Frequently Asked Questions for First Cycle of Campus Climate Surveys in Accordance with P.L. 2020, c. 104

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The New Jersey State Plan for Higher Education: “Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey Higher Education”1 includes the vision that every New Jersey student should feel safe and supported in their learning environment. To help make this vision a reality and in accordance with P.L. 2020 c.104, institutions of higher education are required to administer campus climate surveys and develop action plans in response to campus climate survey findings. The Campus Sexual Assault Commission (CSAC) will assist in monitoring institutions’ progress towards meeting these requirements and offer technical assistance with the implementation of the campus climate surveys.

On Friday, May 6, 2022, CSAC, along with the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE), conducted a technical assistance webinar. To view the full webinar, visit: https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/csac.shtml. This document provides a summary of frequently asked questions from the webinar.

Conducting Campus Climate Surveys

- **What stakeholders from campuses, i.e. students, online students, employees, should be included in the campus climate survey?**
  Institutions are encouraged to be inclusive in their surveying of stakeholders. We recognize that the selection of participants may depend on the survey tool, goals of surveying, and context of the institution. OSHE will be requiring institutions to describe the population of interest for every survey administration via the submission template.

- **What campus climate surveys should be utilized?**
  The Safe and Inclusive Learning Environment State Plan Working Group developed a guidebook to assist institutions in finding appropriate campus climate instruments to administer to students, faculty, and staff. The guidebook includes a step-by-step implementation guide to help institutions better understand the resources and considerations necessary during key decision points in implementation. Reviews, descriptions, and links (if available) for varying climate survey instruments are also included in the report. Note, however, that institutions are free to use or develop climate surveys that best align with their institutional circumstances and there is no required standard survey instrument at this time.

- **How often should institutions survey the campus?**
  In accordance with statute, institutions must conduct campus climate surveys at least once every four years.

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1. [https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/stateplan.shtml](https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/stateplan.shtml)
Can institutions utilize campus climate data collected recently?
Yes, for the first cycle of campus climate survey submissions, institutions that have conducted a campus climate survey between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2022 may utilize any/all administrations of climate surveys on their campus(es) during this period.

Do all of the domains from the Safe and Inclusive Learning Environment “Promoting practice of data analysis through campus climate surveys” need to be included in the campus climate survey selected?
No, all the domains do not have to be included within the campus climate survey administered. However, institutions will be asked to indicate what domains were covered by the survey administered.

The core domains, which are described in detail in Part Two of the guidebook, “The Inventory of Campus Climate Surveys,” are as follows: campus climate, school connectedness, institutional response, student/peer response, campus education/prevention programs and awareness of campus resources, direct experiences, consent and attitudes toward sexual violence/rape myth acceptance or attitudes toward discrimination, diversity and inclusion, and bystander attitudes and behavior.

What are some general best practices institutions should consider when administering a campus climate survey?
Institutions should consider reviewing the Safe and Inclusive Learning Environment Working Group deliverables to learn more about best practices in conducting a campus climate survey. The Inventory of Campus Climate Surveys includes additional information regarding: building capacity on campus, planning for a campus climate survey, selecting a survey tool, determining a sampling approach, determining when to administer a survey, and disseminating findings. In addition, CSAC has hosted a technical assistance workshop on general best practices and additional workshops are forthcoming.

How can an institution with limited resources administer a campus climate survey effectively?
The Safe and Inclusive Learning Environment State Plan Working Group created a series of resources to help institutions through all stages of surveying, from selecting a campus climate survey to implementing change on campus in response to survey results. These resources include:
1. Campus climate inventory and step-by-step guidebook;
2. A resource guide for creating campus safe and inclusive environments; and
3. An implementation guide addressing the recommendations set forth by the 2017 Task Force on Campus Sexual Assault.
These resources were created by a working group that reflected all higher education sectors and considered a wide variety of campus budgets.

Survey Submission to OSHE

What data should institutions submit to OSHE upon completing the survey?
Given the vast number of campus climate surveys available, the first submission by institutions is designed to provide OSHE with information about the survey process, specific survey instrument, and summary reports to establish baseline information.

In the first collection cycle, institutions will utilize a submission template that will ask a series of questions about the survey administration process. Potential fields may include: the demographics of the surveyed population, the sampling method, the specific set of survey instrument(s) utilized, the core domains covered, high-level summary of results, and plans for future climate surveys.
Will there be a codebook for how the file should be structured and submitted?
No, a codebook will not be provided due to the variety of campus climate surveys institutions may utilize. Instead, OSHE will be providing a form template to institutions, which will include an agency contact for any questions.

What is the deadline for institutions to comply for the first reporting cycle?
OSHE recognizes that some institutions of higher education may have well-established processes for collecting campus climate data while other institutions may be in the preliminary stages of the process. As such, a staggered submission approach will be incorporated into the first reporting cycle. Institutions that have conducted a campus climate survey between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2022 may submit this data to OSHE on or before December 31, 2022 to satisfy the first reporting cycle. Institutions that have not conducted a campus climate survey between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2022 will have one year from June 30, 2022 to administer a survey and submit data to satisfy the first reporting cycle requirements (deadline of June 30, 2023).

How will data be used?
This joint effort by the State and CSAC is designed to improve campus climates by enhancing campus climate surveys and evaluations. The purpose of the data gathering is to assist institutions in creating the best possible learning climates for students, faculty, and staff.

OSHE will share institutions’ submissions with CSAC, which will utilize them to develop a statewide action plan with policies, programs, and/or procedures to respond to the issues and needs identified through the surveys.

How should institutions submit the data?
In late summer 2022, OSHE will provide instructions on how to submit survey findings via the template reporting form. These instructions will include a preview of all required entry fields to allow institutions ample time to prepare submissions.

Institutions that have not conducted a campus climate survey between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2022 will still be required to submit a form indicating that they will be submitting survey information by the June 30, 2023 deadline.

General Questions

Do all institutions of higher education in New Jersey have to conduct a campus climate survey?
Yes, pursuant to statute, all degree-granting institutions of higher education are required to conduct campus climate surveys. On or before December 1, 2022, all institutions must either: a) submit campus climate survey data as required by the OSHE-generated submission template if the institution administered a campus climate survey between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2022; or b) submit a form notifying OSHE that campus climate survey data will be submitted on or before June 30, 2023 because the institution did not administer a campus climate survey between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2022.

How will the renewed Violence Against Women Act impact the statutory campus climate survey requirement?
In March 2022, the reauthorization of the federal Violence Against Women Act mandated standardized campus climate surveys on sexual harassment and sexual assault. At this time, New Jersey is continuing to move forward with the first cycle of campus climate surveying pursuant to state statute and acknowledges that further guidance from the Federal government may inform future cycles. OSHE and CSAC will share relevant updates with institutions as they become available.
- **How will institutions be notified of updates regarding P.L. 2020, c.104, such as the availability of the template for submission?**
  Institutions will be notified of relevant information through OSHE’s biweekly broadcast. In addition, the template will be available on CSAC’S webpage once it has been provided to institutions. [https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/csac.shtml](https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/csac.shtml).

- **How can I connect with CSAC to provide feedback on technical assistance needs?**
  Institutions can reach out to CSAC via [OSHE@oshe.nj.gov](mailto:OSHE@oshe.nj.gov). OSHE will share the communication with the CSAC chair. For a full list of CSAC members, please visit the webpage listed above.