

Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS)

# Whittier College Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey

Prepared by the Title IX Committee  
and the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment  
November 2016



# Background

At the end of the 2014-2015 academic year, the Title IX Committee recommended that Whittier College formally assess the campus climate around sexual misconduct in 2016.

With support from senior staff and the President, the Title IX Committee researched and selected the Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey developed by the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Consortium. In the Spring of 2016, Whittier College participated in the HEDS survey alongside 49 other institutions across the United States, including 46 small, private colleges.



# Background

All Whittier College students were sent four invitation emails by various student leaders, administrators, and faculty members from February 16<sup>th</sup> to March 28<sup>th</sup> of 2016.

Participation was voluntary and anonymous. HEDS did not allow incentives for participation or adjustment of the survey questions.

Students were provided with supportive resources and options for reporting sexual assault to the College and police in their invitation to participate, as well as after taking the survey.



# Context

Before and during the survey implementation period, there were public events that may have impacted the results, including:

- November 2<sup>nd</sup>: A “timely warning” campus notification was sent out for a sexual assault occurring in a residence hall.
- January 20<sup>th</sup>: A public physical assault occurred. It was discussed at ASWC meetings, mentioned in an email from President Herzberger on February 20<sup>th</sup>, and written about on public social media sites.
- February 12<sup>th</sup>: A student death occurred.
- February 14<sup>th</sup>: A “timely warning” campus notification and text was sent about an armed individual on campus and a campus lockdown occurred.
- Throughout February: Other incidents related to sexual misconduct were written about on public social media sites.

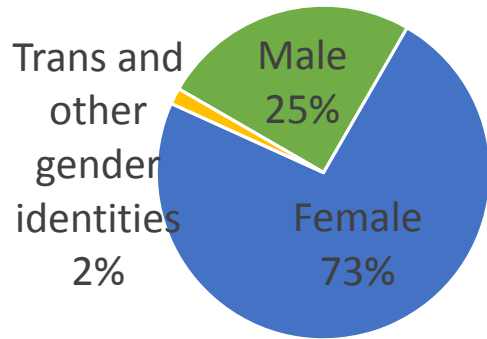


# Survey Demographics

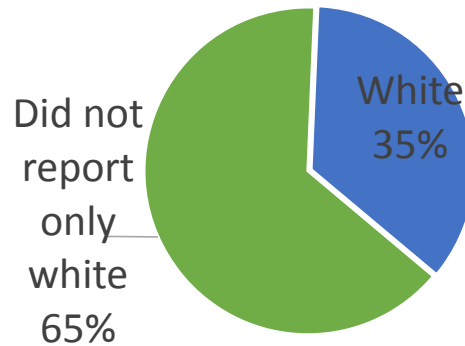
Total WC students emailed: 1,613

WC Response Rate: 20% (323) | National Response Rate: 21%

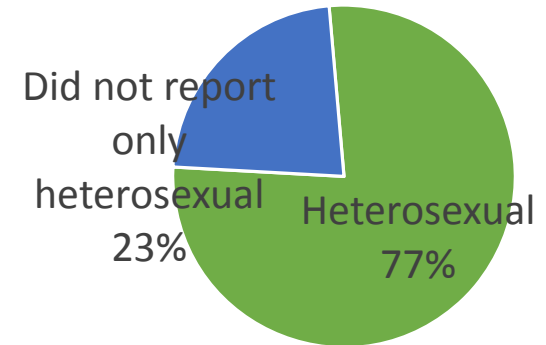
Gender



Race & Ethnicity



Sexual Orientation



Class Standing:

Freshman/First Year: 26% | Sophomore: 15% | Junior: 31% | Senior: 27%

Residence:

49% on campus | 51% off campus



# Contents of the Survey

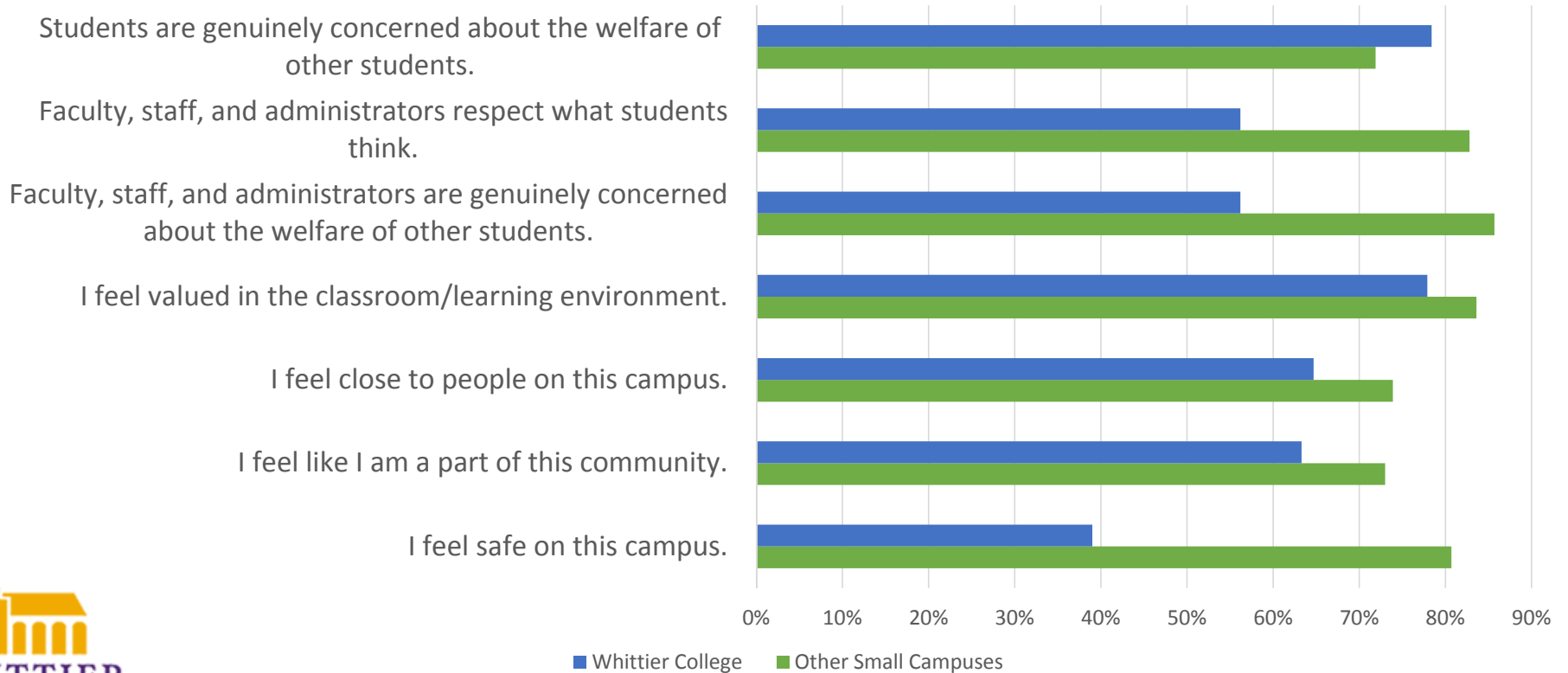
The Sexual Assault Climate Survey was broken into four different sections:

- I. General Campus Climate
- II. Education and Outreach Regarding Sexual Assault
- III. Rates of Unwanted Sexual Contact and Sexual Assault
- IV. Nature, Context, and Reporting of Sexual Assault



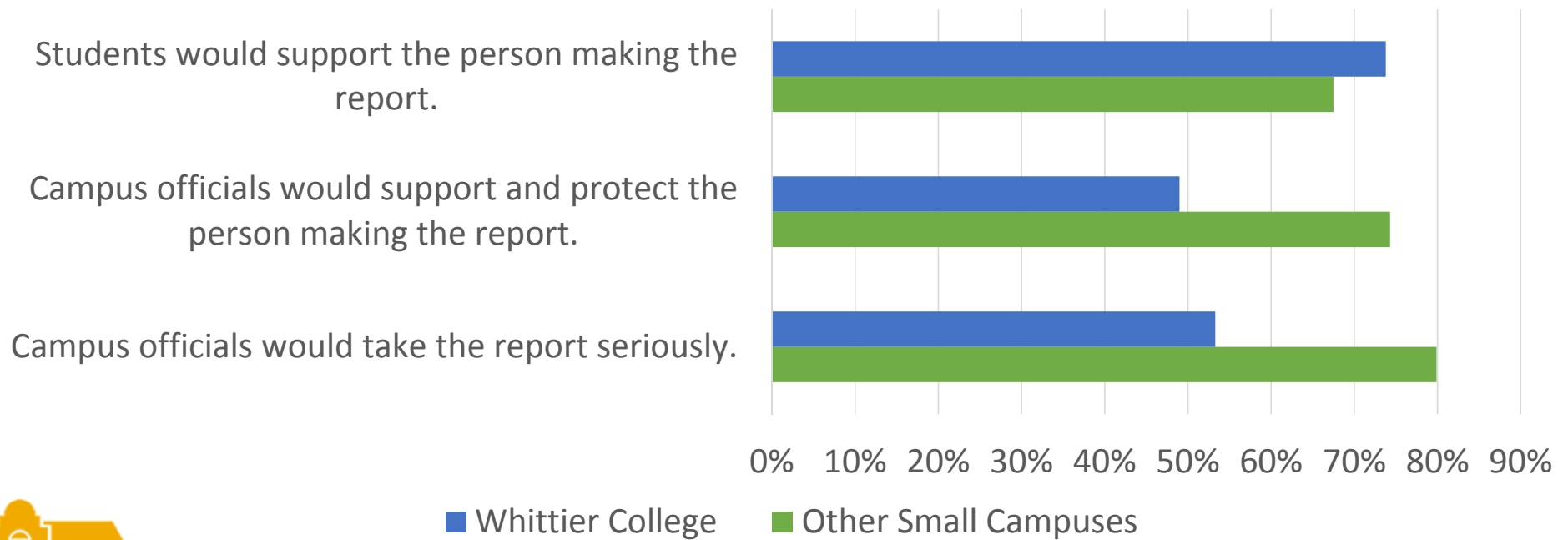
# General Campus Climate

Percent that “agree” or “strongly agree.”



# Campus Climate - Reporting Sexual Assault

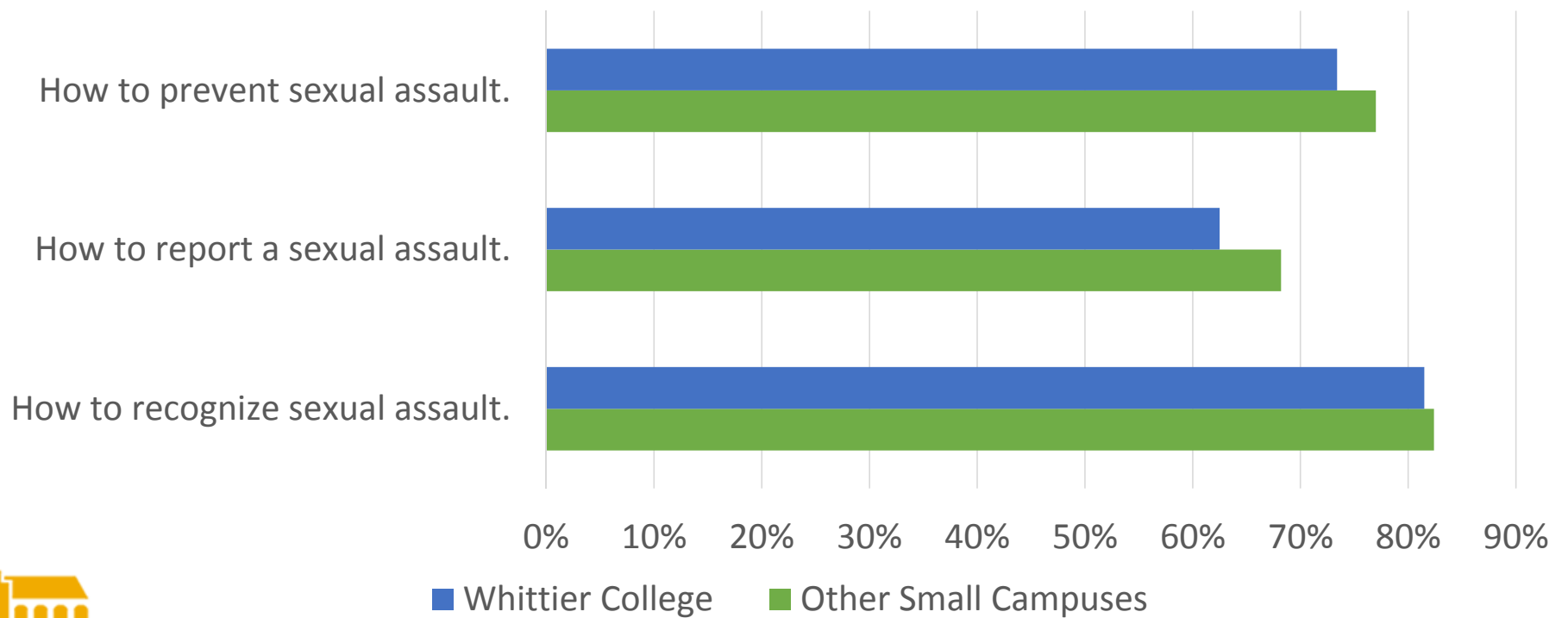
Percent that “agree” or “strongly agree.”





# Education and Outreach

Percent that answered “yes” to having received information or education about:



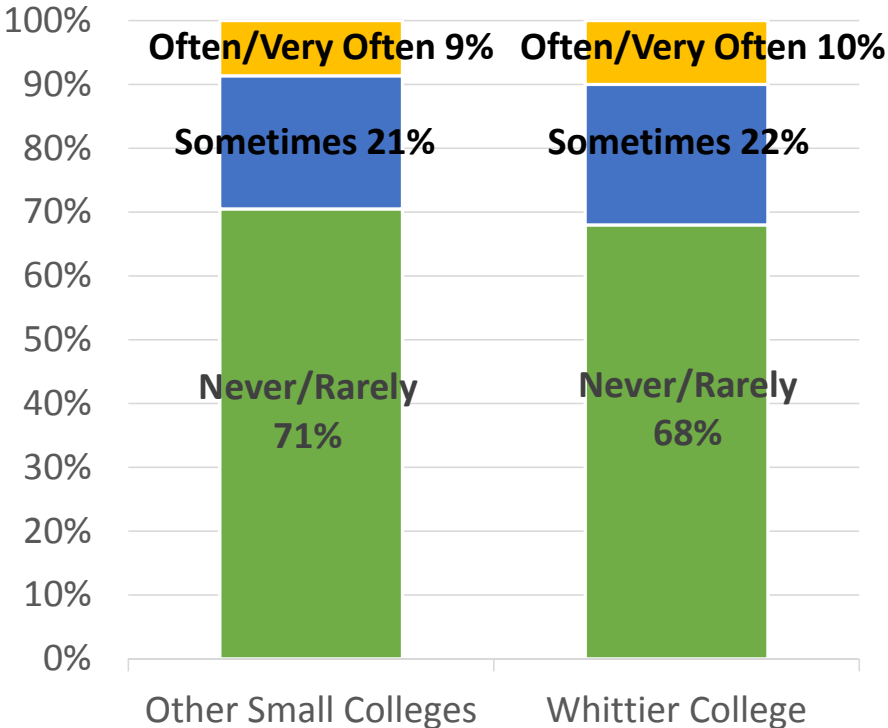
# Definitions in HEDS Survey: Sexual Assault and Unwanted Sexual Contact

- Unwanted verbal behaviors – such as someone making sexual comments about your body; someone making unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, or suggestions to you; or someone telling you sexually offensive jokes or kidding about your sex or gender-specific traits.
- Unwanted nonverbal behaviors – such as sending you sexual emails, texts, or pictures; posting sexual comments about you on blogs or social media; showing you sexually offensive pictures or objects; leering at you or making lewd gestures towards you; or touching oneself sexually in front of you.
- Unwanted brief physical contact – such as someone briefly groping you, rubbing sexually against you, pinching you, or engaging in any other brief inappropriate or unwelcome touching of your body.
- Sexual assault includes touching of a sexual nature, oral sex, vaginal sex, anal sex, anal or vaginal penetration with a body part other than a penis or tongue, or by an object, like a bottle or candle.



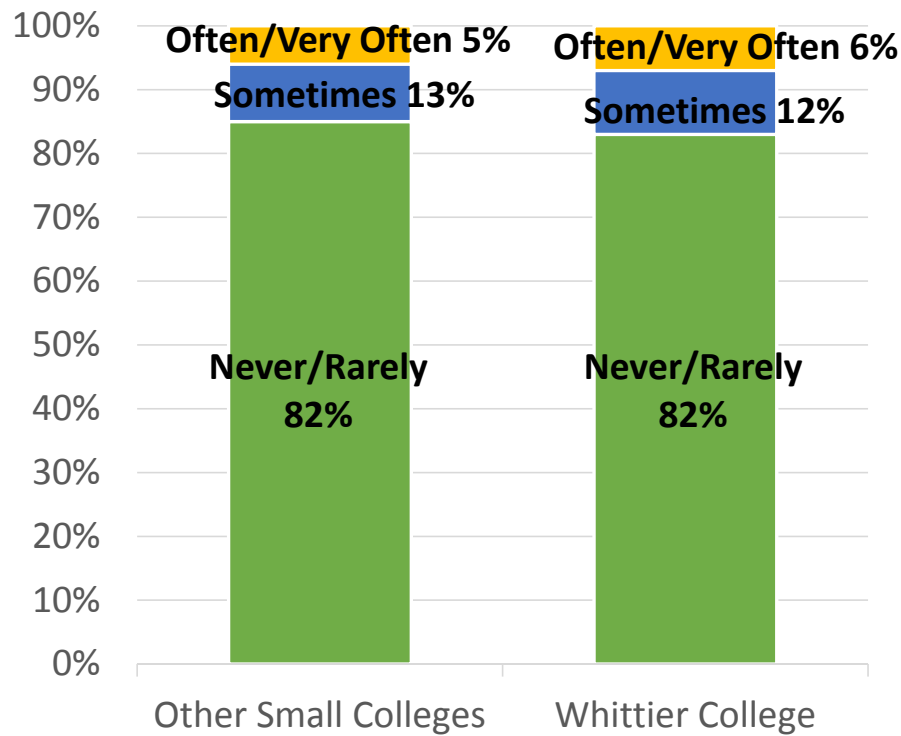
# Rates of Unwanted Verbal Behaviors (Sexual Comments/Advances, etc.)

Since starting College, considering incidents that happened on campus, at an event/program connected with the College, or at a social activity or party near campus.



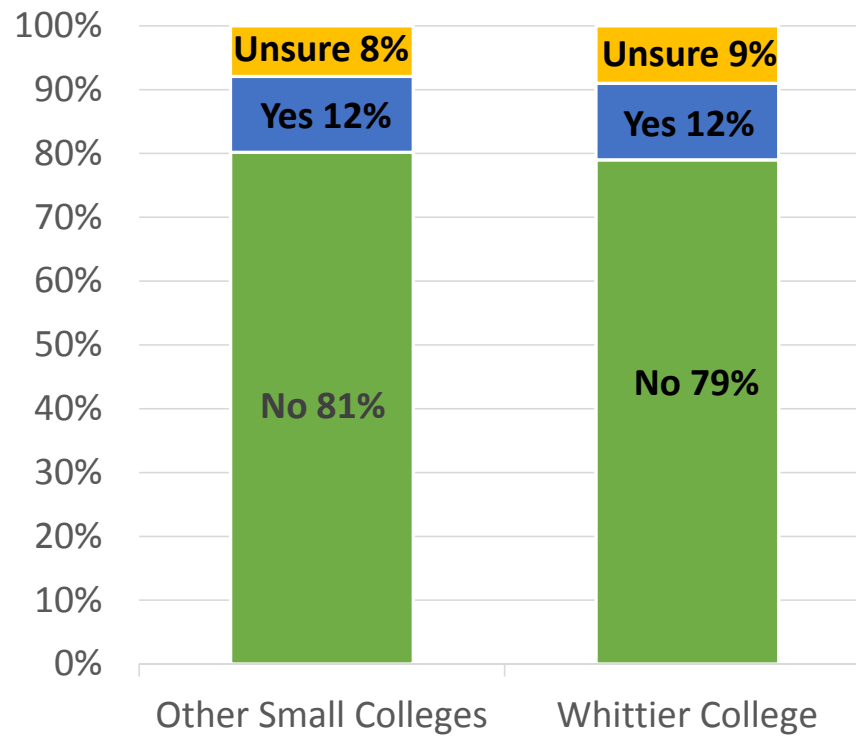
# Rates of Unwanted Brief Physical Contact (Groping/Rubbing, etc.)

Since starting College, considering incidents that happened on campus, at an event/program connected with the College, or at a social activity or party near campus.



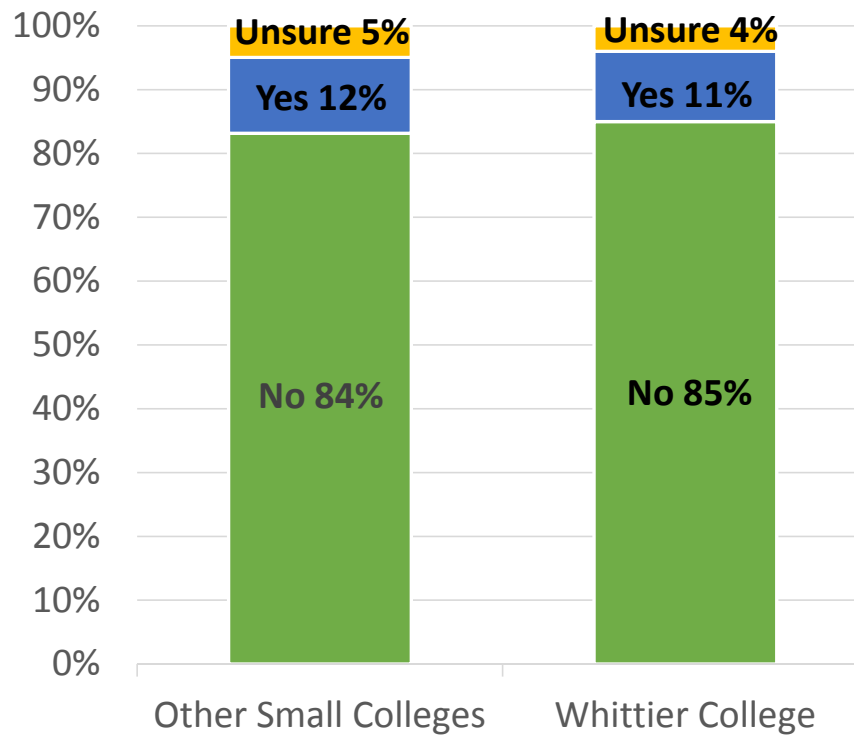
# Rates of Attempted Sexual Assault Since Starting College

The incident happened on campus, at an event/program connected with the College, or at a social activity or party near campus.



# Rates of Sexual Assault Since Starting College

The incident happened on campus, at an event/program connected with the College, or at a social activity or party near campus.



# Limitations of Survey

- There is no distinction between urban, suburban, and rural college
- “Small Colleges” are defined as less than 4,000 students
- Whittier College has a large commuter student population compared to other small, private institutions
- Men are underrepresented in survey sample
- Survey did not include questions about violence other than sexual violence that could also impact student perception of safety
- Staff, faculty, administrators, and campus officials are all evaluated in this survey but the terms are undefined and sometimes undistinguished



# Next Steps

After receiving the results in Fall 2016, the President, Office of Institutional Research & Assessment, and Title IX Committee met to discuss the results and devise a plan, including:

1. Implement immediate changes to address transparency of policies, processes, and programs.
2. Meet with various groups to discuss the results, including Senior Staff, Faculty Executive Committee, ASWC, the Quaker Campus, and the newly formed LGBTQIA+ Committee.
3. Before survey is repeated in Spring 2017, conduct focus groups to interpret the results.
4. Repeat the survey in Spring 2017 to assess trends.
5. Develop a plan to address key areas of concern in Summer 2017.



# Resources

- For full results of the survey, visit <http://www.whittier.edu/campussafety>
- For the Whittier College's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Student Affairs Procedures, visit [www.whittier.edu/SMAP](http://www.whittier.edu/SMAP)
- For resources for victims/survivors, visit [www.whittier.edu/studentlife/victimsupport](http://www.whittier.edu/studentlife/victimsupport)
- For information about the Title IX Committee, visit [www.whittier.edu/studentlife/titleix](http://www.whittier.edu/studentlife/titleix)

