

Survey Results: 2014 Unwanted Sexual Behavior

In April 2014, George Washington University conducted a survey to better understand students' experiences of unwanted sexual behaviors occurring within the GW community.¹ The research set out to assess the prevalence and perceptions of prohibited sexual behaviors – both personal experiences and the experiences of others they know. The survey also gathered information related to experiences of reporting and intent to report unwanted sexual behavior at the university.

The survey instrument was designed with advice from the U.S. Department of Education and included questions adapted from several studies on related topics conducted at other universities. This document is a summary of the most pertinent results corresponding to questions asked. The survey was completed by 713 students, including 362 undergraduate and 337 graduate students, which reflects a 24 percent response rate. As shown below, students representing a variety of backgrounds participated in the study.

Profile of survey participants*		
	Undergraduate	Graduate
Gender		
Male	125	127
Female	234	203
Transgender	1	2
Race/ethnicity		
Asian	36	96
White	284	201
Underrepresented minority	59	52
Sexual orientation		
Heterosexual	312	291
LGBT	48	42

*Responses to these demographic items were optional and multiple responses were accepted.

When appearing in this report, the term “forcible acts/behaviors” is used. Those behaviors include a select number from a predetermined list included in the survey:

- Forced someone to do something sexual other than kissing
- Forced kiss on someone
- Clothing pulled at, off, or down in an unwanted sexual way
- Blocked someone’s way, corner, or follow you in an unwanted sexual way
- Touched, grabbed, or pinched someone in an unwanted sexual way

The document is organized into the following sections:

1. Perceptions of the Sexual Climate at GW
2. Personal Experience with Unwanted Sexual Behavior at GW
3. Others’ Experience with Unwanted Sexual Behaviors
4. Reporting/Discussing Incidents

¹ TRIGGER WARNING: Some of the questions asked about sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence might be upsetting. The results might remind you of experiences that you, or a friend or family member, have gone through. If you would like to talk to someone immediately about questions or concerns relating to sexual assault or intimate partner violence, please visit University Counseling Center: <http://counselingcenter.gwu.edu>.

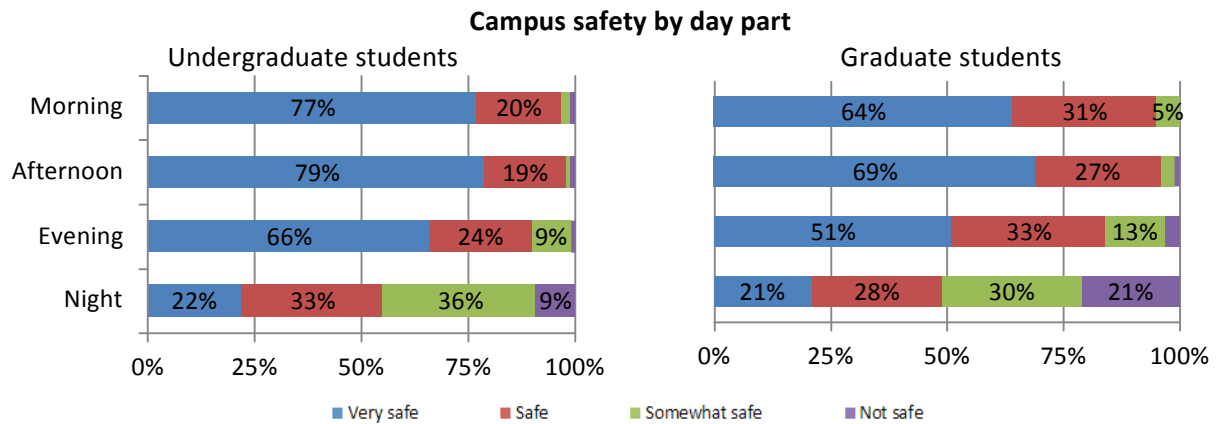
1. Perceptions of the Sexual Climate at GW

Participants were asked a series of questions about the sexual climate at George Washington University. Among the key findings were:

- The vast majority of students do not feel unsafe on campus at any point in the day and the majority believe that the university has policies regarding sexual harassment
- Few students feel that the university is not effective in creating a proper climate free from unwanted sexual behavior, however the majority of students feel that the university should do more to raise awareness about sexual harassment issues
- Few students report participating in programming providing information about the policies prohibiting and procedures for reporting sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking while at GW

Campus Safety

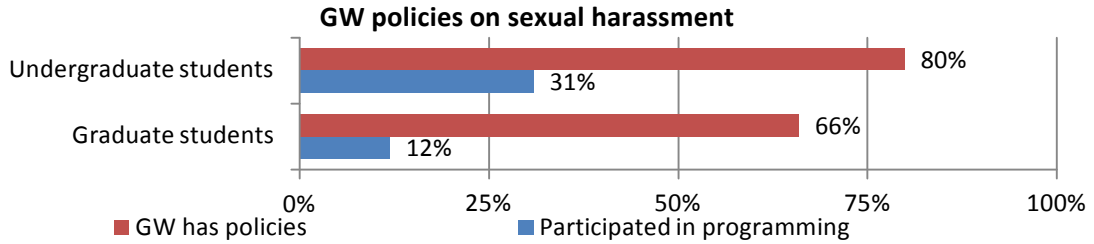
Respondents were asked how safe they felt on campus at various times of day. As a whole, students do not perceive the campus to be unsafe, even at night. However, roughly one-in-five freshman females and graduate students (21 percent each) feel that the campus is unsafe at night.



GW Policies on Sexual Harassment

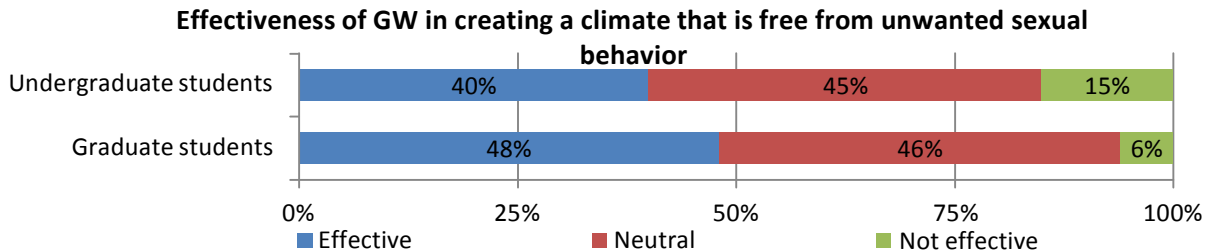
Respondents were asked two questions related to GW’s policies on sexual harassment: 1) If GW has such policies and 2) if they had participated in programming/training that provided information about the policies prohibiting and procedures for reporting sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence or stalking while at GW.

The majority of students indicated that GW has sexual harassment policies – 80 percent of undergraduate students and 66 percent of graduate students. While the majority of students are aware of the policies, far fewer students reported participating in programming related to them (31 percent of undergraduate students and 12 percent of graduate students).

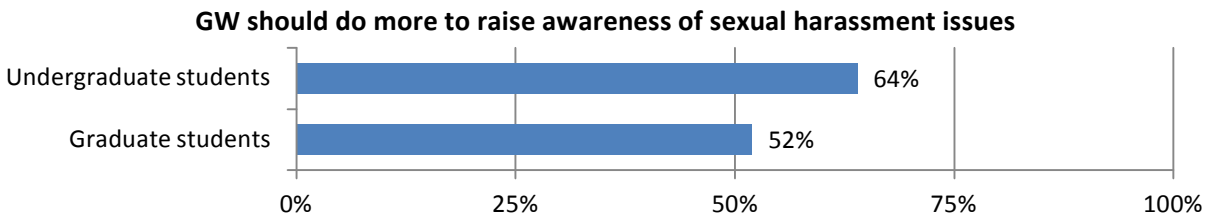


Effectiveness in Creating Climate Free From Unwanted Sexual Behavior

Respondents were asked to rate how effectively is GW, from their perspective, creating a climate that is free from sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating / domestic violence, or stalking. Fewer than half of the respondents perceive GW as being effective in creating a climate free from unwanted sexual behavior. Among undergrads, LGBT and underrepresented minorities are most critical of the university’s campus climate; 27 percent and 23 percent, respectively, provided a bottom-two-box rating suggesting that GW is not effective.



The majority of students (64 percent of undergrads and 52 percent of graduate students) feel that the university should do more to raise awareness of sexual harassment issues. One segment of the undergraduate population – freshmen males – are significantly less likely than the undergrad population as a whole to feel that the university should do more (46 percent compared to 64 percent).



2. Personal Experience with Unwanted Sexual Behavior at GW

Participants were asked a series of questions about their own personal experience with unwanted sexual behavior while at George Washington University. Among the key findings are:

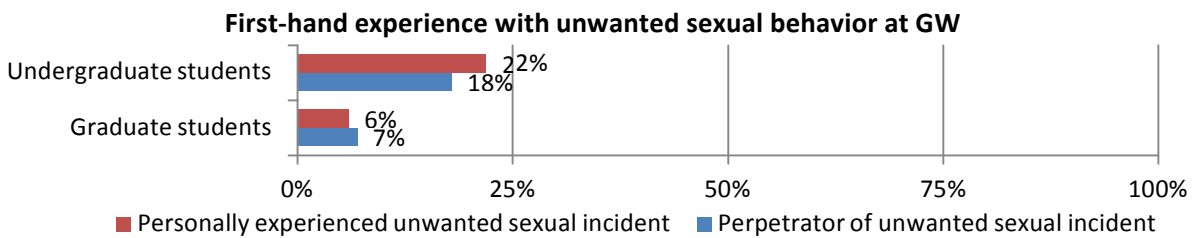
- Unwanted sexual behavior is more likely to involve undergraduate students (one-in-five) than graduate students (less than one-in-ten)
- 36 percent of upperclass females have experienced unwanted sexual behavior and 31 percent have experienced a forced sexual encounter while at GW
- 35 percent of LGBT undergraduates have experienced unwanted sexual behavior and 31 percent have experienced a forced sexual act/behavior while at GW
- This unwanted sexual behavior is nearly as likely to be perpetrated against undergraduates by someone unaffiliated with GW as it was to be perpetrated by a GW student, while unwanted

sexual behavior was more likely to be perpetrated against graduate students by someone unaffiliated with GW

- One-in-three upperclass males reported perpetrating an unwanted sexual behavior, most frequently unwanted comments/jokes/looks, and 2 percent indicated that they perpetrated a forced sexual act/behavior while at GW

First-hand Experience with Unwanted Sexual Behavior at GW

Respondents were asked if they have personally experienced what they would consider to be sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking while enrolled at GW. As shown below, incidents are more likely to involve undergraduate students than graduate students. 22 percent of undergraduate students personally experienced unwanted sexual behavior and 18 percent perpetrated unwanted sexual behavior at GW. One-in-three upperclass females (36 percent) and undergrad who are LGBT (35 percent) had personally experienced an unwanted sexual behavior at GW.



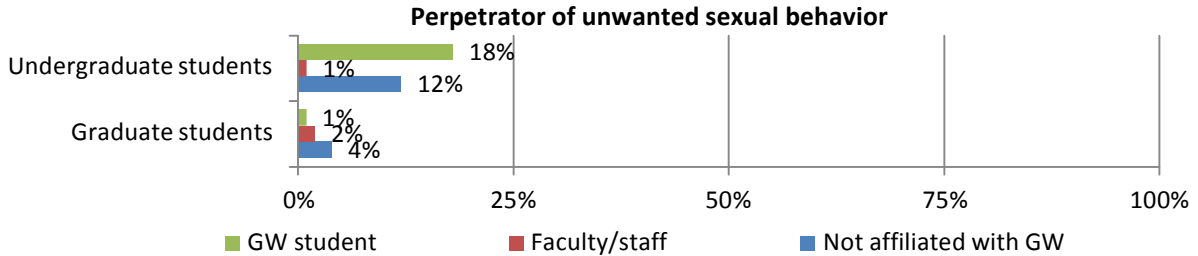
Behaviors Personally Experienced

Respondents were provided with a list of 13 specific behaviors and asked which they had experienced. More than one-in-five undergraduate females reported receiving unwanted sexual comments, jokes, or looks and/or reported being touched, grabbed, or pinched in an unwanted sexual way. LGBT undergraduates, too, were in a high risk segment; one-in four reported receiving unwanted sexual comments, jokes and/or reported being forced to do something sexual. The responses for these segments are shown below.

Behaviors personally experienced	Behaviors personally experienced			
	Upperclass male	Upperclass female	Undergrad Heterosexual	Undergrad LGBT
Forced kiss	10%	9%	5%	19%
Intentionally bushed up against	7%	19%	9%	19%
Forced to do something sexual	10%	16%	7%	25%
Touched, grabbed, pinched in sexual way	8%	24%	13%	25%
Clothes pulled at, off, down	8%	17%	10%	19%
Sexual pictures or notes	7%	7%	4%	12%
Flashed	7%	3%	3%	4%
Blocked way, cornered, followed in sexual way	6%	1%	7%	4%
Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, looks	5%	27%	13%	27%
Sexual rumors	5%	8%	6%	15%
Sexual messages	5%	3%	2%	10%
Sexual favor in return for something	3%	1%	2%	2%
Spied on while dressing/in shower	2%	-	<1%	4%

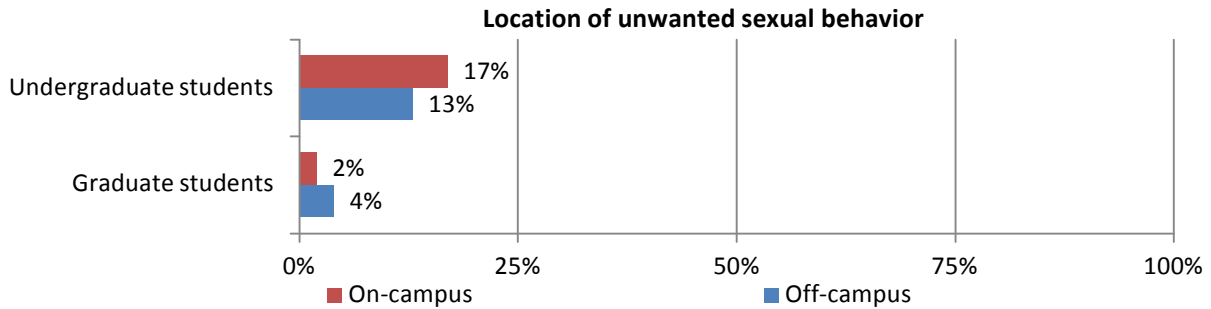
Perpetrator of Unwanted Sexual Behavior

Freshmen females were significantly less likely to have had a problem with someone unaffiliated with GW, as compared to upperclass females (8 percent compared to 23 percent). Unwanted sexual behavior against graduate students, on the other hand, typically involved someone unaffiliated with the university.



Location of Unwanted Sexual Behavior

Respondents were asked where they encountered sexual harassment or violence. For undergraduate students, unwanted sexual behavior was slightly more likely to have occurred on-campus than off-campus (most likely in student housing). Unwanted sexual behavior against graduate students, on the other hand, was more likely to have occurred off-campus.



Location of unwanted sexual behaviors (undergraduate students)

	Male	Female	LGBT
Student housing	5%	16%	23%
Campus grounds	3%	12%	10%
On-campus party	2%	7%	12%
Campus buildings	2%	4%	6%
Classroom	-	1%	2%
Off-campus	6%	19%	23%

Perpetrating Unwanted Sexual Behavior

Respondents were provided with a list of 13 specific behaviors and asked which they have, as an individual or as part of a group, participated in while enrolled at GW. The most frequently cited behavior was an unwanted sexual comment, joke, or look, and undergraduate males and members of the LGBT undergraduate community were more likely to engage in verbal unwanted sexual behavior.

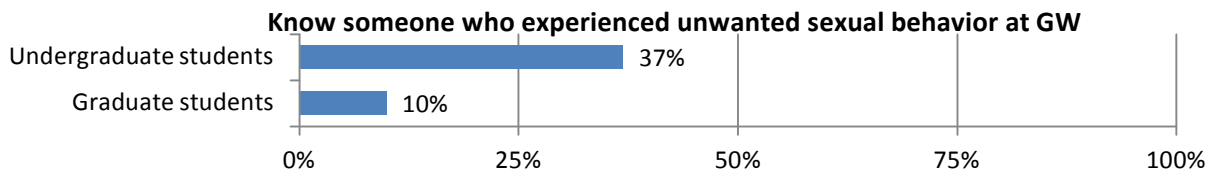
Unwanted sexual behaviors students engage or participate in

	Upperclass male	Upperclass female	Undergrad LGBT
Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, looks	27%	8%	27%
Intentionally bushed up against	2%	3%	4%
Sexual rumors	3%	2%	8%
Sexual messages	3%	2%	4%
Forced someone to do something sexual	-	1%	-
Sexual pictures or notes	7%	7%	6%
Touch, grab, pinch in unwanted sexual way	-	1%	-
Clothes pulled at, off, down	2%	1%	2%
Block way, corner, follow in unwanted sexual way	-	-	-
Forced kiss	-	1%	-
Flashed	-	1%	4%
Sexual favor in return for something	2%	-	4%
Spying while dressing/in shower	2%	-	-

3. Others' Experience with Unwanted Sexual Behaviors

Participants were asked a series of questions about people they know personally (e.g., a friend or classmate) who experienced sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking while he or she was enrolled at GW. Among the key findings were:

- More than one-in-three undergraduate students report knowing someone who experienced unwanted sexual behavior at GW, including half of the upperclass females and LGBT undergraduates (51 percent and 52 percent, respectively)
- Nearly half of the upperclass females know someone who was forced to do something sexual
- More than one-in-three LGBT undergraduates know someone who was forced to do something sexual
- One-in-ten graduate students know someone who experienced unwanted sexual behavior



When responding to the list of specific behaviors:

- 41 percent of upperclass females indicated that they know someone who was forced to do something sexual and 24 percent of upperclass males indicated that they know someone who was forced to do something sexual
- 28 percent of upperclass females indicated that they know someone who had their clothes pulled at, off, or down and 22 percent of upperclass males indicated that they know someone who had their clothes pulled at, off, or down
- 38 percent of LGBT undergraduate students know someone who was forced to do something sexual and 31 percent of LGBT undergraduate students indicated that they know someone who had their clothes pulled at, off, or down

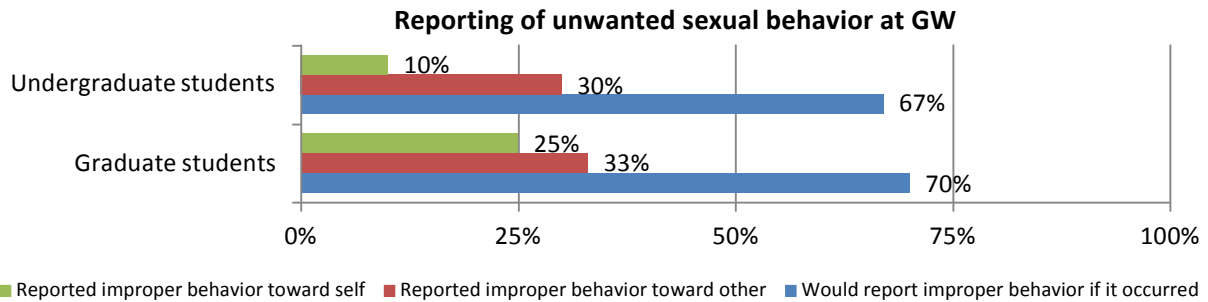
Unwanted sexual behavior perpetrated against someone you know

	Upperclass male	Upperclass female	Undergrad LGBT
Forced someone to do something sexual	24%	41%	38%
Forced kiss	15%	31%	33%
Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, looks	25%	31%	35%
Touch, grab, pinch in unwanted sexual way	24%	35%	40%
Sexual rumors	24%	29%	40%
Clothes pulled at, off, down	22%	28%	31%
Sexual favor in return for something	3%	4%	10%
Block way, corner, follow in unwanted sexual way	14%	24%	31%
Intentionally brushed up against	12%	25%	25%
Sexual messages	15%	14%	19%
Sexual pictures or notes	10%	10%	12%
Spying while dressing/in shower	5%	3%	6%
Flashed	7%	10%	5%

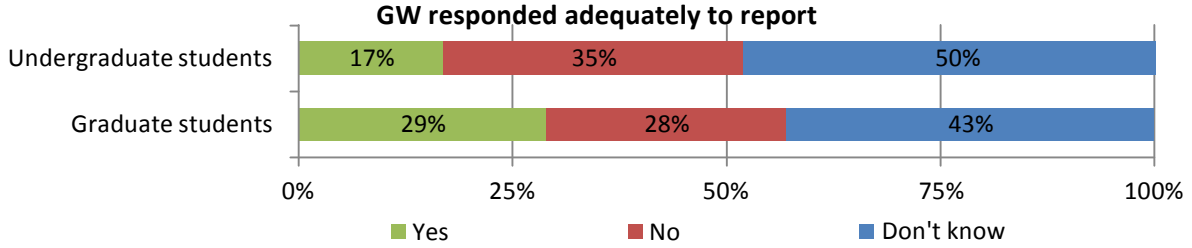
4. Reporting/Discussing Incidents

Participants were asked a series of questions related to reporting incidents of unwanted sexual behavior.

Seven-out-of-ten GW students indicated that they would report improper behavior if it occurred. However, far fewer students actually reported improper behavior experienced by themselves or people that they know.



Among those undergraduate students who did report incidents, the university’s response was more likely to be perceived as being inadequate (35 percent) than adequate (17 percent). Among graduate students who reported incidents, the university’s response was equally as likely to be perceived as inadequate as it was to be perceived as adequate.



Respondents were asked where they reported unwanted sexual behavior. A variety of GW units were engaged, with reporting to the GW Police Department occurring most frequently. The Title IX Coordinator/Sexual Harassment Office was a close second.

To whom unwanted sexual behavior was reported

	Undergraduate	Graduate
GW Police Department	39%	33%
Title IX Coordinator/Sexual Harassment Office	34%	20%
Housing staff	27%	13%
Faculty	11%	13%
Dean’s Office	9%	33%
Academic Advisor	2%	20%
Other	25%	33%

The students who decided not to report unwanted sexual behavior were asked why they made that decision. Victims of forced sexual encounters did not want to talk about the behavior, while those experiencing other unwanted sexual behavior weren’t sure anything could be done. The table below shows the most frequent reasons for not reporting, broken out by the behavior encountered.

Reason didn’t report unwanted sexual behavior (undergraduate and graduate)

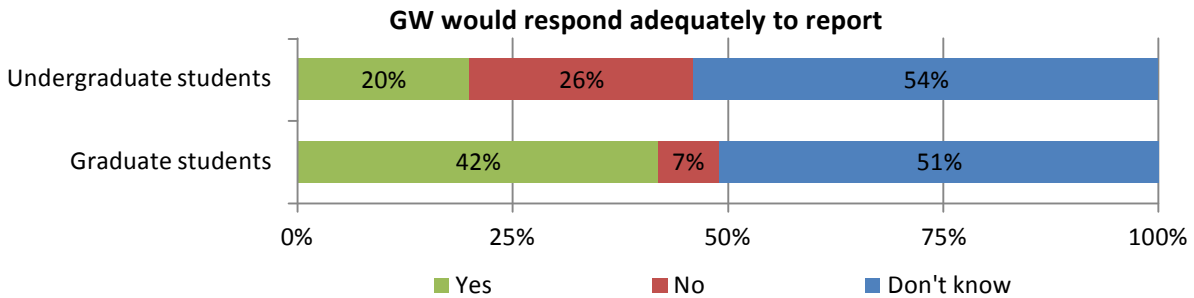
	Forced sexual encounter					Other unwanted sexual behavior		
	Forced to do something sexual (N=35)	Forced to kiss (N=27)	Touched, grabbed, pinched (N=63)	Had clothing pulled (N=42)	Blocked, cornered, followed (N=29)	Intentional brush against (N=46)	Comments, jokes, looks (N=64)	Sexual rumors (N=29)
Thought it would be too much hassle					x	x		
Wasn't sure anything could be done	x					x	x	x
Didn't want to talk about it	x	x	x	x				
Wasn't sure it was sexual harassment				x			x	x
Didn't get hurt		x	x		x			

Students who have not reported an incident were asked if they or someone they know experiences unwanted sexual behaviors would they discuss it with someone. The majority said they would discuss it and almost all respondents indicated that they would discuss with friends. However, 56 percent of undergraduates and 67 percent of graduate students indicated that they would discuss the behavior with a GW staff or faculty member.

If unwanted sexual behavior occurred, would discuss with

	Undergraduate	Graduate
Friend	91%	81%
University	56%	67%
GW Police Department	32%	48%
Housing staff	26%	4%
Title IX Coordinator/Sexual Harassment Office	17%	13%
Sorority/fraternity	12%	2%
Faculty	11%	19%
Dean's Office	10%	18%
Academic Advisor	10%	17%
Parent/family	52%	48%

Students who have not reported an incident were asked to imagine GW's response if they were to make a report. Only 20 percent of undergraduate students, as compared to 42% of graduate students, indicated that they think GW would respond adequately to a reported incident. Half of all students indicate that they do not know if the university would respond adequately.



Additional Information

Additional data tables and a content analysis summary of open-ended responses are available in Appendices A and B.

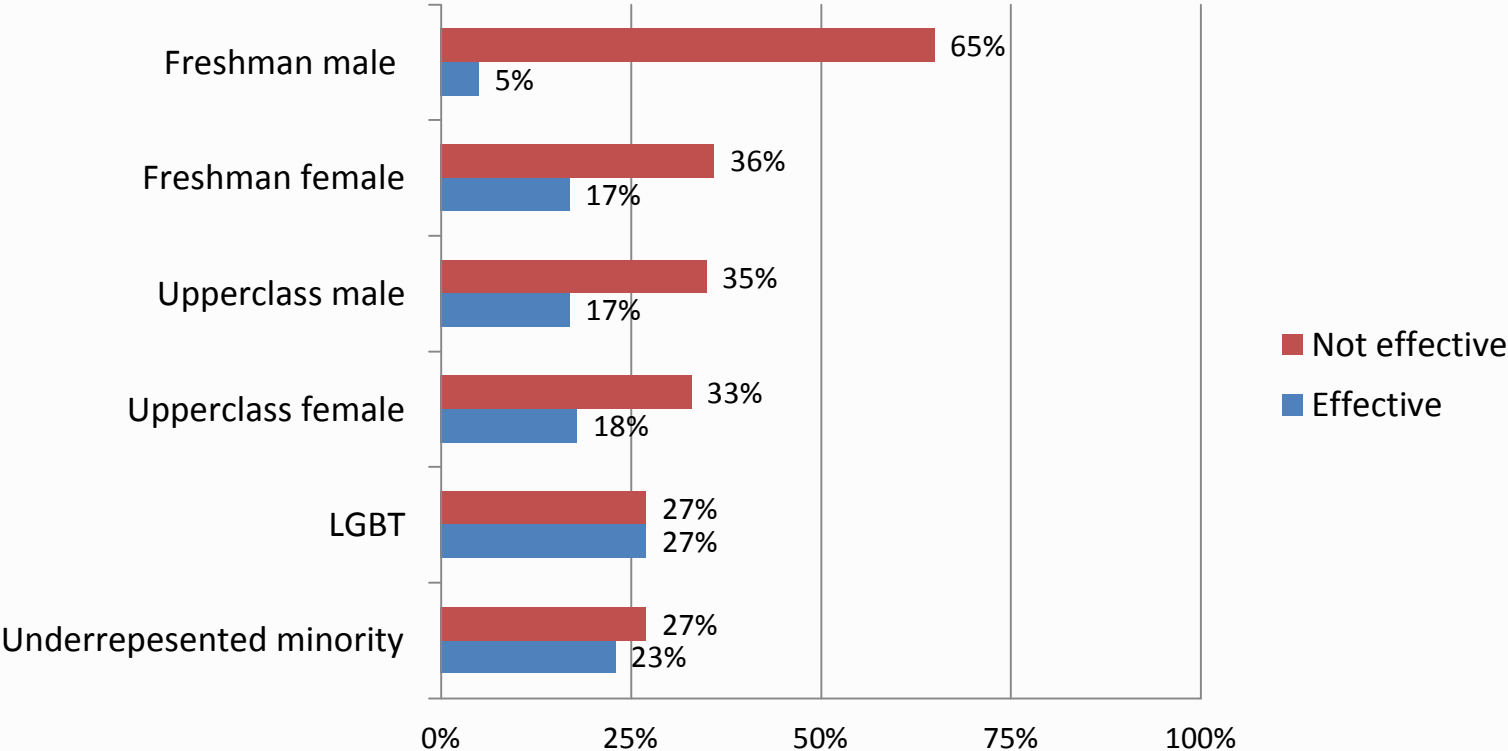
If you've been sexually assaulted and need help call: DC Rape and Crisis Center: (202)-333-RAPE
 Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network: 1-800-656-HOPE. The GW Student Against Sexual Assault Facebook page is www.facebook.com/GWSASA.

GW's policies on preventing and addressing sexual misconduct are available at:
<http://my.gwu.edu/files/policies/SexualHarassmentFINAL.pdf>
<http://my.gwu.edu/files/policies/Threats&ViolenceFINAL.pdf>

APPENDIX A

Closed-ended questions – additional responses

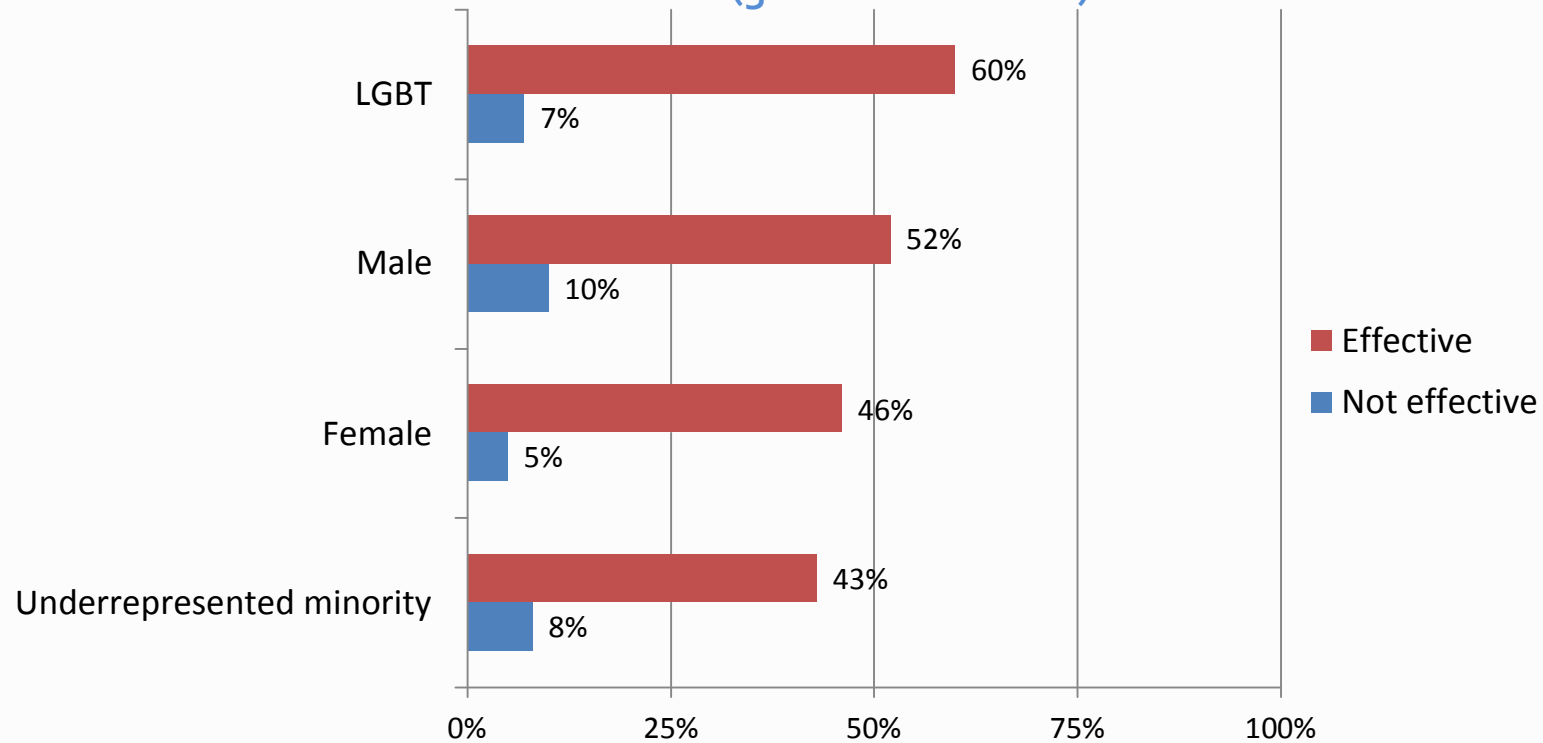
Percentage indicating GW effectively creates climate free from unwanted behavior (undergraduates)



Source: From your perspective, how effectively is GW creating a climate that is free from sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking?

Note: Effective = top-2-box ratings, Not effective=bottom-2-box ratings

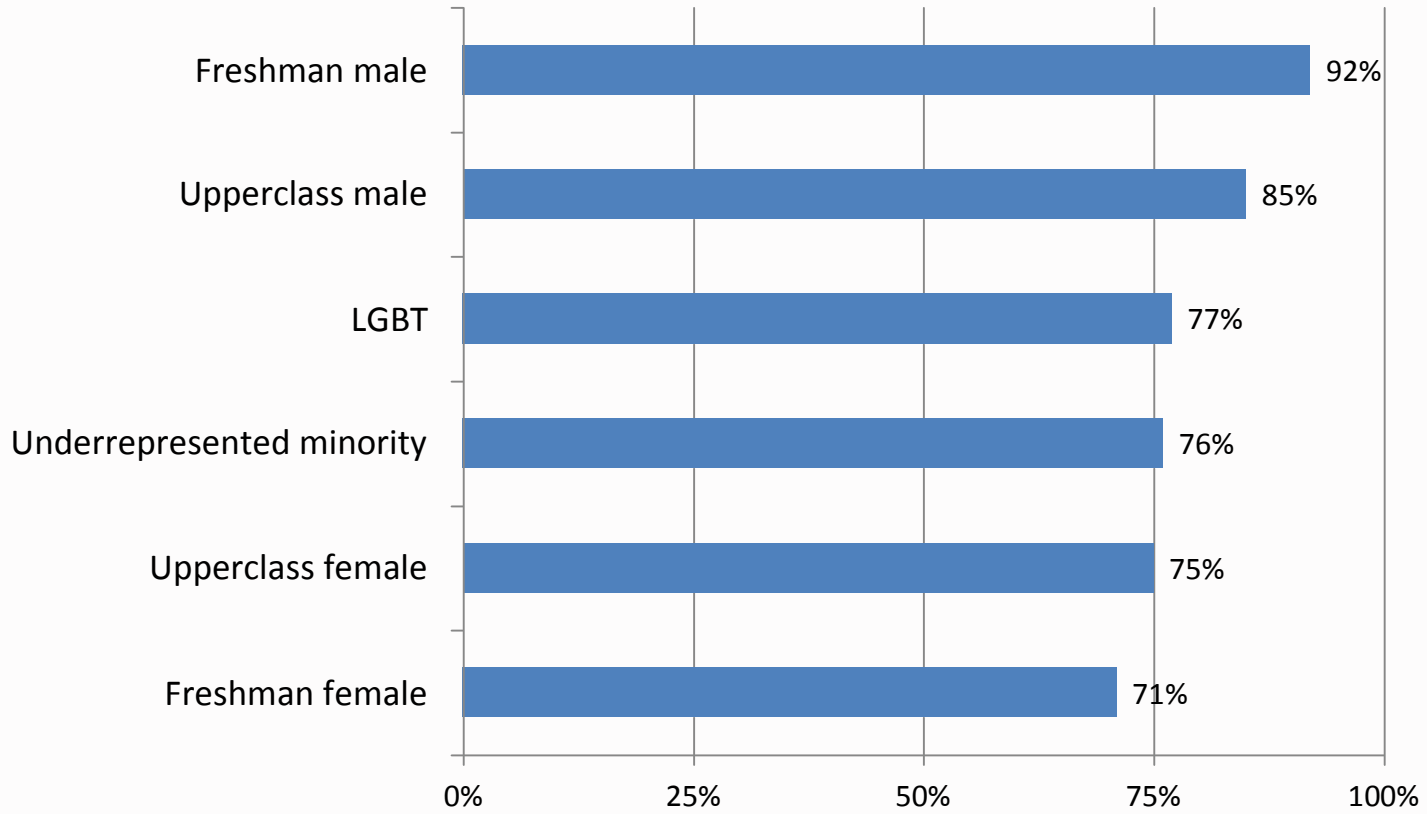
Percentage indicating GW effectively creates climate free from unwanted behavior (graduate students)



Source: From your perspective, how effectively is GW creating a climate that is free from sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking?

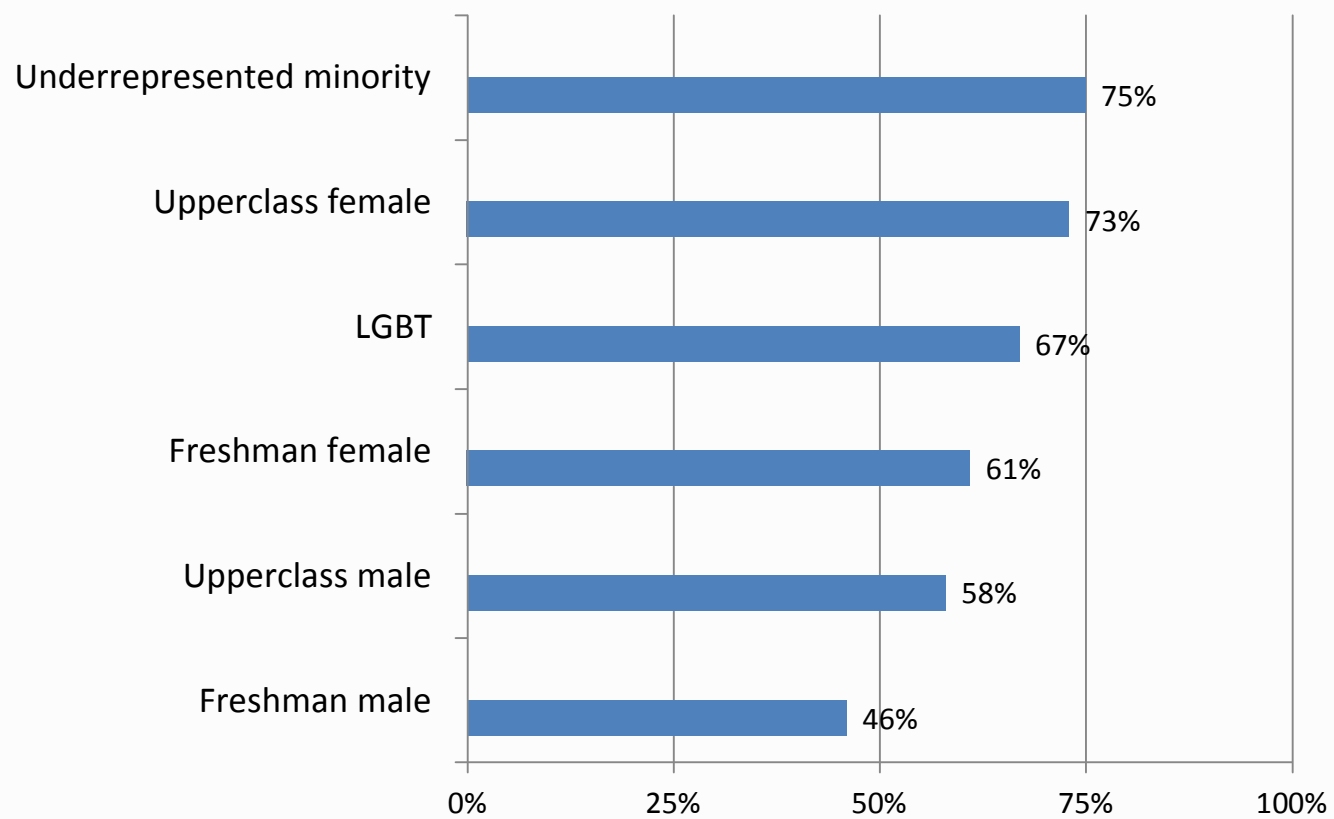
Note: Effective = top-2-box ratings, Not effective=bottom-2-box ratings

Percentage indicating that GW has policies on sexual harassment (undergraduates)



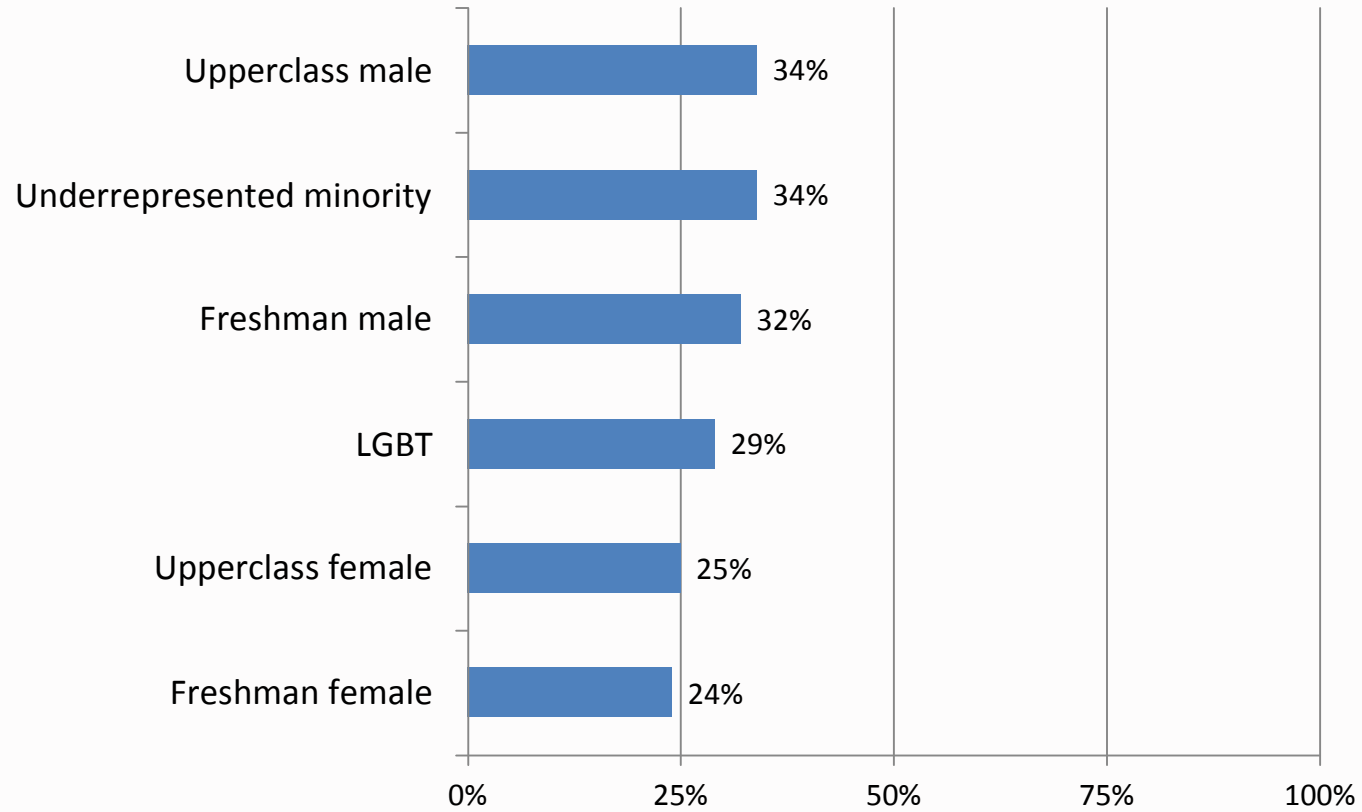
Sources: Does GW have policies on sexual harassment?

Percentage indicating GW should do more to raise awareness of sexual harassment issues (undergraduate students)



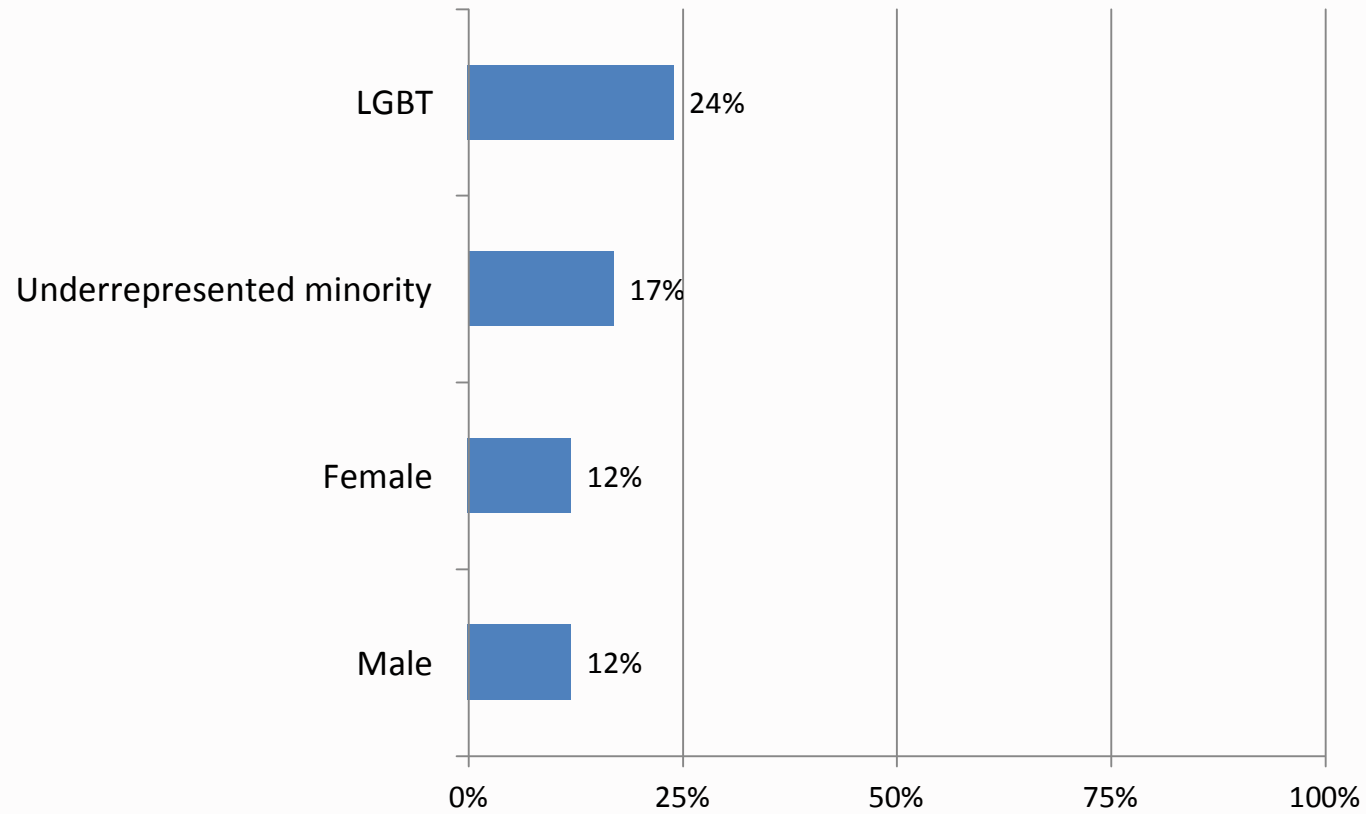
Source: Should GW do more to raise awareness about sexual harassment issues?

Percentage who participated in programming/training (undergraduates)



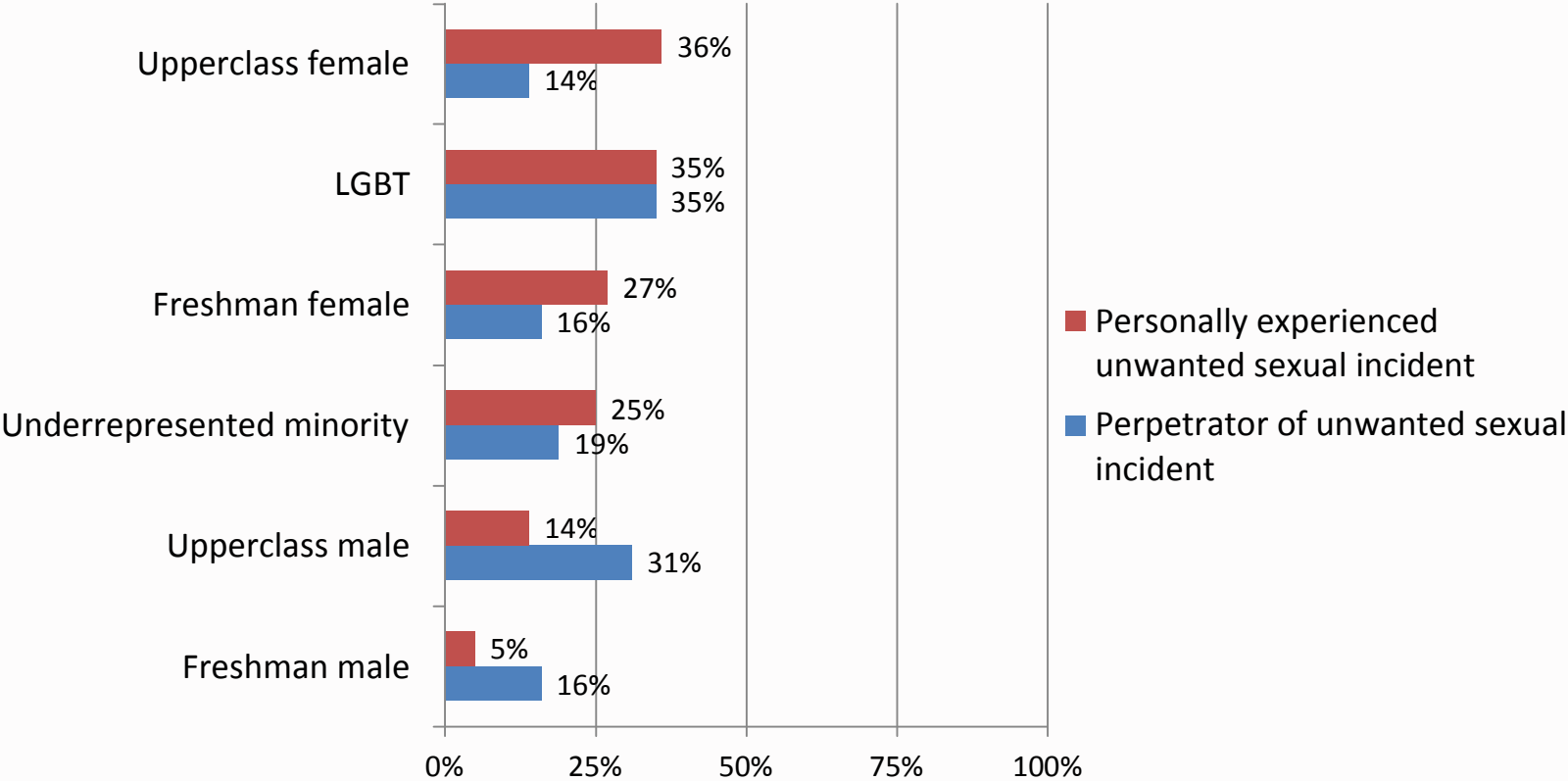
Source: Have you participated in programming or training that provided information about the policies prohibiting and procedures for reporting sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence or stalking while at GW?

Percentage who participated in programming/training (graduate students)



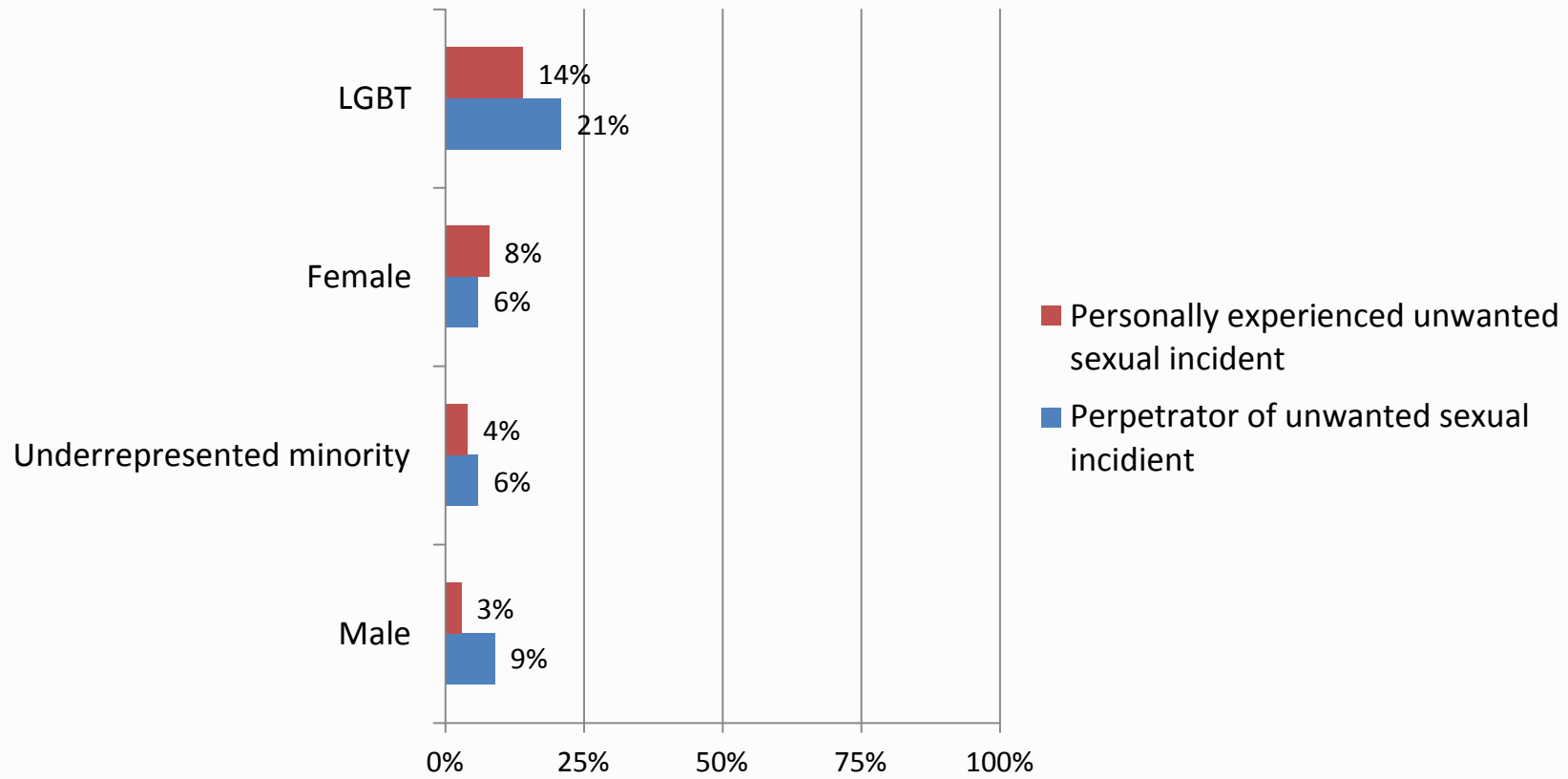
Source: Have you participated in programming or training that provided information about the policies prohibiting and procedures for reporting sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence or stalking while at GW?

Percentage of undergraduates experiencing (or perpetrating) unwanted sexual behavior



Source: Have you personally experienced what you would consider sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking while enrolled at GW? Have you, as an individual or as part of a group, participated in any of the acts listed below while enrolled at GW?

Percentage of graduate students experiencing (or perpetrating) unwanted sexual behavior



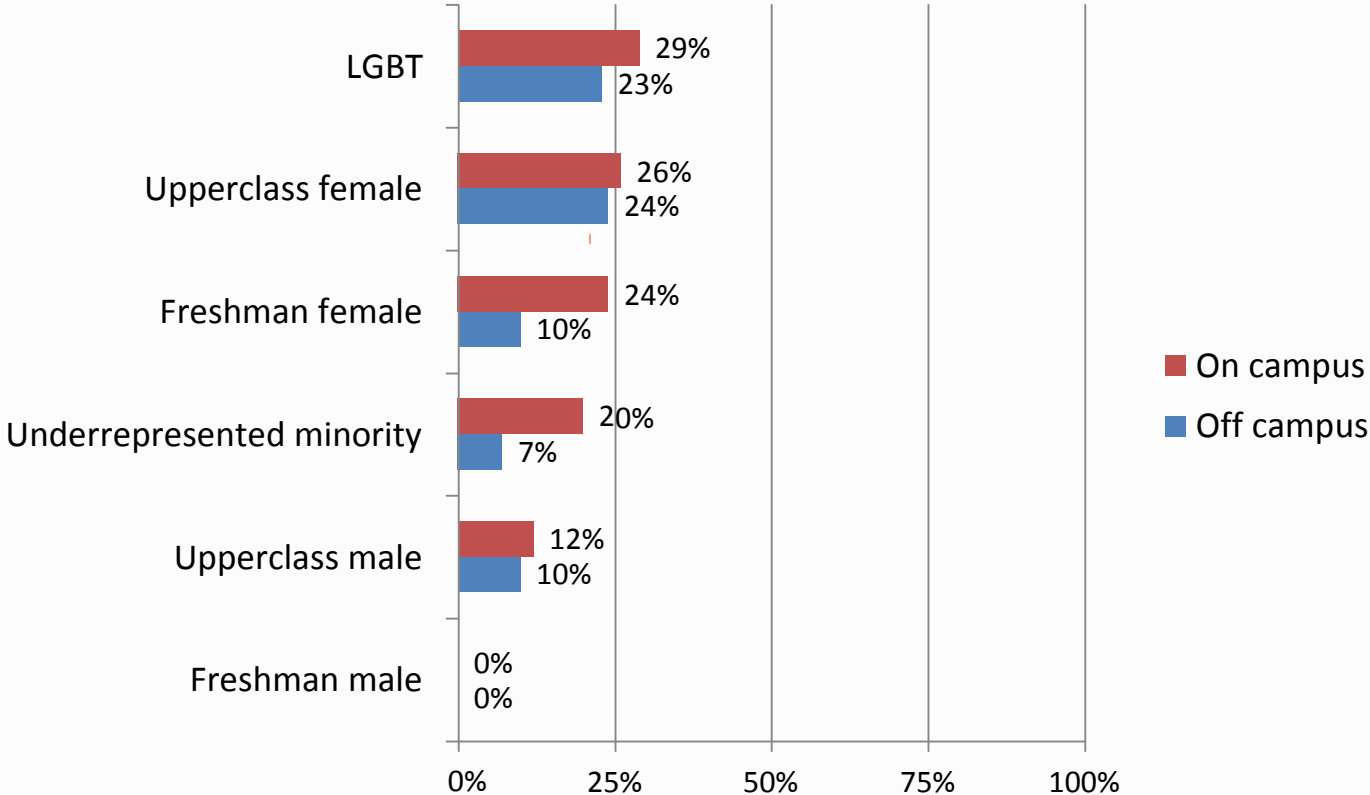
Source: Have you personally experienced what you would consider sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking while enrolled at GW? Have you, as an individual or as part of a group, participated in any of the acts listed below while enrolled at GW?

Types of behaviors personally experienced by students

	Freshman male	Upperclass male	Graduate male	Freshman female	Upperclass female	Graduate female
Forced kiss	3%	10%	1%	6%	9%	<1%
Intentionally brushed up against	3%	7%	1%	13%	19%	4%
Forced to do something sexual	-	10%	1%	11%	16%	<1%
Touched, grabbed, pinched in unwanted sexual way	-	8%	2%	21%	24%	4%
Clothes pulled at, off, down	-	8%	2%	15%	17%	1%
Sexual pictures or notes	-	7%	-	6%	7%	<1%
Flashed	-	7%	-	3%	3%	1%
Blocked way, cornered, followed in unwanted sexual way	-	6%	2%	6%	1%	3%
Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, looks	-	5%	1%	21%	27%	6%
Sexual rumors	-	5%	1%	11%	8%	1%
Sexual messages	-	5%	1%	5%	3%	1%
Sexual favor in return for something	-	3%	-	3%	1%	<1%
Spied on while dressing/in shower	-	2%	-	3%	-	-

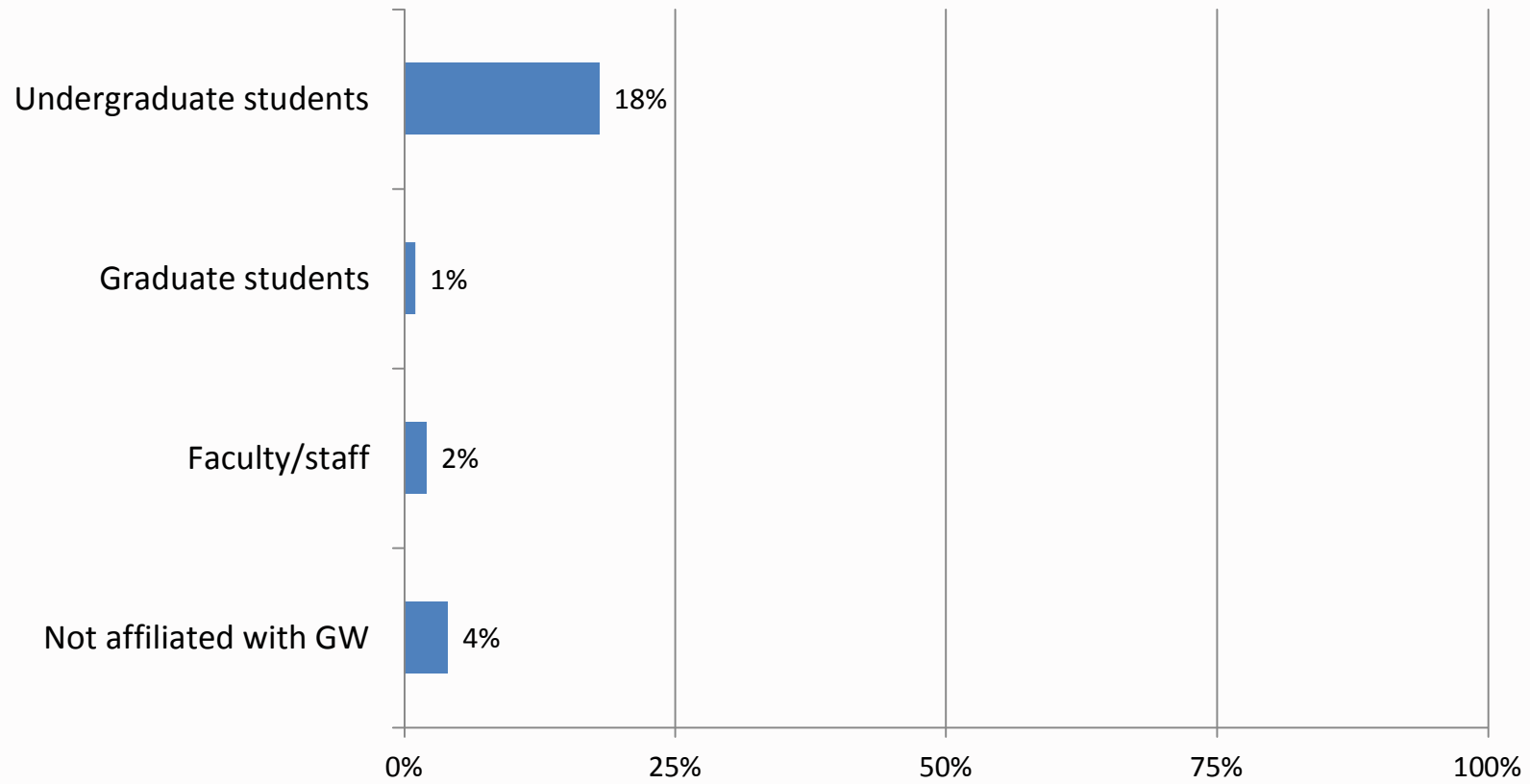
Source: Using the list of acts below, please indicate whether or not you experienced any of them while enrolled at GW.

Location of unwanted sexual behavior (undergraduates)



Source: Where did you encounter sexual harassment or violence?

Perpetrator of unwanted sexual behavior



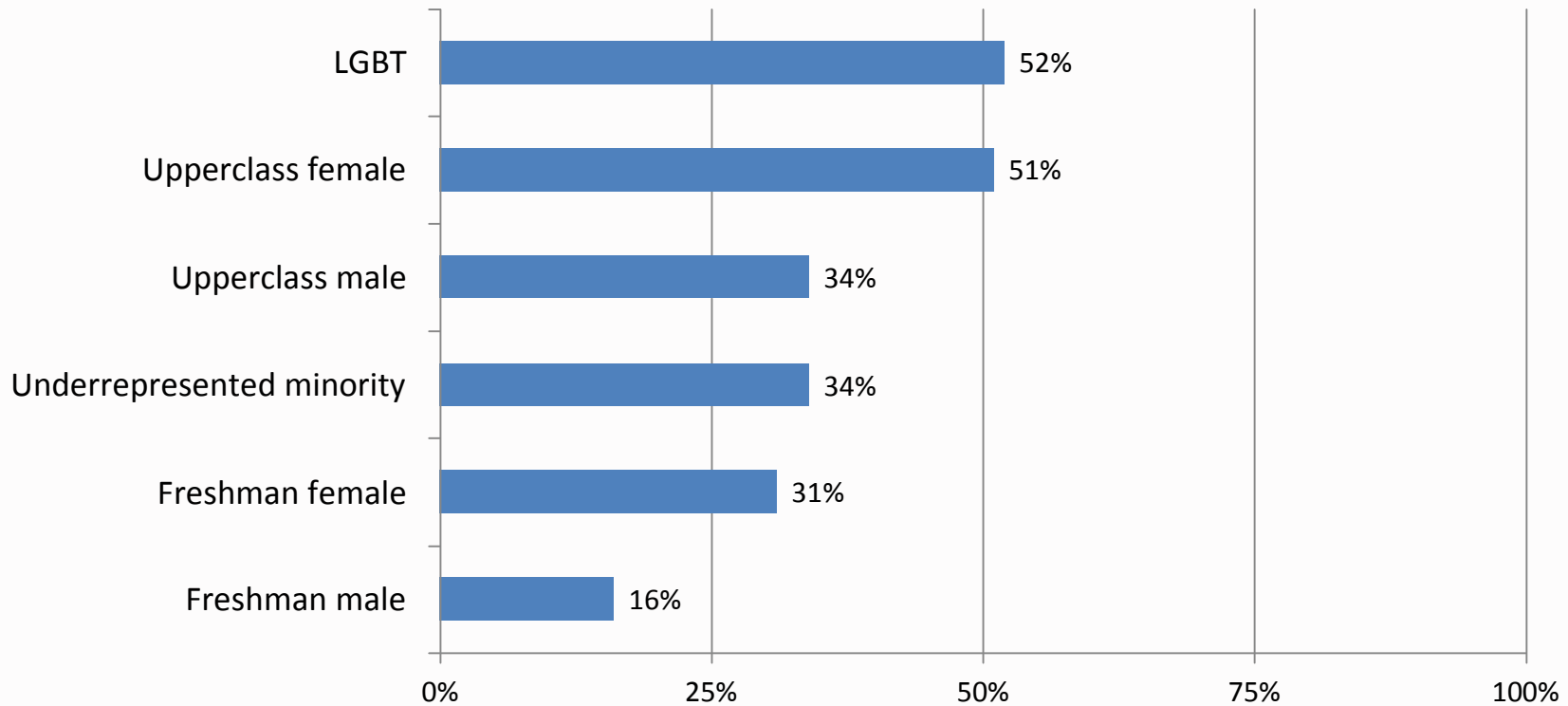
Sources: Did any of the incidents involve a current or former student? Did any of the incidents involve a faculty or staff member? Did any of the incidents involve an individual not affiliated with GW?

Unwanted behaviors students engage or participate in

	Freshman male	Upperclass male	Graduate male	Freshman female	Upperclass female	Graduate female
Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, looks	14%	27%	7%	8%	8%	2%
Intentionally bushed up against	8%	2%	2%	5%	3%	<1%
Sexual rumors	5%	3%	2%	3%	2%	1%
Sexual messages	3%	3%	1%	-	2%	<1%
Forced to do something sexual	-	-	1%	-	1%	-
Sexual pictures or notes	-	7%	1%	5%	7%	2%
Touched, grabbed, pinched in unwanted sexual way	-	-	-	-	1%	1%
Clothes pulled at, off, down	-	2%	1%	-	1%	-
Blocked way, cornered, followed in unwanted sexual way	-	-	-	-	-	<1%
Forced kiss	-	-	2%	2%	1%	<1%
Flashed	-	-	1%	2%	1%	-
Sexual favor in return for something	-	2%	1%	3%	-	<1%
Spied while dressing/in shower	-	2%	1%	-	-	-

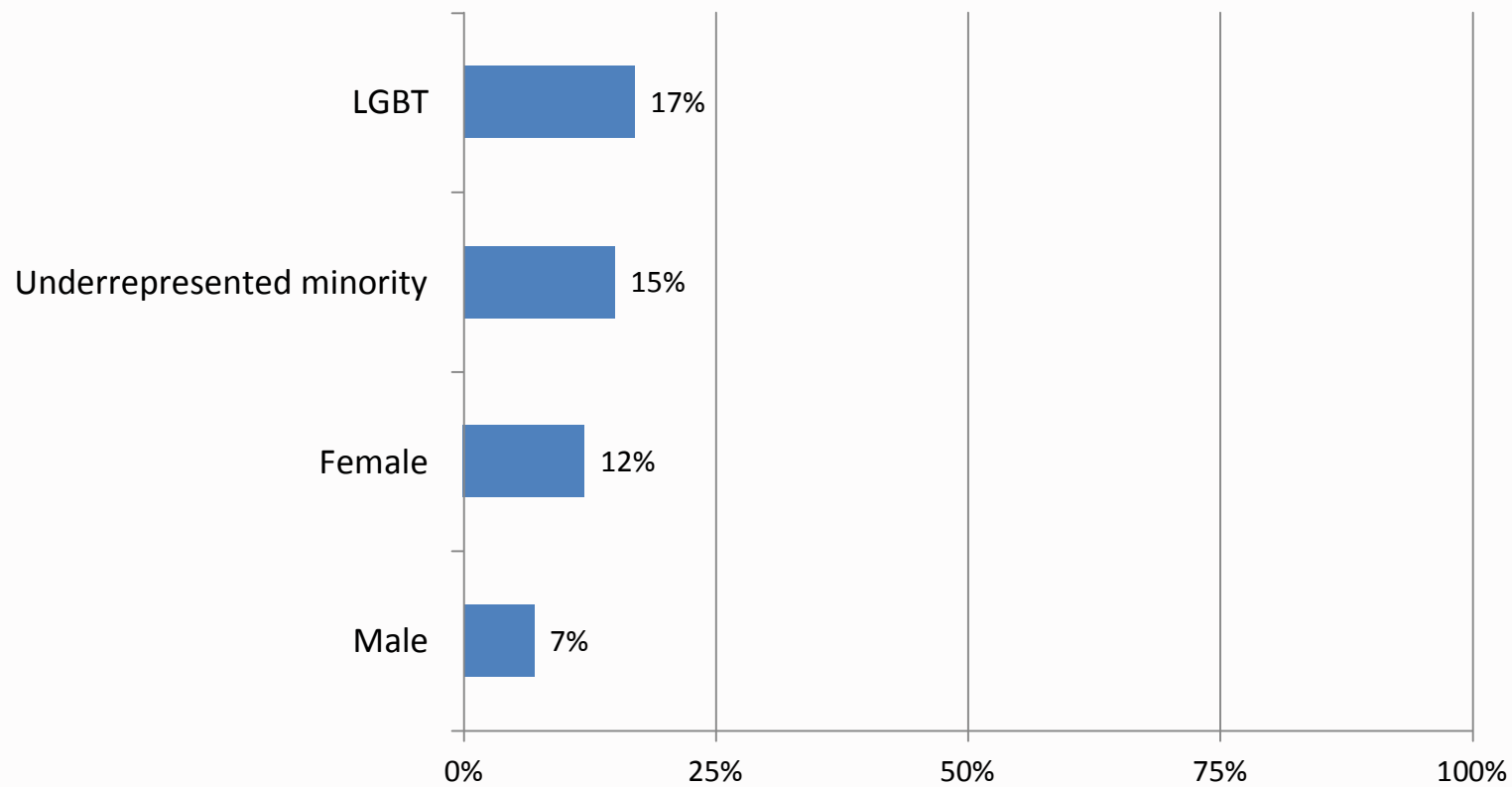
Source: Have you, as an individual or as part of a group, participated in any of the acts listed below while enrolled at GW?

Percentage who personally know someone who has experienced unwanted sexual behavior (undergraduates)



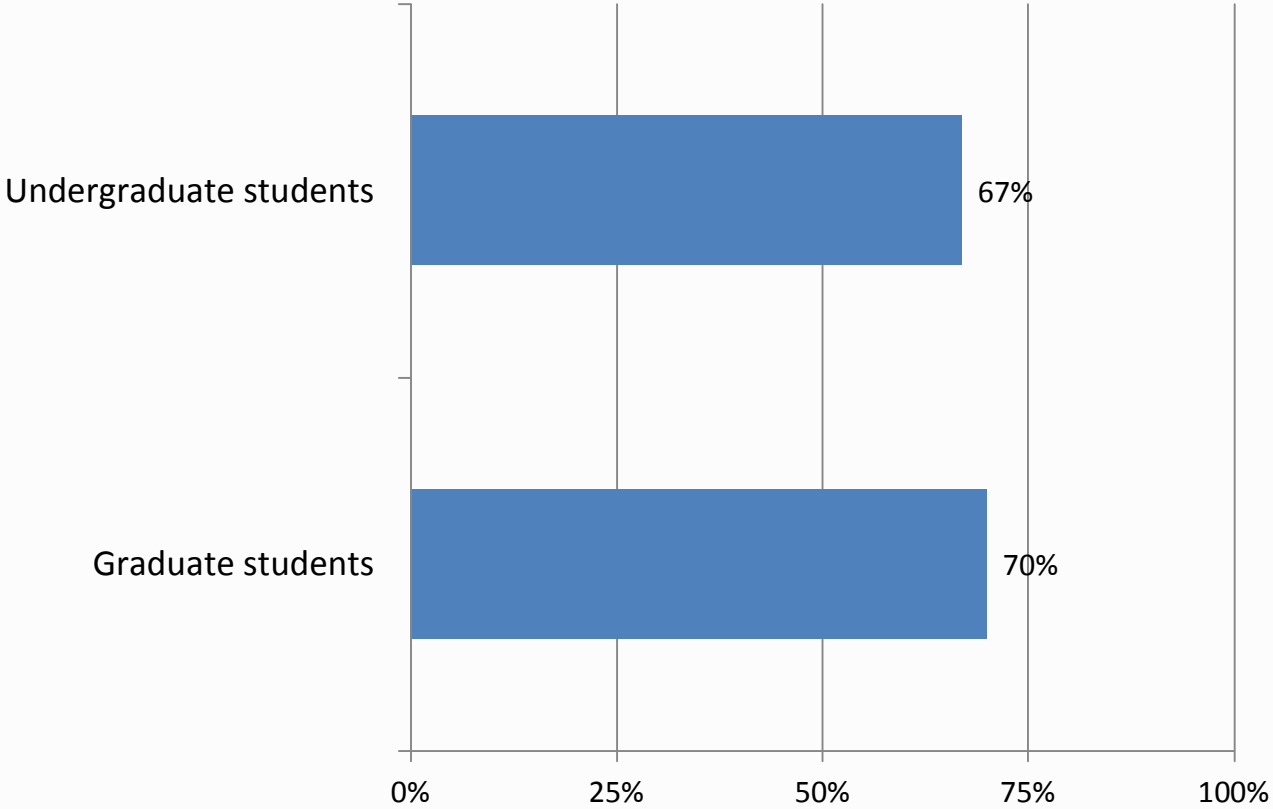
Source: Do you know someone personally (e.g., a friend or classmate) who experienced sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking while he or she was enrolled at GW?

Percentage who personally know someone who has experienced unwanted sexual behavior (graduate students)



Source: Do you know someone personally (e.g., a friend or classmate) who experienced sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking while he or she was enrolled at GW?

Would discuss incident if one occurred



Sources: If you or someone you know personally experienced sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, or stalking at GW would you discuss it with someone?

APPENDIX B

Open-ended responses – content analysis summary

Main Messages from the Content Analysis of “The Unwanted Sexual Behavior Questionnaire”

The survey contained two main open-ended questions prompting students for detailed comments about what could be improved at GW to address or prevent unwanted sexual behaviors. The questions were as follows:

- What, if any, suggestions do you have about how to raise awareness or encourage reporting of incidents?
- Please use the space below to share ideas or concerns about addressing and preventing unwanted sexual behaviors.

Their answers were analyzed using a qualitative data software with the view to identifying recommendations and suggestions on how to improve the system currently in place at GW

Methodological note

We conducted a content analysis of the students’ response using a qualitative data analysis software called MaxQDA. We proceeded with a systematic coding of the answers using codes (or ‘contextual categories’ in an inductive way (starting from the data to the label). When a new code was created, the coder went back to other answers and coded accordingly. The unit of analysis is a ‘coded segment’; consequently any frequency refers to the number of times each code or sub-code has been used.

Summary of findings

Two hundred and fifty one segments were assigned to a “Recommendation sub-code”. The most frequent recommendations were the following:

- Providing more student training (69 coded segments)
- Increasing and Improving communication (59 coded segments)
- Enhancing the inclusiveness of the outreach effort (58 coded segments)

Other recommendations that the students included in their comments were:

- Increasing the protection of students on campus, including more visible campus police and a better Alert systems than the current Blue Light
- De-stigmatizing the victims of sexual harassment who report the incident
- General remarks on the need to change the deeply ingrained student culture.

For the three most frequent categories, the comments were further broken down into sub-codes with more detailed suggestions.

Improving students’ training

A significant portion of comments highlighted the need for student training to be made mandatory. Many segments suggested that this training should take place during students’ first year of college. The comments also expressed the need to emphasize the training of student leaders, notably those engaged in the Greek Life, as well as other student organizations, so that they play the role of peer-educators.

Improving communication

While most comments about the need to improve communications were rather general, three specific ways of having messages about sexual assault and harassment come across were most common:

- Include more flyers and posters around campus about the various resource persons
- Include a short text in each syllabus describing the main policy and resources
- Have short interventions in class, especially in those courses that first year students have to take, such as the Writing Program.

Enhancing the inclusiveness of the training and outreach activities

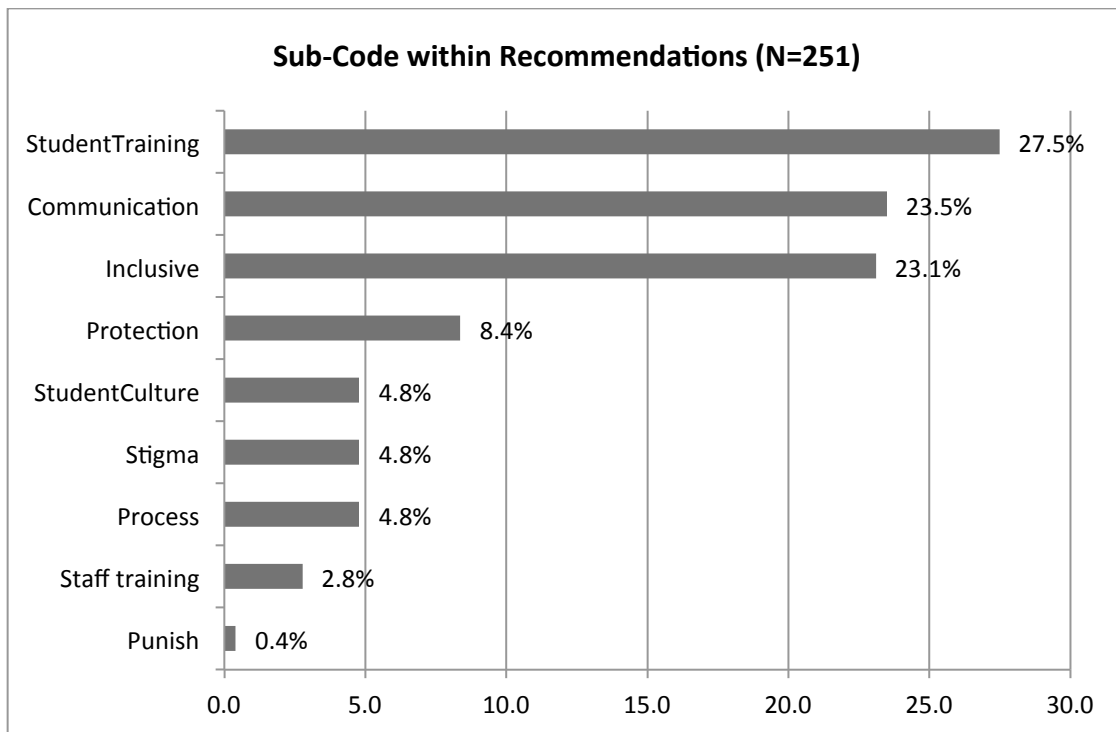
Most coded statements in this category referred to the need of particularly targeting male students in the outreach and awareness-raising efforts. There is also an emphasis put on student organizations, and particularly the Greek Life. Thirdly, several comments referred to the need to include Graduate Students more deliberately in the training and awareness-building activities. Several noticed that Sexual Assault is not a theme that is covered in graduate students' orientation and that graduate students are not as aware of the policies prevailing on campus. Finally, a number of statements also referred to the need of including non-GW members in the outreach activities, notably construction workers, as well as students who do not take class on the Foggy Bottom Campus.

USBQ Q29a & Q30: Content Analysis using MaxQDA

1. Code Frequency Analysis: Recommendations

Code	Frequency	% percentage
Student Training	69	27.49
Communication	59	23.51
Inclusive	58	23.11
Protection	21	8.37
Process	12	4.78
Stigma	12	4.78
Student Culture	12	4.78
Punish	1	0.40
Staff training	7	2.79
Total	251	100.00

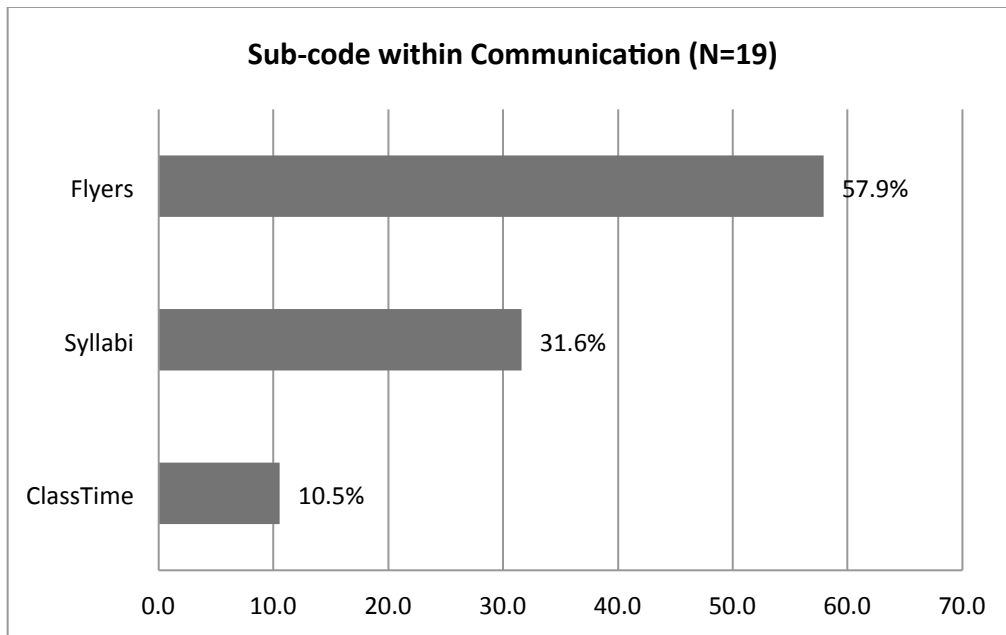
NB: The Unit of Analysis is a coded segment



2. Sub-Code Frequency Analysis: Communication

Name	Frequency	% percentage
Flyers	11	57.89
Syllabi	6	31.58
Class Time	2	10.53
Total	19	100.00

NB: The Unit of Analysis is a coded segment

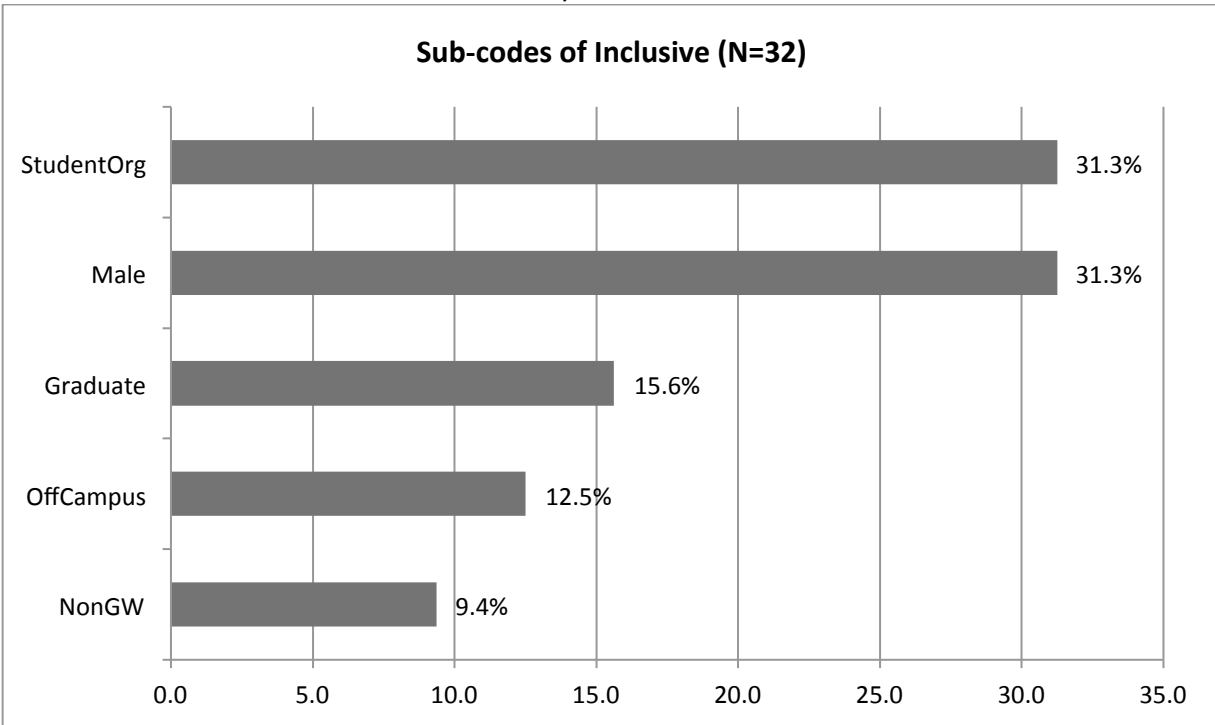


3. Sub-Code Frequency Analysis: Inclusive

Name	Frequency	% percentage
Male	10	31.25
Student Orgs	10	31.25
Graduate	5	15.63
Off-Campus	4	12.50
NonGW	3	9.38
Total	32	100.00

NB: The Unit of Analysis is a coded segment

Unwanted Sexual Behavior Questionnaire: Content Analysis



4. Sub-Code Frequency Analysis: Student Training

Name	Frequency	% percentage
Freshmen	10	31.3
Mandatory	5	15.6
Student Org	4	12.5
Orientation	3	9.4
Total	32	100.00

NB: The Unit of Analysis is a coded segment

Unwanted Sexual Behavior Questionnaire: Content Analysis

