



## **2019 Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Campus Climate Survey Report Executive Summary**

In April 2019, Wheaton distributed its biennial Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Campus Climate Survey to the entire student body via email. Wheaton had previously distributed similar campus climate surveys in the spring of 2015 and the spring of 2017.

Wheaton takes the issue of sexual and gender-based misconduct very seriously and seeks to create open dialogues with learning opportunities to help raise awareness and share resources available to students. Continuing these discussions and prevention efforts remains an important part of our work going forward. In order to do this, Wheaton utilizes the Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Campus Climate Survey to better understand the prevalence of sexual and gender-based misconduct on our campus, as well as to get a sense of students' knowledge of resources, perceptions, beliefs, and readiness to help. The survey serves as an assessment of our campus environment as it relates to sexual and gender-based misconduct and helps Wheaton:

- improve education and prevention programs;
- better respond to students who have experienced incidents of sexual and gender-based misconduct; and
- better understand behavior on our campus that goes unreported and why.

Several weeks were allotted for the completion of the survey and participation was encouraged through various opportunities to win cash prizes. In total, 372 students participated, which is just over 20% of the student population. Of the total number of respondents, 72% percent were women, 24% were men, and 5% were gender nonconforming.<sup>1</sup> It is probable that students who have experienced sexual or gender-based misconduct were more likely to respond than other students. More than one half of respondents were first or second year students, and 2% were international students.

This Executive Summary is divided into the following sections:

- I. Assessment of Campus Climate
- II. Unwanted Sexual Behavior
- III. Stalking
- IV. Intimate Partner Abuse
- V. Bystander Intervention

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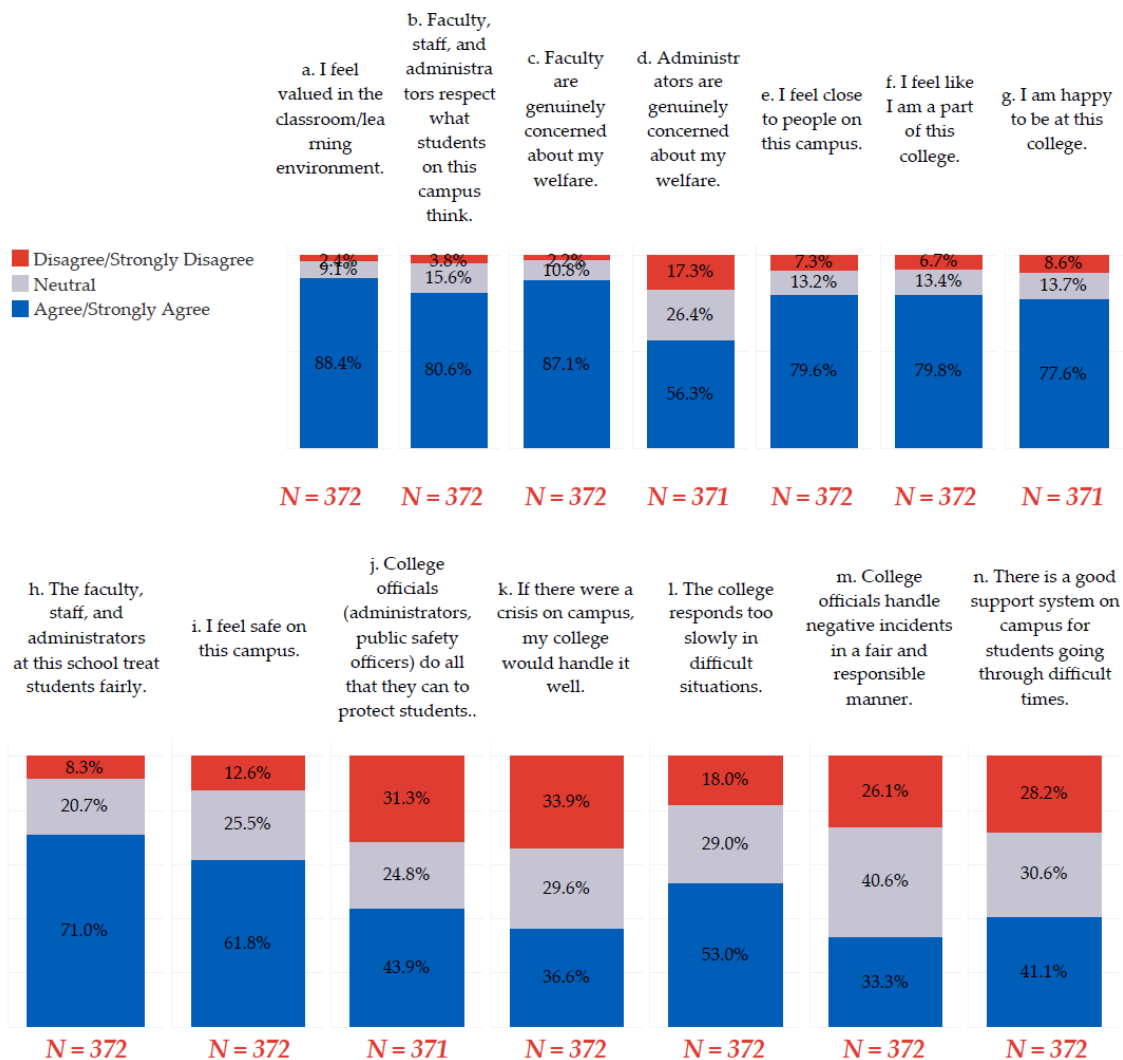
<sup>1</sup> The category "gender nonconforming" includes respondents who selected nonbinary, genderqueer, gender fluid, and/or agender. We appreciate that not all of these identities are typically placed in the "gender nonconforming" category, however due to the small sample size, they were combined in order to protect the anonymity of respondents.

**Content Warning:** Some of the information within this Executive Summary includes explicit language and references to sexual assault and sexual violence. The summary may be upsetting or cause discomfort and may result in the reminders of previous experiences with sexual misconduct. If you are a Wheaton community member and would like to speak to someone or learn more about resources and reporting options, please visit our sexual assault information page.

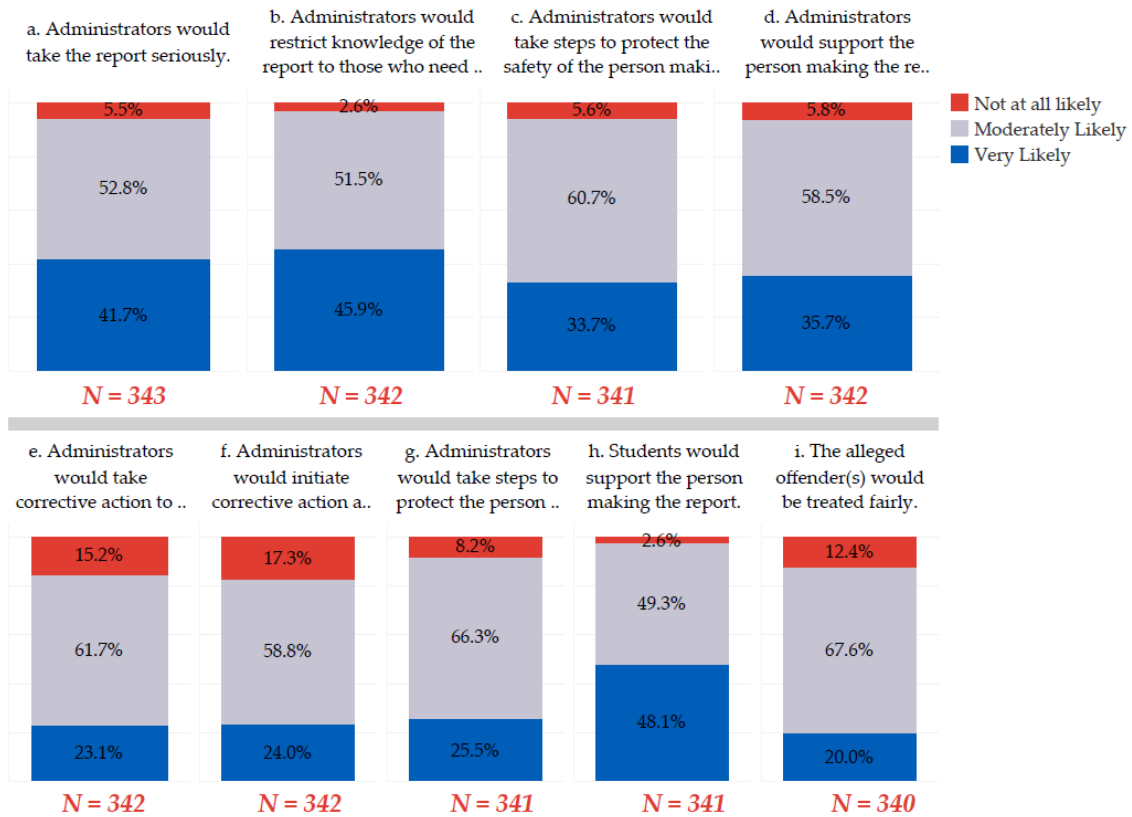
## I. Assessment of Campus Climate

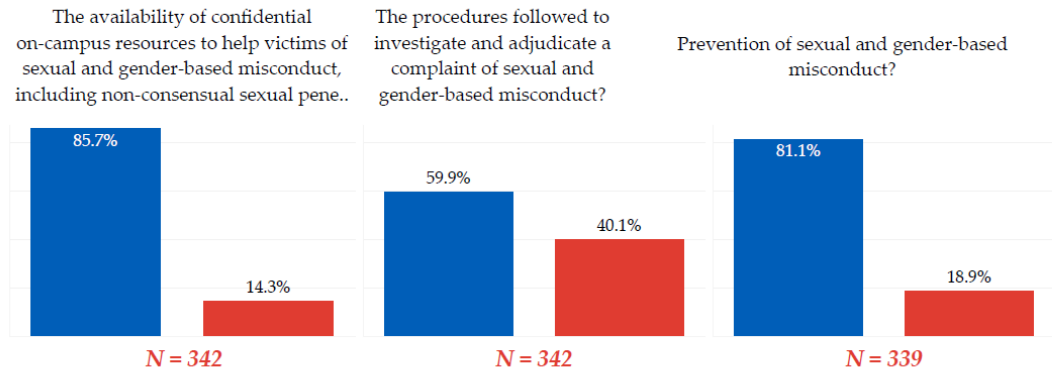
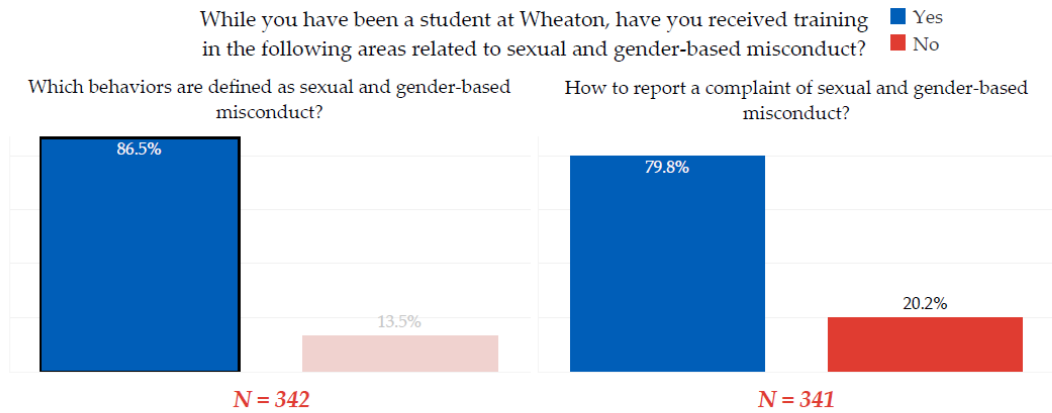
Students offered an overall positive assessment of the college community, with 80% to 90% indicating (agree or strongly agree) that they feel valued and respected and feel close to people on campus. On the other hand, students were more critical of administrative reactions to negative events. Between 60% and 70% disagreed/strongly disagreed that the administration would be timely in their response or handle an on-campus crisis well. Although we are heartened by a generally positive assessment of the community and believe that our community atmosphere encourages students who experience assaults to report, the proportion of students who feel that the college has a good support system for those in difficult situations is lower than we would like. We will consider this finding as we review college policy and as we develop programs and trainings (in which all students are required to participate).

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

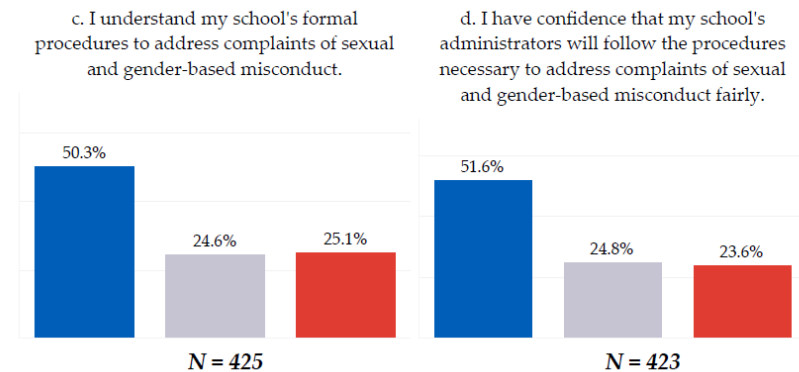
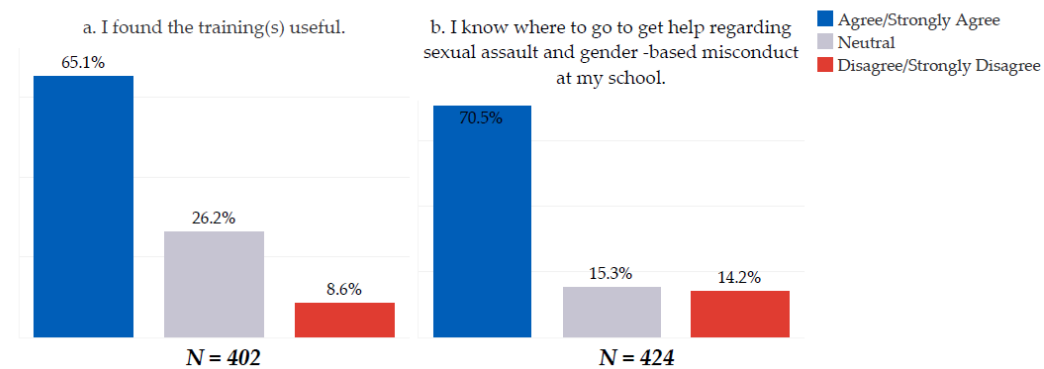


If someone were to report sexual and gender-based misconduct, including sexual assault to administrators at Wheaton, how likely is it that:





Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

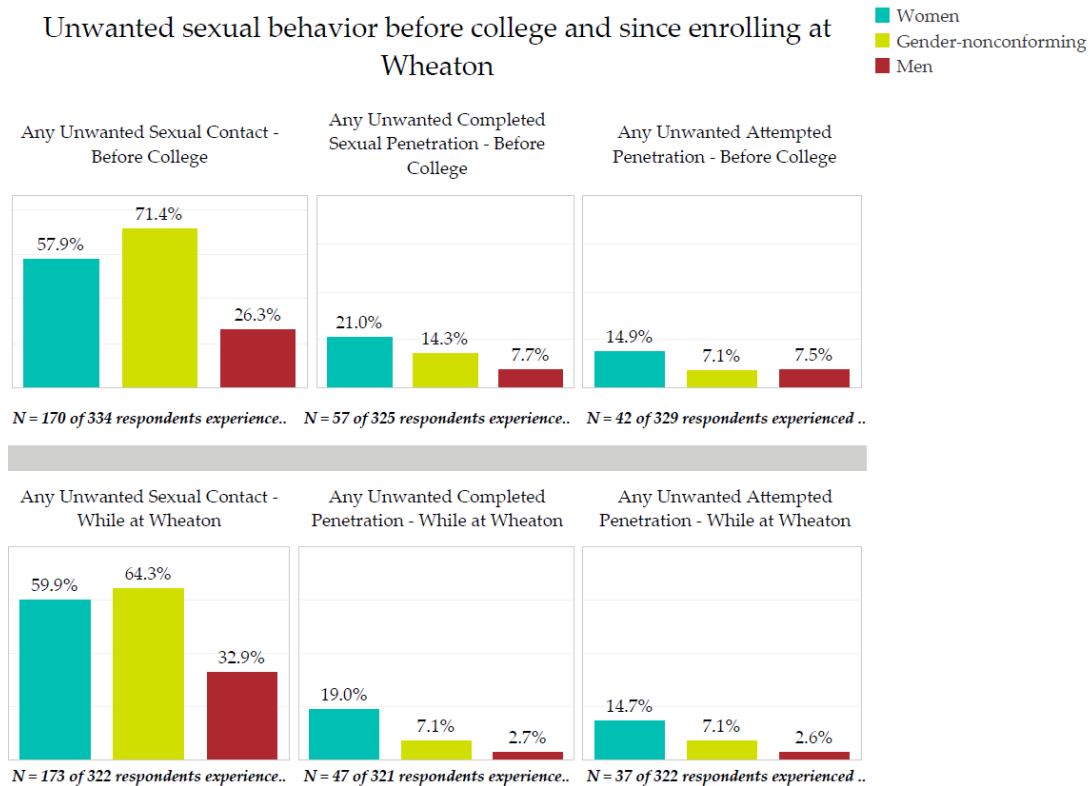


## II. Unwanted Sexual Behavior

Of those respondents to answer the question, 57% of women (N=139), 71% of gender nonconforming students (N=10), and 26% of men (N=21) reported unwanted sexual contact before arriving at college. We keep these data in mind as we conduct new student orientation and offer support services.

While at Wheaton, of those respondents who answered the question, nearly 60% of women (N=139), 64% of gender nonconforming students (N=9), and nearly one third of men (N=25) report experiencing unwanted sexual contact. Unwanted sexual penetration (by non-physical coercion, physical force or incapacitation) was reported by 19% of women (N=44), 7.1% of gender nonconforming students (N=1), and 2.7% of men (N=2).

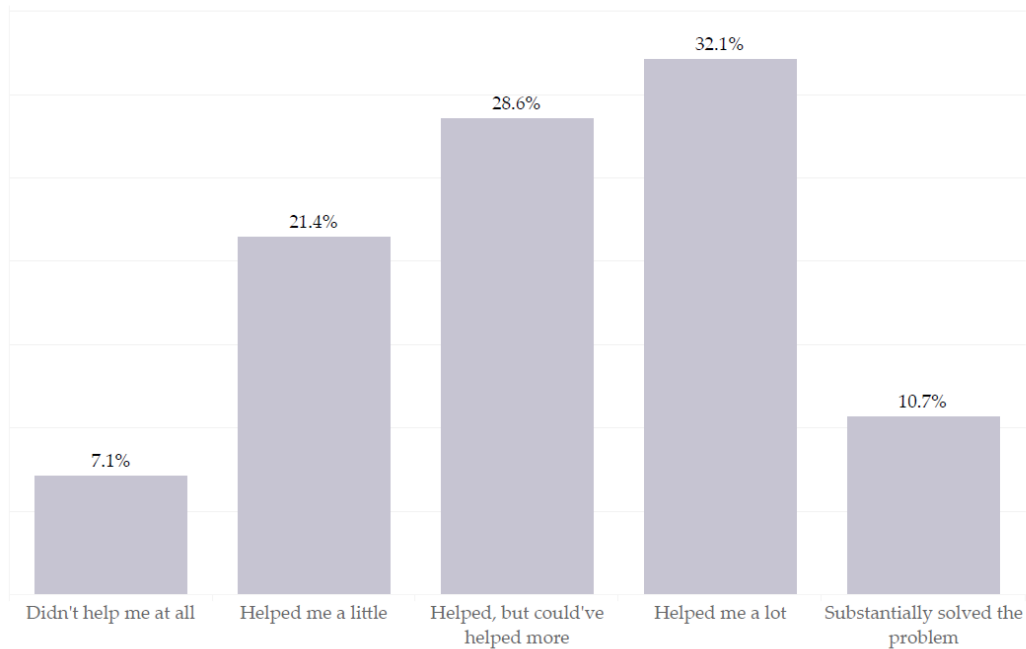
Wheaton is committed to decreasing sexual misconduct on campus and continues to invest in prevention education, training, and programming through its Sexual Misconduct and Assault Resource Team (SMART) Coordinator and with the funding and oversight of the College's third Department of Justice Office on Violence against Women (OVW) grant.



## Who did you tell about the incident(s)?



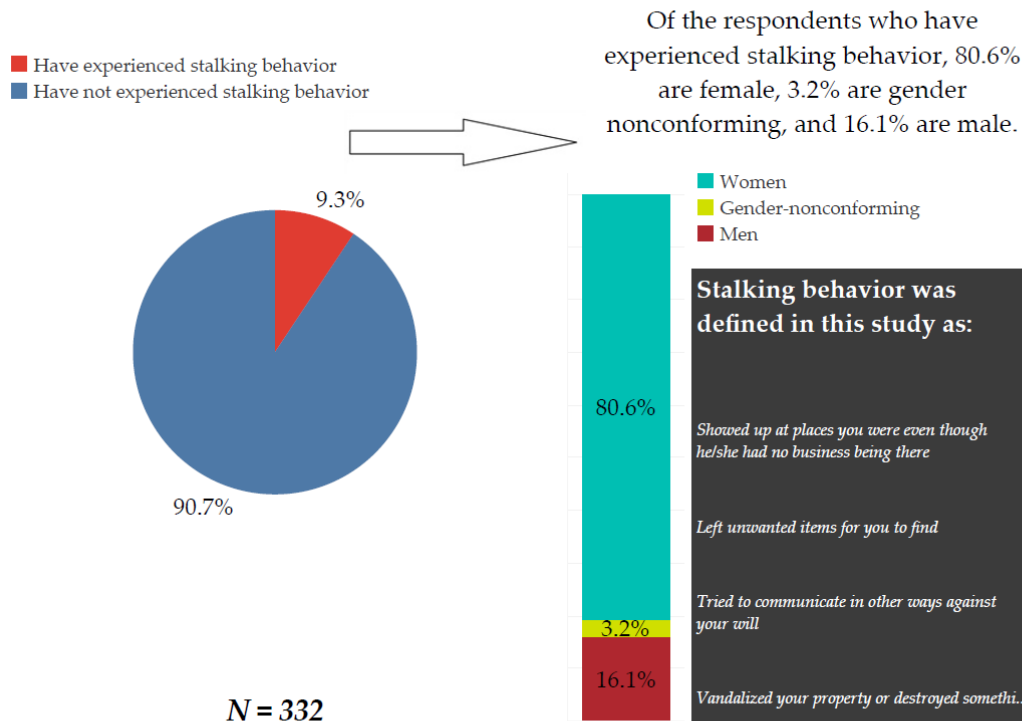
## To what extent did talking with Wheaton staff or faculty help you deal with the incident?



### III. Stalking

Respondents were asked about a range of stalking behaviors, and 31 students reported having experienced such behavior since enrolling at Wheaton. Of all those who responded to this question, stalking behavior was experienced by 10.5% of women, 6.7% of gender nonconforming students, and 6.3% of men. Through the OVW grant, the college plans to continue to bring awareness to the Wheaton community about stalking behaviors and engage on prevention efforts.

Since enrolling at Wheaton, **31 students** have experienced stalking behavior

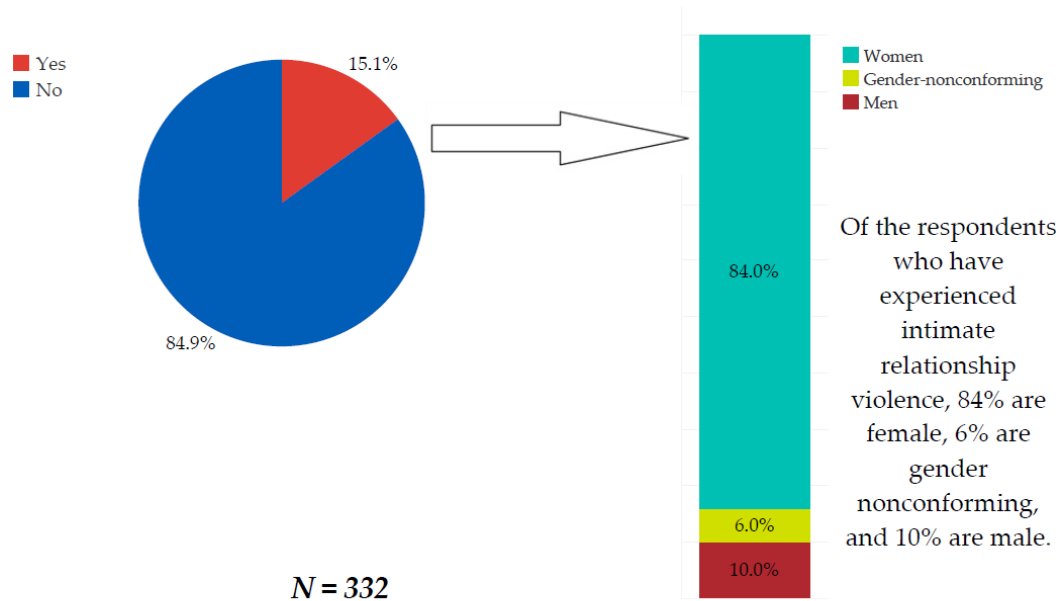


### IV. Intimate Partner Abuse

When asked whether a dating or intimate partner has been physically or emotionally abusive since they started college, 50 respondents said “yes.” Of those respondents, 17.7% were women (N=42), 20% were gender nonconforming students (N=3), and 6.3% were men (N=5).

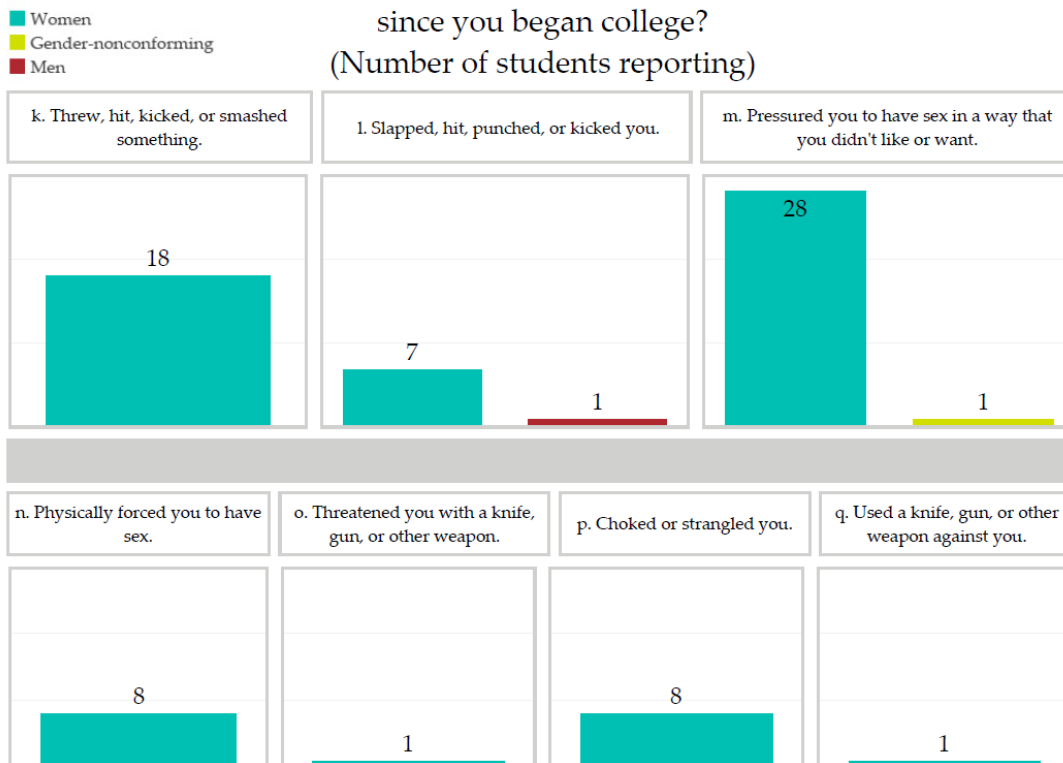
The survey also asked respondents about their experiences with a broad range of behaviors (from throwing/kicking/smashing something to forced sex to physical assault with a weapon). Responses indicate that a number of Wheaton students are in troubled relationships. Increases in our programming about healthy relationships and positive sexuality will remain important in addressing this. When we review the data on serious physical violence we see relatively small numbers: seven women and one man report being slapped, kicked, hit or punched, and eight women report being physically forced to have sex with their intimate partner. Eight women report being choked or strangled, one woman was threatened with a gun or other weapon and one woman had a knife, gun or other weapon used against her. While the rates of these physical

assaults are low, these are extremely troubling behaviors that are of significant concern and can result in trauma, serious injury, and can be potentially lethal. More attention to intimate partner violence on campus continues to be a priority. Wheaton looks forward to continued education programming and prevention work in this area.



How often did the following behaviors occur during a relationship you've had since you began college?

(Number of students reporting)



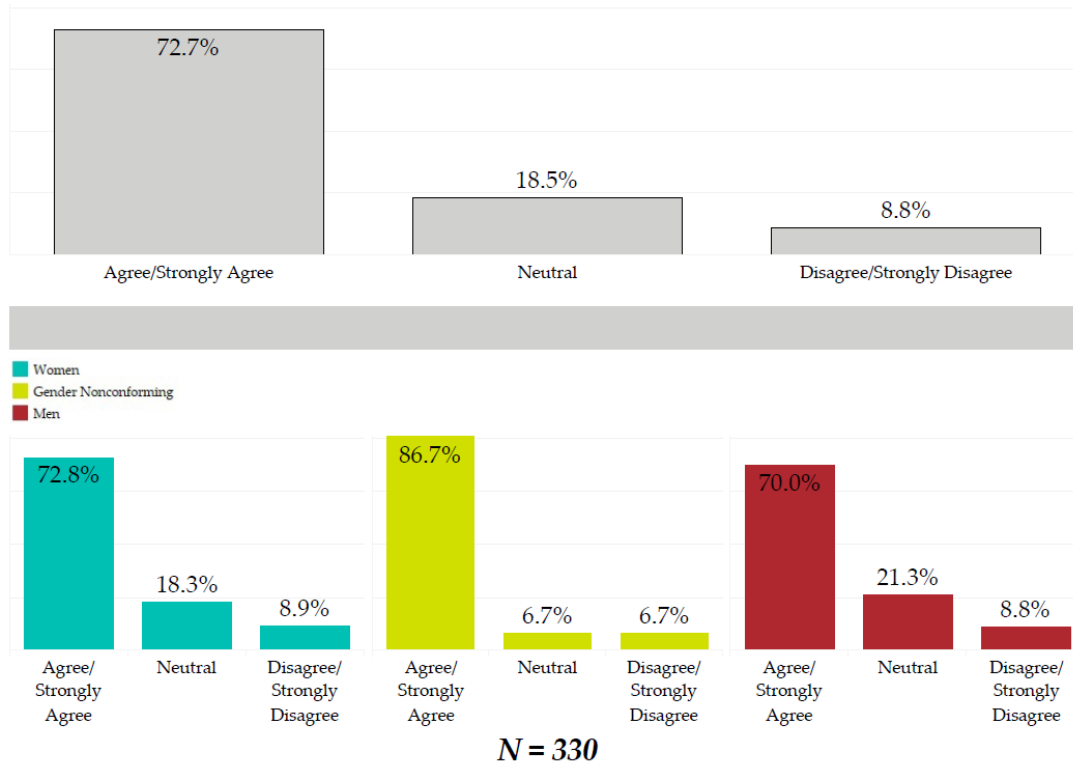
$N = 50$



## V. Bystander Intervention

The survey concludes with a few items designed to assess bystander intervention. When asked if most Wheaton students would intervene if they saw a friend using alcohol, drugs or force to engage in sexual conduct, a large proportion agreed. More gender nonconforming students (86.7%) than women (72.8%) or men (70%) thought other students would intervene in such a circumstance. When asked if most Wheaton students would report sexual or gender-based misconduct, the proportion agreeing dropped to 46.7% for gender nonconforming students, 27.4% for women and 43.8% for men. The respondents were given an opportunity to write about their thoughts on student intervention and many did so, providing valuable qualitative observations. As we have done in previous years, we plan to use some of this material to inform our bystander intervention education and programming.

I think most students at Wheaton would be willing to actively intervene if they saw a friend using alcohol/drugs or force to engage in sexual contact.



Most Wheaton students would report a friend who engaged in sexual and gender-based misconduct, including non-consensual sexual penetration.

