Executive Summary

2024 MIT Student Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Survey Results

The 2024 MIT Student Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Survey was designed to understand better the prevalence of sexual misconduct experienced by MIT students and their knowledge of institutional policies and support services. Understanding the experiences of our students is a critical part of continuing to improve how we work to create a safer and more inclusive campus environment. Toward that goal, in the spring of 2024, the Institute conducted the Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Survey, MIT's third survey to students on this topic. The 2024 survey assessed sexist/crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention,[1] stalking, intimate partner violence, image-based sexual exploitation, sexual violence, bystander confidence, and students' knowledge of MIT policies and resources.

Twenty percent (2,250 survey respondents) of MIT students (*N*=11,446) responded to the survey, including 23 percent (*n*=1,003) of undergraduate students and 18 percent (*n*=1,247) of graduate students. MIT contracted with a third-party company, Rankin Climate, LLC, to develop and administer the survey as part of a consortium that included other major research universities. All MIT students, 18 years or older, were encouraged to complete this anonymous survey.

The results are based on experiences student respondents indicated happened since they enrolled at MIT by someone affiliated or unaffiliated with MIT. Throughout the report, the use of "*n*" indicates the number of respondents in a specified group who responded affirmatively to a given question or set of questions. This report includes two sections: Key MIT Results and Summary Tables.

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[1] The 22 questions related to sexist/crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention measured a wide range of experiences, from sexist or crude remarks to sexual touch or coercion. Survey questions in this section included:
- Treated you "differently" (mistreated, slighted, or ignored you) because of your sex or gender?
- Put you down or was condescending to you because of your sex (for example, female, male) or gender identity and/or gender expression (for example, man, woman, non-binary)?
- Made unwelcome attempts to draw you into a discussion of sexual matters (for example, attempted to discuss or comment on your sex life)?
- Continued to ask you for dates, drinks, dinner, etc., even though you said "No"?

Key MIT Results

A total of 2,250 MIT students, 20 percent of the total student population (*N*=11,446), responded to the survey.

Overall Rates of Sexual Misconduct

- Overall, 39 percent (*n*=831) of student respondents indicated they had experienced at least one form of sexist/crude behavior or unwanted sexual attention[2] since they enrolled at MIT by other MIT or non-MIT students. This finding is **comparable** with the peer comparison group of major research universities in the spring 2024 survey consortium (37%).

- Overall, 22 percent (*n*=496) of student respondents indicated they had experienced at least one form of sexist/crude behavior or unwanted sexual attention since they enrolled at MIT by an MIT faculty or staff member. This finding is **comparable** with that of the peer comparison group (25%).

- Overall, 20 percent (*n*=426) of student respondents indicated they had experienced stalking since they enrolled at MIT by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT. This finding is **comparable** with the peer comparison group (19%).

- Overall, 8 percent (*n*=171) of student respondents indicated they had experienced intimate partner violence since they enrolled at MIT by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT. This finding is **comparable** with the peer comparison group (10%).

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[2] Although this survey was designed to capture conduct that potentially meets MIT's definition of sexual and gender-based harassment, it cannot evaluate whether the responses to the survey would constitute sexual harassment or gender-based harassment under MIT's policy. Such an assessment requires an examination of the totality of the circumstances surrounding the conduct including its frequency, nature and severity, the relationship between the parties, the context in which the conduct occurred and whether a reasonable person would consider it intimidating, hostile or abusive.

This report uses the term *sexist/crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention* to describe experiences that might be found to constitute a violation of MIT's sexual and gender-based harassment policy depending on the totality of the circumstances surrounding the conduct.

- Overall, eight percent (*n*=176) of student respondents indicated they had experienced sexual violence since they enrolled at MIT by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT. This finding is **comparable** with the peer comparison group (11%).

- Overall, 26 percent (*n*=131) of student respondents; 27 percent (*n*=34) of undergraduate women respondents; and 32 percent (*n*=63) of graduate women respondents who indicated at least one form of sexist/crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention specified that at least one experience was perpetrated by a mentor, advisor, supervisor, PI, or boss since they enrolled at MIT. Peer comparison is unavailable because the other universities structured these questions differently.

Available Support, Bystander Intervention, and Knowledge of MIT Policies

- Overall, 51 percent (*n*=1,128) of student respondents reported feeling confident in their ability to intervene as a prosocial[3] bystander to stop all forms of misconduct assessed in the survey. This finding is **comparable** with the peer comparison group (52%).

- Overall 60 percent (*n*=1,248) agreed with a statement indicating they understand what happens when a student reports an incident of sexual misconduct at MIT, which is **higher than the average** (43%) agreement with that statement among students from the peer comparison group when referring to their institution.

- Overall, 69 percent (*n*=1,417) of student respondents indicated they were familiar with MIT's policies on sexual misconduct, which is **higher than the average** (59%) agreement with that statement among students from the peer comparison group when referring to their own institution.

- Overall, 81 percent (*n*=1,788) of student respondents indicated they know where to go to get information, support, or help on campus if a friend or themselves experienced sexual misconduct, which is **higher than the average** (53%) agreement with that statement among students from the peer comparison group when referring to their own institution.

- When asked how MIT might handle a student reporting an incident of sexual misconduct, 77 percent (*n*=1,715) of respondents indicated that MIT would take the report seriously,

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[3] Action taken by a bystander that actively aims to help or positively influence a situation where someone is experiencing harm or distress.

which is **higher than the average** (60%) agreement with that statement among students attending the institutions in the comparison group.

MIT has made considerable progress in increasing students' knowledge of policies and awareness of available resources, and the Institute needs to continue its efforts to address the incident rates.

A subcommittee of the Committee on Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response (CSMPR) will analyze the data in further detail to comprehend students' experiences of sexual misconduct at MIT; evaluate current programs, resources, and policies; and make recommendations on where MIT can make important and needed improvements. The subcommittee co-chairs are Duane de Four from Violence Prevention and Response and Simi Ogunsanwo from the Institute Discrimination and Harassment Response Office. Representatives from the Division of Student Life, the Office of the Vice Chancellor, and faculty and students will comprise the rest of the committee.

Summary Tables

Overall, 20 percent (2,250 survey respondents) of MIT students (n=11,446) responded to the survey, including 23 percent (n=1,003) of undergraduate students and 18 percent (n=1,247) of graduate students.

Table 1 on the following page presents the 2024 incident rates by gender identity for MIT undergraduate and graduate students.

Table 1: Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Experiencing Sexual Misconduct Since Enrolling at MIT by Someone Affiliated or Not Affiliated with MIT						
	Undergraduate Students			**Graduate Students**		
	Men	Women	Non-Binary/ Transgender*	Men	Women	Non-Binary/ Transgender*
Sexist/crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention by other MIT or non-MIT students	**23%** (n=81)	**59%** (n=318)	**72%** (n=51)	**17%** (n=99)	**45%** (n=247)	**58%** (n=23)
Sexist/crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention by MIT faculty or staff**	**7%** (n=24)	**23%** (n=127)	**43%** (n=32)	**14%** (n=87)	**34%** (n=198)	**51%** (n=21)
Stalking by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT	**16%** (n=55)	**23%** (n=120)	**42%** (n=29)	**12%** (n=71)	**25%** (n=138)	**25%** (n=10)
Intimate partner violence by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT	**8%** (n=29)	**8%** (n=42)	**21%** (n=14)	**4%** (n=26)	**9%** (n=52)	**15%** (n=6)
Sexual violence by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT	**4%** (n=15)	**14%** (n=71)	**23%** (n=16)	**3%** (n=16)	**10%** (n=53)	**8%** (n=4)

Note: Image-based exploitation rates are excluded from this table as they did not meet the reporting threshold. Overall, 1 percent (n=19) of student respondents indicated they had experienced image-based exploitation since they enrolled at MIT by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT.

*Non-binary gender identity includes student respondents who identified as gender non-binary, gender non-conforming, or transgender. We observe that incident rates among non-binary/transgender student respondents are higher than their peers. This trend is consistent with findings observed in the peer comparison group.

**Faculty includes teaching staff; staff refers to all non-faculty MIT employees, including administrative staff, postdoctoral scholars, research staff, service staff, and support staff.

Table 2 presents 2024 peer benchmarks for incident rates by academic level. The peer comparison group (*n*=3) includes major research universities participating in the Spring 2024 survey consortium.

Table 2: Peer Benchmarks for Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Experiencing Sexual Misconduct Since Enrolling at their Respective Institutions by Someone Affiliated or Not Affiliated with the Institution				
		Overall	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
Sexist/crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention by other MIT or non-MIT students	MIT	39%	47%	32%
	Peers	37%	56%	28%
Sexist/crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention by MIT faculty or staff	MIT	22%	19%	25%
	Peers	25%	26%	24%
Stalking by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT	MIT	20%	22%	19%
	Peers	19%	24%	17%
Intimate partner violence by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT	MIT	8%	9%	7%
	Peers	10%	11%	8%
Sexual violence by someone affiliated or not affiliated with MIT	MIT	8%	11%	6%
	Peers	11%	15%	7%
Note: Image-based exploitation rates are excluded from this table as peers did not include this section.				

Tables 3 and 4 present trend benchmarks for MIT's 2019 and 2024 findings. Please note that the 2019 Association of American Universities (AAU) Survey and the 2024 Rankin Climate Survey significantly differ in construction. The 2024 survey is more nuanced and, for some modules, utilizes a broader range of behaviors that could be considered misconduct. The 2024 survey also includes additional follow-up questions and customized MIT-specific answer choices. **Although broad comparisons between the 2019 and 2024 surveys can be made for some findings, a direct match of survey questions is impossible. Comparative findings should be interpreted with great caution.**

Table 3: Sexual & Gender-Based Misconduct Incidence Trend Benchmarks					
2019			**2024**		**Notes**
Sexist/crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention	**39%** (by an MIT student, employee, or other MIT associate)	5 survey questions ➡️ ⬅️	22 survey questions ➡️	**39%** (by an MIT or non-MIT student)	The 2019 survey measured sexually harassing behaviors **across 5 items,** whereas the 2024 survey measured sexist/crude behavior or unwanted sexual attention **across 22 items**. Moreover, the 2024 survey measures sexist/crude behavior or unwanted sexual attention that is perpetrated by other MIT or non-MIT students and MIT faculty and staff in two separate modules across the set of 22 identical survey items. If combined, overall, 45% of student respondents indicated experiencing at least one form of sexist/crude behavior or unwanted sexual attention by MIT or non-MIT students and MIT faculty or staff.
			22 survey questions ➡️	**22%** (by MIT faculty or staff)	
Stalking	**12%**	3 survey questions ⬅️	10 survey questions ➡️	**20%**	The 2019 survey measured stalking **across 3 items,** whereas the 2024 survey measures stalking **across 10 survey items**.
Intimate partner violence	**7%**	3 survey questions ⬅️	7 survey questions ➡️	**8%**	The 2019 survey measured intimate partner violence **across 3 items**, whereas the 2024 survey measures intimate partner violence **across 7 survey items**.
Sexual violence	**7%**	9 survey questions ⬅️	5 survey questions ➡️	**8%**	The 2019 survey measured sexual violence **across 9 items**, whereas the 2024 survey measures sexual violence **across 5 survey items**.
Note: Image-based exploitation rates are excluded from this table as peers did not include this section.					

Table 4: Knowledge Trend Benchmarks				
2019			**2024**	**Notes**
How sexual misconduct is defined	**33%**	% Very or extremely knowledgeable	% Somewhat or strongly agree	**69%**	The 2019 survey utilized a 5-point scale (Not at all, A little, Somewhat, Very, Extremely) to measure knowledge levels, with results reporting the percentage of respondents who indicated being "very" or "extremely" knowledgeable.
Where to get help	**41%**			**81%**	Conversely, the 2024 survey employed a different 5-point scale (Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree) to evaluate agreement with various statements, with results reflecting the
Where to report sexual misconduct	**38%**	←	→	**73%**	percentage of respondents who selected "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree."