

SSID

Fact Sheet

Crime Rates on the College Campus

According to projections from the National Center for Education Statistics, there were approximately 14,979,000 students at U.S. colleges and universities in 2000. With populations that, at times, mirror a small city, criminal activity on college and university campuses has often been an area of concern for the public, who question, "Are colleges and universities safe?"

When discussing crime within a certain population or area, the predominant measurement that is utilized is the crime rate, *the number of offenses committed based on a standard population—normally 100,000*. To get a fair assessment of criminal activity on the college campus, college crime rates should be compared with the total crime rates of the United States, based on the standard population of 100,000. The following table depicts the comparison of the crime rates of the college campus with the entire nation in the four violent index crimes: 1) murder, 2) forcible rape, 3) robbery, and 4) aggravated assault.

U.S. vs. College Crime Rates, 2000

Crime	U.S. Crime Rate	College Crime Rate
Murder	5.7	.13
Forcible Rape	32.0	12.4
Robbery	144.9	12.9
Aggravated Assault	323.6	24.3

As the above figures show, the crime rates of all four violent index crimes are substantially higher for the entire United States when compared with the crime rates on the college campus. For example, the murder rate in the U.S. is almost 44 times higher than that of the college campus and the aggravated assault rate is over 13 times higher.

It is important to note, however, that oftentimes crimes on college campuses do not get reported. This makes it difficult to conclude with certainty that the crime rates are indeed this low.

Despite this margin of error, it can be concluded from this data that, in comparison to criminal activity at the National level, the college and university campus provides a safer environment for students. Acknowledging this conclusion, it still must be stated that these levels of violent crime are unacceptable for any higher education institution.

*Source: Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education and *Crime in the U.S. 2000*

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