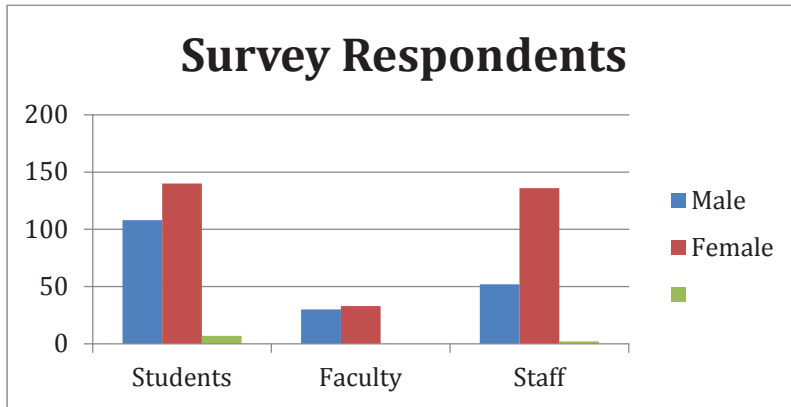


Swarthmore College Public Safety Survey – Spring 2016

In spring 2016 Public Safety invited students, faculty, and staff to share their perceptions and opinions concerning safety on campus on a brief, online survey. This survey was first used in 2014, and only minor changes were made to the current instrument. An open link to the survey was sent to the



faculty-staff and student listservs in March, with several reminders sent over the next few weeks. A total of 517 individuals responded: 64 faculty members, 195 staff members, and 257 students (not all indicated status), representing about 16% of students, 26% of faculty, and 25% of staff. These response rates, although low for Swarthmore, are similar to the 2014 survey and

provide information useful in identifying areas of concern.

Three quarters of respondents indicate that they feel “Very safe” on campus, with a small number (2%) feeling somewhat or very unsafe. This compares favorably with 2014, when 65% reported feeling “Very safe.” These overall ratings did not differ by type of respondent (student versus faculty/staff); however, they do differ by gender, with women feeling less safe than menⁱ. The average ratingⁱⁱ of feeling safe was 3.68 on the 4-point scale for women, and 3.84 for men.

How safe do you feel on campus in general?

Answer	Response	%
Very safe	387	75.6%
Somewhat safe	117	22.9%
Somewhat unsafe	5	1.0%
Very unsafe	3	0.6%
Total	512	100.0%

A list of activities performed by Public Safety staff was presented, and respondents were asked to indicate the importance of each one. 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 (90% rated “Very important”)

Responding to incident reports (75%)

Handling lockouts (admit to residence hall, building, or room) (63%)

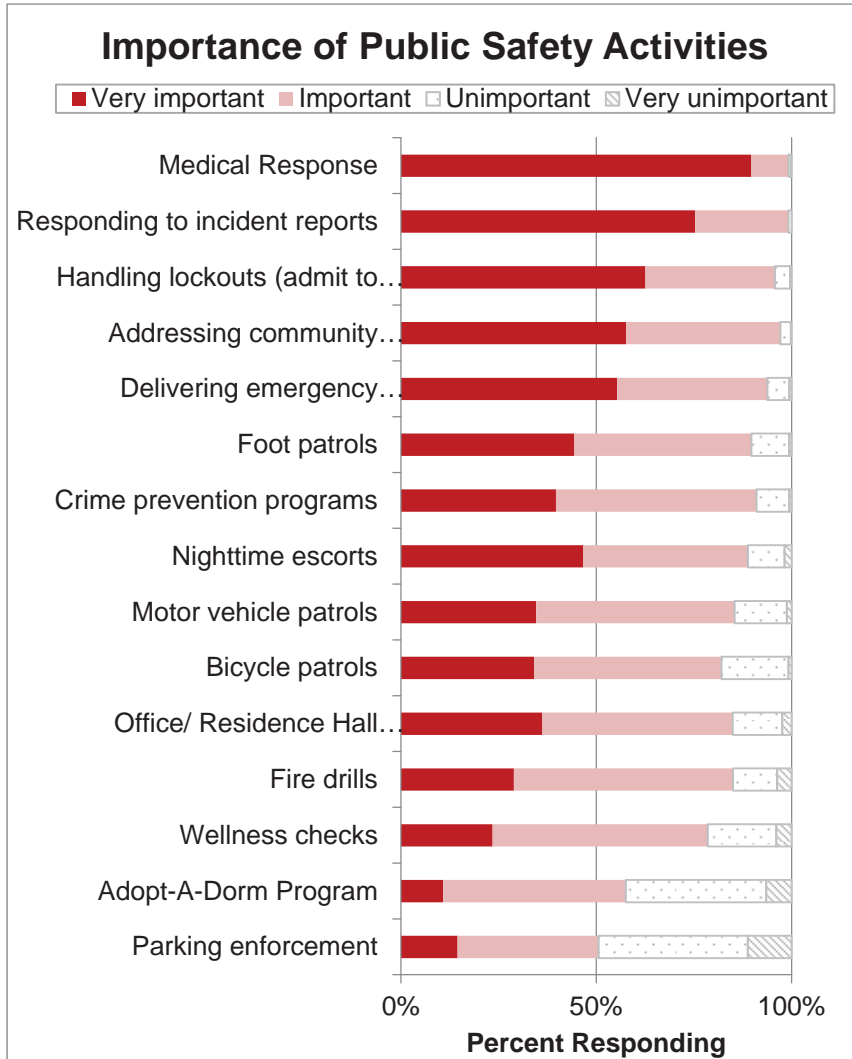
Delivering emergency messages (55%)

Addressing community concerns or requests for service (58%)

Those activities rated as **least important** (rated as “unimportant” or “very unimportant” by over 40%) were:

Parking enforcement (49% rated “Unimportant” or “Very unimportant”)

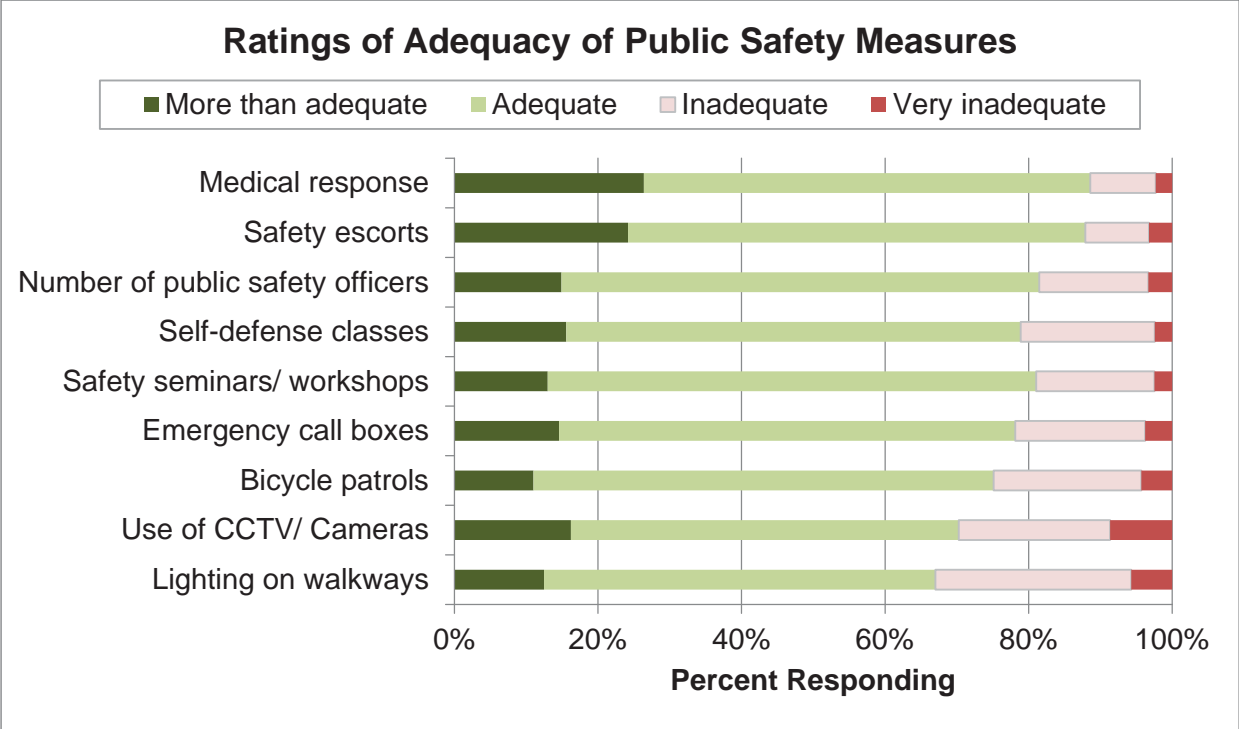
Adopt-A-Dorm Program (42%)



Ratings of importance differedⁱⁱⁱ by type of respondent, with faculty and staff viewing each activity as more important than did students, with the exceptions of *Handling lockouts*, *Medical response*, and *Addressing community concerns*. On the activity *Handling lockouts*, there was a difference, but in the other direction, with students rating this activity as more important than faculty/staff. (Ratings of the latter two activities did not differ type of respondent.)

A pattern of differences was also observed by gender, with females viewing all of the activities as more important than did males, with the exceptions of *Handling lockouts* and *Foot patrols*. Differences amounted to about a quarter of a point (on the four-point scale) or less.

Ratings of the adequacy of different safety measures performed by Public Safety are presented in the chart below. The majority of respondents providing ratings (excluding responses of “Don’t Know”) indicated that each was “Adequate” or “More than adequate.” Although only 24% provided ratings of *Safety escorts*, this measure was rated among the highest. The lowest rating was for *Lighting on walkways*.



Men and women rate these items similarly with a few exceptions. On *Lighting on walkways*, *Emergency call boxes*, and *Number of public safety officers*, women’s ratings of adequacy are lower than men’s ratings, by about a quarter point on the 4-point scale. Faculty and staff rate the adequacy of the *Number of public safety officers* and the *Use of CCTV/ Cameras* lower than do students, and rate the adequacy of *Medical response* higher.

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 (57%) or were aware of it but hadn’t seen it (29%). Only a small proportion (1%) reported having used the form. Awareness is below the level found in the 2014 survey (41% indicated that were not aware of the form).

A new question on the survey this year asked the likelihood that the respondent would contact Public Safety for each of a number of scenarios. This list is presented below in the order of the ratings of likelihood that the respondents would contact Public Safety, from most likely to least likely:

- Almost all would contact Public Safety** (90% or more responded Somewhat or Very Likely)
- Sexual assault*
- A medical incident*
- Locked out of room or office*
- A physical altercation*

The majority would contact Public Safety (50% -89% responded Somewhat or Very Likely)

Suspicious activity

Vandalism

Concern for well being

Unknown individual in the building

Violation of Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy

The fewest would contact Public Safety (Less than 50% responded Somewhat or Very Likely)

Noise or loud party

Verbal dispute

Violation of leash laws

Respondents were asked about feelings of safety in eighteen different locations on campus during the daytime and nighttime, with opportunities to write in additional locations. Just as in 2014, for all respondents regardless of gender or category (students, faculty, or staff) the top locations rated as safe during the *daytime* were:

Front of Parrish

Kohlberg Courtyard

Magill Walk

Outside of Sharples

and an item newly added in 2016 is the next highest:

Your residence hall or office space

These items were at the top of the *nighttime* locations for safety as well.

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

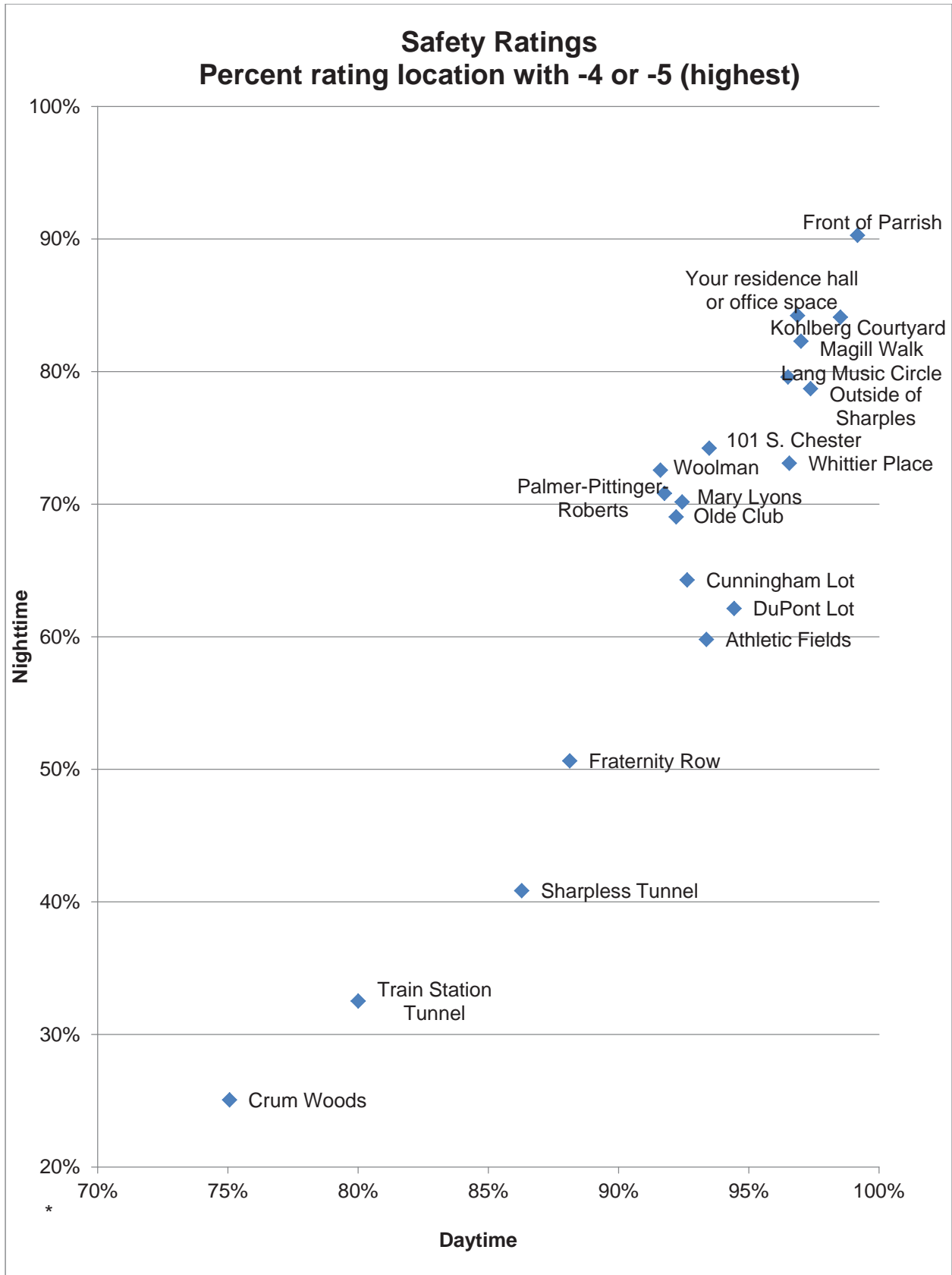
Crum Woods

Train Station Tunnel

Sharples Tunnel

Fraternity Row

Each location received lower ratings for nighttime safety than it did for daytime safety. The following chart plots locations by their ratings of daytime safety (x-axis) with ratings of nighttime safety (y-axis). The four locations noted above as feeling unsafe are outliers on this chart. The cluster of ratings reflecting **Cunningham Lot**, **DuPont Lot**, and **Athletic Fields** are also notable outliers.



* NOTE that in order to focus on the ranges reflecting responses, axes do not begin at 0.

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, Sharples Tunnel, DuPont Lot, Cunningham Lot, Fraternity Row, Athletic Fields, Woolman**, and **Your residence hall or office space**; 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 versus faculty and staff. In all comparisons where there were differences, ratings of the safety by faculty and staff were lower than the ratings by students.

Train Station Tunnel
Sharples Tunnel

Outside of Sharples
Crum Woods

Woolman
Your res hall/office

These same locations were rated differently for safety by students versus faculty/staff (again, faculty and staff offered lower safety ratings than did students) in the nighttime as well, and additional locations with different ratings included:

Front of Parrish
Kohlberg Courtyard
Whittier Place

Cunningham Lot
Olde Club
Lang Music Circle

Magill Walk
Mary Lyons

The table on the following page presents the average ratings of each location in both 2014 and 2016.

Average Ratings of Safety

Location	DAYTIME		NIGHTTIME	
	2014	2016	2014	2016
Front of Parrish	4.9	5.0	4.5	4.6
Kohlberg Courtyard	4.9	4.9	4.3	4.4
Train Station Tunnel	4.0	4.2	2.7	3.0
Sharples Tunnel	4.2	4.4	3.1	3.3
Outside of Sharples	4.8	4.9	4.2	4.2
Whittier Place	4.7	4.8	4.0	4.1
DuPont Lot	4.6	4.7	3.7	3.8
Cunningham Lot	4.6	4.7	3.6	3.8
Fraternity Row	4.4	4.5	3.4	3.5
Olde Club	4.5	4.7	3.7	4.0
Lang Music Circle	4.7	4.8	4.1	4.2
Magill Walk	4.8	4.9	4.1	4.3
Mary Lyons	4.5	4.7	3.9	4.0
Palmer-Pittinger-Roberts	4.6	4.7	3.8	4.0
Athletic Fields	4.6	4.7	3.6	3.8
Crum Woods	4.1	4.1	2.7	2.7
Woolman	4.7	4.7	3.9	4.1
101 S. Chester		4.7		4.0
Your residence hall or office space		4.8		4.4

NOTE: Ratings range from 1 to 5, with 1=Very UNSafe and 5=Very Safe.

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

ⁱⁱ Scoring for all survey items was recoded as needed, so that higher values represented stronger ratings.

ⁱⁱⁱ 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.