

CAMPUS TOLERANCE FOUNDATION

I. Who We Are

Survey Sponsored by Campus Tolerance Foundation: www.campustolerance.com
Research Conducted by FDR Group: www.thefdrgroup.com

II. Why We Conducted This Study

We conducted the study to answer the question: Are America's college campuses physically and intellectually safe? We wanted to create a systematic way to evaluate and compare tolerance and respect on *individual* campuses by asking students to report their own experiences and observations based on the following questions:

- How extensive are bias incidents on campus? What can students who are members of racial, ethnic, political or sexual minority groups expect in terms of tolerance among their peers?
- In general, how safe are women on campus?
- Is there intellectual diversity in the classroom?
- How racially integrated are college campuses?

III. How the Survey Was Conducted

We surveyed **2,612 undergraduate students** on 10 college campuses nationwide from October 20, 2008 to January 19, 2009. The schools included:

- University of Washington – Seattle (n=327)
- UCLA (n=306)
- Texas A & M (n=304)
- University of Nebraska – Lincoln (n=164)
- Ohio State University (n=321)
- George Washington University (n=257)
- Harvard (n=154)
- University of Florida – Gainesville (n=305)
- University of Minnesota – Minneapolis (n=313)

- Barnard (n=161)

✓ This survey is a follow-up to a pilot study conducted in 2007 of three campuses – UC Berkeley, Michigan State University and Columbia University

The survey process was as follows:

- We reached out to college students through *Facebook*, an online venue that is familiar to students. Participants from Barnard came from two sources (*Facebook* and school-provided random sample)
- Students responded to an online survey by clicking on a *Facebook* advertisement targeting the above colleges
- To participate, respondents were required to supply a working “.edu” email address from their respective school. Respondents who were not current undergrads were screened out
- To encourage participation, respondents were offered the chance to participate in a lottery (five \$100 winners to be randomly drawn from each school)
- The survey samples are self-selected, a necessity because these are hard-to-reach populations

IV. Executive Summary

Our findings revealed disturbing levels of intolerance at the 10 college campuses surveyed:

1. Bias incidents are surprisingly common on the 10 college campuses surveyed

- **PROOF:** More than half (59%) of all students in this survey of 10 college campuses have either witnessed or been victims of bias incidents on school grounds. Bias incidents are defined as graffiti, verbal insults, physical threats and physical assaults directed at students because of their group identity. Range: from a high of 69% at OSU to a low of 40% at Harvard.
- **PROOF:** 15% of students have been victims or have witnessed physical threats or actual assaults because of group ID. Range: from a high of 24% at OSU to a low of 3% at Barnard.

2. Female students often experience sexual harassment and sexual assault on campuses

- **PROOF:** 62% of women on the 10 campuses report that they have been victims of broader sexual harassment or personally know someone who has been. Broader sexual harassment is defined as remarks that insult because of gender, remarks that are sexually offensive, attempts to fondle or kiss by force, attempts to have sex by force, and actually being forced to have sex. Range: from a high of 73% at GWU to a low of 52% at Barnard.
- **PROOF:** 33% of women were victims of serious sexual harassment – forced sex, attempts to force sex, or attempts to force kissing or fondling – or personally know someone who was. Range: from a high of 45% at Harvard to a low of 23% at U. of Washington.

Table 1. Rating the Campuses: Bias Incidents

Personally experienced + witnessed

	%	Rating
1. Ohio State U.	69%	Most Intolerant
2. Texas A & M	66	Most Intolerant
3. U. of Florida	65	Most Intolerant
4. U. of Nebraska	64	Most Intolerant
5. George Washington U.	60	Most Intolerant
6. U. of Minnesota	58	More Intolerant
7. UCLA	57	More Intolerant
8. U. of Washington	56	More Intolerant
9. Barnard	42	Least Intolerant
10. Harvard	40	Least Intolerant
Average Rating	59%	

Questions:

A. Have you personally been a victim of the following types of bias or harassment on campus because of your own group affiliation or identity?

B. Have you witnessed someone other than yourself being a victim of the following types of bias or harassment on campus because of their group affiliation or identity?

1. Verbal insult
2. Graffiti
3. Physical threat
4. Physical assault

Ratings Scale: Least Intolerant= 40-49; More Intolerant = 50-59; Most Intolerant= 60+

Table 2. Rating the Campuses: Serious Sexual Harassment

Personally experienced + personally know someone

Female students	%	Rating
1. Harvard	45%	Most Unsafe
2. George Washington U.	43	Most Unsafe
3. Ohio State U.	42	Most Unsafe
4. U. of Nebraska	40	Most Unsafe
5. U. of Minnesota	35	More Unsafe
6. UCLA	30	More Unsafe
7. U. of Florida	30	More Unsafe
8. Barnard	24	Least Unsafe
9. Texas A & M	24	Least Unsafe
10. U. of Washington	23	Least Unsafe
Average Rating	33%	

Questions:

The following describe types of sexual harassment or assault that could happen on campus. For each, please indicate whether it has happened to you, whether it has happened to someone you personally know, or neither:

1. Attempts to force kissing or fondling without consent
2. Attempts to force sex without consent
3. Actually being forced to have sex without consent

Ratings Scale: Least Unsafe=22-29; More Unsafe=30-37; Most Unsafe=38-45

Specific Findings

1. Bias incidents are surprisingly common on the 10 college campuses surveyed

Substantial numbers of students report they have either personally been victims of bias incidents or that they have seen bias incidents perpetrated against other students.

- Overall, more than half (59%) of all students across the 10 campuses personally experienced or witnessed bias incidents – graffiti, verbal insults, physical threats or physical assaults – targeting individuals because of their group identity.
- **Worst:** OSU at 69%
- **Best:** Harvard: 40%

Verbal insults

- **Victims:** The percentages of students personally experiencing verbal insults because of their group identity
- **Worst:** Texas A&M at 37% and U. of Nebraska at 35%
- **Best:** Harvard and Barnard at 16%

- **Witnesses:** The percentages of students that witnessed someone who was victimized
- **Worst:** Texas A&M at 54%
- **Best:** Barnard at 22%

Graffiti

- **Victims:** The percentage of students targeted by graffiti because of their group affiliation
- **Worst:** OSU at 7%
- **Best:** Harvard at 1%

- **Witnesses:** The percentages of students that witnessed someone who was victimized
- **Worst:** Barnard at 22%
- **Best:** Harvard at 8%

Physical threats

- **Victims:** The percentage of students who were physically threatened because of their group identity
- **Worst:** OSU at 8%
- **Best:** Barnard at 1%

- **Witnesses:** The percentage of students that witnessed someone who was victimized

- **Worst:** OSU and Texas A&M at 17%
- **Best:** Barnard at 2%

Physical assaults

- **Victims:** The percentage of students who were physically assaulted because of their group identity
- **Worst:** OSU at 4%
- **Best:** GWU, U. of Washington, Barnard and Harvard at 1%

- **Witnesses:** The percentage of students that witnessed someone who was victimized
- **Worst:** OSU at 9%
- **Best:** Barnard and Harvard at 1%

2. Female students often experience serious sexual harassment and sexual assault on the campuses

- Across the 10 campuses surveyed, one-third (33%) of women personally experienced or personally know someone who was a victim of attempted forced kissing or fondling, attempted forced sex, or actual forced sex.
- **Worst:** Harvard at 45%
- **Best:** U. of Washington at 23%

Attempts to force kissing or fondling

- **Victims**
- **Worst:** GWU at 18%
- **Best:** U. of Washington at 3%

- **Personally know a victim**
- **Worst:** OSU at 30%
- **Best:** Texas A&M at 14%

Attempts to force sex without consent

- **Victims**
- **Worst:** U. of Nebraska at 8%
- **Best:** U. of Washington at 1%

- **Personally know a victim**

- **Worst:** GWU at 24%
- **Best:** Texas A & M at 10%

Actual forced sex

- Victims
- **Worst:** U. of Minnesota, U. of Nebraska, GWU and U. of Florida at 3%
- **Best:** U. of Washington and Harvard at 1%

- Personally know a victim
- **Worst:** U. of Minnesota at 14%
- **Best:** Texas A&M and Harvard at 5%

3. Self-censorship and a Lack of Intellectual Diversity in the Classrooms

- Afraid to speak up: Too many students say they have stopped themselves from saying something in class because they were sure others would disagree with them.
- **Worst:** Texas A&M at 52%
- **Best:** Harvard at 34%

- At no school did a majority of students say their professors make sure to bring in different viewpoints
- **Worst:** Texas A&M at 30%
- **Best:** Harvard at 44%

4. Hidden Prejudice and Social Segregation

- Too often, prejudice readily comes out behind closed doors
- **Worst:** Texas A&M at 56%
- **Best:** Harvard at 20%

- Most say that when students gather on their campus, they “segregate based on race and ethnicity”
- **Worst:** U. of Nebraska at 68%
- **Best:** OSU at 46%

5. How would minority groups fare in election for student body president?

It depends upon the campus; it depends upon the group:

- Gay, lesbian, bi, transgendered students can expect more prejudice at Texas A & M (82% say group ID would hurt chances of being elected) and at U. of Florida (58%); they fare best at Barnard (12% say group ID would hurt chances)
- Politically conservative or Republican students can expect more prejudice at Barnard (66% say group ID would hurt chances of being elected), U. of Washington (65%), and Harvard (62%); they fare best at Texas A & M (only 2% say group ID would hurt chances)
- Traditionally defined minorities – African Americans and Hispanics – and women – don't fare too badly here
- But there are trouble spots for Muslim students (at Texas A & M, for example, 62% say group ID would hurt chances), Arab students (at Texas A & M, 57% say group ID would hurt chances) and Evangelical Christian students (at Harvard, 42% say group ID would hurt chances)