

RSP 1: Student Safety and Mental Health Survey Summarized Report

Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association
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Introduction & Demographic

The Representative Survey Platform (RSP) survey on Student Safety and Mental Health received a total of 651 responses. The report reflects the answers of the 97.45% of students (n = 580) who indicated that they wanted to answer the survey questions about the Waterloo main campus. Throughout the report, the data is broken down by identity demographics that students provided when they signed up for the Representative Survey Platform (Table 1). This is important to include because one's identity can impact their feelings and perception around safety.

Table 1: Summary of Population Size by Identity Demographics

Identity Demographic	# of respondents who selected "Yes"	# of respondents who selected "No"	Total # of respondents
Do you identify as a member of a racialized group?	n = 287	n = 293	N = 580
Do consider yourself to be a person with a disability ?	n = 43	n = 537	N = 580
Are you an International student ?	n = 48	n = 532	N = 580

For gender identity, most students indicated they were either cisgender woman or cisgender man. Thus, to increase the sample size of respondents who did not fit into either one of these categories, we grouped anyone who selected nonbinary, trans woman, trans man, other (including gender diverse, gender fluid and gender queer) or any combination of those identities into the broad category of gender non-conforming (Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of Population Size by Gender Identity Demographics

Gender Identity	# of respondents
Cisgender women	n = 381
Cisgender men	n = 168
Gender non-conforming	n = 31
Total number of respondents	N = 580

Defining Safety

We recognize that there are many different components that make up safety. We are choosing to conceptualize safety broadly to include three main aspects:



Personal safety: freedom from physical harm and threat of physical harm, and freedom from hostility, aggression, and harassment.



Emotional safety: the visceral feeling of being accepted and embraced for who you truly are and what you feel and need



Psychological safety: the belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes.

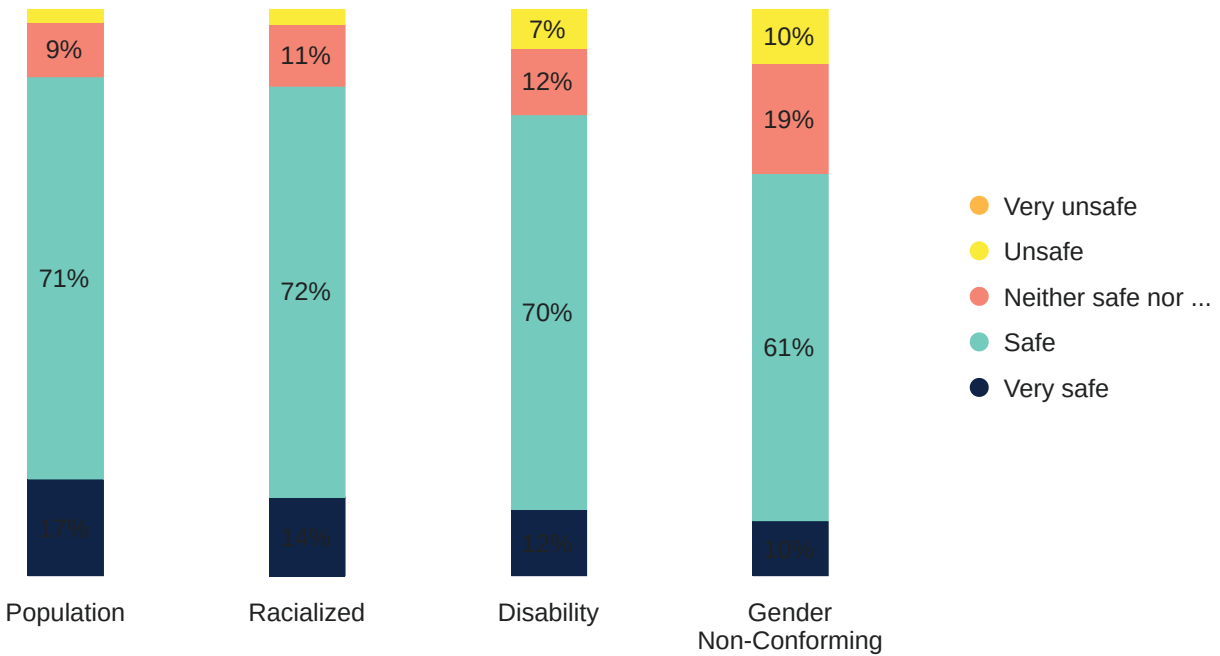
Key Findings

Safety Perceptions

In general, 71% of respondents indicated they feel safe and secure on campus, followed by 17% who said very safe (Figure 1)

Racialized students, students with disabilities, and students grouped as gender non-conforming experience heightened concerns for their safety on campus compared to the general population (Figure 1)

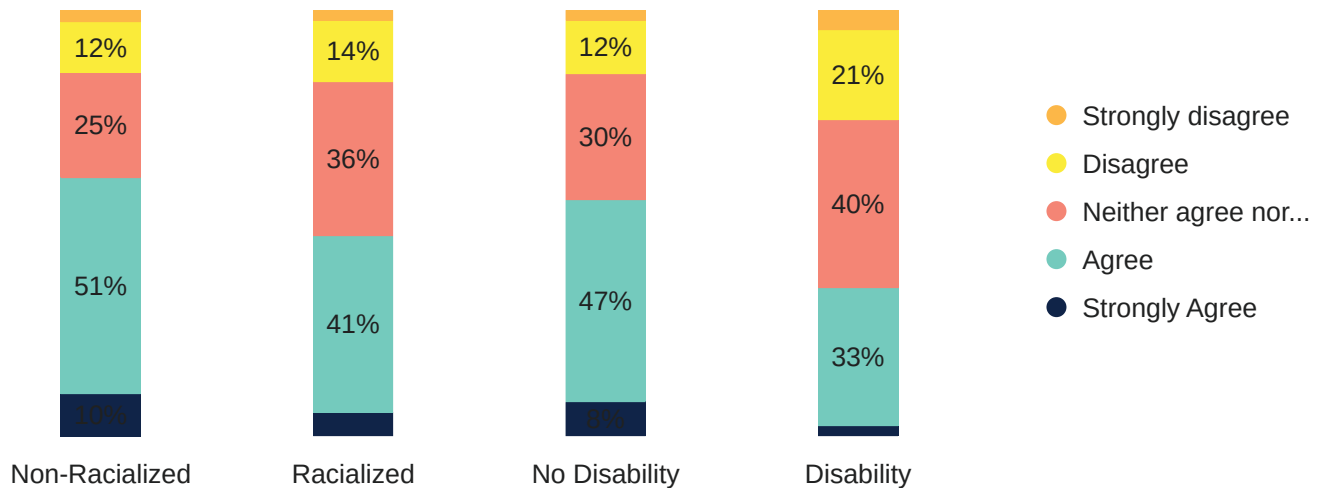
Figure 1: Demographic breakdown of how safe and secure respondents feel on campus



Racialized distinctions: 41% of racialized students agree that UW prioritizes their safety vs. 51% of non-racialized students who agree that UW prioritizes their safety (Figure 2)

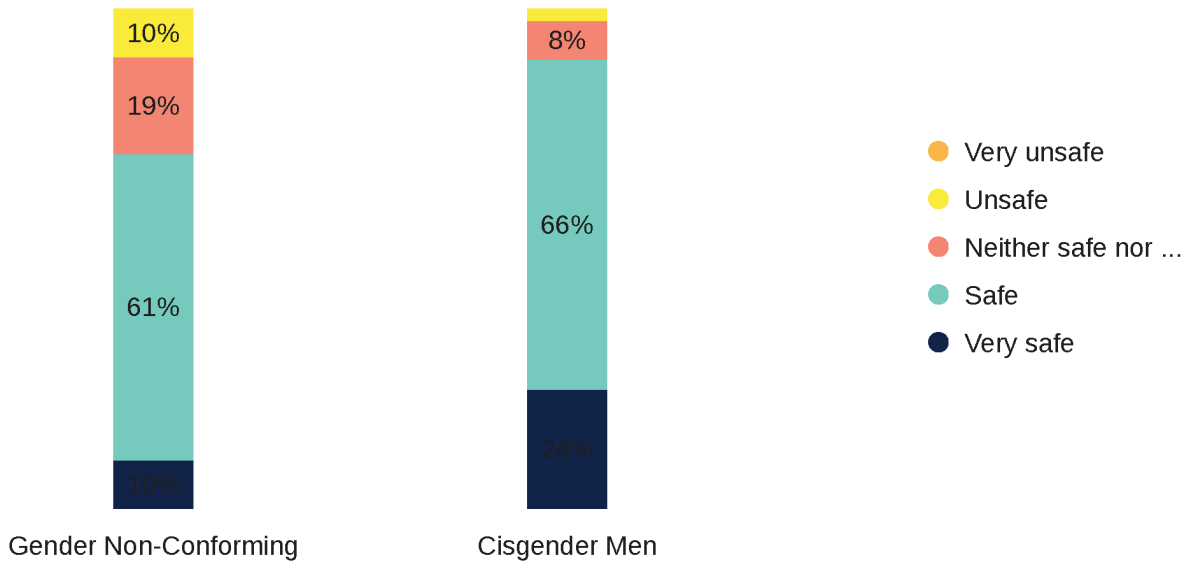
Disability distinctions: 33% of students with a disability agree that UW prioritizes their safety vs. 47% of students with no disability agree that UW prioritizes their safety (Figure 2)

Figure 2: Demographic breakdown of responses to the statement "I feel UW prioritizes my safety"



Gender identity distinctions: 10% of students grouped as gender non-conforming felt very safe on campus vs. 24% of cisgender men who felt very safe on campus (Figure 3)

Figure 3: How safe and secure respondents feel on campus by gender identity



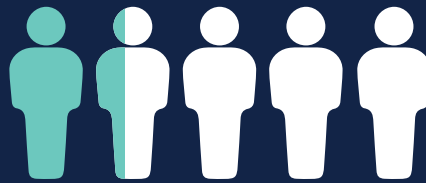
Day vs. Night Safety

Safety concerns at night are more pressing than during the day, with 16% of students feeling unsafe at night compared to only 1% during the day

Top Safety Concerns

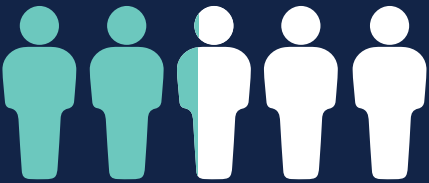


52% Theft

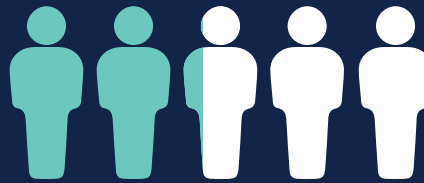


31% Verbal Harassment

Top Areas of Concern



44% Bus/Parking lots



43% Walking Paths

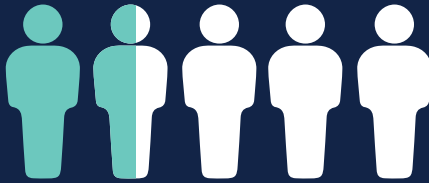
Top Contributors to Feeling Unsafe



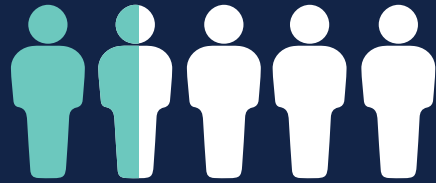
66% Walking alone at night



63% Being in the presence of strangers at night



36% Awareness about campus safety measures



34% Evening Classes

Safety and Mental Health

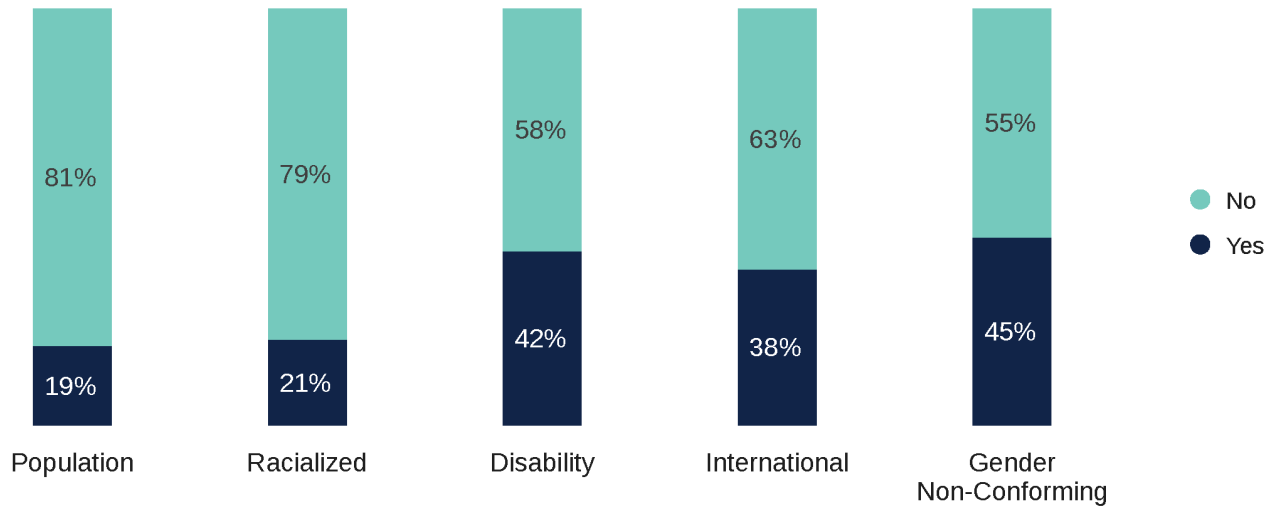


Most students (**81%**) said that concerns about safety did not negatively impact their mental health (Figure 4)



The entire population experienced relatively low negative impacts (**19%**), however, the negative impact is higher for students with disabilities, those grouped as gender non-conforming, international students and racialized students (Figure 4)

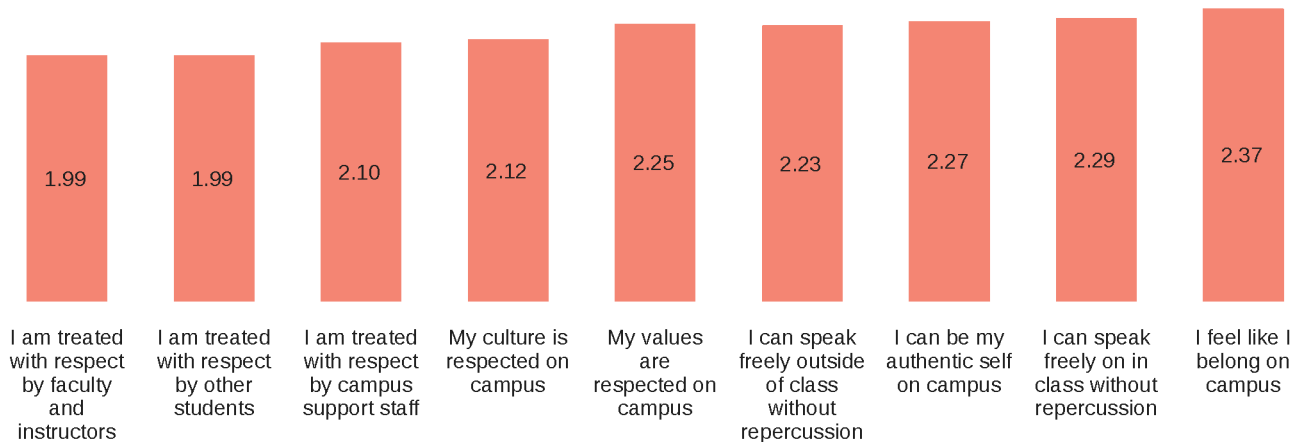
Figure 4: Responses to the question "Do concerns about your safety on campus negatively impact your mental health?" by demographics



Safety, Identity and Belonging

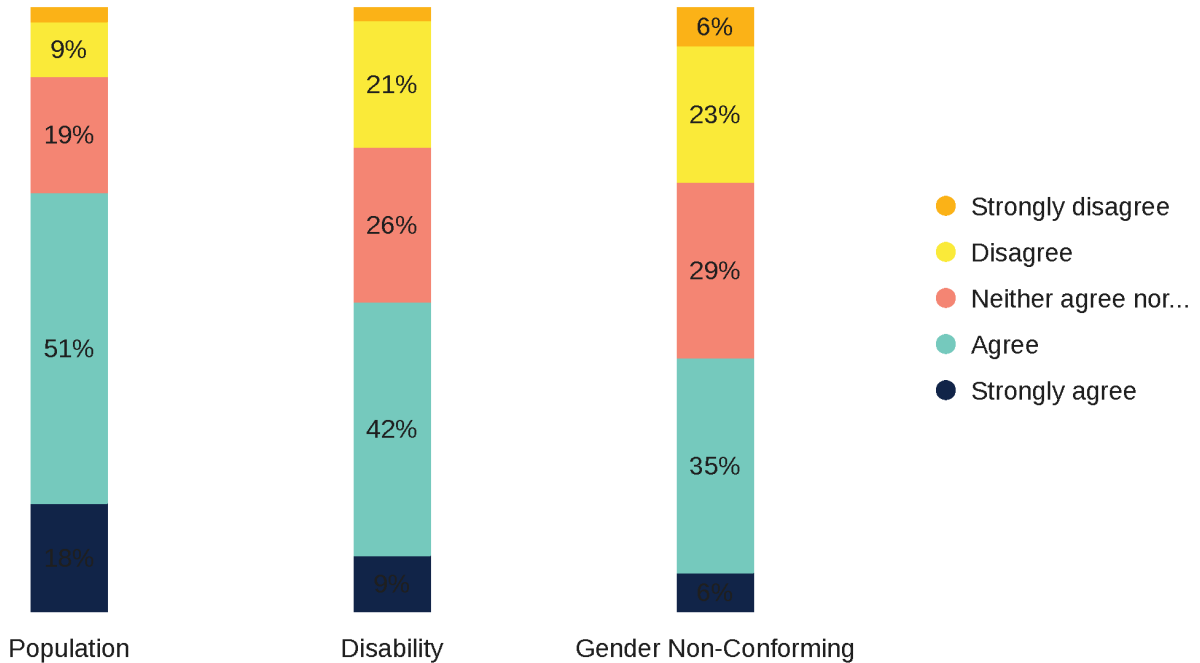
Students generally agreed with positive statements about belonging on campus, with nuanced responses for students identifying as having a disability and gender non-conforming students (Figure 5, Figure 6)

Figure 5: Average rating of statements about respect and belonging on campus



Keep in mind: Figure 5 average ratings are based on the mean response for each statement, with 1 being strongly agree, 3 being neither agree nor disagree and 5 being strongly disagree. Thus, the lower the average rating, the more agreement from students.

Figure 6: Responses to the statement "I can be my authentic self on campus" by demographics



When asked what they felt would help create a more connected and inclusive UW community:

71% selected social events to bring students together

59% selected opportunities to build stronger relationships with faculty and instructors

37% selected opportunities to build stronger relationships with support staff

Further Insights

The full RSP 1: Student Safety and Mental Health Survey Report can also be found on wusa.ca complete with the expanded key findings and corresponding recommendations.