

2025 Campus Climate Survey
St. Thomas Aquinas College
December 17, 2025
Executive Summary of Findings

From October to November, 2025, all students at St. Thomas Aquinas College (STAC) were contacted via e-mail and asked to complete an anonymous online survey exploring their attitudes, beliefs, and experiences with respect to sex- and gender-based misconduct on campus and at STAC-sponsored off-campus events during the spring 2025 and fall 2025 semesters.¹ The foregoing summary sets out respondents' demographic characteristics and outlines areas of strength with respect both to STAC's campus climate and, specifically, to students' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about sex- and gender-based misconduct. The summary closes with some recommendations about ways to improve policy and procedure.

Respondent Characteristics

Forty-six (46) students completed the survey. The registrar reports that during fall, 2025, 1,190 undergraduate (n = 1,007) and graduate (n = 183) students were enrolled at STAC Main Campus. Thus, the survey had an approximate response rate of 3.9%. Notably, this response rate is substantially lower than in the past. The most recent Campus Climate Survey, collected in 2023, had a response rate of 18.2%. Ideas about how to improve future response rates will be presented in the penultimate section, entitled "New Recommendations."

Gender Identity. Twenty-six (26) students identified as female (56.5%), whereas 16 (34.8%) identified as male. One (1) student (2.2%) identified as genderqueer or gender non-conforming, and one (1) student (2.2%) identified as non-binary. One (1) student (2.2%) identified as a transgender female, and no (0) students identified as transgender males (0%). No students (0; 0%) identified as agender or as an unspecified gender category (i.e., 'other').² One (1) student explicitly declined to answer the question (2.2%). Altogether, we can see that approximately 6.6% of our student respondents explicitly identified themselves outside the traditional gender binary.

Sexual Orientation. Twenty-eight (28) students identified as heterosexual/straight (60.9%). One (1) student (2.2%) identified as lesbian, and no (0) students (0%) identified as gay. Nine (9) students identified as bisexual (19.6%), one (1) student identified as questioning (2.2%), one student (1) identified with another, unspecified sexual orientation (2.2%), and four (4) students (8.7%) identified as asexual. Notably, two (2) students (4.3%) explicitly declined to answer the question. Altogether, we can see that approximately 35% of our student respondents explicitly identify themselves as non-heterosexual.

¹ In 2017, the survey was approved by the IRB.

² Totals will not always sum to 46, as no items were strictly required in order for students to submit the survey. As such, in some cases not all students selected a response. For the entirety of the Executive Summary, the percentages given in parentheses will reflect the percentage of students giving a particular response out of all students who answered that item. Additionally, given the small sample size *in toto*, all findings in this report should be interpreted with caution as they may not reflect the broader population of students who chose not to complete the survey.

Biological Sex Assigned at Birth. Twenty-nine (29) students indicated that they had been assigned female sex at birth (63%), whereas seventeen students indicated that they had been assigned male sex at birth (37%).

Race. Twenty-nine (29) students identified as White (63%), eight (8) as Black/African-American (17.4%), three (3) as Asian (6.5%), one (1) as Multiracial (2.2%), and four (4) as belonging to another unspecified racial category (8.7%). No students identified as an American Indian, Alaska Native, Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander. One (1) student (2.2%) explicitly elected not to respond to the question pertaining to race.

Ethnicity. Thirty-one (31) students identified as non-Hispanic (68.9%), whereas 14 identified as Hispanic/Latino (31.1%). No (0) student (0%) elected not to respond to the item pertaining to ethnicity.

Campus Location. All students (46; 100%) indicated they were students at STAC's main campus in Sparkill, New York.

Class Rank. Nine (9) students indicated that they were freshmen (19.6%), eight (8) students indicated that they were sophomores (17.4%), 13 students indicated that they were juniors (28.3%), and 12 students indicated that they were seniors (26.1%). Three (3) students indicated that they were graduate students (6.5%), and one (1) student categorized their class rank as "other" (2.2%).

Transfer Status. Only 14 students indicated that they had transferred to STAC from another institution (30.4%). The remainder (32; 69.6%) indicated they had only attended STAC.

Residency Status. Twenty-four (24) students (53.3%) indicated that they had lived on campus during either spring or fall semester, 2025, whereas the remainder indicated that they had exclusively lived elsewhere (21; 46.7%).

Main Findings: Students' Attitudes, Beliefs, and Knowledge

1. *Students Feel Safe on Campus.*

The vast majority of participants either strongly agreed (22; 47.8%) or agreed (19; 41.3%) that they "feel safe on campus." Five (5) students neither agreed nor disagreed (10.9%), and no (0) student disagreed or strongly disagreed (0%).

2. *Students Feel that Reports of Sex- or Gender-Based Misconduct are Taken Seriously.*

Twenty-nine (29) students (63%) indicated that such reports are very likely to be taken seriously by the College. An additional 11 students (23.9%) indicated that such reports are moderately likely to be taken seriously. Only six (6) students (13%) indicated that such reports are somewhat likely to be taken seriously. No (0) student indicated that such reports are not at all likely to be taken seriously (0%).

3. *Students Feel that the College Supports Alleged Victims of Sex- or Gender-Based Misconduct.*

Students indicated that they believe the College would be "very likely" to do the following in instances of alleged sex- or gender-based misconduct:

- a. “keep knowledge of the report limited to those who need to know in order for the college to respond appropriately” (58.7% ‘very likely’)
 - b. “take steps to protect the safety of the person making the report” (52.2% ‘very likely’)
 - c. “support the person making the report” (59.1% ‘very likely’)
4. *Students Know How to Get Support and Report Sex- and Gender-Based Misconduct.*
 - a. Thirty-eight (38) students either strongly agreed (24; 53.3%) or agreed (14; 31.1%) that they would know where to go to get help if they or a friend were sexually assaulted on campus. Only one (1) disagreed (1; 2.2%) or strongly disagreed (0; 0%) that they would know where to get help. Six (6) students (13.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed that they would know where to get help.
 - b. Forty-three (43) students either strongly agreed (26; 56.5%) or agreed (17; 37%) that they understood the College’s policy to address complaints of sexual assault. Only one (1) student disagreed (1; 2.2%) or strongly disagreed (0; 0%) that they understood the College’s policy. Two (2) students (4.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed.
5. *Students Report a Willingness to use Bystander Intervention Strategies.*

A large majority (presented in parentheses) of students said they were either very or moderately likely to take the following actions:

 - a. “Report other people who continue to engage in sexual harassment or unwanted sexual behaviors after having been previously confronted” (93.5%)
 - b. “Report other people who use force or pressure to engage in sexual contact” (86.9%)
 - c. “Confront a friend who is hooking up with someone who is passed out or otherwise incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol” (95.7%)
 - d. “Report a friend who committed a rape” (97.8%)
6. *Students Understand the Importance of Affirmative Consent.*
 - a. Almost all students (42; 91.3%) indicated they would be very likely to terminate sexual activity if a partner said to stop, even if such activity began consensually. One (1) student (2.2%) said they would be unlikely to terminate sexual activity under such circumstances. The remainder of students said they would be moderately likely (3; 6.5%) to do so.
 - b. Forty-five (45) (97.8%) students indicated they would be very likely (35; 76.1%) or moderately likely (10; 21.7%) to ask for verbal consent from a long-term partner prior to engaging in sexual relations with that partner, whereas only one (1) student (2.2%) indicated they would be somewhat likely to do so. No (0) student said they would be unlikely to do so (0%).
 - c. Students overwhelmingly disagreed (38; 82.6%) that “if somebody doesn’t say ‘no,’ they can’t claim rape.” Only one (1) student (2.2%) agreed with this statement. Seven (7) students (15.2%) were not sure.

Main Findings: Incidence of Sex- and Gender-Based Misconduct.

1. Three (3) students (6.5%) indicated that they had witnessed a situation that they believed was, or could have led to, an instance of sexual assault. Forty-two (42) students (91.3%)

- said they did not witness such a situation. One (1) student explicitly declined to answer (2.2%).
2. Two (2) students (4.3%) indicated that another person had done something to them, sexually, that they did not consent to. Forty-four (44) students (95.7%) said they had not been a victim of unwanted sexual contact.
 3. Two (2) students (4.3%) indicated that another person had attempted, but not succeeded, in using physical force or the threat of physical force to gain sexual contact with them. Forty-four (44) students (95.7%) said this had not happened to them.
 4. No students (0%) reported having been the victim of intimate partner violence. Forty-five (45) students (97.8%) said they had not been the victim of intimate partner violence. One (1) student (2.2%) explicitly declined to answer the question.
 5. Five (5) students (10.9%) reported that somebody else had told them that they had an unwanted sexual experience in 2025. Thirty-nine (39) students (84.8%) reported that nobody had told them about having an unwanted sexual experience during 2025. Two (2) students (4.3%) explicitly declined to answer the question.
 6. Five (5) students (10.9%) reported that during 2025, another person had targeted them with behaviors intended to make them fear for their safety and/or experience significant emotional distress (i.e., stalked them). Thirty-nine (39) (84.8%) students said they had not been stalked during 2025. Two (2) students (4.3%) explicitly declined to answer the question.

New Recommendations

It is difficult to come to firm conclusions about the state of the campus based on relatively few responses. Still, two patterns emerge as potentially important. First, and most critically, we must focus our efforts in 2027 on increasing student participation in the Campus Climate Survey. This may involve any of the following strategies (or a combination of them): survey incentives, an increased number of invitations to respond, the utilization of student leaders to endorse and encourage survey participation, the incorporation of in-class time in STAC 101, 102, and 201 to complete the survey, fliers/posters in public spaces on campus, the deployment of coaches and assistant coaches to encourage student-athletes to complete the survey, and announcements by faculty about the importance of survey participation.

Second, it appears that the proportion of students who explicitly belong to the LBGTQIA+ community continues to expand. Because traditional Title IX Compliance training tends (necessarily) to focus on the straight and cisgender majority, it may be important for efforts to be undertaken to develop specialized training and/or resources for the growing LBGTQIA+ minority. The Title IX Working Group will take these issues under consideration during the coming cycle as we continue to endeavor to serve all students as best we can.

Conclusions

STAC students generally feel safe on campus, believe the College takes sex- and gender-based misconduct seriously, believe the College supports alleged victims, and know how to report alleged sex- and gender-based misconduct. Students also understand important concepts such as affirmative consent and report a willingness to intervene in situations where sex- or gender-based misconduct is suspected. All the same, efforts should be undertaken to improve the response rate so that results can be interpreted with more confidence.