

Perceptions of sexualized violence on post-secondary campuses in BC: Key findings at the University of Victoria

Introduction: The *Sexual Violence on Post-secondary Campuses in BC* survey was administered by the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (BCM – AEST) and BC campus. The survey was meant to assess and understand student perceptions of sexualized violence across post-secondary institutions in BC. In total, the survey – which was distributed in waves from January 12th, 2022 to March 20th, 2022 – garnered 9,642 complete responses (>60% of the questions answered) out of a possible 231,340 students from across the province (4% response rate). At the University of Victoria (UVic), 950 students responded (weighted total) out of a possible 21,800 (~4% response rate).

UVic has a Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response [Policy](#) that was developed with students and other key stakeholders, as well as a range of related education, awareness and prevention initiatives for students, faculty and staff. We continue to consider ways to strengthen our programs and reviewed the survey information for key takeaways to prioritize specific areas for action, new learning, and continued institutional investment. Some of these are set out in this document.

The learnings from the BCM–AEST survey provide an opportunity to identify and action shared goals and initiatives, including collaborative work with the University of Victoria Students Society (UVSS), Graduate Students Society (GSS) and student advocacy groups. Our UVSS, GSS and student advocacy partners have been instrumental in shaping the sexualized violence policies, principles, and prevention and education strategies to date.

In the survey summary below, data from survey sections is highlighted and discussed in relation to ongoing sexualized violence work within the UVic community. The key learnings from the survey information are broken into three sections: (1) *Trust in the institution to handle sexualized violence reporting*; (2) *Campus culture*; and (3) *Education, training and awareness*.

A note on the data: We reviewed the provided data for the most substantive learnings from the qualitative and quantitative responses provided by students'; in other words, we have provided information where respondents were the most critical or had the most concerns. While we focused on the most critical questions at UVic specifically, we have also provided charts in an appendix that include the provincial averages.

It is important to note that the charts set out in this report use the weighted total value for each question. This is a method of calculating an average that takes into consideration the fact there may be fewer respondents answering some questions relative to others. In the PowerPoint report provided by Leger, both UVic's weighted total (around ~950) and the total number of actual responses (around ~902) are used interchangeably which can be confusing. This report uses adjusted (averaged) totals for consistency; the resulting difference in the totals between our summary and Leger's (i.e., adjusted versus unadjusted) is minor.

Key offices: At UVic, we all have responsibility to create a culture of consent and respect. At the same time, key responsibilities rest with certain units. Units who focus on the student experience have shared in the drafting of this report. We have also shared draft versions of this report with the UVic UVSS and the Anti-Violence Project for their review and input.

Equity and Human Rights (EQHR): holds the Sexualized Violence Resource Office, centrally responsible for receiving disclosures, investigating formal reports, and coordinating preventative training and education. They are the office responsible for collecting data related to sexualized violence and reporting out on that data.

Student Affairs: holds the Office of Student Life (OSL), responsible for student training and education, student discipline and investigation outcomes, and coordinating student support.

Campus Security: centrally responsible for 24-hour response to on campus incidents.

Key finding 1: Trust in institution to handle sexualized violence reporting Responses within the section concerning trust in the institution to handle sexualized violence reporting reveal several important takeaways. While respondents indicated that they generally trust the institution to maintain the privacy of all parties involved, take the issue of sexualized violence seriously, and provide appropriate support and resources (*Figures 1-4*), concerns were highlighted when it came to maintaining a safe process (*Figure 5*) and enacting appropriate discipline (*Figures 6-7*). Written responses reflected a lack of trust in these areas, citing disciplinary measures as *ineffective, unsatisfactory* and *contributing to an unsafe campus culture*.

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Figure 1: Maintaining the privacy of all parties involved

UVIC (n=920)

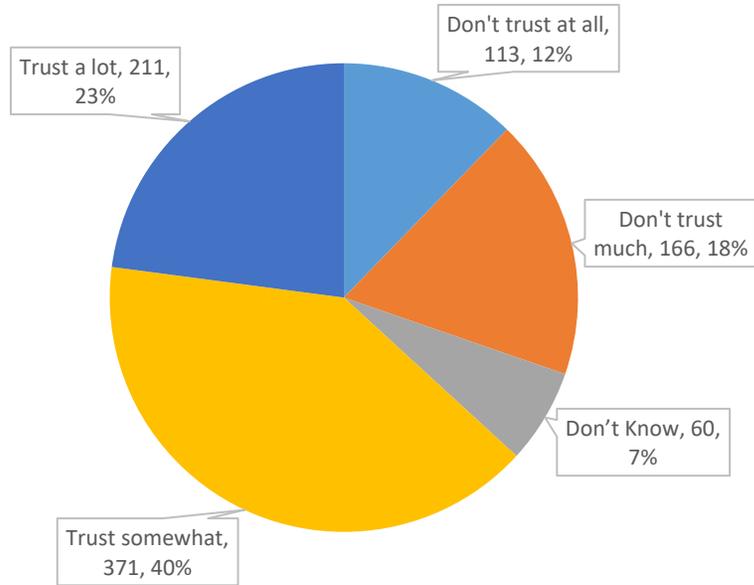


Figure 2: Taking the issue seriously

UVIC (n=920)

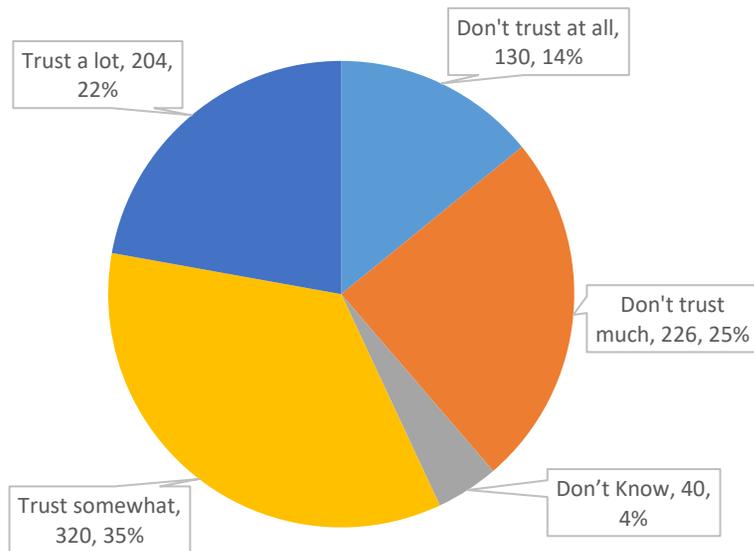


Figure 3: Believing the person who comes forward with the issue

UVIC (n=920)

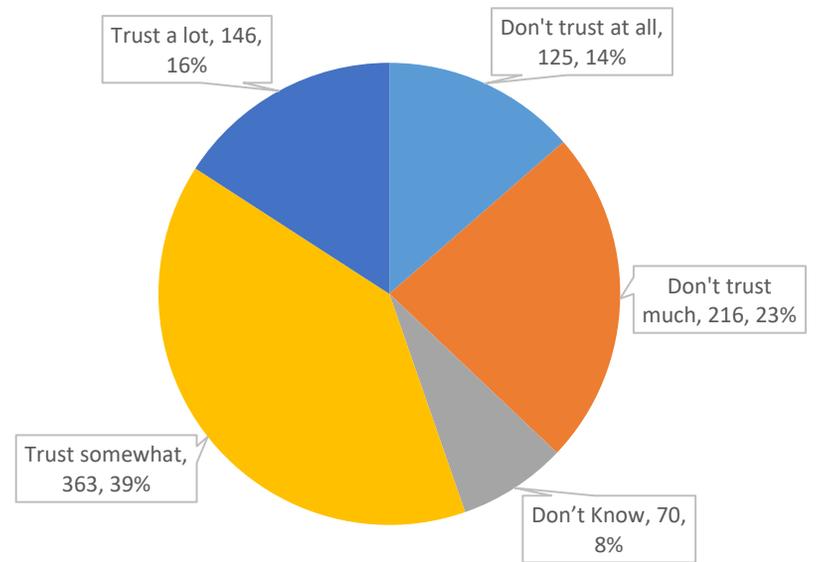
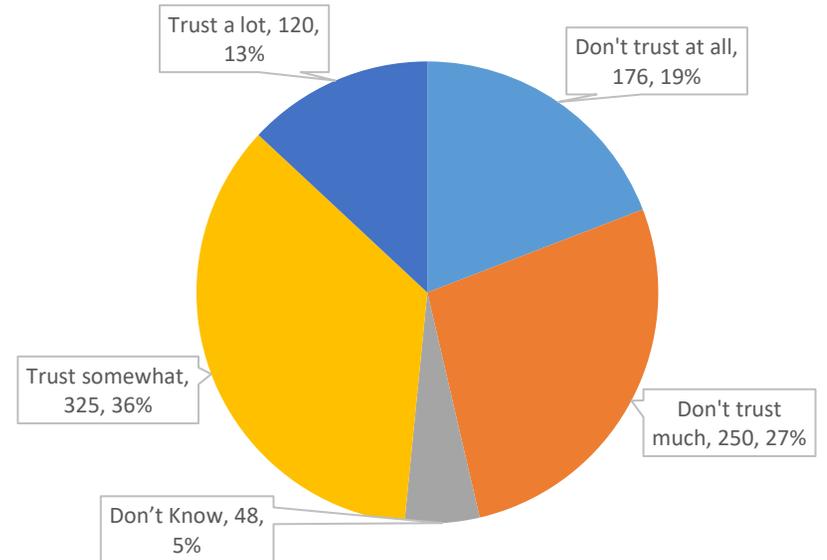


Figure 4: Providing adequate support and resources to all parties involved

UVIC (n=919)



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Figure 5: Protecting the safety of all parties involved

UVIC (n=918)

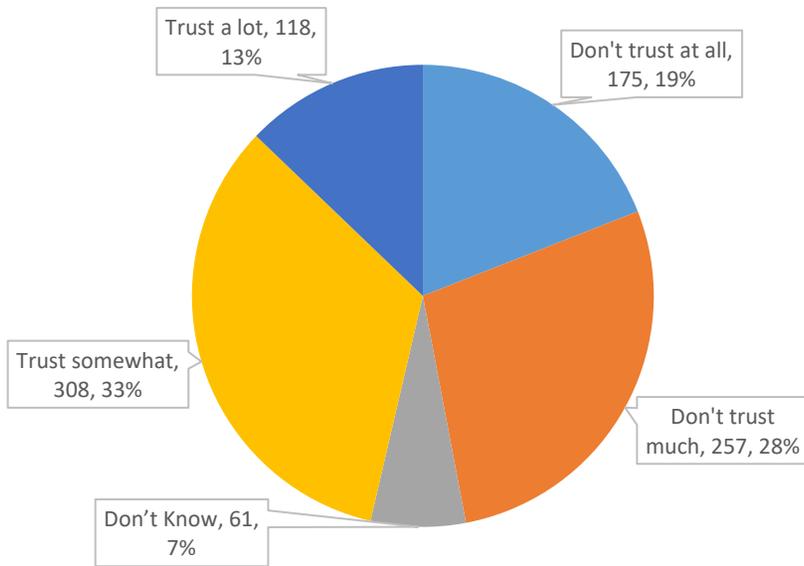


Figure 6: Following procedures to resolve the issue in a fair and appropriate manner

UVIC (n=918)

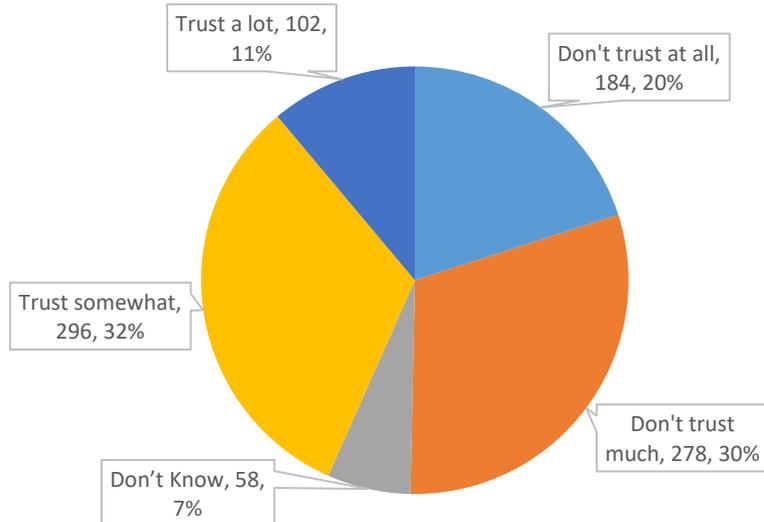
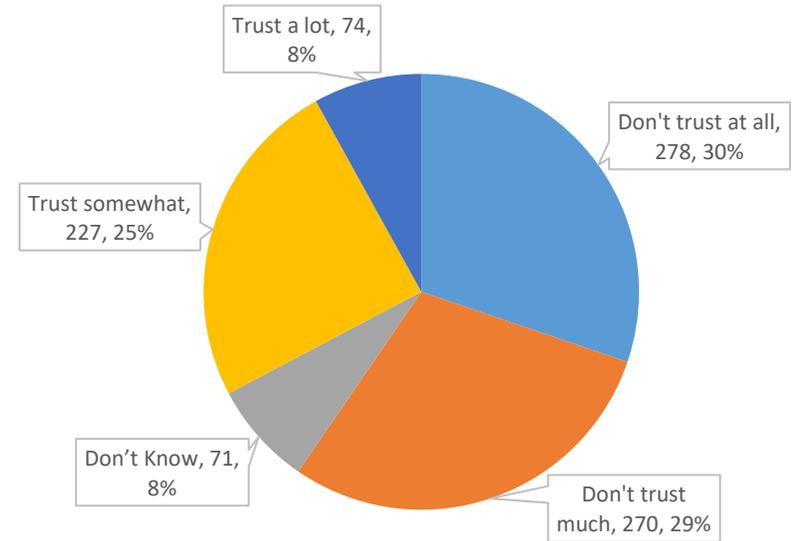


Figure 7: Taking appropriate disciplinary action

UVIC (n=919)



UVic works continuously to build and maintain trust with the campus community. The survey highlights that we have more work to do to communicate our strong commitment to following the Sexualized Violence - Investigation Procedures when a report is made, to resolve the issue in a procedurally fair and appropriate manner, and to take appropriate action when discipline is warranted.

Reporting, investigating and disciplinary outcomes are complicated quasi-judicial processes that are not simple to unpack, and each individual process will look different. For example, incidents involving students may happen off campus, which places them outside UVic's jurisdiction to investigate, but UVic still supports those impacted through the coordination of both on- and off-campus support services. There are also provincial confidentiality laws preventing the public disclosure of investigation outcomes. Despite this, UVic can do better at explaining scenarios and potential outcomes. We can also look at the tensions that exist within the policy – such as limits on jurisdiction – and continue the work of aligning processes with our values and commitment to an accountable campus community.

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What UVic is doing:

- ✚ Every three years, we consult broadly and extensively on the Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy and review with key student stakeholders. In the last review in 2021, students from the Anti-Violence Project and the UVSS were instrumental in the drafting process.
- ✚ We follow procedural fairness in all our processes and are transparent about each step of the process. All parties have the option to participate and can choose to not participate at any time in any of our processes.
- ✚ We have an expectation that students, staff and faculty believe survivors, and we train these groups on a regular basis on how to receive a disclosure and support a survivor. Please see our annual [SV Data Reports](#) listed on our website for more information on the number of workshops we have offered, and how many people have received this training each year
- ✚ We provide annual tailored training to students and staff living in student residences.
- ✚ We partner with student groups to share information and plan prevention events, including Sexualized Violence Awareness Week.
- ✚ We transparently share information via a student-focussed website, with clear information on options, processes and policy: <https://www.uvic.ca/svp>.
- ✚ We provide a current fact sheet on the SVP website that provides more details on potential outcomes of SV investigations: [Understanding Potential Outcomes](#)

What UVic is planning:

- ✚ Develop additional resources, tools, and training to build a culture of accountability.
- ✚ Enhance communications and materials to make processes and outcomes as clear and accessible as possible.
- ✚ Further strengthen our processes for alternative forms of justice (i.e.: restorative justice, transformative justice) and education (both preventative and responsive).

- ✚ Develop and deliver a new education approach, tentatively entitled, Engaging Men, to challenge and change hegemonic masculine norms that perpetuate sexualized violence.

Key finding 2: Campus culture

The second key learning is related to campus culture, safety and perceived risk of sexualized violence. Within this section of the survey participants were asked about whether they felt safe from sexualized violence at their institution using a variety of in-person and online scenarios. While the responses indicate that the majority of our students feel safe on campus (674 respondents out of 947 either agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe on campus – see *Figure 8*), a close examination of the data reveals important differences between population groups at UVic. For instance, 92% of respondents who identified as cisgender men agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe from sexualized violence.

In contrast, only 58% of those who do not identify as cis men indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe from sexualized violence (see *Figure 9*). Though these cross-population discrepancies point to trends commonly highlighted within the sexualized violence literature, they also point to a need for UVic to find new and creative ways to support these populations.

When asked ‘*how common do you think sexualized violence is at your school?*’ 547 of 942 UVic respondents indicated that they perceived it was somewhat common or very common on campus, while 333 of 943 indicated it was somewhat common or very common in online environments (see *Figure 11-12*). These numbers represent a high level of awareness of the issue among our student population and, importantly, reflect a continued need for UVic to assess the prevalence of sexualized violence on campus and online. We need to explore new ways to share our annual sexualized violence disclosure and reporting statistics to maintain transparency with the community. These [reports](#) highlight the prevention efforts taking place and having this information more widely available may increase a sense of transparency and clarity.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that you feel safe from sexualized violence at your school?

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Figure 8: In person on campus

UVIC (n=947)

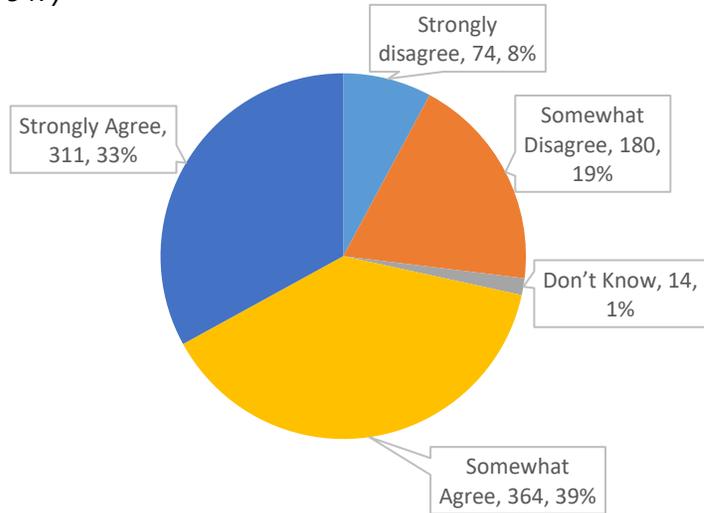


Figure 10: In online environments

UVIC (n=942)

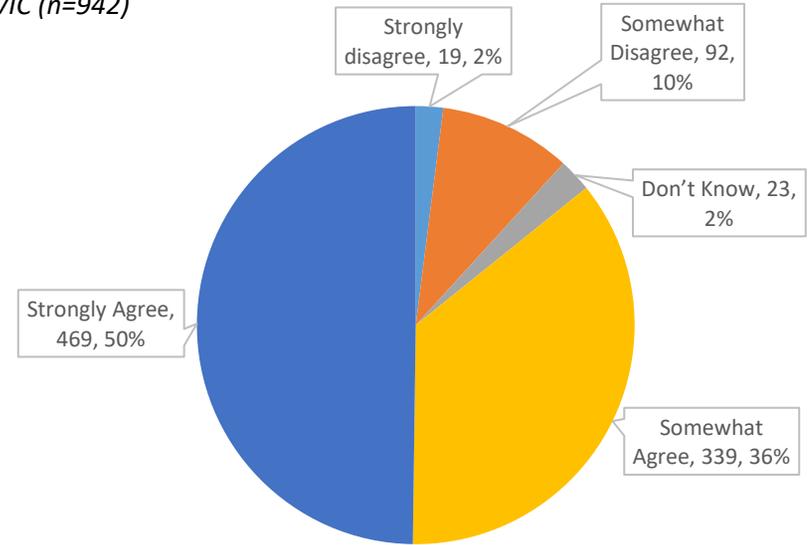
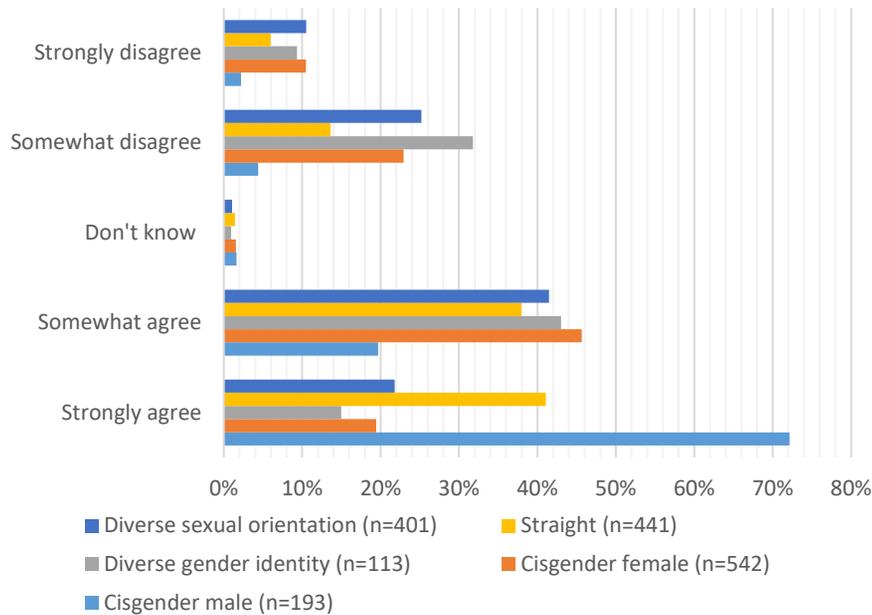


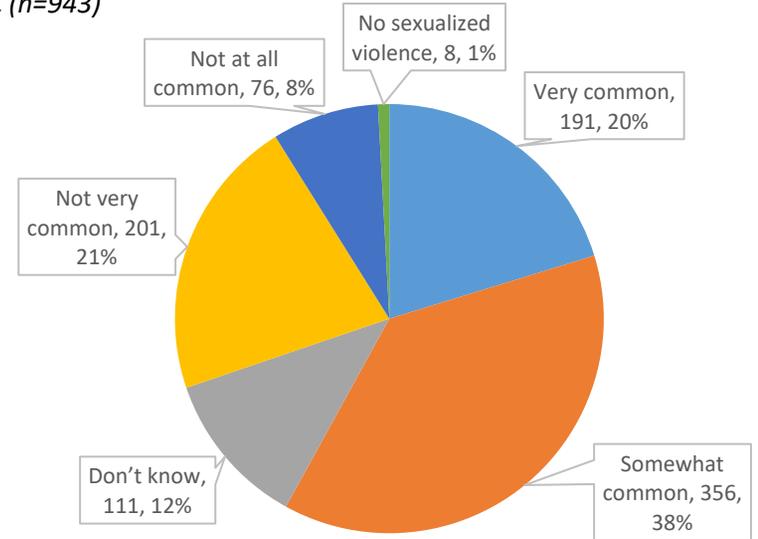
Figure 9: In person on campus, by gender identity and sexual orientation



How common do you think sexualized violence is at your school?

Figure 11: In person on campus

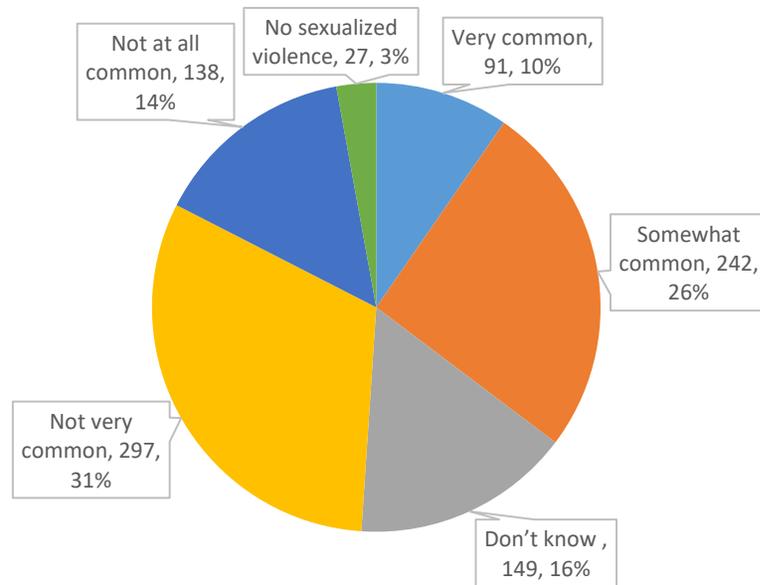
UVIC (n=943)



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Figure 12: In online environments

UVIC (n=943)



Changing the campus culture is at the heart of UVic's sexualized violence prevention programming. It is a priority that everyone understands that a culture of harmful attitudes and beliefs will lead to harmful expressions of sexualized violence and an unsafe campus.

Therefore, UVic's training is focused on the broad definition of sexualized violence and works to ensure everyone understands how to identify sexualized violence and respond to a disclosure. We know that in a system rooted in patriarchal, colonial and systemic oppression, this is challenging work and we don't expect that campus culture will change overnight. UVic is committed to amplifying UVic's efforts to ensure that every member of our community can identify and take seriously the harm caused by all acts of sexualized violence.

What UVic is doing:

- ✚ We report annually to the UVic Board of Governors and the UVic community on sexualized violence statistics, including disclosures and reports – with a breakdown based on gender, membership (student, staff, or faculty) and jurisdiction – see [annual reports](#).

- ✚ We offer [Tools for Change](#), an online and in-person workshop designed for students to build their understanding of sexualized violence, consent, prevention strategies, how to receive a disclosure, and where to go for support.
- ✚ We will review and will offer a bystander intervention training, a program designed to empower students on how to step in and prevent sexualized violence among other forms of harm.

What UVic is planning:

- ✚ Build an online dashboard to create a more accessible space for sharing sexualized violence statistics beyond our annual reporting.
- ✚ Review and reassess existing procedures and processes as they relate to campus safety with a view to protecting human rights, equity, and maintaining a trauma informed approach.
- ✚ Build on and diversify our connections to the community supports that are available.

Key finding 3: Education, training and awareness

The third key finding involved perceptions of current training and education initiatives, as well as awareness regarding reporting procedures, resources and support.

Respondents provided positive feedback for UVic's ongoing prevention and education efforts on campus. For instance, UVic respondents indicated that the institution does a good job at communicating about the resources and supports that are available for those impacted by sexualized violence. More specifically, 585 of 949 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that UVic does a good job of clearly communicating about resources and supports available for people impacted by sexualized violence, while 523 out of 948 respondents felt that they knew where to get information and support related to sexualized violence (see *Figures 13-14*).

In addition to the scaled responses, UVic students also noted throughout written answers that the training and education UVic provides is *robust, diverse in topic and approach, and generally very effective*. Along with these successes, UVic students highlighted a need for more thorough information about the distinction between a disclosure and a formal investigation process (responses highlighted in *Figure 16*). Notably, on the other end of

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the scale, 183 of 948 responses indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed that UVic has clearly explained the difference between making a disclosure about sexualized violence and filing a formal report of sexualized violence (see Figure 16).

Figure 13: My school does a good job of clearly communicating about resources and supports available for people impacted by sexual violence
UVIC (n=949)

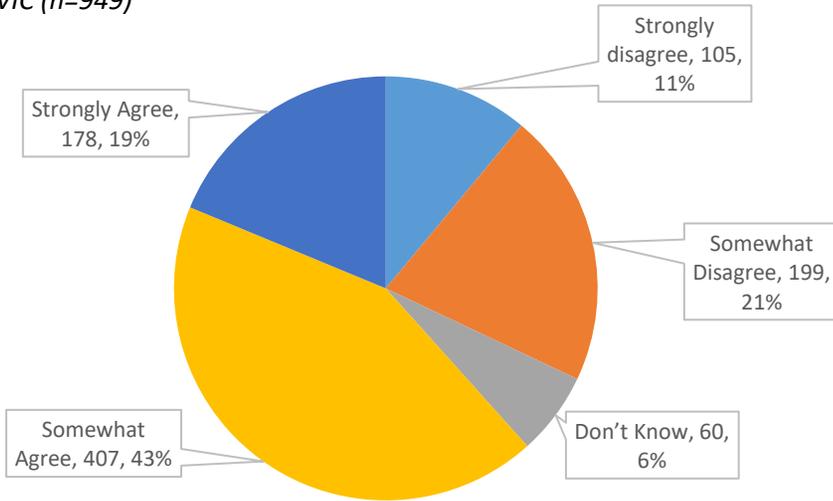


Figure 14: I know where to look on my post-secondary school's website to get information and support related to sexualized violence

UVIC (n=948)

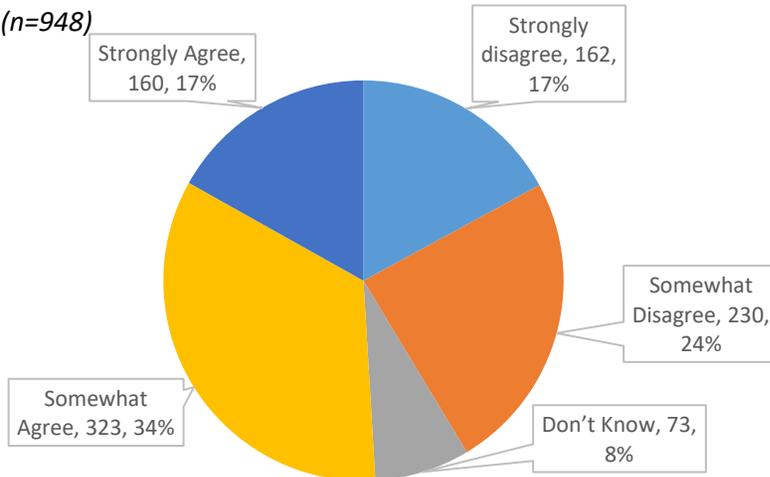


Figure 15: I know where to go on campus to get information and support related to sexualized violence

UVIC (n=949)

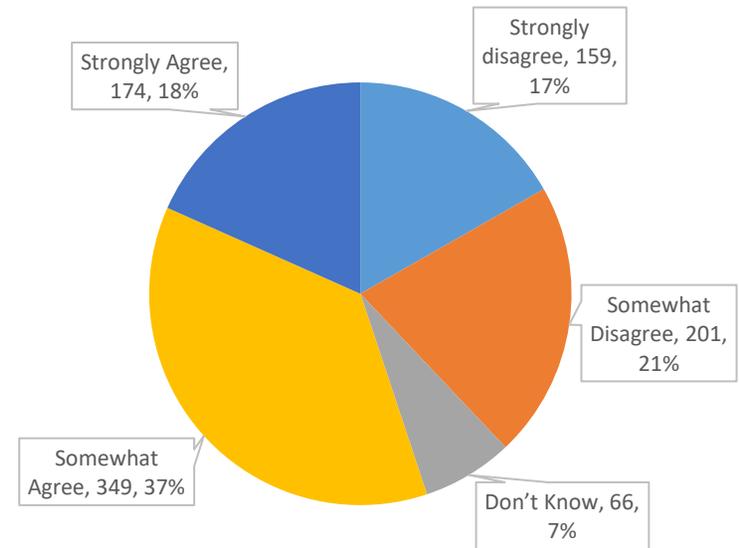
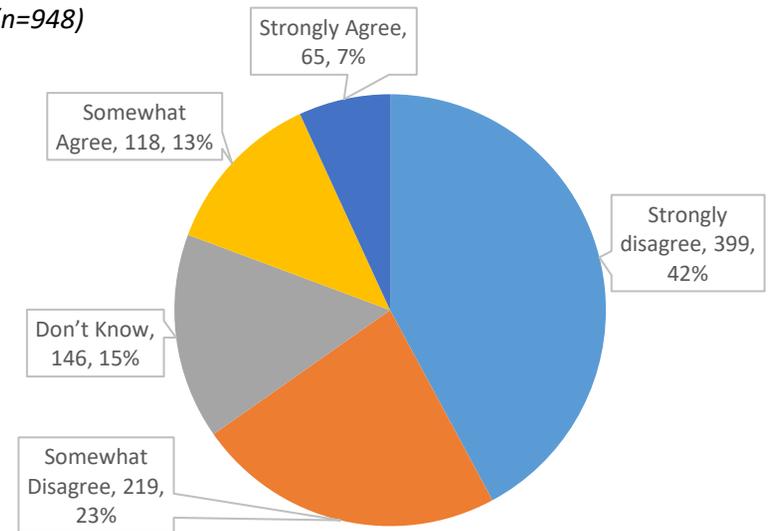


Figure 16: My school has clearly explained the difference between making a disclosure about sexualized violence and filing a formal report of sexualized violence

UVIC (n=948)



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UVic remains committed to providing many avenues for training and education concerning sexualized violence, including ensuring that these initiatives reflect the most up-to-date, critical research available on these topics. The survey results highlight that consistent messaging about the important difference between a disclosure and a report and other related information is paramount. These foundational messages will not only ensure survivors are aware of their options, but they will also set the stage for more advanced training. We will use as many communications channels as possible to provide clear and precise outlines of the reporting procedures and policies to ensure that disclosure is a well-understood option for the entire campus community.

What UVic is doing:

- ✚ We have a video describing the options for survivors under the Policy that are available in an accessible way:
<https://www.uvic.ca/equity/sexualized-violence/index.php>.
- ✚ We provide sexualized violence training and information to all degree-seeking students through our pre-arrival programming.
- ✚ We run student-centered campaigns on consent, as well as on alcohol and consent, and where to go for support.
- ✚ We partner with student advocacy groups, including the Anti-Violence Project and the Gender Empowerment Centre, to hold an annual Sexualized Violence Awareness Week.
- ✚ We offer two different sexualized violence prevention workshops aimed at undergraduates – at least once monthly – which students can access [here](#).
- ✚ We regularly train staff and faculty across campus, including key units such as Campus Security and all the Faculties, on what sexualized violence is, its systemic roots, consent, how to support a survivor, and where to go for supports and options.
- ✚ The Sexualized Violence Resource Office (SVRO) provides 1-1 coaching to students, staff, and faculty who are interested in receiving individually tailored training on consent, boundaries, power dynamics, healthy relationships, and other topics connected to sexualized violence prevention.

What UVic is planning:

- ✚ We will insert sexualized violence prevention and informational materials in online welcome packages to all students.
- ✚ EQHR and Residence Services will work together to develop and provide tailored materials to students living in residences (including booklets, posters, etc.), with an emphasis on terms such as ‘disclosure’ and ‘report,’ as well as information on consent and boundaries, and options for support.
- ✚ We will review Tools for Change and Bringing in the Bystander to assess whether the programming is meeting student needs and effectively reaching students and make any improvements necessary to better support the campus community.

We will identify opportunities to incentivize student sexualized violence training and continue to pilot and test mandatory options.

Open-ended questions:

As briefly mentioned throughout the report, in addition to the quantitative questions, respondents were also given two opportunities to answer open-ended questions with written responses. The two questions were as follows:

- ✚ *(1) In your own words, please give us your suggestions on how you think your school could do a better job at preventing and responding to sexual violence. Please do not share any personal information about yourself or others.*
- ✚ *(2) In your opinion, which of the following types of information or education should your school make available to help students understand what is meant by “healthy relationships” and “sexual boundaries”? - OTHER (please specify)*

Of 902 UVic respondents, the first open-ended question garnered 665 responses of which 319 were ‘Don’t know’, meaning there were 346 responses with content to be reviewed. Because the second open-ended question included an expanded ‘Other – please specify’ option within a parent question, there were only 83 UVic responses to be reviewed. After a thematic analysis of the responses, the three key findings highlighted above were reflected in several places throughout the resulting thematic map, including: (1) Reporting process; (2) Population-specific training and resources; and (3) Due process.

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1) Reporting process:

The open ended data was in line with the trends identified through the qualitative responses. Specifically, this data mirrored key themes such as a lack of trust in the institution's ability to appropriately handle sexualized violence reporting and a perceived lack of safety on campus due to the perceived risk of sexualized violence.

Regarding a lack of trust in the institution's ability to appropriately respond to sexualized violence reporting, some respondents referenced hearing about other students' disclosures of sexualized violence or reading about their experiences in the student newspaper as the primary reason for the eroded trust, particularly concerning enacting appropriate punishment. Several responses reiterated the importance of standing with survivors who come forward and suggested that efforts should be directed towards ensuring their experience on campus is safe following the reporting process. Other respondents referenced confusion around the institution's lack of jurisdiction concerning instances of sexualized violence occurring off-campus as a frustrating aspect of the current reporting policy.

Campus culture and perceived safety:

Responses concerning the reporting process also reiterated concerns surrounding campus culture, perceived safety, and perceived risk of sexualized violence. Specifically, written responses indicated a desire for the institution to be more transparent about rates of sexualized violence occurring on campus. Again, some respondents indicated that experiences they'd heard from others and media articles were the main influencing factor behind thinking that UVic needs to be more upfront about what is a known problem. The most frequently referenced suggestions for improving transparency – and, in turn, perceived safety – included moving the sexualized violence webpage to a more prominent location and providing up-to-date rates of sexualized violence within all sexualized violence training or educational initiatives.

2) Population-specific training and support:

Because of the nature of the open-ended questions themselves, training and resources were also prominent topics among the responses. Specifically, UVic respondents indicated their desire to have a mandatory training program for issues related to sexualized violence. Respondents suggested that while current training initiatives are generally viewed in a positive light (also reiterated by the quantitative responses), UVic students

would benefit from making these resources mandatory for all populations on campus (i.e., students, staff, and faculty).

In addition to making training mandatory, UVic respondents also emphasized the importance of supporting populations that typically have a higher risk of experiencing sexualized violence (e.g., members of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community) through training and resourcing efforts. This assertion – which is also highlighted earlier in the report – reflects discrepancies in perceived safety across different populations seen in the quantitative responses.

3) Due process:

Along with the themes expressed above, a portion of UVic responses also expressed concern that UVic's processes surrounding sexualized violence are too quick to assume guilt, do not reflect a fair or just process for people identified as potentially causing harm, and fall outside what "should be" a post-secondary institution's responsibility. These narratives reiterate a need for continued education and a recommitment to reaching populations across campus with accurate, transparent, and research-informed information on sexualized violence at UVic, as well as the policy and procedurally fair processes that guide our actions.

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Appendix A – Participant profiles:

Age	Provincial Average (n=8351)	UVIC (n=776)
<19	23%	25%
20-21	22%	26%
22-24	20%	23%
25-29	15%	14%
30+	19%	13%
Gender identity	Provincial Average (n=8397)	UVIC (n=793)
Cisgender woman	66%	66%
Cisgender man	26%	23%
Non-binary	6%	10%
Gender fluid	2%	3%
Transgender man	2%	2%
Transgender woman	1%	1%
Two-spirit	1%	1%
Sexual orientation	Provincial Average (n=8613)	UVIC (n=801)
Straight	64%	53%
Bisexual	20%	20%
Queer	8%	13%
Pansexual	6%	8%
Asexual	4%	6%
Lesbian	3%	4%
Gay	2%	2%
Undecided	4%	4%
Indigenous/First Nations/Metis/Inuit	Provincial Average (n=8750)	UVIC (n=806)
Yes	6%	6%
No	94%	94%
Racialized	Provincial Average (n=8509)	UVIC (n=799)
Yes	27%	14%
No	73%	86%
Have a disability	Provincial Average (n=8687)	UVIC (n=795)
Yes	16%	22%

No	84%	78%
Domestic versus international	Provincial Average (n=8840)	UVIC (n=815)
Domestic	82%	%
International	18%	6%
Living arrangement	Provincial Average (n=8755)	UVIC (n=816)
On campus	16%	12%
Off campus	84%	88%
Part-time/Full-time status	Provincial Average (n=9639)	UVIC (n=902)
Full-time	85%	93%
Part-time or continuing ED student	15%	7%
Current course delivery	Provincial Average (n=9634)	UVIC (n=902)
All on campus	33%	43%
All online	12%	7%
Mix of on campus and online	55%	50%
Years at this school	Provincial Average (n=9634)	UVIC (n=902)
This is my first year	35%	20%
Two years including this one	23%	22%
Three years including this one	16%	18%
Four years including this one	12%	17%
Five years or more including this one	13%	22%
Type of enrolment	Provincial Average (n=9610)	UVIC (n=826)
Undergraduate degree	65%	83%
Graduate degree	13%	15%
Non-degree program	22%	2%

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Appendix B – Provincial Averages

Please note the straight-across comparisons are not possible as the provincial averages were not controlled for institution type (i.e., college/university; with/without residence), participant profiles (i.e., self-identification demographic data), institutional response rate, or institution size. Simply put, because these variables were not controlled for or considered in survey preparation or analysis, the provincial averages provided represent a point of context and should not be interpreted as highlighting meaningful comparisons or differences.

Figure 1: Maintaining the privacy of all parties involved

Provincial Average (n=9343)

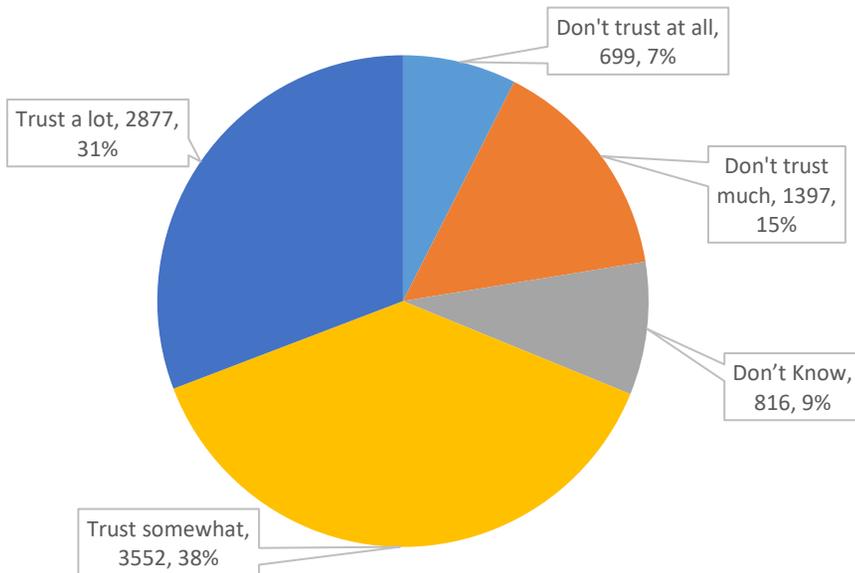


Figure 2: Taking the issue seriously

Provincial Average (n=9338)

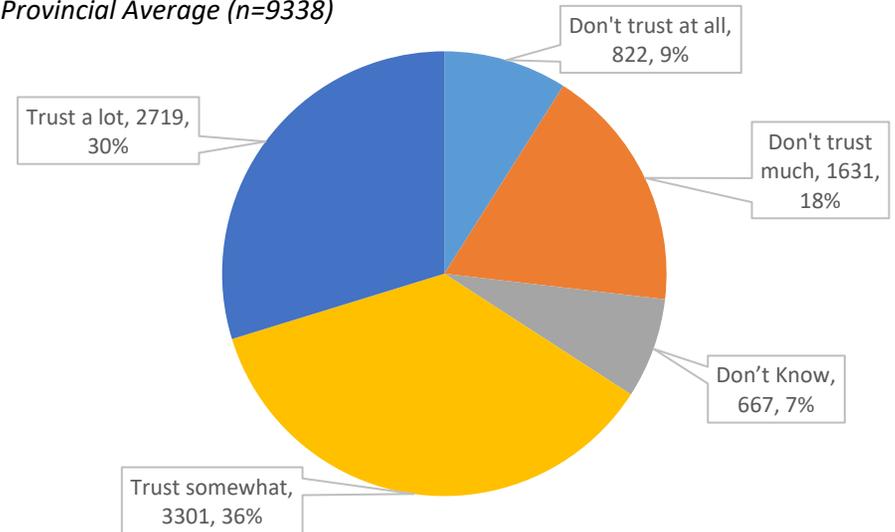
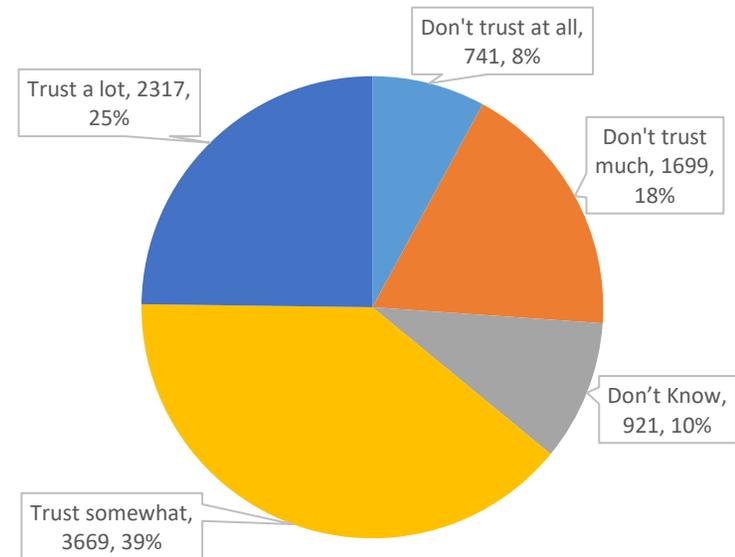


Figure 3: Believing the person who comes forward with the issue

Provincial Average (n=9346)



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Figure 4: Providing adequate support and resources to all parties involved
Provincial Average (n=9350)

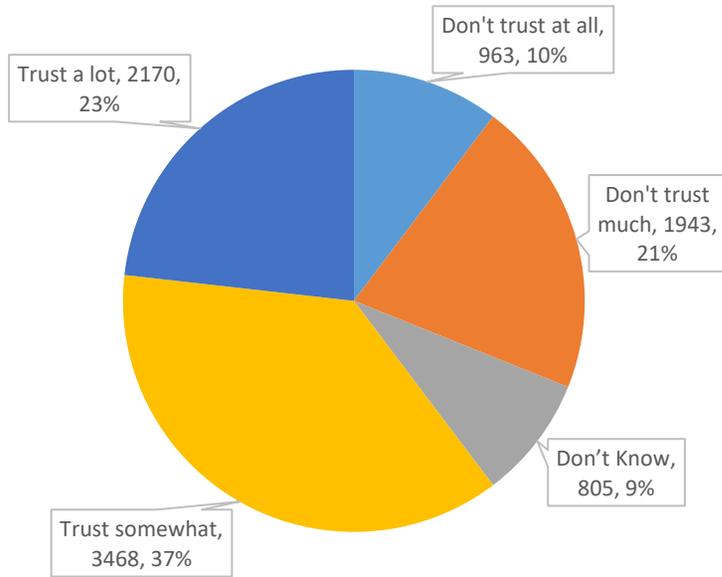


Figure 5: Protecting the safety of all parties involved
Provincial Average (n=9345)

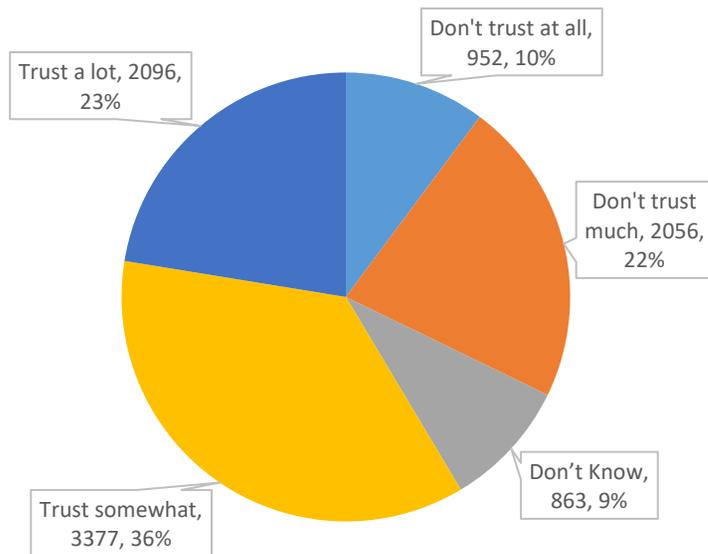


Figure 6: Following procedures to resolve the issue in a fair and appropriate manner
Provincial Average (n=9348)

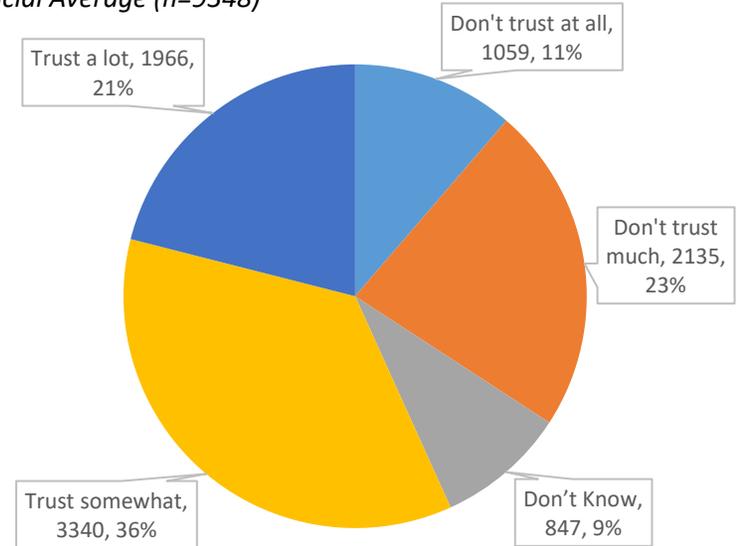
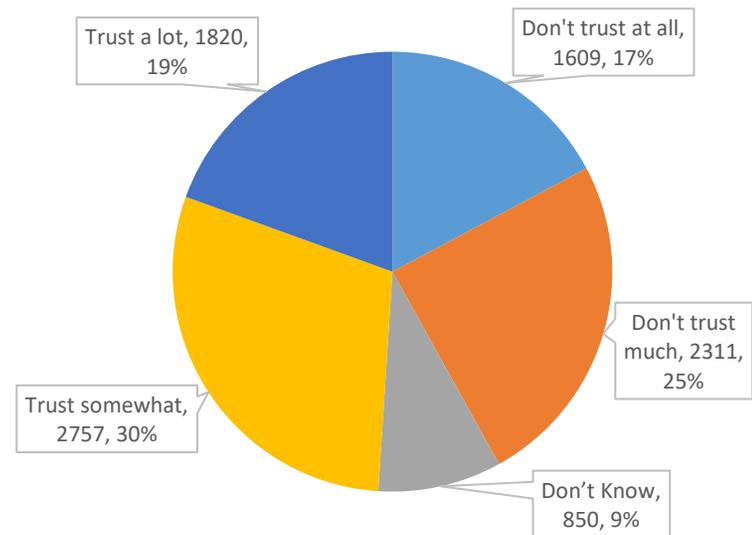


Figure 7: Taking appropriate disciplinary action
Provincial Average (n=9347)



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To what extent do you agree or disagree that you feel safe from sexual violence at your school?

Figure 8: In person on campus

Provincial average (n=9118)

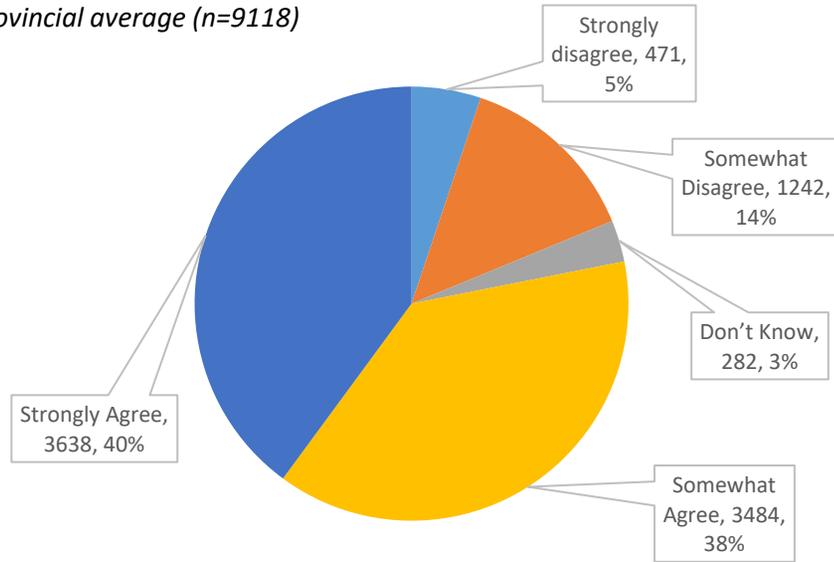
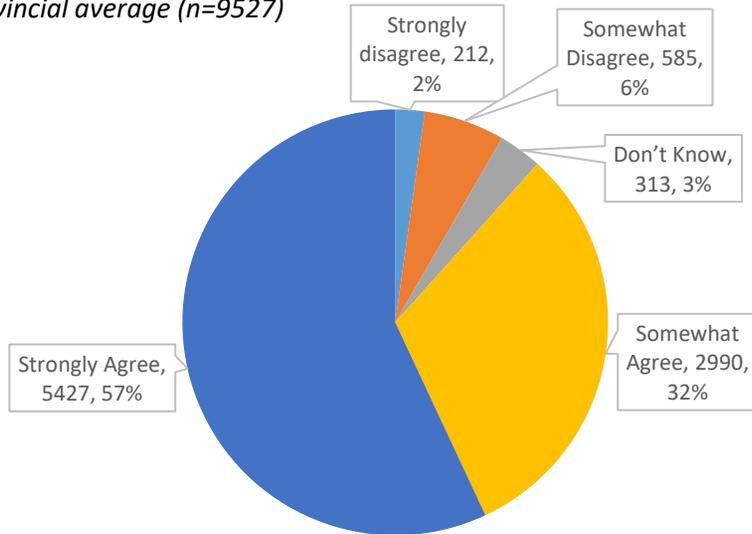


Figure 10: In online environments

Provincial average (n=9527)



How common do you think sexualized violence is at your school?

Figure 11: In person on campus

Provincial average (n=9096)

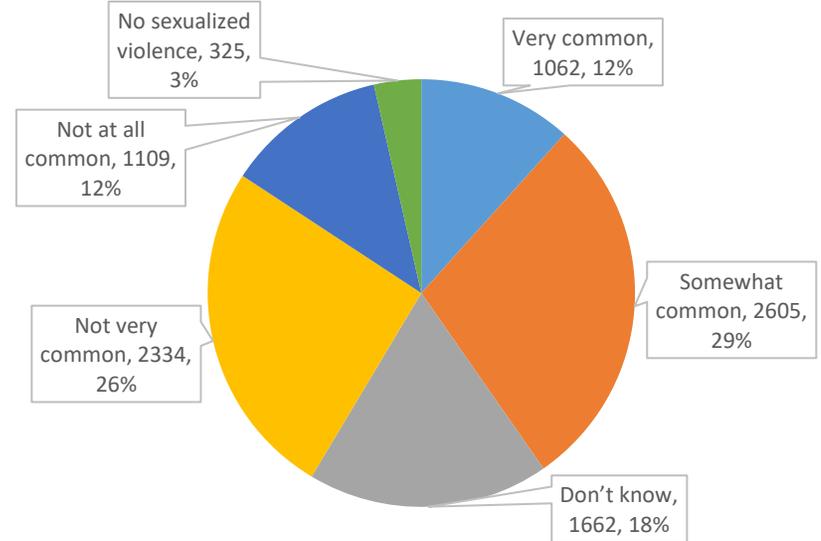
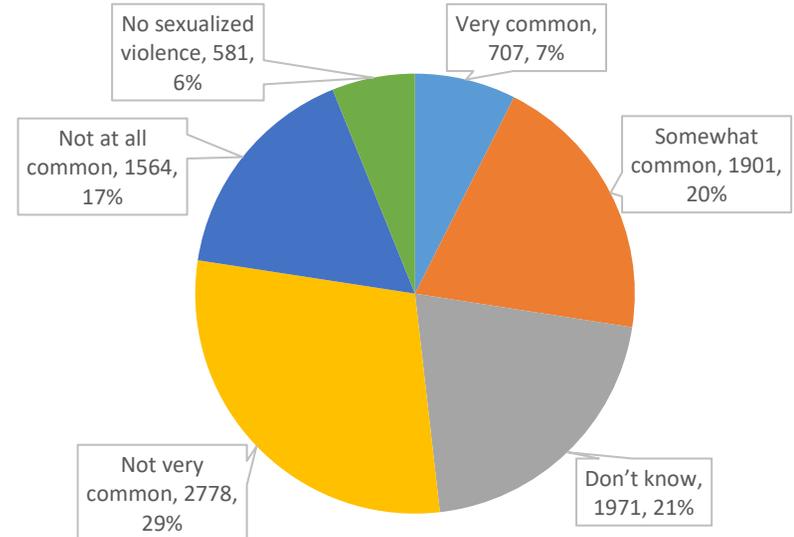


Figure 12: In online environments

Provincial average (n=9502)



Perceptions of sexualized violence on post-secondary campuses in BC: Key findings at the University of Victoria

Figure 13: My school does a good job of clearly communicating about resources and supports available for people impacted by sexual violence
Provincial Average (n=9610)

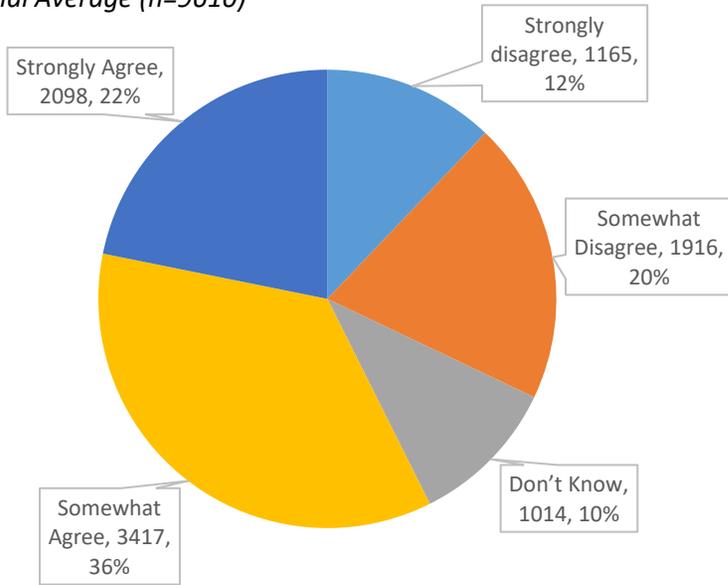


Figure 14: I know where to look on my post-secondary school's website to get information and support related to sexual violence
Provincial Average (n=9603)

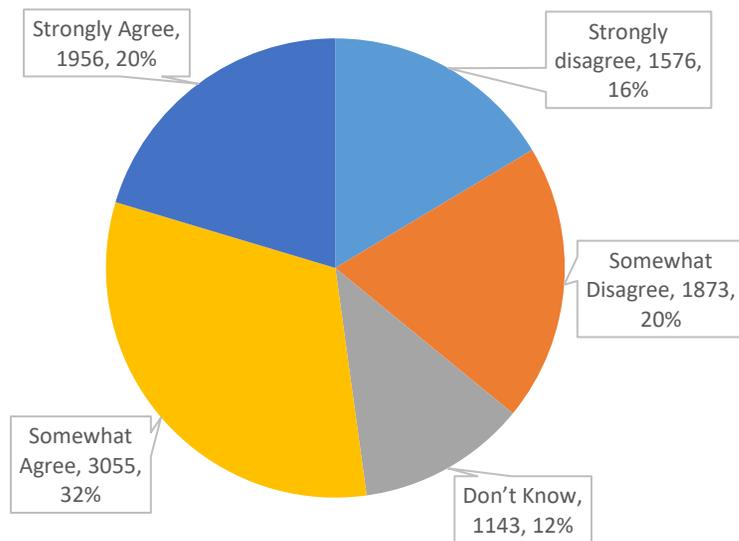


Figure 15: I know where to go on campus to get information and support related to sexual violence
Provincial Average (n=9595)

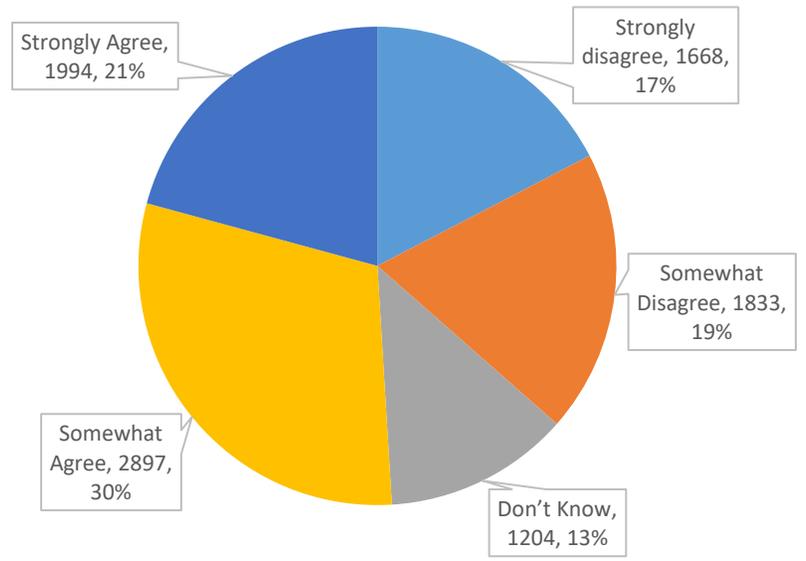


Figure 16: My school has clearly explained the difference between making a disclosure about sexual violence and filing a formal report of sexual violence
Provincial Average (n=9606)

