

# 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, consisting of the presidents from each of the seven colleges, decided to participate in the HEDS survey because the presidents felt that survey results would provide valuable insights that allow us to better work together to improve and expand 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. The Claremont Colleges have participated in the survey twice - in the spring of 2015 and in the spring of 2018.

**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 or 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 also allowed for an additional layer of anonymity for potential student respondents.

**3. Why did The 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), we are aware that climate and sexual assault issues exist not only at the institutional level, but also at the consortium level. Using the same survey instrument allows us to assess both areas and also to plan accordingly for the student population as a whole.

**4. How many other institutions participated in the survey and what was the response rate?**

Forty-five colleges, including the five Claremont Colleges and Keck Graduate Institute participated in the HEDS survey during the 2017-18 academic year. There were a total of 13,632 survey respondents and the overall survey response rate was 22 percent, ranging from 11 percent to 45 percent by institution.

**5. Why did The Claremont Colleges create supplemental questions about dating violence, stalking and domestic violence?**

Sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and stalking are all forms of sex discrimination/violence addressed under Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act, and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act ("Clery Act"). Each of these forms of abuse includes the exertion of power and control over a victim and can cause severe trauma. These forms of abuse also often overlap. For example, dating relationships often include abuse that is sexual, or stalking may have followed the end of an abusive dating relationship.

In addition to the well-known statistic that 20 percent of women experience some form of sexual assault while in college, research also shows that college-age women are at high

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risk for dating violence and stalking. Students of all gender identities across the country experience these forms of violence. At The Claremont Colleges, the Title IX Coordinators, the EmPOWER Center, and student advocates support students impacted by these forms of abuse. Also, our prevention education programs across the consortium, including New Student Orientation sessions, often address these forms of abuse in the same session in recognition of how closely related they are. Hence, we felt it critical that the HEDS survey collected data on not only sexual assault, but also on dating/domestic violence and stalking in order to provide us with important data that can help inform our work holistically.

### **6. Can I compare the findings from the 2015 administration of the HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey to the 2018 version?**

No. There are several reasons why comparisons between the two administrations are not appropriate. First, the survey instrument underwent revision after its 2015 administration. While the changes were subtle, and are mostly confined to items regarding the characteristics of sexual assault, researchers at HEDS have advised us that data from the 2015 survey would not be sufficiently comparable to warrant a year-over-year comparison to data from 2016, 2017, or 2018. Additionally, because the survey was voluntary and because the topic of sexual assault and campus climate has the potential to provoke strong opinions, it is not possible to determine the impact self-selection may have had on the results. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that this information does not represent generalizations about the Claremont Colleges community. Finally, because a version of the survey was administered in 2015, there is potential for overlap in the survey respondent populations. Hence, the reports should be treated as two distinct snapshots, from two different points in time, and not as longitudinal tracking the same population over time.

An example of the potential implications may help make it clear why comparing the two administrations is not appropriate. Imagine a survey on voting behavior that asks how people plan to vote on a ballot measure. The first time the survey is administered, 200 out of 1000 survey respondents (20%) indicated that they were going to vote "yes". As the election draws closer, the same survey is administered again, and the same 200 people indicate they are still "yes" votes, but this time, there are only 500 survey respondents. The percentage of "yes" voters jumps to 40%, even though the number of actual "yes" voters remains unchanged. While it is useful to know the percentage of "yes" voters at the two points in time, the differences in sample size, time and self-selection make it potentially misleading to compare outcomes of the two surveys directly.

## **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

### **7. How and when was the survey administered?**

Email invitations to take the electronic survey were sent to all students at each of The participating Claremont College campuses on Feb. 21, 2018, followed by three reminders. The survey closed on March 21, 2018.

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### 8. Can I compare the 5C findings to those for my own campus?

While the five undergraduate Claremont institutions (also known as the 5Cs) may provide useful context when reviewing data from individual campuses, there are both methodological and ethical reasons why comparisons are not appropriate. Because the 5C 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 shared improvement.

### 9. 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 the 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.

### 10. 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 to encourage conversations on campuses as well as across them. The variation in survey response rates by campus are worth noting, as well as differences in survey respondent demographics. Furthermore, because the survey was voluntary and the topics of sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and stalking have the potential to provoke strong opinions, it is not possible to determine the impact self-selection may

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have had on the results. Therefore, please keep in mind that this information does not represent generalizations about The Claremont Colleges community.

Also, maintaining the anonymity of survey respondents was a key consideration in preparing the findings report. In areas where the number of survey respondents was small ( $n < 10$ ) we will not make that information public. Individual institutions may decide to use that information internally in their planning and policy discussions.

### 11. 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**:*

- 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*

### 12. 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 survey respondents to provide information with respect to one assault.

### 13. 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.

### 14. Why is there a category for Nonbinary or no response?

The instrument contains three response options for the question about gender: man, woman and fill in. The category "Nonbinary or no response" was created for two reasons. For one, the data files from HEDS did not separate the students who filled in

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another gender from those who left the question blank (see information in question nine about individually identifiable information). Second, there were differences in how the "Nonbinary or no response" 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.

### **15. 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 survey 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.

### **16. What about the written comments? Why aren't those included in the analysis?**

To maintain the privacy of the survey respondents, The Claremont Colleges did not request these in the 5C 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.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **17. Where can I find data for individual campuses within The Claremont Colleges consortium?**

Individual schools results can be found on their Title IX pages. Links to those pages are provided on the 7C website: <https://www.7csupportandprevention.com/>

### **18. How does this compare to national data?**

Many institutions have made their campus climate and sexual assault survey data publicly available. The Association of American Universities (AAU) has a webpage with their 2015 results: <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.

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

<https://www.7csupportandprevention.com/>