

FAQs for Harvard Student Survey on Sexual Assault & Misconduct 2019

What is the Harvard Student Survey on Sexual Assault & Misconduct?

It is a survey for all Harvard degree students to measure the prevalence of, attitudes towards, and response to sexual harassment and sexual assault on our campus.

The survey—known broadly as the campus sexual climate survey—is sponsored by the Association of American Universities (AAU) and is being sent to students at thirty-three participating colleges and universities this spring; it is a follow-up to the AAU's 2015 campus sexual climate survey, in which Harvard also participated. The data collected will provide information not only about the environment on Harvard's campus, but also about the environment at many other institutions across the country. To ensure confidentiality and protect response information, an independent research firm—Westat—will be administering the survey.

At Harvard, for clarity, we are calling it the Harvard Student Survey on Sexual Assault & Misconduct and the emails you will receive from Westat will refer to the survey by that name. While other participating institutions may use a different name for the surveys, Harvard's survey is nearly identical to those administered on other campuses, with just a few examples and questions which are unique to Harvard.

Will my answers be confidential?

Yes. Survey responses will be completely confidential.

When you complete the survey, the connection with your name, email, and IP address will be permanently severed, so responses will not be connected to identifying information from that point forward. If you start the survey but do not complete it, the connection with your name, email, and IP address will be permanently severed at the end of the survey period.

Why should I take the survey?

Your responses will provide Harvard with a better understanding of student experiences on campus. That understanding can help inform university policies designed to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault, improve resources, and measure change to create a safer environment for all of Harvard's community members.

To do this, a high response rate is critical.

I have not experienced sexual harassment or sexual assault while at Harvard. Should I still take this survey?

Yes, absolutely. This survey is for all students, and in order to fully understand the landscape around sexual harassment and assault on campus, we need to hear from everyone, whether you have personal experiences around sexual misconduct or not. Again, a high response rate will yield more accurate understanding of the campus environment at the university.

How do I take the survey?

Every Harvard student over 18 years of age who is a degree candidate will receive an email with the subject line "Harvard Student Survey on Sexual Assault & Misconduct," which will be sent by Westat, the firm administering the survey. Open the email invitation and click on the individualized link—you must use this link to access the survey (this protects your confidentiality – read more here). Harvard's survey period will run from April 2 through April 30.

Westat will send all students four reminder emails (on April 9, April 16, April 22, and April 25) that again will contain the individualized link needed to access the survey (these reminders will be sent even if you have already completed the survey). Note that while you also will receive multiple emails from members of the Harvard community, only Westat's emails will have your individualized survey link.

Am I required to take this survey?

No. You do not have to participate in this survey, and if you do participate, you may skip any question you are not comfortable answering; you may also exit the survey at any time.

How long will the survey take to complete?

This survey should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. If you do not complete the survey in one sitting, you will be able to save your progress and return to it at another time.

What will Harvard do with the results?

Harvard will share aggregated results in a way that protects the privacy of students and will use the results to understand how we can better prevent and address sexual misconduct within the Harvard community.

Harvard expects to share aggregated results with our community. We plan to report data that permits comparability with other AAU institutions. In addition, Westat will provide a report that aggregates data across all participating institutions. These results will be used to understand the current climate at Harvard regarding sexual harassment and sexual assault and to shape related policies.

Which institutions are participating in the survey sponsored by the AAU?

Boston University
Brown University
California Institute of Technology
Carnegie Mellon University
Case Western Reserve University
Georgetown University
Harvard University
Iowa State University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Northwestern University
Rice University
Stanford University
Texas A&M University
The John Hopkins University
The Ohio State University
The University of Arizona
The University of Chicago
The University of Kansas
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
The University of Wisconsin-Madison
University of Florida
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
University of Missouri
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Rochester
University of Southern California
University of Virginia
Vanderbilt University
Washington University in St. Louis
Yale University

Will Harvard make the survey data public?

Yes. [You may view the findings from the 2015 survey here.](#) Harvard's 2019 survey results will be released this fall, alongside Westat's report on the national aggregate data.

What has changed at Harvard since the last survey was administered in 2015?

Many changes have occurred since the 2015 survey. The Title IX Office and the Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR) became two distinct entities, both reporting to the Office of the Provost. This separation allowed ODR to handle cases that fell outside of the scope of the University Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment Policy, at the request of Schools or Units. The separation also allowed the Title IX Office to expand its educational programming offered across the University and to work more closely with local Title IX Coordinators in responding to disclosures. Since 2015, Harvard's network of local Title IX Coordinators has expanded.

Other significant changes include; the redesign of the [Title IX Office's website](#) to increase awareness and understanding of the University Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment Policy; the development of new and enhanced resource materials including an Employee Resource folder which outlines the steps to support individuals who disclose an incident of sexual or gender-based harassment; increased staffing within the Title IX Office; the development of new trainings to address areas such as bystander intervention; and the launch of School-specific online training courses for students and mandatory online training for students, staff, and faculty. Additionally, the Title IX Student Liaison Committee first convened in the fall of 2018 and was formed as the result of recommendations made by key stakeholders at the institution. The Committee is designed to serve as a centralizing hub of information, to give voice to students' needs, and to engage in dialog around means of preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based harassment across the Harvard community.

Why is Harvard conducting the survey again?

Campus climates change over time. The 2015 survey provided us baseline data, increased community engagement and led to improvements in resources to address sexual misconduct in our community. Issuing the survey again allows us to identify trends and adapt our approaches.

Are there any incentives associated with this survey?

All students at Harvard who complete the survey will receive a \$5 Amazon gift card.

Does the survey work on all browsers and handheld devices?

Yes, the survey is compatible with all browsers and handheld devices. You do not have to complete the survey from a Harvard computer or Harvard network.

I am having technical difficulties (for example, I lost my link to the survey, or I'm having issues with the \$5 Amazon.com gift card). What should I do?

Please send an e-mail to CampusClimateHelp@westat.com or call 1-855-793-5324.

I would like to talk to someone about sexual harassment and sexual assault. Who should I contact?

Please refer to our resource list [here](#).

I still have questions about the survey. Who should I contact?

Send an email to aasurvey@harvard.edu. During the four weeks that the survey is open (April 2 through April 30), this Harvard-specific email account will be regularly monitored and someone will respond to your questions within one business day.