



**Unwanted Sexual Behavior Survey
2018**

Summary

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In April of 2018, GW administered the Unwanted Sexual Behavior Survey which assessed the prevalence and perceptions of prohibited sexual behaviors in our community. The goal was to better determine what resources are needed to more effectively prevent and address sexual misconduct, including sexual violence. Responses were anonymous, and students were encouraged to seek out confidential resources for assistance if needed.

Survey Redesign and Students Surveyed

The 2018 survey was redesigned to more accurately capture the experience of all respondents. Specifically, a screening question was eliminated which asked "Have you personally experienced what you would consider sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking while enrolled at GW? Yes/No." Previously only respondents who indicated they had an experience aligned with this general description of behavior were asked about specific types of incidents. However, in the 2018 survey, all respondents were asked about each type of incident. This allows the respondent to see the type of incident before deciding if it happened to them or not. For example, previously, a person who may have experienced an unwanted sexual comment, may not have indicated yes to the broader question when seeing "sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking." For this reason, the results from the 2018 questionnaire are not directly comparable to previous surveys.

The 2015 survey used a random sampling methodology where a smaller number of the student population was asked to complete the survey. This helps to reduce survey fatigue. However, for the 2018 survey, various stakeholders including the Student Association and Students Against Sexual Assault, requested that every student have an opportunity to participate in the survey. Subsequently, the 2018 survey was administered to the entire student population. This may have resulted in a non-representative group of respondents. The 2015 random sample of 3,000 students resulted in a 23% response rate, on par with many other university surveys.

Though the 2018 survey had overall more responses, the response rate was significantly lower at 11%, representing a smaller portion of those who were asked to complete the survey.

Respondent Demographics

The number of students who completed the survey was 3054 GW students (response rate = 11.1%). The sample was fairly representative of the GW population in terms of race: 50% White; 15% International; 9% Asian; 9% Two or More Races or Unknown; 8% Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish; 7% Black or African American; 1% Middle Eastern or North African; <1% American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. The sample was also 66% women and 80% heterosexual. Additionally, 53% of students were undergraduates, and 52% lived off campus.

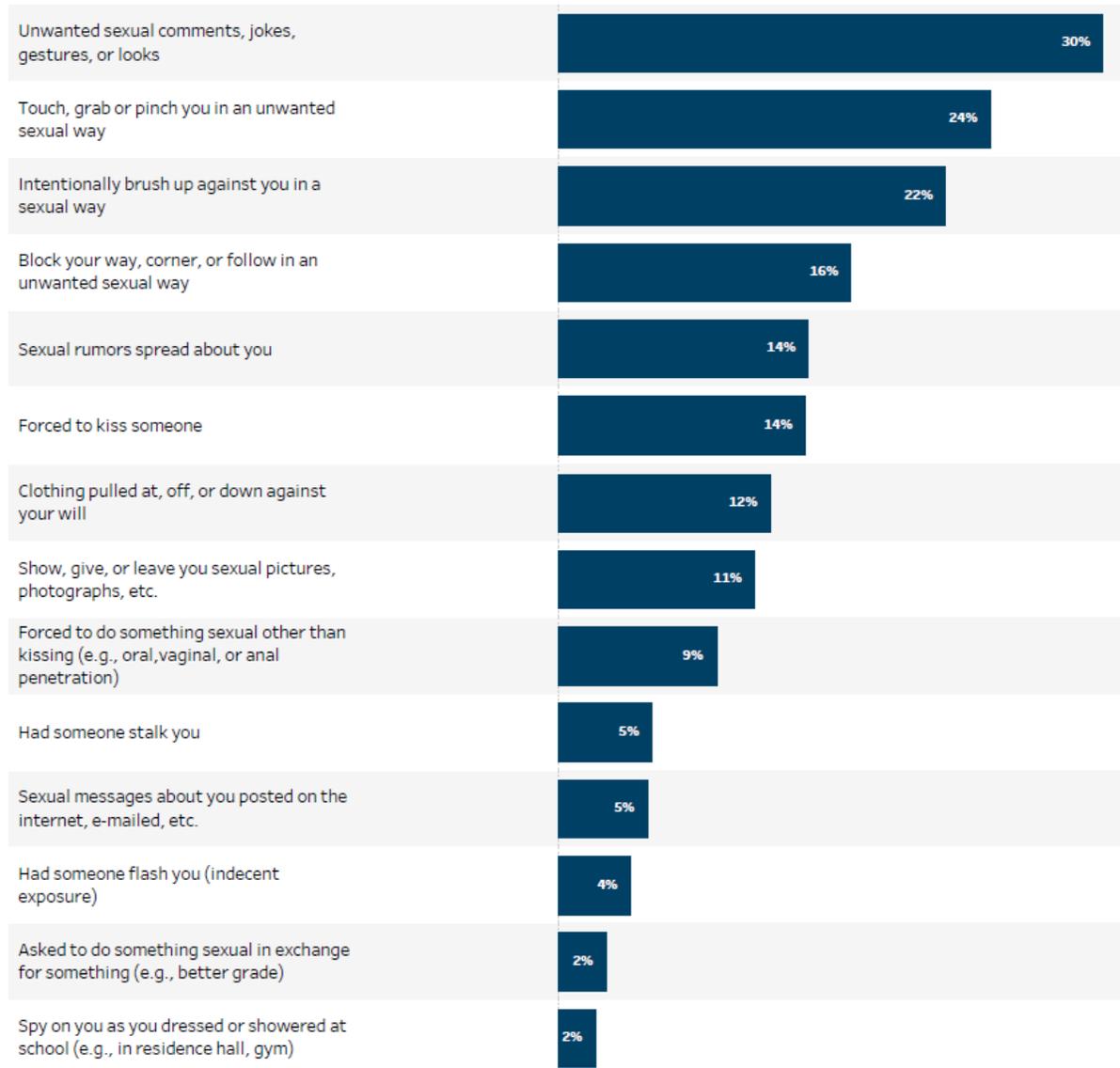
General Findings

Type of Incident

The most common incident representing 30% of the respondents was unwanted sexual comments, jokes, gestures, or looks. The second most common incident was being touched, grabbed, or pinched in an unwanted sexual way at 24%. Additionally, 22% of students said someone intentionally brushed up against them in a sexual way. Only 2% of respondents indicated someone spied on them as they dressed or showered at school (e.g., in residence hall, gym). Finally, 9% of students stated they had been forced to do something sexual other than kissing (e.g., oral, vaginal, or anal penetration). See Table 1 for frequencies of all incident types.¹

¹ This question was asked as “choose all that apply” so percentages will not add up to 100%.

Table 1. Type of Incident Experienced



Individuals Involved and Time and Location Details

Generally, the behaviors described were enacted by individuals not affiliated with GW (31%) or current/former GW students (28%). Intimate partners made up 7% of the actors, and 2% were current/former faculty or staff. The most common location for these experiences of unwanted sexual behavior was off-campus (26%). Of the on-campus locations, non-Greek student housing was the most common (15%) followed by campus grounds (including GW transportation services) (14%)

and campus buildings (academic, administrative, etc.) (7%). Five percent of incidents occurred in Greek housing, and 7% happened in some other undefined location. Undergraduate students were most likely to have experienced incidents of unwanted sexual behaviors in the fall (31%) and spring (28%) of their freshman year, with decreasing occurrence in later class years. Graduate students were most likely to have had this experience in their first year of graduate school (16%); however, almost as many indicated the incident occurred in their undergraduate career (15%).²

Campus Resources and Perceptions of GW

A large majority of respondents (90%) are aware of and/or know how to access Mental Health Services (MHS). Students were also aware of and/or knew how to access the Title IX Office (75%), Students against Sexual Assault (SASA) (57%), Sexual Assault Response and Consultation (SARC) Team (54%), or the GW Police Department's Victim Services Specialist (51%). However, the majority of respondents had never heard of Rape Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN) (55%), GW Haven (66%), or Network for Victim Recovery of DC (NVRDC) (73%). Respondents were most comfortable reporting incidents of unwanted sexual behavior to GW SASA (51%) and the Title IX Office (50%) and least comfortable reporting to faculty members (35%) or staff (32%).

Students perceive that unwanted sexual behavior happens often (45%) or somewhat often (32%) on campus, but only 39% of students feel that GW is effectively "creating a climate free from sexual harassment/violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking." About a third of students agree that the University supports students who experience unwanted sexual behavior (32%) and that GW is doing enough to prevent these incidents (27%). After experiencing an incident of unwanted sexual behavior, students found the most effective support through academic resources (37%). One-third of students found housing adjustments effective. Thirty percent found mental health and support services effective. Students perceived the

² This may be explained by the fact that some graduate students also attended GW for their undergraduate degree.

most ineffective support was judicial procedures (62%) followed by due process/fairness (59%) and housing adjustments (56%).

Generally, students find that the safest times of day on campus are in the morning and afternoon while 17% of respondents thought the campus was not very safe or only somewhat safe (36%) at night (i.e., after classes finished and very few people are on the street).

Unwanted Sexual Contact

Of all respondents, 9% indicated that they were “forced to do something sexual other than kissing (e.g., oral, vaginal, or anal penetration)” while enrolled at GW. Many students who experienced this incident (84%) noted that they had experienced more than one instance of generally unwanted sexual behavior during their time at GW. A majority (87%) of these individuals were women. Eleven percent of these students felt that GW would respond adequately to a report of a hypothetical future incident of experienced unwanted sexual behavior, and 88% felt that GW should do more to raise awareness about sexual harassment issues.

Options Chosen after the Incident

Respondents disclosed to a variety of individuals and offices in addition to pursuing direct action following the incident(s)³. Students were most likely to disclose to a friend (87%) followed by family members (32%). Additionally, students disclosed to the Title IX Office (13%), the Colonial Health Center (13%), GW Students Against Sexual Assault (7%), Student Rights and Responsibilities Office (6%), and the GW Sexual Assault Response & Consultation (SARC) Team (6%). Eighteen percent of students did not disclose the incident to anyone. The most common response was to seek mental health services (36%) followed by receiving information about reporting options and support resources (25%). Only 12% of respondents made a report. Reports were made to the Title IX Office (11%), the GW Police Department (6%), the Student Rights and Responsibilities Office (6%), and the DC Metropolitan Police Department (4%). Less than 1% made a report to the GW Human Resources Equal Opportunity Office.

³ Options pursued after incident includes any respondent who selected that forced sexual contact other than kissing happened to them while at GW and may include options pursued for other incidents also.

On-Campus vs Off-Campus Students

On-campus students were more likely to indicate having experienced unwanted sexual behavior during their time at GW than off-campus students, with the exception of indecent exposure which was fairly equally experienced (4%). More on-campus students (11%) specifically indicated experiencing being forced to do something sexual (other than kissing) than off-campus students (7%) during their time at GW. While 40% of on-campus students noted that incidents of unwanted sexual behavior happened with a current/former GW student, only 20% of off-campus students said the same. The most common location of these incidents was off-campus for both on-campus (32%) and off-campus (23%) students. The second-most common location for on-campus students was non-Greek student housing (25%). Both on-campus and off-campus students were most likely to file a report with the Title IX Office, if at all. Generally, off-campus students were less aware and/or knew less about how to access support services at GW for those who have experienced unwanted sexual behavior. More off-campus students (52%) felt that mental health and support services were ineffective than on-campus students (34%).

Gender

The most common incident experienced by women (40%) and non-binary or other students (29%) was unwanted sexual comments, jokes, gestures, and looks. This experience was also the most common type of incident among men (11%) in addition to having sexual rumors spread about them (11%). Students from all gender identities said they had experienced an incident of being forced to do something sexual other than kissing, though the proportions were higher for women and non-binary or other students. Generally, women were more likely to pursue options after experiencing unwanted sexual behavior including seeking mental health services (F: 6%, M: 2%), receiving information about reporting options and support resources (F: 5%, M: 1%), and making a report (F: 3%, M: 1%). The few men who did file a report only did so with the Title IX Office (1%).

Generally, women and non-binary or other students view support services from GW after an incident of unwanted sexual behavior as more ineffective than men do. However, the findings were generally the same across gender that academic resources were seen as the most effective. Housing adjustments, due process/fairness, and judicial procedures were viewed as less effective.