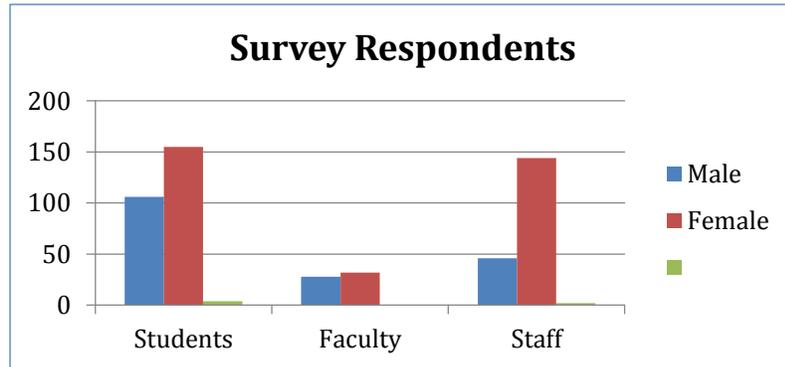


Swarthmore College Public Safety Survey – Spring 2014

Preliminary Findingsⁱ

In spring 2014 Public Safety invited students, faculty, and staff to share their perceptions and opinions concerning safety on campus on a brief, online survey. An open link to the survey was sent to the faculty-staff and student listservs in March, with a reminder sent several days later. A total of 522



individuals responded: 60 faculty members, 192 staff members, and 266 students (not all indicated status), representing about 19% of students and 26% of employees. While these response rates are somewhat low for Swarthmore, the findings are useful in beginning to identify areas of concern.

Nearly two-thirds (65%) of respondents indicating that they feel “Very safe” on campus, with a small number (5%) feeling somewhat or very unsafe. These overall ratings did not differ by type of respondent (student versus faculty/staff), or by genderⁱⁱ.

How safe do you feel on campus in general?

Answer	Response	%
Very safe	336	65.2%
Somewhat safe	154	29.9%
Somewhat unsafe	18	3.5%
Very unsafe	7	1.4%
Total	515	100.0%

A list of activities performed by Public Safety staff was presented, and respondents were asked to indicate the importance of each one. Almost all of the items were rated as important by over half the respondents. **The most important activities** (rated as “Very important” by more than half the respondents) were:

Medical Response

Responding to incident reports

Handling lockouts (admit to residence hall, building, or room)

Delivering emergency messages

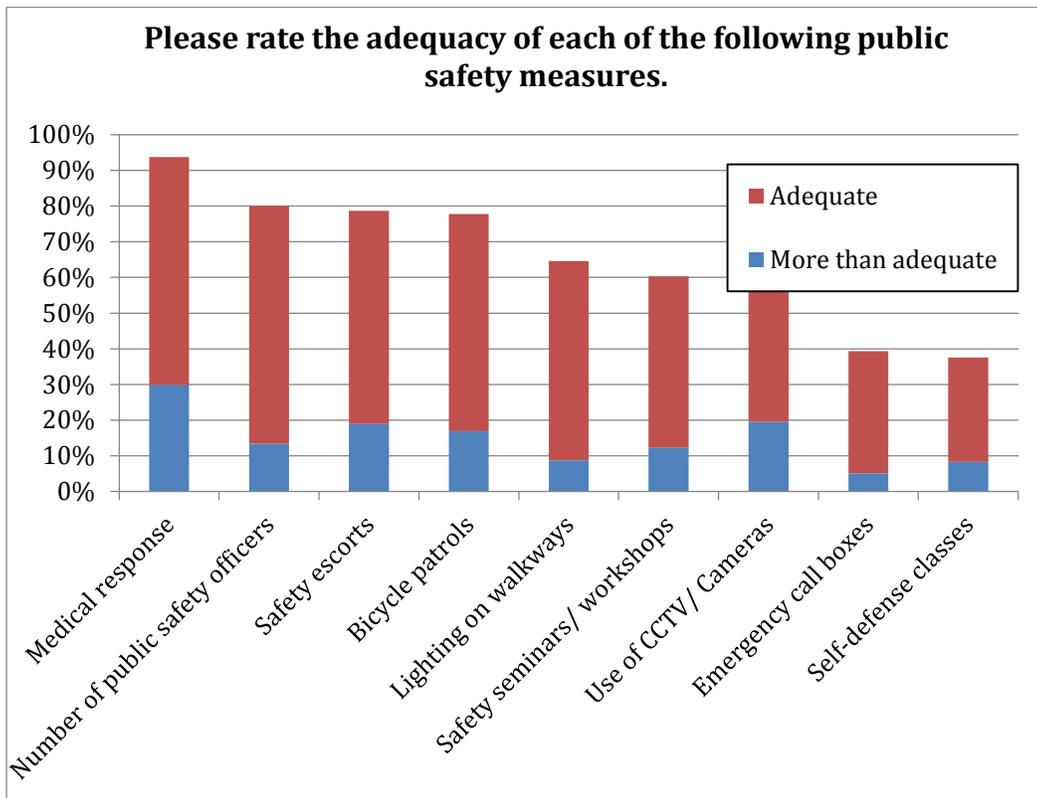
Those activities rated as **least important** (rated as “unimportant” or “very unimportant” by more than half) were:

Parking enforcement

Adopt-A-Dorm Program

With the exception of *Handling lockouts*, and *Medical Response*, faculty and staff perceived each of the activities to be more important than did students. A pattern of differences was also found by gender, with females viewing each as more important than males.

Ratings of the adequacy of different safety measures are presented in the chart below. Respondents were most favorable in rating the Medical Response of Public Safety staff, with over 90% indicating that it was “Adequate” or “More than adequate.” Emergency call boxes and self-defense classes were the least well-rated.



When asked about their experiences with the **online form** for reporting criminal activity or sexual misconduct, most respondents indicated that they were not aware of the form (41%) or were aware of it but hadn’t seen it (44%). Only a small proportion (3%) reported having used the form.

Interest in having **digital message displays** or flat screen monitors on campus that would provide general information and other information in the event of an emergency was mixed, with about a third of respondents not at all interested.

Answer		Response	%
Very interested		76	14.7%
Interested		106	20.5%
Somewhat interested		160	30.9%
Not at all interested		175	33.8%
Total		517	100.0%

Respondents were asked about feelings of safety in seventeen different locations on campus during the daytime and nighttime. For all respondents regardless of gender or category (students, faculty, or staff) the top four locations rated as safe during the *daytime* were:

- Front of Parrish**
- Kohlberg Courtyard**
- Magill Walk**
- Outside of Sharples**

These were at the top of the *nighttime* locations for safety as well, though some other locations were intermingled.

The locations rated as the most UNSAFE were likewise consistent across categories of respondent, and times of day. These were:

- Crum Woods**
- Train Station Tunnel**
- Sharpless Tunnel**
- Fraternity Row**

Although the locations' rankings of safety were similar across groups, there were differences in perceptions of safety. **Ratings of safety differed by gender** for *daytime* ratings of the **Train Station Tunnel, Sharpless Tunnel, Outside of Sharples, Magill Walk, and Woolman**; and for nighttime ratings of **every location**. In each of these comparisons, ratings of safety by women were lower than the ratings by men.

For about half the locations in the *daytime*, ratings of safety were different for students and faculty/staff. In all comparisons where there were differences, ratings of the safety by faculty and staff were lower than the ratings by students.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Kohlberg Courtyard | Outside of Sharples | Athletic Fields |
| Train Station Tunnel | Lang Music Circle | Crum Woods |
| Sharpless Tunnel | Magill Walk | |

Except for Palmer-Pittinger-Roberts, ratings of safety in the *nighttime* for **all locations** differed by category of respondent. Again, faculty and staff offered lower safety ratings than did students.

ⁱ All comparisons noted as different used the appropriate independent samples t-test, depending on whether assumptions about homogeneity of variance were met. The $p < .05$ threshold was used in determining statistical significance.

ii There were too few respondents selecting the open gender option to include in the gender comparison.