

First Results: Brandeis University Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Misconduct (Spring 2015)

In the spring 2015 semester, the Office of the Provost and the Division of Students and Enrollment sponsored a campus climate survey on sexual misconduct. The survey was distributed electronically to all current undergraduate and graduate student members of the Brandeis community. Graduate students in the Rabb School of Continuing Studies were excluded, as their program is nonresidential. Students under the age of 18 were also excluded. The purpose of the survey was to better understand students' attitudes, experiences and opinions of sexual misconduct on our campus. This document is an initial summary of the survey findings, and additional analysis of the data are planned. Throughout this academic year, we will work with our community to use these findings for prevention resources, program development, communication about campus supports and other areas of improvement identified in the survey data.

The document is divided into the following sections:

- Response rate
- Experiences at Brandeis
- Attitudes at Brandeis
- Sexual misconduct and sexual assault — labeled experiences
- Experiences of unwanted sexual behaviors
- Reporting and perceptions of response
- Sense of community
- Bystander actions
- Knowledge of campus resources

TRIGGER WARNING

Some of the information in this report includes explicit language and references to sexual situations, sexual assault and sexual violence. These materials may be upsetting and may result in readers being reminded of previous experiences with sexual misconduct.

If you are a student and you would like to talk to someone about experiences of sexual misconduct that you have experienced, please contact Sheila McMahon, sexual assault services and prevention specialist, at 781-736-3626. You can also contact Julia Rickey, survivor advocate and education specialist at 781-736-3016 or jrickey@brandeis.edu. Additional resources can be found at the Office of Prevention Services website: www.brandeis.edu/preventionservices.

If you are a staff or faculty member and you would like to access resources for support, Brandeis Human Resources provides counseling and support services through the confidential Employee Assistance Program. Information can be found at www.LifeScopeEAP.com. The user name is brandeis university, and the password is guest. You may also call 888-777-0052.

Response Rate

A total of 5,416 undergraduate and graduate students were contacted to take the survey, and the response rate was 34.3% (N=1,856). In general, the data in this document are presented by respondents' gender and enrollment status (undergraduate or graduate students). While respondents were asked about their standing as an undergraduate or graduate student, not all respondents answered these questions.

In addition, not all respondents indicated a gender. The students who identified as transgender or other genders represented a small segment of all respondents, and therefore, their data are provided in a combined format (trans* and other together). In some instances, when response rates were very small for trans* and other, the data are not presented in order to protect the privacy of individuals. Table 1 shows the response rate by enrollment status and gender identity.

Table 1: Response Rates

	Invited	Responding	% Responding
Female Undergraduate Students	2,109	937	44.4%
Male Undergraduate Students	1,587	524	33.0%
Trans* & Other Undergraduate Students	unknown	18	---
Female Graduate Students	893	203	22.7%
Male Graduate Students	827	165	20.0%
Trans* & Other Graduate Students	unknown	9	---
Total	5,416	1,856	34.3%

In the discussion of survey results that follows, we present percentages of respondents who have experienced various forms of sexual misconduct. However, it is not possible to draw conclusions from these results about the incidence of these events across the university population as a whole. These numbers should be understood only to represent the incidence of such events among the students who responded to the survey.

In addition, within each set of questions, respondents were asked separately about each kind of behavior or experience. Because each student could report more than one kind of experience, the percentages in the tables below should not be added. In order to preserve confidentiality of responses, when fewer than five students (but at least one) responded affirmatively to a question, the exact number and percentage is omitted from the table, and an indication to this effect is included in place of the actual number.

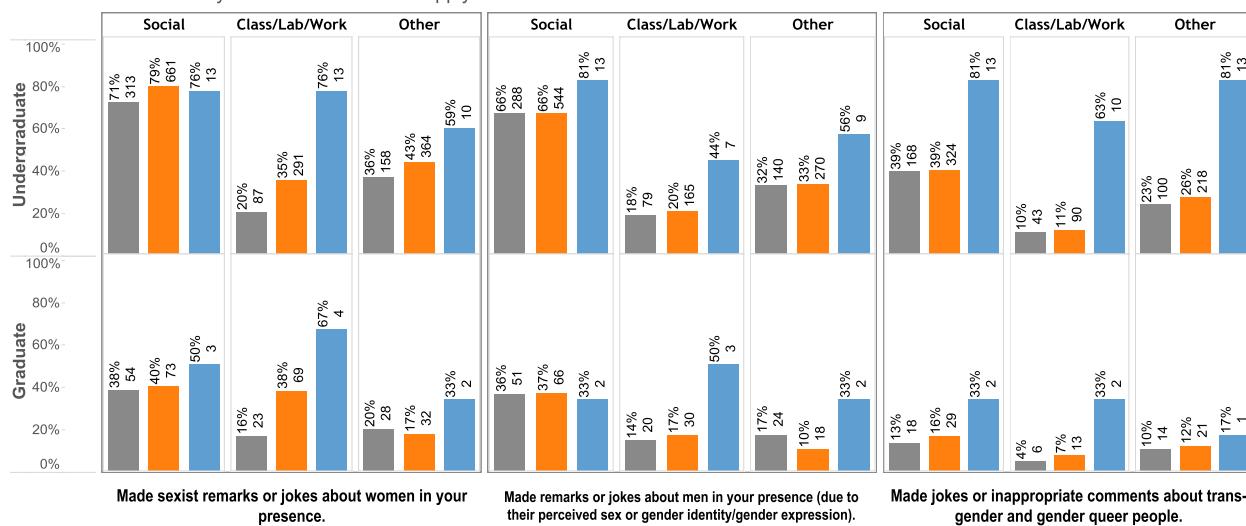
Climate and Harassment Experiences at Brandeis

Participants were asked about a range of verbal and other behaviors that they may have experienced, from sexist remarks to being pressured to go out with someone. In general, these negative behaviors were more likely to have occurred in social settings rather than in a class, lab or work setting. In addition, respondents at both the undergraduate and graduate level who identified as trans*/other were far more likely to have these experiences than respondents who identified as male or female. Chart 1 shows an overview of respondents' experiences at Brandeis.

Chart 1: Experiences at Brandeis

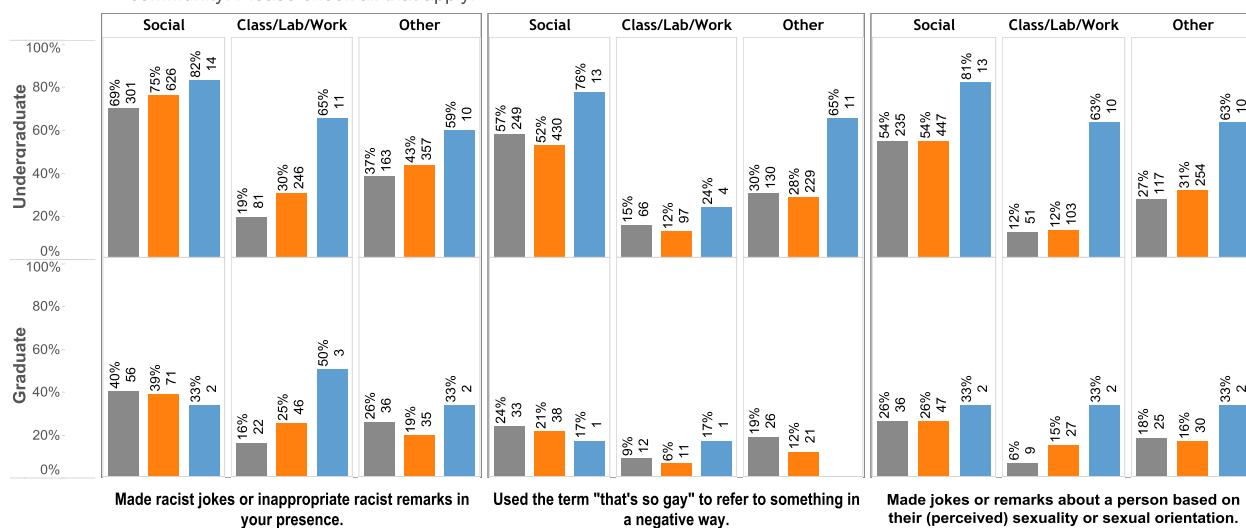
Male
Female
Trans*/Other

Please indicate if you've ever witnessed or been the target of **any** of the following experiences while at Brandeis and where they took place, if applicable. These unwanted experiences may have happened with anyone you consider a member of the Brandeis community. Please check all that apply.



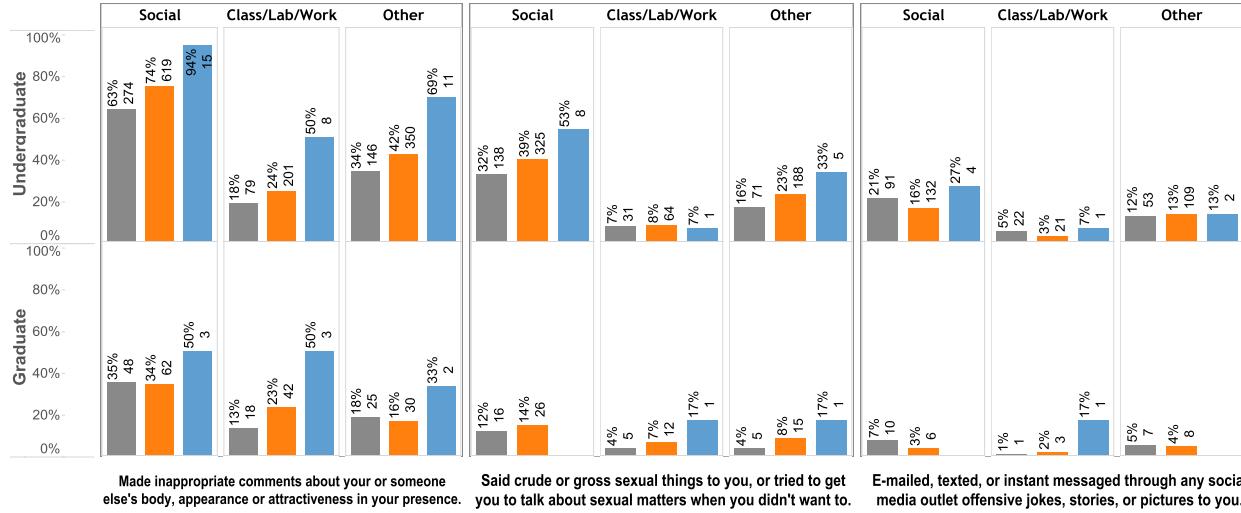
Male
Female
Trans*/Other

Please indicate if you've ever witnessed or been the target of **any** of the following experiences while at Brandeis and where they took place, if applicable. These unwanted experiences may have happened with anyone you consider a member of the Brandeis community. Please check all that apply.



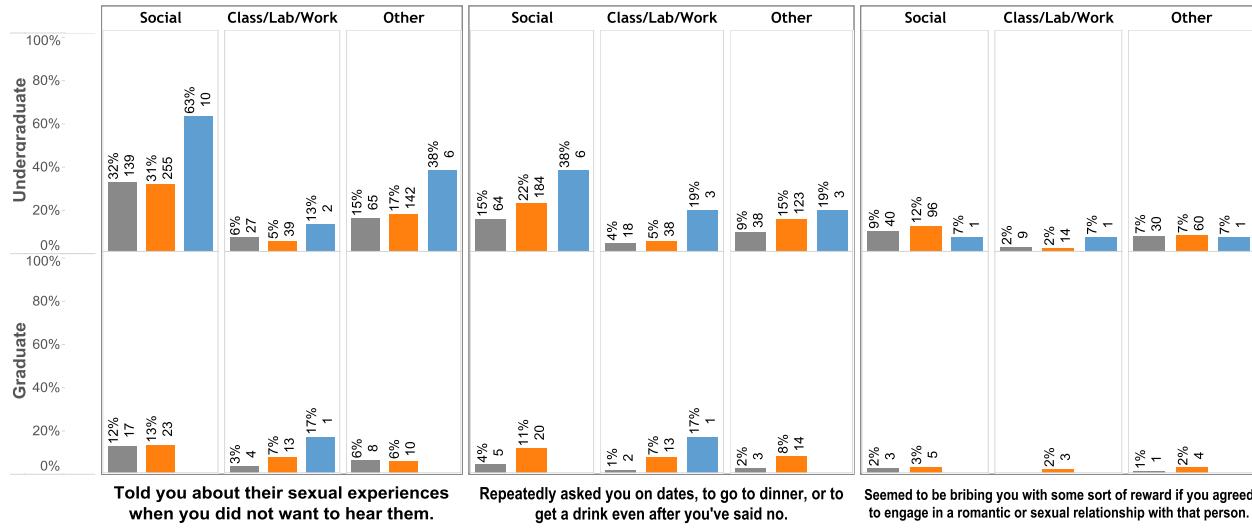
Male
 Female
 Trans*/Other

Please indicate if you've ever witnessed or been the target of **any** of the following experiences while at Brandeis and where they took place, if applicable. These unwanted experiences may have happened with anyone you consider a member of the Brandeis community. Please check all that apply.



Male
 Female
 Trans*/Other

Please indicate if you've ever witnessed or been the target of **any** of the following experiences while at Brandeis and where they took place, if applicable. These unwanted experiences may have happened with anyone you consider a member of the Brandeis community. Please check all that apply.



Attitudes at Brandeis

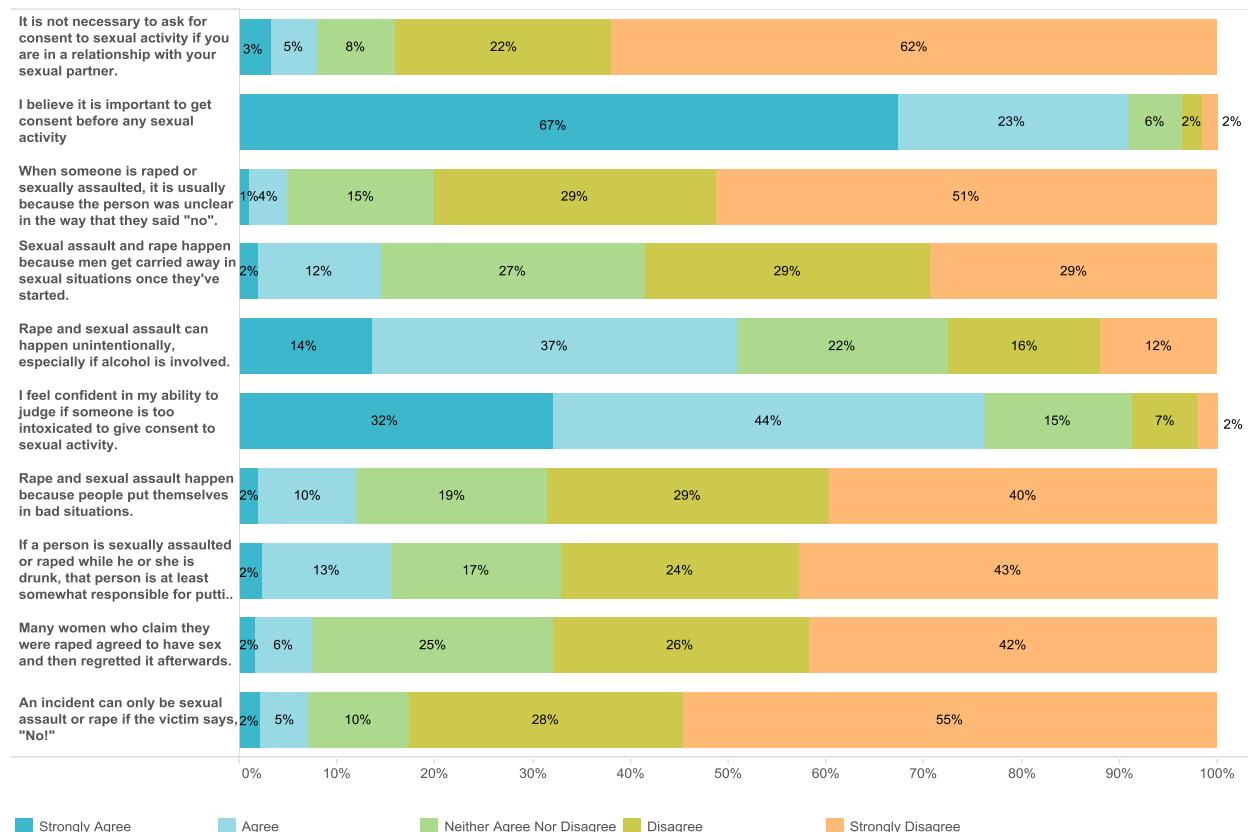
Survey participants were asked their level of agreement and disagreement with a series of questions about gender, consent and why sexual misconduct occurs.

- The vast majority of students — 91% of Brandeis undergraduates and 90% of graduate students — agree or strongly agree that it is important to get consent before any sexual activity.
- The majority of students — 78% of undergraduate respondents and 89% of graduate student respondents — disagree or strongly disagree with the statement “When someone is raped or sexually assaulted, it is usually because the person was unclear in the way that they said no.”
- However, gender plays an important role in respondents’ perceptions regarding sexual assault. A small but notable portion of undergraduate respondents — 16% — and of graduate student respondents — 10% — agree or strongly agree with the statement “Sexual assault and rape happen because men get carried away in sexual situations once they’ve started.” Similarly, 8% of undergraduate respondents and 6% of graduate student respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement “Many women who claim they were raped agreed to have sex and then regretted it afterwards.”
- The role of alcohol in instances of sexual assault is an area in which respondents’ opinions are more divided by enrollment and by gender identity. Fifty-four percent of undergraduate student respondents and 41% of graduate student respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Rape and sexual assault can happen unintentionally, especially if alcohol is involved.” When viewed by gender identity, 61.8% of male undergraduate respondents, 49.6 of female undergraduate respondents, and 22.2% of trans*/ other undergraduates agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. For male graduate student respondents, 48% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement compared to 34% of female graduate respondents, and 43% of trans*/other graduate respondents.

Chart 2 shows the attitudes of all respondents at Brandeis. The chart does not distinguish by undergraduate or graduate enrollment status or gender identity. It is important to note that some questions are asked in the negative and some in the affirmative. Respondents could strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree.

Chart 2: Attitudes at Brandeis

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (All respondents)



Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Assault — Labeled Experiences

The survey asked about different experiences of harassment as well as instances of sexual assault that students have faced while at Brandeis. The survey used two sets of questions to understand the prevalence of sexual misconduct. The first set of questions concern unwanted sexual experiences using common definitions such as “sexual assault” and “rape” where respondents apply their own interpretations to these experiences. These are referred to as “labeled” unwanted sexual experiences.

For the labeled experiences, undergraduate respondents who identified as trans*/other indicated the greatest levels of sexual misconduct, followed by respondents who identified as females. At the graduate level, low numbers of responses occurred for male graduate students and trans*/other graduate students. In order to protect confidentiality, these results are not reported.

Table 2 provides an overview of labeled experiences of sexual misconduct and assault.

Table 2: Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Assault — Labeled Experiences

	Undergraduates			Graduate Students		
	Male	Female	Trans*/, Other	Male	Female	Trans*/, Other
Been stalked, followed, or received repeated unwanted messages, texts, emails, etc. from someone who made the recipient uncomfortable.	25	114	6	***	12	***
	6%	14%	35%	***	7%	***
Been given dirty looks, intimidated, verbally harassed or otherwise harassed because of one's (actual or assumed) gender identity or sexual orientation.	24	57	13	***	12	***
	5%	7%	76%	***	7%	***
Been given dirty looks, intimidated, verbally harassed or otherwise harassed because of (actual or assumed) racial or ethnic background.	35	103	***	5	14	***
	8%	12%	***	4%	8%	***
Been in a relationship that was controlling or abusive (physically, sexually, psychologically, emotionally or financially).	22	73	***	***	8	***
	5%	9%	***	***	4%	***
Been sexually harassed, including inappropriate sexual comments, receiving unwanted sexual images via social media, text or in email.	22	122	***	***	16	***
	5%	15%	19%	***	9%	***
Been sexually assaulted, including inappropriate sexual touching, fondling, grabbing and groping.	21	186	6	***	***	***
	5%	22%	35%	***	***	***
Been raped (nonconsensual penetration of one's mouth, vagina or anus by a finger, penis or object).	6	49	***	***	0	***
	1%	6%	***	***	0%	***

Each labeled experience was asked as a separate question. Therefore, respondents could indicate experiencing more than one of these negative behaviors from a single act. Because of this, the values of different cells cannot be added to determine an overall rate for harassment and/or sexual misconduct. Cells with a label of *** indicate fewer than five respondents. This information was withheld to respect individuals' privacy.

- 5% of male undergraduate respondents and 22% of female undergraduate respondents indicated that they had been sexually assaulted. In addition, 35% of trans*/other undergraduate respondents indicated that they had been sexually assaulted.
- 1% of male undergraduate respondents and 6% of female undergraduate respondents reported being raped (nonconsensual penetration).

- While individual cell sizes are too small to report in Table 1, overall 1.3% of graduate student respondents indicated that they had been sexually assaulted or raped. Results are not divided by gender identity to protect confidentiality.

Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Assault — Unwanted Behaviors

For this set of questions, respondents were asked about specific types of unwanted sexual behaviors that they may have experienced. Rather than label these experiences as harassment or rape, these questions defined different types of sexual encounters a participant could have experienced. Research (Fisher, Cullen, Francis & Turner, 2000; Fisher & Cullen, 2000) has found that in these types of surveys, respondents are more likely to indicate that they have experienced a specific unwanted sexual behavior than to indicate that they experienced a labeled behavior such as “sexual assault.”

In addition to the numbers reported below in Table 3, at the undergraduate level 17% of male respondents, 38% of female respondents, and 41% of trans*/other respondents indicated that “someone fondled, kissed or rubbed up against the private areas of my body even though I didn’t want them to do so.” At the graduate level, 10% of female respondents cited having had these experiences. As with other data, some results for male graduate respondents as well as for undergraduate and graduate trans*/other respondents were withheld due to low counts in order to protect individual respondents’ privacy.

Table 3: Experiences of Unwanted Sexual Behaviors

		Undergraduate			Graduate		
		Male	Female	Trans*/Other	Male	Female	Trans*/Other
Someone TRIED to perform oral sex on me or make me give them oral sex even though I didn’t want them to do so.	Number	13	78	***	***	5	***
	Percent	3%	10%	***	***	3%	***
Someone performed oral sex on me even though I didn’t want them to do so.	Number	13	26	***	***	***	***
	Percent	3%	3%	***	***	***	***
Someone made me give them oral sex or performed oral sex on me even though I didn’t want them to do so.	Number	13	49	***	***	5	***
	Percent	3%	6%	***	***	3%	***
Someone TRIED to put their finger, penis or object into my vagina or anus even though I didn’t want them to do so.	Number	11	119	***	***	5	***
	Percent	3%	15%	***	***	3%	***
Someone put their penis or finger or object inside my vagina or anus even though I didn’t want them to do so.	Number	6	71	***	***	***	***
	Percent	2%	9.0%	***	***	***	***

Each experience of an unwanted sexual behavior was asked as a separate question. Therefore, respondents could indicate experiencing more than one of these negative behaviors from a single act. Because of this, the values of different cells cannot be added to determine an overall rate for harassment and/or sexual misconduct. Cells with a label of *** indicate fewer than five respondents. This information was withheld to respect individuals’ privacy.

Location, Affiliation, Connection and Effects

- At the undergraduate level, 47% of instances took place either on campus in a residential building or in Brandeis-affiliated housing, followed by 40.1% taking place off-campus but not at another university.
- At the undergraduate level, 72% of the individuals who engaged in acts of sexual misconduct against respondents were current Brandeis students; 8.6% were affiliated with another college or university, and 3.9% were Brandeis alumni.
- At the graduate level, 32.7% of the individuals who engaged in acts of sexual misconduct against respondents were current Brandeis students, and 10.2% were affiliated with another college or university.
- At the undergraduate level, 43.7% of respondents described the person who engaged in acts of sexual misconduct against respondents as “having no prior relationship”; 31.1% describe the person as an “acquaintance, peer or colleague”; and 24.9% describe the person as a “friend.”
- At the graduate level, 22% described the person who engaged in acts of sexual misconduct against respondents as “having no prior relationship”; 22% described the person as an “acquaintance, peer or colleague”; and 19.5% described the person as a “friend.”
- For respondents who experienced these unwanted sexual behaviors—tried or performed vaginal or anus penetration, or tried or performed oral sex—the share of these experiences involving the threat of physical harm was 2%, the use of force was 24%, and the use of a weapon was 2%.
- For undergraduate respondents, the greatest effects of having experienced sexual misconduct were changes in eating patterns, not being able to complete course assignments, having grades drop, and lost interest in sex or sexual intimacy.
- For graduate respondents, the greatest effects of having experienced sexual misconduct were not being able to complete course assignments, lost interest in other kinds of intimacy (i.e., relationships with friends, family, etc.), and changes in eating patterns.

Reporting and Perceptions of Response

Participants were asked about whether or not they told anyone about an incident of unwanted sexual activity. At the undergraduate level, female respondents were more likely to tell someone than males or trans*/other respondents. At the graduate level, male, female and trans*/other respondents overwhelmingly did not disclose their experiences with unwanted sexual activity. Table 4 shows the reporting levels of unwanted sexual activity.

Table 4: Reporting Unwanted Sexual Activity

Have you ever told anyone about this incident of unwanted sexual activity?				
Undergraduate Respondents	Male	Female	Trans*/Other	Total
% Yes	39.2%	60.4%	***	54.5%
% No	60.8%	39.6%	72.7%	45.5%
Graduate Student Respondents	Male	Female	Trans*/Other	
% Yes	***	44.4%	***	30.2%
% No	94.4%	55.6%	***	69.8%

- Only 54.5% of undergraduate respondents told someone about their experience of having had an unwanted sexual activity. An even lower fraction of graduate student respondents, just 30.2%, told someone about their experience.
- Respondents were asked about whether they formally reported the experience. Of undergraduate respondents (all gender identities), 3.7% had formally reported. Of graduate student respondents (all gender identities), 9.4% had formally reported.
- 91% of female undergraduate respondents and 67% of male respondents indicated that when they disclosed an incident of sexual misconduct, the person they told “responded in a way that makes you feel supported.” At the graduate student level, 73% of female graduate respondents agreed with this statement.
- For female undergraduate respondents, 29% said their peers “Minimized the importance or seriousness of what happened”; 14% said their peers “doubted you, asked questions to determine if it really happened, or refused to believe you”; and 11% said their peers “blamed you for the assault, or said you could have done something to prevent it, or asked why you didn’t do something to prevent it.”
- For male undergraduates, 33% said their peers “minimized the importance or seriousness of what happened,” and 14% said their peers “doubted you, asked questions to determine if it really happened, or refused to believe you.” Similar experiences were reported by female graduate respondents, of whom 40% said that their peers “minimized the importance or seriousness of what happened,” and 33% said their peers “made excuses for the person who did this to you.”
- Only 14% of female undergraduate respondents and 12% of male undergraduate respondents indicated that their peers “helped you gather information or find resources or services.”

Sense of Community

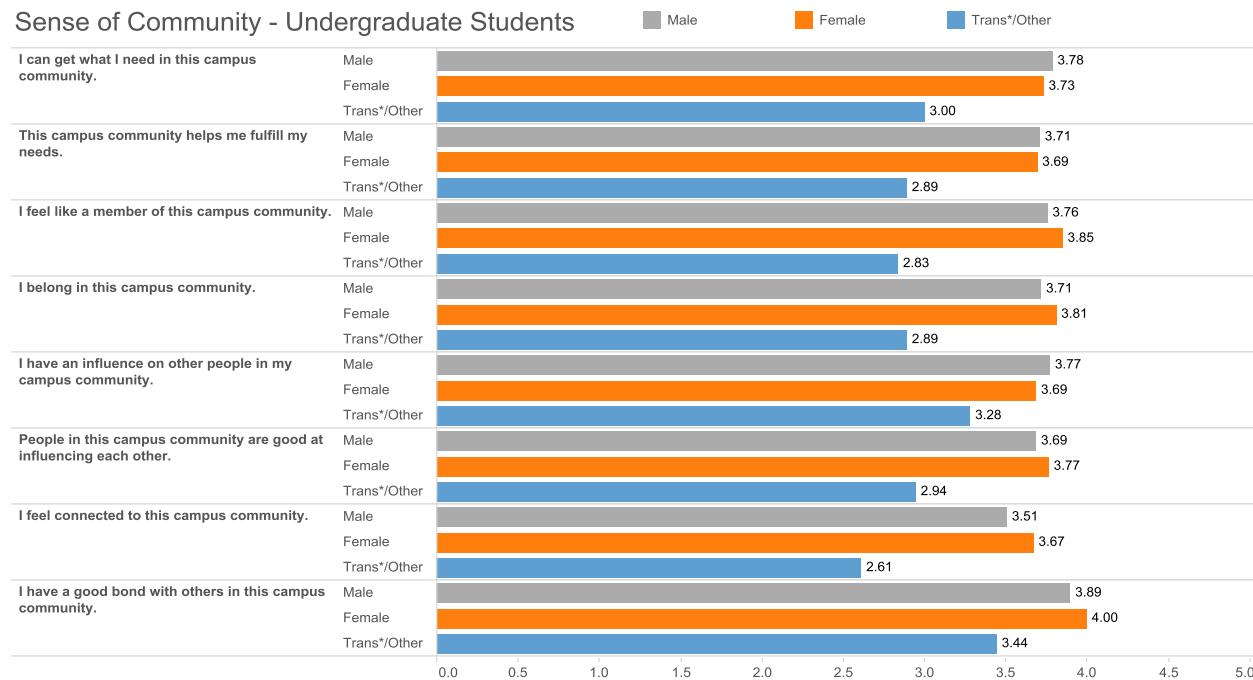
Respondents were asked about their sense of community in four domains: connection with the community, the ability to influence, feelings of belonging and fulfillment of needs. Research has found that a sense of community is a correlate of students' willingness to intervene as bystanders in instances of sexual harassment and assault.

Responses were examined in two ways. The first analysis was the degree to which respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements about community. Key findings for undergraduate respondents from this analysis include:

- 70.4% of undergraduate male respondents and 71.5% of undergraduate female respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I can get what I need on this campus" in contrast with only 38.9% of undergraduate trans*/other respondents.
- 64.5% of undergraduate male respondents and 69.8% of undergraduate female respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I belong in this campus community" in comparison with 38.9% of undergraduate trans*/other respondents.
- 67.1% of undergraduate male respondents and 65.5% of undergraduate female respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I have an influence on other people in my campus community" in comparison with 55.5% of undergraduate trans*/other respondents.
- 73.6% of undergraduate male respondents and 78.1% of undergraduate female respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I have a good bond with others in this campus community" in comparison with 55.5% of undergraduate trans*/other respondents.

The second analysis used mean scores on a five-point scale to understand the differences by gender identity as illustrated in the below chart about the sense of community amongst undergraduate respondents. Chart 3 shows the sense of community by undergraduate respondents by gender identity.

Chart 3: Undergraduate Sense of Community

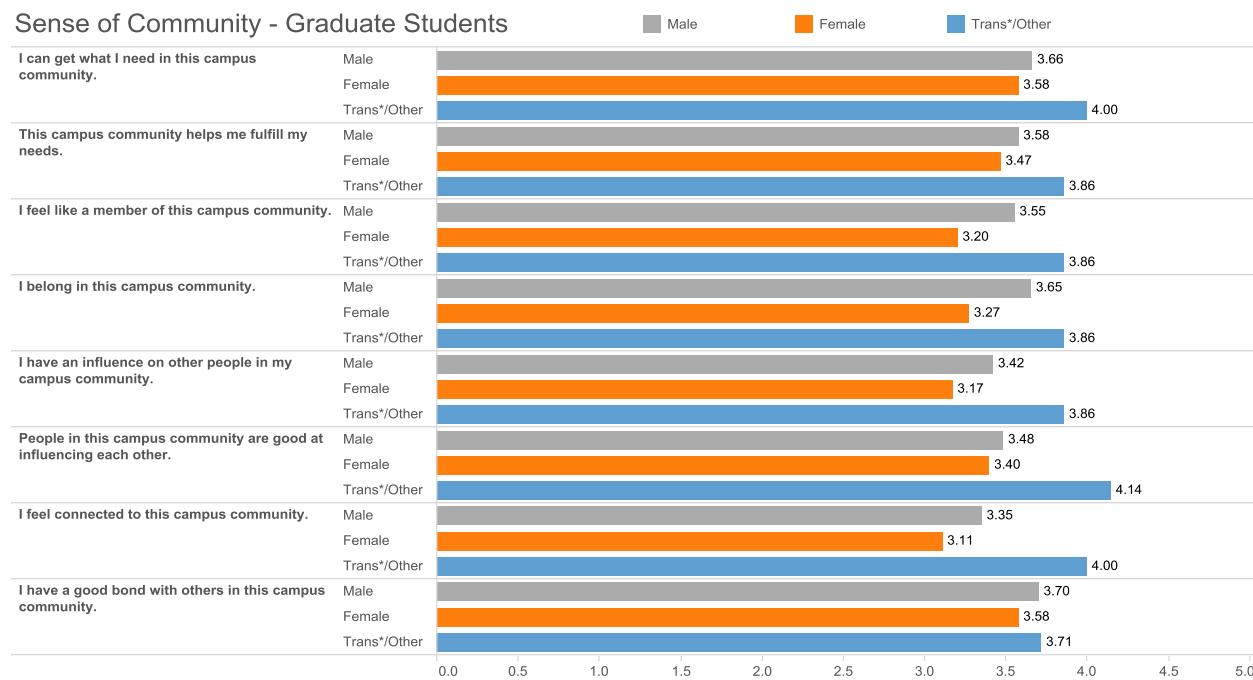


As with the undergraduate respondents, graduate student respondent data were also examined in two ways. The first analysis was the degree to which respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements about community. Key findings for graduate student respondents from this analysis included:

- 60.8% of male graduate student respondents, 62.1% of female graduate student respondents and 71.5% of trans*/other graduate student respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I can get what I need on this campus.”
- 64.1% of male graduate student respondents, 44.2% of female graduate student respondents and 57.2% of trans*/other graduate student respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I belong in this campus community.”
- 51.9% of male graduate student respondents, 42.6% of female graduate student respondents and 57.2% of trans*/other graduate student respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I have an influence on other people in my campus community.”
- 67.1% of male graduate student respondents, 63.9% of female graduate student female respondents and 57.2% of trans*/other graduate student respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I have a good bond with others in this campus community.”

The second analysis used mean scores on a five-point scale to understand the differences by gender identity as illustrated in the below chart about the sense of community amongst graduate student respondents. Chart 4 shows the sense of community by undergraduate respondents by gender identity.

Chart 4: Graduate Student Sense of Community

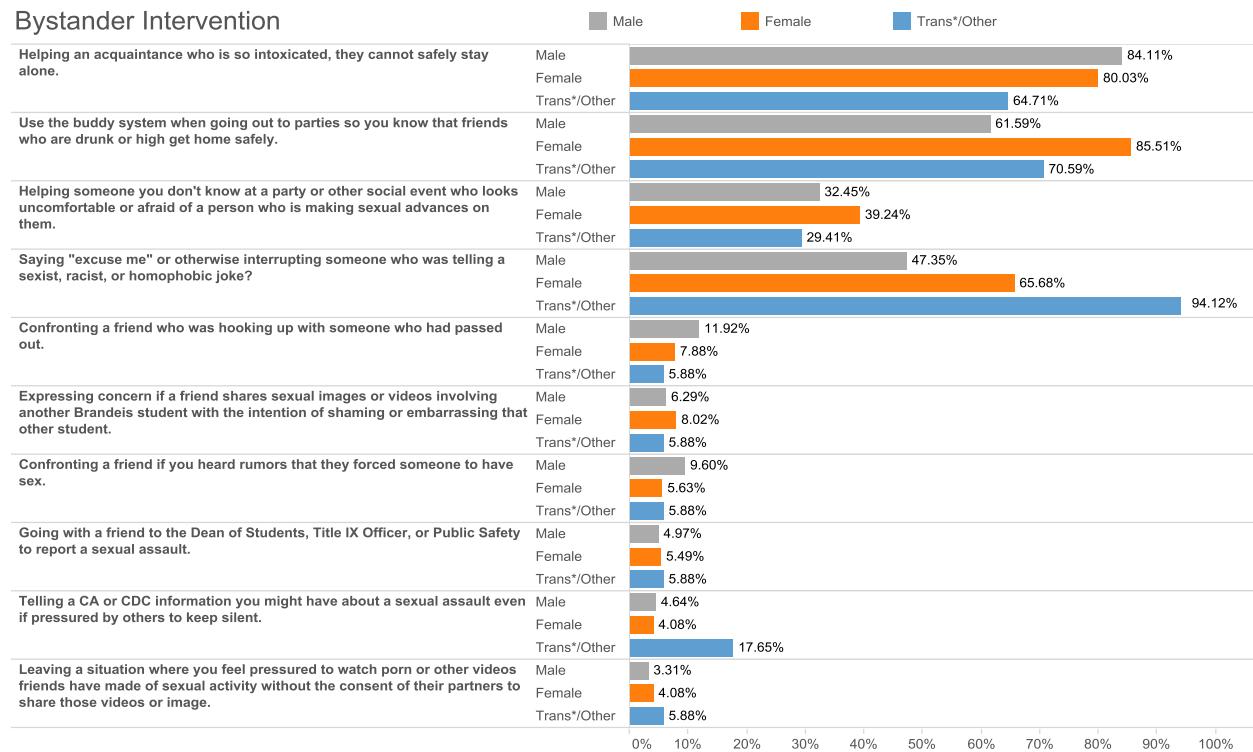


5 point scale with 5=strongly agree and 1=strongly disagree

Bystander Actions

Bystander intervention is a prevention strategy that helps students recognize situations that could escalate to sexual misconduct and, keeping their own safety in mind, intervene to prevent misconduct from occurring (Banyard, Plante & Moynihan, 2004). Respondents were asked about the degree to which they use bystander intervention or bystander actions to help their peers. Respondents were first asked if they had ever been in a situation in which they could have helped their peers. If the respondent indicated yes, the respondent was then asked if they had engaged in a behavior to help a peer. Chart 5 below shows the percentage of students who engaged in pro-social bystander actions. For those who had the opportunity and acted, the percentages below reflect response rates from both undergraduate and graduate students. For trans*/other respondents, results are given only if the response rate was at least five students in that gender identity category.

Chart 5: Bystander Actions — All Students



Respondents were also asked the reasons that they chose not to engage in a bystander action if they were in a situation in which they could act. The main reasons selected by respondents were that they didn't "know what to do or say" and that they "didn't realize until later that the situation was serious."

Knowledge of Campus Resources

Participants were asked questions to assess their awareness of campus resources that can be accessed when instances of sexual misconduct or assault occur. In response to the statement "If a friend or I were sexually assaulted, I know where to go get help on campus," 71.9% of undergraduate respondents and 49.6% of graduate student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they knew where to get help.

In response to the statement "I understand what happens when a student reports a claim of sexual assault at Brandeis," 52.2% of undergraduate respondents and 59.9% of graduate students disagreed or strongly disagreed; 17.9% of undergraduate respondents and 16.1% of graduate student respondents were neutral; and 29.9% of undergraduate respondents and 23.9% of graduate student respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

In response to the statement "If a friend or I were sexually assaulted, I know where to go to make a report of sexual assault," 38.2% of undergraduate respondents and 46.4% of graduate student respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement; 15.1% of undergraduate respondents

and 16.7% of graduate student respondents were neutral; and 46.7% of undergraduate respondents and 36.8% of graduate student respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 5 shows respondents' knowledge of campus resources that students may contact when instances of sexual misconduct and/or assault occur.

Table 5: Knowledge of Campus Resources

Percentage of respondents indicating that they were somewhat aware, very aware or extremely aware the following campus resources:	Male Undergrad	Female Undergrad	Trans*/ Other Undergrad	Male Grad Student	Female Grad Student
Confidential Resources					
Office of Prevention Services	49.6%	56.4%	87.6%	24.6%	27.9%
Psychological Counseling Center	75.2%	82.9%	93.9%	49.2%	59.8%
Rape Crisis Center	69.9%	74.7%	87.6%	36.0%	43.8%
Interfaith Chaplaincy	60.9%	61.3%	25.0%	57.2%	54.8%
Health Center	85.5%	80.9%	62.50%	82.7%	78.0%
Reporting Resources					
Dean of Students Office	55.1%	50.4%	56.3%	27.4%	25.0%
Department of Student Rights & Community Standards	41.8%	36.6%	37.6%	19.6%	16.3%
University Police/Public Safety	77.4%	72.6%	50.1%	66.0%	64.9%
Title IX Coordinator Linda Shinomoto	34.4%	29.1%	50.0%	20.9%	24.0%
Title IX Investigator Rebecca Tillar	33.0%	26.9%	37.6%	19.5%	20.3%

Sources Cited:

Banyard, V.; Moynihan, M.; & Plante, E. (2007) *Sexual Violence Prevention through Bystander Education: An Experimental Evaluation*. Journal of Community Psychology, 35 (4), 463-481.

Fisher, B.S.; Cullen, F. T.; & Turner, Michael G. The Sexual Victimization of College Women. Research Report. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., National Institute of Justice.; Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., Bureau of Justice Statistics. REPORT NO NCJ-182369 PUBDATE 20-12-0.

Fisher, B. S., & Cullen, F. T. (2000). Measuring the sexual victimization of women: Evolution, current controversies, and future research. In D. Duffee (Ed.), Criminal Justice 2000: Vol. 4. Measurement and analysis of crime and justice, (pp. 317-390). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice.