

# FACT SHEET



## Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Assault Committed Against University of Alaska Students

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This Fact Sheet presents estimates of *sexual misconduct* and *sexual assault* victimization against University of Alaska (UA) students. Estimates are provided for the UA system as a whole, as well as specific estimates for each of UA's three major administrative units (MAUs): the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), and the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS). The results presented here are based on the survey responses of a randomly selected sample of 1,982 undergraduate and graduate students who were enrolled at UAA, UAF, or UAS during spring semester 2016.

In spring semester 2016 the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (AJSAC) conducted the *University of Alaska Campus Climate Survey*. The primary objective of this online survey was to establish baseline prevalence measures of sexual misconduct and sexual assault for the total population of UA students, as well as to establish baseline prevalence measures for each of the three MAUs within the UA system. In addition, the *University of Alaska Campus Climate Survey* measured student academic outcomes and overall perceptions of campus climate.

### UA Student Population

In spring semester 2016, a total of 25,177 undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled in the UA system. Nearly 60% (59.9%; n=15,081) of all UA students were enrolled at UAA, slightly more than 30% (30.7%; n=7,729) were enrolled at UAF, and less than 10% (9.4%; n=2,366) were enrolled at UAS. With respect to student *level* (i.e., undergraduate vs. graduate), 62.0% of all UA *undergraduate* students were enrolled at UAA, 29.1% were enrolled at UAF, and 8.9% were enrolled at UAS. In

contrast, nearly half of the UA system's *graduate* students (48.3%) were enrolled at UAF, 36.8% were enrolled at UAA, and 14.9% were enrolled at UAS.

Overall, 58.2% of all UA students enrolled in the spring semester 2016 were women. Women represented more than two-thirds of all students at UAS (66.8%), 57.9% of students at UAA, and 56.1% of students at UAF. For two MAUs – UAA and UAS – women comprised even larger segments of their *graduate* student populations. At UAA, nearly two-thirds (64.2%) of all graduate students were women; at UAS, nearly three-quarters (73.7%) of all graduate students were women. In contrast, at UAF a smaller percentage – but, still a majority (56.0%) – of graduate-level students were female.

### Sexual Misconduct

*Sexual misconduct* refers to unwanted, uninvited, or coerced touching of a sexual nature, or unwanted or uninvited sexual commentary. Survey respondents were asked, "Since January 2015, has someone attempted or succeeded in having unwanted, uninvited, or coerced touching of a sexual nature or unwanted/uninvited sexual commentary with you under any circumstances (on or off campus), or do you suspect someone did?"

Every survey respondent was provided the following examples of *sexual misconduct*: kissing without permission; forced kissing; touching of body or private parts in a sexual way without permission; grabbing, fondling, or rubbing up against a person in a sexual way (even if over clothing); taking a sexual experience further than wanted even if consent was given for minor sexual

contact such as kissing or touching, without it leading to intercourse; and, lewd or blatant sexual comments that make a person feel uncomfortable, uneasy, or unsafe.

**Sexual Assault**

*Sexual assault* refers to nonconsensual or unwanted sexual contact with penetration, even if consent was given for minor sexual contact such as kissing or touching. Survey respondents were asked, “Since January 2015, has someone attempted or succeeded in having nonconsensual or unwanted sexual contact with you under any circumstances (on or off campus), or do you suspect someone did?”

Every survey respondent was provided the following examples of *sexual assault*: sexual penetration with a finger or object (someone putting their finger or an object in the vagina or anus); oral sex (someone’s mouth or tongue making contact with genitals); anal sex (a penis being put into an anus); and sexual intercourse (someone’s penis being put into a vagina).

**Results**

Between January 2015 and spring semester 2016, an estimated 11.2%—or 1 out of every 9—UA (statewide) students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both. Put another way, between January 2015 and spring semester 2016, an estimated 2,819 UA students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both. Nearly a third of

these 2,819 victims (n=881; 31.3%) experienced at least one attempted or completed sexual assault (data not shown).

Figure 1 presents MAU-specific estimates of sexual misconduct and sexual assault. UAA estimates are depicted in yellow; UAF estimates are depicted in light green; and UAS estimates are depicted in dark green.

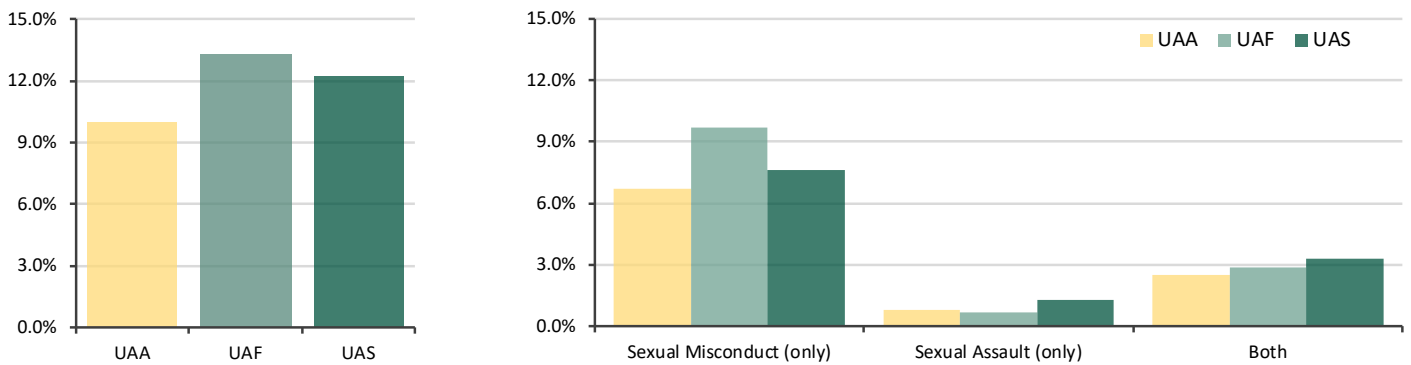
Between January 2015 and spring semester 2016, an estimated 10.0%—or 1 out of every 10—UAA students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both. Put another way, between January 2015 and spring semester 2016, an estimated 1,508 UAA students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both. Over a third of these 1,508 victims (n=497; 33.0%) experienced at least one attempted or completed sexual assault.

Between January 2015 and spring semester 2016, an estimated 13.3%—or 1 out of every 8—UAF students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both. Put another way, between January 2015 and spring semester 2016, an estimated 1,027 UAF students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both. More than a quarter of these 1,027 victims (n=278; 27.1%) experienced at least one attempted or completed sexual assault.

Between January 2015 and spring semester 2016, an estimated 12.2%—or almost 1 out of every 8—UAS students

**Figure 1.**

Percentage of students who experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both in the past year, by major administrative unit



Source of data : University of Alaska Campus Climate Survey, 2016

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10.0% of UAA students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both in the past year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6.7% experienced sexual misconduct (only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.8% experienced sexual assault (only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.5% experienced both sexual misconduct and sexual assault</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13.3% of UAF students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both in the past year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9.7% experienced sexual misconduct (only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.7% experienced sexual assault (only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.9% experienced both sexual misconduct and sexual assault</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12.2% of UAS students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both in the past year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7.6% experienced sexual misconduct (only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.3% experienced sexual assault (only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.3% experienced both sexual misconduct and sexual assault</li> </ul>

experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both. Put another way, between January 2015 and spring semester 2016, an estimated 288 UAS students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both. Over a third of these 288 victims (n=108; 37.5%) experienced at least one attempted or completed sexual assault.

An estimated 11.2% of all UA students — 2,819 individuals — experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both sexual misconduct and sexual assault between January 2015 and spring semester 2016. Nearly a third of these students — an estimated 881 individuals — suffered at least one attempted or completed sexual assault.

## SUMMARY

This Fact Sheet reports estimates of sexual misconduct and sexual assault committed against UA students between January 2015 and spring semester 2016. Prevalence estimates of sexual misconduct (only), sexual assault (only), and both sexual misconduct and sexual assault for the UA system as a whole, as well as for each MAU (UAA, UAF, and UAS), were presented.

The percentage of students who experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both sexual misconduct and sexual assault varied for each MAU. Between January 2015 and spring semester 2016, an estimated 10.0% of UAA students experienced sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or both. The estimated percentages of UAF and UAS students who had these acts committed against them were 13.3% and 12.2%, respectively.

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## NOTES

### FUNDING

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### SURVEY AND METHODOLOGY

The *University of Alaska Campus Climate Survey* was modeled after the *Campus Climate Survey Recommendations* prepared by the White House Task Force to Protect Students From Sexual Assault (<https://www.notalone.gov/assets/ovw-climate-survey.pdf>). The *University of Alaska Campus Climate Survey* was modified to include only the following sections from the Task Force recommendations: the general climate of the school, the prevalence of sexual violence, the context around the incidents of sexual violence, rape myth acceptance, and behavior questions related to bystander confidence and readiness to help. In addition, the *University of Alaska Campus Climate Survey* included two other sections: academic engagement, and family and peer attachment. The criteria for inclusion in the *University of Alaska Campus Climate Survey* were: must have been a student enrolled in at least 1 credit hour in the spring of 2016 at the University of Alaska, must have been a UA student over the age of 18, and must have been a student with an email address on file with the university. The total population of students at the University of Alaska in the spring of 2016 was 25,177. After taking into account all inclusion criteria, 810 students were removed, leaving a total of 24,367 students in the sampling frame. From this sampling frame, 10,000 students were randomly selected to receive the online survey. Of these 10,000 students, 9,857 were successfully contacted (143 could not be contacted at their preferred email address). Of this number, a total of 1,982 students responded to the survey. The final response rate was 20.1%.

### LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS

Important limitations include: 1) This survey provides baseline estimates for the number of victims and not the number of total victimization incidents that occurred. 2) These estimates are only generalizable to students that were enrolled at UA during the spring of 2016. 3) This survey only includes students who were aged 18 and older. 4) These estimates may be conservative because of the continuing stigma of reporting sexual violence.”

Important strengths include: 1) This survey presents a more holistic view of sexual violence committed against UA students by asking students about sexual misconduct and sexual assault victimizations that occurred both *on and off campus*. 2) This survey uses an established survey protocol vetted and recommended by the White House and the Bureau of Justice Statistics. 3) This survey includes both male and female victims in the baseline estimates of sexual misconduct and sexual assault. 4) This survey presents the first baseline estimates of sexual misconduct and sexual assault against UA students; these estimates can be utilized by the University of Alaska to impact and evaluate prevention efforts and education programs for UA students.

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## ALASKA JUSTICE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER



### ABOUT

The Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (AJSAC) was established by Administrative Order No. 89, signed by Governor William Sheffield on July 2, 1986. Since that time the AJSAC has been housed within the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center. The AJSAC assists Alaska criminal justice agencies, as well as state and local governments and officials, with the development, implementation, and evaluation of criminal justice programs and policies through the collection, analysis, and reporting of crime and justice statistics.

Since 1972, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and its predecessor agency, the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, has provided support to state and territorial governments to establish and operate Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) to collect, analyze, and report statistics on crime and justice to federal, state, and local levels of government, and to share state-level information nationally. There are currently 53 SACs located in the United States and its Territories. The AJSAC is a member of the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA), a national nonprofit organization comprised of SAC directors, researchers, and practitioners dedicated to policy-oriented research and analysis.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Location

The Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (AJSAC) is housed in the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center, which is located on the second floor of the UAA/APU Consortium Library, Suite 213.

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### ON THE WEB

To learn more about the AJSAC research, please visit our website at: <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/ajsac/>.

### PRODUCTION

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