse
  - d. Anal sex
  - e. Sexual Penetration with a finger or object
  - f. Don't Know

The next questions ask more about the time since TIMEFRAME that someone had sexual contact with you when you were unable to provide consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, drugged, drunk, incapacitated, or asleep.

- 20.** Just prior to (the incident/any of the incidents), had you been drinking alcohol? Keep in mind that you are in no way responsible for the assault that occurred, even if you had been drinking.

YES NO

- a. If yes, were you drunk? YES NO

- 21.** Just prior to (the incident/any of the incidents), had you voluntarily been taking or using any drugs other than alcohol? YES NO

- 22.** Just prior to (the incident/any of the incidents), had you been given a drug without your knowledge or consent? YES NO DON'T KNOW

## **F. Sample Context and Disclosure Questions**

*It can often be helpful to campus staff to understand more about where sexual assault occurs. A number of measures have been developed to assess this. [Use if participants indicate they had unwanted sexual experiences.]*

For the next set of questions, please pick the MOST SERIOUS INCIDENT if you had more than one, and answer the questions below about this experience. If you had no unwanted sexual experiences, circle "no experience" for each of the questions below.<sup>16</sup>

- 23.** Who did the UNWANTED BEHAVIOR involve? (Check only one)

- a. stranger
- b. family member
- c. acquaintance
- d. coworker
- e. employer/supervisor
- f. college professor/instructor
- g. college staff
- h. non-romantic friend
- i. casual or first date
- j. current romantic partner

- k. ex-romantic partner
- l. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- m. No experience

**24.** Was this person a student at your University?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I do not know
- d. No experience

**25.** Was this person affiliated with the University, as an employee, staff, or faculty member?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I do not know
- d. No experience

**27.** What was the gender of the individual who did this to you?

- a. Man
- b. Woman
- c. No experience

**28.** Did the incident involve: (Circle ALL that apply)

- a. the other person's use of alcohol
- b. your use of alcohol
- c. the other person's use of drugs
- d. your use of drugs
- e. none of the above
- f. No experience

**29.** How frightened were you by the incident?

- a. Extremely frightened
- b. Somewhat frightened
- c. Only a little frightened
- d. Not at all frightened
- e. No experience

**30.** Where did the incident occur? (Mark ALL that apply)

- a. Off-campus (please specify location) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. On-campus (please specify location) \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Other location (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**31.** Who did you tell about the incident? (Circle ALL that apply)

- a. no one
- b. roommate
- c. close friend other than roommate
- d. parent or guardian
- e. other family member
- f. counselor
- g. faculty or staff
- h. residence hall staff
- i. police
- j. romantic partner (other than the one who did this to you)

- k. campus sexual assault advocate
- l. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- m. No experience

**32.** Did you use the formal procedures to report the incident(s)?

YES NO

**33.** If yes, did university formal procedures help you deal with the problem?

- a. Didn't help me at all
- b. Helped me a little
- c. Helped, but could have helped more
- d. Helped me a lot
- e. Completely solved the problem

**34.** If you did not tell anyone, why? (Circle ALL that apply)<sup>17</sup>

- a. Ashamed/embarrassed
- b. Is a private matter – wanted to deal with it on own
- c. Concerned others would find out
- d. Didn't want the person who did it to get in trouble
- e. Fear of retribution from the person who did it
- f. Fear of not being believed
- g. I thought I would be blamed for what happened
- h. Didn't think what happened was serious enough to talk about
- i. Didn't think others would think it was serious
- j. Thought people would try to tell me what to do
- k. Would feel like an admission of failure
- l. Didn't think others would think it was important
- m. Didn't think others would understand
- n. Didn't have time to deal with it due to academics, work, etc.
- o. Didn't know reporting procedure on campus
- p. Feared I or another would be punished for infractions or violations (such as underage drinking)
- q. I did not feel the campus leadership would solve my problems
- r. I feared others would harass me or react negatively toward me
- s. I thought nothing would be done
- t. Didn't want others to worry about me
- u. Wanted to forget it happened
- v. Had other things I needed to focus on and was concerned about (classes, work)
- w. Didn't think the school would do anything about my report.
- x. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- y. No experience/I did tell someone

#### IV. ADDITIONAL CLIMATE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

##### 1. Optional Module 1: Sample Bystander Attitudes and Behaviors

*Yet another facet of climate is engagement in bystander actions and perceptions of peer support for bystander actions to address harassment and sexual violence. Validated measures for these constructs are now appearing in the peer review literature.*

##### ***Readiness to Help***

Sexual violence refers to a range of behaviors that are unwanted by the recipient and include remarks about physical appearance; persistent sexual advances that are undesired by the recipient; unwanted touching; and unwanted oral, anal, or vaginal penetration or attempted penetration. These behaviors could be initiated by someone known or unknown to the recipient, including someone they are in a relationship with.

**Please read the following statements and circle the number that indicates how true each is of you.<sup>18</sup>**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
 Strongly disagree/ Not at all true                      Strongly agree/Very much true

1.	I don't think sexual violence is a problem on this campus.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I don't think there is much I can do about sexual violence on campus.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	There isn't much need for me to think about sexual violence on campus.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Doing something about sexual violence is solely the job of the crisis center.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Sometimes I think I should learn more about sexual violence.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I have not yet done anything to learn more about sexual violence.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I think I can do something about sexual violence.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I am planning to learn more about the problem of sexual violence on campus.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I have recently attended a program about sexual violence.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I am actively involved in projects to deal with sexual violence on campus.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I have recently taken part in activities or volunteered my time on projects focused on ending sexual violence on campus.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I have been or am currently involved in ongoing efforts to end sexual violence on campus.	1	2	3	4	5

## ***Bystander Confidence***

*This module focuses on key aspects of bystander attitudes. These include bystander perceptions of the problem, confidence and intent to intervene, and perceptions of peer norms about taking action. These questions are intended to assess community norms; they are not intended to or designed to measure, assess, or predict individual respondents' future behavior.<sup>19</sup>*

**Please read each of the following behaviors. Indicate in the column *Confidence* how confident you are that you could do them. Rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 0 to 100 using the scale given below:<sup>20</sup>**

0      10      20      30      40      50      60      70      80      90      100

can't do                      quite uncertain                      moderately certain                      very certain

You may interpret the phrase "do something" to mean acting in some way, such as asking for help, creating a distraction, or talking directly.

Confidence

<b>13.</b>	Express my discomfort if someone makes a joke about a woman's body.	%
<b>14.</b>	Express my discomfort if someone says that rape victims are to blame for being raped.	%
<b>15.</b>	Call for help (i.e. call 911) if I hear someone in my dorm yelling "help."	%
<b>16.</b>	Talk to a friend who I suspect is in a sexually abusive relationship.	%
<b>17.</b>	Get help and resources for a friend who tells me they have been raped.	%
<b>18.</b>	Able to ask a stranger who looks very upset at a party if they are ok or need help.	%
<b>19.</b>	Ask a friend if they need to be walked home from a party.	%
<b>20.</b>	Ask a stranger if they need to be walked home from a party.	%
<b>21.</b>	Criticize a friend who tells me that they had sex with someone who was passed out or who didn't give consent.	%
<b>22.</b>	Do something to help a very drunk person who is being brought upstairs to a bedroom by a group of people at a party.	%
<b>23.</b>	Do something if I see a woman surrounded by a group of men at a party who looks very uncomfortable.	%
<b>24.</b>	Tell an RA or other campus authority about information I have that might help in a sexual assault case even if pressured by my peers to stay silent.	%
<b>25.</b>	Speak up to someone who is making excuses for forcing someone to have sex with them.	%
<b>26.</b>	Speak up to someone who is making excuses for having sex with someone who is unable to give full consent.	%

**For the next few questions, based on behavior you have observed, how likely are students willing to:**<sup>21</sup>

Very likely      Moderately likely      Somewhat likely      Not at all

- 27. Confront other students who make inappropriate or negative sexual comments and gestures?
- 28. Report other students who continue to engage in sexual harassing or unwanted sexual behaviors after having been previously confronted?
- 29. Report other students who use force or pressure to engage in sexual contact?
- 30. Allow personal loyalties to affect reporting of sexual assault?
- 31. Choose not to report sexual assault out of concern they or others will be punished for infractions, such as underage drinking or fraternization?
- 32. Be interviewed as or serve as a witness in a sexual assault case if they knew relevant information?

**Please indicate how likely you are to engage in each of the following behaviors using this scale:**<sup>22</sup>

Not likely      0      1      2      3      4      5      Extremely likely

- 33. Ask for verbal consent when I am intimate with my partner, even if we are in a long-term relationship.
- 34. Stop sexual activity when asked to, even if I am already sexually aroused.
- 35. Check in with my friend who looks drunk when they go to a room with someone else at a party.
- 36. Say something to my friend who is taking a drunk person back to their room at a party.
- 37. Challenge a friend who made a sexist joke.
- 38. Express my concern if a family member makes a sexist joke.
- 39. Challenge a friend who uses insulting words to describe girls.
- 40. Confront a friend who plans to give someone alcohol to get sex.
- 41. Refuse to participate in activities where girls' appearances are ranked/rated.
- 42. Confront a friend who is hooking up with someone who was passed out.
- 43. Confront a friend if I hear rumors that they forced sex on someone.
- 44. Report a friend that committed a rape.
- 45. Stop having sex with a partner if they say to stop, even if it started consensually.
- 46. Decide not to have sex with a partner if they are drunk.

**Please answer the following questions based on your experiences:<sup>23</sup>**

**47.** Since the start of the current academic year, I have had a friend or acquaintance tell me that they were the victim of an unwanted sexual experience. YES NO

a. If yes: How many women told you this? \_\_\_\_\_

b. If yes: How many men told you this? \_\_\_\_\_

**48.** Since the start of the current academic year, I have observed a situation that I believe was, or could have led to, a sexual assault. YES NO

[If answered yes to above question:]

**49.** In response to this situation: (Select the one response that most closely resembles your actions)

a. I stepped in and separated the people involved in the situation.

b. I asked the person who appeared to be at risk if they needed help.

c. I confronted the person who appeared to be causing the situation.

d. I created a distraction to cause one or more of the people to disengage from the situation.

e. I asked others to step in as a group and diffuse the situation.

f. I told someone in a position of authority about the situation.

g. I considered intervening in the situation, but I could not safely take any action.

h. I decided not to take action.

## **2. Optional Module 2: Sample Perceptions of Sexual Assault Questions**

### ***Contextual Perceptions of Sexual Assault***

*These two vignettes were used in research by Bennett & Banyard (under review) and judged believable by students. These vignettes are made to be general but may be more appropriately specific to residential campuses with traditional-aged students. Some of the terms used in this section may be offensive.*

Please indicate how much do you think this situation is a problem using a 7-point Likert Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very much)

Not at all            1            2            3            4            5            6            7            Very Much

1. You are at a party and you notice Rachael across the room. You have never seen Rachael around campus and you do not know who she is. Next to Rachael is Jesse. You have never seen Jesse around campus and you do not know who he is. From what you can see, there is a lot of alcohol at the party, and Jesse and Rachael appear to be drinking. Jesse keeps grabbing Rachael's butt and rubbing up against her. Rachael is laughing but you can also tell she is trying to pull away from Jesse. Rachael keeps removing his hands from her body and politely telling him to 'cut it out.' Yet, Jesse continues to make advances.
2. You are at a party and you are watching a girl that you have never seen before, Kayla, laughing and having a great time. While at your party, you also witness Kayla and a guy that you have never seen before, John. Every time you have seen Kayla and John, they have an alcoholic drink in their hands. At one point, you encounter them in the hallway and they are slurring their speech and declaring that they are wasted. Kayla and John are kissing and you overhear John tell Kayla he is taking her back to his place. Kayla can barely walk on her own, and she seems reluctant to be kissing John. John begins to lead Kayla away from the party.

### ***Rape Myth Acceptance***

*Measures of rape myth acceptance have been validated but are becoming less useful because students increasingly know the "right" answer and do not answer truthfully. More subtle options such as the vignettes above may more accurately capture student attitudes but have not yet been validated. Some of the terms used in this section may be offensive. Researchers have validated these questions as the most effective means to assess rape myth acceptance.*





### **3. Optional Module 3: Sample Physical Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Questions**

*To understand the scope of physical IPV committed against your students, it is essential to measure the extent, type, and consequences of the violence. Hamby (2014) describes how small changes to how questions are asked can make a big difference.<sup>25</sup> Consequences to be measured can include fearfulness resulting from the assault or assessing injury related to the incident. The 2010 CDC National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey measured impact of the incident, including need for services.<sup>26</sup> The CDC survey also asked about specific types of violence.*

*The sample below uses questions from the University of New Hampshire 2012 survey.<sup>27</sup> Physical IPV was measured using the 16-item Safe Dates Physical Violence Victimization scale.<sup>28</sup> Some of the terms used in this section are graphic. Through extensive evaluation, researchers have validated these questions as the most effective and scientific means to assess whether someone has been a victim of intimate partner violence.<sup>29</sup>*

This section will continue to ask questions about relationship and dating experiences. No matter how well a couple gets along, there are times when they disagree, get annoyed with the other person, want different things from each other, or just have spats or fights because they are in a bad mood, are tired, or for some other reason. Couples also have many different ways of trying to settle their differences. This is a list of things that might happen when you have differences.

**How many times has a casual, steady, or serious dating or intimate partner done the following to you DURING THIS SCHOOL YEAR (since the start of fall 20\_\_ semester)?**

0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10+

1. Scratched me?
2. Slapped me?
3. Physically twisted my arm?
4. Slammed me or held me against a wall?
5. Kicked me?
6. Bent my fingers?
7. Bit me?
8. Tried to choke me?
9. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved me?
10. Dumped me out of a car?

- 11. Threw something at me that hit me?
- 12. Burned me?
- 13. Hit me with a fist?
- 14. Hit me with something hard besides a fist?
- 15. Beat me up?
- 16. Assaulted me with a knife or gun?

*Please answer the following questions about what you consider the MOST SERIOUS INCIDENT you indicated that happened during this school year. If you answered zero (0) to all questions above, please circle "No Experience" or "N/A" (unless otherwise indicated).*

17. How frightened were you by the incident?

Extremely      Somewhat      Only a Little      Not at All      No Experience

18. How concerned were you about your safety?

Extremely      Somewhat      Only a Little      Not at All      No Experience

19. Did you seek services or contact a hotline after the incident?

YES      NO      N/A

20. Were you injured in the incident?

YES      NO      N/A

a. If yes, did you seek medical attention?

YES      NO      N/A

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<sup>1</sup> Krebs, C.P. (2009) College women's experiences with physically forced, alcohol- or other drug-enabled, and drug-facilitated sexual assault before and since entering college, *Journal of American College Health*, 57 (6):639-649.

<sup>2</sup> Edwards, K. M., Probst, D. R., Tansill, E. C., & Gidycz, C. A. (in press). Women's reactions to participation in interpersonal trauma research: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.

Edwards, K. M., Kearns, M. C., Calhoun, K. S., & Gidycz, C. A. (2009). College women's reactions to participating in sexual assault research: Is it distressing? *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 33, 225-234.

<sup>3</sup> See for example: <http://cola.unh.edu/justiceworks/project-unwanted-sexual-experiences>

<sup>4</sup> Koss, M.P., Abbey, A., Campbell, R., Cook, S., Norris, J., Testa, M., Ullman, S., West, C., & White, J. (2007). Revising the SES: A collaborative process to improve assessment of sexual aggression and victimization. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 31, 357-370.

Fisher, B. S. & Cullen, F. T. (2000). Measuring the sexual victimization of women: Evolution, current controversies, and future research. *Measurement and analysis of crime and justice*, 4, 317-390.

Fisher, B. S., Cullen, F. T., & Daigle, L. E. (2005). The discovery of acquaintance rape: The salience of methodological innovation and rigor. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 20, 493-500.

<sup>5</sup> See for example: [http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CNSTAT/Rape\\_and\\_Sexual\\_Assault/index.htm](http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CNSTAT/Rape_and_Sexual_Assault/index.htm)

<http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=18605>

[http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.midss.org/content/sexual-experiences-survey-long-form-victimization-ses-lfv> and

<http://www.midss.org/content/sexual-experiences-long-form-perpetration-ses-lfp>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/221153.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> McNeely, C., Nonnemaker, J. & Blum, R. (2002). Promoting school connectedness: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, *Journal of School Health*, 72, 138-146. Whitlock, J. (2006). Youth perceptions of life at school: Contextual correlates of school connectedness in adolescence. *Applied Developmental Science*, 10, 13-29.

<sup>10</sup> Adapted from Sulkowski, M. (2011). An investigation of students' willingness to report threats of violence in campus communities. *Psychology of Violence*, 1, 53-65.

<sup>11</sup> Adapted from Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey

[http://deocs.net/docdownloads/sampledeocs\\_2014jan.pdf](http://deocs.net/docdownloads/sampledeocs_2014jan.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Adapted from Carleton College's Campus Climate Survey, developed by Rankin & Associates, Consulting:

[https://apps.carleton.edu/governance/diversity/campus\\_climate\\_survey/results/](https://apps.carleton.edu/governance/diversity/campus_climate_survey/results/)

<sup>13</sup> For example, in their recent report on how the Bureau of Justice Statistics could improve the way they measure rape, the National Academy of Sciences Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education Committee on National Statistics said: "The survey's language should explicitly describe the behavior involved rather than solely using terms like rape. For example, on the National Violence Against Women Survey, respondents were asked: 'Has a man or boy ever made you have sex by using force or threatening to harm you or someone close to you? Just so there is no mistake we mean putting a penis in your vagina.' This question describes a specific action, which is more likely to be clearly understood than asking a respondent if he or she has been raped." See "Report Brief" at [http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CNSTAT/Rape\\_and\\_Sexual\\_Assault/index.htm](http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CNSTAT/Rape_and_Sexual_Assault/index.htm).

<sup>14</sup> See for example: [http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CNSTAT/Rape\\_and\\_Sexual\\_Assault/index.htm](http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CNSTAT/Rape_and_Sexual_Assault/index.htm)

[http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/2010\\_report.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/2010_report.html)

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- <sup>15</sup> All questions in this section are from the Campus Sexual Assault (CSA) Study by Krebs et al. (2007) <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/221153.pdf>
- <sup>16</sup> From the University of New Hampshire <http://cola.unh.edu/sites/cola.unh.edu/files/departments/Justiceworks/use/UNHUSESurvey2012.pdf>
- <sup>17</sup> Adapted from Banyard et al (2009). Friends of survivors: The community impact of unwanted sexual experiences. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25, 242- 246.
- <sup>18</sup> Banyard, Moynihan, et al, 2013. How do we know it works? *Psychology of Violence* <http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/vio/4/1/101/>
- <sup>19</sup> Measuring actual bystander behavior may also be of interest to campuses. However, this is complex and questions must be tailored to be appropriate for a given campus community. Readers interested in including such measures should consult Banyard, Moynihan et al. (2014). How do we know if it works? Measuring outcomes in bystander focused abuse prevention on campuses, *Psychology of Violence*, 4(1), 101-115.
- <sup>20</sup> Banyard, Moynihan, et al, 2013. <http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/vio/4/1/101/>
- <sup>21</sup> Adaptation of Merchant Marine Academy Survey [http://www.marad.dot.gov/documents/Report-Sexual\\_Harassment\\_and\\_Sexual\\_Assault\\_at\\_the\\_USMMA.pdf](http://www.marad.dot.gov/documents/Report-Sexual_Harassment_and_Sexual_Assault_at_the_USMMA.pdf)
- <sup>22</sup> Adapted from McMahon (2010). Rape Myth Beliefs and Bystander Attitudes, *Journal of American College Health*, 59, 3-11. (Adaptation of Banyard et al measures.) <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/07448481.2010.483715#.UzcYXfldWSo>
- <sup>23</sup> Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey [http://deocs.net/docdownloads/sampledeocs\\_2014jan.pdf](http://deocs.net/docdownloads/sampledeocs_2014jan.pdf) and Banyard et al (2009). Friends of survivors: The community impact of unwanted sexual experiences. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25, 242- 246.
- <sup>24</sup> Adapted from McMahon (2010). <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/07448481.2010.483715#.UzcYXfldWSo>
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid. Hamby, 2014, Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Research: Scientific Progress, Scientific Challenges, and Gender. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse*. Online first.
- See also Hamby & Turner (2013). Measuring teen dating violence in males and females, *Psychology of Violence*, 3, 323-339.
- <sup>26</sup> [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf)
- <sup>27</sup> <https://cola.unh.edu/justiceworks/project-unwanted-sexual-experiences>
- <sup>28</sup> Foshee, V.A., Bauman, K.E., Arriaga, X.B., Helms, R.W., Koch, G.G., & Linder, G.F. (1998). An Evaluation of Safe Dates, an Adolescent Dating Violence Prevention Program. *American Journal of Public Health*, 88(1), 45-50. <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdf/10.2105/AJPH.88.1.45>
- See also [http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/IPV\\_Compodium.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/IPV_Compodium.pdf).
- <sup>29</sup> See for example [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/2010\\_report.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/2010_report.html)
- See also: Hamby S., Finkelhor, D. & Turner, H (2012). Teen dating violence: Cooccurrence with other victimizations in the National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV). *Psychology of Violence*, 2, 111-124.
- Hamby, S., Turner, H., (October, 2013) Measuring teen dating violence in males and females: Insights from the national survey of children's exposure to violence. *Psychology of Violence*, Vol 3(4), 323-339.