

EdTrust Analysis of Hate Crimes on College Campuses by Accreditor

EdTrust analyzed the most recently available Clery data to better understand the increase in instances of crime on college campuses. Focusing on the organizations tasked with ensuring educational quality for students on campus, our Clery data analysis focuses on the six major U.S. accrediting agencies (see Table 1), which serve the following regions: New England (NECHE), Middle States (MSCHE), North Central (HLC), Southern (SACSCOC), Western (WASC), and Northwest (NWCCU). Although the functions and practices of institutional accrediting agencies differ, they share a responsibility to ensure that the institutions they accredit meet basic standards of quality, effectiveness, and integrity. They do this in various ways, such as reviewing faculty qualifications, student support services, and institutional policies, or by requiring institutions to submit improvement plans, collect and report data, and undergo periodic reviews.

To assess the landscape of hate crime incidents at institutions accredited by the six major U.S. accrediting agencies, hate crime data from 2015-2021 was collected from the [Campus Safety and Security \(CSS\)](#). We exclusively focused on four-year public and private nonprofit institutions in the 50 U.S. states and Washington, D.C., that enroll more than 1,000 students and have on-campus housing facilities.

The CSS data shows that across the 1,338 institutions in our sample, there were more than 4,200 reported on-campus hate crimes between 2015 and 2021. When adjusted for differences in student enrollment, this means there were 6.47 reported hate crimes for every 100,000 full-time enrollment (FTE) students (see Table 2). Institutions accredited by NECHE had the highest rate of reported hate crimes, with 12.97 per 100,000 FTE; followed by MSCHE, with 9.95; and NWCCU, with 7.54. SACSCOC institutions reported the lowest rate, at 3.23 per 100,000 FTE, which was significantly below the average.

The three most prevalent types of hate crimes — intimidation, destruction of property, and simple assault — collectively accounted for 94% of all reported incidents. With 1,758 cases of intimidation, 1,703 cases of destruction of property, and 390 cases of simple assault, these figures suggest that most hate crimes are meant to instill fear, cause physical harm, or damage property, and directly undermine the sense of security and belonging of students from various under-represented groups.

More than half of all reported hate crimes were motivated by bias over race, ethnicity, or national origin — followed by sexual orientation and religion, which accounted for 19.5% and 16.9% of incidents, respectively. These statistics highlight how unwelcoming and challenging some academic settings can be for people of color, LGBTQ people, and religious minorities, who are disproportionately more likely to be targets of hate-driven attacks.

The data also reveals patterns between types of crimes and their motivators (see Table 3). For instance, hate crimes of property destruction were often motivated by racial or ethnic bias, while hate crimes of intimidation against individuals were more commonly motivated by racial bias or a bias against a certain sexual orientation or religion. The vast majority — 90% — of reported rapes were motivated by the victim’s gender identity or sexual orientation, and nearly 60% of reported thefts were driven by bias against a person’s religion or sexual orientation. These patterns only underscore the need for targeted preventive measures and educational initiatives to counter biases and reduce the prevalence of hate crimes, while promoting a safer, more inclusive campus environment.

Next, we identified notable variations in the motivating factors for hate crimes between accreditors (see Tables 4A and 4B). Race was the most predominant factor across all accreditors, ranging from 36.9% for WASC to 47.7% for SACSCOC. Sexual orientation was the second most common motivating variable, with variability ranging from 14.0% at MSCHE institutions to 25.1% at SACSCOC institutions. Interestingly, the rate of hate crimes motivated by bias against a religion was significantly higher at WASC institutions (28.7%), while the rates of crimes motivated by bias against a person’s race or gender were lower at WASC institutions than at institutions in other accreditors’ regions.

While destruction of property and intimidation were the most common types of crimes committed across all the accrediting regions (see Table 5A), there were outliers. Institutions in states where NECHE is the primary accreditor had a particularly high percentage of intimidation reports at 50.6% (see Table 5B). Meanwhile, the incidence of larceny-theft was notably higher in states where WASC is the primary accreditor — at 15.1% of reported crimes (see Table 5B). This may be connected to the high rate of religiously motivated hate crimes in states where institutions are primarily accredited by WASC, as larceny-theft crimes were most attributed to biases against religion and sexual orientation.

More serious crimes, such as rape, aggravated assault, and murder, were rare across all accrediting regions, emphasizing how prevalent and impactful crimes like destruction of property and intimidation appear to be in students’ everyday lives.

Table 1

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITORS	
HLC	Higher Learning Commission
MSCHE	Middle States Commission on Secondary Schools
NECHE	New England Commission of Higher Education
NWCCU	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
SACSCOC	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
WASC	Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Source: <https://www.chea.org/regional-accrediting-organizatiowns-accreditor-type>

Table 2: Average Hate Crimes by Institutional Accreditor

	HLC	MSCHE	NECHE	NWCCU	SACSCOC	WASC	ALL
Number of Institutions	427	250	116	83	379	83	1,338
Total Hate Crimes	1,267	1,040	603	337	662	337	4,246
Average Number of Hate Crimes per Institution	2.97	4.16	5.2	4.06	1.75	4.06	3.17
Total FTE Enrollment (2015-21) (in 1000s)	18.95	10.46	4.65	4.47	20.46	6.61	65.6
Hate Crimes per 100,000 FTE	6.69	9.95	12.97	7.54	3.23	5.1	6.47

Table 2 shows the average number of hate crimes per institution and the average number of hate crimes per 100,000 full-time enrollment (FTE) students within each accreditor. Source: <https://ope.ed.gov/campusafety/#/customdata/search>

Table 3: Hate Crime Totals by Crime Type and Motivating Variable (All Accreditors)

	DISABILITY	ETHNICITY	GENDER	GENDER IDENTITY	NATIONAL ORIGIN	RACE	RELIGION	SEXUAL ORIENTATION	TOTAL
Intimidation	16	92	107	48	99	839	205	352	1758
Destruction of property	5	64	62	84	55	718	410	305	1703
Simple assault	2	30	18	15	18	189	41	77	390
Aggravated assault	0	5	1	3	18	46	1	22	96
Larceny-theft	1	4	9	7	2	15	27	27	92
Burglary	0	0	2	1	0	5	3	3	14
Robbery	0	1	0	0	0	3	2	5	11
Rape	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	5	10
Fondling	0	0	3	3	0	1	1	1	9
Arson	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	2	7
Murder	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	24	196	203	165	192	1820	692	799	4091

Table 3 shows hate crime totals for all accreditors based on the different types of crimes and their motivating variables.

Source: <https://ope.ed.gov/campussafety/#/customdata/search>

Table 4A: Hate Crimes by Motivating Variable and Accreditor (Full Values)

	HLC	MSCHE	NECHE	NWCCU	SACSCOC	WASC
Race	584	442	222	140	310	122
Sexual Orientation	267	142	105	68	163	54
Religion	151	230	94	36	86	95
Gender	87	42	37	10	23	4
Ethnicity	61	57	16	12	23	27
National Origin	68	50	17	15	23	19
Gender Identity	43	41	37	19	16	9
Disability	6	7	3	1	6	1
Total	1267	1011	531	301	650	331

Table 4A shows the hate crime statistics for each motivating variable across the six accreditors, including the raw numbers. Source: <https://ope.ed.gov/campusafety/#/customdata/search>

Table 4B: Hate Crimes by Motivating Variable and Accreditor (Percentage Values)

	HLC	MSCHE	NECHE	NWCCU	SACSCOC	WASC
Race	46.1%	43.7%	41.8%	46.5%	47.7%	36.9%
Sexual Orientation	21.1%	14.0%	19.8%	22.6%	25.1%	16.3%
Religion	11.9%	22.7%	17.7%	12.0%	13.2%	28.7%
Gender	6.9%	4.2%	7.0%	3.3%	3.5%	1.2%
Ethnicity	4.8%	5.6%	3.0%	4.0%	3.5%	8.2%
National Origin	5.4%	4.9%	3.2%	5.0%	3.5%	5.7%
Gender Identity	3.4%	4.1%	7.0%	6.3%	2.5%	2.7%
Disability	0.5%	0.7%	0.6%	0.3%	0.9%	0.3%
Total	1267	1011	531	301	650	331

Table 4B shows the hate crime statistics for each motivating variable across the six accreditors, in percentages of each accreditor's total hate crimes. Source: <https://ope.ed.gov/campusafety/#/customdata/search>

Table 5A: Hate Crimes by Crime Type and Accreditor (Full Values)

	HLC	MSCHE	NECHE	NWCCU	SACSCOC	WASC	ALL
Destruction of property	567	456	236	157	296	105	1817
Intimidation	501	449	305	124	246	144	1769
Larceny-theft	119	76	45	38	81	51	410
Simple assault	32	9	3	6	23	26	99
Arson	28	36	9	5	11	8	97
Burglary	4	5	3	0	2	0	14
Aggravated assault	5	0	0	4	1	1	11
Robbery	4	3	2	1	0	1	11
Fondling	4	2	0	1	2	1	10
Rape	3	3	0	1	0	0	7
Murder/non-negligent manslaughter	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total Hate Crimes	1267	1040	603	337	662	337	4246

Table 5 shows the breakdown of total hate crimes by crime type between institutional accreditors, including the raw numbers.

Source: <https://ope.ed.gov/campussafety/#/customdata/search>

Table 5B: Hate Crimes by Crime Type and Accreditor (Percentage Values)

	HLC	MSCHE	NECHE	NWCCU	SACSCOC	WASC	ALL
Destruction of property	44.8%	43.8%	39.1%	46.6%	44.7%	31.2%	42.8%
Intimidation	39.5%	43.2%	50.6%	36.8%	37.2%	42.7%	41.7%
Larceny-theft	9.4%	7.3%	7.5%	11.3%	12.2%	15.1%	9.7%
Simple assault	2.5%	0.9%	0.5%	1.8%	3.5%	7.7%	2.3%
Arson	2.2%	3.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.7%	2.4%	2.3%
Burglary	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%
Aggravated assault	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%
Robbery	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
Fondling	0.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
Rape	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Murder/non-negligent manslaughter	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.02%
Total Hate Crimes	1267	1040	603	337	662	337	4246

Table 5 shows the breakdown of total hate crimes by crime type between institutional accreditors, in percentages of each accreditor's hate crime total. Source: <https://ope.ed.gov/campussafety/#/customdata/search>

Table 6: Hate Crime Statistics by State

STATE	PRIMARY ACCREDITOR IN STATE	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS	TOTAL HATE CRIMES	TOTAL FTE ENROLLMENT (2015-21)	HATE CRIMES PER 100,000 FTE
VT	NECHE	8	50	197,470	25.32
DC	MSCHE	8	97	491,205	19.75
RI	NECHE	9	59	338,818	17.41
NH	NECHE	9	117	674,715	17.34
MT	NWCCU	8	39	229,541	16.99
CT	NECHE	19	103	807,031	12.76
MA	NECHE	54	257	2,123,433	12.1
NM	HLC	8	36	310,359	11.6
NE	HLC	16	62	537,364	11.54
MD	MSCHE	21	115	1,019,411	11.28
IA	HLC	26	81	765,677	10.58
WI	HLC	30	138	1,308,351	10.55
NY	MSCHE	99	440	4,388,456	10.03
PA	MSCHE	92	280	2,904,526	9.64
OR	NWCCU	16	69	720,563	9.58
IN	HLC	32	158	1,667,523	9.48
CO	HLC	18	105	1,162,867	9.03
WA	NWCCU	35	134	1,498,883	8.94
AK	NWCCU	3	9	109,782	8.2
OH	HLC	53	195	2,420,973	8.05
NJ	MSCHE	27	101	1,458,479	6.93
ND	HLC	9	17	250,800	6.78
MN	HLC	28	70	1,046,938	6.69
ME	NECHE	13	17	266,052	6.39
ID	NWCCU	7	20	327,083	6.11
WY	HLC	5	7	119,031	5.88
VA	SACSCOC	34	115	2,056,994	5.59
SD	HLC	10	12	224,216	5.35
NV	NWCCU	4	18	339,266	5.31
CA	WASC	76	335	6,395,928	5.24
MO	HLC	34	76	1,450,233	5.24
KS	HLC	14	32	642,150	4.98

Table 6: Hate Crime Statistics by State - Continued

STATE	PRIMARY ACCREDITOR IN STATE	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS	TOTAL HATE CRIMES	TOTAL FTE ENROLLMENT (2015-21)	HATE CRIMES PER 100,000 FTE
IL	HLC	49	109	2,282,888	4.77
UT	NWCCU	9	48	1,049,199	4.57
MI	HLC	39	95	2,085,892	4.55
NC	SACSCOC	42	75	1,985,106	3.78
KY	SACSCOC	23	36	973,488	3.7
DE	MSCHE	3	7	192,158	3.64
TX	HLC	75	167	4,896,965	3.41
OK	HLC	21	25	763,691	3.27
TN	SACSCOC	31	41	1,256,817	3.26
AL	SACSCOC	22	37	1,154,100	3.21
AZ	HLC	8	29	902,710	3.21
FL	SACSCOC	44	95	3,373,159	2.82
GA	SACSCOC	43	61	2,180,764	2.8
AR	HLC	15	17	613,383	2.77
SC	SACSCOC	30	17	976,789	1.74
LA	SACSCOC	21	14	993,142	1.41
WV	HLC	13	5	400,213	1.25
HI	WASC	5	2	184,887	1.08
MS	SACSOC	11	2	564,131	0.35

Table 6 summarizes the data displayed in the state heat map (Figure 1), ranked by total hate crimes within each state's institutions.

Source: <https://ope.ed.gov/campussafety/#/customdata/search>