

# Northeastern University

## *Student Affairs*

Dear Members of the Northeastern community,

The prevalence of sexual assault is among the most serious issues facing colleges and universities today. Beyond published statistics, we know that incidents of sexual violence remain underreported. As a community, we have the obligation to redouble our efforts to prevent sexual violence at every turn and to foster a campus climate of mutual tolerance and respect.

Last November, Northeastern conducted its first campus climate survey. The survey was designed to assess students' knowledge and perceptions of prohibited sexual conduct, and to better understand how students respond when incidents occur. The university's goal in undertaking the survey was to determine what it is doing well and what additional resources are necessary to most effectively prevent and respond to incidents of sexual violence on campus.

Today, the university is making good on its pledge to release the results of last year's climate survey. Some 25.6 percent of Northeastern undergraduate and graduate students responded to the voluntary, confidential survey. This is considered a strong response rate for a survey of its kind and ensures that the university can take confidence in the veracity of the results. We are making this announcement at the start of the academic year to raise the community's awareness about the continued importance of our work in this area.

First, some encouraging news. In many ways, the recent strides the university has made to provide victims of sexual violence with access to support services and other resources appear to be paying off. More than 73 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "If a friend or I were to be a victim of sexual violence, I know where to go to get help." In addition, more than 81 percent of respondents said they were likely or very likely to use campus services or support in the event they encountered sexual violence.

Similarly, the survey suggests our efforts to enhance campus safety, increase awareness of risky behavior, and create a culture of bystander intervention are having an impact. More than 95 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that they feel safe on campus. In addition, some 93 percent said they were likely or very likely to intervene when they suspect a peer might become a victim of sexual violence. Importantly, the same percentage said they were likely or very likely to ask someone who had too much to drink if they needed help getting home. And 91 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "most Northeastern students would respect someone who did something to prevent an instance of sexual violence."

At the same time, the climate survey clearly shows that more work remains to be done to prevent sexual violence on campus and to educate our community about the violence prevention and response resources available to members. In just one example, more than 21 percent of respondents admitted that they did not know the Code of Student Conduct's definition of consent. In addition, nearly 6 in 10 respondents indicated that they did not know that if they were victims of sexual violence they could have a no contact order issued to an alleged assailant by the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) or have their class sections or other schedules changed.

More concerning still is the perception some students have that the university does not fully support victims of sexual violence. Nearly 11 percent of respondents doubt that the university would take the report of an instance of sexual violence seriously. In addition, 16 percent disagree or strongly disagree that the university would support a victim of sexual violence on campus who made a report. And more than 25 percent of respondents disagree or strongly disagree that the university would take corrective action against a perpetrator of sexual violence on campus.

To be sure, these results clearly point to challenges that need to be handled head on. We intend to redouble our efforts and address them openly and directly. We have already implemented a number of initiatives to fortify our response to these urgent matters. In cooperation with the Student Government Association (SGA), we completed a thorough review of the Code of Student Conduct and made a number of updates to the Code that clarify definitions, expectations and practice. We have actively engaged with the SGA leadership and other student leaders to review our efforts and resources and look forward to continuing this collaborative and intentional work.

**Enhanced Prevention and Training.** New online sexual violence prevention training (chosen with the help of our students) is now required for all incoming students. This interactive interpersonal violence prevention program is designed to provide students with greater awareness of these important issues, expectations for behavior and the resources that are available through the university for support. [Students can access the program here: <https://studentsuccess.org/SP/northeastern>.] Additional sexual violence prevention and awareness programs have been incorporated into Orientation and Welcome Week, as well as made available throughout the year. New programming continues our efforts to promote bystander intervention, and includes a focus on the issues of consent, boundaries and healthy relationships. We will also add staff within Student Affairs to develop programs and collaborate directly with student leaders and advocates. Faculty and staff will be required to receive enhanced training and all students will see increased training in the areas of proactive prevention education.

**Second Campus Climate Survey.** The university will conduct another campus climate survey this Fall to gather further data about sexual violence on campus and the outcomes from our enhanced prevention efforts.

**Available Campus Resources.** Sexual violence is not tolerated at Northeastern. Incidents of sexual violence should be reported to the Northeastern University Police Department (NUPD) or the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (OIDI). In addition, the university provides victims with a number of on-campus and off-campus resources to facilitate access to immediate confidential medical care and counseling services, incident reporting, and access to legal counsel. Information on services and resources of campus and community partners targeting sexual violence, stalking, and dating violence, can be found on the Violence Support, Intervention and Outreach Network (ViSION) webpage at [www.northeastern.edu/vision](http://www.northeastern.edu/vision). The university's *WeCare* team is also available to provide academic and personal support.

Moving forward, we must work together to sustain the progress made in addressing issues of sexual violence on our campus. Northeastern University is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which students, faculty, and staff can work and study in an atmosphere free from all forms of harassment. To be sure, challenges remain. But by working together, we will make Northeastern a place where all members of the community can feel safe to pursue their goals and aspirations.

This work is the responsibility of each one of us and on behalf of the university, I ask for your participation in these community efforts. I invite anyone on campus to contact me personally at [m.estabrook@neu.edu](mailto:m.estabrook@neu.edu) with any inquiry or question.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Estabrook  
Vice President for Student Affairs

To view the full results of the 2014 campus climate survey, please visit: <http://www.northeastern.edu/vision/>

**Q1. What is your class year?****Percent**

32.77%	First year
12.62%	Second year
17.23%	Third year
15.32%	Fourth year
12.06%	Fifth year
1.35%	Sixth year or beyond
8.65%	Not classified by year

**Q2. What is your student level?****Percent**

73.19%	Undergraduate
24.11%	Graduate student
2.70%	Law student

**Q3. In which college is your primary major?****Percent**

7.02%	College of Arts, Media and Design
14.17%	D'Amore-McKim School of Business
7.16%	College of Computer and Information Science
25.09%	College of Engineering
13.68%	Bouvier College of Health Sciences
0.00%	College of Professional Studies
16.37%	College of Science
11.91%	College of Social Sciences and Humanities
2.69%	School of Law
1.91%	University Programs (undeclared and general studies)

**Q4. With which gender do you identify?****Percent**

47.41%	Man
51.74%	Woman
0.14%	Transgender/Non-conforming
0.07%	Another gender identity (please specify)
0.64%	I prefer not to respond

**Q5. Are you an international student or foreign national?****Percent**

20.64%	Yes
79.36%	No

**Q6. In the past year, have you taken an on-ground course on the Boston campus of Northeastern University?**

**Percent**

89.32%	Yes
10.68%	No

**Q7. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - If a friend or I were to be a victim of sexual violence, I know where to go to get help.**

**Percent**

21.99%	Strongly agree
51.36%	Agree
22.24%	Disagree
4.41%	Strongly disagree

**Q8. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I have confidence that the University addresses reports of sexual violence fairly.**

**Percent**

15.13%	Strongly agree
55.73%	Agree
23.42%	Disagree
5.73%	Strongly disagree

**Q9. Where have you received information regarding sexual violence? (Check all that apply)**

**Respondent %      Response %**

36.16%	10.89%	Presentations
53.68%	16.16%	Orientation
37.84%	11.39%	Posters
24.42%	7.35%	Handouts
40.63%	12.23%	University Health and Counseling Services (UHCS)
26.47%	7.97%	Awareness weeks
18.08%	5.44%	Tables around campus
21.81%	6.57%	Residence Halls
2.52%	0.76%	Administrative Office
3.45%	1.04%	Snell Library
1.40%	0.42%	Marino/Cabot/Squashbusters
10.07%	3.03%	Curry Student Center
24.14%	7.27%	Northeastern websites
8.76%	2.64%	Northeastern University Police Department (NUPD) waiting area
1.30%	0.39%	Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (OIDI)
10.25%	3.09%	Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR)
1.40%	0.42%	Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs
9.79%	2.95%	Other (please specify)

**Q10. Where would you go to report an incident of sexual violence? (Check all that apply)**

Respondent %	Response %	
86.81%	34.12%	Northeastern University Police Department (NUPD)
28.74%	11.30%	Residential Life staff/RAs/RDs
2.70%	1.06%	Academic Advisor
1.27%	0.50%	Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (OIDI)
53.68%	21.10%	University Health and Counseling Services (UHCS)
26.04%	10.23%	Violence Support, Intervention and Outreach Network (ViSION)
6.76%	2.66%	WeCare
1.01%	0.40%	Athletic Coach
5.49%	2.16%	Faculty member
1.35%	0.53%	Co-op advisor
4.06%	1.59%	Title IX Coordinator
2.11%	0.83%	Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs
16.99%	6.68%	Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR)
3.21%	1.26%	Spiritual Advisor
0.25%	0.10%	Cultural Center staff
1.94%	0.76%	International Student and Scholar Institute (ISSI)
0.42%	0.17%	Center for Student Involvement (CSI)
0.59%	0.23%	Student Athlete Support Services (SASS)
7.02%	2.76%	Other (please specify)
3.97%	1.56%	I don't know where to go to report an incident.

**Q11. Do you know that if you were a victim of sexual violence: - You could receive counseling and medical care**

Percent	
86.67%	Yes
13.33%	No

**Q12. Do you know that if you were a victim of sexual violence: - You could have an OSCCR no-contact order issued to your alleged assailant**

Percent	
40.51%	Yes
59.49%	No

**Q13. Do you know that if you were a victim of sexual violence: - You could seek disciplinary action through OSCCR**

Percent	
65.95%	Yes
34.05%	No

**Q14. Do you know that if you were a victim of sexual violence: - You could seek a judicial order/restraining order**

Percent	
84.41%	Yes
15.59%	No

**Q15. Do you know that if you were a victim of sexual violence: - You could get alternative housing arrangements**

**Percent**

51.92% Yes

48.08% No

**Q16. Do you know that if you were a victim of sexual violence: - You could have your class sections or other schedules changed**

**Percent**

40.11% Yes

59.89% No

**Q17. Do you know that if you were a victim of sexual violence: - You could meet with an Assistant District Attorney**

**Percent**

38.51% Yes

61.49% No

**Q18. Did you know that the University's Medical Amnesty policy says the following?**

**"Medical Amnesty Policy:**

*In cases of a drug or alcohol emergency, the primary concern is the health and safety of the individual(s) involved. Students/organizations are strongly encouraged to call for medical assistance (617.373.3333) for themselves or for another student who they observe to be or feel is dangerously intoxicated/under the influence of drugs. If a student/organization calls on behalf of another student, that student/organization is required to remain with the student experiencing the emergency until medical assistance arrives. Neither the caller nor student requiring medical assistance for an alcohol or other drug-related emergency will be subject to University disciplinary action for the violation of possession or consumption of alcohol or drugs. This policy shall extend to the referring student/organization who called for medical assistance.*

*The student requiring medical assistance (and possibly the referring student(s)/organization) will receive Medical Amnesty and will have a confidential "check in" meeting with a staff member from the Office of Prevention and Education at Northeastern (O.P.E.N.). As long as the student(s)/organization complies with all directives, there will be no disciplinary action taken related to the violation of possession or consumption of alcohol or drugs and no disciplinary record of the incident kept in the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. This policy applies only to those students or organizations who seek emergency medical assistance in connection with an alcohol or drug-related medical emergency and does not apply to individuals experiencing an alcohol or drug-related medical emergency who are found by University employees (e.g., Northeastern University police, faculty, administrative staff, or residence hall staff), or where the reporting student(s)/organization did not stay with them.*

*The Medical Amnesty Policy is not intended to shield or protect those students or organizations that repeatedly violate the Code of Student Conduct. When repeated instances of drug or alcohol emergencies occur, the University reserves the right to take disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis regardless of the manner in which the incident was reported.*

*Medical amnesty applies only to alcohol or other drug-related emergencies but does not apply to other conduct violations such as but not limited to assault, property damage, or distribution of illicit substances. If other violations occur, then a student will face disciplinary charges for those violations. The use or abuse of alcohol or drugs is not considered a mitigating circumstance for any other violations of the Code of Student Conduct.*

*Medical amnesty applies only to the University response to a medical emergency. Criminal/police action may still occur separately from the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution."*

**Percent**

65.47%	Yes
34.53%	No

**Q19. Did you know that the Code of Student Conduct's definition of consent is the following?**

**"CONSENT:** *Appropriate sexual behavior requires consent from all parties involved. Consent means a voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity proposed by another and requires mutually understandable and communicated words and/or actions demonstrating agreement by both parties to participate in all sexual activities.*

*Consent may never be given by minors (in Massachusetts, those not yet 16 years of age), mentally disabled persons, or those who are incapacitated or intoxicated as a result of alcohol or other drug consumption (voluntary or involuntary) or those who are unconscious, unaware, or otherwise physically helpless. Physical force, threats, intimidating behavior, duress, or coercion cannot be used to gain consent. A person who is incapacitated or intoxicated cannot give consent to sexual activity with that person. Incapacitation is a state where one cannot make a rational, reasonable decision because they lack the ability to understand the who, what, when, where, why, or how of their sexual activities.*

*"Without consent" may be communicated by words and/or actions demonstrating unwillingness to engage in proposed sexual activity."*

**Percent**

78.48%	Yes
21.52%	No

**Q20. What are the three (3) best ways for the University to communicate to students about sexual violence support and services?**

Respondent %	Response %	
59.08%	20.14%	Orientation
36.31%	12.38%	RA/Hall meetings
11.38%	3.88%	Large campus presentations
15.09%	5.14%	Small workshops
34.42%	11.73%	Social media
28.73%	9.79%	Posters
10.66%	3.63%	Handouts
23.94%	8.16%	In-class presentations
11.02%	3.76%	In student organizations
13.37%	4.56%	On-line education/training
39.30%	13.40%	Email
8.85%	3.02%	Websites
1.17%	0.40%	Other (please specify)

**Q21. In the event that you encountered sexual violence, please indicate your likelihood of using campus services/support concerning sexual violence:**

Percent	
35.62%	Very likely
45.99%	Likely
14.43%	Unlikely
3.97%	Very unlikely

**Q22. If you or a friend were a victim of sexual violence while a student at Northeastern, and decided not to report the incident, why did you, or they, decide not to report the incident? (Check all that apply)**

Respondent %	Response %	
78.48%	39.88%	Not applicable. I was not a victim of sexual violence while a student at Northeastern and did not know anyone who was a victim.
7.52%	3.82%	Felt ashamed
7.89%	4.01%	Felt embarrassed
8.08%	4.11%	It is a private matter, wanted to deal with it on my/their own
5.92%	3.01%	Concerned others would find out
3.38%	1.72%	Didn't want the person who did it to get in trouble
4.42%	2.24%	Fear of retribution from the person who did it
5.45%	2.77%	Fear of not being believed
5.08%	2.58%	Thought I/they would be blamed for what happened
6.11%	3.10%	Didn't think what happened was serious enough to talk about
5.73%	2.91%	Didn't think others would think it was serious enough to talk about
1.79%	0.91%	Thought people would tell me/them what to do
3.29%	1.67%	Didn't think others would think it was important
3.29%	1.67%	Didn't think others would understand
4.32%	2.20%	Didn't have time to deal with it due to academics, work etc.
3.20%	1.62%	Didn't know reporting procedure on campus
2.26%	1.15%	Feared I/they or another would be punished for infractions, such as underage drinking
3.85%	1.96%	Did not feel campus leadership would do anything about my problems
2.82%	1.43%	Feared others would harass me or react negatively towards me
5.92%	3.01%	Thought nothing would be done
3.29%	1.67%	Didn't want others to worry about me/them

**Q22. If you or a friend were a victim of sexual violence while a student at Northeastern, and decided not to report the incident, why did you, or they, decide not to report the incident? (Check all that apply)**

<b>Respondent %</b>	<b>Response %</b>	
8.18%	4.15%	Wanted to forget it happened
5.83%	2.96%	Didn't want my/their family to find out
1.22%	0.62%	Thought it would distract me/them from my work
0.56%	0.29%	Where I/they come from, these things aren't talked about
1.03%	0.53%	I was/they were away from campus or on co-op or study abroad
4.23%	2.15%	Not clear that harm was intended
1.60%	0.81%	Don't know
2.07%	1.05%	Other (please specify)

**Q23. Please indicate how likely you are to engage in the following behaviors: - Assist a peer who is a victim of sexual violence**

<b>Percent</b>	
74.77%	Very likely
23.47%	Likely
1.30%	Unlikely
0.46%	Very unlikely

**Q24. Please indicate how likely you are to engage in the following behaviors: - Assist a peer who reports an instance of sexual violence**

<b>Percent</b>	
69.89%	Very likely
27.60%	Likely
2.04%	Unlikely
0.46%	Very unlikely

**Q25. Please indicate how likely you are to engage in the following behaviors: - Intervene when you suspect a peer might become a victim of sexual violence**

<b>Percent</b>	
54.37%	Very likely
39.59%	Likely
5.67%	Unlikely
0.37%	Very unlikely

**Q26. Please indicate how likely you are to engage in the following behaviors: - Asking someone who has had too much to drink if they need help getting home**

<b>Percent</b>	
62.72%	Very likely
30.80%	Likely
5.64%	Unlikely
0.83%	Very unlikely

**Q27. Please indicate how likely you are to engage in the following behaviors: - Refuse to remain silent about instances of sexual violence you may know about**

**Percent**

41.18%	Very likely
42.38%	Likely
14.04%	Unlikely
2.40%	Very unlikely

**Q28. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

**If someone were to report an instance of sexual violence on campus . . . - The University would take the report seriously.**

**Percent**

38.27%	Strongly agree
50.19%	Agree
9.76%	Disagree
1.78%	Strongly disagree

**Q29. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

**If someone were to report an instance of sexual violence on campus . . . - The University would limit the disclosure of information to those who need to know.**

**Percent**

42.27%	Strongly agree
50.05%	Agree
6.28%	Disagree
1.41%	Strongly disagree

**Q30. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

**If someone were to report an instance of sexual violence on campus . . . - The University would take steps to protect the safety of the person making the report.**

**Percent**

35.91%	Strongly agree
51.46%	Agree
10.65%	Disagree
1.98%	Strongly disagree

**Q31. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

**If someone were to report an instance of sexual violence on campus . . . - The University would support the person making the report.**

**Percent**

31.44%	Strongly agree
52.12%	Agree
13.98%	Disagree
2.46%	Strongly disagree

**Q32. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

**If someone were to report an instance of sexual violence on campus . . . - The University would take corrective action against the offender.**

**Percent**

26.48% Strongly agree

48.07% Agree

21.02% Disagree

4.43% Strongly disagree

**Q33. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

**If someone were to report an instance of sexual violence on campus . . . - The University would take steps to protect the person making the report from retaliation.**

**Percent**

27.97% Strongly agree

52.26% Agree

17.04% Disagree

2.73% Strongly disagree

**Q34. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I trust that my friends would watch out for me if it seemed like something bad might happen to me at a party or social event.**

**Percent**

60.87% Strongly agree

34.03% Agree

4.16% Disagree

0.95% Strongly disagree

**Q35. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - Most Northeastern students would respect someone who did something to prevent an instance of sexual violence.**

**Percent**

44.03% Strongly agree

47.54% Agree

7.77% Disagree

0.66% Strongly disagree

**Q36. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I feel confident in my ability to judge when someone is too intoxicated to give consent.**

**Percent**

55.11% Strongly agree

38.45% Agree

5.78% Disagree

0.66% Strongly disagree

**Q37. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - Northeastern students would support the person making a report of an instance of sexual violence.**

**Percent**

35.52% Strongly agree

55.37% Agree

8.17% Disagree

0.95% Strongly disagree

**Q38. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - Northeastern students would label the person making a report of an instance of sexual violence a trouble maker.**

**Percent**

8.48% Strongly agree

19.24% Agree

52.19% Disagree

20.10% Strongly disagree

**Q39. How often do you . . . - Hear Northeastern students make jokes about sexual violence?**

**Percent**

6.09% Very frequently

19.03% Frequently

47.95% Infrequently

26.93% Very infrequently

**Q40. How often do you . . . - See online posts from Northeastern students that make jokes about sexual violence?**

**Percent**

1.91% Very frequently

7.46% Frequently

42.73% Infrequently

47.90% Very infrequently

**Q41. How often do you . . . - See Northeastern students describe other students in sexually explicit, graphic or degrading ways on email lists or social media sites that you belong to?**

**Percent**

4.49% Very frequently

13.28% Frequently

39.35% Infrequently

42.88% Very infrequently

**Q42. How often do you . . . - Hear Northeastern students make sexist remarks?**

**Percent**

15.20% Very frequently

**Q42. How often do you . . . - Hear Northeastern students make sexist remarks?**

**Percent**

35.28%	Frequently
36.71%	Infrequently
12.81%	Very infrequently

**Q43. How often do you . . . - Receive emailed pictures of a sexual nature that you found offensive?**

**Percent**

0.48%	Very frequently
0.96%	Frequently
15.90%	Infrequently
82.66%	Very infrequently

**Q44. How often do you . . . - Hear Northeastern students make inappropriate comments about your or someone else's body or attractiveness?**

**Percent**

13.40%	Very frequently
29.28%	Frequently
35.17%	Infrequently
22.15%	Very infrequently

**Q45. How often do you . . . - Hear Northeastern students make inappropriate comments about your or someone else's sexual orientation?**

**Percent**

7.04%	Very frequently
15.03%	Frequently
40.82%	Infrequently
37.11%	Very infrequently

**Q46. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - The University is concerned about my welfare.**

**Percent**

24.76%	Strongly agree
60.00%	Agree
12.67%	Disagree
2.57%	Strongly disagree

**Q47. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I feel safe on this campus.**

**Percent**

36.69%	Strongly agree
57.79%	Agree
4.94%	Disagree

**Q47. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I feel safe on this campus.**

**Percent**

0.57%	Strongly disagree
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**Q48. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - There is a good support system on campus for students going through difficult times.**

**Percent**

20.62%	Strongly agree
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59.63%	Agree
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15.32%	Disagree
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4.43%	Strongly disagree
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**Q49. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I have a role in making Northeastern a safe and supportive community.**

**Percent**

35.11%	Strongly agree
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54.42%	Agree
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9.32%	Disagree
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1.14%	Strongly disagree
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