

PACE UNIVERSITY

HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey 2021

Overview

The purpose of the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey is to assess students' perceptions of the campus climate for unwanted sexual contact and assault, perceptions on how the institution responds to sexual assault and how often they have experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault. There are several sections in the survey including general climate, assessing unwanted sexual contact and assault, context and disclosure (given only to those respondents who indicated they were assaulted), and demographics.

The questions ask the level to which a student agrees with statements about members of the University community, expected University responses to situations, and views on sexual assault and reporting. Many questions ask about Title IX information, process and outcomes. Following these general questions, the survey asks more questions about sexual assault, including participants, situations, bystanders, locations, and acts.

The survey was administered via email between November 2 and 16, 2021 from the Higher Education Data Consortium to guarantee the anonymity of respondents. Institutions are unable to link survey responses to individual students and data files did not include variables connected to the student.

There were 964 total undergraduate respondents from Pace University. Some demographic variables were collapsed across groups to reduce the potential to identify specific students when a response group was small. This year had a larger number of respondents than when the survey was administered by HEDS in 2017. As an added incentive to complete the survey, the Office of Sexual and Interpersonal Wellness and the Office of Planning, Assessment and Institutional Research pledged to donate \$1 for every completed survey to the Pace Care Fund, which provides emergency financial relief to students who face unforeseeable economic hardships. There were 954 completed surveys and the offices rounded up the contribution to \$1000 with the support of Pace's Chief Diversity Office Tiffany Hamilton.

Percentage of Women and Men who Experienced Sexual Assault

Pace University Students who completed the survey were asked if they had been sexually assaulted since they had started at Pace University. Of the students who completed the survey in 2021, 6.2% of Pace University undergraduate students reported that they had been sexually assaulted. This is a smaller percentage than in 2017 and 2016.

More detailed information about the incidents of sexual assault can be found on page 5.

General Climate

The first section of the survey focuses on General climate. Undergraduate students think Faculty and Staff contribute most to the general campus climate with students close behind. They selected that they "agree" or "strongly agree" that Administration contributes to the campus climate the lowest.

The second section asks questions about the students' opinion on different Pace University groups and how they feel on campus. A comparison of the three years of undergraduate data is in the following table.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement: (Strongly Agree / Agree)	2016 Pace Undergraduate	2017 Pace Undergraduate	2021 Pace Undergraduate
Faculty, staff, and administrators respect what students think	79.1%	82.6%	80.5%
Faculty, staff, and administrators concern for students' welfare	72.4%	70.8%	74.5%
Faculty, staff, and administrators treat students fairly	72.1%	72.6%	74.2%
Students concern about welfare of other students	64.6%	62.9%	71.0%
I feel valued in the classroom	73.5%	72.8%	73.9%
I feel close to people	55.4%	56.0%	52.9%
I feel part of the community	55.9%	57.8%	56.4%
I feel safe	78.9%	82.8%	81.2%

Students who identified as “not only white” were significantly higher than those who selected white only in their agreement with two statements: “Faculty, staff, and administrators respect what students think” and “I feel safe.”

In most of the above statements, Male students agreed significantly more than Female students. The only two statements that there were NO significant differences were “students concern about welfare of other students” and “I feel part of the community.”

Title IX Information Sharing

Students were asked if they received information about specific Title IX concerns. Over 80 percent of undergraduates said they had received information or education about what sexual assault is and how to recognize it while nine percent said they were unsure if they had received the information. All responses were higher than the results in 2017.

Have you received information or education from [Pace University] about:	2017 Pace Undergraduate	2021 Pace Undergraduate
What sexual assault is and how to recognize it?	67.8%	80.1%
How to report an incident of sexual assault?	52.6%	61.0%
[Pace University]’s confidential resources for sexual assault and how to locate them on campus?	50.2%	64.8%
The procedures for investigating a sexual assault?	36.7%	46.1%
The actions you can take to help prevent sexual assault, such as bystander intervention, clear communications with a potential partner, or some other action?	57.0%	68.3%

Students who answered Yes to one or more of the questions above received two additional questions. Over sixty percent (62.4%) of those Pace University undergraduates who responded yes said they remembered “most” or “almost all” of the information and over three fourths (78.6%) said the information was helpful. These responses were much higher than the results in 2017.

Responses “Most” or Almost All	2017 Pace Undergraduate	2021 Pace Undergraduate
Overall, how much do you remember about the information or education from [Pace University] about sexual assault? (“Most of it” or “Almost all or all of it” responses)	54.5%	62.4%
Overall, how helpful did you think the information or education from [Pace University] about sexual assault was? (“Helpful” or “Very helpful” responses)	67.6%	78.6%

Perception of University Officials

Two thirds of undergraduates believe the Campus officials do a good job protecting students from harm. There were 56.8% of Pace University undergraduates who believe that the campus officials would handle a crisis well. Fewer than 50% of Pace University undergrads believe that Campus officials respond quickly in difficult situations and 53% believe campus officials handle incidents in a fair and responsible manner.

Sixty percent of undergraduates believe that there is a good support system in place for students going through difficult times.

Responses Agree or Strongly Agree	2016 Pace Undergraduates	2017 Pace Undergraduates	2021 Pace Undergraduates
Campus officials do a good job protecting students from harm.	67.2%	61.1%	66.0%
If a crisis happened here, I am confident campus officials would handle it well.	61.2%	56.4%	56.8%
Campus officials respond quickly in difficult situations.	53.7%	47.0%	49.5%
Campus officials handle incidents in a fair and responsible manner.	57.3%	51.3%	53.1%
There is a good support system at {Institution} for students going through difficult times.	61.2%	58.4%	60.1%

Perception of Sexual Assault Incidence and Risks

Just under half of the undergraduate students believe that there is a low number of sexual assaults at Pace University which is lower than previous years. Almost half of undergraduate students do not believe they are at risk. Over two-thirds of undergraduate students at Pace believe that students at Pace University would intervene if they witnessed a sexual assault. A comparison with the previous two surveys is provided in the table at the top of the next page.

Responses Agree or Strongly Agree	2016 Pace Undergraduates	2017 Pace Undergraduates	2021 Pace Undergraduates
I believe the number of sexual assaults that occur on campus, off campus at an event of program connected with {Institution} or at a social activity or party near campus is low.	65.6%	52.7%	48.1%
I do not believe that I or one of my friends is at risk for being sexually assaulted on campus, off campus at an event or program connected with {Institution} or at a social activity or party near campus.	62.5%	51.1%	49.6%
I believe that students at {Institution} would intervene if they witnessed a sexual assault.	64.5%	61.4%	66.9%

Responses to Reporting a Sexual Assault

Over two thirds of undergraduates (71.6%) think their report would be taken seriously and a similar number (69.6%) thought Campus officials would support and protect the person making the report. A higher number (78.4%) of undergraduates expected that students would support the person making the report.

Careful investigations were expected by 63.3% of Pace University undergraduates, which was up slightly from 60.9% in 2017. However, Pace undergraduates had lower expectations that officials would take action against the offender (58.9%).

In responses to all questions Male students responded with significantly higher agreement than female students. Non-white only students also agreed significantly more than white students to all statements except on how they expected students to respond.

Incidents of Sexual Assault

Of the students who completed the survey in 2021, 6.2% of Pace University undergraduate students reported that they had been sexually assaulted. This is a smaller percentage than in 2017 and 2016.

Since starting at Pace University, have you been sexually assaulted while you were (a) on campus; (b) off campus at an event or program connected with Pace university, including study abroad and internships; or (c) at a social activity or party near campus such as at an apartment, restaurant or bar?	2016 Pace Undergraduate	2017 Pace Undergraduate	2021 Pace Undergraduate
Yes	8.3%	8.7%	6.2%
No	88.8%	87.8%	90.8%
I suspect that someone attempted to sexually assault me, but I am not certain	2.9%	3.6%	3.0%

There were 59 students who responded they had been sexually assaulted, which represented 7.3% of Females and 2.1% of male students. For the population of students who did not specify a gender, 9.8% said they had been sexually assaulted.

Of these sexual assaults, 83% occurred within the first two years at school. Pace University students were identified as the attacker 74% of the time. Other attackers were students from another institution (10%), Pace University Faculty, Staff or Administrator (2%), no one affiliated with Pace University or another institution (14%), or an unknown attacker (3%). These responses were “check all that apply” as some students reported being assaulted by more than one attacker.

A nonromantic friend or acquaintance (43%) was the most common assailant with stranger (26%) and casual date or hookup (24%) as the next two categories. Assaults were most common by males (79%) with 14% females. In cases where there was more than one assailant, 7% were both male and female.

Attacks occurred most often off campus (44%), in housing on campus (35%), in another location on campus (10%), in a fraternity or sorority (7%), or during study abroad (3%).

Reporting of Sexual Assault

A set of questions asked students to assess unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault. The question asked “Since starting at [Pace University], how often have you experienced the following forms of unwanted sexual contact while you were (a) on campus; (b) off campus at an event or program connected with [Pace University], including study abroad and internships; or (c) at a social activity or party near campus such as at an apartment, restaurant or bar?

The students who report experiencing Unwanted verbal behaviors has almost doubled but Unwanted nonverbal behaviors and Unwanted brief physical contact has gone down. The following table presents the results for the 2017 survey as well as the 2021 results. The reports of Unwanted verbal behaviors have almost doubled since 2017 but the Unwanted brief physical contact went down.

Responses Sometimes”, Often” or “Very Often	2017 Pace Undergraduate	2021 Pace Undergraduates
Unwanted verbal behaviors – such as someone making sexual comments about your body; making unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, or suggestions to you; or telling you sexually offensive jokes or kidding about your sex or gender-specific traits	13.6%	26.0%
Unwanted nonverbal behaviors – such as someone sending you sexual emails, text, or pictures; posting sexual comments about you on blogs or social media; showing you sexually offensive pictures or objects; leering at you of making lewd gestures towards you; or touching him/herself sexually in front of you	14.6%	13.8%
Unwanted brief physical contact – such as someone briefly groping you, rubbing sexually against you, pinching you, or engaging in any other brief inappropriate or unwelcome touching of your body	16.2%	13.4%

Demographic data:

Pace University Undergraduate Students (N 965)	2016	2017	2021
Male	24.5%	21.5%	26.0%
Female	75.5%	78.5%	74.0%
New York Campus	66.7%	58.2%	-
Pleasantville Campus	33.0%	41.5%	-
White Plains Campus	0.2%	0.3%	-
Live on Campus	48.6%	50.8%	49.1%
Live in Fraternity or Sorority	1.0%	1.5%	0.8%
Live off Campus	50.5%	47.6%	50.1%