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| 2021 |
| CU Boulder Sexual Misconduct Survey |
| Results Summary |

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| Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance  9-7-2022 |

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2021 Sexual Misconduct Survey Results Summary

Introduction

The 2021 Sexual Misconduct survey was embedded within the larger 2021 Campus Culture Survey (CCS), administered between October 18th and November 28th, 2021. The Sexual Misconduct section of the survey was presented only to graduate and undergraduate students[[1]](#footnote-1). Survey participants were asked whether they had experienced sexual misconduct *since becoming a student at CU Boulder*.

The number of survey participants and response rates were:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Students | Population | Responded | Response Rate |
| Undergraduate Women | 13,678 | 4,274 | 31% |
| Undergraduate Men | 16,589 | 3,422 | 21% |
| Graduate Women | 3,030 | 1,511 | 50% |
| Graduate Men | 3,945 | 1,539 | 39% |

Although the 2021 overall response rate was lower in 2021 (29% responded to the sexual misconduct section of the Campus Culture Survey) as compared to 2015 (41% responded to the Sexual Misconduct Survey), the participants in both administrations were highly representative of the student population demographically, including for race and ethnicity, gender, school/college, and class level. Additional analyses will be performed to detect any differences among student populations related to sexual misconduct prevalence, characteristics, and perpetrators. Updates will be posted on this website as they become available.

It is not possible to compare all 2021 findings to 2015 results because of differences in the way that some questions were asked, as well as the addition of new questions in 2021.

Aggregate Rates for All Forms of Sexual Misconduct

All forms of sexual misconduct decreased from 2015 to 2021, with the exception of stalking, which remained about the same. Although the incidence of sexual assault, exploitation, and harassment as well as intimate partner violence may have indeed decreased due to factors such as the #metoo and #timesup movements, as well as campus prevention education efforts, compelling alternative explanations include:

* A “pandemic pause” effect on sexual activity resulting from:
  + Decreased contact among students: remote classes, county and state health orders limiting parties and events, restricted contact among students living in the residence halls, and masking requirements.
  + [Increased protective factors such as students living at home with family and away from peers](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2022/06/220615130834.htm).
  + [Decreased alcohol use and binge drinking among first-year students](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X2100327X?via%3Dihub).
  + [Decreased interest in being sexually intimate due to infection risk](https://www.bu.edu/articles/2020/4-ways-disgust-is-shaping-the-coronavirus-pandemic/).
* [Continued decline since 2000 in the percentage of teens and young adults who engage in sexual activity](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2378023121996854#:~:text=(2020)%20found%20that%20the%20percentage,percent%20over%20the%20same%20period).
* Greater precision in the instructions, phrasing, and display logic of the 2021 sexual misconduct survey questions as compared to the 2015 version.
* A possible increase in participation in 2021 among students who had *not* experienced sexual misconduct since becoming a student at CU Boulder. In 2015, communications about the survey, including messaging from campus leadership and the survey invitation/reminders, were exclusively focused on sexual misconduct; many students who didn’t feel the issue was relevant to them may have ignored the survey messages. In contrast, 2021 survey messaging highlighted the campus culture content and gave much less emphasis to the sexual misconduct component of the student version of the CCS; we may have seen greater participation in 2021 from students who would have otherwise declined to participate if the sexual misconduct content had been more explicitly communicated.

Below are the overall rates for sexual misconduct:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015** | | | **2021** | | |
| **Sexual Assault** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 1545 | 28% | 4,274 | 625 | 15% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 296 | 6% | 3,422 | 78 | 2% |
| Graduate Women | 1,168 | 111 | 10% | 1,511 | 21 | 1% |
| Graduate Men | 1,428 | 35 | 2% | 1,539 | 9 | 1% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sexual Harassment[[2]](#footnote-2)** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 1534 | 28% | 4,364 | 841 | 19% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 451 | 9% | 3,485 | 181 | 5% |
| Graduate Women | 1,168 | 233 | 20% | 1,527 | 95 | 6% |
| Graduate Men | 1,428 | 94 | 7% | 1,552 | 35 | 2% |
| **Sexual Exploitation** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 352 | 6% | 4,243 | 219 | 5% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 125 | 3% | 3,402 | 40 | 1% |
| Graduate Students[[3]](#footnote-3) | 2,596 | 30 | 1% | 3,055 | 8 | <1% |
| **Intimate Partner Abuse** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 785 | 14% | 4,237 | 530 | 13% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 348 | 7% | 3,399 | 174 | 5% |
| Graduate Women | 1,168 | 98 | 8% | 1,506 | 90 | 6% |
| Graduate Men | 1,428 | 71 | 5% | 1,537 | 42 | 3% |
| **Stalking** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 563 | 10% | 4,232 | 429 | 10% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 151 | 3% | 3,393 | 109 | 3% |
| Graduate Women | 1,168 | 95 | 8% | 1,506 | 68 | 5% |
| Graduate Men | 1,428 | 27 | 2% | 1,536 | 22 | 1% |

Sexual Assault: Rates

The prevalence of sexual assault decreased across groups from 2015 to 2021.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015** | | | **2021** | | |
| **Sexual Assault** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 1545 | 28% | 4,274 | 625 | 15% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 296 | 6% | 3,422 | 78 | 2% |
| Graduate Women | 1,168 | 111 | 10% | 1,511 | 21 | 1% |
| Graduate Men | 1,428 | 35 | 2% | 1,539 | 9 | 1% |

Sexual Assault: Incident Timing

In both administrations of the survey, for undergraduates, the majority of sexual assaults occurred in the Fall semester:

* 68% for undergraduate women in 2015; 71% for undergraduate women in 2021
* 65% for undergraduate men in 2015; 69% for undergraduate men in 2021

The rate of assault in both survey administrations is highest for students in their first year and the window for next greatest risk is the Fall semester of students’ second year at CU.

Sexual Assault: Number of Incidents and Behaviors/Tactics

Although the rates for sexual assault are lower in 2021, reports of experiencing more than one incident increased from 2015 for undergraduates and for graduate men; however, this could be due to making it easier to report multiple assaults in the 2021 survey.

In addition, assault characteristics in 2021 were more severe in several ways:

* In 2021, for men and women at both career levels, there was an increase in the percentage of participants reporting that perpetrators had used their incapacitation, physical threats or intimidation, and/or force as tactics to facilitate the sexual assault incident.
* Results indicate that unlike in 2015, for the majority of students intentional touching (only) was *not* the most commonly reported assaultive behavior. In 2021, rates for nonconsensual intentional touching (only) decreased for all groups and being made to perform sexual acts increased for all groups.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015**  **(N = 1545)** | | **2021**  **(N = 621)** | |
| **UG Women** | **Freq** | **%** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Intentionally touched you | 1406 | 91% | 578 | 93% |
| Intentionally touched you ONLY | 770 | 50% | 266 | 43% |
| Penetrated you | 697 | 45% | 277 | 45% |
| Made you perform acts | 442 | 29% | 226 | 36% |
|  | **2015**  **(N = 296)** | | **2021**  **(N = 77)** | |
| **UG Men** | **Freq** | **%** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Intentionally touched you | 254 | 86% | 71 | 92% |
| Intentionally touched you ONLY | 212 | 72% | 44 | 57% |
| Penetrated you | 107 | 36% | 19 | 25% |
| Made you perform acts | 93 | 31% | 26 | 34% |
|  | **2015**  **(N = 111)** | | **2021**  **(N = 20)** | |
| **Graduate Women** | **Freq** | **%** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Intentionally touched you | 101 | 91% | 18 | 90% |
| Intentionally touched you ONLY | 69 | 62% | 9 | 45% |
| Penetrated you | 42 | 38% | 10 | 50% |
| Made you perform acts | 12 | 11% | 3 | 15% |
|  | **2015**  **(N = 35)** | | **2021**  **(N = 9)** | |
| **Graduate Men** | **Freq** | **%** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Intentionally touched you | 29 | 83% | 8 | 89% |
| Intentionally touched you ONLY | 22 | 63% | 3 | 33% |
| Penetrated you | 13 | 37% | 3 | 33% |
| Made you perform acts | 12 | 34% | 6 | 67% |

Sexual Assault: Incident Characteristics

In 2021, the most common locations where the assault took place were:

* Undergraduate women
  + Greek chapter house 30%
  + Someone else’s off-campus residence 22%
  + My campus housing 18%
* Undergraduate men
  + My campus housing 25%
  + Someone else’s off-campus residence 21%
  + Greek chapter house 15%
* Graduate women
  + My off-campus residence 20%
  + Someone else’s off-campus residence 20%
  + Boulder bar, club, restaurant 20%
* Graduate men
  + In the US, outside of Colorado 44%

The majority of sexual assaults did not take place at a university-related event. Among undergraduates who *had* been sexually assaulted at a university-related event, the most common event was Greek-associated:

* Undergraduate women
  + Not related to a CU event 54%
  + Greek-associated event 35%
* Undergraduate Men
  + Not related to a CU event 70%
  + Greek-associated event 12%
* Rates for graduate students are too low to include here

Sexual Assault: Perpetrator Characteristics

The percentages of undergraduate participants who reported being sexually assaulted since coming to CU Boulder, along with the gender of the perpetrator, are presented below. Sexual assault rates decreased among *both* LGBTQ+ and Not LGBTQ+ undergraduates[[4]](#footnote-4) from 2015 to 2021[[5]](#footnote-5).

* Among Not LGBTQ+ women
  + Sexual assault rates decreased from 27% in 2015 to 13% in 2021.
  + The majority of these participants were assaulted by a man in both 2015 and 2021 (98% in both years).
* Among Not LGBTQ+ men
  + Sexual assault rates decreased from 5% in 2015 to 2% in 2021.
  + The majority of these participants were assaulted by a woman in both 2015 (87%) and 2021 (78%).
* Among LGBTQ+ women
  + Sexual assault rates decreased from 30% in 2015 to 17% in 2021.
  + The majority of these participants were assaulted by a man in 2015 (93%) and 2021 (95%).
* Among LGBTQ+ men
  + Sexual assault rates decreased from 12% in 2015 to 5% in 2021.
  + The majority of these participants were assaulted by a man in 2015 (51%); a plurality were assaulted by a man in 2021 (48%).

With respect to the perpetrator’s relationship to the participant, the great majority of sexual assaults were perpetrated by someone the participant knew. Among undergraduates, strangers and others who were unknown to the survey participant comprised 23% of perpetrators for women and 25% for men.

In 2021, participants were able to indicate that the perpetrator was “someone they had just met,” which was not a response option in 2015. A substantial proportion of undergraduates indicated that the perpetrator who assaulted them was in fact someone they had just met (18% of women, 13% of men), almost entirely accounting for the decrease seen in the proportion of “stranger” responses between the two administrations.

Finally, as compared to 2015, there was an increase in the number of assaults committed by a casual dating partner/hook-up.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015**  **(N = 1466)** | | **2021**  **(N = 601)** | |
| **UG Women** | **Freq** | **%** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Stranger | 595 | 41% | 129 | 21% |
| Friend | 335 | 23% | 119 | 20% |
| Someone I just met | NA | NA | 109 | 18% |
| Casual dating partner or hookup | 96 | 7% | 75 | 12% |
| Acquaintance | 312 | 21% | 64 | 11% |
| Current or former romantic partner | 87 | 6% | 49 | 8% |
| Colleague or co-worker | 10 | 1% | 6 | 1% |
| Person supervising me or with more authority than me at work | 4 | <1% | 2 | <1% |
| CU Boulder professional employee | 6 | <1% | 1 | <1% |
| CU Boulder RA | 1 | <1% | 1 | <1% |
| Family member or relative | 0 | 0% | 1 | <1% |
| Current or former spouse | 2 | <1% | 0 | 0% |
| CU Boulder TA/Research Assistant | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Other | 18 | 1% | 6 | 1% |
| Don’t know/Not sure | 21 | 1% | 14 | 2% |
| Prefer not to answer | NA | NA | 25 | 4% |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015**  **(N = 271)** | | **2021**  **(N = 72)** | |
| **UG Men** | **Freq** | **%** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Friend | 82 | 30% | 16 | 22% |
| Stranger | 85 | 31% | 15 | 21% |
| Someone I just met | NA | NA | 9 | 13% |
| Acquaintance | 46 | 17% | 8 | 11% |
| Casual dating partner or hookup | 19 | 7% | 8 | 11% |
| Current or former romantic partner | 21 | 8% | 2 | 3% |
| Colleague or co-worker | 4 | 1% | 2 | 3% |
| Current or former spouse | 2 | 1% | 1 | 1% |
| CU Boulder RA | 3 | 1% | 0 | 0% |
| Person supervising me or with more authority than me at work | 1 | <1% | 0 | 0% |
| Family member or relative | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| CU Boulder professional employee | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| CU Boulder TA/Research Assistant | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Other | 8 | 3% | 3 | 4% |
| Don’t know/Not sure | 7 | 3% | 3 | 4% |
| Prefer not to answer | NA | NA | 5 | 7% |

* For graduate women, sexual assault committed by a stranger was most common in 2015 (27%), whereas the perpetrator being another graduate student was most common in 2021 (33%)—note that “other graduate student” was not a response option in 2015.
* For graduate men, assaults committed by a stranger or an acquaintance were most common in 2015 (each 26%), whereas a current or former romantic partner was most frequently the perpetrator in 2021 (38%).

Rates for other categories of perpetrator type cannot be displayed because the number of graduate student participants who reported any other specific perpetrator type is less than 10.

Sexual Assault: Disclosing and Reporting

In general, reporting of any kind increased from 2015 to 2021.

The percentage of participants indicating that they did not tell anyone about the sexual assault they experienced decreased from 2015 for men and women graduates and undergraduates.

* Undergraduate women: 33% to 13%
* Undergraduate men: 52% to 21%
* Graduate women: 41% to 21%
* Graduate men: 56% to 33%

For all groups, the most common person that participants told was a roommate or friend.

Looking at confidential resources (OVA, CAPS, Wardenburg, or an off-campus confidential resource), the most commonly identified resources used by students were:

* Undergraduate women: off-campus resource (2015, 15%; 2021, 19%)
* Undergraduate men: off-campus resource (2015, 11%; 2021, 14%)
* Graduate women: CAPS (2015; 21%); off-campus resource (2021, 32%)
* Graduate men: OVA/CAPS/off-campus resource (2015, 15%); off-campus resource (2021, 33%)

The increase in use of off-campus resources from 2015 to 2021 may be related to students being remote during parts of the pandemic.

Except for graduate men, the percentage of participants who reported working with OVA increased from 2015 to 2021 (overall 11% to 14%):

* Undergraduate women: 12% in 2015; 14% in 2021
* Undergraduate men: 4% in 2015; 9% in 2021
* Graduate women: 10% in 2015; 16% in 2021
* Graduate men:15% in 2015, 11% in 2021

Again, except for graduate men, reporting to OIEC increased from 2015 to 2021. The percentage indicating that they or someone else reported the assault they experienced to OIEC was:

* Undergraduate women: 2% in 2015; 8% in 2021
* Undergraduate men: 2% in 2015; 4% in 2021
* Graduate women: 0% in 2015; 32% in 2021
* Graduate men: 8% in 2015, 0% in 2021

Reporting to the police was also uncommon in both survey administrations. Rates for police reports were:

* Undergraduate women: CU Boulder Police Department (4% in both years)
* Undergraduate men: CU Boulder Police Department (2015, 3%; 2021, 4%)
* Graduate women: Boulder Police Department (2015, 3%); Other police (2021, 11%)
* Graduate men: N/A (0% reported to any police in 2015); Other police (2021, 11%)

Sexual Assault: Consequences

In the 2021 survey, new questions were added asking participants about a variety of consequences they may have experienced as a result of the assault. The most prevalent consequences were:

* Undergraduate women
  + Affected your mental health (82%)
  + Affected your intimate relationships (72%)
  + Affected your social relationships (62%)
* Undergraduate men
  + Affected your mental health (57%)
  + Affected your intimate relationships (49%)
  + Affected your social relationships (47%)
* Graduate women
  + Affected your mental health (79%)
  + Caused you to be less productive in your academic work (68%)
  + Affected your social/intimate relationships (both 63%)
* Graduate men
  + Affected your intimate relationships (75%)
  + Affected your mental health (62%)
  + Affected your social relationships (50%)

Sexual Harassment: Rates

The prevalence of sexual harassment decreased across groups from 2015 to 2021. Compared to 2015, the 2021 instructions for these questions were more explicit in clarifying that participants were being asked specifically about sexually harassing behaviors that occurred *in the context of CU-related activities* (in person or remote), rather than *any* sexual harassment participants might have experienced during their time as students at CU. This may account for some of the reduction seen in these rates.

Note that the questions asking about Sexual Harassment appeared earlier in the survey than the other forms of sexual misconduct and as such have higher numbers of responses; a small proportion of student participants exited the survey at or before the point where the questions about the other forms of sexual misconduct were presented.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015** | | | **2021** | | |
| **Sexual Harassment** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 1534 | 28% | 4,364 | 841 | 19% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 451 | 9% | 3,485 | 181 | 5% |
| Graduate Women | 1,168 | 233 | 20% | 1,527 | 95 | 6% |
| Graduate Men | 1,428 | 94 | 7% | 1,552 | 35 | 2% |

Sexual Harassment: Behaviors

Below are the prevalence rates for the most common sexual harassment behaviors reported by students who experienced sexual harassment. Results are only displayed if there are at least 10 participants who reported a specific behavior.

The increased prevalence of behaviors related to online or digital forms of sexual harassment (e.g., “Made offensive sexualized remarks to you (or about you to others) by text, email, or social media”; “Sent or posted unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, or pictures to you by any means, including text, email, or social media”) may be due to greater opportunity for such behaviors in the COVID-19 era, as more activities were conducted online.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Undergraduate Women | 2015 | 2021 |
| Made offensive remarks to you (or about you to others) regarding your appearance, body, or sexual activities | 45% | 39% |
| Made unwanted attempts to touch you in a sexual way | 34% | 38% |
| *Without your consent,* touched you or made you touch them in a sexual way, did something sexual to you, or made you do something sexual to them | 33% | 38% |
| Continued to ask you out for dates, drinks, dinner, etc., even though you said “No” | 35% | 36% |
| Treated you badly for refusing to engage in a romantic/dating relationship or in sexual activity | 19% | 27% |
| Repeatedly told sexual stories or jokes that were offensive to you | 41% | 26% |
| Made sexualized gestures or used sexualized body language that embarrassed or offended you | 26% | 26% |
| Made offensive sexualized remarks to you (or about you to others) by text, email, or social media | 14% | 21% |
| Sent or posted unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, or pictures to you by any means, including text, email, or social media | 8% | 18% |
| Spread sexual rumors about you by any means, including text, email, or social media | 8% | 12% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Undergraduate Men | 2015 | 2021 |
| Made offensive remarks to you (or about you to others) regarding your appearance, body, or sexual activities | 35% | 33% |
| Repeatedly told sexual stories or jokes that were offensive to you | 36% | 27% |
| *Without your consent,* touched you or made you touch them in a sexual way, did something sexual to you, or made you do something sexual to them | 16% | 24% |
| Made unwanted attempts to touch you in a sexual way | 19% | 23% |
| Made offensive sexualized remarks to you (or about you to others) by text, email, or social media | 11% | 23% |
| Spread sexual rumors about you by any means, including text, email, or social media | 10% | 23% |
| Treated you badly for refusing to engage in a romantic/dating relationship or in sexual activity | 10% | 20% |
| Continued to ask you out for dates, drinks, dinner, etc., even though you said “No” | 11% | 18% |
| Made sexualized gestures or used sexualized body language that embarrassed or offended you | 15% | 15% |
| Sent or posted unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, or pictures to you by any means, including text, email, or social media | 7% | 15% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Graduate Women | 2015 | 2021 |
| Made offensive remarks to you (or about you to others) regarding your appearance, body, or sexual activities | 46% | 40% |
| Continued to ask you out for dates, drinks, dinner, etc., even though you said “No” | 24% | 37% |
| Made offensive sexualized remarks to you (or about you to others) by text, email, or social media | 10% | 24% |
| Repeatedly told sexual stories or jokes that were offensive to you | 44% | 23% |
| Made unwanted attempts to touch you in a sexual way | 15% | 17% |
| Treated you badly for refusing to engage in a romantic/dating relationship or in sexual activity | 9% | 15% |
| Made sexualized gestures or used sexualized body language that embarrassed or offended you | 24% | 14% |
| *Without your consent*, touched you or made you touch them in a sexual way, did something sexual to you, or made you do something sexual to them | 20% | 14% |
| Sent or posted unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, or pictures to you by any means, including text, email, or social media | 7% | 14% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Graduate Men | 2015 | 2021 |
| Made offensive remarks to you (or about you to others) regarding your appearance, body, or sexual activities | 24% | 37% |
| Repeatedly told sexual stories or jokes that were offensive to you | 47% | 29% |
| Spread sexual rumors about you by any means, including text, email, or social media | 12% | 26% |

Sexual Harassment: Perpetrator Roles

In both 2015 and 2021, the most common type of perpetrator for undergraduate women and men was another undergraduate student:

* Women: 89% in 2015 and 81% in 2021
* Men: 84% in 2015 and 65% in 2021

The proportion of undergraduates indicating that they prefer not to identify the role(s) of the sexual harasser increased from 2015 to 2021, perhaps reflecting increased concerns about the privacy of personal information.

Similarly, in both 2015 and 2021, the most common perpetrator for graduate men and women was another graduate student:

* Women: 55% in 2015, 57% in 2021
* Men: 60% in 2015, 71% in 2021

For both graduate women and men, the next most common perpetrators were faculty member(s) and undergraduates.

Sexual Harassment: Consequences

The 2021 survey introduced a new set of questions that asked about the consequences of the sexual harassment students had experienced.

For undergraduate women, the most prevalent consequences were:

* Affected your mental health (64%)
* Eroded your confidence in your abilities (50%)
* Caused you to be less productive in your academic work (46%)

For undergraduate men, the most prevalent consequences were:

* Affected your mental health (69%)
* Caused you to be less productive in your academic work (64%)
* Caused you to be less committed to the university (58%)

For graduate women, the most prevalent consequences were:

* Affected your mental health (78%)
* Eroded your confidence in your abilities (65%)
* Caused you to be less certain about your future career (63%)

For graduate men, the most prevalent consequences were:

* Affected your mental health (67%)
* Caused you to consider not recommending CU to someone considering studying here (67%)
* Eroded your confidence in your abilities (56%)

Sexual Exploitation: Rates

Sexual exploitation is when someone takes sexual advantage of another person without their consent*.* The prevalence of sexual exploitation decreased slightly across groups from 2015 to 2021. Due to small numbers of responses and to protect confidentiality, results for sexual exploitation for graduate students are not broken out by gender.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015** | | | **2021** | | |
| **Sexual Exploitation** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 352 | 6% | 4,243 | 219 | 5% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 125 | 3% | 3,402 | 40 | 1% |
| Graduate Students | 2,596 | 30 | 1% | 3,055 | 8 | <1% |

Sexual Exploitation: Behaviors

For undergraduate men and women in both administrations of the survey, the most common sexual exploitation behavior reported was: “Exposed their genitals or masturbated in front of you.”

For graduate students (combined across genders due to small numbers of responses) the most common behavior in 2015 was “Exposed their genitals or masturbated in front of you,” while the most common behavior in 2021 was “Taken photographs or videos of your intimate parts and/or genitals.”

The prevalence of each sexual exploitation behavior for undergraduate women and men is presented below (note that some behaviors were only asked in the 2021 survey). To ensure that participants cannot be identified by the uniqueness of their responses, rates for undergraduates are only displayed if at least 10 students reported the behavior. The number of graduate student participants who reported any specific sexual exploitation behavior is less than 10 and so their results are not displayed.

Below are the prevalence rates for the most common sexual exploitation behaviors that survey participants reported experiencing.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Undergraduate Women | 2015 | 2021 |
| Exposed their genitals or masturbated in front of you | 52% | 50% |
| Taken photographs or videos of your intimate parts and/or genitals, etc. | 29% | 30% |
| Viewed your sexual activity, etc., in a place where you had a reasonable expectation of privacy | 34% | 25% |
| Distributed photographs or videos of your intimate parts and/or genitals, etc. | 10% | 18% |
| Taken possession of your intimate personal property | NA | 18% |
| Made you expose your genitals or masturbate in front of them | NA | 13% |
| Made you engage in sexual activity (i.e., prostituted you) | 8% | 8% |
| Made audio recordings of you engaging in sexual behavior | NA | 5% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Undergraduate Men | 2015 | 2021 |
| Exposed their genitals or masturbated in front of you | 55% | 45% |
| Taken possession of your intimate personal property | NA | 25% |
| Viewed your sexual activity, etc., in a place where you had a reasonable expectation of privacy | 42% | 22% |
| Taken photographs or videos of your intimate parts and/or genitals, etc. | 14% | 22% |

Sexual Exploitation: Perpetrator Affiliation

Participants who reported experiencing sexual exploitation were asked about the perpetrator’s affiliation with CU (not about the perpetrator’s specific CU role).

For undergraduate women, in both survey administrations, the perpetrator(s) were primarily affiliated with the university (66% in 2015, 48% in 2021). The same was true for undergraduate men (69% in 2015, 42% in 2021).

However, for graduate students, while most who experienced sexual exploitation indicated that the perpetrators were affiliated with the university in 2015 (83%), only 38% indicated that the perpetrator was affiliated with the university in 2021 (50% indicating “No”; 12% indicating “Not sure”).

In 2021, there was an increase in the proportion of students indicating “prefer not to answer” when asked for details about the sexual exploitation perpetrator. This change may be related to increased concerns about data privacy in 2021 relative to 2015.

Intimate Partner Abuse: Rates

The prevalence of intimate partner abuse (including dating and domestic violence) decreased slightly across groups from 2015 to 2021. This decrease may be explained, in part, by the decrease in prevalence of physically abusive behaviors such as “Pushed, grabbed, or shook you” possibly due to social distancing and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015** | | | **2021** | | |
| **Intimate Partner Abuse** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 785 | 14% | 4,237 | 530 | 13% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 348 | 7% | 3,399 | 174 | 5% |
| Graduate Women | 1,168 | 98 | 8% | 1,506 | 90 | 6% |
| Graduate Men | 1,428 | 71 | 5% | 1,537 | 42 | 3% |

Intimate Partner Abuse: Behaviors

As with the other forms of sexual misconduct, new behaviors for intimate partner abuse were added to the survey in 2021 that were not asked in 2015. Notably, for all groups of students in 2021, the most prevalent intimate partner abuse behaviors are among those newly added behaviors: “Manipulated you into doubting your memory, perception, or judgment (sometimes referred to as gaslighting)” and “Emotionally or verbally abused you.”

In contrast, the proportion of students indicating that their partner “Acted constantly jealous” decreased substantially from 2015 (where it was the most common form of abusive behavior); this suggests that behaviors classified as jealousy in 2015 were in fact better captured by gaslighting and emotional/verbal abuse in 2021.

The prevalence rates for the most common intimate partner abuse behaviors are presented below. Results are only displayed if there are at least 10 participants who reported a behavior.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Undergraduate Women | 2015 | 2021 |
| Manipulated you into doubting your own memory, perception, or judgment (sometimes referred to as "gaslighting") | NA | 67% |
| Emotionally or verbally abused you | NA | 55% |
| Acted constantly jealous | 72% | 44% |
| Scared you without laying a hand on you | 45% | 40% |
| Threatened to hurt themselves | 33% | 27% |
| Made decisions for you, such as where you go or what you wear or eat | NA | 22% |
| Restricted your movement, held you down, blocked the door, took your keys or cell phone, or wouldn't allow you leave or make a call when you wanted to | 27% | 20% |
| Pushed, grabbed, or shook you | 31% | 16% |
| Did not allow you to see or talk with friends or family | NA | 16% |
| Kept you from going to work or pursuing career or other life goals | NA | 15% |
| Threatened to hurt you | 11% | 11% |
| Tried to choke you or restrict your breathing | 10% | 11% |
| Hit, slapped, or punched you with a fist or hard object | 10% | 8% |
| Stole or destroyed your property, including pets | 10% | 8% |
| Threw things at you | NA | 8% |
| Pinched or twisted your fingers or arm | 8% | 5% |
| Threatened to harm your pet(s), someone close to you, or a valued possession | 4% | 4% |
| Threatened to "out" you at work or to others | NA | 4% |
| Used a weapon against you or threatened to use a weapon | 3% | 3% |
| Repeatedly punched, hit, kicked, grabbed, or threw you down | 2% | 3% |
| Kicked you | 2% | 3% |
| Bit or burned you | 3% | 2% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Undergraduate Men | 2015 | 2021 |
| Manipulated you into doubting your own memory, perception, or judgment (sometimes referred to as "gaslighting") | NA | 57% |
| Emotionally or verbally abused you | NA | 49% |
| Acted constantly jealous | 65% | 42% |
| Threatened to hurt themselves | 34% | 31% |
| Scared you without laying a hand on you | 14% | 21% |
| Kept you from going to work or pursuing career or other life goals | NA | 19% |
| Did not allow you to see or talk with friends or family | NA | 19% |
| Made decisions for you, such as where you go or what you wear or eat | NA | 16% |
| Hit, slapped, or punched you with a fist or hard object | 21% | 12% |
| Restricted your movement, held you down, blocked the door, took your keys or cell phone, or wouldn't allow you leave or make a call when you wanted to | 11% | 11% |
| Threw things at you | NA | 11% |
| Pushed, grabbed, or shook you | 17% | 10% |
| Stole or destroyed your property, including pets | 9% | 10% |
| Threatened to "out" you at work or to others | NA | 9% |
| Kicked you | 9% | 7% |
| Threatened to hurt you | 8% | 7% |
| Threatened to harm your pet(s), someone close to you, or a valued possession | 3% | 6% |
| Repeatedly punched, hit, kicked, grabbed, or threw you down | 2% | 6% |
| Pinched or twisted your fingers or arm | 10% | 5% |
| Bit or burned you | 8% | 5% |
| Tried to choke you or restrict your breathing | 7% | 3% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Graduate Women | 2015 | 2021 |
| Manipulated you into doubting your own memory, perception, or judgment (sometimes referred to as "gaslighting") | NA | 66% |
| Emotionally or verbally abused you | NA | 58% |
| Scared you without laying a hand on you | 59% | 42% |
| Acted constantly jealous | 59% | 31% |
| Threatened to hurt themselves | 30% | 21% |
| Restricted your movement, held you down, blocked the door, took your keys or cell phone, or wouldn't allow you leave or make a call when you wanted to | 26% | 18% |
| Made decisions for you, such as where you go or what you wear or eat | NA | 18% |
| Pushed, grabbed, or shook you | 26% | 13% |
| Threatened to hurt you | 17% | 12% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Graduate Men | 2015 | 2021 |
| Emotionally or verbally abused you | NA | 64% |
| Manipulated you into doubting your own memory, perception, or judgment (sometimes referred to as "gaslighting") | NA | 48% |
| Acted constantly jealous | 63% | 40% |
| Threatened to hurt themselves | 37% | 26% |

Intimate Partner Abuse: Perpetrator Affiliation

In 2015, less than half of undergraduate women who reported experiencing intimate partner abuse indicated that the perpetrator was affiliated with CU (41%), however in 2021, that percentage increased to 52%.

A plurality of undergraduate men indicated the perpetrator of their abuse was affiliated with the university in both years (45% in 2015, 49% in 2021).

For both graduate women and men, most students reported that the perpetrator was *not* affiliated with the university in both survey administrations (women: 57% in 2015 and 71% in 2021, men: 59% in 2015 and 64% in 2021). As seen in other categories of sexual misconduct, the proportion of students indicating that they prefer not to answer if the abusive partner was affiliated with the university increased from 2015 to 2021, perhaps reflecting increased concerns about the privacy of personal information.

Stalking: Rates

The prevalence of stalking remained approximately the same across groups from 2015 to 2021.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015** | | | **2021** | | |
| **Stalking** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** | **N** | **Freq** | **%** |
| Undergraduate Women | 5,519 | 563 | 10% | 4,232 | 429 | 10% |
| Undergraduate Men | 4,821 | 151 | 3% | 3,393 | 109 | 3% |
| Graduate Women | 1,168 | 95 | 8% | 1,506 | 68 | 5% |
| Graduate Men | 1,428 | 27 | 2% | 1,536 | 22 | 1% |

Stalking: Behaviors

For all groups in both years, the most common stalking behavior was “Sent you unwanted emails, instant messages/texts, or messages through social media.”

The prevalence of the behavior “Tried to communicate with you in other ways that you did not want” increased for all groups from 2015 to 2021; however, this increase may be due to an artifact of survey randomization; items were presented in a random order in 2021 but not 2015, and so this behavior may have appeared earlier in the list and been chosen more often in 2021 solely for that reason.

The prevalence of all behaviors for all groups is presented below. Results are only displayed if there are at least 10 participants who reported a behavior. Fifty percent of graduate men reported that they had received “unwanted emails, instant messages/texts, or messages through social media”; the number of graduate men who experienced other of specific types stalking behaviors is too small (n < 10) to display.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Undergraduate Women | 2015 | 2021 |
| Sent you unwanted emails, instant messages/texts, or messages through social media | 51% | 48% |
| Tried to communicate with you in other ways that you did not want | 24% | 43% |
| Left unwanted messages after you told them to stop (including handwritten notes, voice messages, social media messages or electronic messages) | 30% | 37% |
| Showed up at places where you were, even though that person had no business being there | 34% | 31% |
| Contacted other people to get information about you or to find you | 23% | 31% |
| Waited for you at places, such as your home, workplace or school when you didn’t want them to be there | 33% | 29% |
| Made unwanted phone calls to you (including hang-up calls) | 27% | 24% |
| Watched or followed you from a distance, or spied on you with a listening device, camera, or GPS | 22% | 16% |
| Sent you unwanted gifts or other items | 11% | 14% |
| Entered your home or car and did things to let you know they had been there | 3% | 8% |
| Vandalized your property or destroyed something you loved | 5% | 7% |
| Left you strange or potentially threatening items | 5% | 6% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Undergraduate Men | 2015 | 2021 |
| Sent you unwanted emails, instant messages/texts, or messages through social media | 37% | 34% |
| Tried to communicate with you in other ways that you did not want | 25% | 33% |
| Showed up at places where you were, even though that person had no business being there | 21% | 28% |
| Contacted other people to get information about you or to find you | 18% | 28% |
| Left unwanted messages after you told them to stop (including handwritten notes, voice messages, social media messages or electronic messages) | 21% | 23% |
| Waited for you at places, such as your home, workplace or school when you didn’t want them to be there | 26% | 20% |
| Made unwanted phone calls to you (including hang-up calls) | 21% | 19% |
| Watched or followed you from a distance, or spied on you with a listening device, camera, or GPS | 17% | 19% |
| Vandalized your property or destroyed something you loved | 10% | 13% |
| Entered your home or car and did things to let you know they had been there | 9% | 12% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Graduate Women | 2015 | 2021 |
| Sent you unwanted emails, instant messages/texts, or messages through social media | 55% | 68% |
| Tried to communicate with you in other ways that you did not want | 31% | 41% |
| Contacted other people to get information about you or to find you | 23% | 28% |
| Left unwanted messages after you told them to stop (including handwritten notes, voice messages, social media messages or electronic messages) | 35% | 25% |
| Waited for you at places, such as your home, workplace or school when you didn’t want them to be there | 32% | 21% |
| Showed up at places where you were, even though that person had no business being there | 22% | 19% |
| Made unwanted phone calls to you (including hang-up calls) | 25% | 15% |
| Watched or followed you from a distance, or spied on you with a listening device, camera, or GPS | 21% | 7% |

Stalking: Perpetrator Affiliation

For undergraduates, most students reported that the stalking perpetrator(s) were affiliated with the university in both survey administrations: 64% of women in both years; 59% of men in 2015 and 52% of men in 2021.

For graduate women, most (53%) indicated that their stalking perpetrator was affiliated with the university in 2015, but equal proportions (46%) indicated that the perpetrator was and was not affiliated with CU in 2021. CU-affiliated perpetrators were most common among graduate men in both years (60% in 2015, 45% in 2021).

As seen in other categories of sexual misconduct, the proportion of students indicating that they prefer not to answer if the stalker was affiliated with the university increased from 2015 to 2021, perhaps reflecting increased concerns about the privacy of personal information.

1. Due to the small number of survey participants (n < 15) who have self-identified in the CU records system as agender/do not gender identify, gender queer/non-conforming, non-binary, gender not listed, trans female/trans woman, trans male/trans man, or two spirit, results for this group cannot be disaggregated in this report. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In 2021, the questions that asked about Sexual Harassment were incorporated into the CCS for all versions of the survey (student and employee). They appeared before the presentation of questions about other forms of sexual misconduct that came at the end of the survey and that were only administered to students. Due to attrition (participants dropping off as they moved through the survey), more participants responded to the Sexual Harassment questions. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Due to small numbers of participants, results for sexual exploitation for graduate students are not broken out by gender. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Due to the small number of survey participants (n < 15) who have self-identified in the CU records system as agender/do not gender identify, gender queer/non-conforming, non-binary, gender not listed, trans female/trans woman, trans male/trans man, or two spirit, results for this group cannot be disaggregated in this report. For this reason, assault rates are disaggregated by LGBTQ+ identity and by gender as indicated in CU records as man/male and woman/female. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Please note that [national sexual assault rates for trans people](https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/press/ncvs-trans-press-release/) are substantially higher than for cisgender individuals. Due to the small number of trans students who participated in the survey, it is not possible to disaggregate their results in this report. Still, it is likely that the prevalence of sexual assault among trans CU students is also higher than for cisgender CU students. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)