

HAVEN: Understanding Sexual Assault



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Introduction

Wake Forest University has always taken seriously its commitment to providing a safe and secure environment for all members of the University community. As part of renewed efforts to prevent sexual violence and other forms of sexual misconduct, in Fall 2015, the University's Title IX Office launched HAVEN, an online course for students across the Reynolda campus. The course also included two anonymous short surveys.

During the course, students learned to identify behaviors that constitute sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking; ways to prevent sexual misconduct through safe bystander intervention; the avenues available to report sexual misconduct; and the support resources available to those experiencing sexual misconduct as well as to those who may be accused of such misconduct.

HAVEN meets and exceeds the compliance requirements of Title IX, the Clery Act, VAWA, and the SaVE Act.

Methods

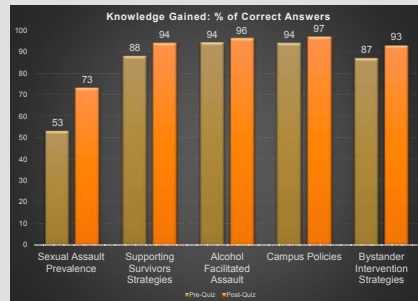
Prior to beginning the course, students are asked to complete a pre-course assessment and an anonymous survey (Survey 1). The HAVEN course consists of seven (7) modules focusing on healthy relationships (including understanding sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence and stalking); University policies (including the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy and Faculty and Staff Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy); and skill building (including ways to support survivors and how to safely and effectively intervene as a bystander). The course is very interactive, utilizing video and audio, and allows for some self-guidance between modules. Following completion of the course, students were asked to complete a post-assessment as well as a second survey (Survey 2), which became available to students 30 days after completion of the course. The assessments consisted of tests and quizzes that measure a student's knowledge. The assessment responses were true/false answers or multiple choice answers. The surveys sought to measure attitudes and behavior through use of a Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Data in this assessment is based upon 2865 students (undergraduate, graduate and professional) who completed all seven modules of the course. 2865 students completed Survey 1 and 1046 students completed Survey 2.

Results

The following results are a snapshot of the types of data collected from HAVEN's pre and post assessments as well as the two surveys.

Knowledge Gained: A comparison of pre-course assessments and post-course assessments indicate an increase in knowledge about the prevalence of sexual assault on campus (20%), strategies to support survivors (6%), the use of alcohol as a means to facilitate sexual assault (2%), campus sexual misconduct disciplinary policies (3%), and safe ways to effectively intervene as a bystander (6%).



Awareness & Attitudes:

In responding to survey questions concerning awareness and attitudes toward bystander intervention, there was no significant increase between Survey 1 and Survey 2 responses that asked about one's own willingness to take action (.1% increase) when faced with someone trying to take advantage of another person sexually. On the other hand, perceptions of whether others would take action changed significantly from 47% to 63%. When asked whether the respondent would take action when another person used sexist language, only 56.7% of respondents moderately to strongly agreed. That number, however, increased by 11.4% to 68.1% in Survey 2.

Awareness & Attitudes	Survey 1 (%)	Survey 2 (%)	% Change	National Change
I would take action in a situation in which someone was trying to take advantage of another person sexually. (moderately - strongly agree)	85.5	85.6	0.1	-2.5
Most students at my school would take action if they saw someone trying to take advantage of another person sexually. (moderately - strongly agree)	47	63.8	16.8	14.4
I would say or do something if I heard someone using sexist language. (moderately - strongly agree)	56.7	68.1	11.4	4.4

Conclusions

Knowledge Gained: The assessments indicate that students gained knowledge from the online course. Most promising is the 20% increase in correct answers in response to questions concerning the prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses and at Wake. Indeed, the percentage increase in awareness nationally was only 3%, with only 57% of correct answers at the post-assessment stage. In contrast, 73% of Wake students answered correctly at the post-assessment stage. Awareness of a problem is one of the first steps in solving it.

While there was a significant (6%) increase in correct answers related to strategies to support survivors, it is difficult to draw conclusions that students would be capable of applying the knowledge. The Safe Office's in-person, role playing curriculum is probably a better predictor of knowledge application.

Similarly, there was a significant increase (6%) in knowledge around safe bystander intervention strategies. While the assessments included video and audio realistic scenarios, it is difficult to predict whether students would actually intervene when faced with a situation involving their friends. Albeit there were small increases in knowledge around alcohol facilitated assaults and sexual misconduct campus disciplinary policies, the number of correct answers during the pre-assessment were high on both assessments. Separate from HAVEN, anecdotal information and informal focus groups have indicated that while students may know where to locate policies, they do not have a full understanding of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and do not know how to apply the policy (e.g., application of the consent definition). The Title IX Office will be providing more education in this area.

Awareness & Attitudes: There are limits to the survey data in that it is difficult to know exactly how each participant is interpreting the questions and response choices. Nonetheless, the survey results show that the vast majority of students have healthy attitudes towards intervening when faced with someone trying to take advantage of another person sexually and a majority of students indicate that they would intervene if they heard someone using sexist language. Additionally, the data indicating the perception of norms compared to actual norms can be drawn upon as a basis for social norm campaigns aimed at overcoming students' barriers to effectively intervening as bystanders.

References

- Everfi HAVEN, Fall 2015 – Spring 2016 Wake Forest University Student Assessment and Survey Results
- Everfi HAVEN, National Aggregate Data