

## **Frequently Asked Questions: 2019 AAU Survey on Sexual Assault and Harassment at Stanford**

*If you have questions about sexual assault, harassment or other forms of sexual violence at Stanford, please see: <https://sexualviolencesupport.stanford.edu/>*

### **What is the 2019 AAU Survey on Sexual Assault and Harassment?**

The survey is a web-based questionnaire open from **April 9<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019** that asks students about:

- Perceptions related to social situations and sexual assault, harassment, and other forms of sexual violence at Stanford
- Knowledge of resources related to sexual assault, harassment, and other forms of sexual violence available at Stanford
- Personal experiences with prohibited sexual conduct at Stanford, including questions about sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and relationship violence
- Perceptions of the University's response to reports of sexual assault, harassment and other forms of sexual violence

The survey has been organized by the [Association of American Universities](#) (AAU) and is being administered between February and May of 2019 on [33 college and university campuses](#) in the US to over 870,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students. The AAU has contracted with [Westat](#), a private research firm, to administer the survey on all 33 campuses including Stanford. Westat will gather survey responses in a way that will ensure participant privacy and confidentiality and will conduct analyses and report findings from the survey to the Stanford community.

### **Why am I being invited to take this survey? What will Stanford do with the information collected?**

Stanford is asking all 2018-19 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students to take this survey on sexual assault, harassment, and other forms of sexual violence. The results will be used to guide Stanford policies and practices to encourage a healthy, safe, and nondiscriminatory environment on campus. This survey is an important tool for Stanford to assess current programs and to shape future policies and practices. Stanford's goal is to develop programs and services that minimize sexual assault, harassment and other forms of sexual violence, as well as to better respond to these events when they do occur.

### **Who is eligible to participate in the survey?**

The AAU survey is for enrolled or recently enrolled Stanford students. In order for a Stanford student to participate, an undergraduate, graduate, or professional student must have received an email invitation from Stanford to complete the survey and must click on the unique Westat link included in the email invitation. Students who are under 18 are not eligible to take the survey. Degree-seeking students over the age of 18 who have been enrolled in Autumn and/or Winter quarter during the 2018-19 Stanford academic year will receive an email on April 9<sup>th</sup> from Provost Drell with their unique survey link.

If you have questions about your eligibility to take the survey, please contact [aausurvey@stanford.edu](mailto:aausurvey@stanford.edu). If you have trouble accessing the link in your email, please contact the Westat Help Desk at **855-793-5324**.

### **How can those not eligible to take the survey make sure their voices are heard on these important issues?**

Post-docs, faculty, staff, student partners, and recent alumni are not eligible to participate in the AAU survey as it is a national survey for students only. Stanford recognizes that many voices need to be heard on these important issues. All members of our community are invited to share concerns. For non-confidential reports or policy/practice suggestions in matters involving students, contact the **Title IX Office** at [titleix@stanford.edu](mailto:titleix@stanford.edu) or **(650) 497-4955**; for non-confidential reports or policy/practice suggestions in matters not involving students, contact the **Sexual Harassment Policy Office** at [harass.stanford.edu](http://harass.stanford.edu) or **(650) 724-2120**. Additionally, anonymous concerns can be reported to the **Stanford Compliance Hotline (650) 721-2667**.

### **What are the incentives to take the survey?**

In addition to helping Stanford better understand how sexual violence affects the Stanford student community and measure the progress made to combat sexual assault and harassment on campus, ALL eligible students who complete the online survey will receive a \$20 Amazon gift card upon survey completion.

### **What kinds of questions are in the survey?**

This survey includes sections that ask about your knowledge and beliefs about social situations, perceptions related to sexual assault and harassment at Stanford and your knowledge of resources available at Stanford. This survey also asks about your personal experience with these issues, such as sexual assault, harassment, and other forms of sexual violence.

### **Why are you asking about these sensitive topics? Why is the language on this survey so explicit?**

In order to better understand sexual assault, harassment, and other forms of sexual violence on campus, the survey needs to ask direct questions about topics that some may find sensitive. By directly collecting this information from students, Stanford can more effectively help to prevent negative experiences and respond when they do happen.

Some of the language used in this survey is explicit and some people may find it uncomfortable, but it is important that questions are asked in this way so that you are clear what is being asked about. Support resources with information on how to get help, if you need it, appear on each page and at the end of the survey.

### **I've never experienced sexual assault, harassment, or other forms of sexual violence at Stanford so why should I take part?**

One of the goals of this survey is to better understand students' attitudes, perceptions, and experiences with sexual assault and harassment on campus. In addition, not all of the questions

on the survey are about personal experiences with sexual assault and sexual harassment. This survey also includes sections that ask about your knowledge and beliefs about social situations, perceptions related to sexual harassment and sexual assault at Stanford, and your knowledge of the information and resources available for addressing these issues. We need as many students to respond as possible so that we have as accurate a representation as possible.

Additionally, the results of this survey will be used to inform policies and strategies that affect all undergraduate and graduate students. Therefore, it is important that your voice be captured in the results.

**If I answer that I experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment on the survey, does that mean I reported it to Stanford?**

Your responses are confidential and do not get reported to Stanford. (Please see the next question for more information on confidentiality, and its limitation in matters where child abuse or a threat of harm to self or others is reported.)

Given the confidential nature of your survey responses and the fact it is not being administered by Stanford, your responses will not be used as a means to report to Stanford instances of prohibited sexual conduct, such as harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of violence that may have occurred while you have been a student at Stanford. Stanford encourages individuals to seek assistance for incidents involving sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, or stalking. To get help while in the survey, support resources are linked at the top of every page and at the end of the survey. You can also find a detailed list of support resources including on and off-campus options, as well as confidential and non-confidential at <https://sexualviolencesupport.stanford.edu/>.

**How do you keep my answers confidential?**

The survey is being administered and analyzed by a third-party independent research firm – Westat – in part to help ensure the confidentiality of your responses. When you complete the survey, the link between your survey responses and your email and IP address will be broken so that no one will be able to connect your email or IP address with your survey responses. Information on who completed the survey will not be provided to Stanford or anyone else. The results will be presented in summary form so no individual can be identified. *However, if Westat or Stanford learns about child abuse or about a threat of harm to yourself 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. However, 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 from them.

**Why is Stanford participating in the Association of American Universities (AAU) survey?**

Stanford is participating in the AAU survey following [the recommendation](#) of an advisory committee of students, faculty and staff, appointed by the Provost in 2017-18. The committee heard from undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty and staff who advocated for the

University to administer the AAU survey. In addition, the ASSU and GSC both passed resolutions in 2017-18 requesting that Stanford participate in the 2019 AAU survey. Over the last several years, students have played an important and vocal role in encouraging Stanford's participation in this national survey effort.

### **Who designed this survey?**

The survey was designed by Westat, a social science research firm retained by the AAU. Westat led the development of the survey in collaboration with a multi-disciplinary team of representatives from the AAU and other college campuses. Undergraduate, graduate, and professional students at participating schools – including Stanford – gave feedback on the survey questions. In addition, Westat coordinated cognitive interviews and focus groups about the survey instrument with students on multiple college campuses.

### **Am I required to participate? How long will the survey take if I participate?**

You do NOT have to participate in this survey. If you do choose to participate, you may skip any question you are not comfortable answering and may exit the survey at any time. This survey should take most students approximately 20 minutes to complete. It may take up to 30 minutes for some individuals. If you are not able to complete the survey in one sitting, you can save your progress and return later by clicking the link sent in the invitation email. The survey will be available to Stanford students to take from April 9, 2019 to May 10, 2019. Students can take as much time as they need to complete the survey as long as it is submitted before the end of the survey period.

### **What will happen if I don't participate?**

There will be no consequences to you personally if you choose not to complete the survey. Information on who completed the survey (and who did not) will not be available to Westat or Stanford.

### **Will my participation or survey responses affect my visa status?**

No. There will be no consequences to your visa status if you choose not to complete the survey. Your responses to the survey will also have no effect on your visa status. Information on who completed the survey (and who did not) will not be available to Westat or Stanford.

### **Why are you asking me about my race and ethnicity, my citizenship, my gender identity and other personal information?**

The survey asks these questions in order to provide a description of the sample of students who completed the survey, and so that the study researchers can describe how perceptions of campus climate and actual experiences with sexual assault and harassment differ by self-reported identities. This will help Stanford target resources to those who need it the most. You may skip any question you are not comfortable answering.

### **Do I have to answer all the questions? If I skip a question, can I go back to it later?**

You may skip any question you are not comfortable answering and may exit the survey at any time. You can save your progress and return later by clicking the link sent in the invitation email. However, once you click "submit", you will no longer be able to change your answers. If you do

not submit your survey before the survey close date, your answers will not be saved or collected by Westat.

**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 come back to the survey later to complete it. However, if you close the browser without clicking one of those buttons on the current screen, your answer on the current screen will not be saved.

If you are not able to complete the survey in one sitting, you can save your progress and return later by clicking the link sent in the invitation email.

**When can I see the results of this study?**

Westat will produce an aggregate report based on data from all participating schools in the fall of 2019. Westat will also provide Stanford with a campus-level report in the fall of 2019, which will be shared publicly with the Stanford community.

**I still have questions.**

If you have any additional questions or feedback regarding the survey, please email [aausurvey@stanford.edu](mailto:aausurvey@stanford.edu).

For technical issues related to the survey, please contact Westat’s survey **Help Desk** at **855-793-5324**.

For questions about your rights and welfare as a research participant, please call the **Westat Human Subjects Protections Office** at **1-888-920-7631**.