

# **Self-Reported Sexual Assault Prevalence among University Students in Armenia**

Master of Public Health Integrating Experience Project

Professional Publication Framework

by

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2023

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## **List of Abbreviations**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| AAU   | Association of American Universities  |
| AUA   | American University of Armenia  |
| CHS   | College of Health Sciences  |
| GPA   | Grade Point Average   |
| IRB   | Institutional Review Board  |
| OIRA  | Office of Institutional Research and Assessment   |
| PTSD  | Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder  |
| STI   | Sexually Transmitted Infection  |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund  |
| WASC  | Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior<br>College and University Commission |

## Abstract

*Background:* Sexual assault prevalence is high globally, with a large proportion of these events taking place among university-aged students. This age range is of particular concern as they are more likely to engage in risky behaviors. Sexual assault leads to significant physical and mental health problems that can affect quality of life and academic performance. Many universities globally conduct sexual assault prevalence studies to understand the dynamics of the issue on campus and where interventions could be implemented. No studies have been reported on sexual assault prevalence at universities in Armenia. I assessed the prevalence and associated factors of sexual harassment, stalking, and assault among university students at the American University of Armenia (AUA) in Yerevan, Armenia.

*Methods:* I attempted a census of all undergraduate and graduate students at the university, via an online self-administered questionnaire. I adapted the questionnaire from the study conducted by the Association of American Universities (AAU) in 2019 across 33 universities in the U.S. I used frequency analyses and chi-square tests to assess prevalence of sexual harassment, stalking, and sexual assault and their associated factors.

*Results:* Approximately 4.9% (n=105) of AUA's 2123 currently enrolled students completed at least one of the major sections of the survey, and 3.2% (n=67) completed all major sections. Prevalence rates for sexual assault while at AUA, sexual harassment, and stalking were 14.9% (n=10), 49.5% (n=49), and 19.2% (n=15), respectively. Female and international students reported higher rates of sexual misconduct, along with students who had been enrolled at AUA for several years ( $p < 0.05$ ). Perpetrators were mostly male and were primarily identified as being part of the AUA community. Faculty were identified as perpetrators by 31.4% (n=11) of students who reported harassment. Half of the students knew little or nothing about AUA policies (n=53) and 80.0% (n=84) of students knew little or nothing about disciplinary procedures regarding this topic. Moreover, 11.1% (n=7) did not think the administration would take a report seriously or conduct a fair investigation. Out of the students who experienced harassment, 74.3% (n=26) did not report the incident to any other person, and only 1 reported it to a counselor at AUA. None of the respondents who experienced stalking reported it to anyone.

*Conclusions:* The self-reported sexual assault prevalence rates at AUA were comparable to those reported at universities globally, but slightly higher than had been previously identified in the Armenian population. Respondents had limited understanding of how the university handled this issue and low trust in reporting and disciplinary procedures. Awareness of the issue, reporting, and disciplinary procedures needs to be amplified campus wide. The university should have a comprehensive approach that focuses on increasing awareness in the community and providing evidence-based consent training to reduce perpetration, improving the culture and confidence in the administration surrounding these issues to reduce barriers to reporting and support, and taking every possible step to reduce incidence of sexual misconduct. Also, additional protective measures should be put in place for female and international students specifically. Finally, additional prevalence and climate studies need to be conducted throughout Armenian universities to better understand this issue.

## **1. Introduction**

### ***1.1 Sexual assault as a public health issue***

Sexual assault is a major global health issue, as nearly one in three women and one in six men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup> Aside from initial trauma concerns, sexual assault leads to health concerns such as physical injury, unwanted pregnancies and abortions, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and a slew of mental health disorders.<sup>2</sup> Victims of sexual assault are known to have significantly higher rates of conditions such as anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, eating and sleeping disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).<sup>3</sup> These conditions, if untreated, decrease quality of life for victims of sexual assault.<sup>4</sup> It is vital that governments and organizations create interventions both to reduce the prevalence of sexual assault and to support victims to help them manage their physical and mental health to improve their quality of life. Sexual assault includes sexual penetration, oral sex, kissing, or touching in a sexual way that is unwanted or was not consented to.<sup>5</sup> Detailed definitions for sexual assault are included in Appendix I.

### ***1.2 Sexual assault in universities***

While people of all ages can be victims of sexual assault, the demographic at greatest risk are university-aged students (18-24 years).<sup>6</sup> This demographic is the most at-risk globally, although prevalence rates vary across countries, largely because college-aged students often engage in risky behaviors, such as drug use, alcohol consumption, and risky sexual behaviors.<sup>7</sup> Reported rates among undergraduates globally are 10.3% and 4.1% for women, and 3.1% and 0.8% for men, for sexual assault and completed rape respectively.<sup>6</sup> In the USA, prevalence rates are significantly greater, with female undergraduate sexual assault rates being above 24%, whereas in Norway, reported rates for completed rape among undergraduate students is 3.4%.<sup>8,9</sup>

A study among Russian university students reported rates of sexual coercion among intimate partners at 24.1%.<sup>10</sup> No data yet exists on university sexual assault prevalence rates in Armenia.

University students face a unique challenge with still being in school. Victims of sexual assault who attended universities had significant declines in their grade point averages (GPAs) and significant increases in dropout rates.<sup>8</sup> So, in addition to the moral obligation, ensuring proper care and resources for victims of sexual assault should be of the utmost importance to universities worldwide.

One major issue with implementing sexual assault interventions for university students is the utilization of such interventions. Victims of sexual assault do not always report or seek help after an incident, which is largely due to their perception of campus climate regarding sexual assault.<sup>11</sup> Working to understand sexual assault climates can be useful in developing successful interventions and reducing barriers for victims seeking help.

### ***1.3 Sexual assault in Armenia***

The Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia dedicates Section 7 Chapter 18 to “Crimes against sexual immunity and sexual freedom”.<sup>12</sup> This portion of the code contains five articles (138-142) detailing violent sexual acts that are punishable by law. The first article includes the following definition: “Rape, sexual intercourse of a man with a woman against her will, using violence against the latter or some other person, with threat thereof, or taking advantage of the woman’s helpless situation”.<sup>12</sup> The criminal code goes on to define other sexual acts of violence between persons of all genders, all of which are punishable with jail time. This is in line with the international crime laws and recommendations.<sup>13</sup>

Despite the aforementioned laws, a recent quantitative study demonstrated that the Armenian population at large does not view sexual assault to be nearly as criminal as the laws

state.<sup>14</sup> A 2016 study conducted in Armenia by The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) details the prevalence and perceptions of sexual assault amongst Armenians. The researchers collected 1617 valid surveys from men and women of all ages across the country.<sup>14</sup> This report provides insight into the current social situation regarding sexual assault in the country.

Firstly, the report addresses self-reported prevalence of sexual assault perpetration. In response to the questionnaire, 14.6% of all male participants willingly admitted to perpetrating sexual assault during their lifetime.<sup>14</sup> Given the criminality of sexual assault, it is notable that such a large proportion of respondents were willing to admit to committing these acts of violence. One can assume that this proportion is in actuality much larger given the social desirability bias that accompanies such questionnaires. However, this proportion is in line with global statistics that report an estimate of 11.4% among European studies and higher ranges among US-focused studies (36-60%).<sup>17,18</sup> In 2021, the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia released the only known assessment of sexual assault prevalence in Armenia, where the prevalence of sexual abuse by a non-partner was 3.1%, and sexual abuse by a partner was 6.6%, for a total of 9.7%.<sup>17</sup> This finding is much lower than expected lifetime prevalence considering global statistics. Varying definitions of sexual assault are cited as one of the primary reasons national surveys consistently underestimate sexual assault.<sup>5</sup> Low reporting rates due to fear of police or court proceedings is another potential reason for the discrepancy seen between global and Armenian prevalence rates.<sup>19</sup>

Next, and perhaps most significantly, the UNFPA study addresses the population perception of sexual assault. Over 80% of the respondents agreed with at least one statement placing the responsibility for the act of violence on the victim.<sup>15</sup> This statistic suggests that the Armenian culture stigmatizes sexual assault and places blame on the victim rather than the



perpetrator. As a result, citizens may have access to very few reporting mechanisms due to climate surrounding sexual assault.<sup>18</sup> The United Nations' human rights division recently published findings from a list of countries, including Armenia. Their findings include higher risk of sexual assault for women and girls who are internally displaced or in conflict areas of the country.<sup>20</sup>

#### ***1.4 Sexual assault at Universities in Armenia***

Armenia is home to a variety of public and private universities, the majority of which are concentrated in the capital, Yerevan. No data is accessible on reporting or rates of sexual assault at any university in Armenia.

The American University of Armenia (AUA) presents a unique case of a higher education institution in Armenia, as it provides a liberal arts education in the western tradition and maintains accreditation with the United States' Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission (WASC). As such, it must uphold Armenian laws and any values established by WASC. No data exist on the prevalence of sexual assault or on the perceived climate regarding sexual assault among AUA students. The AUA student code of conduct does state that all forms of sexual assault and harassment are forbidden and subject to disciplinary action, and information regarding protocols, reporting, and available resources are listed in a separate sexual harassment policy on the website.<sup>21</sup> Local higher education accreditation requirements do not require any regulation on such issues.<sup>22</sup> While no standard set of regulations, procedures, or resources that universities should implement to combat sexual assault exists, some practices are widely used.<sup>23</sup> Some common practices among American accredited universities to deal with sexual assault include having a counselor available to students and providing mandatory consent training.<sup>23</sup>

### ***1.5 Study aims and objectives***

The primary objective of my study was to assess sexual assault prevalence among AUA students during enrollment at the university. The secondary objective of my study was to identify any barriers to reporting and seeking help for sexual assault by assessing student perceptions of campus climate.

This project built on past studies from an AUA student and the UNFPA.<sup>24,14</sup> Neither of these studies considered university prevalence and climate surrounding sexual assault. This project helped obtain an accurate understanding of the current prevalence of sexual assault among AUA students, as well as understand the climate of the university and perceptions of response to sexual assault. The results of this study estimated prevalence of sexual assault and misconduct, as well as student perceptions of campus that could inform where protocol, education, and awareness are lacking.

## **2. Methodology**

### ***2.1 Study design and population***

A quantitative study design was utilized to answer the research questions. This study involved primary data collection and analysis through a cross-sectional, census survey conducted in Yerevan, Armenia via a self-administered web-based questionnaire. The target population of the study was all AUA students aged 18 and older that were enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student in the spring 2023 semester.

### ***2.2 Instrument***

I adapted the questionnaire used for the survey from the Association of American Universities' (AAU) Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct.<sup>5</sup> This questionnaire was used at 33 universities in the U.S. in 2015 and in 2019.<sup>5</sup> I also used an adapted version of the consent form from the study, which can be seen in Appendix II. I used the 2019

version of the questionnaire in this study, with a few alterations. First, portions of the survey were removed, as they did not pertain to the primary or secondary objectives of the study. Second, an additional section collecting demographic information (enrollment status, age, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation) was added to the survey. The final version of the survey can be found in Appendix III.

### ***2.3 Sampling and data collection***

As this study was a census survey, no sampling strategies or calculations were involved. All 2123 undergraduate and graduate students at AUA were included in the sample. Previous census surveys disseminated, such as exit interviews administered at the end of the year by the university's Office of Institutional Research, had approximate response rates of 60% across all classes.<sup>25</sup> However, those surveys did not address a sensitive topic. The average response rate for the original Association of American Universities study was 21.9%.<sup>5</sup> The response rate from the sexual assault prevalence assessments in Armenia was 22.7%.<sup>17</sup> From evaluating these three numbers, the response rate for this study was expected to be 22% (467 responses).

AUA's Office of Student Affairs emailed a link to the questionnaire from the data collection program Alchemer to all students. The survey was disseminated at the end of April 2023, with a deadline of one week. The survey was extended for an additional week when the target response rate was not met, totaling two weeks of field time for the survey. During the time the survey was in the field, the Office of Student Affairs sent two reminder emails to all students. The text of all emails can be seen in Appendix IV.

### ***2.4 Data analysis***

Data cleaning took place prior to the export of data from Alchemer into IBM SPSS 21. Following the AAU methodology, a complete response was one that had at least one answer in each of the harassment, stalking, and assault sections of the questionnaire. A partial response was

any response that included at least one but not more than three of the following sections: climate, harassment, stalking, or assault. Responses meeting one of these criteria were exported from Alchemer into an SPSS data file. These classifications as complete or partial responses were reevaluated via a missingness check after exporting the datafile to SPSS.

Next, I assessed rates of response decline through survey sections by demographic factors to determine which, if any, characteristics had associations with the drop-offs after starting the survey via Kaplan-Meier survival curves. I considered log-rank values less than 0.05 to be significant. Then, I ran frequency analyses on each section of the survey. The frequency analyses allowed me to identify the counts and proportions of experiences of sexual assault and misconduct, as well as climate and reporting questions. Finally, I ran chi-square tests to examine potential associations between demographic factors and experiences of sexual harassment, stalking, and sexual assault. I chose this test because it allows the examination of associations with categorical variables. I examined each demographic factor against each individual question from the harassment, stalking, and assault sections. The only demographic variable that I collapsed for this assessment was sexual orientation. While respondents had been given many options for this variable, I collapsed the responses into students identifying as straight, and those identifying as having any other sexual orientation. I did this because there were limited responses in most of the non-straight orientations, and because most of the literature on sexual assault only lists being not straight as a risk factor and does not break it down into further categories. I kept years of enrollment and age as ordinal variables and did not collapse them, primarily because I was working with such a small sample size. I did not need to collapse enrollment status, citizenship, and gender identity, as they had limited categories that were all of unique interest. For the chi-square analyses, I considered p-values less than 0.05 as significant.

### **3. Ethical Considerations**

Ethical concerns were of note for this project, as rape and sexual assault are sensitive topics, and the victims were asked about their experiences directly. Five steps were utilized to protect survey respondents. First, this survey was self-administered to maintain privacy of respondents by allowing them to respond individually without the presence of others. Second, all responses were anonymized through the web-based delivery system for the survey. Alchemer delinked all IP addresses, email addresses, and geolocations from the responses submitted. Third, the demographic information collected in the survey was limited to help participants stay non-identifiable, while ensuring sufficient data to make a full assessment. Fourth, since both AUA and the Republic of Armenia do not have mandated reporting for sexual assault, respondent anonymity was secured throughout the process. Fifth, every page of the survey contained a banner with information for sexual assault care resources that were available to participants through the counselling center.

### **4. Results**

#### ***4.1 Administrative results***

Out of the entire student body, 183 students (8.6%) accessed the survey via the link provided, and 180 (8.5%) consented and began the survey. Of the 180 that started the survey, 7.2% (n=152) completed the demographic section, 4.9% (n=105) completed the climate section, 4.7% (n=99) completed the harassment section, 3.7% (n=78) completed the stalking section, and 3.2% (n=67) completed the assault section (**Table 1**). As the primary objective of the study was to examine sexual assault prevalence, the 67 respondents who completed all major sections were the ones designated as complete, for an overall response rate of 3.2%.

Response rates across the various sections of the survey were only notable for two demographics. Older students and graduate students were more likely to complete more sections

of the survey than were younger and undergraduate students, with log-rank values of 0.007 and 0.042, respectively.

#### ***4.2 Respondent demographics***

In a comparison of the demographics of respondents and the student body, graduate students were slightly underrepresented among the respondents, while non-Armenian citizens were slightly overrepresented (**Table 2**). Response rates for U.S. and Armenian studies regarding sexual assaults were similar, so this statistic was unexpected.<sup>5,17</sup> The age range of respondents spanned from 18 to 37 years, with a mean of 21.1 years. Women were slightly overrepresented, comprising 69.7% (n=106) of respondents versus 62.7% (n=1401) of the student body. This higher proportion of women respondents to this survey was the only expected result out of the three.<sup>5</sup> In summary, undergraduate students, international students, and women were slightly overrepresented in the survey.

**Table 3** summarizes other respondent demographic characteristics. For sexual orientation, 69.8% (n=106) of respondents who completed the section identified as heterosexual or straight. The average number of years a respondent had been enrolled at AUA was 2.4. No data on the student body exist for these demographic factors. However, the proportion of students identifying as an orientation other than straight was more than double the average proportion found across campuses in the AAU study<sup>5</sup>, which may indicate they were overrepresented.

#### ***4.3 Prevalence of harassment, stalking, and assault***

The total number of respondents that reported at least one type of sexual harassment was 49 (49.5%). For the sexual harassment section of the questionnaire (**Table 4**), the highest prevalence was for experiencing inappropriate comments made about someone's body or appearance (n=35, 35.4%), and the lowest was for receiving offensive sexual content online

(n=5, 5.1%). A significant association was seen between years enrolled in AUA and experiences of receiving offensive sexual content online ( $p<0.001$ ). Additional associations were seen between gender and inappropriate comments ( $p<0.01$ ) and gender and receiving offensive sexual content online ( $p<0.001$ ). The frequency of harassment experiences by respondents reporting at least one instance ranged from 1 to 11, with a median of 3.

The total number of respondents that reported at least one type of stalking was 15 (19.2%). For the stalking section of the questionnaire (**Table 5**), the highest prevalence was seen in people showing up uninvited and people making unwanted contact (n=8, 10.3%). The lowest prevalence was seen in those being spied on or monitored (n=5, 6.6%). No significant associations were seen between experiences of stalking and any demographic factor. The frequency of stalking event by individual respondents who had experienced stalking ranged from 1 to 10, with a median of 3.

The number of respondents that reported at least one type of sexual assault was 10 (14.9%). For the assault section of the questionnaire (**Table 6**), both lifetime prevalence and prevalence since enrollment at AUA were assessed. Various forms of non-consensual penetration and groping were assessed. The rates of different types of assault had equal or higher prevalence prior to enrollment as during enrollment, with the exception of groping by physical force. Lifetime prevalence of this type of sexual assault was reported by 9 (13.5%) respondents, with 5 (7.5%) of them reporting since enrollment at AUA and one (1.5%) of them reporting both before and since enrollment at AUA. So, sexual assault prevalence during enrollment at AUA is 9.0% (n=6). Significant associations were seen between year of enrollment and nearly all forms of sexual assault ( $p<0.001$ ), with the exception of unwanted kissing, touching or groping with the use of physical force. Other significant associations were seen between citizenship status and

some forms of sexual assault ( $p < 0.05$ ), including unwanted sexual penetration or oral sex completed without consent due to incapacitation or with threats of non-physical harm or reward, in addition to unwanted kissing, touching, or groping with threats of non-physical harm or reward. No other statistical associations with demographic factors were identified; however, only women reported experiencing sexual assault.

#### ***4.4 Characteristics of perpetrators***

Data on the demographics of perpetrators was only collected for experiences of harassment and assault (**Table 7**). For harassment, perpetrators were identified across a variety of genders, with most respondents identifying at least one of their perpetrators as a man ( $n=31$ , 88.6%). The greatest proportion of perpetrators were other AUA students ( $n=29$ , 82.9%), with the second greatest being AUA faculty and staff ( $n=11$ , 31.4%). Most perpetrators were a classmate or acquaintance of the respondent ( $n=17$ , 48.6%;  $n=18$ , 51.4%). Other relationships to perpetrators include teachers, coaches, friends, current or previous partners, and strangers.

For stalking, all identified perpetrators were male. Of identified perpetrators, 4 were identified by university affiliation; 3 were students, and 1 was faculty. Once again, classmates and acquaintances were the main perpetrators ( $n=2$ , 25.0%, each). Friends and teachers made up the other identified perpetrators.

#### ***4.5 Reasons for not reporting misconduct***

Reporting practices and reasons for not reporting harassment and stalking can also be found in **Table 7**. For harassment, most respondents did not report their experiences to another person ( $n=26$ , 74.3%). Most who did report told someone who was not part of the reporting structure at AUA ( $n=5$ , 14.3%). Only one respondent told a counselor (2.9%). Respondents noted a variety of reasons for why they did not report their experiences. The two most common reasons



were that the respondent did not deem it serious enough to report (n=17, 48.6%) and they believed they could handle the situation (n=13, 37.1%). However, several respondents noted not reporting due to fear of consequences (n=5, 14.3%), retaliation (n=3, 8.6%), or reports not being kept confidential (n=5, 14.3%). A few students noted not reporting because they did not think they would be believed (n=2, 5.7%). Other students said they did not report because they were embarrassed or ashamed (n=5, 14.3%), while several stated they did not know who to report the incident to (n=2, 5.7%). For those who did not report because they did not think the event was serious enough, the major reasoning for lack of severity was that no one was physically hurt (n=14, 40.0%).

For stalking, no respondents reported their experiences to anyone. The primary reason noted was that respondents said they could handle the situation on their own (n=3, 37.5%). Other notable reasons included fear of consequences, retaliation, or reports not being kept confidential. Five students who had experienced stalking answered questions about how the event made them feel; four (80.0%) of these students said it caused them substantial emotional distress and two (40.0%) said it made them fear for their safety.

#### ***4.6 Climate assessment***

Responses to climate questions are reported in **Table 8**. The first set of climate questions related to university atmosphere were answered using a Likert scale with response options ranging from “not at all” to “extremely”. These questions concerned how connected students feel to campus, each other, as well as faculty and staff. Concerning feeling connected to AUA, the largest proportion of respondents fell in the middle of the scale, answering “somewhat” (n=53, 42.4%). The other questions in this section of the survey regarding connection to campus all followed a similar bell-shaped distribution.

The next set of questions addressed student perceptions of sexual assault and misconduct at AUA. When asked about sexual assault and misconduct at AUA, 12.1% (n=15) rated it as “very” or “extremely” problematic. An additional 35.5% (n=44) said they did not know. When students were asked how likely they thought they were to experience assault or misconduct, 4.0% (n=5) thought it was “very” or “extremely” likely. An additional 13.7% (n=17) respondents said they did not know. A majority of students were aware of the resources provided by AUA’s counselling center (n=79, 75.2%). However, many students also said they were “not at all” or “a little” knowledgeable about how assault and misconduct are defined by the university (n=53, 50.0%), about where to get help if someone experiences assault or misconduct (n=49, 46.2%), about where to make a report of assault or misconduct (n=71, 67.6%), or about what happens when a report is made (n=84, 80.0%).

When asked about the reporting of sexual assault or misconduct, several students said it was “not at all” or “a little” likely that officials would take the report seriously and conduct a fair investigation (n=7, 11.1%). An additional 27.0% (n=17) respondents answered that they “didn’t know” how likely it was that a fair investigation would take place.

## **5. Discussion**

### ***5.1 Study limitations and strengths***

The major limitation of this study was the small number of responses. A limited number of responses might mean that the sample was not representative of the student body and potentially limit the applicability of statistical analyses. The response rates ranging from 3.2% (n=67) to 4.7% (n=99) for different sections were substantially lower than the response rates reported in the AAU study. The AAU study had an average response rate of 21.9%, with the lowest rate being 6%.<sup>5</sup> A variety of factors may have contributed to an unexpectedly low

response rate. First, the survey did not provide an incentive to complete the study, which is a proven method of increasing responses. Next, the survey was fairly long, with over 300 response items for the full questionnaire, which may have deterred students from completing it. Also, the survey was fielded close to the end of the academic year, during which time students were working on finals, which tends to decrease response rates.<sup>5</sup> The survey was on a sensitive topic that is not frequently discussed in Armenia, which may have contributed to the low response rate.

Other potential sources of bias in this study were response bias and recall bias. Research on sexual assault tends to have response bias; however, whether that bias leads to overestimation or underestimation of prevalence varies across studies.<sup>5</sup> In some cases, those who have experienced assault are less inclined to share their experiences and want to keep it private, leading to underestimation.<sup>5</sup> In other cases, those who have experienced assault are more inclined to fill out a survey sharing their experiences than people who did not have those experiences.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, responses may have been subject to recall bias, particularly since some questions were asking about lifetime prevalence. Respondents may not have remembered events as they happened. A final source of potential bias is attrition bias, as many student responses dropped off throughout the survey. While there were not very many significant demographic differences between those who dropped off and those who continued, there may have been associations with the outcomes of interest that were not evaluated.

The major strengths of this study lie in it being a census survey. Because all AUA students were sent the questionnaire, selection and sampling bias were absent, apart from the possibility of self-selection bias. Additionally, the series of protective measures in place to maintain respondent anonymity was a strength of this study. Administering the survey in English allowed stronger comparisons to be made between the AAU and AUA surveys.

## ***5.2 Main findings***

This study assessed the prevalence of sexual assault and misconduct at AUA, along with student perceptions of campus climate regarding these topics. To our knowledge, this is the first sexual assault prevalence study done among university students in the Republic of Armenia.

Among AUA students, the study found that the prevalence of sexual assault was 14.9% (n=10). This proportion is similar to AAU findings of 13.0%<sup>5</sup>, global prevalence among university students at 13.4%<sup>6</sup>, and reported prevalence among the general population of Armenia at 9.7%<sup>17</sup>. The risk associated with being a university student appears to be a global phenomenon that does not discriminate based on country. This finding reinforces the research suggesting that university students, particularly in the 18-24 age bracket, are at highest risk for experiencing sexual assault.

Concerning Armenia, the prevalence rate among AUA students who responded was 1.5 times the rate reported among the general population.<sup>17</sup> This finding is surprising, as lifetime prevalence should increase as the age bracket expands. This discrepancy may be because sampling techniques and sample sizes from both this study and the Armenian domestic violence study might be subject to various types of bias or be too small to make any generalizable conclusions. My study had a low response rate, which could also contribute to this discrepancy. It may be possible that AUA students were more comfortable responding to questions on sexual assault, or even that the surveys may have presented different definitions of assault. Additionally, cultural stigma surrounding sexual assault may have contributed to underreporting in the Armenian domestic violence study.<sup>5</sup>

The prevalence of sexual harassment at AUA was 49.5% (n=49), comparable to the AAU rate of 41.8%.<sup>5</sup> The modest difference seen here may be due to a small sample size in the AUA

study, or potentially reflect cultural differences between more conservative (Armenia) and more liberal (U.S.) cultures that have differing levels of religiosity that can contribute to how discourse on sexual matters takes place.<sup>26</sup>

The prevalence of stalking at AUA was 19.2% (n=15), which is roughly 3.3 times higher than the AAU rate of 5.8%.<sup>5</sup> Stalking being more common among AUA students might be a result of stalking not being considered a criminal act in Armenia.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, AUA's population is much smaller than most of the AAU universities, which could have allowed greater accessibility for stalking of students. With a small community, it is much easier to locate contact information or trace the activities of various students.

Limited associations were found between experiences of sexual assault and misconduct and the demographic data collected. Year of enrollment showed associations for both harassment and assault. This finding was not surprising, as prevalence rates are expected to go up the longer that students remain in school. If students are experiencing sexual assault and misconduct while in university, spending more time enrolled at the university would increase the risk of those events taking place. However, no association was observed between age and any of the prevalence rates. Similar to years enrolled in school, age typically follows an increase in prevalence. This lack of association may have been due to having a small sample size or due to the small age range of the respondents. Graduate and older students were more likely to complete more survey sections, including the ones regarding sexual assault prevalence, which may have impacted this finding. Gender showed associations with experiences of harassment, but not stalking or assault. This result is likely due to the small sample size, as all instances of sexual assault were reported by women, meaning an association should have been seen. The literature suggests that all rates should have shown associations with gender.<sup>5</sup>

Citizenship status showed associations with experiences of assault. This was a unique finding, as little to no literature exists on the risk of sexual assault for international students at universities. A difference in risk may not be present between Armenian and non-Armenian students, particularly since international students were overrepresented in the sample. However, if non-Armenian citizens did have actual higher rates of assault, that may be because they have different living situations than local students and have a lack of support systems in a foreign country. It may be that the university should provide more support to its international students than it is currently.

No associations were found between stalking and demographic information. It was unexpected that no associations were found between sexual orientation and prevalence rates, as research suggests there are known associations.<sup>5</sup> This is most likely due to the small sample size, particularly when considering the limited number of participants that identified as an orientation other than straight, though it may be possible there is no association.

The characteristics of the perpetrators of the misconduct reported was concerning. The vast majority of perpetrators (n=49, 92.5%) were affiliated with AUA in some capacity. This proportion is comparable to the findings of the AAU study.<sup>5</sup> While most perpetrators were identified as students, several students identified faculty members as perpetrators (n=11, 28.9%). This is a higher proportion than expected based on results reported by other universities, where faculty members were perpetrators in 5.5% to 24.0% of cases.<sup>5</sup> Students should feel safe and supported in the classroom and not threatened by faculty.

Very few students reported incidents of misconduct to someone else. Although the most common reasons for not reporting were because students felt the situation was not serious enough and that they could handle it on their own, some students did not report the incidents due

to fears that they would not be taken seriously or that they would face some sort of consequence or retaliation for reporting, despite the protections listed in the code of conduct.<sup>21</sup> The administration needs to ensure that the disciplinary processes in place are communicated thoroughly to all students and provide additional trainings and support to the entire community.

Stalking was an interesting case, as 4 of those 7 (57.1%) students who experienced stalking and answered questions on reporting practices stated they did not report it because they believed it was not serious and they could handle the problem themselves. Stalking is currently not included or defined in AUA policies, and it may be that students do not know they can seek help or support for such events.<sup>21</sup>

With regards to campus climate, there were concerns about the perceptions respondents had of how the university deals with sexual misconduct. Though many students were aware of the services offered by the counselling center at the university, the majority of students (n=71, 67.6%) knew little to nothing about where to make a report of sexual assault misconduct. Additionally, 11.1% (n=7) of students think it is unlikely a fair investigation would be conducted if misconduct were to be reported, which is a little lower than the AAU proportion (15.7%).<sup>5</sup> However, 27.0% (n=17) said they did not know whether a fair investigation would be conducted, which was not an option for respondents in the AAU study.<sup>5</sup> This finding suggests a disconcerting level of mistrust in the university's administration, perhaps a consequence of the limited knowledge/awareness reported by a majority of the respondents.

Overall, this study demonstrated that sexual assault and misconduct at AUA are as big a problem as at universities around the globe and, potentially a bigger problem than in Armenia as a whole. The university needs to make greater efforts in offering resources and looking out for the well-being of students, particularly females and international students. Moreover, as most of

the perpetrators identified within this study were from within the AUA community, the university must do a better job of setting expectations for all community members and following through on rigorous disciplinary actions as currently stipulated in the codes and policies. Reinforcing these expectations and procedures could also improve student confidence in the administration in dealing with sexual assault and misconduct, making it easier for them to report and receive help from the university.

### ***5.3 Conclusions and recommendations***

This study demonstrated that sexual assault and misconduct are an active problem at AUA. My findings showed sexual harassment and assault prevalence rates that were comparable to the rates seen at universities globally. However, the estimates were higher than previous studies done in Armenia. The students most at risk for experiencing sexual misconduct are females and international students, potentially due to gender norms and living situations. A disconcerting proportion of respondents, including those who had not experienced sexual misconduct, reported a lack of trust in (n=7, 11.1%) or knowledge of (n=84, 80.0%) university disciplinary practices regarding conduct issues.

Even though the reported rates in the study are lower than expected, any instance is a serious issue to be addressed. The university should have a comprehensive approach that focuses on increasing awareness in the community, improving the culture and confidence in the administration surrounding these issues to reduce barriers to reporting and support, and taking every possible step to reduce incidence of sexual misconduct. As such, I recommend the following policy measures:



- Ensuring all information on sexual harassment and assault listed in the Student Code of Ethics, Student Code of Conduct, and Sexual Harassment Policy is coordinated and easily found.
- Including a question on sexual assault and harassment in the mandatory code of conduct quiz all students are required to take.<sup>27</sup>
- Raising the profile of reporting and disciplinary procedures by emphasizing them with the counselling center, student affairs, and international student offices in mandatory trainings. Through mandatory consent courses and bystander training that outline university policies, procedures, and attitude, this mistrust will hopefully lessen considerably.
- Continuing to make staff and faculty disciplinary processes transparent and easily accessible as the administration revises these policies, being careful in hiring practices, and providing more trainings or guidance on exactly what type of behavior is expected from faculty and staff.

In addition to new policy measures, I also recommend the following practices to be implemented:

- Including consent training in the mandatory new student orientation including information on reporting.<sup>27</sup> This should be done to bolster confidence in advocacy and create a safer environment for all.
- Including mandatory sexual violence trainings for faculty and staff, at least every 2 years that cover topics such as definitions of sexual violence, social norms that normalize violence, bystander intervention, appropriate responses to survivors, local

resources available to survivors, and options for reporting harassment or assault at AUA and in Armenia.<sup>27</sup>

- Creating sexual assault awareness programs that are campus-wide, particularly during Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April). Awareness events highlighting the seriousness and importance of sexual assault, like the nationwide Teal Tuesday events in the U.S., would likely build confidence in the severity with which the administration considers sexual assault.<sup>28</sup>

Lastly, my study created implications for future research to be conducted on sexual assault and misconduct at AUA (with a larger sample), at other Armenian universities to evaluate prevalence and create recommendations, and in the general population of Armenia as a whole, to reconcile the discrepancies in prevalence that has been assessed.

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**Tables**

***Table 1. Rates of completion to individual sections of the survey***

|                 | <b>Received<br/>the link, n<br/>(%)</b> | <b>Clicked<br/>link, n<br/>(%)</b> | <b>Consented<br/>to survey,<br/>n (%)</b> | <b>Completed<br/>demographic<br/>section, n (%)</b> | <b>Completed<br/>climate<br/>section, n<br/>(%)</b> | <b>Completed<br/>harassment<br/>section, n<br/>(%)</b> | <b>Completed<br/>stalking<br/>section, n<br/>(%)</b> | <b>Completed<br/>assault<br/>section, n<br/>(%)</b> |
|-----------------|---|------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Students</b> | 2123<br>(100.0)                         | 183 (8.6)                          | 180 (8.5)                                 | 152 (7.2)   | 105 (4.9)   | 99 (4.7)   | 78 (3.7)   | 67 (3.2)  |

**Table 2. Comparison of survey respondent and student body demographic characteristics**

|                          | <b>Student Body, n (%)</b> |        | <b>Respondents, n (%)</b> |        |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|
| <b>Age</b>               |                            |        |                           |        |
| 16-25                    | 1931                       | (91.0) | 152                       | (90.5) |
| 26-35                    | 134                        | (6.3)  | 15                        | (8.9)  |
| 36-45                    | 50                         | (2.3)  | 1                         | (0.6)  |
| 46-55                    | 8                          | (0.4)  | 0                         | (0.0)  |
| <b>Gender</b>            |                            |        |                           |        |
| Female*                  | 1401                       | (62.8) | 106                       | (69.7) |
| Male                     | 830                        | (37.2) | 38                        | (25.0) |
| Other                    | 0                          | (0.0)  | 8                         | (5.3)  |
| <b>Enrollment Status</b> |                            |        |                           |        |
| Undergraduate*           | 1811                       | (81.2) | 130                       | (85.5) |
| Graduate                 | 420                        | (18.8) | 22                        | (14.5) |
| <b>Citizenship</b>       |                            |        |                           |        |
| ROA citizen              | 2043                       | (91.6) | 123                       | (80.9) |
| Non-ROA citizen*         | 188                        | (8.4)  | 29                        | (19.1) |

*\*Statistically (but not meaningfully) overrepresented in respondent sample*

**Table 3. Demographic characteristics of survey respondents by number of completed survey sections**

|                           | 1, n (%)   | 2, n (%)  | 3, n (%)  | All, n (%) |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Age, years</b>         |            |           |           |            |
| 18-24                     | 133 (87.5) | 81 (82.7) | 64 (82.1) | 57 (83.8)  |
| 25+                       | 19 (12.5)  | 17 (17.3) | 14 (17.9) | 11 (16.2)  |
| <b>Years at AUA</b>       |            |           |           |            |
| 1                         | 40 (26.3)  | 23 (23.5) | 18 (23.1) | 16 (23.5)  |
| 2                         | 55 (36.2)  | 39 (39.8) | 34 (43.6) | 29 (42.6)  |
| 3                         | 29 (19.1)  | 16 (16.3) | 13 (16.7) | 12 (17.6)  |
| 4                         | 19 (12.5)  | 12 (12.2) | 10 (12.8) | 9 (13.2)   |
| 5                         | 5 (3.3)    | 4 (4.1)   | 1 (1.3)   | 1 (1.5)    |
| 6+                        | 4 (2.6)    | 4 (4.1)   | 2 (2.6)   | 1 (1.5)    |
| <b>Enrollment Status</b>  |            |           |           |            |
| Undergraduate             | 130 (85.5) | 80 (81.6) | 61 (78.2) | 54 (79.4)  |
| Graduate                  | 22 (14.5)  | 18 (18.4) | 17 (21.8) | 14 (20.6)  |
| <b>Citizenship</b>        |            |           |           |            |
| Armenian                  | 123 (80.9) | 76 (77.6) | 60 (76.9) | 53 (77.9)  |
| Non-Armenian              | 29 (19.1)  | 22 (22.4) | 18 (23.1) | 15 (22.1)  |
| <b>Gender</b>             |            |           |           |            |
| Female                    | 106 (69.7) | 70 (71.4) | 57 (73.1) | 51 (75.0)  |
| Male                      | 38 (25.0)  | 21 (21.4) | 17 (21.8) | 14 (20.6)  |
| Other                     | 8 (5.3)    | 7 (7.1)   | 4 (5.1)   | 3 (4.4)    |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> |            |           |           |            |
| Heterosexual/straight     | 106 (69.7) | 68 (69.4) | 53 (67.9) | 48 (70.6)  |
| Gay/lesbian               | 4 (2.6)    | 3 (3.1)   | 2 (2.6)   | 2 (2.9)    |
| Bisexual                  | 24 (15.8)  | 17 (17.3) | 16 (20.5) | 14 (20.6)  |
| Asexual                   | 4 (2.6)    | 3 (3.1)   | 2 (2.6)   | 2 (2.9)    |
| Queer                     | 9 (5.9)    | 8 (8.2)   | 5 (6.4)   | 5 (7.4)    |
| Questioning               | 7 (4.6)    | 6 (6.1)   | 5 (6.4)   | 5 (7.4)    |



|                  |         |         |         |         |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Pansexual        | 4 (2.6) | 2 (2.0) | 2 (2.6) | 1 (1.5) |
| Decline to state | 7 (4.6) | 3 (3.1) | 3 (3.8) | 1 (1.5) |
| <b>Total</b>     | 152     | 98      | 78      | 68      |

**Table 4. Sexual harassment experience prevalence since enrollment at AUA by type and significant associations of harassment experience with demographic characteristics of respondents by chi-square analysis**

| Since being a student at AUA, have you experienced:             | Yes, n(%) | No, n(%)  | Don't know, n(%) | Prefer not to answer, n(%) | Associations, $\chi^2$ (p-value) |             |                         |  |  |  |
|---|-----------|-----------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|--|--|--|
|   |           |           |                  |                            | Enrollment year                  | Citizenship | Gender                  |  |  |  |
| Insulting or offensive sexual remarks                           | 30 (30.3) | 65 (65.7) | 3 (3.0)          | 1 (1.0)                    | 16.1 (0.373)                     | 0.5 (0.910) | 7.8 (0.804)             |  |  |  |
| Inappropriate or offensive comments about someone's body        | 35 (35.4) | 50 (50.5) | 11(11.1)         | 3 (3.0)                    | 13.5 (0.561)                     | 3.9 (0.277) | <b>30.1 (0.003)</b>     |  |  |  |
| Conversation on rude or gross sexual things                     | 9 (9.2)   | 84 (85.7) | 2 (2.0)          | 3 (3.1)                    | 14.0 (0.524)                     | 2.4 (0.493) | 7.6 (0.818)             |  |  |  |
| Continual asking for dinner, drinks, or sex despite saying "no" | 8 (8.1)   | 90 (91.8) | -                | -                          | <b>31.2 (0.001)</b>              | 2.3 (0.310) | <b>58.4 (&lt;0.001)</b> |  |  |  |
| Offensive sexual remarks, pictures, or videos sent online       | 5 (5.1)   | 91 (92.9) | 2 (2.0)          | -                          | 4.4 (0.500)                      | 0.0 (0.857) | 1.3 (0.868)             |  |  |  |

**Table 5. Stalking experience prevalence since enrollment at AUA by type and significant associations of stalking experiences with demographic characteristics of respondents by chi-square analysis**

| Since being a student at AUA, have you experienced:        | Yes, n(%) | No, n(%)  | Don't know, n (%) | Prefer not to answer, n (%) | Associations, $\chi^2$ (p-value) |         |             |         |        |         |
|--|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|--------|---------|
|  |           |           |                   |                             | Enrollment year                  |         | Citizenship |         | Gender |         |
| Made unwanted contact via phone or online                  | 8 (10.3)  | 66 (84.6) | 4 (5.1)           | -                           | 16.7                             | (0.081) | 1.8         | (0.411) | 3.3    | (0.509) |
| Showed up uninvited when you did not want them to be there | 8 (10.3)  | 67 (85.9) | 3 (3.8)           | -                           | 15.1                             | (0.129) | 3.4         | (0.182) | 3.4    | (0.496) |
| Spied on, monitored you, or tracked your devices           | 5 (6.6)   | 61 (80.3) | 10 (13.2)         | -                           | 6.1                              | (0.805) | 0.3         | (0.871) | 1.3    | (0.855) |

**Table 6. Sexual assault experience prevalence by type and time of occurrence and significant associations of sexual assault experience with demographic characteristics of respondents by chi-square analysis**

| Have you experienced:  | Yes, only before being a student at AUA, n (%) | Yes, only since being a student at AUA, n (%) | Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA, n (%) | No, n (%) | Don't know, n (%) | Prefer not to answer, n (%) | Associations (lifetime prevalence), $\chi^2$ (p-value) |                    |             |
|--|--|---|--|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------|
|  |  |   |  |           |                   |                             | Enrollment year  | Citizenship        | Gender      |
| Sexual penetration or oral sex through physical force                          | 1 (1.5)  | 2 (3.0)                                       | -  | 63 (95.5) | -                 | -                           | <b>36.1 (&lt;0.001)</b>                                | 4.0 (0.136)        | 1.0 (0.909) |
| Unsuccessful sexual penetration or oral sex through physical force             | 2 (3.0)  | 2 (3.0)                                       | 1 (1.5)  | 62 (92.5) | -                 | -                           | <b>39.3 (0.001)</b>                                    | 5.0 (0.172)        | 1.7 (0.945) |
| Kissing, touching, or groping through physical force                           | 3 (4.5)  | 5 (7.5)                                       | 1 (1.5)  | 56 (83.6) | 1 (1.5)           | 1 (1.5)                     | 30.6 (0.204)   | 8.9 (0.113)        | 4.1 (0.941) |
| Sexual penetration or oral sex without consent due to incapacitation           | 2 (3.0)  | 1 (1.5)                                       | -  | 63 (95.5) | -                 | -                           | <b>68.6 (&lt;0.001)</b>                                | <b>7.9 (0.020)</b> | 1.0 (0.909) |
| Kissing, touching, or groping without consent due to incapacitation            | 2 (3.0)  | 2 (3.0)                                       | -  | 60 (90.9) | 1 (1.5)           | 1 (1.5)                     | <b>43.3 (0.002)</b>                                    | <b>8.6 (0.073)</b> | 2.1 (0.977) |
| Sexual penetration or oral sex through threats of non-physical harm or rewards | 2 (3.0)  | 1 (1.5)                                       | -  | 63 (95.5) | -                 | -                           | <b>68.6 (&lt;0.001)</b>                                | <b>7.3 (0.027)</b> | 1.0 (0.909) |
| Kissing, touching, or groping through threats of                               | 2 (3.0)  | 1 (1.5)                                       | -  | 64 (95.5) | -                 | -                           | <b>69.7 (&lt;0.001)</b>                                | <b>7.4 (0.025)</b> | 1.0 (0.912) |

|   |         |         |   |           |         |   |                         |             |             |
|---|---------|---------|---|-----------|---------|---|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| non-physical harm or rewards  |         |         |   |           |         |   |                         |             |             |
| Sexual penetration or oral sex without active, ongoing, voluntary agreement | 3 (4.5) | 1 (1.5) | - | 63 (94.0) | -       | - | <b>71.1 (&lt;0.001)</b> | 3.8 (0.151) | 1.3 (0.855) |
| Kissing, touching, or groping without active, ongoing, voluntary agreement  | 3 (4.5) | 3 (4.5) | - | 60 (89.6) | 1 (1.5) | - | <b>35.1 (0.002)</b>     | 4.6 (0.207) | 2.5 (0.874) |

**Table 7. Characteristics of harassment and stalking perpetrators and reporting practices of respondents while at AUA**

|  | Harassment |           | Stalking   |           |
|--|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
|  | Yes, n (%) | No, n (%) | Yes, n (%) | No, n (%) |
| <b>Were any of the people that did this to you (select all):</b> |            |           |            |           |
| <b>Gender</b>  |            |           |            |           |
| Men  | 31 (88.6)  | 2 (11.4)  | 5 (62.5)   | 2 (37.5)  |
| Women  | 10 (28.6)  | 17 (71.4) | -          | -         |
| Other gender   | 4 (11.4)   | 20 (88.6) | -          | -         |
| Don't know   | 3 (8.6)    | 18 (91.4) | -          | -         |
| Prefer not to answer   | 3 (8.6)    | 19 (91.4) | -          | -         |
| <b>University affiliation</b>                                    |            |           |            |           |
| Student  | 29 (82.9)  | 9 (17.1)  | 3 (37.5)   | 4 (62.5)  |
| Student teaching assistant                                       | 1 (2.9)    | 37 (97.1) | -          | -         |
| Faculty  | 11 (31.4)  | 27 (68.6) | 1 (12.5)   | 6 (87.5)  |
| Residential staff  | -          | -         | -          | -         |
| Other staff  | 3 (8.6)    | 35 (91.4) | -          | -         |
| Coach/trainer  | 1 (2.9)    | 37 (97.1) | -          | -         |
| Alumni   | 2 (5.7)    | 36 (94.3) | -          | -         |
| Other AUA persons  | 2 (5.7)    | 36 (94.3) | -          | -         |
| Not associated with AUA  | 2 (5.7)    | 36 (94.3) | -          | -         |
| Unsure about association   | 1 (2.9)    | 37 (97.1) | -          | -         |
| Don't know   | -          | -         | -          | -         |
| Prefer not to answer   | 1 (2.9)    | 37 (97.1) | -          | -         |
| <b>Relationship to respondent at the time</b>                    |            |           |            |           |
| Currently involved/intimate with                                 | 2 (5.7)    | -         | -          | -         |
| Previously involved/intimate with                                | 1 (2.9)    | -         | -          | -         |
| Teacher  | 8 (22.9)   | -         | 1 (12.5)   | -         |
| Coach/trainer  | 1 (2.9)    | -         | -          | -         |

|   |           |   |          |   |
|---|-----------|---|----------|---|
| Friend  | 7 (20.0)  | - | 1 (12.5) | - |
| Classmate   | 17 (48.6) | - | 2 (25.0) | - |
| Acquaintance  | 18 (51.4) | - | 2 (25.0) | - |
| Didn't know/recognize   | 8 (22.9)  | - | -        | - |
| Prefer not to answer  | 1 (2.9)   | - | -        | - |
| <b>Who did you report the incident to? (select all)</b>           |           |   |          |   |
| Counselor   | 1 (2.9)   | - | -        | - |
| Other   | 5 (14.3)  | - | -        | - |
| None  | 26 (74.3) | - | 5 (62.5) | - |
| Prefer not to answer  | 1 (2.9)   | - | -        | - |
| <b>Why did you not report? (select all)</b>                       |           |   |          |   |
| Didn't know who to contact  | 2 (5.7)   | - | -        | - |
| Was embarrassed/ashamed   | 5 (14.3)  | - | 1 (12.5) | - |
| Feared I would not be believed                                    | 2 (5.7)   | - | -        | - |
| It wasn't serious enough  | 17 (48.6) | - | 1 (12.5) | - |
| Didn't want to get the person in trouble                          | 3 (8.6)   | - | -        | - |
| Feared the consequences of reporting                              | 5 (14.3)  | - | 2 (25.0) | - |
| Feared the report wouldn't be confidential                        | 5 (14.3)  | - | 2 (25.0) | - |
| I could handle the situation                                      | 13 (37.1) | - | 3 (37.5) | - |
| Feared retaliation  | 3 (8.6)   | - | 1 (12.5) | - |
| Believed the resources would not help me                          | 4 (11.4)  | - | -        | - |
| School was not in session   | 1 (2.9)   | - | 1 (12.5) | - |
| Other   | 2 (5.7)   | - | -        | - |
| Don't know  | 1 (2.9)   | - | -        | - |
| <b>Why did you think it wasn't "serious enough"? (select all)</b> |           |   |          |   |
| I was not injured   | 14 (40.0) | - | -        | - |

|                                       |           |   |          |   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---|----------|---|
| The reaction of others                | 5 (14.3)  | - | -        | - |
| I was too busy                        | 1 (2.9)   | - | -        | - |
| The possibility to be counter-accused | 1 (2.9)   | - | -        | - |
| Events like this seem common          | 4 (11.4)  | - | -        | - |
| Other                                 | 3 (8.6)   | - | -        | - |
| Don't know                            | 1 (2.9)   | - | -        | - |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>35</b> |   | <b>8</b> |   |



**Table 8. Frequency of responses on a Likert scale for student perception of AUA campus climate questions**

|   | Not at all,<br>n (%) | A little, n<br>(%) | Somewhat,<br>n (%) | Very, n (%) | Extremely,<br>n (%) | Don't know,<br>n (%) | Prefer not to<br>answer, n (%) |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| How connected are you to AUA campus?  | 19 (15.2)            | 15 (12.0)          | 53 (42.4)          | 28 (22.4)   | 8 (6.4)             | 1 (0.8)              | 1 (0.8)                        |
| How comfortable are you seeking advice from AUA faculty/staff?  | 23 (18.5)            | 23 (18.5)          | 34 (27.4)          | 29 (23.4)   | 7 (5.6)             | 6 (4.8)              | 2 (1.6)                        |
| How concerned are AUA students about each other's well-being?   | 13 (10.5)            | 17 (13.7)          | 55 (44.4)          | 27 (21.8)   | 3 (2.4)             | 9 (7.3)              | -                              |
| How concerned are faculty/staff about your well-being?  | 6 (4.8)              | 25 (20.2)          | 50 (40.3)          | 29 (23.4)   | 5 (4.0)             | 8 (6.5)              | 1 (0.8)                        |
| How concerned are university officials about your well-being?   | 14 (11.3)            | 23 (18.5)          | 38 (30.6)          | 18 (14.5)   | 3 (2.4)             | 28 (22.6)            | -                              |
| How problematic is sexual assault or misconduct at AUA?   | 33 (26.6)            | 18 (14.5)          | 14 (11.3)          | 5 (4.0)     | 10 (8.1)            | 44 (35.5)            | -                              |
| How likely do you think you are to experience sexual assault or misconduct at AUA while enrolled?         | 52 (41.9)            | 44 (35.5)          | 5 (4.0)            | 3 (2.4)     | 2 (1.6)             | 17 (13.7)            | 1 (0.8)                        |
| How knowledgeable are you about how sexual assault and misconduct are defined at AUA?                     | 30 (28.3)            | 23 (21.7)          | 26 (24.5)          | 9 (8.5)     | 6 (5.7)             | 12 (11.3)            | -                              |
| How knowledgeable are you about where to get help at AUA after experiencing sexual assault or misconduct? | 35 (33.0)            | 14 (13.2)          | 23 (21.7)          | 18 (17.0)   | 8 (7.5)             | 7 (6.6)              | 1 (0.9)                        |

|  |           |           |           |           |           |           |         |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| How knowledgeable are you about where to make a report of sexual assault or misconduct at AUA?                         | 52 (49.5) | 19 (18.1) | 17 (16.2) | 5 (4.8)   | 4 (3.8)   | 7 (6.7)   | 1 (1.0) |
| How knowledgeable are you about what happens when a student reports sexual assault or misconduct at AUA?               | 64 (61.0) | 20 (19.0) | 8 (7.6)   | 1 (1.0)   | 3 (2.9)   | 9 (8.6)   | -       |
| How likely is it that campus officials would take a report of sexual assault or misconduct seriously?                  | 2 (3.2)   | 5 (7.9)   | 12 (19.0) | 18 (28.6) | 11 (17.5) | 15 (23.8) | -       |
| How likely is it that campus officials would conduct a fair investigation of a report of sexual assault or misconduct? | 2 (3.2)   | 5 (7.9)   | 15 (23.8) | 18 (28.6) | 5 (7.9)   | 17 (27.0) | 1 (1.6) |

## Appendix I: Definitions of Sexual Assault and Harassment

Source: Cantor, D., Fisher, B., Chibnall, S., Harps, S., Townsend, R., Thomas, G., Lee, H., Kranz, V., Herbison, R., & Madden, K. (2020, January 17). *Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct*. Westat. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf)

### Sexual assault:

- Sexual penetration. When one person puts a penis, fingers, or object inside someone else's vagina or anus
- Oral sex. When someone's mouth or tongue makes contact with someone else's genitals
- Kissing
- Touching someone's breast, chest, crotch, groin or buttocks
- Grabbing, groping or rubbing against the other in a sexual way, even if the touching is over the other's clothes

### Sexual harassment:

- Someone made sexual remarks or told sexual jokes or stories that were insulting or offensive
- Someone made inappropriate offensive comments about your or someone else's body, appearance or sexual activities
- Someone said crude or gross sexual things to you or made unwelcomed attempts to get you to talk about sexual matters
- Someone used social or any other form of on-line media to communicate offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures or videos to you or about you
- Someone continued to ask you to go out, get dinner, have drinks or have sex even though you said, "No"

## **Appendix II. Consent form**

**American University of Armenia**

**Turpanjian College of Health Sciences**

**Institutional Review Board #1**

**Informed Consent form (English)**

**Title of Research Project: Sexual Assault Prevalence Assessment at the American University of Armenia**

Hello, my name is Lydia McGee. I am a second-year student in the Master of Public Health program at the American University of Armenia (AUA). Within the scope of the master thesis project, I am conducting a survey to assess sexual assault prevalence among AUA students.

All students at AUA are being requested to complete this survey. You are requested to participate in the survey because you are an AUA student. Only students who are 18 and older are eligible to participate. This survey includes sections that ask about your knowledge and beliefs about social situations, perceptions related to sexual misconduct at AUA and your knowledge of resources available at AUA. This survey also asks about your personal experience with sexual misconduct, such as harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of violence.

Some of the language used in this survey is explicit and some people may find it uncomfortable, but it is important that we ask the questions in this way so the meaning is clear. Information on how to get help, if you need it, appears on the bottom of each page and at the end of the survey.

This survey should take most students approximately 20 minutes to complete. It may take up to 30 minutes for some individuals. You do NOT have to participate in this survey, and if you do choose to participate, you may skip any question you are not comfortable answering and may exit the survey at any time. There will be no consequences to you personally or your student status if you choose not to complete the survey.

We will protect the anonymity and confidentiality of your answers. When you complete the survey, the link between your survey responses and your name, email, and IP address will be broken so that your survey responses will never be connected to these identifiers (name, email, and IP address). The results will be presented in summary form so no individual can be identified.

The study does not pose any direct risks or benefits. Your participation in our study will contribute to a better understanding of the prevalence of sexual assault among AUA students. The result obtained from the study will be helpful in guiding future AUA policies and improving counseling and other services for students. Your individual response to the study is not only important for the AUA, but also benefits for the better understanding of sexual violence prevalence among university students in Armenia as a whole.

For any additional questions concerning this study, please contact the secondary investigator of the study: Dr. Anya Agopian (+37460) 61 25 65.

If you feel that you have been harmed or mistreated by participating in the study, you should contact the Human Protections Administrator of the American University of Armenia, Varduhi Hayrumyan(+37460) 61 25 61.

**Consent Statement:**

**I have carefully read and understood the information provided in the consent form. I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without any reason and consequence. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.**

**Agree**

**Disagree**

**(IF “Agree”, SKIP TO SURVEY)**

**(IF “Disagree”, SHOW “Thank you for your time” BEFORE EXITING)**

### **Appendix III. Questionnaire**

*[BANNER TO APPEAR AT BOTTOM OF EVERY PAGE]*

*If you need any support dealing with the topics discussed here, please reach out to AUA's counselling center at:*

[counselingservices@aua.am](mailto:counselingservices@aua.am)

+374 60 612 519

Room 418M

#### **Instructions:**

As a reminder, this survey should take most students approximately 20 minutes to complete. It may take up to 30 minutes for some individuals. Please set aside enough time to complete the entire survey in one setting, as you will not be able to save your responses and return to the survey once you exit.

There is no “right” or “wrong” answer to any question. Please answer each to the best of your ability.

#### **Section A. General Demographics**

First, we'd like to ask you a few questions about your background. The data will remain anonymous and will be grouped with other responses for reporting.

A1. How old are you? (drop down list)

Under 18

18-39, by single year

40+

(If age=Under 18)

“We are sorry but the survey can only be completed by students who are at least 18 years old. Thank you for your interest in our study. We appreciate your time.”

(Exit survey)

A2. Which of the following best describes your current student affiliation with the American University of Armenia?

Undergraduate

Graduate

Non-degree/certificate

[IF BLANK THEN GO TO A4]

A3. Including this year, how many years have you been studying at AUA?

1-5 (by single year)

6+

A4. Is your primary citizenship Armenian:

Yes

No

A5. Which best describes your gender identity?

Woman

Man

Trans woman (male-to-female)

Trans man (female-to-male)

Nonbinary or genderqueer

Questioning

Not listed. I describe myself as (specify)

Decline to state

A6. Do you consider yourself to be (Mark all that apply)

Heterosexual or straight

Gay or lesbian

Bisexual

Asexual

Queer

Questioning

Not listed. I consider myself (specify)

Decline to state

## **Section B. General Perceptions of Campus**

The next few questions are about how you experience the campus community at the American University of Armenia.

B1. How connected do you feel to the campus community at the American University of Armenia as a whole?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

B2. How comfortable are you seeking advice from faculty or staff at the American University of Armenia, even about something personal?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

B3. How concerned are students at the American University of Armenia about each other's well-being?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer



B4. How concerned are faculty or staff at the American University of Armenia about your well-being?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

B5. How concerned are University Officials at the American University of Armenia about your well-being?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

“Sexual assault” and “sexual misconduct” refer to a range of behaviors that are nonconsensual or unwanted. These behaviors could include remarks about physical appearance or persistent behavior such as nonconsensual or unwanted touching, sexual penetration, oral sex, anal sex or attempts to engage in these behaviors. These behaviors could be initiated by someone known or unknown including someone you are in or have been in a relationship with.

These next questions ask about your perceptions related to the risks of experiencing sexual assault or misconduct.

B6. How problematic is sexual assault or other sexual misconduct at the American University of Armenia?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

B7. How likely do you think it is that you will experience sexual assault or sexual misconduct in the future while enrolled at the American University of Armenia?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

### **Section C. Sexual Assault Resources**

The next questions ask about the services and resources offered by the university for those affected by sexual assault and other sexual misconduct.

C1. Are you aware of the services and resources provided by the counselling center at the American University of Armenia?

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

C2. How knowledgeable are you about how sexual assault and other sexual misconduct are defined at the American University of Armenia?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

C3. How knowledgeable are you about where to get help at the American University of Armenia if you or a friend experienced sexual assault or other sexual misconduct?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

C4. How knowledgeable are you about where to make a report of sexual assault or other sexual misconduct at the American University of Armenia?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

C5. How knowledgeable are you about what happens when a student reports an incident of sexual assault or other sexual misconduct at the American University of Armenia?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

## Section D. Personal Experiences

These next questions ask about behaviors you may have experienced while a student at the American University of Armenia.

D1. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has a student, or someone employed by or otherwise associated with the American University of Armenia made sexual remarks or told sexual jokes or sexual stories that were insulting or offensive to you?

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D2. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has a student, or someone employed by or otherwise associated with the American University of Armenia made inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone else's body, appearance or sexual activities?

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D3. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has a student, or someone employed or otherwise associated with the American University of Armenia said crude or gross sexual things to you or tried to get you to talk about sexual matters when you didn't want to?

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D4. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has a student, or someone employed by or otherwise associated with the American University of Armenia used social or on-line media to do any of the following that you didn't want:

- Send offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures or videos to you
- Communicated offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures or videos about you

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D5. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has a student, or someone employed by or otherwise associated with the American University of Armenia continued to ask you to go out, get dinner, have drinks or have sex even though you said, "No"?

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

BOX D1

IF YES TO ANY QUESTION D1-D5, CONTINUE

ELSE GO TO E1

You said that the following happened to you since you've been a student at the American University of Armenia:

- [IF D1=YES] Someone made sexual remarks or told sexual jokes or stories that were insulting or offensive
- [IF D2=YES] Someone made inappropriate offensive comments about your or someone else's body, appearance or sexual activities
- [IF D3=YES] Someone said crude or gross sexual things to you or made unwelcomed attempts to get you to talk about sexual matters
- [IF D4=YES] Someone used social or any other form of on-line media to communicate offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures or videos to you or about you
- [IF D5=YES] Someone continued to ask you to go out, get dinner, have drinks or have sex even though you said, "No"

D5. Did (this/any of these) experience(s) affect you in any of the following ways? (Mark all that apply)

Interfered with your academic or professional performance

Limited your ability to participate in an academic program

Created an intimidating, hostile or offensive social, academic or work environment

None of the above

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D6. How many different people behaved this way?

1 person [GO TO D6a]

2 persons [SKIP TO D6b]

3 or more persons [SKIP TO D6b]

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

[IF BLANK SKIP TO D6b]

D6a. [IF 1 PERSON] Was the person that did this to you...

Man

Woman

Other gender identity

Don't Know

Prefer not to answer

[FOR ANY RESPONSE OR IF BLANK SKIP TO D7]

D6b. [IF >1 PERSON] Were any of the people that did this to you...

|     |     |    |
|-----|-----|----|
| Man | Yes | No |
|-----|-----|----|

|       |     |    |
|-------|-----|----|
| Woman | Yes | No |
|-------|-----|----|

|                       |     |    |
|-----------------------|-----|----|
| Other gender identity | Yes | No |
|-----------------------|-----|----|

|            |     |    |
|------------|-----|----|
| Don't know | Yes | No |
|------------|-----|----|

Prefer not to answer

D7. How (was the person/were the persons) who behaved (this way/these ways) associated with the American University of Armenia? (Mark all that apply)

Student

Student teaching assistant

Faculty or instructor

Research staff

Other staff or administrator

Coach or trainer

Alumni

Other person associated with the American University of Armenia (e.g. internship, study abroad)

The person was not associated with the American University of Armenia

Unsure about association with the American University of Armenia

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D8. At the time of (this event/these events), what (was the person's/were these persons') relationship to you? (Mark all that apply)

Someone I was involved or intimate with at the time

Someone I previously had been involved or intimate with

Teacher

Advisor

Someone I was teaching or advising

Live-in residential staff

Coach or trainer

Boss or supervisor

Co-worker

Friend

Classmate

Someone I know or recognize, but was not a friend

Did not know or recognize this person

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D9. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, how many times has someone behaved this way?

[DROP DOWN LIST]

0-19 (by single year)

20+

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D10. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, have you contacted any of the following about this experience? (Mark all that apply)

Counselor

Nurse

Department chair

Provost

President

Security

Other

None of the above

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D11. [IF NO PROGRAMS CONTACTED] Why did you decide not to contact any of these programs or resources? (Mark all that apply)

I did not know where to go or who to tell

I felt embarrassed, ashamed or that it would be too emotionally difficult

I did not think anyone would believe me

I did not think it was serious enough to contact any of these programs or resources

I did not want the person to get into trouble

I feared the negative academic, social or professional consequences

I feared it would not be kept confidential

I could handle it myself

I feared retaliation

I didn't think these resources would give me the help I needed



Incident occurred while school was not in session

Other

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

BOX D2

IF D11='NOT SERIOUS ENOUGH' OR 'OTHER' THEN CONTINUE

ELSE SKIP TO D13

D12a. You said you did not contact any of these programs or resources (because it was not serious enough/for an 'other' reason/because it was not serious enough and for an 'other' reason). Please review the list below and mark any of the reasons that may better describe why you didn't contact any of these programs or resources (Mark all that apply).

I was not injured or hurt

The reaction by others suggested that it wasn't serious enough to contact any of these programs or services

I contacted other programs or services that I felt were appropriate

I had trouble reaching the program or service

I was too busy

The event happened in a context that began consensually

Because of the person's gender, I thought it would be minimized or misunderstood

I might be counter-accused

Alcohol and/or other drugs were present

Events like this seem common

My body showed involuntary arousal

Other: [Text Box]

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

D13. Which of the following persons, if any, did you (also) tell about this? (Mark all that apply)

Friend

Family member

Faculty member or instructor  
Residential staff  
Other administrative staff  
Spiritual or religious advisor, leader, or clergy  
Therapist or counselor  
Sexual or romantic partner  
Program or resource outside the University (e.g., a hotline)  
Physician  
Someone else  
I didn't tell anyone (else)  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

### **Section E. Personal Experiences Continued**

The next questions ask about instances where someone behaved in a way that made you afraid for your personal safety or caused you substantial emotional distress.

E1. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has someone made unwanted phone calls, sent emails, voice, text or instant messages to you, or posted unwanted messages, pictures or videos on social media to or about you or elsewhere online?

Yes  
No [GO TO E2]  
Don't know [GO TO E2]  
Prefer not to answer [GO TO E2]  
[IF BLANK GO TO E2]

E1a. Did the same person do this to you more than once since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia?

Yes  
No  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

E2. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has someone showed up somewhere uninvited or waited for you when you did not want that person to be there?

Yes

No [GO TO E3]

Don't know [GO TO E3]

Prefer not to answer [GO TO E3]

[IF BLANK THEN GO TO E3]

E2a. Did the same person do this to you more than once since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia?

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

E3. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has someone spied on, watched or followed you in person, or monitored your activities or tracked your location using devices or software on your phone or computer?

Yes

No [GO TO BOX E1]

Don't know [GO TO BOX E1]

Prefer not to answer [GO TO BOX E1]

[IF BLANK THEN GO TO BOX E1]

E3a. Did the same person do this to you more than once since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia?

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

BOX E1

IF REPORTED ‘SAME PERSON DID THIS MORE THAN ONCE’ TO ANY OF THE THREE TACTICS (E1a=yes or E2a=yes or E3a=yes), THEN GO TO E4a

IF YES TO TWO OR MORE ITEMS E1-E3, AND NO TO ALL ITEMS E1a & E2a & E3a, THEN GO TO E4

IF ‘NO’ TO ALL ITEMS E1-E3, OR

IF ‘YES’ TO EXACTLY 1 ITEM E1-E3 AND ‘NO’ OR BLANK TO ALL ITEMS E1a & E2a & E3a THEN GO TO BOX F0

You said that the following happened to you since you’ve been a student at the American University of Armenia:

- [IF E1=YES] Someone made unwanted phone calls, sent emails, voice, text or instant messages to you, or posted unwanted messages, pictures or videos on social media to or about you or elsewhere online
- [IF E2=YES] Someone showed up somewhere uninvited or waited for you when you did not want that person to be there
- [IF E3=YES] Someone spied on, watched or followed you either in person, or monitored your activities or tracked your location using devices or software on your phone or computer

E4. Did the same person do more than one of these to you since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia?

Yes [GO TO E4a]

No [GO TO BOX F0]

Don’t know [GO TO BOX F0]

Prefer not to answer [GO TO BOX F0]

You said that the following happened to you since you’ve been a student at the American University of Armenia:

- [IF E1=YES] Someone made unwanted phone calls, sent emails, voice, text or instant messages, or posted messages, pictures or videos on social networking sites
- [IF E2=YES] Someone showed up somewhere uninvited or waited for you when you did not want that person to be there
- [IF E3=YES] Someone spied on, watched or followed you either in person or using devices or software

E4a. Did any of these unwanted contacts or behaviors make you fear for your safety or the safety of someone close to you?

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

E4b. Did any of these unwanted contacts or behaviors cause you substantial emotional distress?

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

E4d. Were any of the people that did this to you...

Man Yes No

Woman Yes No

Other gender identity Yes No

Don't know Yes No

Prefer not to answer

E5. How (is the person/are the persons) who did these things to you associated with the American University of Armenia? (Mark all that apply)

Student

Student teaching assistant

Faculty or instructor

Research staff

Other staff or administrator

Coach or trainer

Alumni

Other person associated with the American University of Armenia (e.g. internship, study abroad)

The person was not associated with the American University of Armenia

Unsure about association with the American University of Armenia

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

E6. At the time of these events, what (was the person's/were the persons') relationship to you?  
(Mark all that apply)

Someone I was involved or intimate with at the time

Someone I previously had been involved or intimate with

Teacher

Advisor

Someone I was teaching or advising

Residential staff

Coach or trainer

Boss or supervisor

Co-worker

Friend

Classmate

Someone I know or recognize, but was not a friend

Did not know or recognize this person

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

E7. Since you have been a student at AUA, how many times have you had any of these experiences?

[DROP DOWN LIST]

0-19 (by single year)

20+

E8. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, have you contacted any of the following about any of these experiences? (Mark all that apply)

Counselor

Nurse

Department chair

Provost

President  
Security  
Other  
None of the above  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

BOX E2

IF MORE PROGRAMS MARKED THEN RETURN TO BOX E2

ELSE SKIP TO E10

E9. Why did you decide not to contact any of these programs or resources? (Mark all that apply)

I did not know where to go or who to tell  
I felt embarrassed, ashamed or that it would be too emotionally difficult  
I did not think anyone would believe me  
I did not think it was serious enough to contact any of these programs or resources  
I did not want the person to get into trouble  
I feared negative academic, social or professional consequences  
I feared it would not be kept confidential  
I could handle it myself  
I feared retaliation  
I didn't think these resources would give me the help I needed  
Incident occurred while school was not in session  
Other  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

BOX E3

IF E9='NOT SERIOUS ENOUGH' OR 'OTHER' THEN CONTINUE

ELSE SKIP TO E10

E9a. You said you did not contact any of these programs or resources (because it was not serious enough/for an 'other' reason/because it was not serious enough and for an 'other' reason). Please review the list below and mark any of the reasons that may better describe why you didn't contact any of these programs or resources (Mark all that apply).

I was not injured or hurt

The reaction by others suggested that it wasn't serious enough to contact any of these programs or services

I contacted other programs or services that I felt were appropriate

I had trouble reaching the program or service

I was too busy

The event happened in a context that began consensually

Because of the person's gender, I thought it would be minimized or misunderstood

I might be counter-accused

Alcohol and/or other drugs were present

Events like this seem common

My body showed involuntary arousal

Other: [Text Box]

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

E10. Which of the following persons, if any, did you (also) tell about this? (Mark all that apply)

Friend

Family member

Faculty member or instructor

Residential staff

Other administrative staff

Spiritual or religious advisor, leader, or clergy

Therapist or counselor



Sexual or romantic partner

Program or resource outside the University (e.g. a hotline)

Physician

Someone else

I didn't tell anyone (else)

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

## **Section F. Unwanted Sexual Contact**

This next section asks about nonconsensual or unwanted sexual contact you may have experienced while attending the American University of Armenia.

The sexual behavior may have been performed on you or you may have been made to perform the sexual behaviors on another person. The person with whom you had the nonconsensual or unwanted contact could have been someone you know, such as someone you are currently or were in a relationship with, a co-worker, a professor, or a family member. Or it could be someone you do not know.

Please consider anyone who did this, whether or not the person was associated with the American University of Armenia. The following questions separately ask about contact that occurred because of physical force, incapacitation due to alcohol and/or drugs, and other types of pressure.

The first few questions ask about incidents that involved force or threats of force against you. Force could include someone using their body weight to hold you down, pinning your arms, hitting or kicking you, or using or threatening to use a weapon against you.

F1. Since you have been attending the American University of Armenia, has someone used physical force or threats of physical force to do the following with you:

- Sexual penetration. When one person puts a penis, fingers, or object inside someone else's vagina or anus, or
  - Oral sex. When someone's mouth or tongue makes contact with someone else's genitals
- No, never  
Yes, but only before I was a student at AUA  
Yes, but only since I have been a student at AUA  
Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

F2. Since you have been attending the American University of Armenia, has someone used physical force or threats of physical force in an unsuccessful attempt to do any of the following with you:

- Sexual penetration. When one person puts a penis, fingers, or object inside someone else's vagina or anus, or
- Oral sex. When someone's mouth or tongue makes contact with someone else's genitals
- No, never
- Yes, but only before I was a student at AUA
- Yes, but only since I have been a student at AUA
- Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

F3. Since you have been attending the American University of Armenia, has someone used physical force or threats of physical force to do any of the following with you:

- Kissing
- Touching someone's breast, chest, crotch, groin or buttocks
- Grabbing, groping or rubbing against the other in a sexual way, even if the touching is over the other's clothes
- No, never
- Yes, but only before I was a student at AUA
- Yes, but only since I have been a student at AUA
- Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

The next questions ask about incidents when you were unable to consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, asleep, or incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol. Please include incidents even if you are not sure what happened.

F4. Since you have been attending the American University of Armenia, has any of the following happened to you while you were unable to consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, asleep or incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol:

- Sexual penetration. When one person puts a penis, fingers, or object inside someone else's vagina or anus, or
- Oral sex. When someone's mouth or tongue makes contact with someone else's genitals
- No, never
- Yes, but only before I was a student at AUA
- Yes, but only since I have been a student at AUA
- Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

F5. Since you have been attending the American University of Armenia, has any of the following happened to you while you were unable to consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, asleep or incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol:

- Kissing
- Touching someone's breast, chest, crotch, groin, or buttocks
- Grabbing, groping or rubbing against the other in a sexual way, even if the touching is over the other's clothes

No, never

Yes, but only before I was a student at AUA

Yes, but only since I have been a student at AUA

Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

The next questions ask about incidents when someone coerced you by threatening serious non-physical harm or promising rewards.

F6. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has someone had contact with you involving penetration or oral sex by threatening serious non-physical harm or promising rewards such that you felt you must comply? Examples include:

- Threatening to give you bad grades or cause trouble for you at work
- Promising good grades or a promotion at work
- Threatening to share damaging information about you with your family, friends or authority figures
- Threatening to post damaging information about you online

No, never

Yes, but only before I was a student at AUA

Yes, but only since I have been a student at AUA

Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

F7. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has someone had contact with you involving kissing or sexual touching by threatening serious non-physical harm or promising rewards such that you felt you must comply? Examples include:

- Threatening to give you bad grades or cause trouble for you at work
- Promise good grades or a promotion at work
- Threatening to share damaging information about you with your family, friends or authority figures
- Threatening to post damaging information about you online

No, never

Yes, but only before I was a student at AUA  
Yes, but only since I have been a student at AUA  
Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

The next questions ask about incidents that occurred without your active, ongoing voluntary agreement.

F8. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has someone had contact with you involving penetration or oral sex without your active, ongoing voluntary agreement? Examples include someone:

- Initiating sexual activity despite your refusal
- Ignoring your cues to stop or slow down
- Went ahead without checking in or while you were still deciding
- Otherwise failed to obtain your consent

No, never

Yes, but only before I was a student at AUA  
Yes, but only since I have been a student at AUA  
Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

F9. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, has someone kissed or sexually touched you without your active, ongoing voluntary agreement?

Examples include:

- Initiating sexual activity despite your refusal
- Ignoring your cues to stop or slow down
- Went ahead without checking in or while you were still deciding
- Otherwise failed to obtain your consent

No, never

Yes, but only before I was a student at AUA  
Yes, but only since I have been a student at AUA  
Yes, both before and since being a student at AUA

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

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## Section G. Reporting Sexual Misconduct

The following are statements about what might happen if someone were to report a sexual assault or other sexual misconduct to an official at the American University of Armenia. Please use the scale provided to indicate how likely you think each scenario is.

G1. If someone were to report a sexual assault or other sexual misconduct to an official at the American University of Armenia, how likely is it that campus officials would take the report seriously?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

G2. If someone were to report a sexual assault or other sexual misconduct to an official at the American University of Armenia, how likely is it that campus officials would conduct a fair investigation?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

## **Section H. Sexual Harassment**

The next questions are about situations you may have seen since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia.

H1. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, have you noticed someone at the American University of Armenia making inappropriate sexual comments about someone else's appearance, sharing unwanted sexual images, or otherwise acting in a sexual way that you believed was making others feel uncomfortable or offended?

Yes [CONTINUE]

No [GO TO H2]

Don't know [GO TO H2]

Prefer not to answer [GO TO H2]

[IF BLANK THEN GO TO H2]

H1a. Thinking about the last time this happened, what did you do? (Mark all that apply)

Directly intervened or interrupted the situation in the moment

Checked in with the person who seemed impacted by the behavior

Confronted or expressed concern to the person engaging in the behavior

Sought help from either person's friends

Sought help from someone else

Expressed concern to school administrators or another person in a position of authority

Did nothing because the person impacted appeared to be handling the situation

Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do

Did nothing for another reason

Other: [Text Box]

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

H2. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, have you witnessed a pattern of ongoing sexual comments or behaviors that made you concerned that a fellow student at the American University of Armenia was experiencing sexual harassment?

Yes [CONTINUE]

No [GO TO J3]

Don't know [GO TO J3]

Prefer not to answer [GO TO J3]

[IF BLANK THEN GO TO J3]

H2a. Thinking about the last time this happened, what did you do? (Mark all that apply)

Directly intervened or interrupted the situation in the moment

Checked in with the person who seemed impacted by the behavior

Confronted or expressed concern to the person engaging in the behavior

Sought help from either person's friends

Sought help from someone else

Expressed concern to school administrators or another person in a position of authority

Did nothing because the person impacted appeared to be handling the situation

Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do

Did nothing for another reason

Other: [Text Box]

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

H3. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, have you witnessed someone at the American University of Armenia behaving in a controlling or abusive way towards a dating or sexual partner?

Yes [CONTINUE]

No [GO TO H4]

Don't know [GO TO H4]

Prefer not to answer [GO TO H4]

[IF BLANK GO TO H4]

H3a. Thinking about the last time this happened, what did you do? (Mark all that apply)

Directly intervened or interrupted the situation in the moment

Checked in with the person who seemed impacted by the behavior

Confronted or expressed concern to the person engaging in the behavior

Sought help from either person's friends

Sought help from someone else

Expressed concern to school administrators or another person in a position of authority

Did nothing because the person impacted appeared to be handling the situation

Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do

Did nothing for another reason

Other: [Text Box]

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

H4. Since you have been a student at the American University of Armenia, have you witnessed a situation that you believed could have led to a sexual assault?

Yes [CONTINUE]

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

H4a. Thinking about the last time this happened, what did you do? (Mark all that apply)

Directly intervened or interrupted the situation in the moment

Checked in with the person who seemed impacted by the behavior

Confronted or expressed concern to the person engaging in the behavior

Sought help from either person's friends

Sought help from someone else

Expressed concern to school administrators or another person in a position of authority

Did nothing because the person impacted appeared to be handling the situation

Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do

Did nothing for another reason

Other: [Text Box]

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

---

You have completed the survey, but your data have not yet been submitted. We greatly appreciate your willingness to share your personal experiences and opinions about some very private and sensitive issues. Thank you.

If you or someone you know needs support services related to an experience of sexual assault or other sexual misconduct, click on the "Support Resources" link at the top and bottom of this page for information on how to access support services.

Please click on the "Submit" button to submit your completed survey now.

[SUBMIT BUTTON]

[PREVIOUS PAGE BUTTON]



## **Appendix IV: Dissemination Emails**

### *Dissemination email #1:*

Dear students,

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and we are conducting a survey of the entire student body. Help us gather some information to have a better understanding of sexual assault at AUA. This is a student public health master's project to guide policy and resource availability for students to make campus a safer place for everyone.

The survey is anonymous and will take 20-30 minutes to complete. Please, follow the link below to **complete the survey**. The deadline for filling out the survey is **Friday, May 5th**.

\*insert link\*

Let's try to improve the safety of all the members of our community with your help.

Thank you.

AUA Turpanjian College of Health Sciences

### *Dissemination email #2*

Dear Students,

You recently received a link to participate in a climate survey. If you have filled out the survey, thank you!

This message has gone to all students on campus because no identifying information is linked with the survey, and we are unable to identify whether you have completed the survey.

If you have not had a chance to take the survey yet, please do so as soon as possible by clicking on this link: \*insert link\*.

Your participation in this confidential survey is voluntary, but the more people who participate, the better the information we will have to promote a healthier campus.

The closing date for the survey is **Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**, so it is important to hear from you as soon as possible.

Thank you,

AUA Turpanjian College of Health Sciences

### *Dissemination email #3*

Dear Students,

You recently received a link to participate in a climate survey. If you have filled out the survey, thank you! This message has gone to all students on campus because no identifying information is linked with the survey, and we are unable to identify whether you have completed the survey.

If you have not had a chance to take the survey yet, please do so as soon as possible by clicking on this link: \*insert link\*. Your participation in this anonymous survey is voluntary, but the more people who participate, the better the information we will have to promote a healthier campus.

The survey deadline has been extended to allow more responses. The new closing date for the survey is **Friday, May 12**, so it is important to hear from you as soon as possible.

Thank you,

AUA Turpanjian College of Health Sciences