

Crime rose on college campuses in 2015, but might still be underreported

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Students held up a sign at White Plaza during New Student Orientation on the Stanford University campus in Stanford, Calif., last year.

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

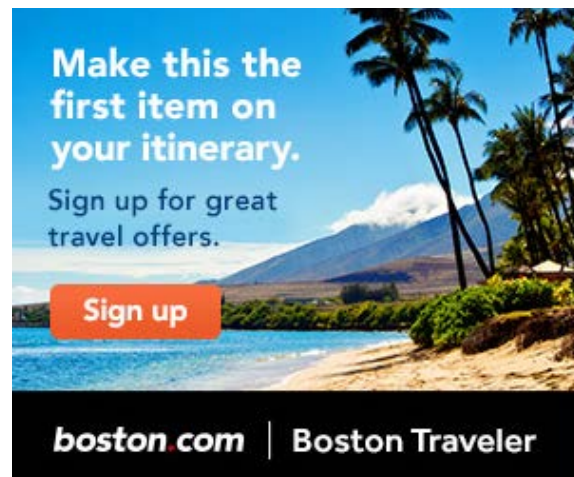
GLOBE STAFF MARCH 13, 2017

Reports of crime on and around college campuses nationwide rose by about 7 percent in 2015, according to newly released figures from the US Department of Education.

The rise included a 16 percent spike in one of the more closely watched categories: reports of sexual assault.

A record-high 9,265 sexual assaults were reported in 2015, marking the sixth consecutive year a record number has been reported.

Of that total, 5,911 were classified as rapes, while 3,354 were classified as forcible fondling, according to the data federally funded schools nationwide must report annually.



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Experts have said the dramatic climb in reports of sexual assault, which was [also seen at campuses across New England](#), is the result of increased monitoring of a crime that has historically been underreported. Despite the increase, the numbers are still believed to undercount the true number of sexual assaults occurring on campuses because so many cases go unreported.

Table: Crimes reported at Mass. college campuses in 2014, 2015

A school-by-school look at reported crimes in 2015 and 2014.

The total number of all crimes reported by colleges during 2015 was nearly 39,000. While that was somewhat higher than each of the two previous years, it was lower, if not significantly lower, than 2012 and years prior.

Similar patterns were seen for both robberies and aggravated assaults; while both categories saw spikes in 2015 compared to the previous year, the totals were lower than several years ago.

The number of burglaries dropped by about 10 percent to a record low of about 13,900.

Just over 1,000 hate crimes were reported on campuses nationwide in 2015, which was consistent with the past several years.

And the number of reports of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking each rose. Across all three categories, which are known together as violence against women offenses, there were about 14,700 reports in 2015, up from about 12,200 the year prior, which was the first year such figures were widely tracked.

At Massachusetts campuses, reports of both sexual assaults and violence against women offenses rose at similar rates as nationwide figures. Meanwhile, reports of other types of crime, including robberies, aggravated assaults, burglaries, and hate crimes, were roughly flat if not slightly down year over year at colleges statewide.

Schools with some of the highest totals of reported crimes were also some of the largest, including Boston College, Boston University, Harvard University, MIT, Northeastern University, Tufts University and UMass Amherst.

For the second straight year, there were no murders at any Massachusetts schools.



The national data seemed to show a near-tripling in the number of murders at campuses nationwide. But the dramatic jump appears to largely be attributed to a community college in Baltimore that reported a few dozen murders that happened nearby, but not on its campuses.

Another large number of murders are attributed to the Oct. 2015 mass shooting at Umpqua Community College. Both that school and another Oregon college that partners with Umpqua and runs programming on its campus reported the nine murders from that mass shooting.

Experts caution against comparing numbers of reported crimes at different campuses for a variety of reasons.

For example, the reports do not reflect crimes that occur in private off-campus apartments. The amount of such housing can differ widely from school to school. The figures also sometimes include crimes that occurred near a campus but did not involve students or faculty.

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter [@mrochele](https://twitter.com/mrochele)

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Mother of Conrad Roy III seeks \$4.2m in wrongful death suit against Michelle Carter

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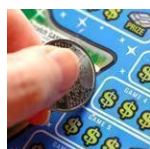
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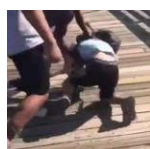
Police disperse hundreds of youths in the North End

State Police spokesman David Procopio said Boston police requested Massachusetts State Police assistance with dispersing between 500 and 1,000 youths. [MORE...](#)



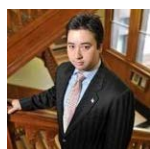
A cross-country bicycle trip of a lifetime — delayed 40 years

John Sweeney averaged 65 miles a day, mostly along Route 20, a 3,365-mile ribbon of asphalt that is the longest road in the United States. [MORE...](#)



State Police investigate video of youths fighting on pier in Quincy

A video of youths being punched and kicked is making the rounds on social media. [MORE...](#)



Cambridge city councilor to leave politics

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Michelle Carter receives 15 months in jail; will remain free pending appeal

A judge sentenced Michelle Carter to two and a half years, with 15 months to serve and 15 months probation, for goading her boyfriend to kill himself in a high-profile texting suicide case. However, he allowed Carter to remain free while awaiting appeal. [MORE...](#)



'Dukes of Hazzard' actor arrested in Waltham

Tom Wopat was arraigned on a charge of groping a woman who was to share the stage with him in a local production of "42nd Street." [MORE...](#)

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