

From: CT Council on Sexual Misconduct Climate Assessments
Date: December 1, 2023

Dear Colleagues:

The purpose of this letter is to update you on the work of the CT Council on Sexual Misconduct Climate Assessments, as well as to provide initial guidance to colleges and universities who are planning campus assessments related to prescribing legislation [HB 6374](#). Contained within this document, you will find a timeline of the Council's upcoming reports and brief guidance regarding compliance with HB 6374.

Following a hiatus in response to [VAWA regulations](#), the Council has resumed regular meetings. The Council anticipates the following timeline in distributing detailed guidance this winter:

- December 1: Release of Council's initial letter with brief guidance regarding HB 6374 and list of campus contacts
- January 1: Release of existing sample climate assessments and best practices
- February 1: Release of any additional information based on feedback received from campuses

Over the coming months, the Council will distribute more detailed guidance around best practices in the assessment of sexual misconduct experience and awareness; however, the Council is cognizant of the active planning processes currently taking place on Connecticut campuses in advance of campus data collection during the 2023-24 academic year. For those institutions who may benefit from earlier clarity regarding select portions of the Council's prescribing legislation, this letter contains initial guidance to incorporate into data collection that is already underway.

1. **Sample instruments:** The Council reviewed several campus sexual misconduct assessment instruments for coverage of the data points required by HB 6374. If an institution would like to use an instrument that is already in the public domain and free to use, the Council affirms that the [AAU 2019](#) and [ARC3](#) instruments contain questions that will fulfill the statute; however, it is not a requirement that institutions use one of the two samples below. The appendix of this letter includes links to both instruments, as well as the list of specific questions from each that would fulfill the statute's requirements.
2. **March 1, 2024 deadline:** The Council recommends that institutions view the promotion of a campus climate study as part of the study itself; therefore, the announcement to students of an upcoming assessment should take place by the deadline written in HB 6374 Sec 3a of March 1, 2024. In pursuit of as broad and diverse a collection of student voices as possible, it is imperative that students understand when a campus sexual climate assessment will be conducted by their school and the assessment's goals. A school may remain in compliance with HB 6374 if their assessment outreach plan includes clear communication to students by March 1, 2024, even if data collection will occur after that date. As noted in the legislation, data collection should occur by the end of the 2023-2024 academic year.

3. **Methods used for climate assessment:** Connecticut institutions are varied in their assessment needs and benefit from the flexibility of the prescribing legislation, which allows each institution to determine the best collection method to generate data that will be useful in serving its students. In addition, campuses may remain in compliance with HB 6374 by collecting the statute's key data points through campus research methods that are quantitative in nature (e.g., web survey with closed-ended questions), qualitative (e.g., confidential interviews; web survey with text responses), or a mixed-methods approach. The goal of the assessment described in HB 6374 is to strengthen each institution's ability to support and educate their students. Each institution should select the study design that will give them the greatest opportunity to serve and improve their student community.

4. **Timeline to report back to Council with results of assessment (Sec 3c):** In section 3c, the Council interprets the distribution of a climate assessment to include the period during which the study is open to student responses. If an institution finds that they will not be able to release the findings of their campus climate assessment by 6 months following the end of the data collection period, the Council recommends that the institution write a statement to the General Assembly describing the timing challenge and giving a revised timeline by which the General Assembly can be assured of viewing the institution's assessment results on a public webpage.

The Council is committed to supporting Connecticut colleges and universities in our shared goal of supporting students and raising awareness about campus sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, and resource awareness. If you have questions about the ongoing work of the Council, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Chair.

Sincerely,



Beth Hamilton, Chair
CT Council on Sexual Misconduct Climate Assessments
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Appendix

AAU 2019:

Link to instrument: (full instrument published with methods and results as part of 2019 Aggregate Report)

<https://www.aau.edu/key-issues/campus-climate-and-safety/aau-campus-climate-survey-2019>

ARC3:

Link to instrument: (instrument available by request)

<https://www.arc3survey.org/>

List of Council-approved questions by statute requirement satisfied:

Required Topics	Item sections & numbers which satisfy each requirement	
	AAU 2019	ARC3
“Student awareness of institutional policies and procedures related to sexual assault, stalking and intimate partner violence”	C1, C2a, C2b, C2c, C2d	Module 4/C
“If a student reported sexual assault, stalking or violence to an institution of higher education or law enforcement, the response to and results of such report”	Reporting: Harassment D10-11, Stalking E8-E9, IPV F8-F9, Assault GA16-GA16a; Assessment of resources: HH1-HH2 ; Perceptions: I1-I2	Module 4/A, 4/B; Module 13
“Student perceptions of campus safety”	B1-B2	F1, Module 4/A, 4/B, Module 17