

University of Massachusetts Lowell

Student Campus Safety and Well-Being Survey

FINAL REPORT

(without Appendices)

By

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Executive Summary

The Campus Safety and Well-Being survey was designed to measure levels of victimization among University of Massachusetts Lowell (UML) students and their perceptions of safety on campus, as well as assess student campus use patterns and knowledge of services to find points of prevention and intervention. It was a voluntary internet survey of nearly 6,400 students age 18 and over who had attended UML in the Fall of 2007 and were also enrolled in the Spring of 2008. Over 1600 students responded to the survey for a 26 percent response rate. The characteristics of the students who replied to the survey were comparable to the student body as a whole.

Key findings include:

- *High levels of victimization in the student population.* Overall, 22% of the students in the sample reported experiencing some type of victimization: 13.5% experienced a property victimization and 11% experienced a violent victimization.
- *Some students experienced multiple victimizations.* 7% of students experienced more than one type of victimization and 9% of students reported experiencing the same type of victimization more than once. This resulted in students in the sample reporting experiencing over 600 victimizations.
- *Much of the victimization occurred on campus.* 61% of students who were victimized experienced at least one victimization on campus and 62% of the most recent victimizations occurred on campus.
- *Most victimizations occurred at night.* The most victimization was experienced between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., with much lower levels of victimization experienced during the daytime hours.

- *Students are not very likely to report victimizations.* Rates of reporting were very low for violent victimization, with only 11% of the most recent incidents being reported to police (and some of those were reported by third parties). Rates of reporting for property victimization were higher, with 47% of the most recent incidents reported to police. For those victimizations reported to the police, most (65%) were reported to the UML police.
- *Most students felt safe on campus generally, but felt the least safe at night in outdoor locations such as walkways, parking lots, and bus stops.* Students also did not worry much about becoming a victim of crime while on the UML campus, nor did they let their fear of crime affect their campus activities.
- *Students need more knowledge of university services available.* The survey also inquired about number of university services. It appears that students had quite a bit of uncertainty as to whether the university offers a variety of services.
- *Satisfaction with university services is high.* When asked if students would use services if they knew they were available and needed them, a majority indicated they would. As for those students who utilized university services, the vast majority were satisfied with those services and would use them again.
- *Heavy drinking is not the norm for UML students.* UML students did not spend many nights out partying, nor did they drink alcohol very often in an average week, if at all. When student did drink alcohol, the number of drinks consumed was most often two or less. Drug use, including marijuana, was generally rare amongst UML students.

Key recommendations include:

- *Increase awareness of services the university already provides related to crime prevention.*
- *Continue to improve lighting of the university at night, particularly for walkways, parking lots, and bus stops.*

- *Reduce signs of disorder, particularly damaged university property and keep nonstudents from hanging around campus.*
- *Continue collaboration between UML and Lowell Police Departments to ensure student safety when traveling between campuses.*
- *Promote bystander awareness and provide students information on what to do when they witness a crime.*
- *Encourage reporting of crime on campus to the University Police Department*
- *Strengthen support services for victims who do report.*
- *Use findings on substance use patterns to strengthen ongoing efforts to reduce students drinking and drug use.*
- *Field a shortened version of the Campus Safety and Well-Being Survey each year or two years.*

Introduction

Although in recent years crime rates have continued to decline, in the wake of a small number of high profile shootings on college campuses, concern over the safety of college campuses has increased. The University of Massachusetts Lowell (UML) has taken a proactive approach to insuring campus safety. In early 2007, UML successfully petitioned the UMASS President's Office for funds to conduct a survey to assess issues of campus safety. This survey was designed to measure levels of victimization among UML students and their perceptions of safety on campus, as well as assess student campus use patterns and knowledge of services to find points of prevention and intervention. The survey focused on a broad range of victimization experiences to gain a full picture of victimization of college students and on college campuses, instead of focusing on the tragic, but rare and isolated occurrences of school shootings covered so heavily by the media. The information in this survey went beyond the crimes reported annually under the Jeanne Clery/Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act to cover crimes not reported to campus officials. The information from this survey provides UML with the ability to address the needs and concerns of students, make improvements where needed, and raise awareness of existing services. This supports the pledge made by Chancellor Meehan in his email to the UML campus responding to the tragedy at Northern Illinois University in February of 2008.

During times like these, it is natural to question the measures our own campus has in place to protect members of our community. I assure you that this University takes campus safety and security very serious. We will continue to review campus security in the wake of this tragedy but, in the meantime, I want you to be aware of important

measures that currently exist, or are in the process of being implemented. (Chancellor Martin Meehan, 2/15/2008)

Context

In terms of age, “traditional” college students are a group with high risk of victimization. Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 have some of the highest violent victimization rates of any age group. According to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), in 2009 Americans between the ages of 11 and 24, which include the traditionally aged college population, had higher rates of violent victimization than those age 25 and older (Truman & Rand, 2010). In part, knowledge of this is why college administrators and policymakers have long been concerned with victimization of students and campus safety.

There is not currently a national survey of victimization on college campuses. What we do know about national patterns of victimization of college students comes from estimates of violent victimization of college students from the NCVS (the source of the violent victimization referenced above) and estimates of sexual violence against female college students from the National College Women’s Sexual Victimization Study, as well as isolated studies on individual campuses.

Method

The UML Campus Safety and Well Being Survey was a voluntary internet survey of nearly 6,400 students age 18 and over who had attended UML in the Fall of 2007 and were also enrolled in the Spring of 2008. The survey was launched on April 7th during the Spring 2008 semester and remained open for four weeks. All eligible students were sent an e-mail (available upon request from the authors) to their

student accounts detailing the nature of the survey with a (unique to them) embedded hotlink¹ to the survey itself. The surveys were constructed and stored using software provided by Survey Monkey.² In addition to the e-mail, half of the respondents were mailed a letter to their address of record during the semester (either on or off campus) explaining the purpose of the survey and to let them know the e-mail was waiting in their student accounts (available upon request from the authors). To also increase awareness of the survey, flyers were placed around both North and South campuses (available upon request from the authors).

When students accessed the survey via the embedded hotlink, they first had to read a consent script and then click a button either accepting or declining to participate. The consent script (available upon request from the authors) stressed the voluntary and anonymous nature of the survey, and that students could choose not to answer any of the questions that made them feel uncomfortable. As well, students could stop the survey at any time and come back to it later. Those who participated in the survey could choose to be entered into a raffle to win 1 of 33 prizes including an iPod Touch, a Nintendo Wii, 1 of 3 \$50 Barnes & Noble (the university book store) gift cards, 1 of 6 \$25 iTunes gift cards, 1 of 10 \$10 gift Barnes & Noble (the university book store) gift cards, or 1 of 10 \$10 Dunkin' Donuts gift cards.

Response Rate

A total of 6,372 e-mails were sent out when the survey launched. Each week thereafter, students who had not participated in the survey, or who had only partially completed the survey, were sent reminder e-mails asking them to either participate in, or to complete the remainder of, the survey. A total of 1,343 students completed the survey, and another 325 partially completed the survey, resulting in a 26 percent response rate. This rate is comparable to that of other internet surveys of college age populations (Cook, Heath, & Thompson, 2000; Sax, Gilmartin, & Bryant, 2003). Table 1 provides a detailed description of the survey response results. Most students did not respond to the initial e-mail to take the

¹ An embedded hotlink is a hyperlink, otherwise known as a website address that, when a user clicks on it, opens a web browser window and takes the user directly to the website.

² See <http://www.surveymonkey.com> for more information

survey, or the subsequent reminders. Of those who did respond, the vast majority completed the survey. Only 1.5 percent of respondents actually opted out of the survey.³

<i>Student e-mails sent</i>	6372	
<i>Responses</i>	Percent	Frequency
<i>Completed Survey</i>	21%	1343
<i>Partially Completed Survey</i>	5%	325
<i>Opted Out</i>	2%	95
<i>Invalid e-mails</i>	<1%	4
<i>No reply</i>	72%	4605
<i>Response rate</i>	26 %	

Sample Characteristics

What we know about students who took the survey (demographic characteristics) is presented in Table 2. As can be seen, there is an even split between males and females in the sample. The vast majority of respondents (81 percent) were White, and four-fifths of the students were under 24 years of age.

	Percent	Frequency
<i>Gender (N=1323)⁴</i>		
<i>Male</i>	50%	662

³ To be considered as opting out of the survey, the student clicked on the embedded hotlink, was taken to the consent page, and selected “I do not want to take the UML Student Campus Safety and Well Being Survey.”

⁴ N within tables refers to the sample size. This varies by question. For example, in this case, N=1323 means that of the 1668 students who participated in the survey, 1323 answered the question about gender.

<i>Female</i>	50%	657
<i>Transgender</i>	<1%	4
<i>Race (N=1314)</i>		
<i>White</i>	81%	1068
<i>Black</i>	4%	46
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	5%	63
<i>Asian/Pacific Islander</i>	12%	160
<i>Native American/Alaskan native</i>	2%	22
<i>Other</i>	2%	20
<i>Age (N=1264)</i>		
<i>18-19</i>	27%	345
<i>20-21</i>	33%	411
<i>22-23</i>	20%	246
<i>24+</i>	21%	262

Several university-related demographic questions were also asked, the results of which are presented in Table 3. Nearly all respondents were full time students, and were evenly split by class standing. Only 15 percent of the respondents were graduate students. In terms of residents, 59 percent of the students lived off campus and commuted to take classes. Of those who lived off campus, one-third indicated they lived in Lowell and the other two-thirds indicated they lived outside of Lowell (not shown).

Table 3: University Demographics		
	Percent	Frequency
<i>Class Standing (N=1623)</i>		

First year	21%	333
Sophomore	23%	372
Junior	23%	368
Senior	19%	300
Grad Student	15%	250
<i>Time on Campus (N =1625)</i>		
Full Time	92%	1500
Part Time	8%	125
<i>Residence (N=1616)</i>		
On Campus	41%	661
Off Campus	59%	955

Comparison of Student Survey Takers to Overall Student Population

The demographic characteristics of those who participated in the survey (the sample) are comparable to the demographic characteristics of the student population as a whole. Table 4 presents the demographics for both the sample and the entire student population. The population data were obtained from the Office of Institutional Research and contains information on all full and part time day students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels for the Fall 2007 semester. For comparability, some categories had to be collapsed or excluded because there were differences between how UML records information and how it was collected in the survey. For example, transgender was an option for gender in the survey, but not in the UML records.

It appears our survey over-represents female and Asian students, and under-represents male, Black, and Hispanic students when compared to the student population. This is not surprising, as females tend to be more likely to respond to surveys than males, and blacks tend to be less likely than whites to

respond. In general, it appears that the sample was a good representation of the overall student body in terms of gender and race/ethnicity.

Table 4: Student Demographics Comparison		
	Sample Percent	Population Percent
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	50%	58%
Female	50%	42%
	N=1223	N=9404
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>		
White	81%	80%
Black	2%	5%
Hispanic	4%	6%
Asian	12%	9%
Native American	<1%	<1
	N=1165	N=8005

Snapshot of Victimization

Estimates of Victimization (Prevalence and Incidence)

Students were asked to anonymously report their experiences of eight types of victimization for the Fall 2007 semester. The section of initial victimization screening questions (determining whether or not students had experienced a type of victimization) was introduced with the paragraph below:

Now we would like to ask about experiences you have had during last semester. These are acts that might have been committed by anyone – a friend, boyfriend or girlfriend, family member, relative, co-worker, boss, teacher, stranger, acquaintance, or anyone else. Please keep all of these people in mind when answering the following questions. Remember, these questions only cover any of these experiences that happened to you during last semester.

Students were then asked to report their experiences with physical assault, sexual assault, harassment/stalking, hate crime, threat of physical harm, stolen or damaged property, burglary, and identity theft. (For specific wording of screening questions, the complete survey is available upon request from the authors). Students could select as many types of victimization as they experienced in the Fall 2007 semester.

The survey uncovered high levels of reported victimization in the student population (see Table 5). Overall, 22% of the students in the sample reported experiencing some type of victimization during the Fall of 2007 semester: 13.5% experienced a property victimization and 11% experienced a violent victimization.⁵ This represents the *prevalence* of victimization in the sample. In this case, prevalence is the proportion of respondents who experienced victimization. *Incidence* estimates are the total numbers of victimizations students reported experiencing. Because one student may experience more than one type of victimization and/or experience the same type of victimization more than once, incidence estimates are greater than prevalence estimates. In fact, 7% of students experienced more than one type of victimization and 9% of

⁵ In keeping with definitional terms used by major measures of victimization, such as the U.S. Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), all crimes against a person are defined as violent victimizations.

students reported experiencing the same type of victimization more than once. In the Fall of 2007, students in the sample reported experiencing over 600 victimizations. Physical assault and harassment/stalking were the most commonly experienced types of violent victimization. Having personal property stolen or damaged was the most commonly experienced type of property crime.

Type of Victimization Reported	Number of Victimization	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
<i>Violent Victimization</i>	310	189	11%
<i>Physical Assault</i>	129	78	5%
<i>Sexual Assault</i>	36	22	1%
<i>Harassed or Stalked</i>	81 ⁶	81	5%
<i>Hate Crime</i>	30	22	1%
<i>Threatened with Physical Harm</i>	34	21	1%
<i>Property Victimization</i>	337	226	13.5%
<i>Stolen, Damaged or Vandalized Property</i>	219	170	10%
<i>Break In or Attempted Break In</i>	78	66	4%
<i>Identity Theft</i>	40	32	2%
ANY VICTIMIZATION	647	360	22%

⁶ In keeping with other major surveys measuring stalking, incidence and prevalence of stalking are considered the same.

Characteristics of Victims

As a part of the survey, we gathered detailed demographic information on student respondents (see Table 6 below), which allows us to present a profile of students who were victimized. Overall, there were not many differences between the demographics of victims and non-victims among the respondents. Those living on campus were more likely to report having been victimized in Fall 2007 (gray boxes below represent that the difference between groups was statistically significant).⁷ There is a significant difference between full and part time students, with full time students being modestly more likely to report experiencing a victimization, but the difference does not appear to be large. Upon further investigation, students living on campus were more likely than those living off campus to report experiencing a violent victimization (14% versus 10%) or a property victimization (18% versus 12%). There were not significant differences in reported levels of overall victimization by gender, age, race, undergraduate versus graduate student status, or international student status (not shown).

Although not presented in Table 6 below, there is one group that may particularly be at risk that warrants mention. While the number of gay and lesbian students who responded to the survey was too small (only 26 students) for analysis⁸, there was a larger group of student respondents who identified as bisexual (43 students) and they reported much higher rates of

⁷ By saying something is statistically significant, we mean that we can say with 95% confidence that there really is a difference between the groups. So, for example, we think that students who lived on campus were more likely to be victimized.

⁸ When sample sizes are 30 or lower, that is too few cases to conduct most statistical analyses. What that means is that if there is actually a difference between groups, there are not enough cases for us to be able to detect that difference, especially if that difference is modest. Similarly, we cannot confidently say there is not a difference. All we know is that we did not have enough information (i.e. enough cases) to generate an answer.

victimization than heterosexual students. One-quarter of heterosexual students reported a victimization, but almost one-half (49%) of bisexual students reported a victimization.

Table 6: Comparison of Demographic Measures				
	University Fall 2007 Enrollment	Total Sample (N⁹=1669)	Non-Victims (N=1309)	Victims (N=360)
<i>Age</i>	Not available	22 years	22.5 years	22 years
<i>Male</i>	58%	50%	50%	49%
<i>White (non- Hispanic)</i>	80%	80%	80%	79%
<i>Undergraduate</i>	71%	85%	84%	87%
<i>Full-Time</i>	71%	92%	91%	95%
<i>On Campus</i>	24%	41%	39%	50%

Looking at victims overall obscures important differences by gender and type of victimization. The male and female students in the survey experienced different patterns of victimization (Table 7). Male students were more likely than female students to be physically assaulted. Female students were more likely than male students to be sexually assaulted and harassed or stalked.

Table 7: Gender and Victimization		
Type of Victimization	Male	Female

⁹ The letter “N” in this case represents the sample size, or the number of student respondents in each group. For example, “N=1669” means the entire sample is 1669 students.

	%	Frequency	%	Frequency
<i>Physical Assault (N=1315)</i>	7%	46	3%	22
<i>Sexual Assault (N=1319)</i>	<1%	2	2%	13
<i>Harassed or Stalked (N=1285)</i>	2%	14	9%	60
<i>Hate Crime (N=1306)</i>	2%	11	1%	9
<i>Threatened with Physical Harm (N=1312)</i>	2%	13	1%	7
<i>Stolen or Damaged Property (N=1309)</i>	14%	94	11%	70
<i>Break In or Attempted Break In (N=1311)</i>	5%	30	5%	34
<i>Identity Theft (N=1312)</i>	3%	17	2%	14

Limitations

In the interests of maximizing survey participation by keeping the survey length to approximately 15 to 20 minutes,¹⁰ the victimization screening questions were very basic. Compared to more detailed, multipart questions, our simplified questions will produce significant underreporting of victimization experiences. Therefore, the number of victimizations reported here should be viewed as underestimates of the actual victimization experienced in the Fall 2007 semester by UML students who responded to the survey. However, that is balanced against what is referred to as telescoping – that respondents may include victimizations in their responses that happened longer ago than the reference time of the survey. This is common in

¹⁰ Participants were told in the survey informed consent form that participation would take between 15 and 30 minutes. That range of time was provided because students who reported victimization were then asked follow up questions that would take additional time. For the large majority of students, it was expected that the survey would take between 15 and 20 minutes.

one time surveys, where respondents may have difficulty remembering exactly when an event happened. In the case of this survey, that means that some respondents may have included victimizations that happened before the start of the Fall of 2007 semester. While it is not possible to estimate how much these two factors may impact the levels of victimization reported in this survey, it is something of which to remain aware.

Characteristics of Victimization

For each type of victimization, students were asked to report details of the most recent incident of that type of victimization that they experienced. This allowed us to know more about when, where, and how students experience victimization. Because we did not gather detailed information on every victimization students reported, but only the most recent, these details may not be representative of all the victimizations reported. Students were only asked to report details on the most recent victimization to limit the length of the survey, which is a common approach in victimization surveys. It is a balance between quality and quantity – the longer a survey is, the less likely respondents are to complete it. Even with these limitations, the information on where victimizations happened and what time of day they happened is helpful in directing prevention and intervention efforts.

Location. Although any victimization of UML students is a concern, to address on campus safety, it is important to have a picture of how much of the victimization is occurring on campus, which types are more likely to occur on campus, and where on campus they occur. Sixty-one percent of students who were victimized experienced at least one victimization on campus (analyses not shown). Property victimization is more likely than violent victimization to

occur on campus.¹¹ It is also important to note that, while currently a small proportion of the victimization, attention also needs to be paid to victimization that can occur online – 9% of the most recent incidents of violent victimization (but limited to harassment/stalking, hate crime, and threats) occurred online.

Type of Victimization	On Campus		Off Campus		Online	
	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.
<i>Violent Victimization (N=219)</i>	48%	105	43%	95	9%	19
<i>Physical Assault (N=74)</i>	45%	33	55%	41	N/A	
<i>Sexual Assault (N=20)</i>	45%	9	55%	11	N/A	
<i>Harassed or Stalked (N=91)</i>	46%	42	34%	31	20%	18
<i>Hate Crime (N=15)</i>	73%	11	27%	4	0%	0
<i>Threatened with Physical Harm (N=19)</i>	53%	10	42%	8	5%	1
<i>Property Victimization (N=222)</i>	75%	167	25%	55	N/A	
<i>Stolen or Damaged Property (N=161)</i>	80%	128	21%	33	N/A	
<i>Break In or Attempted Break In (N=61)</i>	64%	39	36%	22	N/A	
<i>ANY VICTIMIZATION (N=441)</i>	62%	272	34%	150	4%	19

¹¹ These differences were statistically significant at the p<.001 level. ($\chi^2=23.7$, df=1)

As a follow up, students who indicated that the most recent incident happened on campus were asked to specify where on campus. Some of the counts (referred to in the table as frequency) for this were small, so locations of victimization were reported for victimization overall. The most common place students reported being victimized was in a residence hall (41% of most recent incidents).

Location On Campus	Percent	Frequency
<i>In your living quarters</i>	21%	47
<i>In your dorm, but not in your room</i>	15%	34
<i>In a dorm, but not your dorm</i>	5%	11
<i>In a campus building, but not a campus dorm</i>	27%	59
<i>In a campus parking area</i>	22%	49
<i>In an open area of campus (e.g., street, field)</i>	18%	39
<i>In a vehicle</i>	<1%	2

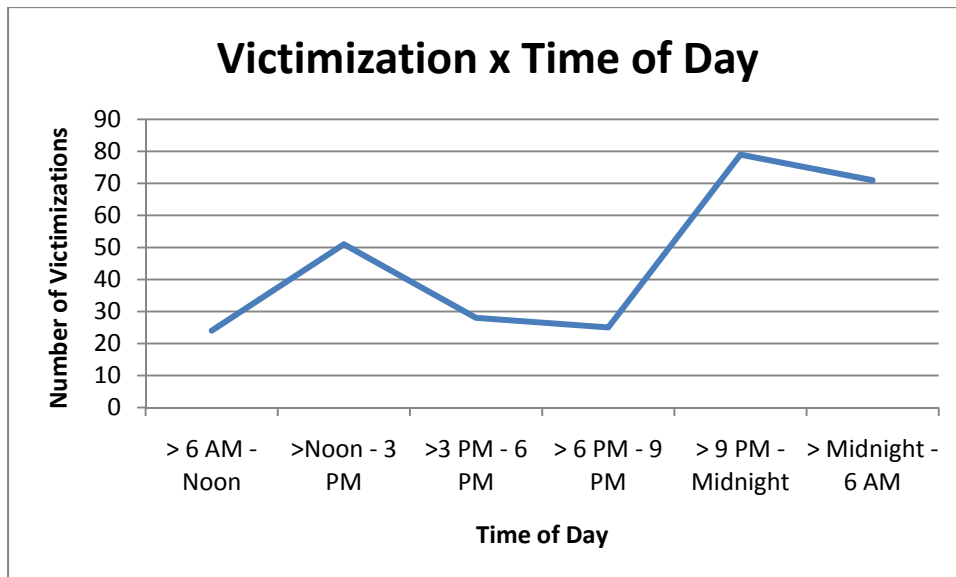
Students who reported that a most recent victimization was experienced off campus were asked a follow up question as well – whether or not the victimization occurred in Lowell. Because the counts for a number of victimizations occurring off campus were very low for some of the types, counts by type of victimization are not presented. Overall, 65% (71 of 110

¹² The victimizations included were physical assault, sexual assault, hate crime, threats, stalking, and stolen/damaged/vandalized property. This follow up question was not asked for break-ins or identity theft.

victimizations) of the most recent off campus victimizations for which students responded happened in Lowell.

Time of Day. Students were asked, for the most recent of each type of victimization they experienced, what time of day the victimization occurred. Victimization tends to be more common in the nighttime hours, and patterns for UML students were no exception (see Chart 1 below). The most victimization was experienced between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., with much lower levels of victimization experienced during the daytime hours (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.). In over one-quarter (28%) of most recent incidents, students could not remember or did not know precisely what time of day a victimization occurred. In those instances, they either selected sometime during the day (defined as 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.) or sometime during the night (defined as 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.).

Chart 1



Perpetrators. Although the survey included a number of questions about perpetrators of the most recent of each type of reported victimization incident, the number of responses given in

the various categories (such as number of perpetrators, gender of perpetrator, victim-offender relationship, perpetrator use of drugs and alcohol) was too small for analysis. Especially for property victimizations, this is likely a function of victims frequently lacking any knowledge of who committed the crime against them, as it is typically not done in person.

Bystanders. Bystanders, or those who are also present during an incident, frequently do nothing, but represent a potential avenue for intervention and assistance. For example, they may actively intervene to stop a victimization or may call 911 for help. To identify if there are potential avenues for bystander prevention and intervention in the future, students were asked if anyone else (themselves not included) witnessed the most recent incident and, if so, who.¹³ Overall, one third (32%) of the most recent victimization incidents were witnessed by others. Violent victimization was more likely to be witnessed by others than property victimization, which is largely a function of a high proportion of physical assaults being witnessed by others.¹⁴

Type of Victimization Witnessed	Percent	Frequency
<i>Violent Victimization (N=126)</i>	56%	71
<i>Physical Assault (N=71)</i>	68%	48
<i>Sexual Assault (N=21)</i>	10%	2
<i>Hate Crime (N=14)</i>	43%	6
<i>Threats (N=20)</i>	75%	15

¹³ This set of questions was inadvertently left out of the questions on the most recent stalking incident and was also not included for identity theft (since in most cases witnessing in the traditional sense is not applicable).

¹⁴ These differences were statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level. ($\chi^2 = 30.1$, $df = 1$)

<i>Property Victimization (N=223)</i>	18%	40
<i>Stolen, Damaged, or Vandalized Property (N=162)</i>	11%	17
<i>Break In or Attempted Break In (N=61)</i>	38%	23
<i>Any Victimization (N=349)</i>	32%	111

The next step in targeting potential bystanders for safe and positive intervention efforts is to know who these bystanders are. Students were also asked to report, by selecting from pre-set categories (an “other” category with a fill in box was also offered), who it was that witnessed the most recent victimization incident. What this reflected was the potential influence of students’ peers – friends and acquaintances, roommates, classmates, and romantic partners (current and former girlfriends and boyfriends) – as well as that often these victimization incidents happen in the presence of strangers.

Table 11: Who Witnessed Most Recent Victimization Incident	
	Frequency
<i>Friend or Acquaintance</i>	52
<i>Roommate</i>	36
<i>Stranger</i>	24
<i>Classmate</i>	17
<i>Current or Former Girlfriend or Boyfriend</i>	11
<i>Co-Worker</i>	3
<i>Parent</i>	2
<i>Sibling</i>	1

<i>Other</i>	11
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Victim Help Seeking

Reporting. Students were asked, for most recent incident of each reported type of victimization, whether or not the incident had been reported to police (by the victim or a third party). Rates of reporting were very low for violent victimization (physical assault, sexual assault, harassment/stalking, hate crime, and threats of physical harm), with only 11% of the most recent incidents being reported to police. Rates of reporting for property victimization were much higher, with 47% of the most recent incidents reported to police.¹⁵ For those victimizations reported to the police, most (65%) were reported to the UML police.

	Violent Victimization		Property Victimization	
	%	N	%	N
<i>Reported</i>	11%	25	47%	118
<i>Not Reported</i>	89%	193	53%	135

For those students who did not report their victimization to police¹⁶, we asked the reasons why not. Students were given a list of 11 common reasons why people do not report crimes to the police and could select as many reasons from that list as applied. There was also an option to

¹⁵ These differences were statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level. ($\chi^2 = 68.5$, $df = 1$)

¹⁶ Some of these victimizations may have been reported to the police, but by someone other than the victim in the survey.

provide their own reason (“other”). Consistent with the findings from other populations, the most common reason student victims did not report was because they “didn’t think what happened was serious enough” to report to the police. Other common reasons were that they “didn’t think police would do anything” and the incident was “a private matter – wanted to deal with it on own.”

Table 13: Reasons Victimization Not Reported to Police	
Is there a reason you did not report this incident to the police?	Frequency
<i>Didn’t think what happened was serious enough</i>	177
<i>Didn’t think police would do anything</i>	114
<i>Is a private matter – wanted to deal with it on own</i>	76
<i>Didn’t want the person who did it to get in trouble</i>	28
<i>Fear of not being believed</i>	23
<i>Fear of being blamed</i>	21
<i>Fear of retribution from the person who did it</i>	20
<i>Shame or embarrassment</i>	15
<i>Thought people would try to tell me what to do</i>	13
<i>Concern others would find out</i>	11
<i>Would feel like an admission of failure</i>	7
<i>Other reason</i>	37

For those students whose victimization was reported (by them or by others) to the UML police, we asked two follow up questions: “How fairly were you treated by the UML police?”

and “How satisfied were you with the way the UML police handled the report?” Overall, students whose victimization had been handled by police felt that they had been treated fairly (84%). However, student victims’ rating of the handling of their report by the UML police was not as positive – only 67% were satisfied.

Table 14: Fairness of Treatment by UML Police		
How fairly were you treated by the UML Police?	%	Frequency
<i>Very Fairly</i>	52%	47
<i>Somewhat Fairly</i>	32%	29
<i>Somewhat Unfairly</i>	11%	10
<i>Very Unfairly</i>	5%	5

Table 15: Satisfaction with UML Police Handling of Report		
How satisfied were you with the way the UML Police handled the report?	%	Frequency
<i>Very Satisfied</i>	28%	25
<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>	39%	35
<i>Somewhat Dissatisfied</i>	23%	21
<i>Very Dissatisfied</i>	10%	9

Unfortunately, due to small numbers, we cannot share reporting to or satisfaction with police and UML police within types of victimization, as that would not fully protect the anonymous participation of student respondents. For example, if only 4 people reported a sexual

assault to UML police in the Fall of 2007 and four people in our sample reported their sexual assault to UML police, their identity could be easily known.

Help Seeking. In addition to asking about reporting to police, the survey also included questions about other help seeking, such as seeking out support from on and off campus services. Students reported turning to a wide range of on and off campus resources for assistance, although the services they sought depended on the type of victimization (analyses not shown). For instance, all 17 of the victimizations for which credit card companies’ assistance was sought were identity theft.

For on campus services, it is clear that the primary resource students turn to is Residence Life, with RAs and RDs being the most frequently used resource. They were the most frequently used resource for both violent and property victimizations (analyses not shown). The pattern of resource use for off campus services reflects the heavier use of resources by property crime victims. For example, property victimizations accounted for 77% of the reported use of landlords/property managers and 100% of the reported use of insurance companies (analyses not shown).

Resource	Frequency
<i>On Campus</i>	
<i>Residence Assistant (RA) or Residence Director (RD)</i>	57
<i>Counseling Center</i>	11
<i>Academic Advisor</i>	9
<i>Affirmative Action/EEO</i>	7

<i>Health Services</i>	4
<i>Campus Ministry</i>	3
<i>Judicial Programs</i>	2
<u><i>Off Campus</i></u>	
<i>Landlord/Property Manager</i>	22
<i>Insurance Company</i>	21
<i>Credit Card Company</i>	17
<i>Lawyer or Other Legal Services</i>	9
<i>Credit Reporting Bureau (i.e., Equifax, Experien, Transunion)</i>	8
<i>Medical Care</i>	7
<i>Victim Witness Assistance Program (County Level)</i>	4
<i>Mental Health Services</i>	3
<i>Hotline (not domestic violence)</i>	3
<i>Victim Advocates</i>	3
<i>Domestic Violence Hotline</i>	2
<i>Phone Company or Internet Service Provider</i>	2
<i>Clery or Faith Community</i>	1
<i>Rape Crisis Center</i>	1
<i>State Victim Compensation Program</i>	1
<i>Other</i>	5

Support Seeking. Finally, students were asked, for the most recent victimization incident, if they had talked to others about it (besides reporting to police or seeking help from on campus

and off campus services). In the majority of incidents, for violent and property victimizations, students had reached out to talk to someone about their experience.

Table 17: Talked to Someone About Most Recent Victimization Incident		
Type of Victimization	Percent	Frequency
<i>Violent Victimization (N=207)</i>	64%	132
<i>Physical Assault (N=68)</i>	57%	39
<i>Sexual Assault (N=19)</i>	58%	11
<i>Stalking/Harassment (N=87)</i>	75%	65
<i>Hate Crime (N=13)</i>	54%	7
<i>Threats (N=20)</i>	50%	10
<i>Property Victimization (N=247)</i>	70%	172
<i>Stolen, Damaged, or Vandalized Property (N=162)</i>	73%	118
<i>Break In or Attempted Break In (N=59)</i>	59%	35
<i>Identity Theft (N=26)</i>	73%	19
<i>Any Victimization (N=454)</i>	67%	304

Once again, as we saw with witnesses to victimization incidents, there is a strong influence of peers. Three of the top four places students turn to are peers – friends, roommates, and romantic partners.

Table 18: Talking to Others About Most Recent Victimization Incident	
Who Talked To About Most Recent Victimization Incident	Frequency
Friend	247

Parent or Guardian	150
Roommate	149
Romantic Partner	105
Other Family Member	77
Faculty or Staff	67
Other	10

Student Perceptions of and Behavior Related to Campus Safety

Perceptions of Campus Safety

In addition to measuring the prevalence and incidence of victimization on the UML campus, another objective of the survey was to assess the perceptions of, and behavior related to, campus safety. What follows is a summary of these perceptions and behaviors for all students, and then a comparison to those students who experienced victimizations during the reporting period.

The survey first asked a global question regarding how safe students felt while on the UML campus. The responses are provided in Table 19. The vast majority of students feel very or somewhat safe on campus. Nearly 89 percent of students felt very or somewhat safe, with only about 11 percent of students feeling very or somewhat unsafe on campus.

	Percent	Frequency
<i>Very safe</i>	32%	500
<i>Somewhat safe</i>	57%	897
<i>Somewhat unsafe</i>	9%	143
<i>Very unsafe</i>	2%	33

Next, students were asked about their feelings of safety at specific locations around the university during both the day and at night. The substantive conclusions from both tables are generally similar, except that students tend to feel less safe at night than during the day. Tables 20 and 21 present the feelings of safety in particular areas during both times. While most students feel safe in most of the locations specified in the survey, outdoor locations tend to evoke more frequent feelings of being unsafe. Bus stops, parking lots, and walking around campus tended to make students feel the least safe with 51 percent, 57 percent, and 51 percent of students feeling somewhat or very unsafe at these locations at night, respectively. Conversely, in the indoor areas of campus (e.g., libraries, dining halls, dorms, etc), results indicate that only about 10 percent of students felt unsafe at night, with even lower percentages during the day.

	Very safe	Freq.	Somewhat safe	Freq.	Somewhat unsafe	Freq.	Very unsafe	Freq.
<i>Music rooms</i> (N=682)	74%	502	23%	157	2%	16	1%	7
<i>Lecture halls</i> (N=1489)	73%	1086	24%	363	2%	29	<1%	11
<i>Labs</i> (N=1308)	72%	942	26%	340	2%	19	<1%	7
<i>Libraries</i> (N=1486)	72%	1066	25%	368	3%	42	<1%	10
<i>Art studios</i> (N=533)	71%	448	25%	160	3%	16	1%	9

¹⁷ Excludes N/A responses

<i>Dining halls</i> (N=1282)	70%	898	28%	359	1%	17	<1%	8
<i>Gathering places</i> (N=1398)	61%	854	35%	489	3%	42	1%	13
<i>Dorms (N=1042)</i>	52%	544	40%	414	7%	70	1%	14
<i>Walking around</i> (N=1502)	38%	564	48%	720	11%	166	4%	52
<i>Bus stops</i> (N=1371)	34%	472	46%	634	15%	209	4%	56
<i>Parking lots</i> (N=1489)	27%	408	47%	694	20%	295	6%	92

Table 21: How safe do you feel in these locations at night?¹⁸

	Very Safe	Freq.	Somewhat safe	Freq.	Somewhat unsafe	Freq.	Very unsafe	Freq.
<i>Dining halls</i> (N=1047)	61%	635	34%	359	4%	37	2%	16
<i>Music rooms</i> (N=567)	61%	343	31%	175	5%	30	3%	19
<i>Art studios</i> (N=523)	59%	307	31%	161	6%	32	4%	23
<i>Labs (N=919)</i>	59%	539	33%	306	6%	55	2%	20
<i>Lecture halls</i>	55%	602	36%	391	6%	70	3%	27

¹⁸ Excludes N/A responses.

<i>(N=1090)</i>								
<i>Libraries</i> <i>(N=1224)</i>	53%	650	38%	462	7%	90	2%	22
<i>Dorms</i> <i>(N=965)</i>	47%	455	41%	394	9%	88	3%	28
<i>Gathering places</i> <i>(N=1109)</i>	46%	510	43%	472	8%	92	3%	35
<i>Walking around</i> <i>(N=1307)</i>	13%	165	37%	479	34%	440	17%	223
<i>Bus stops</i> <i>(N=1130)</i>	12%	140	37%	414	38%	425	13%	151
<i>Parking lots</i> <i>(N=1291)</i>	10%	126	33%	431	38%	490	19%	244

The survey also inquired as to whether there were any additional areas where students felt unsafe, and upon reading these open-ended responses, bathrooms, locker rooms, and traveling between campuses—particularly the university bridge—appeared quite frequently, even though the bridge is technically not part of the campus. This appears to indicate that students hold the university responsible for their safety when traveling between campuses, especially those areas adjacent to the university that are most frequently traveled by students.¹⁹

¹⁹ It should be noted that since completion of the survey, the university has installed cameras and a blue-light emergency phone on the university bridge.

In tandem with questions about safety, we asked students to rate the quality of lighting on campus (to link to feelings of safety at night) and the overall security of buildings (Table 22). For each item, the majority of students rated these as very good or good, although a significant minority of students (41 percent) felt the campus lighting at night was poor or very poor.

Table 22: How would you rate...								
	Very good	Freq.	Good	Freq.	Poor	Freq.	Very poor	Freq.
<i>Lights at night of parking lots & walkways (N=1325)</i>	7%	96	52%	684	34%	451	7%	94
<i>Security of university buildings (N=1325)</i>	9%	120	60%	793	26%	347	5%	65
<i>Security in dorms (residents only) (N=614)</i>	22%	134	60%	371	14%	85	4%	24

When students indicated they did not feel safe on campus either during the day or the night, we inquired as to why. There were a variety of responses to this open-ended question, but it appears that many students feel the lighting on campus at night is inadequate (which we had anticipated, see Table 22 above), and there is a lack of police presence to provide reassurance. For example, one respondent wrote “Not enough authorities around watching. Parking lots are not well lit, especially Coburn.” Another wrote, “At night it can seem somewhat unsafe. It seems like there are no people around or security in place, specifically in the big parking lots.” There also appears to be the feeling that the city of Lowell itself is unsafe, and that people wanting to engage in crime could come on campus searching for potential

victims.²⁰ For example, one respondent wrote “Lowell is known to be a city of high crime.” Another student wrote, “Anyone can walk around campus. A lot of gangs and violent people are in the area.” One final theme to emerge from these responses is that having to cross busy streets or wait at bus stops by busy intersections also make students feel unsafe. It is likely many students expressed this concern as the survey was conducted shortly after UML student Rachel Carnes was struck by a pickup truck while waiting at the bus stop near Alumni Hall. Some respondents mentioned her specifically, while other commented on the bad driving habits of students (especially in parking lots) or Lowell residents more generally.

In short, it appears from these results that students feel the least safe when traveling, or waiting to travel, in-between campuses. Students feel safe generally while on campus during both the day and at night, especially when inside university buildings.

Fear of Future Victimization On Campus

In addition to asking about perceptions of safety on campus, the survey also inquired about worry of future victimizations and defensive behaviors students may engage in to prevent themselves from becoming crime victims. First, we asked a global question relating to how afraid students were about becoming a victim of a crime while on the UML campus. Table 23 displays the results of this question. The majority of students (65 percent) are either not afraid or not afraid at all of becoming a crime victim while on campus. Still, more students are somewhat or very afraid about becoming a crime victim (35 percent) than feel unsafe on the UML campus (11 percent).

Table 23: How afraid are you of becoming a victim of crime on the UML campus? (N=1475)		
	Percentage	Frequency
Very afraid	7%	105

²⁰ Based on 2008 Uniform Crime Report data, Lowell’s violent crime rate per 10,000 ranks 7th highest amongst Massachusetts cities, and ranks 20th highest in property crime rate per 10,000 amongst Massachusetts cities.

Somewhat afraid	28%	415
Not afraid	45%	669
Not afraid at all	19%	286

Second, we asked about how worried students were of becoming a victim of specific crimes in the coming semester. These results are reported in Table 24. It appears that for each crime except one, the vast majority of students are not worried about becoming a victim of crime. Students were most worried that someone would steal or damage their personal property, with 52 percent of students somewhat or very worried. This is not surprising, given that property crimes are more common than violent crime. Students were also worried about becoming victims of identity theft (“steal your personal info”) and physical assault (“assault you”), with 34 percent and 32 percent of students, respectively, either somewhat or very worried about being a victim of those crimes in the coming semester. For the crimes of harassment or hate crimes (“threaten or physically assault you because of your race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability”), the vast majority of students are not worried about being a victim of these crimes. In short, with the exception of property crime, most students are not worried about becoming a crime victim while on campus.

Table 24: How worried are you that in the coming semester, someone will...while on campus?								
	Very worried	Freq.	Somewhat worried	Freq.	Not worried	Freq.	Not worried at all	Freq.
<i>Steal or damage your personal property (N=1458)</i>	12%	169	40%	586	38%	555	10%	148
<i>Steal your personal</i>	8%	117	26%	381	47%	674	19%	276

<i>info (N=1448)</i>								
<i>Assault you (N=1452)</i>	7%	103	25%	360	45%	649	23%	340
<i>Threaten or harass you (N=1444)</i>	6%	82	23%	328	49%	703	23%	331
<i>Sexually assault you (N=1449)</i>	5%	77	15%	222	35%	506	44%	644
<i>Threaten or physically assault you because of your race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability? (N=1454)</i>	4%	58	11%	155	37%	535	49%	706

Fear of Crime and Student Behavior Change

When students feel unsafe or fear victimization, they may change their behaviors to compensate. To assess the degree of behavioral change, the survey asked students specifically whether their activities on campus had been affected by their fear of crime. The results are reported in Table 25. As can be seen from the table, a majority of students (62 percent) never had their fear of crime affect their campus activities. Of those who did, most only occasionally (25 percent) had their fear of crime affect campus activities, with much smaller percentages reporting some (11 percent) or most (2 percent) of the time.

Table 25: How often have you activities on campus been affected by fear of crime? (N=1437)		
	Percent	Frequency

Most of the time	2%	26
Some of the time	11%	153
Occasionally	25%	364
Never	62%	894

In addition to this global activities question, we asked a series of questions about behaviors taken to prevent crime, such as asking someone to walk the respondent somewhere after dark, or questions about avoidance behaviors, such as avoiding classes because of safety concerns. The results appear in Table 26. While most students did not engage in any of the avoidance behaviors, a majority of respondents (69 percent) asked someone to watch unattended property, and one-third of students asked someone to walk them somewhere after dark. In terms of avoidance, nearly one-third of students reported that they avoid certain areas at night because of safety concerns, and another 28 percent avoided parking their cars in certain lots because of safety concerns. The prevalence of the remaining avoidance behaviors were very low, with less than 4 percent of respondents indicating one of the other avoidance behaviors, such as avoiding campus events or classes.

Table 26: Since last semester, have you...				
	Yes	Freq.	No	Freq.
<i>Asked someone to watch your property while unattended (N=1428)</i>	69%	983	31%	445
<i>Asked someone to walk you somewhere after dark (N=1427)</i>	34%	479	66%	948
<i>Avoided certain areas of campus at night because of safety concerns (N=1180)</i>	32%	372	69%	808
<i>Avoided parking your car in certain lots because of safety concerns (N=1392)</i>	28%	384	72%	1008
<i>Avoided certain areas of campus during the day because of safety</i>	4%	49	96%	1255

<i>concerns (N=1304)</i>				
<i>Avoided classes because of safety concerns (N=1426)</i>	4%	52	96%	1374
<i>Avoided classes because someone made you feel threatened (N=1429)</i>	3%	48	97%	1381
<i>Avoided certain campus events because of safety concerns (N=1401)</i>	3%	47	97%	1356

If students avoided areas of the campus or campus events, we asked them where and why. Again, if students avoided areas of campus, they tended to be parking lots, bus stops, and the university bridge. When asked why, students generally indicated these locations made them feel unsafe due to inadequate police presence and lighting, or a fear of traveling in Lowell more generally.

The survey also asked about items carried for defense, and these are presented in Table 27. Respondents could check all items that applied. Most students (70 percent) did not carry any item for self-defense. If students did carry such an item, the most common item was holding keys in a defensive manner (25 percent). Five students reported carrying a gun on campus, but we did not ask respondents to indicate if they were in law enforcement or not (and thus legally licensed to carry a firearm), and 87 students reported carrying a knife, although we did not ask for details to determine legality of carrying the knife.²¹

Table 27: During last semester, did you ever carry any of the following items on campus to defend yourself or get others' attention in case of an incident*				
	Yes	Freq.	No	Freq.
<i>None of the above</i>	70%	1166	30%	504
<i>Keys in a defensive manner</i>	25%	413	75%	1257

²¹ Knives such as dirks, daggers, double edged knives, switchblades, and spring loaded knives are illegal to carry under Massachusetts law, but the law does not prohibit items such as Swiss Army knives or folding knives.

<i>Knife</i>	5%	87	95%	1583
<i>Whistle</i>	4%	69	96%	1601
<i>Other (typically cell phone)</i>	4%	65	96%	1544
<i>Mace</i>	2%	20	99%	1650
<i>Pepper Spray</i>	2%	29	98%	1641
<i>Gun</i>	<1%	5	100%	1655
*Percentages do not sum to 100 as respondents could indicate they carry multiple weapons				

Perceived Signs of Disorder

Finally, the survey attempted to gauge students' perceptions of disorder on campus. These were asked about as research has indicated that people who perceive signs of disorder (e.g., graffiti, trash, etc) are more likely to feel unsafe and more likely to fear victimization (Skogan, 1990). In order to assess this, students were asked how big a problem a number of typical signs of disorder were, which were drawn from criminological research. In addition, we asked about how big a problem crime itself was on campus. The results are presented in Table 28. The majority of students do not perceive these indicators to be a big problem on campus, although there is a fair degree of uncertainty amongst the respondents, particularly for drug dealing. As for those who perceived a particular indicator to be a big or very big problem, most account for about twenty percent or less of respondents. Those who perceive more signs of disorder were also significantly more likely to see crime as a big or very big problem, were more likely to feel unsafe while on campus, were more likely to worry about being a crime victim in the coming semester, and were more likely to carry an item for self-defense (results not shown).²² These results suggest that the university should not ignore signs of disorder in its overall strategy to enhance campus safety. In fact, it would appear that by combating them, the university could have a substantive impact on students' perceptions of safety.

²² Based on a Chi-Square analysis at the .05 level of significance.

Table 28: How big a problem on campus is...										
	Very big problem	N	Big problem	N	Not a big problem	N	Not a problem at all	N	Uncertain	N
<i>Nonstudents hanging around (N=1477)</i>	7%	99	16%	241	37%	546	12%	180	28%	411
<i>Unrepaired property (N=1480)</i>	5%	71	19%	286	46%	678	18%	263	12%	182
<i>Drug dealing (N=1469)</i>	5%	78	11%	165	16%	385	14%	201	44%	640
<i>Loud parties (N=1471)</i>	5%	78	14%	202	39%	571	15%	214	28%	406
<i>Crime (N=1491)</i>	3%	41	19%	280	51%	762	5%	74	22%	334
<i>Graffiti (N=1479)</i>	2%	28	8%	113	50%	736	26%	387	15%	215

Overall, it appears that most students feel safe while on campus during the day and at night. Few students worry about becoming victims of crime while on campus, and fewer still let that worry affect their behavior. Specifically, most students do not let their fear of crime impact their behavior on campus, and as such most students do not carry any items for self defense. That said, student do appear to be most

fearful while traveling or waiting to travel between campuses. Students expressed fear while waiting at the bus stop, while in the parking lots, and while walking around campus, especially at night. When asked why they were fearful, students commented on inadequate lighting, lack of police presence, and had a tendency to view the city of Lowell as a high crime area. Many students also commented on fear when traveling between campuses, especially along the university bridge. It appears students hold the university accountable for their safety when traveling between campuses.

Comparisons between Victims and Nonvictims. We also explored whether experiencing a victimization during the Fall of 2007 was related to various perceptions of campus safety as well as on campus behaviors.²³ Victims felt less safe, were more fearful of future victimization, saw crime on campus as a bigger problem, and these things have a bigger impact on their on campus behavior than for non-victims.

Students who had been victimized in the previous semester were twice as likely to indicate they felt somewhat or very unsafe when compared to students who had not been victimized. While most students indicated that they felt very or somewhat safe while on campus regardless of victimization, being a crime victim nevertheless is related to significantly decreased feelings of safety.

Feelings of Safety on campus	Victimized			
	No	Freq.	Yes	Freq.
<i>Very Safe</i>	35%	422	23%	78
<i>Somewhat Safe</i>	56%	683	59%	196
<i>Somewhat Unsafe</i>	8%	95	14%	48
<i>Very Unsafe</i>	2%	22	3%	11

²³ All of these results are statistically significant. By saying something is statistically significant, we mean that we can say with 95% confidence that there really is a difference between victims and nonvictims.

In addition to feeling less safe, respondents who were victimized during the preceding semester also were more fearful of becoming a crime victim while on campus (Table 30). Nearly one-half (48%) of the students who were crime victims reported being very or somewhat afraid of becoming a crime victim in the future while on campus, while slightly less than one-third (32%) of non-victims reported being very or somewhat afraid.

Fear of becoming a crime victim	Victimized			
	No	Freq.	Yes	Freq.
<i>Very afraid</i>	5%	61	13%	44
<i>Somewhat afraid</i>	26%	300	34%	115
<i>Not afraid</i>	47%	541	38%	128
<i>Not afraid at all</i>	21%	239	14%	47

As with feelings of safety and worry of future victimization, crime victims were also more likely to see crime as a big problem on campus when compared to non-victims. Crime victims were almost twice as likely to see crime as either a very big problem or a big problem on campus (45%) when compared to non-victims (23%). Thus, while most students did not see crime on campus as a big problem, a nontrivial number of crime victims saw crime on campus as a problem.

Crime on Campus (excludes uncertain)	Victimized			
	No	Freq.	Yes	Freq.
<i>A very big problem</i>	3%	30	4%	11

<i>A big problem</i>	19%	172	41%	108
<i>Not a big problem</i>	70%	627	51%	135
<i>Not a problem at all</i>	7%	65	3%	9

Finally, victimization had a demonstrable impact on student behaviors while on campus. Table 32 reports the difference between victimized and non-victimized respondents on whether or not their activities on campus have been affected by their fear of crime. As can be seen, crime victims were less likely to report that they never let their fear of crime affect their activities while on campus (50%) when compared to non-victims (66%). In fact, crime victims were more likely to report that their activities on campus were impacted by their fear of crime either most of the time, some of the time, or occasionally when compared to non-victims.

Table 32: Activities on Campus by Victimization (N=1437)				
How often campus activities affected by fear of crime?	Victimized			
	No	Freq.	Yes	Freq.
<i>Most of the time</i>	1%	15	3%	11
<i>Some of the time</i>	10%	105	14%	48
<i>Occasionally</i>	23%	257	32%	107
<i>Never</i>	66%	727	50%	167

In addition to altering their campus activities, crime victims were also more likely to report carrying something on their person for self defense while on campus. If a respondent reported carrying any items for self defense (e.g., mace, knife, keys in a defensive manner, etc. - see Table 27), they were

considered to be carrying an item for self defense for the purpose of this table. As can be seen, nearly one-half of the crime victims carried at least one item for self defense, while only one-quarter of non-victims reported doing so.

	Victimized			
Carry item for defense	Yes	Freq.	No	Freq.
<i>Yes</i>	75%	996	51%	170
<i>No</i>	25%	339	49%	165

From these results, it appears that being a crime victim is related to both students' perceptions and behaviors. Crime victims in this survey were less likely to feel safe while on campus, more likely to worry about being a future crime victim, and more likely to see crime as a big problem on campus compared to non-victims. In addition, crime victims were more likely to report that their fear of crime impacted their activities on campus, and were more likely to carry at least one item for self defense when compared to non-victims. All told, it appears that at least part of the variation in students' perceptions of, and behavior related to, campus safety is related to whether or not respondents were victims of a crime in the previous semester.

University Services

Awareness and Use of University Services

As another objective, the Campus Safety Survey sought to assess student awareness of university services and to measure student satisfaction with those services. We first inquired as to whether students knew about a variety of services. We asked about services that were and were not offered by UML to test the reliability of student responses. We found quite a bit of uncertainty about many services at the

university. While most students knew about the blue light/emergency phones, the student services escort, and university counseling services, there were many university services of which students were unaware. For example, only about half of the respondents were aware of the self defense classes and online safety advisories offered by the University Police Department, and only one-quarter were aware of the engraving services offered to prevent theft of items and aid in recovery should items be stolen. In addition, a nontrivial number of students indicated awareness of services that do not exist on campus, such as campus watch (36 percent), a public address system (30 percent), and a text messaging alert system²⁴ (50 percent). In sum, there was a considerable lack of awareness or uncertainty around many of the services the university offered its students related to crime prevention or victimization.

	Yes	Freq.	No	Freq.	Don't Know	Freq.
<i>Student Services Escort (N=1552)</i>	89%	1374	<1%	11	11%	167
<i>Emergency/Blue Light Phones (N=1555)</i>	87%	1353	2%	23	12%	179
<i>Counseling Services (N=1550)</i>	84%	1305	<1%	14	15%	231
<i>Drug and Alcohol Awareness Programs (N=1543)</i>	53%	815	4%	65	43%	663
<i>Self-Defense Classes (N=1542)</i>	52%	799	4%	68	44%	675
<i>Student Disciplinary System (N=1541)</i>	52%	800	4%	44	50%	697
<i>Text Messaging Alert System* (N=1536)</i>	50%	772	8%	127	42%	640

²⁴ A text messaging alert system has been offered since the survey has concluded.

<i>Rape Prevention Program</i> (N=1539)	49%	747	5%	73	47%	719
<i>Online Campus Safety Advisories</i> (N=1550)	47%	724	4%	55	50%	771
<i>Campus Watch Program*</i> (N=1545)	36%	558	6%	86	58%	901
<i>Public Address System*</i> (N=1542)	30%	460	11%	164	60%	918
<i>Crime Tips Anonymous Hotline*</i> (N=1537)	26%	392	7%	102	68%	1043
<i>Engraving of personal property</i> (N=1530)	23%	347	7%	100	71%	1083
<i>Metal Detectors*</i> (N=1535)	6%	88	51%	785	43%	662
*Indicates a service not offered by UML during the survey period						

Much later in the survey we inquired as to whether students have actually used several university services, and their satisfaction with those services. The results are presented in Tables 35 and 36. As can be seen, few students availed themselves of any of these services, with the exception of the student services escort. Just over half of the respondents indicated using the escort, and the vast majority of these were female (90 percent – analysis not shown). As for satisfaction with services used, we inquired particularly about the student services escort, university counseling services, and the campus ministry. The vast majority of the respondents were either very or somewhat satisfied with these three services when they used them.

Table 35: Actual Use of Services				
	Yes	Freq.	No	Freq.
<i>Student Services Escort</i> (N=1331)	53%	705	47%	626

<i>Online Campus Safety Advisories (N=1333)</i>	29%	387	71%	946
<i>Counseling Services (N=1332)</i>	13%	173	87%	1159
<i>Campus Ministry (N=1328)</i>	6%	81	94%	1247
<i>Emergency/Blue Light Phones (N=1333)</i>	3%	41	97%	1292
<i>Self-Defense Classes (N=1331)</i>	2%	26	98%	1305
<i>Engraving of personal property (N=1331)</i>	<1%	4	100%	1327

Table 36: Satisfaction With Services Used								
	Very Satisfied	N	Somewhat Satisfied	N	Somewhat Unsatisfied	N	Very Unsatisfied	N
<i>Student Services Escort (N=708)</i>	56%	399	35%	247	5%	37	4%	25
<i>Counseling Services (N=175)</i>	45%	79	37%	64	12%	21	6%	11
<i>Campus Ministry (N=84)</i>	66%	55	27%	23	6%	5	1%	1

For those students who had used the three services we about which we inquired, we also asked whether the student would use that service again. The vast majority of students would use each respective service again. These results are unsurprising, given that the overall satisfaction with these services was high for students who used them.

	Would use again	Freq.	Would not use again	Freq.
<i>Student Services Escort</i> (N=708)	97%	685	3%	23
<i>Counseling Services</i> (N=175)	78%	136	22%	39
<i>Campus Ministry</i> (N=84)	92%	77	8%	7

For those students who did not use the services about which we inquired, we asked them if they would use these services if they felt they needed them. For nearly all of these services, the majority of respondents indicated that they would use that service if they knew of it or they felt they needed it. The only service that would not be used by a majority of students was the campus ministry. When asked why, a large percentage of respondents indicated that they were not religious persons or they would seek religious services off campus (45 percent—results not shown). These results, combined with the results from Table 36, suggest that several university services would be utilized more often if students were made aware of them.

	Yes	Freq.	No	Freq.
<i>Engraving Services</i> (N=1318)	68%	891	32%	427
<i>Student Services Escort</i> (N=625)	60%	374	40%	251
<i>Self Defense Classes</i>	48%	626	52%	681

(N=1307)				
<i>Counseling Services</i> (N=1149)	70%	806	30%	343
<i>Campus Ministry</i> (N=1242)	39%	480	61%	762

University Police

In addition to campus services, we asked several questions pertaining to the University Police Department (UPD). We first inquired as to whether students knew the emergency and nonemergency numbers of the UPD. Most of the students who answered this question knew the emergency number to the UPD, but not the nonemergency number (Table 39). Also notice that the number of students actually answering this question is quite small, so it is likely that students who did not know the answer simply left the question blank. If one makes this assumption, the percentages of students who do know the emergency and nonemergency numbers to the UPD is quite small: 27 percent and 5 percent, respectively.

Table 39: Knowledge of UPD numbers		
Emergency number (N=542)	Percent	Frequency
<i>Correct</i>	67%	363
<i>Incorrect</i>	33%	179
Nonemergency number (N=201)		
<i>Correct</i>	35%	70
<i>Incorrect</i>	65%	131

Regarding perceptions of the UPD, we specifically asked how good a job the UPD was doing in preventing crime. The vast majority of students (83 percent) feel the university police are doing a very good or good job in crime prevention. We also asked about satisfaction with UPD. Again, the results

were positive, with the vast majority of students (86 percent) either very or somewhat satisfied with the UPD.

Table 40: How good a job are university police doing in preventing crime on campus? (N=1320)		
	Percent	Frequency
<i>A very good job</i>	13%	171
<i>A good job</i>	70%	920
<i>A poor job</i>	15%	192
<i>A very poor job</i>	3%	37

Table 41: Satisfaction with UPD (N=1320)		
	Percent	Frequency
<i>Very satisfied</i>	33%	433
<i>Somewhat satisfied</i>	53%	693
<i>Somewhat dissatisfied</i>	11%	138
<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	4%	56

Given that satisfaction with the UPD may differ for those students who actually had a contact with the department during the reference period, the survey asked if students had such a contact (which excludes calling the UPD for information), and their perceptions and satisfaction of their most recent contact. Just over one-fifth of students (22 percent) reported a contact with the UPD. For those respondents, 83 percent were either very or somewhat satisfied with their contact, and 89 percent reported that the police treated them very or somewhat fairly, as reported in Tables 42 and 43.

Table 42: Satisfaction with UPD contact (N=295)	

	Percent	Frequency
<i>Very satisfied</i>	54%	160
<i>Somewhat satisfied</i>	29%	85
<i>Somewhat dissatisfied</i>	12%	36
<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	5%	14

Table 43: Perception of treatment with UPD contact (N=296)		
	Percent	Frequency
<i>Very fairly</i>	63%	185
<i>Somewhat fairly</i>	26%	78
<i>Somewhat unfairly</i>	67%	20
<i>Very unfairly</i>	4%	13

For those students who were dissatisfied with their contact, we asked them to indicate why from a checklist of options (Table 44). Most of the dissatisfaction appears to be related to how the students were treated by a UPD officer, specifically that the officer was rude or that the officer failed to take a student's problem seriously.

Table 44: Dissatisfied with UPD contact because...* (N=50)		
	Percent	Frequency
<i>Officer treated you rudely</i>	53%	27
<i>Officer did not take problem seriously</i>	46%	23
<i>Officer would not listen to you</i>	30%	15
<i>Officer took some action you did</i>	28%	14

<i>not agree with</i>		
<i>Poor response time</i>	14%	7
<i>Officer harassed or threatened you</i>	6%	3
*Percentages do not total 100 because respondent could check all that apply		

Overall, it appears that students have quite a bit of uncertainty as to whether the university offers a variety of services. When asked if students would use services if they knew they were available, a majority indicated they would. This suggests that a variety of services would be utilized more frequently if the university raised awareness of their availability across the student body. As for those students who utilize university services, the vast majority are satisfied with those services and would use them again.

The UPD also received high marks from the students. Most students think the UPD are doing a good job in preventing crime on campus and are satisfied overall with their service. Even for students who had a contact with the UPD during the reference period, most were satisfied with that contact and felt the officers had treated them fairly.

Opportunities for Prevention & Intervention

Another aim of the Campus Safety Survey was to assess areas where the university might be able to impact students' risk of victimization in a positive manner, without laying blame. Students who drink alcohol or use drugs, for example, are at an increased risk of being a crime victim. Thus, the survey measured a number of risk factors for victimization to identify opportunities for prevention.

We first inquired as to how many nights a week students are "out partying". More than one-half (56%) of the respondents indicated that they do not spend any nights out partying. For those students who did, most spent only one (22%) or two (15%) nights out partying. Only seven percent of students were out partying three or more nights a week.

Table 45: Number of nights out partying (N=1328)		
	Percent	Frequency
No Nights	56%	741
1 Night	22%	295
2 Nights	15%	200
3 Nights	6%	74
4 Nights	<1%	12
5 Nights	<1%	4
6 Nights	<1%	2
7 Nights	0%	0

As a follow-up, students were asked where they did their partying—either on or off campus—and how often other people used alcohol or drugs at the parties they attended (Tables 46 and 47). The majority of students (58%) attended parties off campus. Alcohol use at parties was the norm, but drug use was not. For alcohol, over one-half of the respondents (53%) indicated that it is used by other people all the time at parties. Nearly another one-third of respondents (32%) indicated that alcohol was used most of the time. Nearly one-half of students (48%) say drugs are used by others at parties none of the time, and nearly two-fifths (39%) report drugs are used only occasionally.

Table 46: If partying, where? (N=586)		
	Percent	Frequency
<i>Mostly off campus</i>	58%	338
<i>About equally between on and off campus</i>	26%	151
<i>Mostly on campus</i>	17%	97

	Alcohol	Freq.	Drugs	Freq.
<i>All the time</i>	53%	312	4%	22
<i>Most of the time</i>	32%	185	10%	57
<i>Occasionally</i>	12%	67	39%	227
<i>None of the time</i>	4%	21	48%	279

In addition to asking about the peers' substance use, we inquired directly about the respondent's alcohol and drug use. For alcohol, we followed the standard approach and asked about frequency of alcohol use and amount of alcohol consumed in an average drinking episode. Over one-third of students (36%) reported not drinking alcohol at all during an average week, and another one-third (33%) reported a frequency of less than once per week. For students who averaged drinking alcohol at least once per week, most reported 1-2 time per week (25%), with much fewer (7%) reporting 3-4 or 5 or more times per week.

	Percent	Frequency
<i>Never</i>	36%	479
<i>Less than once per week</i>	33%	434
<i>1-2 times per week</i>	25%	324
<i>3-4 times per week</i>	6%	75
<i>5 or more times per week</i>	1%	13

We also inquired how many drinks students consume on average when they drank. The largest percentage of students (29%) consumed less than one drink in an average drinking episode. For those that consume at least one drink, about one-quarter report consuming 1-2 or 3-4 drinks in an average drinking episode. Less than one-fifth of students (19%) consume 5 or more drinks in one evening.²⁵ Combined with the results from Table 48, these results suggest that UML students drink infrequently in any given week, and when they do, the number of drinks consumed is rather low (less than two).

	Percent	Frequency
<i>Less than one drink</i>	29%	331
<i>1-2 drinks</i>	26%	298
<i>3-4 drinks</i>	26%	290
<i>5 or more drinks</i>	19%	208

For drug use, we inquired as to whether respondents used an illegal drug in the preceding semester, and if so, what drugs they used. Very few students reported using (5%) drugs in the preceding semester. Of the students who reported using drugs, the most frequently used drug was using more prescription drugs than prescribed (67%), followed by hallucinogens (45%), and cocaine or crack (23%).

	Percent	Frequency
<i>Yes</i>	5%	66
<i>No</i>	95%	1195

²⁵ The thresholds for binge drinking are typically defined as 5 or more drinks in 2 hours for men and 4 or more drinks in 2 hours for women.

Which of the Following Drugs (for those who answered yes)* (N=66)		
<i>Prescription (more than prescribed)</i>	67%	44
<i>Hallucinogens</i>	45%	30
<i>Cocaine/Crack</i>	23%	15
<i>Speed/Meth/Ice/Uppers</i>	14%	9
<i>Downers/Barbituates/Benzos</i>	6%	4
<i>Sniffing/Huffing glue, aerosols, etc</i>	3%	2
<i>Heroin</i>	3%	2
On average, how often use marijuana (N=1323)		
Never	88%	1170
Less than once per week	6%	79
1-2 times per week	2%	28
3-4 times per week	>1%	11
5 or more times per week	3%	35

We asked separately about marijuana use, as some research indicates that college-age respondents may not consider this an illegal drug. As can be seen from the table, the vast majority of respondents never used marijuana (88%). Of those who did, the largest percentage of respondents reporting using this drug less than once per week.

The result of our sexual activity question is reported in Table 51. From the table it appears that the vast majority of students (74%) did not engage in sexual activity while under the influence of drugs or alcohol during the previous semester. Of those who did, most indicated that this happened two or three times (10%).

Table 51. Number of times under influence of drugs/alcohol while engaging in sex (N=1314)

	Percent	Frequency
<i>None</i>	74%	978
<i>1</i>	7%	96
<i>2-3</i>	10%	128
<i>3-4</i>	3%	33
<i>6 or more</i>	6%	79

In sum, these results present a picture of UML students that is quite contrary to the common stereotype of college students. UML students do not spend many nights out partying, nor do they drink alcohol very often in an average week, if at all. Drug use, including marijuana, is rare amongst UML students. What’s more, UML students do not frequently engage in risky activities while under the influence of drugs or alcohol such as engaging in sexual activity. These numbers should be promoted around campus as a means to combat underage drinking and illegal drug use, so that students can see that these behaviors are, if anything, atypical of UML students.

Recommendations

Based off of the results of the survey, we have a number of recommendations that build upon the existing strengths of UML and address student concerns highlighted in their responses. These recommendations are made to compliment efforts the university has made in the time since the survey, such as the Gotta Be Here campaign. The ultimate goal is to help students feel and be safer at UML and, if a victimization is experienced, insure that they are aware of how to access services.

- **Increase awareness of services the university already provides related to crime prevention.**

The survey results indicate that several services such as self defense classes, online safety advisories, engraving of personal property, and others are not well known or utilized by students. For those services that are often used, students report being satisfied and would use these services

again. It is likely that this would extend to the less utilized services as well. Awareness raising efforts should be designed in collaboration with the university's Office of Public Affairs and informed by efforts at other urban campuses so that efforts increase feelings of safety and prevention efforts instead of increasing feelings of fear. In part, this can be done by focusing the campaign not on crime prevention at UML, but on students taking steps in life to keep themselves and their property secure.

- **Continue to improve lighting of the university at night**, particularly for walkways, parking lots, and bus stops. The survey results demonstrate that students feel the least safe in these areas, and improvement of lighting has been demonstrated to deter criminal behavior and lower victimizations (Welsh & Farrington, 2008). The university could also increase its police presence or security personnel in these areas to help students feel safer.
- **Reduce signs of disorder, particularly damaged university property and keep nonstudents from hanging around campus.** The survey results indicate that those students who perceive more signs of disorder are more likely to feel unsafe, were more likely to worry about being a crime victim in the coming semester, and were more likely to carry an item for self-defense. Criminological research (some of which has been conducted in Lowell) indicates that places with more signs of disorder are also more likely to have increased rates of crime, as such conditions send signals to would-be criminals that the area lacks capable guardians and is unprotected (Kelling & Coles, 1998). Crime prevention efforts which have focused on reducing and eliminating signs of disorder have been successful in lowering crime.
- **Continued collaboration between UML and Lowell Police Departments to ensure student safety when traveling between campuses.** The survey results demonstrate that students hold UML accountable for their safety even when traveling between campuses. The university has already worked with Lowell to install cameras and blue-light phones on the University Bridge, and similar projects should be pursued in the future.

- **Promote bystander awareness and provide students information on what to do when they witness a crime.** This is particularly important for dorm Residence Assistants and Residence Directors, since the survey results indicate that students come to these campus leaders often when they are victims of crime. There are a number of bystander education programs available nationally which could be adapted into orientation, freshman seminars, or other appropriate venues. This would build upon the *Bringing in the Bystander* project which has been implemented on campus the past two years and the new efforts underway in the College of Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences to make a bystander component available for the freshman seminar.
- **Encourage reporting of crime on campus to the University Police Department** given that survey results show most on campus crimes goes unreported. This should include consideration of mechanisms such as anonymous tip lines and exploring any technological innovations for reporting such as text messaging.
- **Strengthen support services for victims who do report.** Prior victimization is one of the strongest predictors of future victimization, especially in the short term. As the survey showed, a number of students experienced more than one victimization in just a single semester. Those who have been victimized may disproportionately benefit from support upon reporting to police or presenting to other UML services for help. This support can take the form of tangible changes victims can make (for example, in the case of a break in, target hardening like changing locks) and emotional support. Care should be taken to provide constructive feedback in a manner that does not place blame on victims.
- **Use findings on substance use patterns to strengthen ongoing efforts to reduce students drinking and drug use.** The survey revealed that most UML students drink little or not at all on a regular basis and very few use drugs. Such social norms marketing techniques has been shown

to be effective in combating binge drinking among college students (Dejong & Linkenbach, 1999).

- **Field a shortened version of the Campus Safety and Well-Being Survey each year or two years.** This would allow UML to monitor campus trends in victimization, improvements in campus services, and student perceptions of safety issues on campus. For example, it may be important to track if victimization is changing with changing technology – if UML computers are increasingly used to perpetrate victimization, then the university could explore prevention efforts related to that.
- **Reach out to student groups to hear specific concerns regarding issues of campus safety.** It may be especially important to reach out to the Pride Alliance to seek their members feedback regarding the finding of increased victimization of the bisexual student population (although that finding should be interpreted with caution, as this was a one time survey and the sample size of bisexual students was limited).

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