



Report to the legislature

RCW 28B.112.050

Addressing sexual misconduct at postsecondary educational
institutions

February 2024

Executive Summary

As directed by RCW 28B.112.050 this report includes information on campus climate assessments, efforts to reach out to and capture information from students who have been historically marginalized, and impacts to institutional hiring practices, public safety, and other relevant considerations.

Campus Climate Assessments

A campus climate assessment specifically designed to gauge the prevalence of sexual misconduct has not been undertaken since the passage of House Bill 2327 in 2021. However, in the 2021-22 academic year, Western Washington University administered the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) Diversity and Equity Campus Climate survey. The HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus Climate survey intends to capture feedback from all members of Western's campus community including students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Asking about perceptions of an institution's climate, how an institution supports diversity and equity, and about any experiences with discrimination or harassment.

This survey had nearly 1,000 responses from students, faculty, and staff. Results of this survey are available online: [2021 Campus Climate Survey](#). This survey did not specifically ask about sexual misconduct but asks participants more generally about discrimination and harassment broken down by demographic categories.

Out of 936 respondents on the survey section on discriminatory experiences both on and off campus, 15 respondents indicated having experienced some form of sexual assault or harassment.

Outreach and student feedback

While the HEDS Campus Climate survey was administered to the entirety of Western's campus community, students were the largest group of respondents, out of the 936 respondents to questions about discrimination and harassment, over 500 were a mix of undergraduate and graduate students.

In addition to the campus-wide survey, students have many opportunities on campus to interact with and deliver feedback to Western administrators. A series of listening sessions were held in the 2022-23 academic year by the Chief Diversity Officer of the university. The Counseling and Wellness Center and the Civil Rights and Title IX compliance office are open to students who wish to report or get resources related to sexual misconduct. Additionally, Western administrators are available to students through many student support services offices including but not limited to academic advising & student achievement, student activities disability access center, staff who oversee the associated students, the student activities office, university residences, or athletic divisions.

Impacts on institutional hiring practices

House Bill 2327 (2020) necessitated additional steps in the WWU hiring process, increasing administrative workload in Human Resources. The process that has been added to the hiring process is outlined below for new or rehired employees:

- An Offer Card is created in the system that Western utilizes for hiring processes called PageUp.
- HR is notified that an Offer Card has been created and then they will send the SMBC questionnaire to the candidate. This is at the start of the Offer Card approval process.
- The candidate responds to the questionnaire and lists any post-secondary employers they previously had.
- Once the candidate responds, HR professionals can move forward to other steps in the process, however, Western is often still waiting for the post-secondary employer(s) to respond when other parts of the hiring process have concluded.