

Wellesley College Campus Climate and Sexual Misconduct Student Survey: 2024 Institutional Results and Strategic Response

I. Executive Summary

Brief Overview of the Survey Purpose

Wellesley College is committed to the safety and welfare of our students. In November 2024, in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 6, Section 168D, the College administered a campus wide student survey measuring experiences of sexual misconduct to assess the campus climate and identify opportunities for further discussion, programming and resources.

The Wellesley College Student Experience Survey (“the survey”) surveyed undergraduate students aged 18 or older. The survey was administered online by Grand River Solutions, an independent company, with a survey tool developed by Grand River. Participants were informed that their responses were anonymous and would be reported in aggregate form so that no individually identifying information would be reported.

The survey asked for self-identification of demographic information of participants and responses containing any personally identifying information were automatically de-linked from survey responses once submitted. The survey asked students about their knowledge of key campus policies relevant to sexual misconduct, their experiences of sexual misconduct during their time as a student at Wellesley College (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, intimate partner violence and stalking). Students were also asked to reflect on their experiences and perceptions of belonging, equity and well-being at Wellesley College.

Institutional Response Rate

A total of 2,280 Wellesley College students were invited to participate in the survey, and 668 students (29%) participated in the survey. The results of the survey reflect only those who participated and may not reflect the experiences of all Wellesley College students. Findings in this executive summary should not be used to make conclusions about the entire student population. Participation in the survey is voluntary, and students could choose to answer all, some, or none of the questions. As a result, the number of respondents varied for each question.

General demographics asked about in the survey included:

- Race and ethnicity

- Gender identity
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Disability status
- First generation student
- Academic class year at Wellesley
- Enrollment status
- Transfer status
- Residency
- Athlete status
- Parental status

See Appendix 1.

II. Perceptions of Campus Climate

The survey asked participating students to what extent they agreed or disagreed with statements about their feelings of belonging, well-being and equity at Wellesley College. Their responses were scored on a scale from 1 to 4, with 4 being the most positive response.

- On average, most students agreed that they feel a sense of **belonging** at Wellesley College, rating 3.3 out of 4.
- On average, most students agreed that Wellesley College treats all students **equitably**, rating 3.0 out of 4.
- On average, most students agreed that they feel **safe and protected** at Wellesley College, rating 3.1 out of 4.

Students were asked about campus culture at Wellesley College, and their perceptions of Wellesley College's efforts to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct. Their responses were scored on a scale from 1 to 4, with 4 being the most positive response.

- Students rated the **campus culture** at Wellesley College 3.1 out of 4.

On average, students agreed that it is uncommon for people at the College to make sexist comments or jokes, and that Wellesley College is doing a good job of trying to prevent sexual misconduct from occurring, and of holding perpetrators accountable.

III. Knowledge of Campus Policies and Offices

Survey participants were asked about their knowledge of key campus offices and departments. A majority of students confirmed their awareness of Health Services, the Stone Center Counseling Service, Campus Police/Public Safety, and the Honor Code. Additionally, eighty-seven percent

(87%) of students answered that they knew Wellesley College has a Title IX Coordinator. *See Appendix 2.*

Definitions and Policies

Ninety percent (90%) of participating students responded that they were informed of the definition of consent and how to obtain it from a sexual partner. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of students confirmed that they have received information on the definition of sexual misconduct, and seventy-one percent (71%) confirmed that they were informed of the school's policy on sexual misconduct. *See Appendix 3.*

Prevention

In the Survey, students were asked whether they had received written, verbal or online information from anyone at Wellesley College relevant to sexual misconduct prevention. Seventy-three percent (73%) of students confirmed that they have received information on how to intervene as a bystander, and sixty-six percent (66%) received information on how to help prevent sexual misconduct. *See Appendix 3.*

Reporting and Resources

Seventy-six percent (76%) of students received information on how to report incidents of sexual misconduct, and seventy-four percent (74%) were informed about where to get help if someone they knew experiences sexual misconduct. *See Appendix 3.*

IV. Prevalence of Sexual Misconduct

The Survey asked students about their experiences of non-consensual sexual contact, sexual harassment, stalking and intimate partner violence since they have been a student at Wellesley College. Of the students responding to this question,

- 24% of students experienced sexual harassment
- 20% of students experienced stalking
- 13% of students experienced intimate partner violence
- 9% of students experienced sexual violence

Sexual Harassment

The Survey asked students about seven different sexual harassment behaviors. *See Appendix 4.* Overall, thirteen percent (13%) of students responding to this question reported experiencing just one of these behaviors, and twelve percent (12%) reported experiencing more than one.

Forty-five percent (45%) of students who experienced sexual harassment did not believe the incidents were related to an identity that they hold, such as gender identity or expression, sexual orientation or race/ethnicity. Of students who did believe the incident(s) were related to an

identity that they hold, 39% of students selected gender identity or expression, 23% of students selected sexual orientation, and 12% of students selected race/ethnicity.

Students who experienced sexual harassment were asked what their relationship was with the person(s) who engaged in that behavior. The highest percentage of students indicated that the perpetrator was an acquaintance, friend, or someone they just met (50%), followed by another student (29%), a current or former friend or roommate (25%).

The highest percentage of students indicated that the incident of sexual harassment occurred in Wellesley housing (e.g. residence hall, dorm, college-owned apartment) (36%), or in a classroom or other academic building (20%).

Sexual Violence

Overall, nine percent (9%) of students responding to this question indicated that they experienced sexual assault and/or rape since they have been a student at Wellesley College. *See Appendix 5.*

Students who experienced sexual assault and/or rape were asked what their relationship was with the person(s) who engaged in that behavior. The highest percentage of students indicated the perpetrator was an acquaintance, friend of a friend, or someone they just met (54%).

Students who experienced sexual assault and/or rape were asked about where the incident took place. The highest percentage of students indicated that the incident occurred in Wellesley College housing (35%) or at another college or university (not fraternity or sorority house) (25%). *See Appendix 6.*

Fifty-four percent (54%) of students who experienced sexual violence did not believe the incidents were related to an identity that they hold, such as gender identity or expression, sexual orientation or race/ethnicity. Of students who did believe the incident(s) were related to an identity that they hold, 39% of students selected gender identity or expression, 15% of students selected sexual orientation, and 6% of students selected race/ethnicity.

Stalking

The survey asked students about five different stalking behaviors (Spread rumors or left mean/rude comments online, repeated calls or messages, watched, followed, spied on, tracked, or monitored them, waited for them or showed up places unwanted, and left unwanted gifts, flowers, or other items). *See Appendix 7.* Overall, 13% of students reported experiencing one of these behaviors, and 7% reported experiencing more than one type of these behaviors.

The students who experienced incident(s) of stalking indicated the perpetrator was an acquaintance (42%), other student (38%), current/former friend or roommate (28%) or current/former partner or spouse (18%).

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of students who experienced stalking did not believe the incidents were related to an identity that they hold, such as gender identity or expression, sexual orientation or race/ethnicity. Of students who did believe the incident(s) were related to an identity that they hold, 14% of students selected race/ethnicity, 8% of students selected gender identity or expression, and 6% of students selected sexual orientation.

Intimate Partner Violence

The Survey asked students about four different forms of intimate partner violence. See Appendix 8. Overall, ten percent (10%) of students reported experiencing one form of intimate partner violence and four percent (4%) reported experiencing more than one form.

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of students who experienced intimate partner violence did not believe the incidents were related to an identity that they hold, such as gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or race/ethnicity. Of those who did believe the incident(s) were related to an identity they hold, 15% of students selected gender identity or expression, 10% of students selected sexual orientation, and 5% of students selected race/ethnicity.

V. Reporting

The survey asked students who experienced sexual harassment if they told someone about the incident. While most students reported to a friend, roommate, or family member (83%), a majority did not report the incident to the College. Of those that did report to the College, 10% contacted a mandated reporter, 9% contacted the Stone Center Counseling Service or Health Services, and 1% contacted Wellesley College Public Safety. *See Appendix 9.*

Students who experienced sexual assault and/or rape were asked if they told someone about the incident. Similar to sexual harassment reporting, while most students told a friend, roommate, or family member (91%), a majority did not report the incident to the College. Of those that did report to the College, 19% contacted a mandated reporter and 12% contacted the Stone Center Counseling Service or Health Services. *See Appendix 10.*

Students who experienced sexual misconduct and told a campus official were asked about their experience reporting. Approximately one third of participants indicated that they were offered supportive measures (34%), and feel comfortable sharing their experience if something happens in the future (28%).

Students who experienced sexual misconduct but did not report the incident(s) were asked about the reasons they did not contact a campus official about the incident. The most common reason why students did not report the incident was because they did not think the incident was serious enough to report (73%). Students also identified concerns that reporting would interfere with school or activities (28%), followed by concerns about not achieving their desired outcome (24%) as reasons for not reporting. *See Appendix 11.*

VI. Next Steps

This survey represents a critical step in Wellesley College's continued efforts to ensure safety and wellbeing on our campus. Wellesley College is actively renewing the survey data to ensure that the College is taking every possible step to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct on our campus. An initial review of the survey responses makes clear that Wellesley College has made considerable progress in increasing students' knowledge of policies, awareness of available resources and confidence in the offices handling reports of sexual misconduct. The survey responses suggest that incidents of sexual misconduct within our community often go unreported, underscoring the need to strengthen awareness efforts and continue working to ensure the safety and well-being of our students.

APPENDICES