

DICKINSON COLLEGE

2021 HEDS SURVEY KEY SUMMARY FINDINGS

About the HEDS Survey

Dickinson College administered the [HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey](#) in the Spring of 2021. HEDS is a questionnaire for undergraduate students developed and administered by the Higher Education Data-Sharing Consortium, which is a membership organization of private colleges and universities that share knowledge and expertise to advance undergraduate liberal arts education, inclusive excellence, and student success.

The questionnaire asks students about their perceptions of their campus's climate for unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault, their perceptions of how their institution responds to sexual assaults, and whether and how often they have experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault. Through this survey, the college is able to understand the overall campus climate and consider the data gathered to inform how we address sexual and gender-based misconduct, and further consider ways in which we can improve our practices and programs to best support a campus where we can all study, work and live in a safe and respectful environment.

Response Rate

The survey was administered to students at Dickinson College in spring 2021 and are compared to over 57,000 undergraduates at 96 other small institutions that administered the HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey during the current and prior three academic years. A total of 265 Dickinson College students responded (26% of them men, 72% of them women, 2% nonbinary), for an overall response rate of 14%. The mean response rate for all small institutions is 21%. While the overall response rate is fairly low and, as a result, somewhat skews the overall findings, the results provide some insight into the perceptions and experiences of Dickinson College students and their peers at other liberal arts colleges. In summary, the percentage of survey responses of participating Dickinson College students were similar to those of participating students at other small colleges.

Sexual Assault Data

In the 2021 survey, 261 undergraduate students from Dickinson responded to the question: "Since starting at your institution, have you been sexually assaulted while you were on campus, off campus at an event or program connected with your institution, including study abroad and internships; or at a social activity or party near campus such as at an apartment, restaurant, or bar?" When we asked this question, the definition of sexual assault provided to students included unwanted touching of a sexual nature, and nonconsensual sexual contact involving oral sex, anal sex, vaginal penetration or sexual penetration with a finger or by an object. Of the 261 students from Dickinson who responded, 223 said they did not experience sexual assault, 24 said they experienced sexual assault and 13 said they were uncertain if they

experienced sexual assault. Of the 24 who said they experienced sexual assault, 23 identified as women, 1 identified as non-binary and 0 identified as men. Statistically compared to other institutions which compare to over 50,000 students at small institutions who have taken the survey in the last four years, men at Dickinson did not report having experienced sexual assault compared to 1 in 29 male students at other institutions; 1 in 8 female students experienced sexual assault at Dickinson and other institutions; 1 in 5 non-binary students experienced sexual assault at Dickinson compared to 1 in 6 non-binary students at other institutions; and 1 in 5 female seniors experienced sexual assault at Dickinson and other institutions.

During what Class Year did the Assault(s) Occur?

Most sexual assaults occur during the first year, with 71% of students sharing that they were assaulted in the first year; 17% were assaulted in their second year; 8% were assaulted in their third year; and 0% were assaulted in their fourth year. The majority of assaults reported by respondents at other small colleges occurred in their first year at a rate of 53%.

Where did the Sexual Assault(s) Occur?

Most sexual assaults are happening on campus in residential buildings. Of the incidents reported by Dickinson College students, 92% occurred in a residence hall. At other small colleges, the majority of assaults reported by respondents occurred in residence halls at a rate of 58% .

Who committed the Sexual Assault(s)?

Of the sexual assaults at Dickinson, 46% was a casual date/hookup; 29% was a stranger and 25% occurred where the person who assaulted them was a non-romantic friend. In comparison, at 96 other small institutions, 52% were committed by a non-romantic friend or acquaintance; 29% were committed by a stranger and 23% was a casual date or hookup.

Types of Sexual Assault

The type of most sexual assaults reported are unwanted touching at 92%, 38% were vaginal sex, and 21% were oral sex.

Unwanted Verbal Behavior

20% of Dickinson female identifying students and 4% of male identifying students reported that they had been subjected to unwanted verbal behaviors, nonverbal behaviors, or brief physical contact of a sexual nature, compared to 14 % of female identifying respondents and 1% of male identifying students at other schools. The most frequent form of unwanted sexual contact reported by all respondents, both at Dickinson College and at other schools, is unwanted verbal behavior. 37% of Dickinson College students reported unwanted verbal behavior, such as sexual comments by the respondent's body; sexual propositions or jokes compared to 29% at other institutions.

Sexual Assault, Alcohol, Incapacitation, Force

Use of alcohol, incapacitation and physical force are common features of assaults both at Dickinson College and elsewhere. 29% of assaulted Dickinson students, and 41% of assaulted students at other small schools, indicated that they were unable to provide consent because they were incapacitated (asleep, drugged, drunk, or passed out). 70% of Dickinson students who reported having been assaulted indicated that the perpetrator had been drinking. At other small schools, 68% of students reported having been assaulted indicated that the perpetrator had been drinking. 58% of Dickinson students who reported having been assaulted indicated they themselves had been drinking. At other small schools, 62% of students reported having been assaulted indicated they themselves had been drinking. Dickinson students shared that in 35% of the assaults, physical force was used; At other small schools, 45% of assaults involved physical force. 39% shared that threats to use force, coercion, or intimidation were used; At other small schools, 35% of assaulted involved use of force, coercion, or intimidation. These findings are in line with national data and similar (although not identical) to the results from the other participating small institutions.

Disclosure of Sexual Assaults

Of those who reported a sexual assault, most confided in a close friend about their experience. 92% said they told a close friend, 33% said they told a roommate, 25% told the Title IX Coordinator, 21% said they told a campus counselor, and 8% said they told a romantic partner. 4% indicated that they did not tell anyone. Of the 23 women who reported a sexual assault, 23 responded to the question, "Who did you tell?" Of the 23 who answered the above question, only 1 or 4% did not tell anyone about the sexual assault.

Institution's Formal Reporting Process

Most survey respondents who reported having been sexually assaulted, whether at Dickinson College or at the other participating institutions, chose not to use their college's procedures to file a formal report. 30% of the students who responded to this question at Dickinson College, and only 16% of responding students at other institutions, indicated that they had used their school's formal reporting process.

Bystander Beliefs and Behaviors

Similar to students at other institutions, a majority of Dickinson College male students believe that students would intervene if they witnessed a sexual assault. However, women were less likely to think that bystanders would intervene. In answer to the question, "I believe that students at this institution would intervene if they witnessed a sexual assault," 45% of female respondents said they "Strongly agree or agree" (with the above statement) whereas 66% of male respondents said they "Strongly agree or agree" (with the statement). Many institutions use bystander training as a means of reducing the number of sexual assaults. For incidents of sexual assaults, we asked students who have experienced sexual assault to provide details

about bystanders. In response, students at Dickinson said 33% of bystanders were present, and of those present, 25% intervened, while for other institutions 35% of bystanders were present and only 24% intervened.

Groups that Contribute to Positive and Supportive Campus

The survey also asked students the extent to which different groups of people contribute to a positive and supportive campus climate at their institution. As before, we show the percentage of students who selected "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" for each group on campus, comparing responses of women and men at Dickinson with those of women and men at all small institutions. Dickinson students rated lower than peer institutions; however, 87% of student agreed that faculty contribute, 79% of staff, and 75% of their peers contribute to a positive and supportive campus climate, while only 46% agree that administration contributes to a positive and supportive campus climate.

Next Steps

Dickinson College will develop a plan to increase awareness and prevention program opportunities for both first year students as well as all students annually with an aim to decrease incidents of sexual assaults that occur among first-year students. We will further develop and deploy training opportunities for employees regarding how to professionally and compassionately respond after a disclosure, including information on how to get help, confidential support services, how to report, and the plethora of available supportive services to provide a positive and supportive campus climate for survivors of sexual assault.