

Results of a Fall 2024 Survey on Campus Climate regarding Sexual Violence Prevention

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OVERVIEW

Connecticut College 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 readministered 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 from our students. A copy of the blank survey instrument appears in Appendix 1. The 2024 version of the survey was reviewed and approved by the Connecticut College Institutional Review Board.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSE RATE

The survey was administered online to all full-time students. Email invitations with survey links was sent on September 25, with reminders send on September 30 and October 9. The survey was completely anonymous, with the online survey software not recording any information about respondents. Overall, 411 students opened the survey and answered at least one of the initial qualifying questions, and 305 students affirmed that they were at least 18 years old and gave their informed consented to taking the survey, about a 16% response rate. Of those, 293 students opened the survey, consented, answered the demographic questions, and answered at least some of the substantive questions (about 15% of the students who were invited to take the survey).

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The self-reported characteristics of respondents are as follows. The questions asking for the respondent’s race/ethnicity and gender identity were open-ended rather than multiple choice, and the results below are the totals calculated after recoding the responses (to standardize varying responses like “F,” “female,” “Female,” “Woman,” etc.)

CLASS YEAR	#	%
2025	63	21%
2026	78	26%
2027	97	32%
2028	66	22%
Prefer not to answer	1	0%
TOTALS	305	100%

HOW STUDENT CAME TO THE COLLEGE	#	%
As a first-year student	295	97%
As a transfer student	10	3%
TOTALS	305	100%

WHERE RESPONDENT CURRENTLY LIVES	#	%
In College-owned housing off campus (Manwaring)	12	4%
In College-owned housing on campus	285	93%
In non-College-owned housing (off campus)	8	3%
TOTALS	305	100%

CITIZENSHIP	#	%
Not a U.S. citizen	19	6%
Prefer not to answer	1	0%
U.S. citizen	285	93%
TOTALS	305	100%

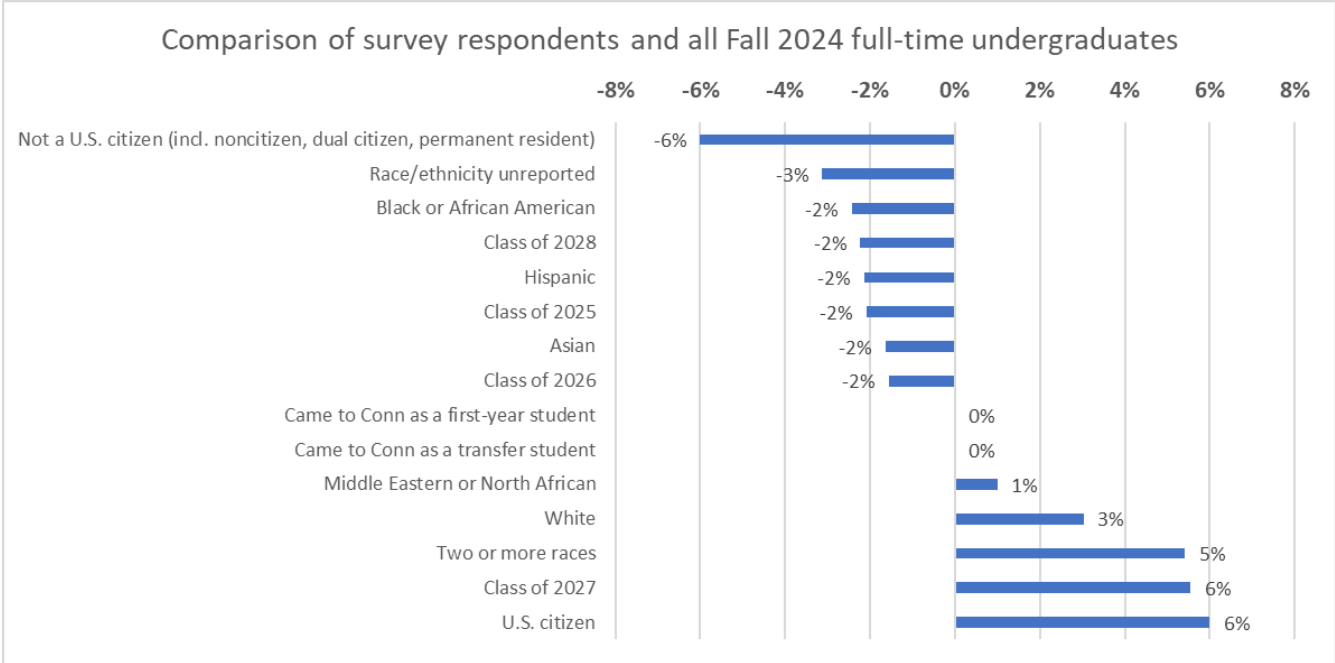
RACE/ETHNICITY (recoded open-ended responses)	#	%
Asian	12	4%
Black or African American	10	3%
Hispanic or Latino	11	4%
Middle Eastern or North African	3	1%
Prefer not to answer	4	1%
Two or more races	42	14%
White	223	73%
TOTALS	305	100%

GENDER-IDENTITY (recoded open-ended responses)	#	%
Female/woman	178	58%
Male/man	76	25%
Some other response	51	17%
TOTALS	305	100%

SEXUAL ORIENTATION (multiple choice; could select all that apply)	#	%
Heterosexual/Straight	149	49%
Bisexual	54	18%
Multiple answers	32	10%
Lesbian	18	6%
Queer	14	5%
Asexual	10	3%
No specific label but not straight	10	3%
Pansexual	7	2%
Gay	4	1%
No response	4	1%
Aromantic	1	0.3%
Demisexual	1	0.3%
Omnisexual	1	0.3%
TOTALS	305	100%

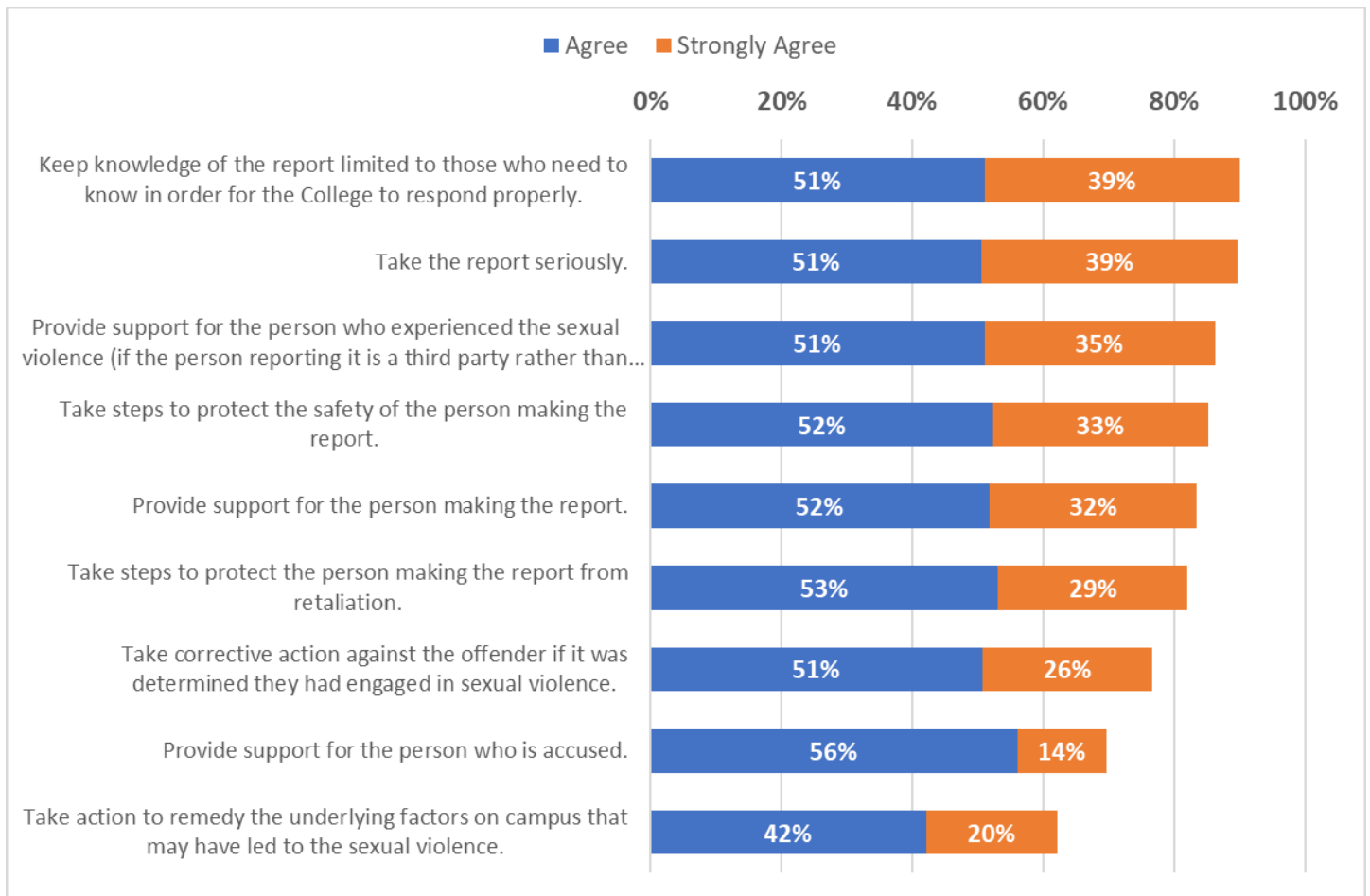
To check whether the survey’s respondents were roughly equivalent to and therefore potentially representative of the student body as a whole, we can compare the respondents with the fall 2024 student body as a whole on various demographic indicators that were collected in the survey. This required some recoding, since on the survey, respondents were asked to self-report their gender identity and race/ethnicity in open-ended questions rather than selecting in a multiple-choice question from the College’s official categories, and we recoded 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 and stores. Using the College’s binary categories, the fall 2024 full-time student body was 61% female and 39% male; on the survey, 58% of respondents identified as a female or a woman, 25% respondent as a male or a man, and 17% responded in some other way (*agender, genderfluid, trans, and nonbinary*, for example).

The graph below compares the respondents with the student body as whole for categories where meaningful comparisons could be made. Categories marked by negative numbers were underrepresented among survey respondents as compared with their proportions in the student body as a whole. For example, non-U.S. citizens were somewhat underrepresented, while U.S. citizens, multiracial students, and members of the Class of 2027 were somewhat overrepresented. This sort of variation between survey respondents and the population as a whole are not unusual.



CAMPUS CLIMATE FOR RESPONDING TO SEXUAL MISCONDUCT REPORTS

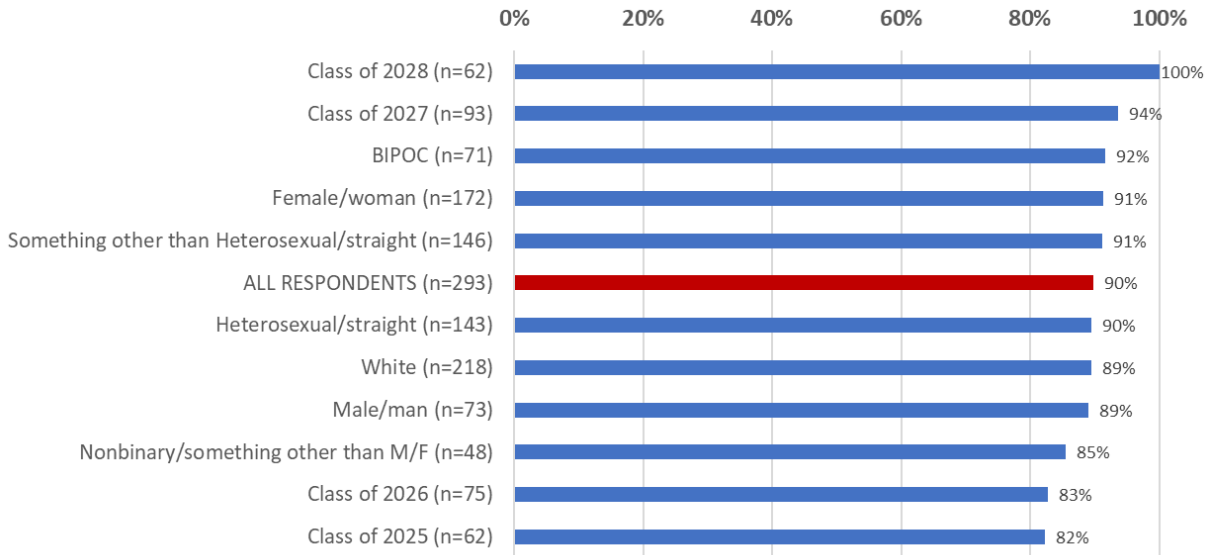
Respondents were first asked a number of questions about how they think the College’s staff and leadership would respond “if you or someone else were to bring forward an allegation of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking.” These questions aim to get respondents’ views on how College 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 → 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.



We can also look at the responses to 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 – i.e., the same totals as are shown in the chart above.

COLLEGE'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

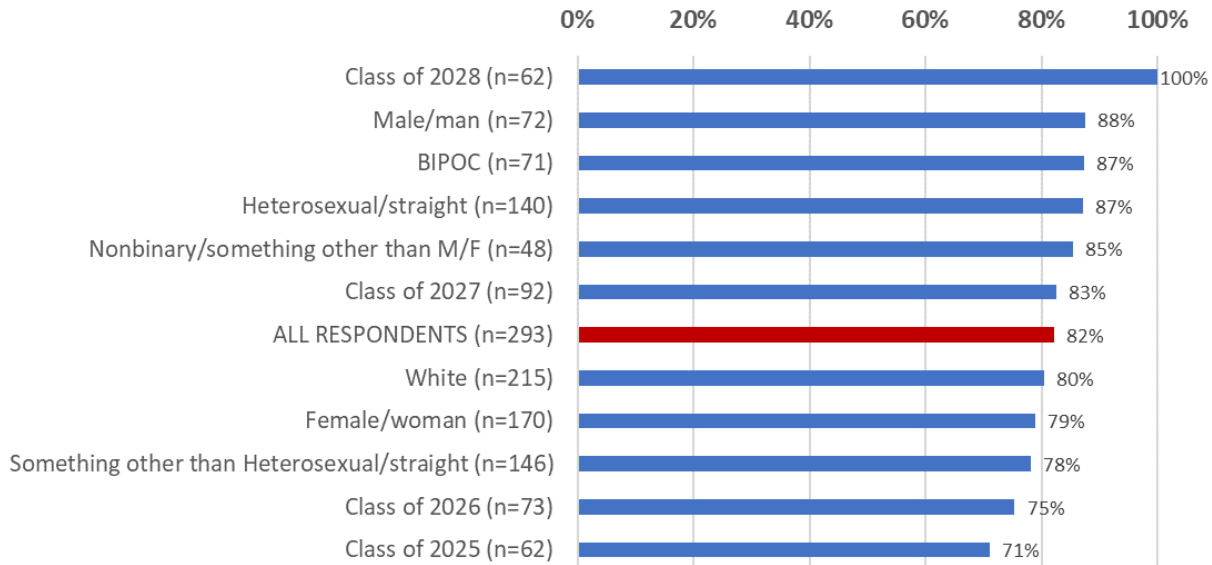
Take the report seriously (% Agree + Strongly Agree)



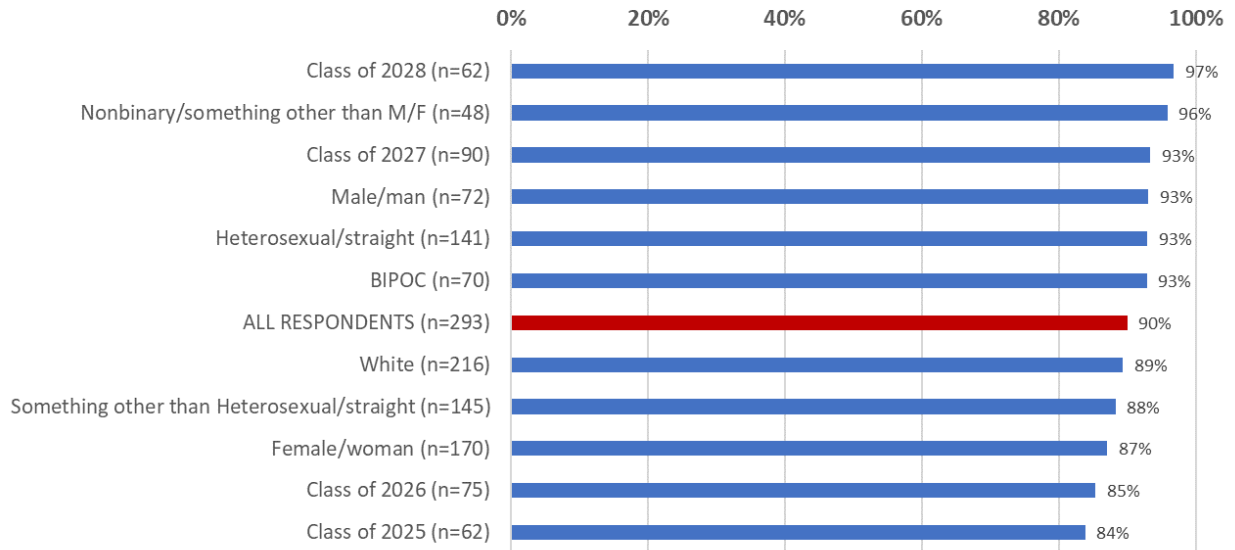
COLLEGE'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

Take steps to protect the person making the report from retaliation.

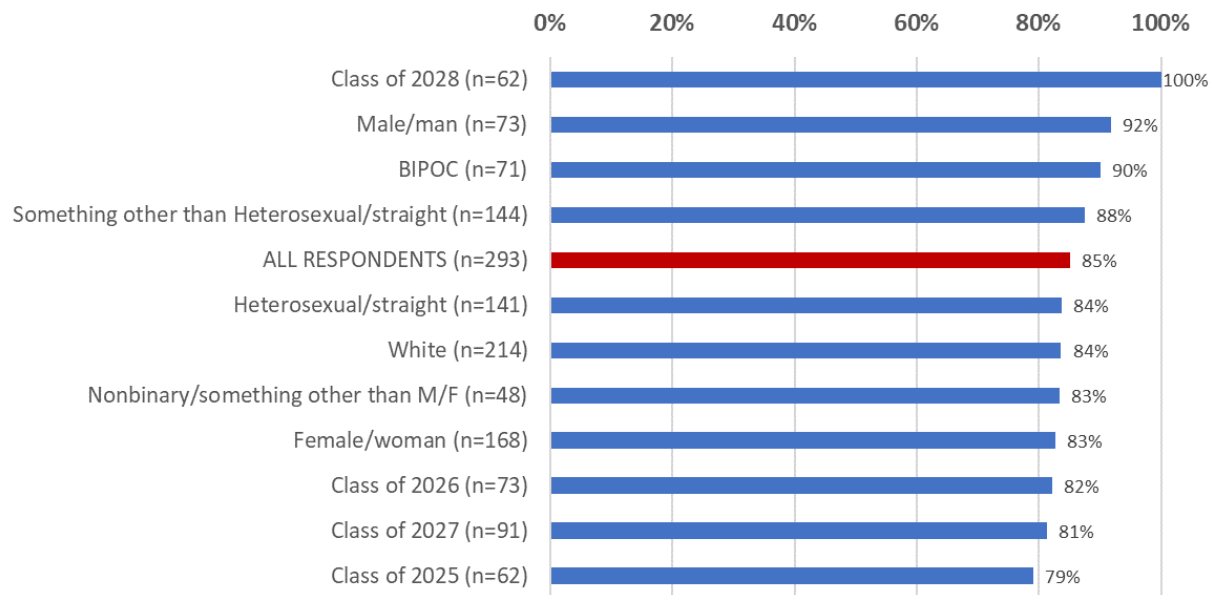
(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



COLLEGE'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
 Keep knowledge of the report limited to those who need to know in order for the
 College to respond properly. (% Agree + Strongly Agree)



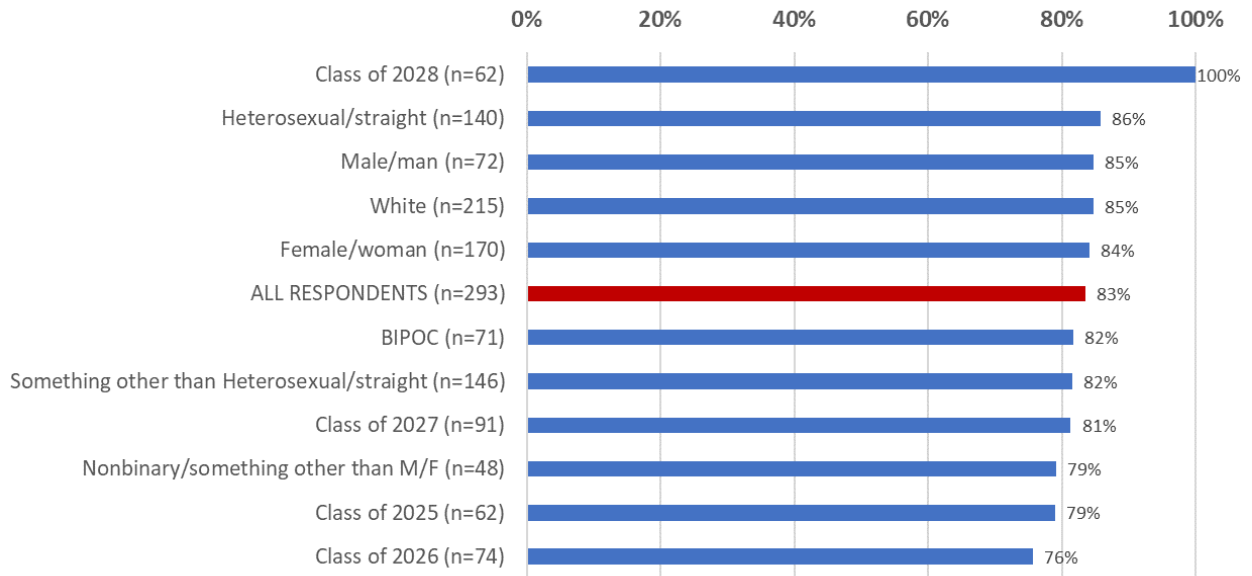
COLLEGE'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
 Take steps to protect the safety of the person making the report
 (% Agree + Strongly Agree)



COLLEGE'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

Provide support for the person making the report

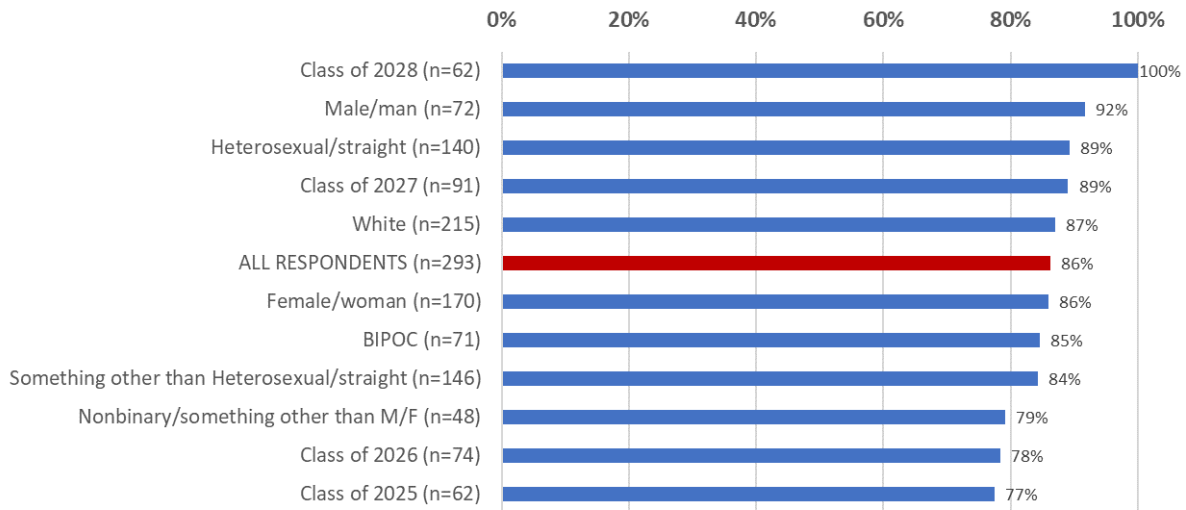
(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



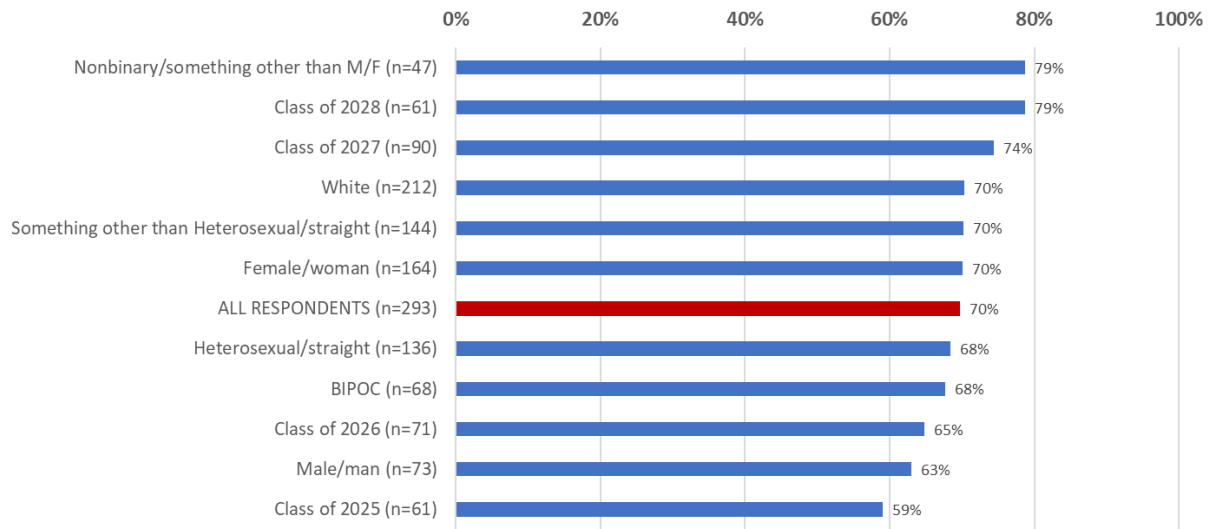
COLLEGE'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

Provide support for the person who experienced the sexual violence (if the person reporting it is a third party rather than the victim)

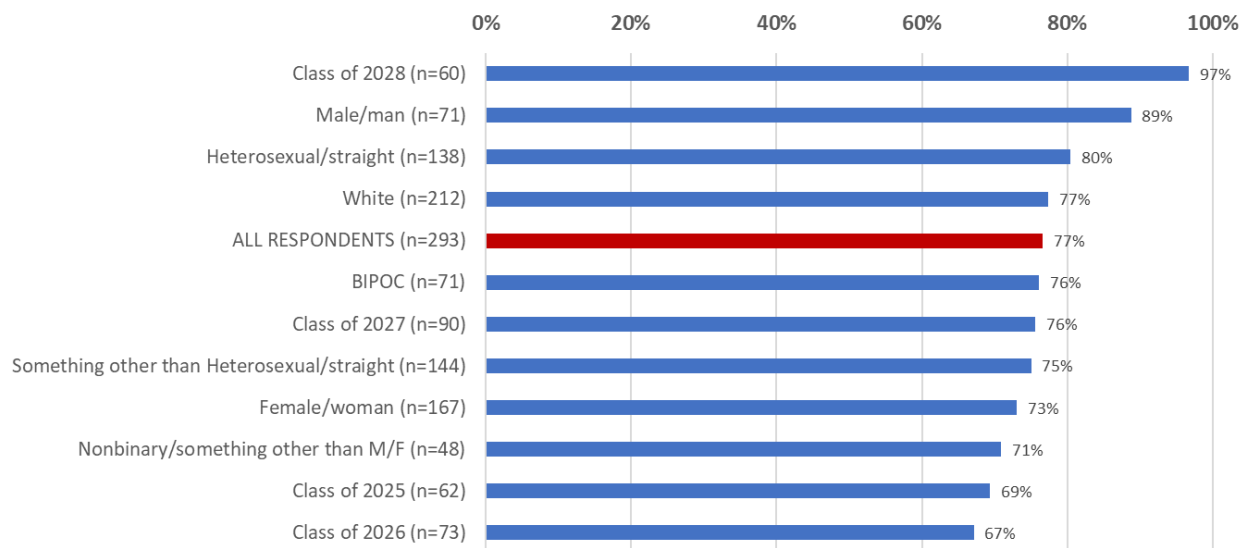
(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



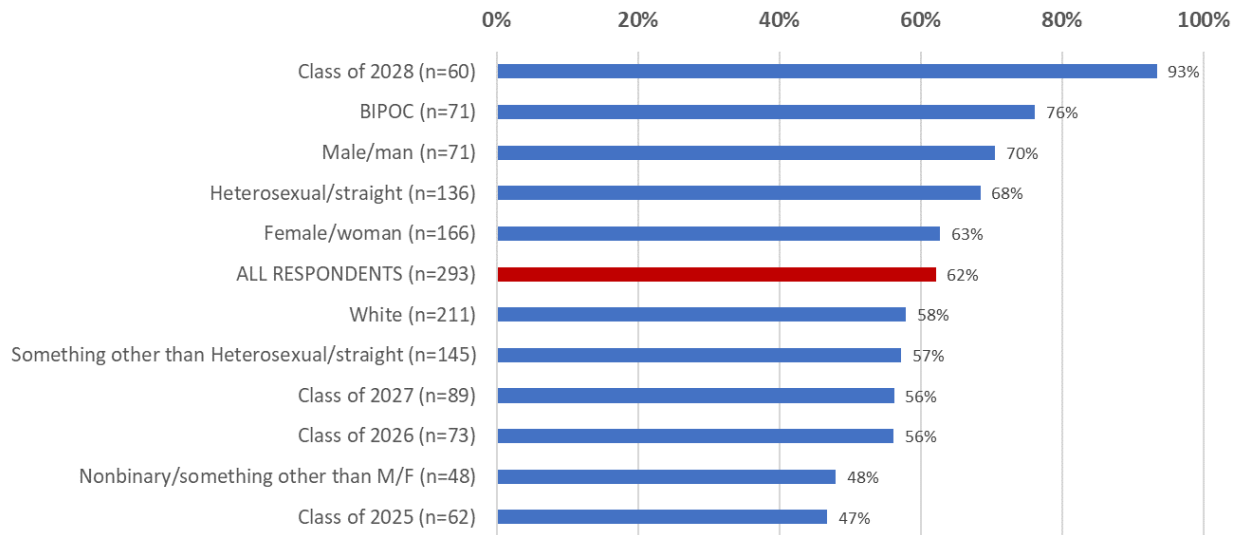
COLLEGE'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
Provide support for the person who is accused. (*% Agree + Strongly Agree*)



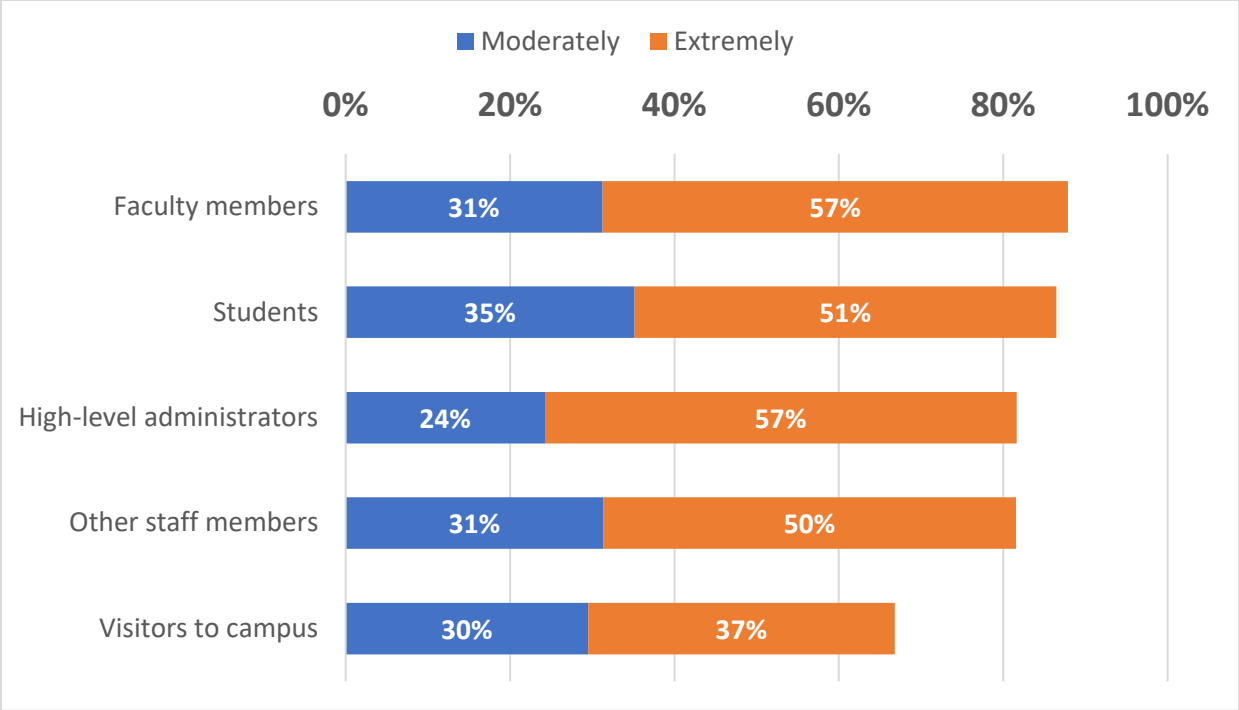
COLLEGE'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
Take corrective action against the offender if it was determined they had engaged in sexual violence. (*% Agree + Strongly Agree*)



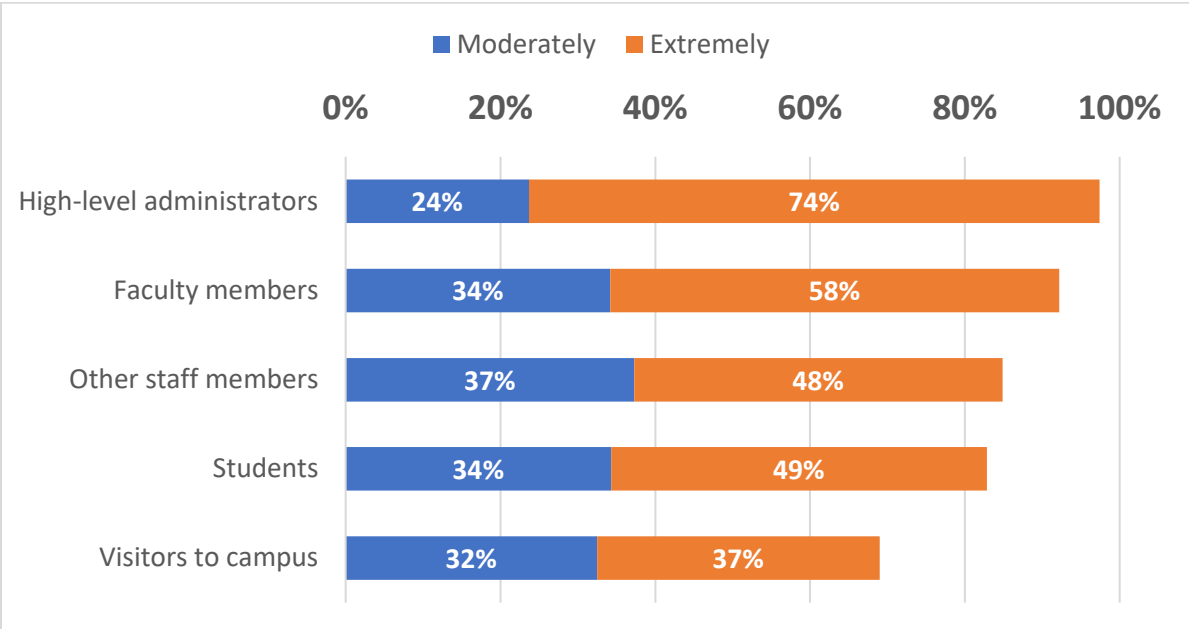
COLLEGE'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
 Take action to remedy the underlying factors on campus that may have led to the sexual violence. (*% Agree + Strongly Agree*)



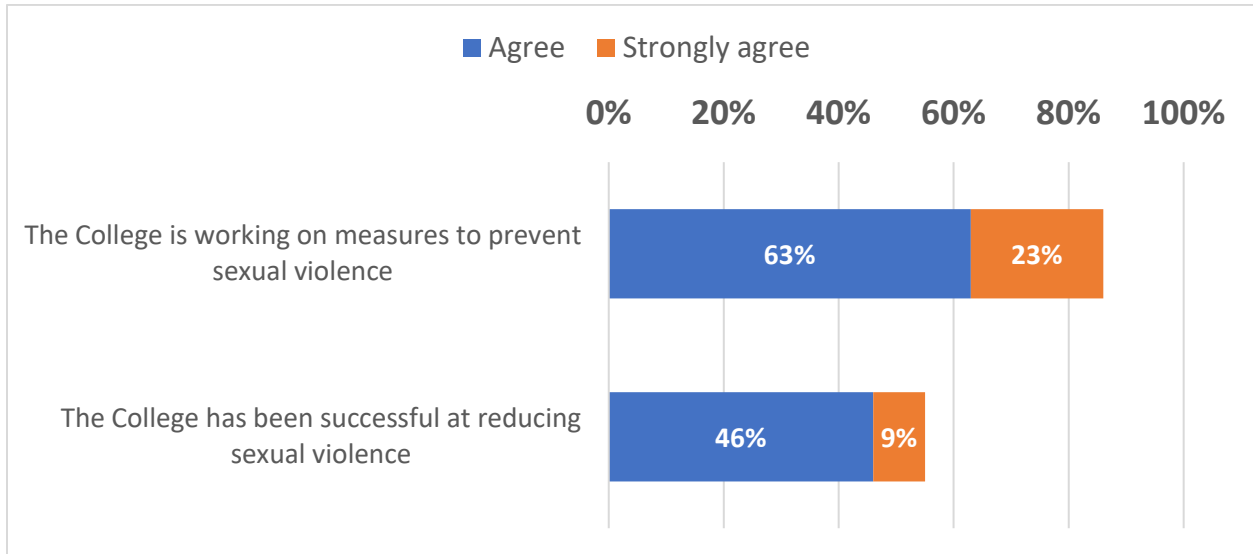
Next, respondents were asked how seriously the College would take reports of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking **against** various types of people. Would allegations against people in positions of authority be taken seriously? (4-point scale from Not at all seriously → Extremely seriously). The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who said the College would take reports against the indicated type of person Moderately seriously or Extremely seriously.



Next, respondents were asked 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 with different kinds of status in the College community be taken seriously? (4-point scale from Not at all seriously → Extremely seriously). The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who said the College would take reports made by the indicated type of person Moderately seriously or Extremely seriously.

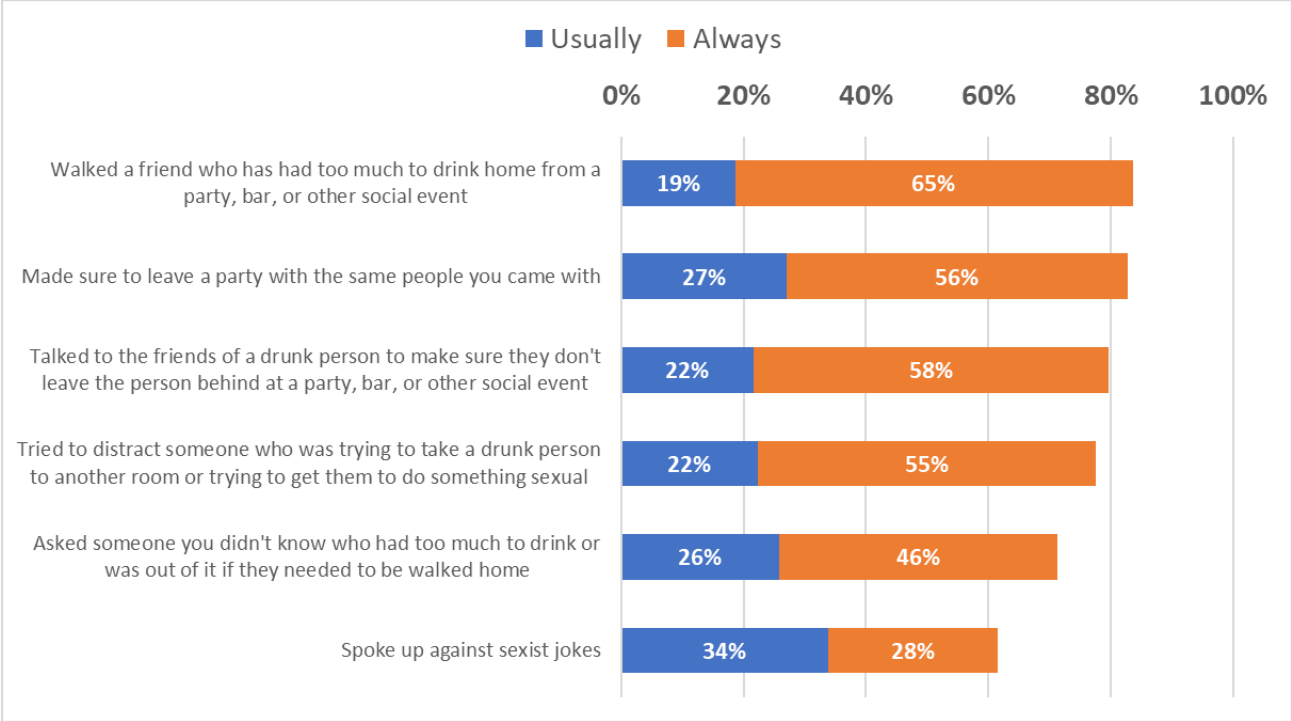


The final question regarding campus climate asked about respondents' level of agreement with two statements regarding the College's efforts to prevent sexual violence and the success of those efforts. (4-point scale from Strongly disagree → Strongly agree). The chart below shows the percentage of respondents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



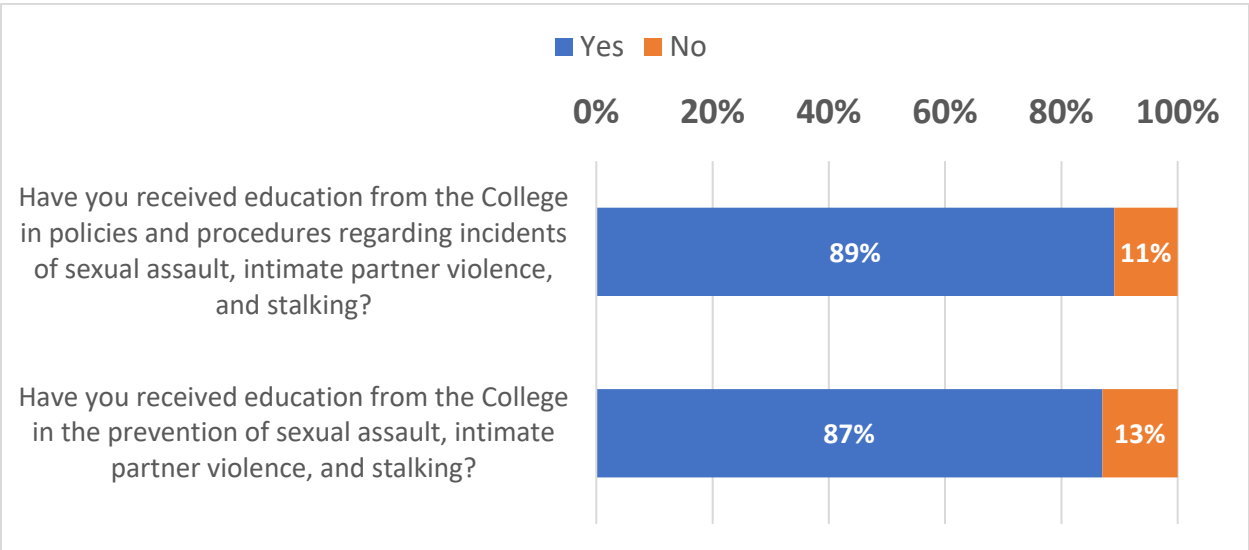
BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

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," responses were on a 4-point scale from Never → 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.

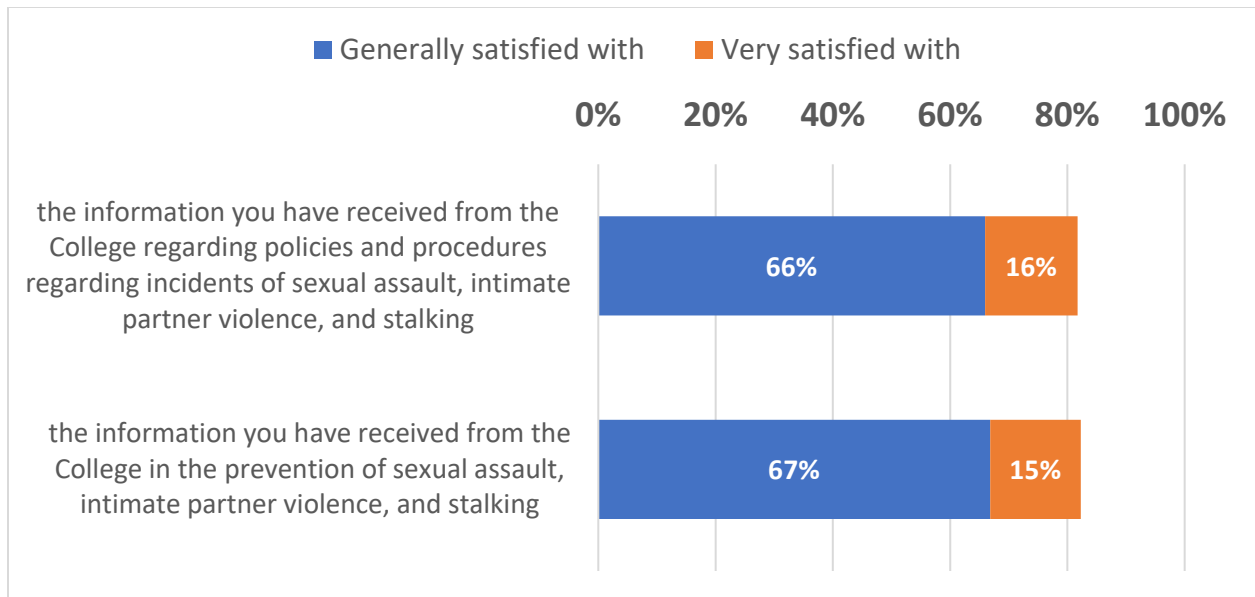


CAMPUS EDUCATION EFFORTS AND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT COLLEGE RESOURCES

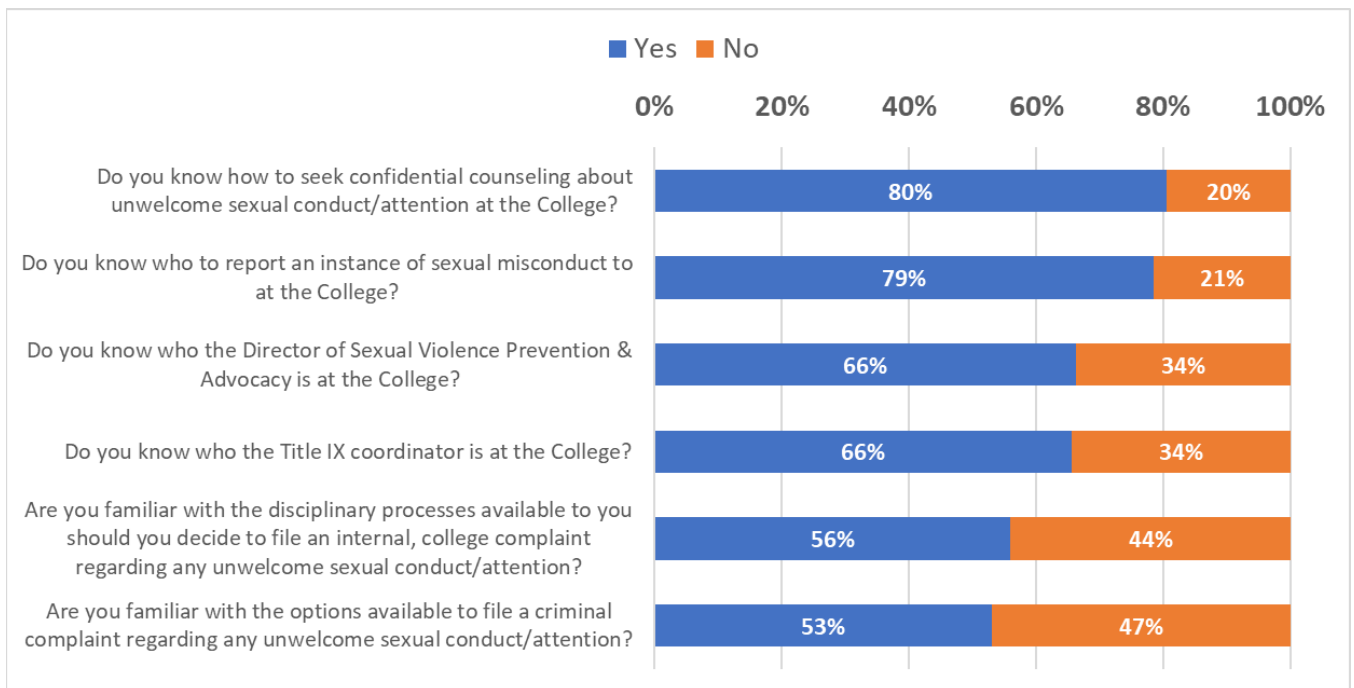
Regarding campus education efforts, respondents were first asked if they have received education about incidents of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking— (a) policies and procedures regarding them and (b) their prevention.



Respondents who said “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.



Respondents were next asked about their knowledge about a number of the College’s resources in a series of Yes/No questions.



The last question in this section of the survey asked the respondent 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 responses were recoded so that accurate counts could be made. The list of people, offices, and resources that received 2 or more mentions by respondents are shown below.

PERSON/OFFICE/RESOURCE	# OF MENTIONS
Nicole Powell/Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy	68
Megan Monahan/Title IX Coordinator	60
Student Counseling Services	27
Office of Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy (unspecified)	17
Campus Safety	17
Justin Mendillo	14
Confidential advocate	12
Close/trusted friends	11
Police	11
A parent	7
Student Support Specialist	7
Student Health Services	7
A trusted professor	7
Chris Campbell	5
A trusted adult	5
Therapist/counselor	5
A dean (unspecified)	5
Office of Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy	5
Pastor Stephanie	4
Housefellow/RA	3
College Chaplain (unspecified)	3
Jenny Henneberry Malcomson	2
Class dean	2
Family member	2
Emily Morash	2
SafetyNet survivor support resources	2
CC Curtiss	2

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND MISCONDUCT PREVALENCE

The final section of the survey aimed to gauge the prevalence of our students’ experiences with various forms of sexual violence. The question aimed to be as specific as possible about the nature of each type of experience, 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.

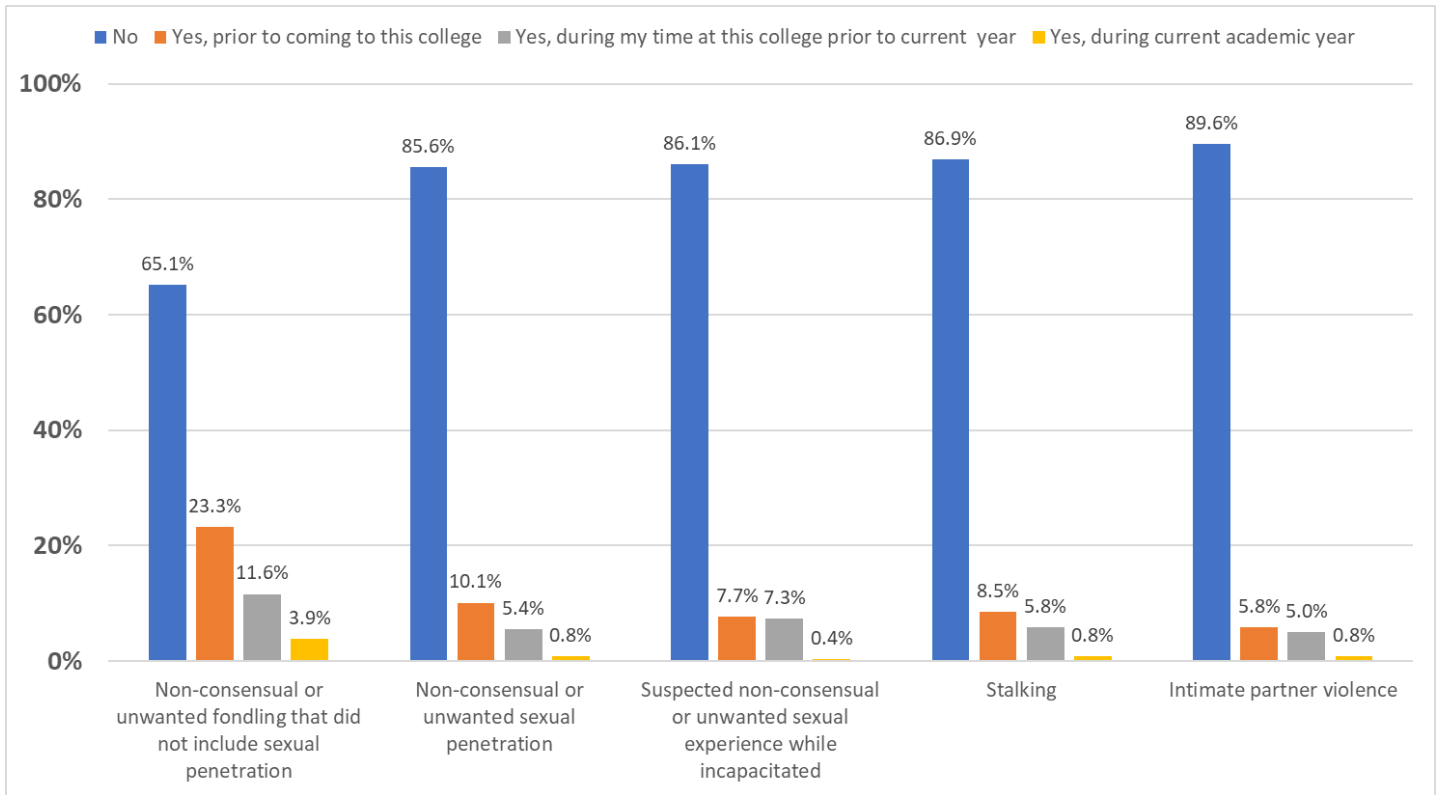
“d. Stalking: Being subjected to behavior, on the basis of sex, that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety, or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress.”

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, for example. Because of this, in the chart below, the totals for each of the four forms of sexual violence sum to slightly more than 100%.

The chart below shows the results organized in ascending order by the percentage of respondents who answered “No” – i.e., they had not experienced the indicated form of sexual violence at any point. The blue bars in the chart indicate that nonconsensual or unwanted fondling that did not involve sexual penetration was the most widely experienced among respondents, with 65% of respondents saying they had not experienced it at any point and 39% of respondents reporting that they had experienced it prior to coming to Conn (23%), at Conn in a prior academic year (12%), and/or in the current academic year, 2024-25 (4%). Intimate partner violence was the least prevalent of the forms of sexual violence that was asked about.



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