Yale is currently conducting a quantitative survey of students’ experiences of sexual misconduct and campus climate. The survey is entirely confidential and has been sent out to all current Yale graduate, undergraduate, and professional students. The survey is part of an AAU collaboration and is also being sent to students at many other colleges and universities; Westat, a private research firm, is administering the survey and will be assisting in the analysis of the data. This survey will provide critical new information about national and local campus patterns. Yale will release a public report in the fall of 2015.

If you are a current Yale student, you should have an emailed survey invitation on April 2nd from Deputy Provost Stephanie Spangler. Please, fill out your survey now to help make Yale’s data as complete as possible.

**General Info**

**What is the survey about?**

The survey seeks to measure students’ attitudes, perceptions, and experiences of Yale’s sexual climate, including individual experiences of sexual misconduct. Yale has conducted qualitative assessments of climate in the past, but this is the first large-scale quantitative effort. All current students have been invited to participate.

**Why is the survey important?**

Yale strives to be a safe, respectful community—one where sexual misconduct is prevented wherever possible, and appropriately addressed if it does occur. The more we know about the patterns and dynamics of sexual misconduct on campus, the more effective we will be in our efforts to combat it. This spring’s survey will give us an unprecedented amount of quantitative information. We need to know if and how common patterns play out in our own community.

**What steps are being taken to protect confidentiality?**

The survey is being administered by Westat, the independent firm that worked with the AAU to develop the survey. The data will be stored with state-of-the-art protections used on similarly sensitive surveys administered by Westat. When students respond to their individualized survey invitations, the link between their responses and their name, email, and IP address is broken. The final datasets will undergo a formal disclosure analysis to minimize any risks of identifying students using indirect identifiers. The data that arrive at Yale will be anonymous.
When survey results are reported, they will be presented in summary form so no individual can be identified.

**How will Yale use the data?**
The information from this survey will help Yale better understand our local climate, the extent of sexual assault and misconduct among students, and the use of programs and services currently being offered. It will help us assess and improve our programs, policies, and strategies.

**Will Yale make the survey findings public?**
Yes. Yale expects to release a public report in the fall of 2015.

### Taking the Survey

**Why should I participate?**
The survey will be used to shape policies that affect everyone on campus, so it is very important to gather the experiences and viewpoints of everyone. The more we hear from all kinds of students, of all genders, ages, and types of experiences, the more accurate and balanced our results will be. It’s particularly important that we hear from men and from graduate and professional school students, who are typically underrepresented in sexual misconduct research.

The survey will be available to all current students from April 2nd to April 23rd. No one is required to participate, but we hope that everyone does. Once you have taken the survey yourself, encourage your friends to take it too!

**What will I be asked to do?**
Once you click on the link in your email, you will be taken to the online survey site and guided through a series of questions. To increase the confidentiality protections, you will not be asked to write anything – each question has a set of answers from which you can choose. You may skip any question you are not comfortable answering (with the exception of the initial age verification) and may exit the survey at any time. You can move forward and backward through the survey. It is best to do the survey in one sitting, but you can save your progress and return if necessary.

The survey questions ask about:
- your demographics;
- your perceptions of campus risk and resources;
- your personal experiences of sexual misconduct since becoming a student at Yale (stalking, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and sexual assault); students who report witnessing or experiencing such incidents are asked follow-up questions; and
- your assessment of how students and university administrators would likely respond to an incident report.

Like most other surveys of complex experiences, the questions use descriptive language to ask about specific behavior. This direct language can sometimes feel awkward or uncomfortable, but it is important to avoid the vagueness of euphemisms or labels. Frank, specific descriptions are the best way to make sure that survey-takers understand what they are being asked.
Is the survey gender-neutral?
Yes. Sexual misconduct can occur in any gender configuration, and the descriptions of specific forms of sexual misconduct are worded accordingly. The survey does ask about gender identity, offering a range of choices; like all questions, you can skip them if you prefer.

How long will it take?
In pre-testing, the survey took an average of 20 minutes to complete. If you report specific experiences of campus sexual misconduct, you will be asked follow-up questions, which may take a little longer.

Will the survey be upsetting?
The sensitive topics of this survey can be difficult to think about. Prior research, though, suggests that most people do not find surveys like this distressing. The questions have been asked with care, and people can find it empowering to record their experiences and ideas. Survey-takers may well find themselves wanting to talk to others about their experiences—and some will find that they want to seek out support, and perhaps consider taking action. A link for “Support Resources” appears on every page of the survey, with Yale contacts as well as national support services. We have included a variety of resources so people can choose to contact the one(s) that seem most helpful. At Yale, the SHARE Center is always available to you, any time of the day or night, every day of the year: (203)432-2000.

Will my answers be confidential?
Yes. This survey has been designed with many protections for your confidentiality. Your invitation to take the survey is unique and the connection to your name, email, and IP address will be broken as soon as you initiate the survey. (There is an encoded survey ID stored temporarily while you take the survey, so that you can pause and return, but that too is severed once you complete the survey or at the end of the data collection period.) Westat will use state-of-the-art protections to store the data. The data Yale gets will be entirely anonymous and when we report on the findings, we will present results only in summary form, so that no individual can be identified.

One effect of all this confidentiality is that the reminder notices from Westat will go out to all students, regardless of whether or not they have taken the survey.

Where do I find my survey?
If you are a Yale student, you should have an email invitation from Stephanie Spangler; search for “Campus Climate Survey.” This survey was sent on April 2nd to all current students, including those on leaves of absence and studying in absentia. (Yale College has a small handful of students who are under 18 and thus cannot participate; those students were notified separately.) If you cannot find your survey invitation, write to titleix@yale.edu for help.
The AAU Campus Climate Survey Project

What is the AAU?
The Association of American Universities is an association of 62 leading research universities in the United States and Canada. AAU projects and programs focus on issues that are important to research-intensive universities, such as funding for research, research policy issues, and graduate and undergraduate education.

What were the AAU’s goals in developing this survey?
The AAU undertook the development of the climate survey to help universities better understand the attitudes and experiences of their undergraduate, graduate, and professional students with respect to sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. In crafting this scientific initiative, their first priority has been to generate reliable data to help university administrators formulate policies and practices to make their own students safer. This data will also be helpful to policymakers more broadly as they craft legislation and policy to prevent and address sexual misconduct.

At an early stage of the survey development, there were some objections from academic researchers. Most, if not all, of their comments have been based on partial, incorrect knowledge about the details of the survey design and intentions of the design team. AAU President Hunter Rawlings wrote a response to their critiques. That response can be found here.

How did the AAU choose a survey firm?
The AAU worked with representatives from member institutions, including Yale, to write a Request For Proposals (an RFP). That group also reviewed the submitted proposals. Westat was chosen for their deep and substantive expertise in conducting surveys about sensitive topics – such as sexual misconduct – in large populations.

Is the survey proprietary?
No. The survey instrument has been confidential during development and administration. In early May 2015, after it is administered on all participating campuses, it will become part of the public domain.

Which schools were invited to take part? Which ones did?
All member institutions of the AAU were invited to take part, along with the members of the Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE). Yale is a part of both groups. A list of the participating schools can be found here.

Does taking part in the AAU survey prevent Yale from fielding other surveys?
No. Yale has been conducting a range of annual climate assessments for several years and plans to continue doing so. The reports from those assessments can be found on the Yale Title IX website.

Will there be a public report on the findings from all participating schools?
Westat will issue a report based on the aggregate data from all participating
AAU schools. Individual institutions can choose whether or not to issue their own campus-specific reports. Yale will issue a report to the community in the fall of 2015.

**Survey Design & Administration**

**Who participated in the survey design?**

The survey was developed by Westat, a leading social science research firm, in conjunction with a multi-disciplinary team of AAU and campus representatives.

Dr. Bonnie Fisher, a nationally recognized expert on sexual assault, was hired by Westat to work closely with the AAU-Westat team to shape the content and analysis of the Campus Sexual Climate Survey. Her article published in 2000 is one of the most widely cited publications on the sensitivity of sexual assault data to the type of measurement employed.

The AAU team was led by Sandra Martin, Professor and Associate Chair for Research, Department of Maternal and Child Health, Associate Dean for Research, Gillings School of Public Health, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Dr. Martin’s research, teaching, and public health service focus on the public health problems of sexual and domestic violence, including sexual violence on campuses. She was involved as a co-investigator on the Campus Sexual Assault Study (led by Chris Krebs of RTI). She has authored more than 100 peer-reviewed manuscripts, as well as book chapters and reports, on a wide range of violence related concerns, including sexual violence.

The AAU survey team included additional recognized experts on survey design as well as campus leaders directly responsible for dealing with sexual assault, issues of gender, health, student affairs, etc., whose expertise was critical to crafting a survey responsive to current student needs. Yale was an active part of this multidisciplinary team.

Throughout the survey design process, members of the survey design team consulted extensively with their university colleagues. Items and topics were submitted by researchers and considered by the team in developing the final instrument. In addition, students provided feedback on questions in a number of ways, including cognitive testing and pilot administration to groups.

**How does this survey compare to existing instruments?**

The starting point for the survey design team was the survey toolkit developed by the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, which was included in the April 2014 report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students From Sexual Assault (see [http://www.notalone.gov/](http://www.notalone.gov/)). Dr. Victoria Banyard was the primary author of the toolkit and the document has been in the public domain for nearly a year.

The design team deliberated for months to adapt this toolkit—an array of different instruments—into one unified survey. Some of this work involved harmonizing the various components. Other adaptations brought the questions more
into line with current campus policies and concerns. For example, questions designed to measure the incidence and prevalence of sexual misconduct were adapted to include language that was aligned with the sexual misconduct policies in place at many colleges. Similarly, gender-neutral language was introduced throughout.

**Was the survey approved by the IRB?**
The survey has been reviewed and approved by the Westat IRB, which serves as the IRB of record for the administration of this survey at Yale.

**Are students offered incentives to participate?**
Yes. As is common with such surveys, modest material incentives will be offered to encourage student participation in the survey. Westat created a stratified random sample of six thousand Yale students, who were each offered a $5 amazon.com gift card as an incentive for participation. The remaining Yale students (slightly more than six thousand) were each offered the incentive of being entered into a lottery to win $500. The lottery will be administered by Westat after Yale’s survey closes to responses.

**When will the survey instrument become public?**
The survey instrument – the survey questions and display logic – will be in the public domain by early May after it is administered on all participating campuses.

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**Survey Results**

**How will the data be analyzed?**
*Will every response be included?*
Yes, every response will be included. Westat will be using scientifically sound statistical techniques to combine the data from the Yale students who received a giftcard and those who were entered into a lottery as an incentive for participation.

**Who will receive the results of the survey?**
Each participating university will receive all of its own data files, along with a report of the aggregate data from all the schools. Westat will analyze the data and generate a findings report, but institutions will be free to conduct additional analysis once they receive their data files.

**What kind of report will Yale produce?**
Yale plans to release the survey findings in a public report next fall. Like prior climate assessments, the report will not share identifying information. Beyond that, we will aim for transparency. The survey findings will become an important part of our community conversations and strategies.

**How will Yale protect confidentiality in reporting the results?**
Yale will not release individual survey records, nor will we report on very small demographic clusters. All identifiers will be removed from Yale’s unit record data before Westat provides the dataset to Yale.
Additional Resources

What else is Yale doing about sexual misconduct?

Yale devotes extensive resources and attention to addressing and preventing sexual misconduct on campus. The [Sexual Misconduct Response](#) website summarizes our key resources and links to more detailed information. Yale’s first-line responder is the Sexual Harassment and Assault Response & Education Center (SHARE), which offers advocacy, information, and support to community members dealing with sexual misconduct, focusing on the needs of student survivors but also working with their friends, families, and classmates. SHARE operates a 24-hour hotline and daytime drop-in services, offers individual and group sessions, and advocates for people as they seek out medical, disciplinary, and legal processes through the [Yale Police](#), the [Title IX Coordinators](#), and the [University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct](#) (the UWC).

Yale also pursues a number of educational and prevention initiatives, guided by the [Title IX Steering Committee](#) with assistance from its student advisory boards. At the undergraduate level, the [Communication and Consent Educators](#) (CCEs) work throughout the year to help their peers create safe, strong, respectful communities; this includes mandatory workshops for the entire freshman and sophomore classes.

What should I do if I’ve experienced sexual misconduct at Yale?

Individuals’ experiences vary widely, as do individual needs, but sexual misconduct often has a profound impact. You should not need to cope with this alone. [SHARE](#) is a wonderful first place to seek help and support, and to consider pursuing disciplinary and criminal sanctions. SHARE’s services are completely confidential and available 24/7. Other resources (accessible directly, or facilitated by SHARE) include the [Yale Police](#), the [Title IX Coordinators](#), the [University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct](#) (the UWC), and [Yale Health](#). At Yale, you have choices about what to do and when—and many people to explain the options, answer your questions, and support you along the way.

I still have questions. Where can I get more information?

If you have any questions about this survey, you can call Westat’s survey Help Desk at (855)497-4787. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you can call the Westat IRB at (888)920-7631. Yale’s Title IX Office is also able to answer many questions. Email us at [titleix@yale.edu](mailto:titleix@yale.edu) or call (203)432-4446.