

Spring 2026 Social, Cultural, Campus Climate, and Sexual Violence Prevention Survey Results Report

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Office of Institutional Research and Planning
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OVERVIEW

Connecticut College first surveyed its students regarding sexual assault policies, prevention, and prevalence in 2015 using a survey instrument developed collaboratively with a group of other New England liberal arts institutions, and again in 2020 using the Higher Education Data-Sharing Consortium's Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey. In fall 2024, we administered a revised and updated version of the 2015 instrument to students to provide the campus community and external audiences with up-to-date survey data. In the spring 2026 round, the length of the survey was reduced, and a copy of the blank survey instrument is available in **Appendix 1**. The survey has been reviewed and approved by the Connecticut College Institutional Review Board. The survey was administered online to all full-time students between February 19, 2026, and May 4, 2026.

In order to improve the response rate, the survey window was extended. The survey was completely anonymous, with the online survey software not recording any information about respondents. Overall, 246 students started the survey, and 201 affirmed that they were at least 18 years old and gave their informed consent to take the survey. Of those, 126 students opened the survey, consented, and answered at least Question 3, resulting in an overall response rate of **7.4%**. Some of the questions in this survey use explicit language, including anatomical names of body parts and specific behaviors, to ask about sexual situations. The survey also asks about sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence. Because of the sensitivity and private nature of some questions, the low response rate was anticipated. The response rate (7.4%) was less than half that of the previous round (15%). The sample of students who took the survey in both rounds is not comparable by class level (**Table 1**). A detailed explanation of the survey and its limitations is included in the methods section at the end of this report.

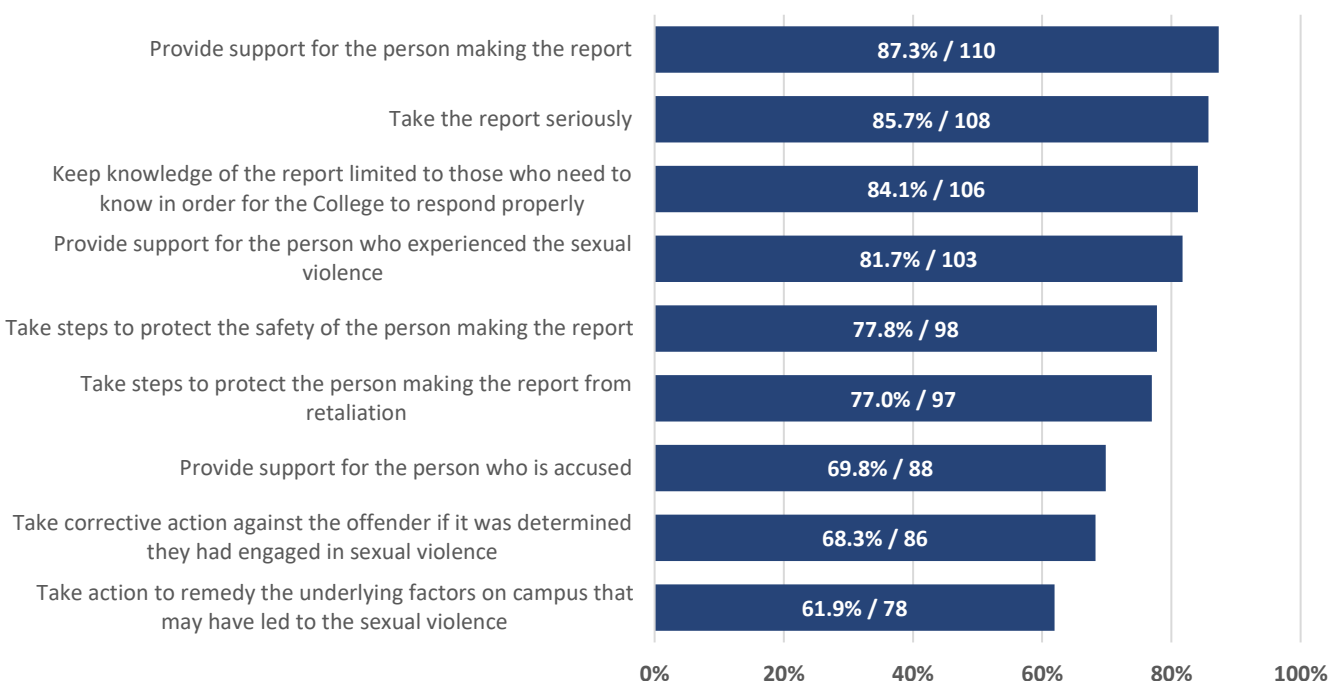
Round CLASS YEAR	Fall 2024		Spring 2026	
	#	%	#	%
First year	63	21%	44	35%
Second year	78	26%	24	19%
Third year	97	32%	31	25%
Final year	66	22%	26	21%
Prefer not to answer	1	0%	1	1%
TOTALS	305	100%	126	100%

Table 1.

CAMPUS CLIMATE FOR RESPONDING TO SEXUAL MISCONDUCT REPORTS

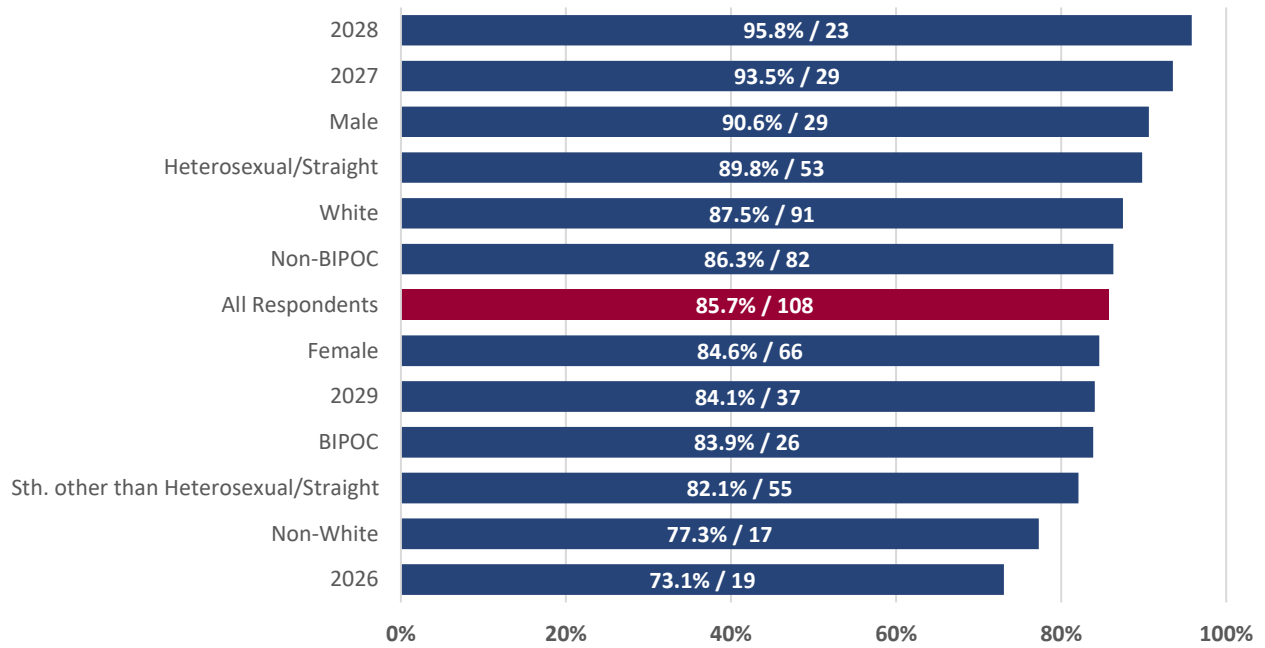
Respondents were first asked a number of questions about how they think the College's staff and leadership would respond "if you or someone else were to bring forward an allegation of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking." These questions aim to get respondents' views on how College officials would respond and whether such allegations are taken seriously. The survey asked respondents their level of agreement with a set of 9 statements about how the institution might respond, using a 4-point scale from Strongly disagree to Strongly agree that the institution would respond in the indicated way. The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement.

Q2.10 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would...? (Agree or strongly agree)

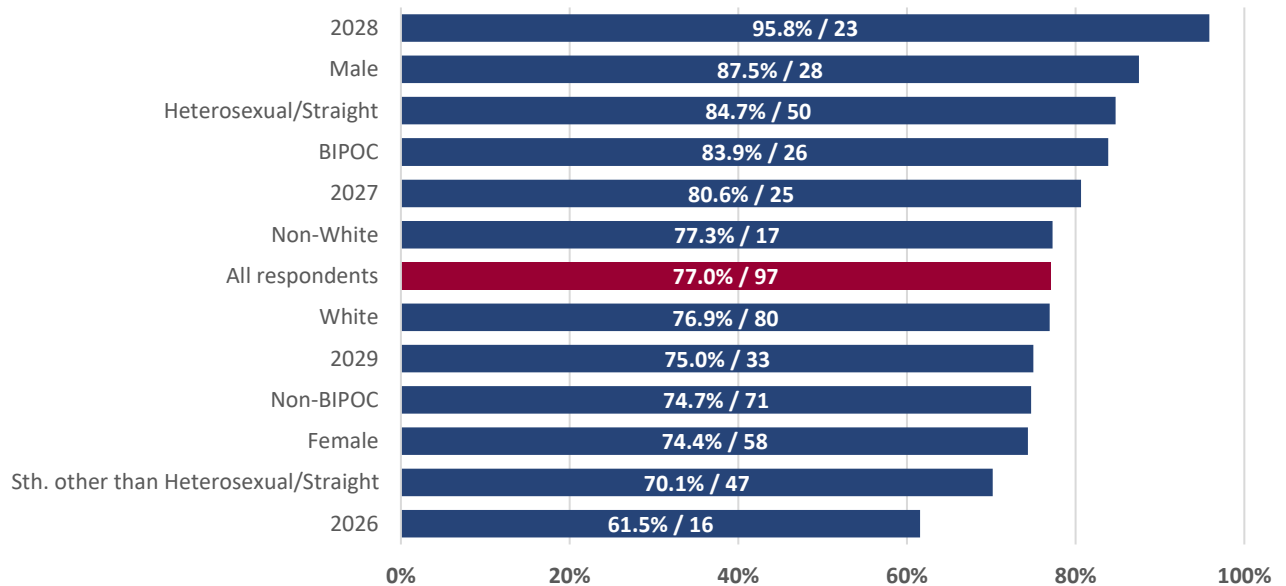


We can also look at the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with these nine questions by various subgroupings of students to see if there is variation in the responses—whether, for example, students in different class years answered any questions differently. In the charts that follow, we see the responses to these nine questions—the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement—by respondents' class year, gender identity, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation. In these charts, the red bars show the results for all respondents, which are the same totals shown in the chart above. The labels on the charts are displayed as proportions / number of respondents.

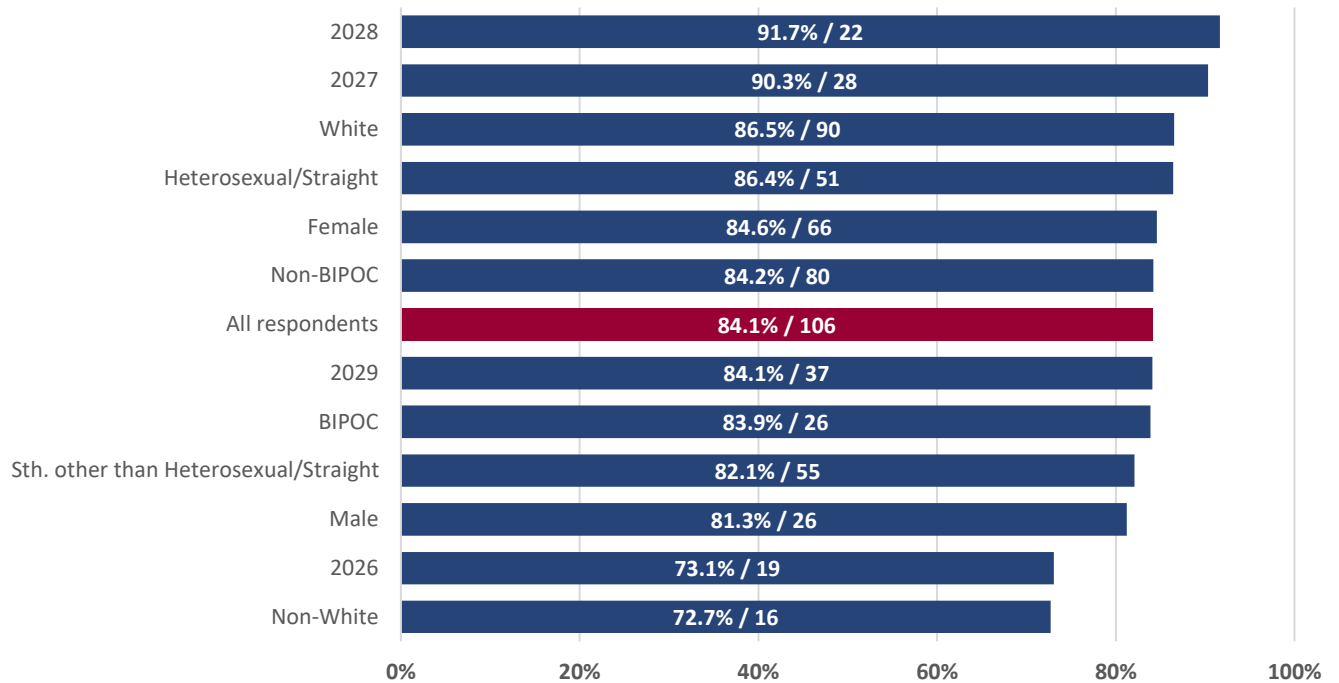
Q2.10_1 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would take the report seriously



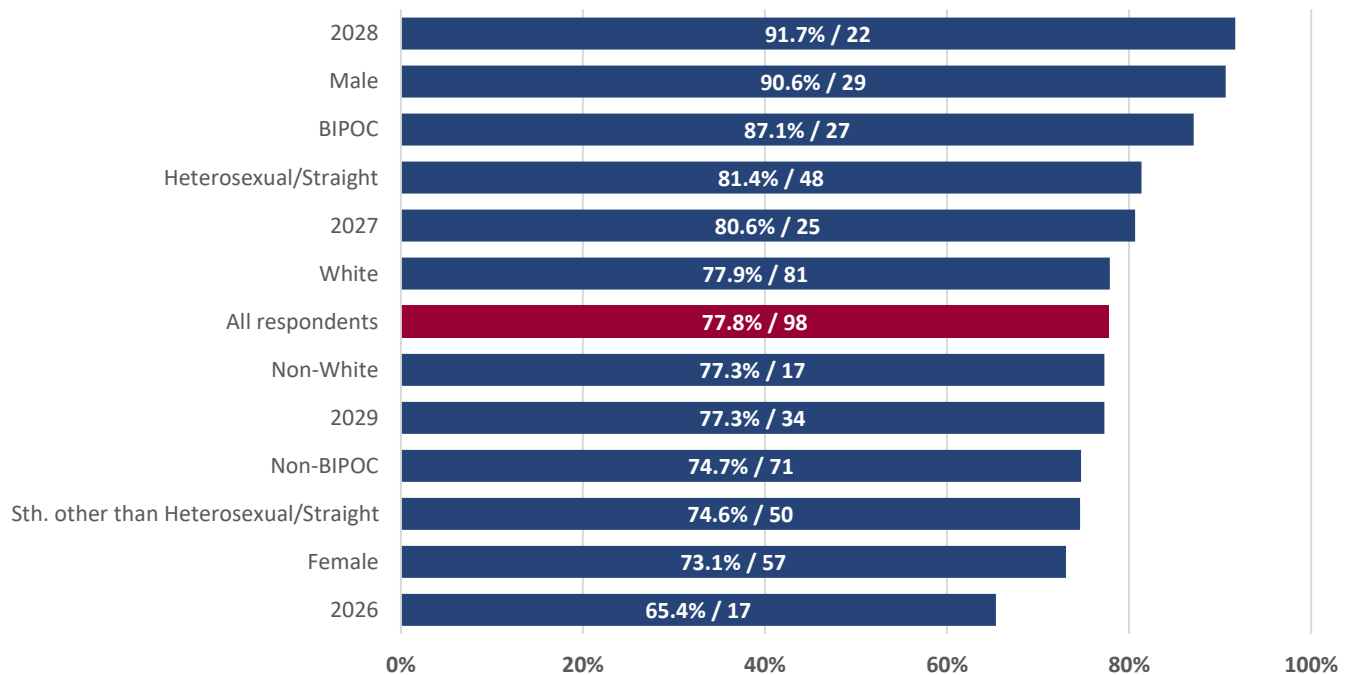
Q2.10_2 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would take steps to protect the person making the report



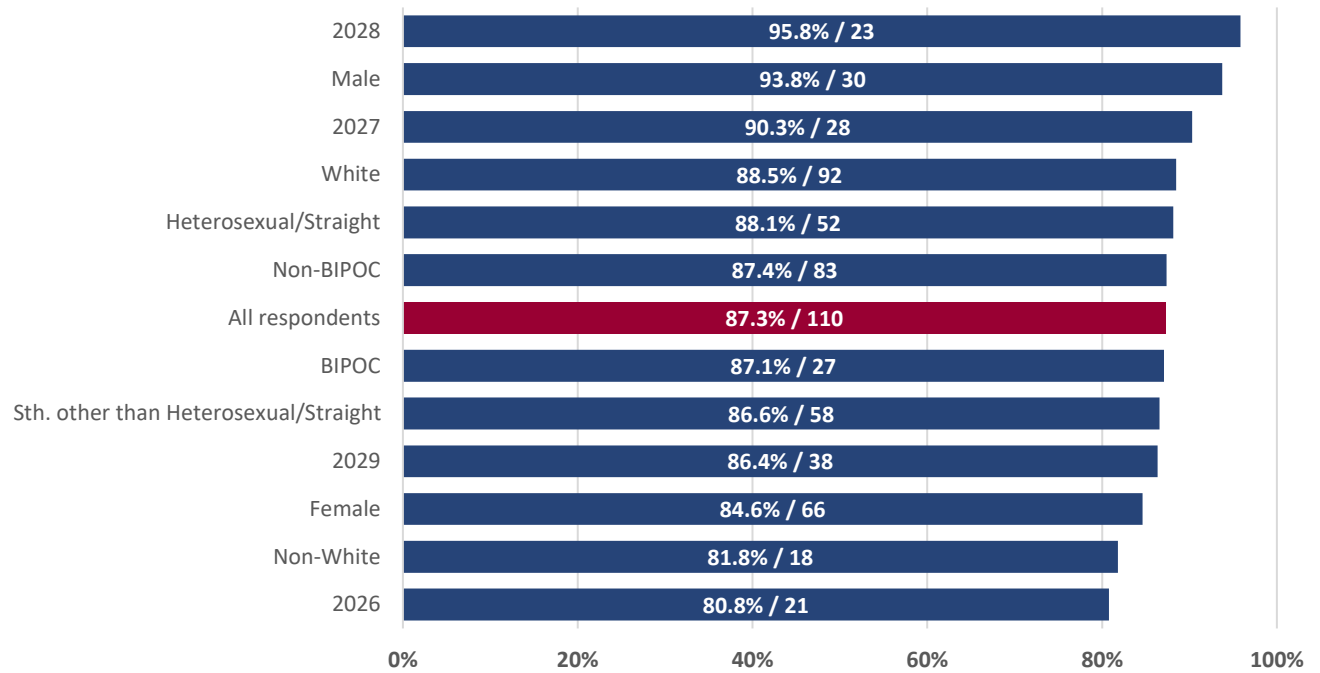
Q2.10_3 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would keep knowledge of the report limited to those who need to know



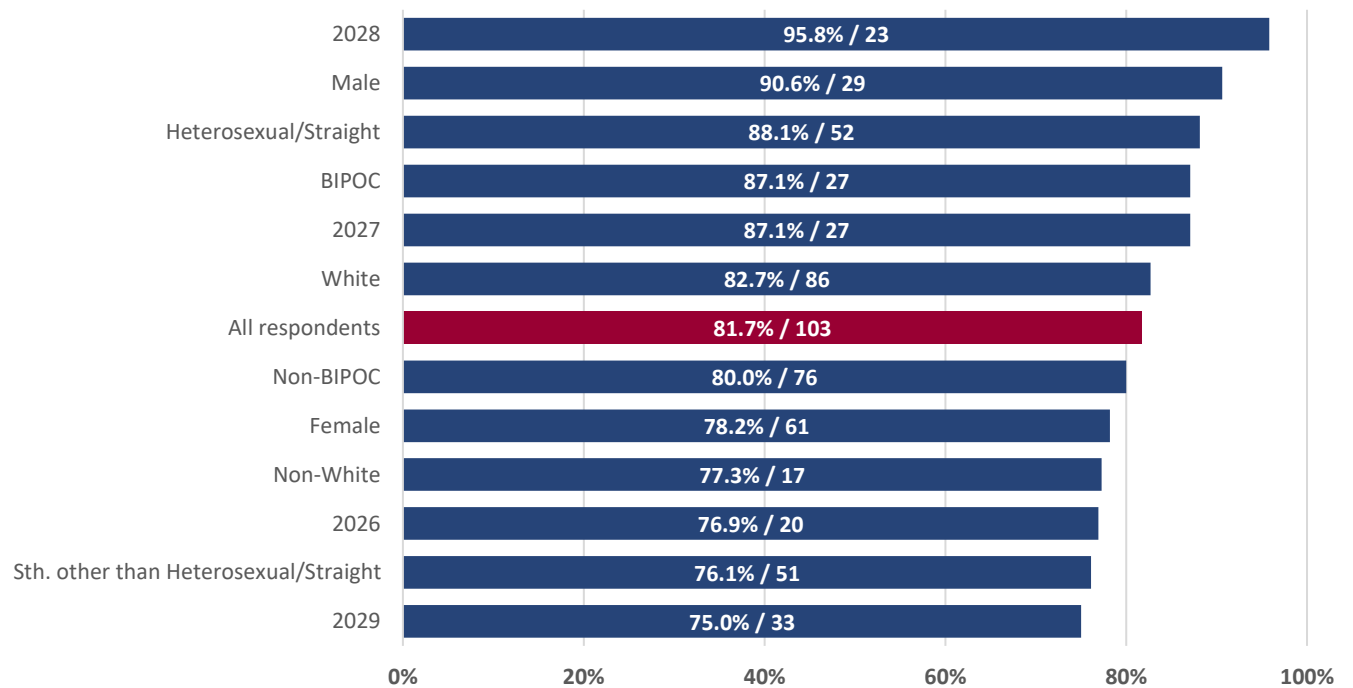
Q2.10_4 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would protect the safety of the person making the report



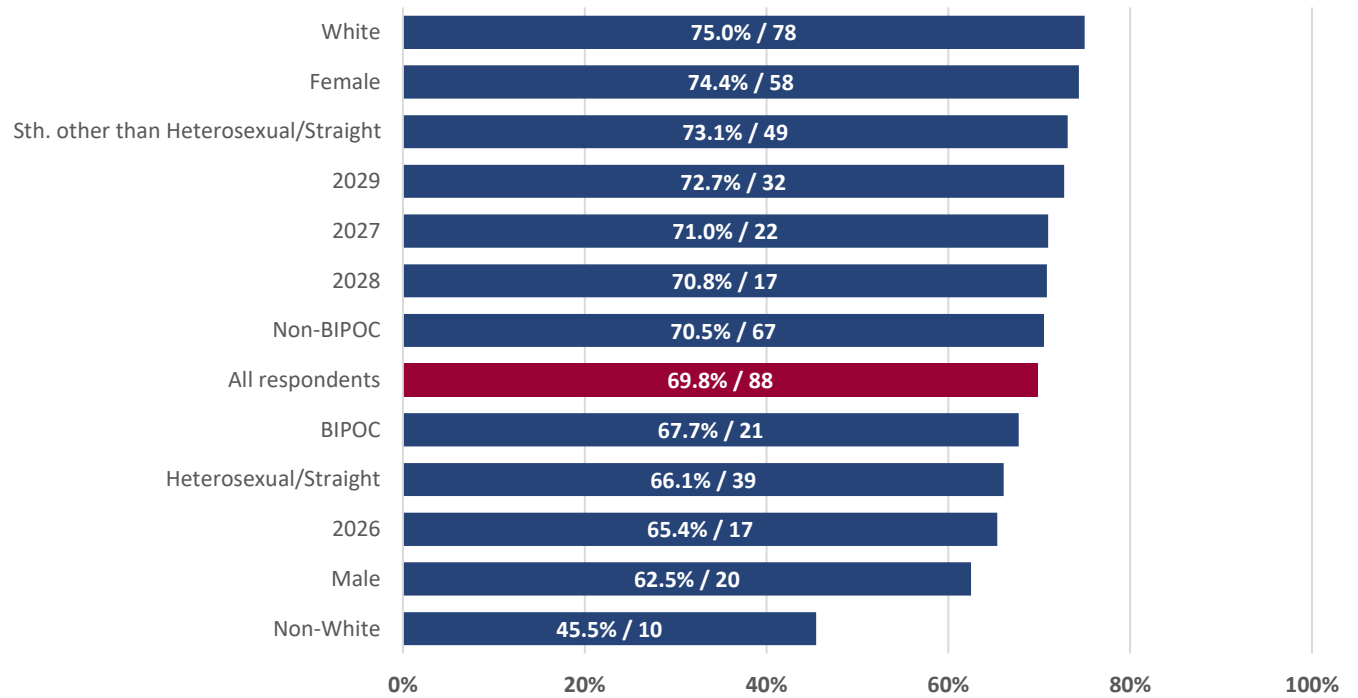
Q2.10_5 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would support for the person making the report



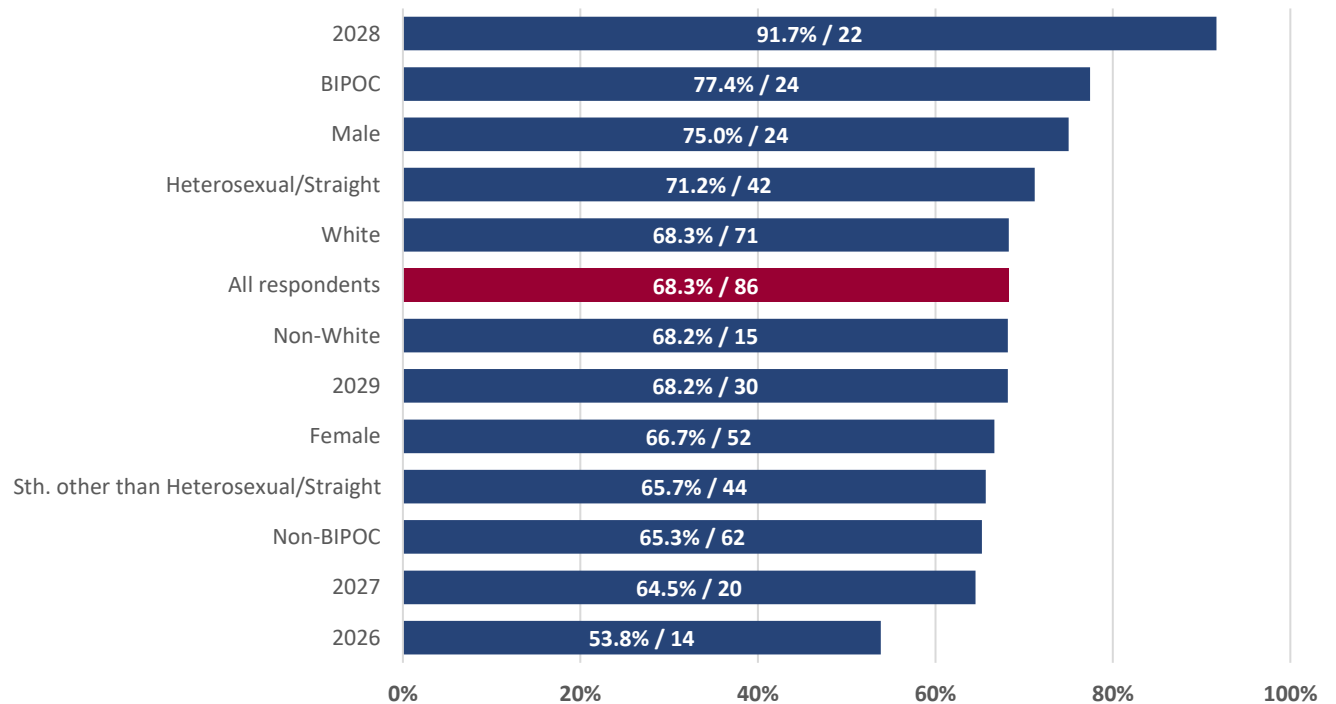
Q2.10_6 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would support for the person who experienced it



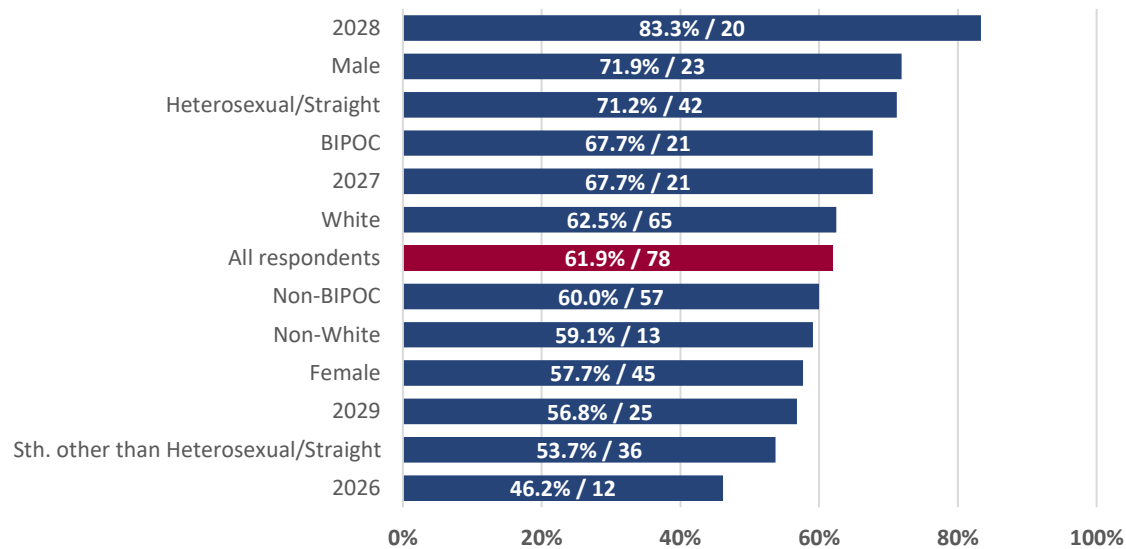
Q2.10_7 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would support for the person who is accused



Q2.10_8 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would take corrective action against the offender if it was determined

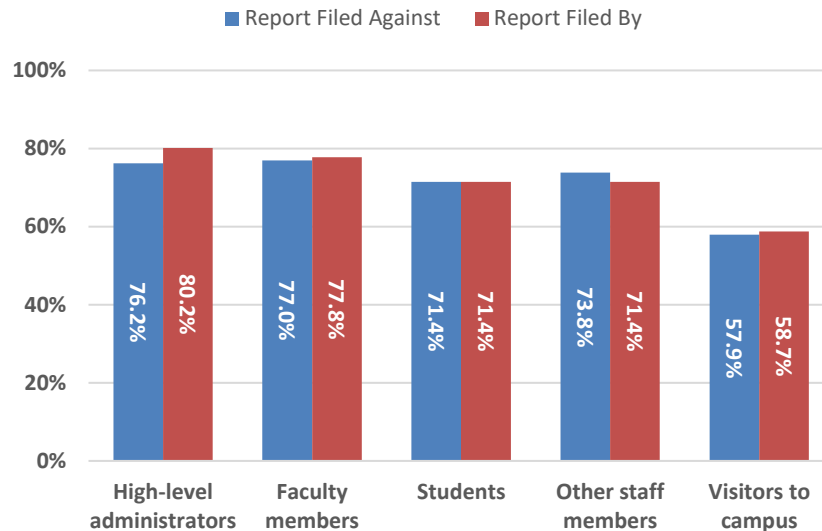


Q2.10_9 If someone were to report a sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking here on campus, the College would take action to remedy the underlying factors



Next, respondents were asked how seriously the College would take reports of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking **against** various types of people. Specifically, would allegations against people in positions of authority be taken seriously (using a 4-point scale from Not at all seriously to Extremely seriously)? This question was followed by one asking how seriously the College would take reports of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking **made by** various types of people. Would allegations made by individuals with different kinds of status in the College community be taken seriously (using the same 4-point scale)? The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who said the College would take reports against or reports made by various types of people moderately seriously or extremely seriously.

Q3.1 How seriously would the College take reports of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking



The final question regarding campus climate asked about respondents' level of agreement with two statements regarding the College's efforts to prevent sexual violence and the success of those efforts, using a 4-point scale from Strongly disagree to Strongly agree. The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement.

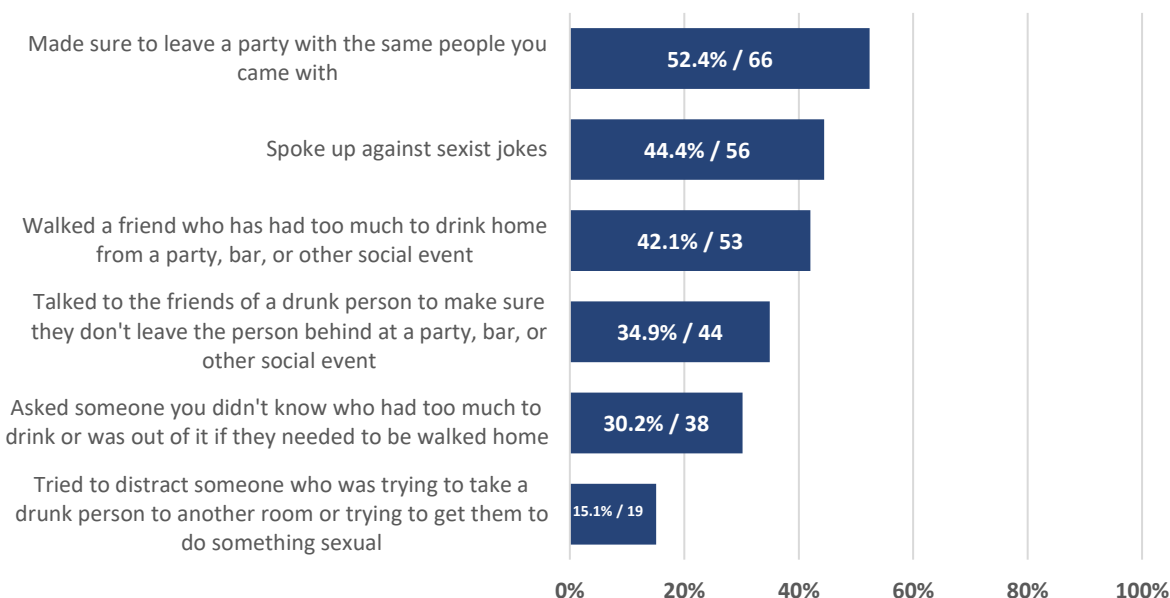
Q125 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

The survey next asked respondents to report how frequently they engaged in various kinds of bystander intervention responses when in various situations. The question read, "When the situation arises, how often do you do any of the following? There is no right answer; these questions aim to establish a baseline of what Connecticut College students do and do not do. If you haven't encountered a situation where you might do this, please check 'This situation has not arisen for me.'" For responses other than "This situation has not arisen for me," options were on a 4-point scale from Never to Always. The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who said they usually or always engaged in the behavior indicated on the left-hand side of the chart.

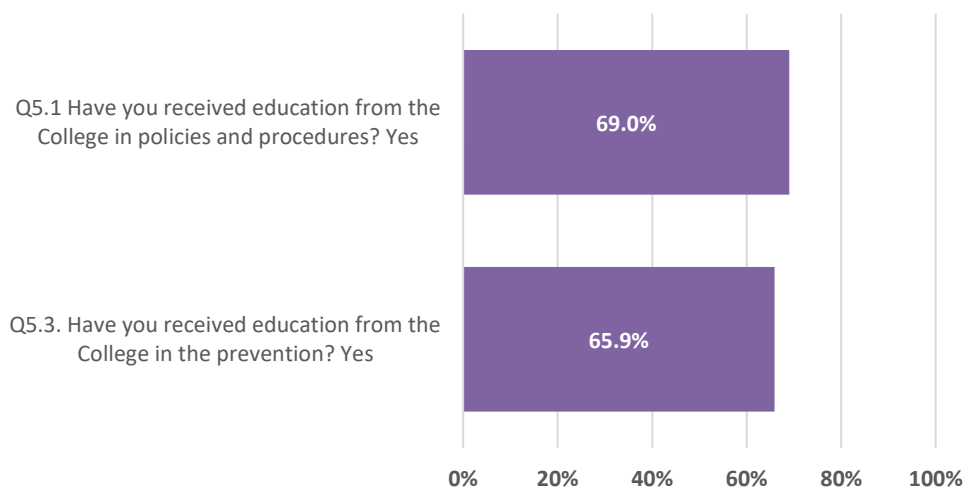
Q4.1 When the situation arises, how often do you do any of the following?



CAMPUS EDUCATION EFFORTS AND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT COLLEGE RESOURCES

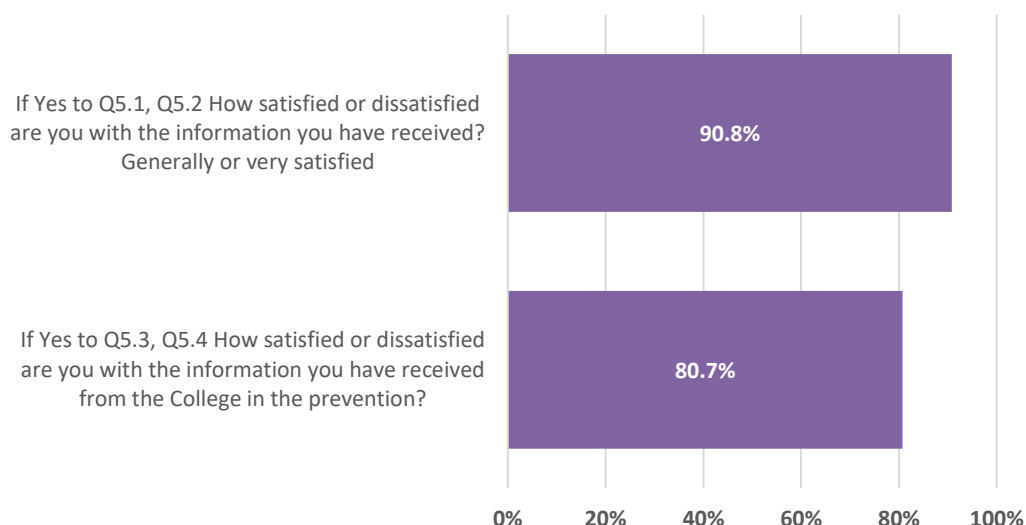
Regarding campus education efforts, respondents were first asked if they had received education about incidents of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking, specifically regarding (a) policies and procedures, and (b) prevention.

Q5.1, 5.2 Education received from the College in policies and procedures



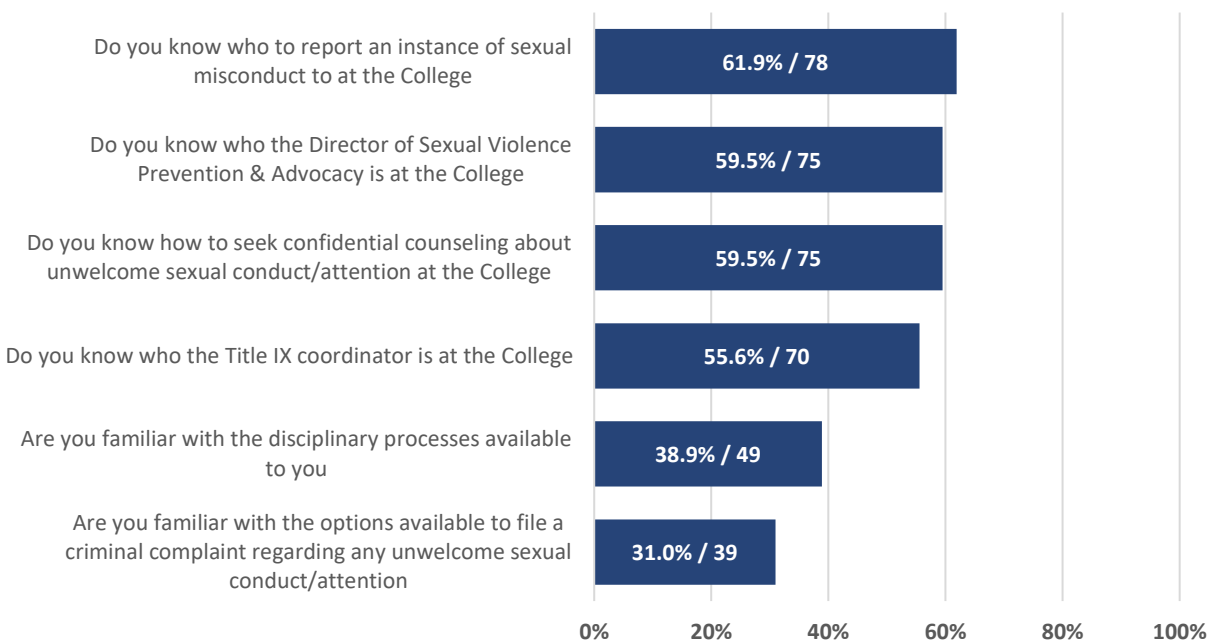
Respondents who answered “yes” to these questions were next asked about their level of satisfaction with the information they had received regarding the College’s policies and procedures and its prevention work. The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who said they were generally or very satisfied with (a) the education materials they received regarding policies and procedures, and (b) the information they received regarding prevention.

Q5.3, 5.4 Satisfaction with the education received from the College



Respondents were next asked about their knowledge of a number of the College’s resources in a series of yes/no questions. The following chart represents the percentage of those respondents who answered “yes” to these questions.

Q5.7 Please answer the following questions



The last question in this section of the survey asked respondents to list up to 5 people on campus to whom they would turn in a crisis. The open-ended question specifically asked, “If you or a friend had been the victim of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking, which resources or people would you contact or recommend that your friend contact?” The write-in responses to this question contained numerous abbreviations, misspellings, and variations of the names and titles of people and offices. For example, “the Office of Campus Safety” was rendered in a variety of ways, including “Campo,” “campus safety,” “campus security,” and other variations. The list of people, offices, and resources that received at least a single mention by respondents is shown below.

Q108_4 If you or a friend had been the victim of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking, which resources or people would you contact or recommend that your friend contact?

PERSON/OFFICE/RESOURCE	# OF MENTIONS
Student Counseling Services	24
Nicole Powell/Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy	21
Megan Monahan/Title IX Coordinator	16
Campus Safety	12
A dean (unspecified)	8
A trusted professor	8
Confidential advocate	8
Pastor Stephanie	7
Police	7
Close/trusted friends	6
Family member	6
Housefellow/RA	5
Chris Campbell	3
Student Support Specialist	3
CC Curtiss	2
President Chapdelaine	2
A trusted adult	1
Ariella Rotramel	1
Class dean	1
College Chaplain (unspecified)	1
Geoff Norbert	1
Jeannette Williams	1
Therapist/counselor	1
Grand Total	145

The final section of the survey aimed to gauge the prevalence of our students’ experiences with various forms of sexual violence. The items were as specific as possible about the nature of each type of incident, as follows:

“This section asks about non-consensual or unwanted sexual contact, intimate partner violence, and stalking you may have experienced. The person who engaged in the unwanted sexual contact, intimate partner violence, or stalking could have been a stranger or someone you know, such as an acquaintance, friend, or someone you were dating or going out with. These questions ask about two types of unwanted sexual contact as well as intimate partner violence and stalking:

“a. Sexual penetration: Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus of the victim, with any body part of the perpetrator or by the perpetrator’s use of an object, without the consent of the victim; or oral penetration of the victim by a sex organ of the perpetrator, without the consent of the victim.

“b. Fondling: The touching of the private body parts of the victim (buttocks, groin, breasts) by the perpetrator for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of a temporary or permanent mental incapacity.

“c. Intimate Partner Violence: Being subjected to violence, on the basis of sex, by a person who is in or has been in a romantic or intimate social relationship with the victim.

“d. Stalking: Being subjected to behavior, on the basis of sex, that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety, or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress.”

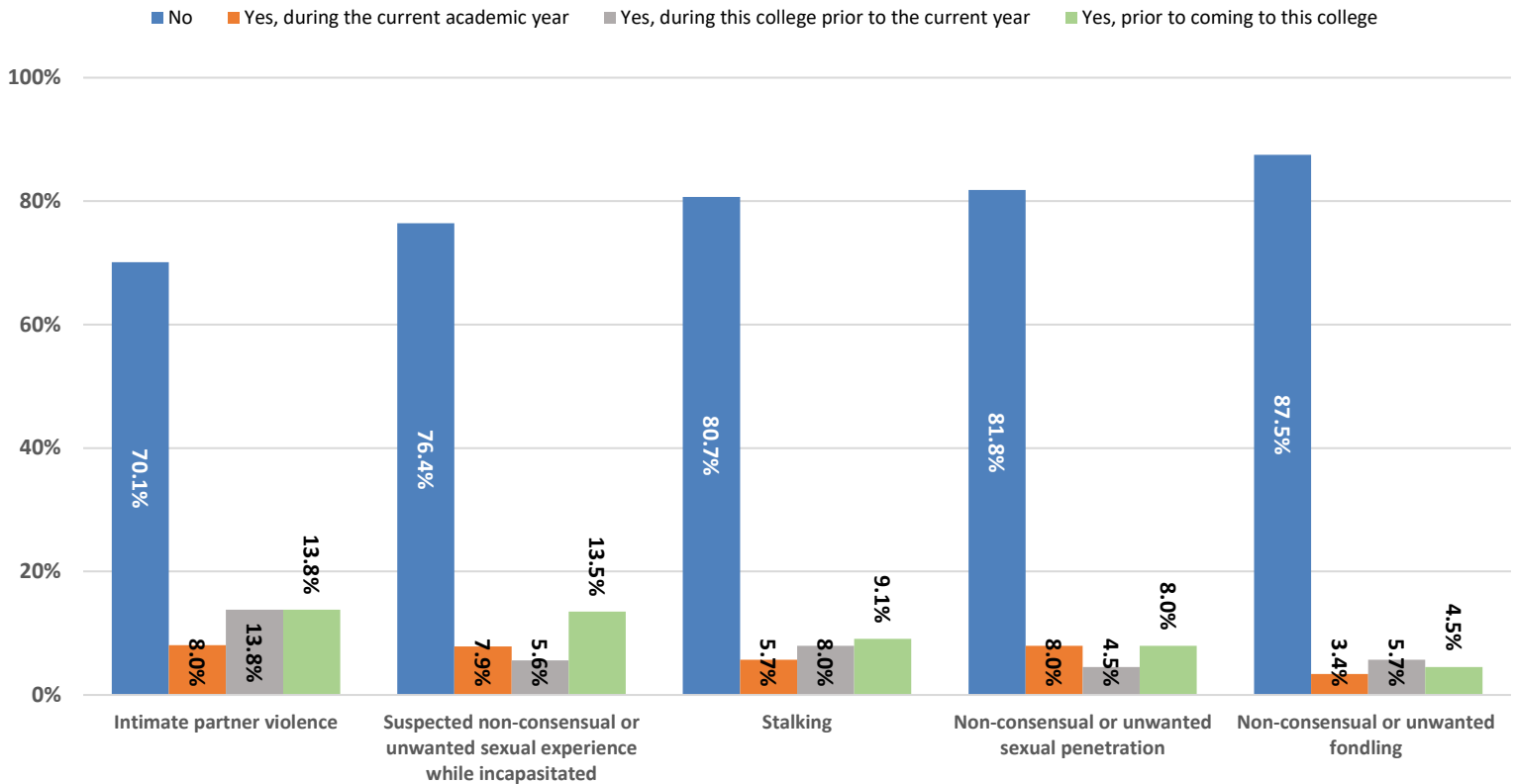
Respondents were asked in separate questions about each of these four experiences, with the following response choices:

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, during the current academic year
- ☐ Yes, during my time at this college prior to the current academic year
- ☐ Yes, prior to coming to this college

Respondents could select all responses that applied, such as if they had experienced stalking both prior to coming to Conn *and* in the current academic year. Because of this, in the chart below, the percentages for each of the four forms of sexual violence can exceed 100%.

The chart below shows the results organized in ascending order by the percentage of respondents who answered “No”—meaning they had not experienced the indicated form of sexual violence at any point (blue bars). Intimate partner violence was the most widely experienced among respondents (**35.6%**). Although **70.1%** of respondents said they had not experienced it at any point, **13.8%** of respondents reported that they had experienced it prior to coming to Conn, **13.8%** at Conn in a prior academic year, and/or **8%** in the current academic year, 2025-26. Non-consensual or unwanted fondling that did not include sexual penetration was the least prevalent of the forms of sexual violence reported.

Q6.1 This section asks about non-consensual or unwanted sexual contact, intimate partner violence, and stalking you may have experienced.



METHODOLOGY

The self-reported characteristics of the respondents are as follows. The questions regarding respondents' race/ethnicity and gender identity were open-ended rather than multiple-choice. The results below are the totals calculated after recoding the responses to standardize varied responses like "F," "female," "Female," and "Woman."

To check whether the survey respondents were roughly equivalent to—and therefore potentially representative of—the student body, we can compare them with the fall 2025 student body data from the Common Data Set (CDS) on various demographic indicators that were collected in the survey. This required recoding, since survey respondents self-reported their gender identity and race/ethnicity in open-ended questions rather than selecting from the College's official multiple-choice categories. We then grouped those open-ended responses into a manageable number of categories. In particular, respondents reported their gender identities in ways that went beyond the binary data the College collects.

	Survey Sample	Population
	%	%
Female	61.9	61.5
Male	25.4	38.5
Non-binary	4.8	N/A
Unknown	7.9	N/A
Total	100.0	

The sample size is small relative to the total population, yielding a low response rate of 7.3%. While the proportion of female respondents aligns closely with the student body, the male students are underrepresented. Consequently, extrapolating these findings to the general population may be unwarranted.

The graph below compares the survey respondents with the student body.

	Survey Sample	Population
	Percent	Percent
Asian	4.8	4.0
Black or African American	4.0	5.6
Hispanic or Latino	12.7	12.7
Two or More	4.8	5.0
Unknown	2.4	2.3
White	71.4	70.3
Total	100.0	100.0

Although the survey sample appears racially representative of the student body, the low response rate introduces potential non-response bias through other influential, lurking variables. For instance, 44 respondents (34.9%) reported experiencing non-consensual sexual contact, intimate partner violence, or stalking (Q7.2). However, it could be misleading for a reader to extrapolate this finding and assume that one out of every three students in the entire student population has encountered such events.

MARGIN OF ERROR

Since the data were gathered from a respondent sample rather than the entire population, the results are subject to a margin of error. At a 95% confidence level, this margin of error (MOE) is 8.40%. This means that if the survey were repeated 100 times, the true population parameter would fall within ± 8.40 percentage points of the sample results in 95 of those times. A margin of error of this magnitude is considered quite high, indicating lower statistical precision. One potential issue with a high MOE or a low response rate is that they can introduce wild swings in proportions between survey rounds because the subgroups are more susceptible to outlier responses. Therefore, the researchers highly discourage relying on the corresponding proportions when a subgroup size is fewer than 30 respondents.

LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The low response rate (7.4%) is a major limitation of this study. Although the survey instrument takes only 6 to 10 minutes to complete—which is reasonable—the sensitive and private nature of the topic

makes it an unlikely candidate for a high response rate, unless a participant has a personal interest in the subject. In the previous round conducted in fall 2024, the study achieved a 15% response rate despite using a much longer survey instrument. That survey was administered over approximately one month. In contrast, for the spring 2026 round, the instrument was truncated, the survey remained in the field for more than three months, and six reminders were sent. Furthermore, instead of asking respondents about multiple incidents as in 2024, the 2026 instrument asked them to describe a single incident. These changes in timing, duration, instrumentation, and response rates make direct comparisons between the 2024 and 2026 rounds inconsistent, and it is not recommended. The researchers recommend conducting future surveys within the same timeframe (i.e., spring or fall) and using a similar instrument to mitigate seasonal or academic term biases. While the spring 2026 survey results may not be generalizable to the broader student population, they likely reflect the experiences, behaviors, and attitudes of those who have encountered sexual violence or similar incidents and hold a general interest in this topic.

Researchers caution against using a single statistic to draw conclusions regarding the general student population. Multiple years of data and/or state, local, or peer-group comparative statistics can provide more meaningful insights.

Some questions or response options in this report may have been truncated to preserve space. For the full text of each question, please refer to the survey instrument in **Appendix 1**.

The published report includes only the questions required by the regulation, PA 21-81 (AN ACT CONCERNING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES). For the full list of questions, response options and their percentages, please refer to the Annotated Results in **Appendix 2**.

Appendices 1 and 2 may be unavailable in the published on-line report to protect privacy and confidentiality.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Office of Institutional Research extends its gratitude to Erika Smith, Dean of the College and Vice President for Retention and Success; Nicole Powell, Assistant Dean of Community Advocacy and Sexual Health; Megan Monahan, AVP for Retention and Success and Associate Dean for Civil Rights; and Andrew Shepard, Assistant Director of Community Advocacy and Sexual Health, for their support in administering the survey and their patience while the survey instrument was being altered. The Office of Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy was instrumental in publicizing the survey during Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) events, including “Take Back the Night,” “Denim Day,” and the “Color Run.” They designed marketing materials, posted fliers with QR codes on campus, and spoke about the survey with students, divisions, departments, and student groups.

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