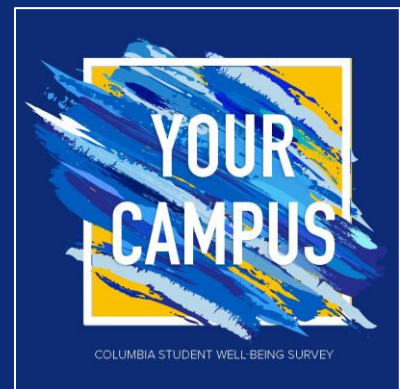
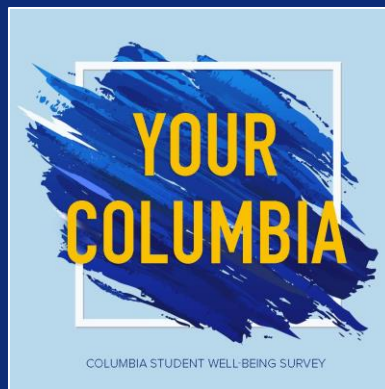
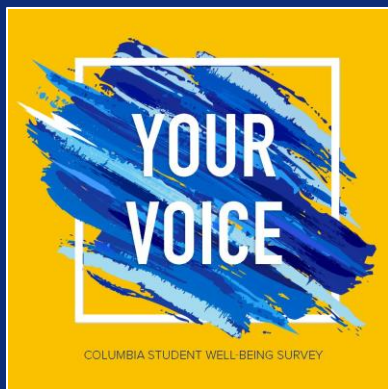


COLUMBIA SEXUAL RESPECT AND GENDER-BASED MISCONDUCT SURVEY DATA REPORT



OVERVIEW

In Spring 2018, Columbia University distributed the Columbia Student Well-Being Survey to all full-time Columbia students. This comprehensive survey looked at campus community, mental health and wellness, and sexual respect and gender-based misconduct. The section of the survey concerned with gender-based misconduct included students' experiences with gender-based misconduct and their knowledge and use of campus resources. More than 8,300 students responded from across 16 schools,¹ representing 28% of the full-time student population at that time. Among individual schools, student participation rates varied from 22 to 51%. This data report on sexual respect and gender-based misconduct is an excerpt from the comprehensive [Report on the 2018 Columbia Student Well-Being Survey](#), which can be found on the Columbia University Life website.

¹ Columbia College; Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Sciences; School of General Studies; Columbia Business School; College of Dental Medicine; Columbia Journalism School; Columbia Law School; Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation; Graduate School of Arts and Sciences; Mailman School of Public Health; School of the Arts; School of International and Public Affairs; School of Nursing; Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons; School of Professional Studies; and School of Social Work

SEXUAL RESPECT AND GENDER-BASED MISCONDUCT

This section includes students' experiences with gender-based misconduct and knowledge and use of campus resources. We compare these data to findings from two other surveys at Columbia, and include benchmarks from those surveys where appropriate.

One of those prior surveys was conducted during the Spring 2016 Semester as part of the [Sexual Health Initiative to Foster Transformation \(SHIFT\)](#), a comprehensive research project that examined the individual, interpersonal and structural (cultural, community and institutional) factors that shape sexual health and sexual violence for undergraduates at Columbia University and Barnard College. This survey, led by CUIMC faculty members Jennifer S. Hirsch and Claude Ann Mellins, was funded by Columbia University.

The other is the 2015 *Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct* that Columbia participated in as part of a consortium of 27 colleges and universities organized by the American Association for Universities (AAU).

More information on both surveys and Columbia resources can be found on Columbia's [Sexual Respect website](#).

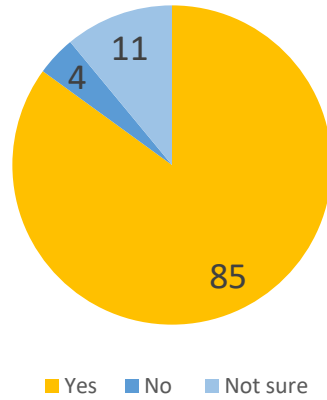
Knowledge of Essential Information about Sexual Respect at Columbia

The survey asked students to indicate their awareness of campus resources related to gender-based misconduct and their knowledge of essential information about key definitions and concepts, such as consent. Survey participants reported being highly aware of resources, and importantly, the majority of survey participants reported knowing who they could talk to confidentially about a question or concern.

The AAU survey, administered in 2015, asked a similar question and found that about three-quarters of Columbia undergraduates and just over half of Columbia graduate students were aware of University resources. In the intervening years, students, faculty and administrators have collaborated on a variety of university-wide and school-specific initiatives that likely have contributed to the increase in knowledge as shown in the following charts.

Figure 8. Knowledge of Where to Find Help, Information and Resources

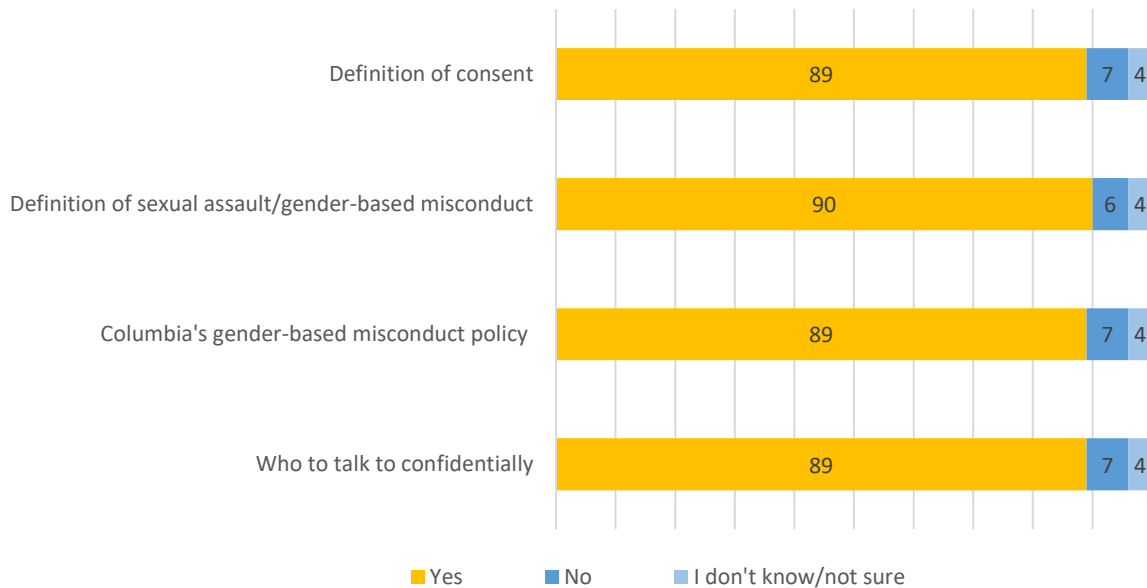
Question: *If you or someone you know experienced gender-based misconduct, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual harassment, would you know where to find help, information and resources?*



The survey also asked students if they had received essential information, such as definitions of important concepts and policies on gender-based misconduct at Columbia. The vast majority of participants confirmed that they had received this information.

Figure 9. Received Essential Information

Question: *Have you ever received information from anyone at Columbia about the following?*



Notably, survey participants were asked if they knew New York State’s definition of affirmative consent (on the next page) before participating in the survey. New York is one of a small number of states in the U.S. that requires colleges and universities to have an affirmative-consent standard in campus policies on sexual assault. The majority of students (89%) confirmed that they were aware of this definition.

Affirmative consent is a knowing, voluntary, and mutual decision among all participants to engage in sexual activity.

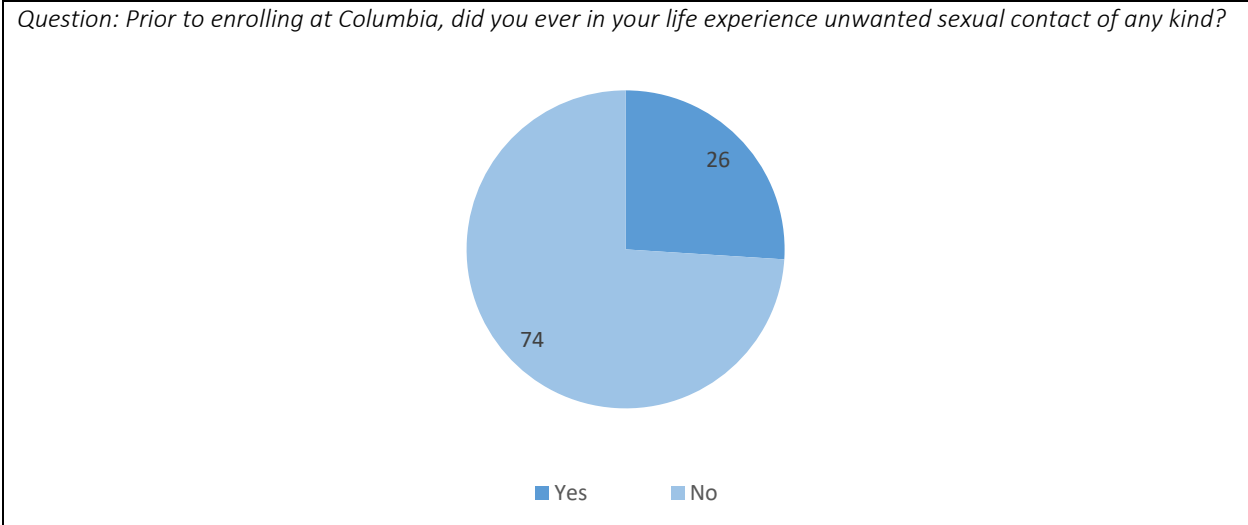
Even with this increased awareness compared to previous survey data, improvements can still be made in this area. For example, some survey participants indicated that they had not or did not know if they had visited the [Sexual Respect website](#) (31% and 18%, respectively), Columbia’s hub for on- and off-campus resources and information on sexual respect and gender-based misconduct. In fact, nearly all Columbia students have visited the Sexual Respect website because this is an essential step in completing the Sexual Respect and Community Citizenship Initiative, which is offered each fall to all students and is required of new students in every school. In the Fall 2019 Initiative, additional efforts will focus on underscoring the Sexual Respect website’s name and location for all students to increase awareness of this resource.

Nearly all student survey participants knew where to go for help, information and resources if they or someone they knew experienced gender-based misconduct; however, slightly fewer (72.5%) knew how to report the experience to the University. We will continue efforts to expand this awareness.

Experience with Gender-Based Misconduct Prior to Columbia

Approximately one in four students reported that they came to campus having already experienced gender-based misconduct. The figure below shows the percentage of survey participants who reported any kind of unwanted sexual contact prior to coming to Columbia. This is especially important because individuals who have already experienced gender-based misconduct are at heightened risk of revictimization (Tjaden et al., 2000; Lalor & McElvaney, 2010; Desai et al., 2002; Mellins et al., 2017).

Figure 10. Unwanted Sexual Contact Prior to Columbia



There were gender differences in reports of unwanted sexual contact before arriving at Columbia. Women and transgender/gender non-binary participants indicated that they had experienced unwanted sexual contact before arriving at Columbia in higher numbers than men (35% of women, 11% of men, and 55% of transgender/gender non-binary students).

Note: Approximately 1% of survey participants identified as transgender, genderqueer, gender non-binary or other non-binary identities. To ensure the anonymity of these survey participants, this report groups together their responses. Given this small sample size, it is difficult to draw conclusions from the survey responses about the overall experience of gender non-binary students at Columbia. However, national data indicates that gender non-binary students are often at higher risk of experiencing gender-based misconduct and sexual assault (Mellins et al., 2017).

Experience with Gender-Based Misconduct at Columbia

The majority of survey participants did not report experiencing any kind of gender-based misconduct while at Columbia, which was also true for students who responded to the SHIFT and AAU surveys at Columbia in prior years. That said, some survey participants did report experiences of gender-based misconduct while at Columbia.

The 2018 Student Well-Being Survey data show fewer incidents of gender-based misconduct at Columbia than were reported in the 2015 AAU survey and than are commonly reported by the national media (Mellins et al., 2017; Candor et al., 2015). While noting this promising trend, we also recognize that students may be reluctant for many reasons to report experiences of unwanted sexual contact, even on an anonymous survey and even with increased awareness and other shifts in the national discourse on issues related to sexual misconduct (Mellins et al., 2017). We will continue to look closely at the data and to survey students in the future about these experiences as we evaluate our collective work in creating a campus culture that rejects all forms of gender-based misconduct, including sexual assault. *See Table 4 on the next page for the definition of sexual assault used in the survey.*

Sexual Assault

The table below illustrates survey participants' experiences with sexual assault since enrolling at Columbia in response to questions based on one of the most widely used and validated measures of sexual assault (Koss et al., 1987; Mellins et al., 2017). Overall, 8.3% of survey participants indicated that they had experienced any type of sexual assault since enrolling at Columbia.

Table 4. Sexual Assault, Since Enrolling at Columbia

Questions: Since you've been at Columbia, has someone touched, kissed, fondled or grabbed you in a sexual way (but did not attempt to have sex) without your consent or agreement?

-Since you've been at Columbia, has someone had oral, anal, vaginal, or other penetrative sex with you without your consent or agreement?

-Even though it didn't happen, since you've been at Columbia has someone attempted to have oral, anal, vaginal or other penetrative sex without your consent or agreement?

Assault Types	Yes (%)	No (%)
Attempted penetrative assault	4.1	95.9
Penetrative assault	3.5	96.6
Unwanted touching	6.8	93.2

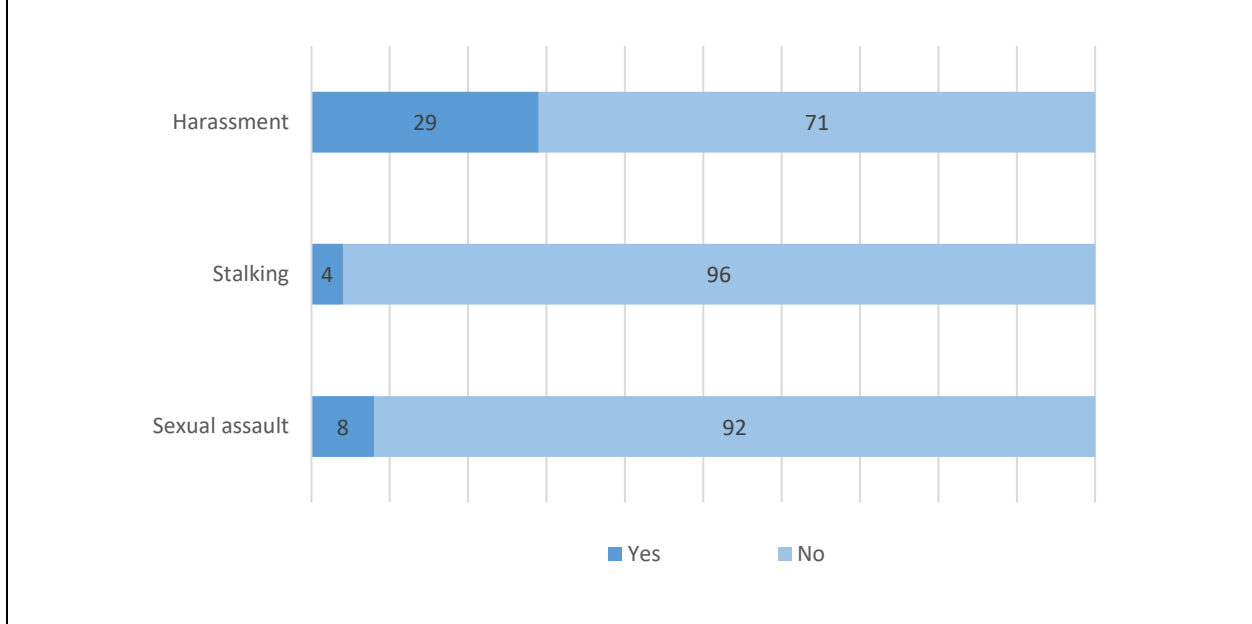
Survey participants also shared their experience with sexual assault specifically for the academic year (2017-18). Three and a half percent of survey participants indicated that they had experienced any type of sexual assault including 2.9% who had experienced unwanted touching, 1.5% who had experienced attempted penetrative assault and 1.2% who had experienced penetrative assault during the 2017-18 academic year. (These numbers total more than 3.5% because some survey participants had experienced more than one type of unwanted sexual contact.)

Sexual Harassment

As shown in Figure 11 on the next page, 29% of survey participants indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment during their time at Columbia. A majority of these students (69%) reported that the perpetrator was another student. Some survey participants reported that the perpetrator was a faculty member (13% of survey participants), an individual not affiliated with Columbia (8%), a staff member/administrator (4%), another individual (3%) or a resident or fellow (3%).

Figure 11. Experience with Gender-Based Misconduct at Columbia

Question: Students were asked about their experiences with gender-based misconduct while at Columbia. This figure presents the % of students who reported experiencing the following types of gender-based misconduct.



For more information about Columbia’s extensive prevention and response efforts, visit the [Annual Report on Gender-Based Misconduct Prevention and Response at Columbia University](#). As the report notes, all students must participate in Columbia’s Sexual Respect and Community Citizenship Initiative in their first semester on campus, in addition to receiving information before arrival on campus and during orientation, and all faculty and staff receive briefings and training on gender-based misconduct and related issues. See also the [2017-18 Annual Report of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action](#) for more information about formal complaints regarding sexual harassment and other gender-based misconduct by students, faculty and staff.

Awareness and Utilization of Resources

The survey also asked students who experienced gender-based misconduct whether they knew about resources and whether they were using them. Overall, the majority of survey participants indicated they were aware of key on-campus resources (over 85%), but only a smaller percent indicated they were using them. The survey did not ask students if they needed any of these resources; it also did not ask about the use of off-campus resources. We will look into refining these questions in future surveys.

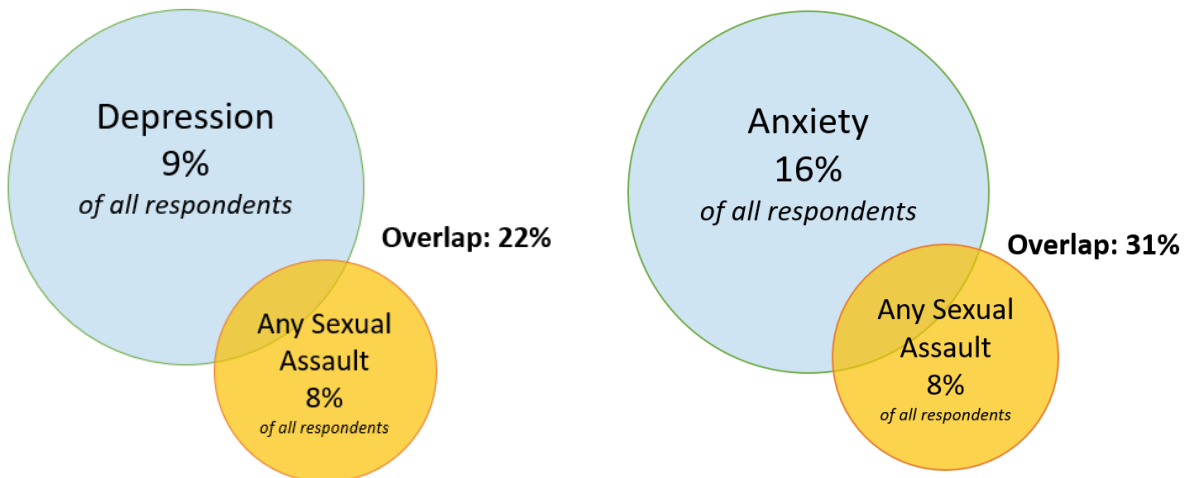
Table 5. Resource Utilization, Among Those Who Experienced Gender-Based Misconduct

Question: Please indicate your awareness and use of the following campus resources for sexual assault and other forms of gender-based misconduct.

Resources	Used (%)	Aware, Not Used (%)	Not Aware (%)
Sexual Violence Response	4.0	89.0	6.7
Gender-Based Misconduct Office	3.9	81.2	14.4
Medical Services	33.7	63.3	2.7
Counseling & Psychological Services/Mental Health Services	25.3	72.1	2.1
Public Safety	11.8	83.4	3.6
University Title IX Coordinator	2.4	75.6	21.2

Relationship between Gender-Based Misconduct and Mental Health

Analysis of the relationship between sexual assault and major depression and generalized anxiety disorder showed that survey participants who reported having experienced gender-based misconduct also had higher rates of depression and anxiety (22% and 31%, respectively) as compared to other students (9% and 16%, respectively). It is not clear from the data whether experiences of sexual assault might result in anxiety or depression, or whether students with anxiety or depression are at higher risk for assault, but these data suggest high co-occurrence and potentially high interdependence.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED – FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

As mentioned at the outset, creating an environment free from sexual and gender-based misconduct is a collective effort – and one that benefits from student, faculty and staff contributions. There are many ways to get involved or find available resources.

Resources for students can be found on Columbia's [Sexual Respect website](#), [University Life's website](#) and the Columbia University Life app.

For Students

Get involved in the [Sexual Respect and Community Citizenship Initiative](#). Through the Initiative, students can [participate in workshops](#), learn about becoming a [Sexual Respect Ambassador](#), or find other ways to [get involved](#).

Students at the Morningside campus can [get involved](#) with Columbia Health by volunteering as educators, advocates, and ambassadors.

Students at the CUIMC campus can contact the [Center for Student Wellness](#) to learn about opportunities to get involved.

For Faculty

As the data show, faculty members are invaluable in supporting student well-being, both inside and outside the classroom. This finding also reinforces how important it is for faculty to be aware of student-support resources.

From office-hour conversations to student mentoring to creating a welcoming classroom or lab environment and providing constructive feedback, faculty can make an enormous difference in students' ability to thrive at Columbia.

A quick reference list of student resources is available on the [University Life website](#) and sample syllabus information on student resources will soon be added. The [Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement](#) and the [Center for Teaching and Learning](#) also offer essential resources for faculty and staff on inclusive teaching, mentoring and many other topics.

For Staff

Students' interactions with Columbia's extensive staff at all levels can also make an important and positive difference in students' well-being, both academically and socially. As the data show, staff play an essential role in fostering students' campus connections and linking students to additional resources as needed. In addition to the work being done in many departments, schools and institutes, staff can participate in existing programs led by the Office of University Life, available on the [University Life website](#).

* * *

Thank you again for your engagement in and support of this important work,
and we welcome your comments and suggestions at
universitylife@columbia.edu.
We look forward to hearing your ideas.

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