

# The Campus Study Project: Methodological Information

Steinhardt Social Research Institute, Brandeis University

This document describes methodological details for six separate surveys of undergraduate students at five US universities: Brandeis University (two different years—Brandeis2016 and Brandeis2018), the University of Pennsylvania (Penn), Harvard University (Harvard), the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (Michigan), and the University of Florida, Gainesville (Florida). The Brandeis2016 and Penn surveys were conducted in the spring of 2016, the Harvard survey was conducted in the fall of 2016, the Michigan survey was conducted in the spring of 2017, and the Brandeis2018 and Florida surveys were conducted in the spring of 2018. All six surveys were conducted using similar, but not identical, methodologies. This document describes the methodology of all six surveys.

## Sampling

The Brandeis2016, Penn, Michigan, Brandeis2018, and Florida surveys employed simple random samples of undergraduates ages 18 or older, drawn from each school's list of undergraduates. Sample sizes ranged from 1,735 at Brandeis2016, to 2,500 at Penn, and 3,500 at Florida.

For the Penn survey and both Brandeis surveys, SSRI researchers received a list of undergraduate names and emails from which the samples were drawn. Surveys were then administered via SSRI's Survey Management System. For the Michigan survey, a random sample of undergraduates was drawn by the university's own "targeted communication" system, which was also used to distribute the surveys (see "Survey Administration" below). At Florida, the registrar drew a random sample of undergraduates and the University of Florida Survey Research Center (UFSRC - <https://www.bebr.ufl.edu/survey>) distributed the survey to respondents on behalf of SSRI.

Because a list of Harvard University (Harvard) undergraduate email addresses could not be obtained for use as a sampling frame, an open access link to the survey was distributed to 4,495 Harvard sophomores, juniors, and seniors via email by Harvard "house fellows" to students in their dorms. After freshman year, Harvard undergraduates are assigned to housing randomly so that each house is effectively a representative sample of the diversity of the non-freshman student body. The survey was sent to students who lived in the following undergraduate houses: Adams, Cabot, Currier, Dunster, Eliot, Kirkland, Leverett, Lowell, Mather, Pforzheimer, and Quincy. Students in freshman housing, in Winthrop house, and those living off campus were excluded.

## Survey Administration

The survey was conducted online using the Limesurvey platform (versions 2.05 and 2.67.1), and respondents were sent email invitations and reminders with a link to the survey. Dates for invitations, reminders, and the closing of the survey period are listed in Table A1.

Table A1. Survey administration

	Brandeis University (2016)	University of Pennsylvania	Harvard University	University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Brandeis University (2018)	University of Florida
<b>Invitation</b>	01/28/2016	04/21/2016	11/18/2016	03/27/2017	02/27/2018	03/20/2018
<b>Reminder 1</b>	02/01/2016	04/25/2016	11/28/2016	04/04/2017	03/02/2018	03/26/2018
<b>Reminder 2</b>	02/05/2016	04/28/2016	12/05/2016	04/13/2017	03/08/2018	04/02/2018
<b>Reminder 3</b>					03/15/2018	
<b>Survey closed</b>	02/15/2016	05/09/2016	12/12/2016	04/21/2017	03/21/2018	04/09/2018

At Brandeis (both studies), Penn, and Michigan students were sent email invitations to complete the survey online, using a unique URL and were informed that they would receive a \$10 Amazon.com gift card as an incentive upon completion of the full survey. All invitations and reminder emails for the Michigan and Florida surveys were sent via the “Targeted Communication” system (at Michigan) and the UFSRC (at Florida), rather than SSRI’s Survey Management System, which was used to distribute emails and reminders for Brandeis and Penn.

Harvard students were sent an open-access (i.e., non-unique) link to the survey via their “house-fellows.” In order to ensure that respondents were in-frame, and to prevent repeat participation, respondents were required to give their unique “@[harvard.edu](mailto:harvard.edu)” undergraduate email address at the conclusion of the survey before receiving their incentive, and for their data to be included in analysis.

At Brandeis (both studies), Penn, and Florida students were given the opportunity to opt-out of receiving a gift card; a small number did so (four at Brandeis in 2016, two at Penn, two at Brandeis in 2018, and six at Florida). The Harvard and Michigan surveys did not have the option to decline a gift card.

## Dispositions and Response Rates

During the course of the study, some individuals were found to be ineligible, because they were not undergraduate students at the universities at the time of the survey, and were consequently dropped from the sample. Table A2 reports the disposition of respondents and response rates for the surveys by university. Individuals who had completed at least the Religion and Ethnicity section of the survey were considered “partials” if they did not complete the remainder of the survey. Individuals who dropped out of the survey prior to the Religion and Ethnicity section were considered “break-offs.”

Table A2. Final dispositions and response rates

	Brandeis University (2016)	University of Pennsylvania	Harvard University	University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Brandeis University (2018)	University of Florida - Gainesville
<b>Initial Sample</b>	<b>1,735</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>4,495</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>1757</b>	<b>3,500</b>
Ineligible	1	8	2	0	11	7
<b>Eligible sample</b>	<b>1,734</b>	<b>2,492</b>	<b>4,493</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>1746</b>	<b>3,493</b>
Complete	960	1,079	984	1,120	909	1,333
Partial	39	34	9	60	39	51
Break-off	36	19	0	32	47	74
Refusal	15	22	NA <sup>†</sup>	NA <sup>†</sup>	17	NA <sup>†</sup>
Not Complete	699	1,338	276	1,788	734	2,027
<b>AAPOR RR 2</b>	<b>57.6%</b>	<b>44.7%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>39.3%</b>	<b>54.3%</b>	<b>39.7%</b>

<sup>†</sup> Refusal information for the Harvard, Michigan, and Florida surveys are unavailable due to the fact that these surveys did not use the standard SSRI respondent management system.

## Weighting

For each school, weights were calculated to adjust for differences between the characteristics of respondents and known characteristics of the population. Population data were obtained from the undergraduate email lists provided to SSRI (for Brandeis2016, Brandeis2018, and Penn), which often included auxiliary information on population members, university provided marginals (for Michigan) or publically available demographics on undergraduates (Harvard and Florida). The weighting factors used for each survey are detailed in Table A3.

Table A3. Weights

	Brandeis University (2016)	University of Pennsylvania	Harvard University	University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Brandeis University (2018)	University of Florida - Gainesville
<b>Gender</b>		X	X	X	X	X
<b>International Student status</b>	X	X	X		X	
<b>Class Year</b>	X	X	X		X	
<b>White Domestic Student vs all others</b>			X			
<b>School Within University</b>		X				

Weights were applied to all analyses. Weighted analyses were conducted using the “svy” suite of commands in Stata, and confidence intervals and Chi square tests produced for such analyses account for the sampling characteristics of the data.

## University of Florida Survey Instrument

[http://www.brandeis.edu/ssri/pdfs/campusstudies/LimeSurvey - UF Gainesville Campus Study 2018\\_030918.pdf](http://www.brandeis.edu/ssri/pdfs/campusstudies/LimeSurvey - UF Gainesville Campus Study 2018_030918.pdf)

## Publications

- Shain, M., Chertok, F., Wright, G., Hecht, S., Koren, A., Gelles, R.J., & Saxe, L. (2016). *Diversity, pressure, and divisions on the University of Pennsylvania campus*. Waltham, MA: Steinhardt Social Research Institute, Brandeis University. Retrieved from <http://www.brandeis.edu/ssri/noteworthy/upenn.html>
- Saxe, L., Chertok, F., Wright, G., Shain, M., Hecht, S., Koren, A., & Sasson, T. (2016). *All together separate: Race, ethnicity, and religion on the Brandeis campus*. Waltham, MA: Steinhardt Social Research Institute, Brandeis University. Retrieved from <http://www.brandeis.edu/ssri/noteworthy/brandeis.html>
- Wright, G., Shain, M., Hecht, S., & Saxe, L. (2017). *The limits of hostility: Students report on antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiment at four US universities*. Waltham, MA: Steinhardt Social Research Institute, Brandeis University. Retrieved from <http://www.brandeis.edu/ssri/noteworthy/fourcampuses.html>