

SAREO
Center for Education Policy
School of Education
UMass Amherst

PROJECT PULSE



Anti-Semitism Survey (F00-F)

On two Wednesday evenings, October 31 and November 7, 2000, Project Pulse conducted a telephone survey of Jewish undergraduates for the Office of Human Relations. Similar surveys were conducted in October of 1991, November of 1994, and November of 1997. The first two of those surveys sampled both Jewish and non-Jewish undergraduates and were partially focused on comparing the two groups. Only the responses from Jewish students are used here for comparison with the current responses.

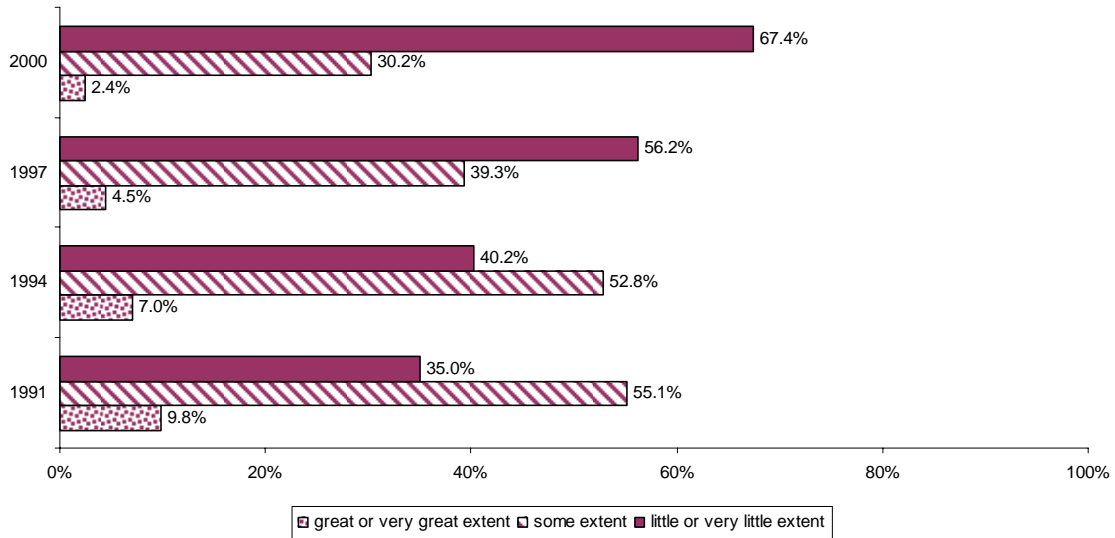
In the latest survey, Pulse interviewers attempted to contact 681 undergraduate students who had self-identified as Jewish according to the University's database. Of these, 502 were successfully contacted and 388 (77.3%) agreed to be interviewed. The response rate for the survey was 57.0% and the sampling error is approximately 5 percentage points. Table 1 provides a demographic summary of the respondents for each of the four survey years.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics, 1991, 1994, 1997 and 2000

	1991	1994	1997	2000
Respondents	n=219	n=202	n=379	n=388
Female	61.6%	58.7%	58.6%	58.5%
Male	38.4%	41.3%	41.4%	41.5%
First-year	30.1%	38.8%	36.5%	29.4%
Sophomore	23.1%	25.9%	25.3%	25.3%
Junior	19.9%	19.9%	18.7%	19.3%
Senior	26.9%	15.4%	19.5%	26.0%
Live On Campus	68.8%	78.1%	71.9%	68.0%

Respondents in the 2000 survey were asked to what extent they think that anti-Semitism exists on the UMass campus. Over one-quarter of those surveyed feel that it exists "to a very little extent." See Figure 1 for a cumulative summary of responses to this question.

Figure 1. Extent to which Jewish students think anti-Semitism exists on the UMass campus, 1991, 1994, 1997 and 2000



The next battery of questions asked students whether they had personally experienced various kinds of anti-Semitic behaviors at UMass. Almost three-quarters (73.2%, n=284) reported that they have experienced other students "stereotyping, making negative remarks about or telling jokes that "put down" Jewish people (see Figure 2). Almost half (46.3%, n=179) have observed anti-Semitic graffiti (see Figure 3). Just over one-third (36.5%, n=141) have seen defaced Jewish activity posters (see Figure 3), and know people at UMass who make anti-Semitic remarks (38.8%, n=150) (see Figure 5). Over one-quarter (27.6%, n=107) have been harassed by other students (see Figure 4). One-fifth (22.7%, n=88) have experienced stereotyping by instructors (see Figure 2) and have experienced "negative remarks being made by students about Jewish people in the classroom which were not challenged by the instructor" (20.1%, n=78) (see Figure 5). Other anti-Semitic behaviors, although less common, have also been part of some respondents' UMass experience.

Figure 2. Proportion of Jewish students who have experienced stereotyping, negative remarks or jokes which "put down" Jewish people (1991, 1994, 1997 and 2000)

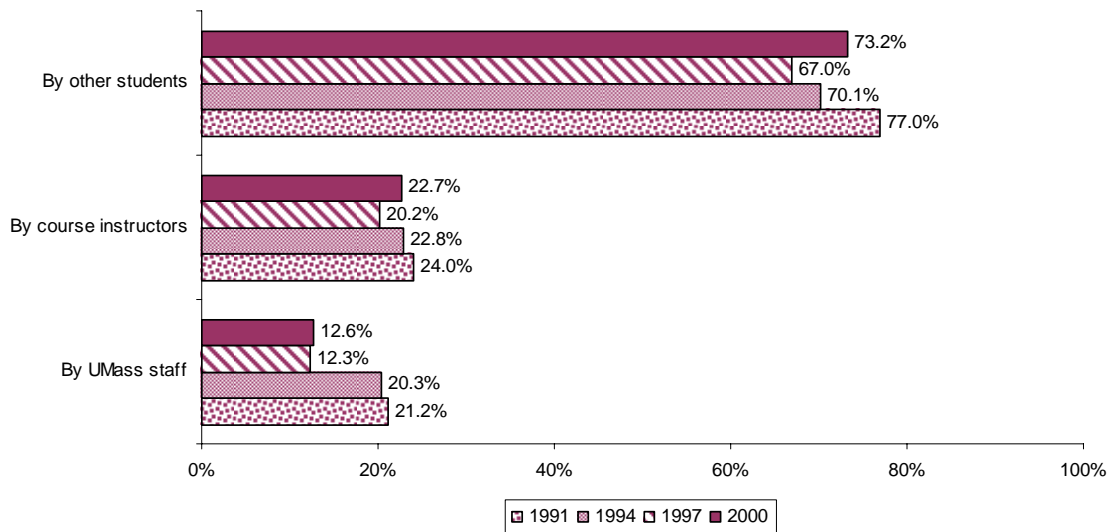


Figure 3. Proportion of Jewish students who have experienced property-related anti-Semitic acts at UMass (1991, 1994, 1997 and 2000)

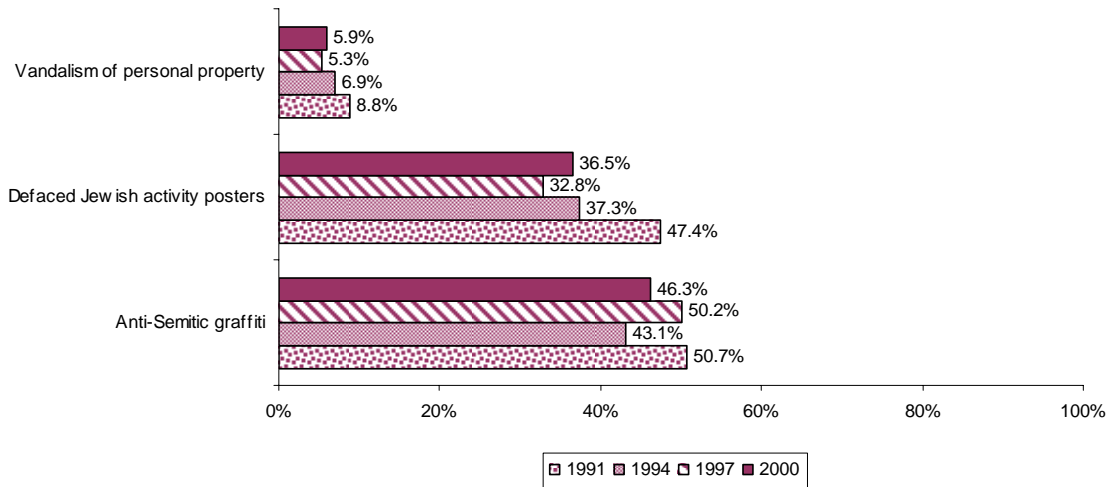


Figure 4. Proportion of Jewish students who have experienced harassment at UMass (1991, 1994, 1997 and 2000)

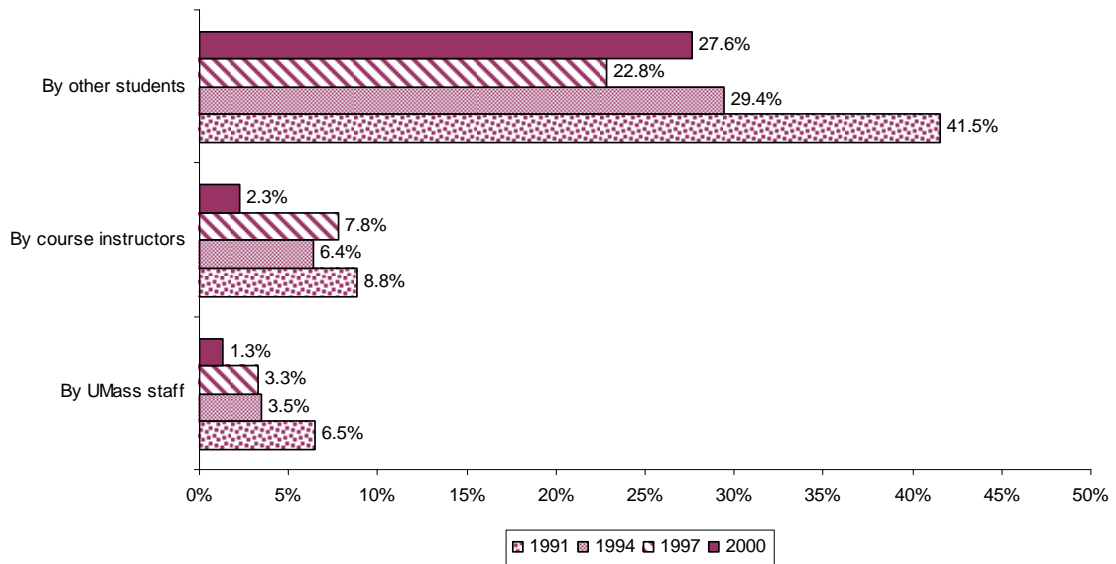
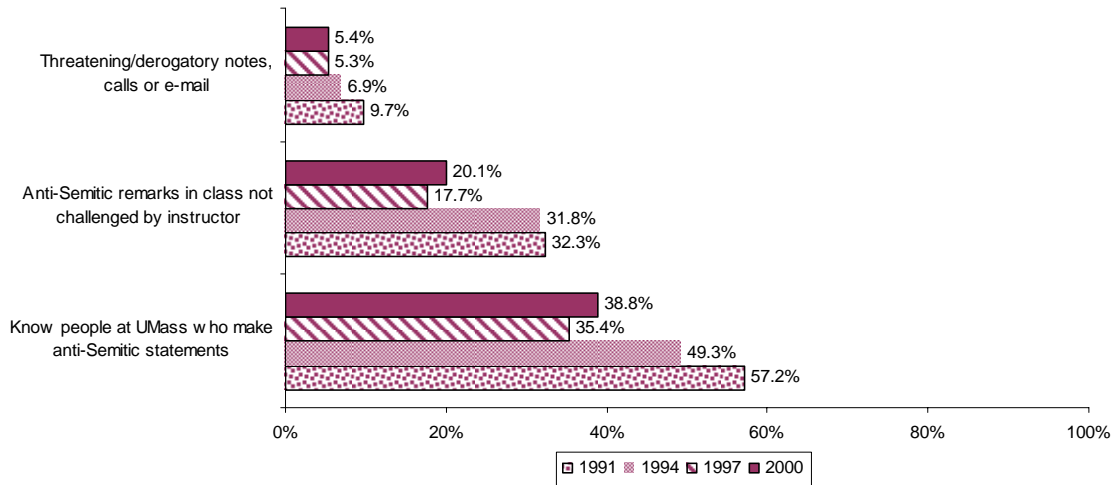
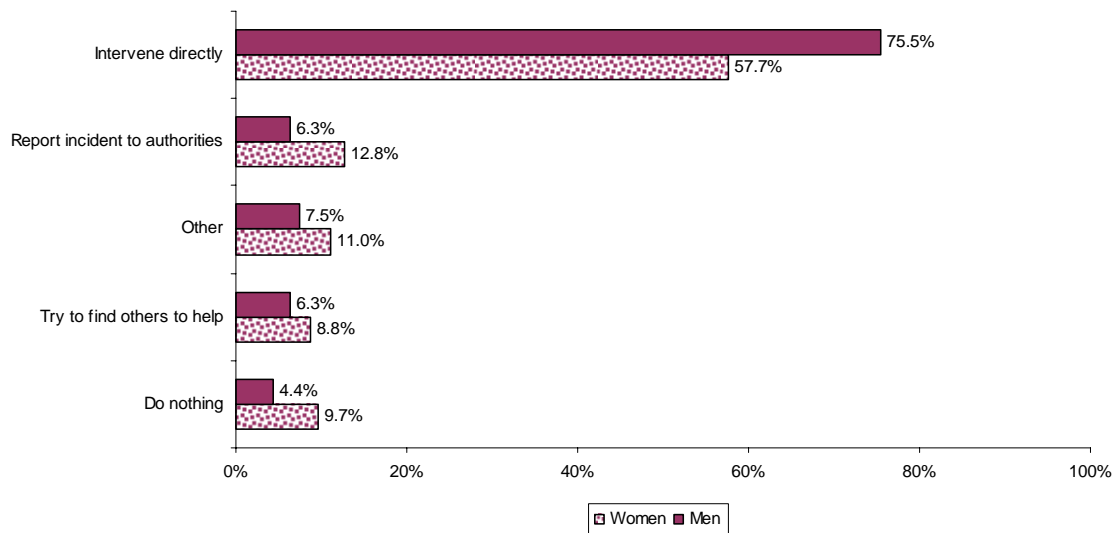


Figure 5. Proportion of Jewish students who have been exposed to anti-Semitic messages at UMass (1991, 1994, 1997 and 2000)



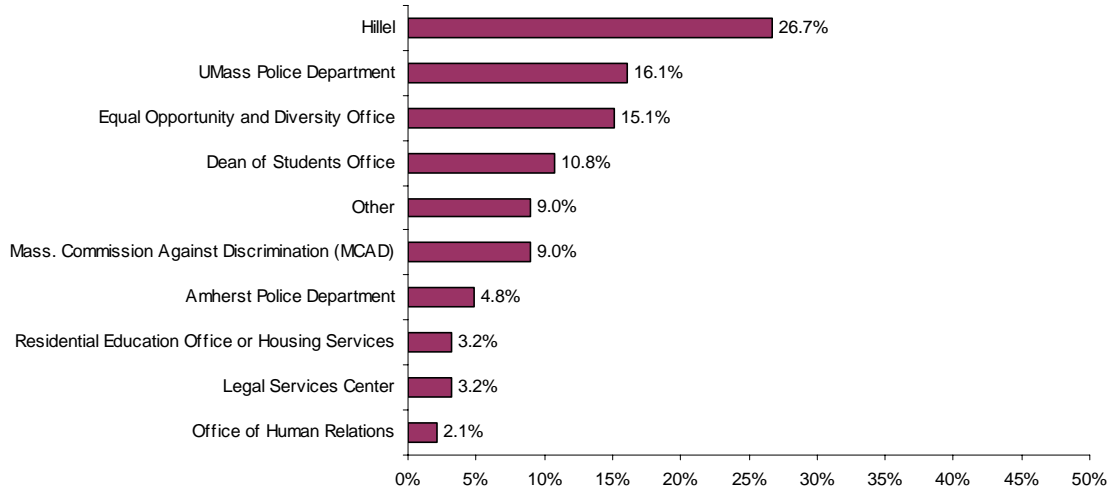
Students were asked how they thought they would respond to incidents of anti-Semitism. They were asked "if you witnessed one or more students making derogatory remarks about Jewish people or otherwise verbally harassing a student because they assumed she or he was Jewish, what would you do first." Two-thirds of the respondents (65.0%, n=251) said that they would intervene directly, 10.1% (n=39) said that they would report the incident to authorities, 7.8% (n=30) said that they would try to find others to help, 7.5% (n=29) said that they would do nothing, and 9.6% (n=37) offered other answers. Men were significantly more likely than women (75.5% v. 57.7%, $\chi^2=13.85$, $p=.008$) to say that they would intervene directly, while women were more likely to say that they would report the incident, find others to help, or do nothing (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. How would you respond if you witnessed harassment?, by sex (2000 only)



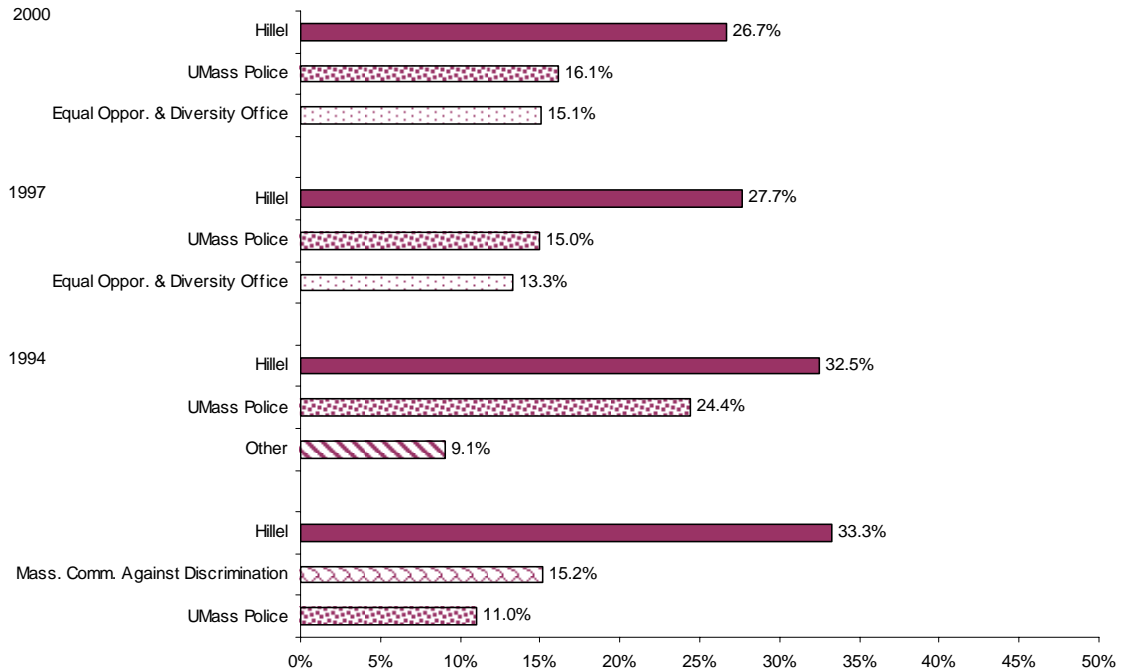
If faced with anti-Semitic behavior, students report that they would be most likely to complain about it to Hillel, the UMass Police Department, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Office, or the Dean of Students Office. See Figure 7 for a more detailed presentation of responses to this question.

Figure 7. Offices or agencies to which students would report anti-Semitic harassment (2000)



A comparison of the results of the 1991, 1994, 1997 and 2000 surveys shows that Hillel has remained the most likely recipient of the reports of anti-Semitic behaviors (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Offices or agencies to which students are most likely to report anti-Semitic behavior (1991, 1994, 1997 and 2000)



Almost four-fifths of the respondents (78.0%, n=297) said that they would be very or somewhat likely to report anti-Semitic harassment directed at themselves. Two-thirds of the respondents (66.0%, n=254) felt that it is very or somewhat likely that others would come to their aid if they were experiencing such harassment on campus (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Proportion of respondents stating it is very or somewhat likely that others would come to their aid if they were being harassed on campus (1991, 1994, 1997 and 2000)

