The University of Pennsylvania
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why am I being asked to complete this survey?
Penn is one of 33 colleges and universities participating in the American Association of Universities (AAU) 2019 Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. This survey is a follow-up to a similar survey administered in 2015 in which Penn also participated. Penn is asking all of its undergraduate, graduate, and professional students to provide information about their knowledge and beliefs about social situations, perceptions related to sexual misconduct on campus, and their personal experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other gender-based misconduct. The results of this survey also will be an important tool to assess Penn’s current programs. The survey results will help guide future University policies and programs to encourage a healthy and safe campus environment.

Who is eligible to participate in the survey?
All Penn students enrolled at the beginning of the spring 2019 semester, except those studying abroad in a country that is a member of the European Union, are eligible to participate in this survey. To participate, students must click on a unique link that was provided in their email invitation or subsequent reminders to access the survey. Students who do not have the message that contains their unique link, should click on AAUsurvey@pobox.upenn.edu and authenticate using their PennKey to access their link.

I've never experienced sexual assault or sexual misconduct, so why should I participate?
If only those who have experienced sexual assault and sexual misconduct participate in the survey, we will not have a complete understanding of what happens on campus. To get a complete picture, we need to hear from as many students as possible.

Isn't this survey only for women?
No, this survey is for everyone, regardless of gender identity or whether they have experienced sexual misconduct. The survey will be used to shape policies that affect everyone on campus, so it is very important that you provide information about your experiences and perspectives.

Why are you asking me about my race, ethnicity, gender, citizenship or other demographic information? Do I have to answer?
We are asking these questions so that we can describe the sample of students who completed the survey, and to understand if and how experiences differ within and among different identity groups. This also will help Penn target resources to those students who need them the most. You do not have to answer any question on the survey, including demographic questions, if you do not wish to do so.

Why are you asking about these sensitive subjects and in such explicit language?
To better understand the climate at Penn, the survey asks direct questions about topics that some may find sensitive. Some of the language used in this survey is explicit and it may make some people uncomfortable, however, it is important that we be clear about what is being asked. You do not have to

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1 As a result of concerns about compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation, which govern data request of those in European Union countries, unfortunately, students studying in one of those locale when the survey is administered will not be able to participate.
answer any question on the survey if you do not wish to do so. If you are upset or wish to speak with someone, in addition to campus resource offices, contact information for national resources for support and assistance appears on the bottom of each page and at the end of the survey.

**Will my answers be confidential?**
When you complete the survey, the link between your survey responses and your email and IP addresses will be broken so that no one will be able to connect your email or IP address with your survey responses. The results will be presented to Penn in summary form so that no individual can be identified. However, if we learn about instances of child abuse or a threat of harm to the student responding to the survey or others, we are obligated to report it to the authorities.

Westat has obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality (CoC) issued by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The CoC is issued to protect the investigators on this study from being forced to tell anyone about your participation in this study, even under a subpoena. Even when a CoC is in place, you and your family members must still continue to actively protect your own privacy. If you voluntarily give your written consent for an insurer, employer, or lawyer to receive information about your participation in the research, then we may not use the CoC to withhold this information.

**Do I have to answer all of the questions?**
You do not have to answer all of the questions on the survey. If you choose not to answer every question, we encourage you to review all of the questions in the survey and click “submit” at the end of the survey so that the responses you have provided are recorded.

**If I skip a question can I go back to it later?**
Yes. You can navigate through the survey items using the “previous” and “next” buttons on the survey pages. You may return and complete the survey at any time before the survey closes.

**If I close the browser will my answers be saved? Can I go back to the survey later to complete it?**
Answers are saved by clicking the navigation buttons on the bottom of each screen (previous, next, and save). You do not have to click “save” on each screen, as long as you navigate to the next question by clicking “next.” When you click one of these buttons, the answers on the current screen will be saved and you can close the browser and return to complete the survey later. However, if you close the browser without clicking one of those buttons on the current screen, your answers on the current screen will not be saved. You may return and complete the survey at any time before the survey closes.

**How much time will it take to complete the survey?**
This survey should take most people approximately 20 minutes to complete. It may take up to 30 minutes for some individuals depending on their responses. You may exit the survey and return to complete it at any time before March 10, 2019 at midnight.

**Am I required to participate?**
You do NOT have to participate in this survey. If you choose to participate, you may skip any question you are not comfortable answering and may exit the survey at any time.

**What will happen if I don’t participate?**
There are no consequences if you choose not to participate in the survey. Information on who completed the survey (and who did not) will not be provided to Penn or any other institution. However, if you choose not to participate, your perspective and experiences might not be reflected in the survey results.
Who is Westat?
AAU has collaborated with Westat, a private research organization, to administer this survey. As in the case for most University-wide surveys, Penn’s Office of Institutional Research and Analysis, will send students a message on behalf of President Amy Gutmann and Provost Wendell Pritchett inviting them to participate in the survey. Students who experience technical difficulty or have questions about the survey can contact Westat directly at CampusClimateHelp@Westat.com or 1-855-793-5324.

Where can I see the results of this study?
Penn expects to receive a report of the results from Westat in September 2019. AAU will release aggregate data from all 33 participating schools and Penn will make its results available to the Penn community.

What will Penn do with the results?
The results will be used to better understand the climate at Penn, the extent of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other gender-based misconduct experienced by students, and their use of the programs and services currently being offered. This information will be used to make recommendations for changes to the policies and procedures related to preventing and handling sexual assault and misconduct at Penn.

I still have questions.
If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the Westat help and information line at CampusClimateHelp@westat.com or call 1-855-793-5324.

If you have questions about your rights and welfare as a research participant, please call the Westat Human Subjects Protections office at 1-888-920-7631. Please leave a message with your full name, the name of the research study that you are calling about (Campus Climate Survey), and a phone number beginning with the area code. Someone will return your call as soon as possible.