



**SUNY Sexual Violence Prevalence (SVP) Survey Report
Purchase College, SUNY
Spring 2023**

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Introduction

The goal of the Sexual Violence Prevalence Survey (SVP) is to evaluate the climate experienced by students and employees at SUNY campuses regarding sexual violence. Climate assessments give institutions the opportunity to better understand their campus and make informed decisions when providing a safe educational environment.

Per SUNY Board policy and NYS Education Law 129-B, each SUNY campus will administer a uniform SVP survey to all students and employees over the age of 18 at least every other year. The survey is voluntary and anonymous. Survey responses cannot be linked to the identity of any respondent. Purchase College will next administer the SUNY Sexual Violence Prevalence survey during spring 2025.

The survey addresses students and employee knowledge about:

- The Title IX Coordinator's role;
- Campus policies and procedures addressing sexual assault;
- How and where to report sexual violence as a victim/survivor or witness;
- The availability of resources on and off campus;
- The prevalence of victimization and perpetration of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking on and off campus during a set time period;
- Bystander attitudes and behavior;
- Whether reporting individuals disclosed to the College/University and/or police, and reasons why they did or did not report;
- General awareness of any difference between the institution's policies and the penal law; and
- General awareness of the definition of affirmative consent.

Fifty-nine SUNY campuses and 17,760 students participated in this, the fourth, administration of the SVP. One campus was excluded due to low response rates. The data analysis and results exclude responses from students with missing age, Pell status, sex, or undergrad/graduate, that only answered the background questions and "Prefer not to respond" answers. Breakdowns with fewer than six respondents are also not shown.

Executive Summary

Purchase College is committed to providing a safe environment that respects all individuals, encourages exploration, and increases growth and knowledge both in and out of the classroom. To better understand our students, faculty and staff the SUNY Sexual Violence Prevalence (SVP) Survey was conducted in spring 2023. As per SUNY policy 'Results will be published on the campus website providing no personally identifiable information shall be shared'.

By [State University of New York \(SUNY\) policy](#) this SUNY-wide survey ascertains faculty and staff awareness of policies and resources, and student experience with and knowledge of college reporting and adjudicatory processes for sexual harassment, including sexual violence and other related crimes.

The response rate for students was 12% while the response rate for faculty and staff was 19.6%. While the student response rate is low, it was the fourth highest in SUNY. It is important to note that with the low student response rate, we cannot assume a representative sample. Accordingly, this report cannot serve as a basis for drawing *conclusions* regarding the state of awareness of resources and prevalence of

incidences of sexual assault on this campus. However, we are required by law to publish results and so we do so with the qualifier of potential bias.

Results indicate that faculty and staff are aware of policies, laws, and resources. 93.6% of employee respondents are aware the college has policies and procedures specifically addressing sexual assault. There were also high levels of knowledge of how to report various incidents to the college. However, the 13.6% of employee respondents who do not know how to report any incident indicate that the College should continue with its comprehensive efforts to increase awareness of process and resources.

Student responses indicate that college must continue to increase efforts to build awareness of college policies through training sessions and workshops during Orientation and other student events. There is more variability in student awareness of how (and to whom) to file a formal complaint about sexual assault, and how (and to whom) to report various other incidents to the college. The student responses to the questions on knowledge of how (and with whom) to file a formal complaint of sexual assault on campus were mixed, ranging from 35.9% (Student Affairs) to 79.9% to the Title IX Coordinator and 82.1% to UPD. Except for knowledge to report to a Title IX Coordinator, Purchase students were consistently less aware than SUNY peers.

Student responses of how to report various incidents to the college also varied – from 58% reporting they knew how to report incidents of sexual assault to 42.6% reporting they knew how to report incidents of stalking. However, 38.2% of student respondents reported that they did not know how to report any kind of incident to the college (sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence/dating violence, or stalking). Although this is slightly better than the 40% reported by all SUNY respondents, it clearly demonstrates that more work is needed to better communicate campus policies to our students. This is challenging since 26.8% of student respondents report that to their knowledge, they have not received any information regarding how to report various incidents. This is even though as part of our comprehensive prevention program all students are required to complete a Sexual Assault Prevention course which includes the definitions of key terms, namely: sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence/dating violence, and stalking. The course also provides information on how (and to whom) to report sexual assault. Additional training on the Title IX Process is conducted at every Freshman Orientation by a member of the Title IX Office and supplemental training is provided to all student athletes in accordance with NCAA requirements.

If you have recommendations about how the College can reduce the incidence of conduct that creates a hostile environment on campus, including sexual violence and related crimes, and improve the support the College offers when it does occur, please contact the Interim Title IX Coordinator at <mailto:titleix@purchase.edu>. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact [Barbara Moore](#), Director of [Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment](#).

Background

Consistent with policies of The State University of New York, Purchase College participated in the 2023 University-wide biennial SUNY Campus Climate Survey. Two separate surveys were concurrently administered, one to students and one to employees (faculty and staff). Students 18 years old or older and the entire faculty/staff population with college email addresses received the survey invitation. The survey timeline was as noted in Table #1 below.

Student Survey	Employee Survey
Heads Up Email – Tuesday, March 14th	Heads Up Email – Tuesday, March 14th
Student’s Spring Break 3/18 – 3/26	Student’s Spring Break 3/18 – 3/26
Survey Launch – Tuesday, March 28	Survey Launch – Tuesday, March 28
Invite – Tuesday, March 28	Invite – Tuesday, March 28
Reminder #1 – Monday, April 3 (Day 4)	Reminder #1 – Monday, April 3 (Day 4)
Reminder #2 – Thursday, April 6 (Day 9)	Reminder #2 – Thursday, April 6 (Day 9)
Reminder #3 – Monday, April 10 (Day 14)	Reminder #3 – Monday, April 10 (Day 14)
Reminder #4 – Thursday, April 13 (Day 18)	Reminder #4 – Thursday, April 13 (Day 18)
Survey Close – Monday, April 17	Survey Close – Monday, April 17

Table 1: Timeline for administration of the SUNY Campus Climate Survey

For the 2021 survey administration, SUNY raffled off 150 \$100 VISA gift cards system-wide, and Purchase College raffled off four (4) \$50 VISA gift cards for our students. However, for this current survey administration, incentives were not available from either SUNY or Purchase College. Given the lack of incentive at an institution that struggles with student survey response rates, a 12% student response rate (down from 14.1% for the last administration) is strong. And, as noted earlier, this is the fourth highest response rate across SUNY.

Prior to the survey start date, a marketing campaign was launched that included outreach to the entire community through announcements in College Senate and Student Government meetings, announcements through the UPD Community Officer, Student Success Mentors, and during Orientation sessions. In addition, banner announcements were placed on the Student and the Faculty/Staff portals, as well as on Moodle, with a link to flyers. Outreach was also made to various groups of students (athletes, Resident Assistants, students in Freshmen Seminars, etc.). Talking points were prepared for faculty who were interested in discussing the survey with their students. Lastly, a broadcast email was sent to the entire college community prior to the survey invitations.

The survey was administered using a SUNY platform for collecting, tracking, and sharing data. SUNY is committed to maintaining the highest standards of data security. Information is protected during internet transactions (when the survey is being completed). In addition, unit level data are securely stored with multiple firewalls and security procedures. Campuses do not have access to individual unit records. Raw data is de-identified and SUNY comparison data is provided in summary form only.

The survey was administered to the entire college population except minor students (below the age of 18) and employees without a Purchase College email address. The response rates for the Sexual Violence Prevalence survey are outlined in Table 2 below.

	spring 2023			spring 2021	spring 2019	fall 2016
	# surveyed	# responded	response rate	response rate	response rate	response rate
Faculty/Staff	1217	238	19.60%	19.30%	21.8	21.28%
Student	2984	368	12.33%	14.10%	16	7.68%

Table 2: Three-Year Trend of Student and Faculty/Staff Response Rates to the SUNY Campus Climate Survey

Table 3 below compares the student respondents to the overall population to determine the survey population's representativeness across those data elements.

		# Surveyed	# Respondent	% of Resp	% Overall Population
Age	18 to 20	1,524	216	58.7%	51.1%
	21 to 24	1,213	129	35.1%	40.7%
	25 and Over	247	23	6.3%	8.3%
			368		
Full/Part-Time	Full-Time	2,750	349	94.8%	92.2%
	Part-Time	234	19	5.2%	7.8%
		2,984	368		
Pell Grant	Yes	1,014	114	31.0%	34.0%
	No	1,970	254	69.0%	66.0%
			368		
Permanent Residency	New York State	2,535	308	83.7%	85.0%
	Unknown				
	Other US State	403	52	14.1%	13.5%
	International	46	8	2.2%	1.5%
			368		
Race/Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaskan Native	2	0	0.0%	0.1%
	Unknown	16	1	0.3%	0.5%
	Asian	122	9	2.4%	4.1%
	Black	370	28	7.6%	12.4%
	Hispanic/Latino	751	78	21.2%	25.2%
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	3	0	0.0%	0.1%
	Non-Resident Alien	54	12	3.3%	1.8%
	Two or More	170	28	7.6%	5.7%
	White	1,496	212	57.6%	50.1%
			368		
Sex	Female	1,743	244	33.2%	58.4%
	Male	1,241	124	16.8%	41.6%
			736		
Undergrad/Grad	Undergraduate	2,922	357	97.0%	97.9%
	Graduate	62	11	3.0%	2.1%

Table 3: Demographic comparison of survey respondents compared to overall headcounts.

Results

As noted earlier the low student response precludes the assumption that results are representative of the entire population. However, these results can help shape the direction of future initiatives, and more and better work must be done in future survey administrations to increase the response rate.

Campus Efforts at Policy Awareness

The Office of Diversity and Compliance provides annual Title IX training to faculty, staff, students, and any individual who is designated as a responsible party. Training is provided in various modalities; in-person, via Everfi software, and in a hybrid modality. Despite the College’s outreach to students and employees providing information on sexual assault, Table #4 below shows that students are not absorbing the training and messaging.

Despite the widespread administration of training 26.8% of student respondents report that to their knowledge they have not received any information regarding how to report various incidents of sexual assault. This is up from only 15.4% from the last survey administration in 2021. The good news is that this percentage dropped from 12.4% to 9.5% for employees.

	Student	Employee
The definition of sexual assault	54.2	75.1
How to report a sexual assault	51.8	79.6
Where to go to get help if you or someone you know is sexually assaulted	52.1	75.6
To whom you can speak confidentially about a sexual assault	45.5	68.8
Policies prohibiting sexual assault	45.2	77.4
To my knowledge, I have not received information regarding any of the above	26.8	9.5

Table 4: Percent of students and employees about how to report a sexual assault.

Results from the questions pertaining to policy awareness show that the college has more work to do to increase students, faculty and staff understanding of these important policies.

	Student	Employee
My campus has policies and procedures specifically addressing sexual assault.	70.3	93.6
Do you know how to contact the Title IX Coordinator?	44.4	67.7
Do you know the definition of Affirmative Consent?	81.8	83.3
Can someone who is incapacitated provide consent? (yes)	3.5	0
Do you know the difference between the college disciplinary process and the criminal justice system?	57.19	80.8
Do you know about SUNY’s alcohol and/or drug use amnesty policy in reporting sexual violence?	51.2	40.7

Table 5: Percent of students and employees aware of various campus policies.

Title IX Coordinator’s role

As outlined in Table 6 below, the various roles of the Title IX Coordinator are becoming better understood on campus, by both students and employees. Except for students’ knowledge of the Title IX Coordinator’s responsibility to ensure training for the community, understanding of the role of the Title IX Coordinator increased across every role for both students and employees.

<i>Which are the roles of a Title IX Coordinator in regard to sex discrimination/sexual assault/sexual misconduct? (Check all that apply)</i>	Student	Faculty/Staff
Receiving reports	75.4%	83.3%
Coordinating campus responses to complaints	56.6%	73.4%
Ensuring training/educating is provided to the campus community	47.2%	78.7%
Providing reporting individuals with accommodations and services during an investigation	53.1%	56.6%

Table 6: Student and Faculty/Staff knowledge of the role of the Title IX Coordinator.

In addition, 79.9% of student respondents are aware that a victim/survivor or witness can formally disclose a sexual assault on campus to the Title IX coordinator, and this percentage increases to 84.7% for faculty and staff respondents. This is an indication that efforts to increase employee awareness of the role of the Title IX Coordinator have been successful.

How and where to report sexual violence as a victim/survivor or witness

Purchase recognizes that making a report of sexual assault is a personal and difficult process, and all our Title IX trainings include options for reporting. Those options include the provision of information regarding how to seek confidential help and support services through Counseling and Health Services, in addition to our formal reporting policy and procedures. Training makes clear that any student describing an incidence of sexual violence to offices other than Counseling or Health Services, including the Title IX Coordinator, UPD, or HR, must understand he/she/they are making a formal report. Reports made to these offices are considered formal disclosures and, while privacy is maintained, confidentiality is not.

Survey results indicate that despite the increased training and engagement with the community, additional and sustained efforts are needed to assure that students, staff, and faculty, are not only aware, but also knowledgeable about the options and process for reporting.

Student responses to the questions pertaining to knowledge of how to report various incidences of sexual violence seem to indicate a lower level of awareness than was seen from the 2021 survey. While a majority knew how to report sexual assault (58%) and sexual harassment (52.8%), this was down from the 2021 survey respondents who reported 64.4% and 62.5% respectively. Respondent knowledge of how to report domestic and/or dating violence and stalking was also down; from 53.7% in 2021 to 43.7% in 2023 for the former and from 50.9% to 42.6 for the latter. Over 60% of student respondents do not know how to report an incidence of sexual assault, and even higher percentages of students are unaware of how to report other types of sexual violence.

The 2021 SVP report highlighted some concern that there seemed to be a sense of faculty and staff distrust about the process triggered when they report student complaints of sexual violence. It is extremely encouraging to see that the college has made great progress in building trust; 86.7% of respondents reported that they believed the campus would take their report seriously, up from only 57.6% in 2021. 74% responded that they agree the campus would conduct a fair investigation, up from 50.2%. 68.7% responded that the campus would provide the student with necessary support during the process, up from 48.8%.

In the same survey section, 78.9% of employee respondents would know how to advise a student who was sexually assaulted on where to get help, and 56.1% understands what happens when a student reports sexual assault at Purchase College. While these numbers are improving, we still lag a bit behind the employees from our SUNY peers, as shown in Table 8 below.

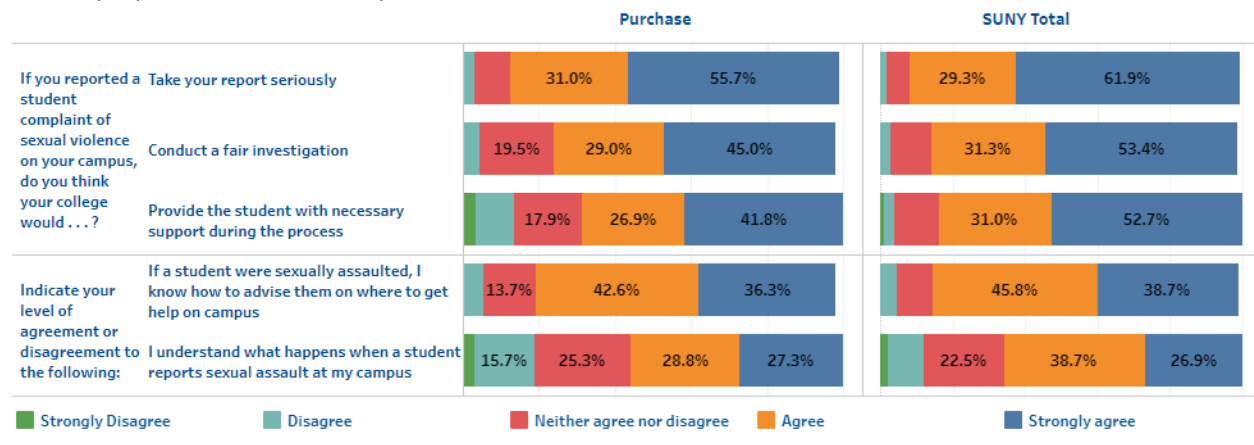


Table 8: Purchase v. SUNY employee respondents on Readiness to Help.

The availability of resources on and off campus

Employee respondents were generally aware of on-campus resources, particularly the Title IX Coordinator (84.7%), UPD (95.6%), the Counseling Center (85.9%) and the Health (Services) Center (75%). Less well known as a resource was HR (62.4%), Student Affairs (44%) and Affirmative Action (44.1%). Somewhat concerning is that 61.5% of employee respondents identified a non-existent Advocacy Services office as a resource. This speaks to the need to continue with policy awareness training across the campus.

Student respondents indicated that they were aware of on-campus resources such as the Counseling Center (82.3%), University Police (80.5%) and Health Services (72.7%). However, they were less aware of other on-campus resources such Student Conduct (42.7%) Human Resources (30%). As with the results from the employee survey, a sizable percentage of student respondents (22.9) also claimed awareness of Campus Advocacy Services available at the Counseling Center which are actively promoted.

For a variety of technical and resource reasons, the SUNY Sexual Violence Prevalence Survey does not customize the surveys for each of the 64 campuses to avoid including offices that might not exist on a particular campus. This “one size fits all” survey SUNY-wide creates some confusion due to the

researchers' inability to understand if the respondent might be referring to an office/employee with a different name, title, or structure.

The prevalence of victimization and perpetration of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking on and/off campus during the last year

The faculty/staff survey did not include questions relating to the prevalence and incidence of sexual violence and assault. The results in this section reflect only those from the student survey. While the numbers are low, any incident of sexual violence is unacceptable. It is important to note that students may be more inclined towards candor on a confidential survey (anonymous to the institution and SUNY) than they are in coming forward to report any such incidents.

For the first time, this report allows for SUNY survey respondent comparison. Compared to our SUNY peers, more of our students report hearing the disclosures of other students' victimization by an unwanted sexual experience (13.9% v. 8/8%). Despite this, fewer Purchase College student respondents reported the disclosure (53.6% v. 63.9%). This underscores a need to better understand why students do not report incidences of sexual violence, and to improve trust and support.

A number of student respondents indicated having been the recipient of some form of sexual activity rising to the level of violence without their consent during the last year, including:

<i># of student respondents indicating sexual activity without consent</i>	<i>Attempted</i>	<i>Completed</i>
someone fondled, kissed, or rubbed up against the private areas of my body	8.1%	14.6%
someone removed some of my clothes	4.1%	7.1%
someone performed oral sex on me or forced me to perform oral sex		6.1%
someone sexually penetrated me		7.1%

Table 9: Number of students who responded on the survey that they were the recipient of some form of non-consensual sexual activity.

The survey asks for incidents that occurred in the past year but does not specify for each incident whether it took place on campus. However, when asked to identify the perpetrators affiliation with the college for the most recent incident, 58.1% indicated some form of affiliation, including other college students. Every reported incident is taken very seriously and is given a thorough review by the Title IX Coordinator and Office of Diversity and Compliance.

Whether victims/survivors reported to the College and/or police, and reasons why they did or did not report

For the respondents above who indicated that they had been a victim of some form of sexual assault, 61% reported that they told someone, and 20.3% reported filing a formal complaint with someone at the college. However, 69.5% reported they did *not* file a formal complaint with the college, and 10.2% were not sure if they did or did not. The most common reasons given for not filing a formal complaint

were 1) They just did not want to deal with it (52.8%), 2) They did not think it was important enough (47.2%), or 3) They did not trust the campus to take appropriate action (38.9%). These survey results highlight the need to continue to work on building trust in our Title IX policies, procedures, and staff.

The general awareness of the definition of affirmative consent

83.8% of employee respondents and 81.8% of student respondents were aware of the definition of affirmative consent, both up from 2021. While a good majority of student respondents were aware that an incapacitated person cannot give consent (92.5%), all the employee respondents were so aware. This is an increase for employee respondents but a slight decrease for student respondents.

Discussion and Next Steps

Purchase recognizes that making a report of sexual assault is a personal and difficult process, and all our Title IX trainings include options for reporting. Those options include the provision of information regarding how to seek confidential help and support services through Counseling and Health Services, in addition to our formal reporting policy and procedures. Training makes clear that any student describing an incidence of sexual violence to offices other than Counseling or Health Services, including the Title IX Coordinator, UPD, or HR, must understand he/she/they are making a formal report. Reports made to these offices are considered formal disclosures and, while privacy is maintained, confidentiality is not.

Survey results indicate that despite the increased training and engagement with the community, additional and sustained efforts are needed to assure that students, staff, and faculty, are not only aware, but also knowledgeable about the options and process for reporting.

During the period between surveys, Purchase has taken steps to address the deficiencies noted in the survey, namely increasing awareness about the process for reporting, creating trust in the Title IX Office through increased presence, transparency, and engagement and by developing a more efficient process through better use of Maxient software.

Additionally in May of 2023 Barbara Washington joined the Title IX Office. Barbara has a long tenure with Purchase College and is currently an Associate Director of Student Success.

We have developed a process for improving response times, using Maxient for timed e-mail follow-ups that Barbara will help to maintain. We have developed a new case monitoring system that will allow us to collect data and calculate our average case resolution rates so that we can report accurate information and have a metric for continued improvement.

To address the numbers that show that our students report not being aware of where to report and to whom, we will review our delivery of policies and procedures to assure that they are user friendly and easily accessible. This will include a re-design of our website, so that information is clear and easy to locate.

The office will continue to collaborate with student leadership and the campus safety committee to address any concerns that students may have and will create open office hours to increase visibility and approachability.