



Secretariat of Catholic Education

3211 Fourth Street, NE • Washington DC 20017 • Ph: 202-541-3132 • F:202-541-3390

A National Study on Catholic Campus Ministry

Weighting

Because we sent the entire sampling frame of identified campus ministers email invitations, our census of campus ministers is a probability sample in which each respondent had an equal chance of selection. Thus, individuals are primary sampling units for the campus minister survey, and we can make clear statistical claims about the full population of Catholic campus ministers in the U.S. To further ensure our final profile of campus ministers accurately represents the entire population of campus ministers, we compared our respondents to the full population and calculated post-survey weights for the study. We utilize these weights in our descriptive analyses (See Table 1, for the comparison of respondents—unadjusted and then weighted—to the full population of campus ministers, indicating the specific dimensions utilized in the construction of post-survey weights).

Table 1: Unadjusted and Weighted Results in Comparison to the Full Population of Campus Ministers

	<u>Unadjusted % in our 2017 Study</u>	<u>2017 Weighted % (N=1006)</u>	<u>Full Population</u>
Sex			
Male	53.9%	57.2%	57.2%
Female	46.1%	42.8%	42.8%
N (unadjusted)	1,012		
Institutional Type			
Catholic	31.5%	28.9%	28.9%
Private	14.5%	15.9%	15.9%
Public	54.1%	55.3%	55.3%
N (unadjusted)	1,106		
FOCUS Missionaries			
FOCUS	25.9%	26.4%	26.4%
N (unadjusted)	1,117		
Religious Status			
Priest	22.6%	23.4%	23.4%
Deacon	1.5%	1.9%	1.9%
Religious Brother	1.7%	1.4%	1.4%
Religious Sister	4.7%	3.4%	3.4%
Layperson	69.6%	69.9%	69.9%
N (unadjusted)	1,009		

To gather student responses, campus ministers were used as an intermediary. A t generic student invitation (with a non-personalized link) was sent to all campus ministers with the request that they forward the invitation to their students. Over 5000 students respond, with about 4400 answering a majority of the questions asked. For our analyses, we generally use respondents who answered at least 90% of all questions, still providing over 3000 student responses. This is a large number of students and provides a wealth of data for us to consider. In communications with campus ministers, however, there was not uniformity in terms of which students received the invitation. For instance, at least one university obtained permission to send the invitation out to all students at their university. In most cases, campus ministers sent the survey to their email list of participating students. The lists had varying degrees of comprehensiveness. Finally, some campus ministers did not send the invitation out to students at all (due to institutional concerns about human subjects approval). Consequently, we do not know how many students were invited to participate in the student survey. This means that we cannot calculate a probability for a student being invited, nor can we calculate an overall response rate or develop a system for appropriately weighting the data. Thus, our student sample is a convenience sample, not a probability sample. Statistical, therefore statistical generalizations cannot be made to a student population beyond our respondents.

The student respondents tend to be very involved in campus ministry. This is most notable when looking at the fact that about 81% of respondents go to mass weekly through campus ministry. Obviously, respondents, composed of campus ministry-involved students, are NOT the average student. As a result, caution is warranted in interpreting descriptive statistics about students. Proper interpretation requires recognizing processes of self-selection alongside causation. With this type of data set, however, relationships between variables tend to be more robust for generalization to larger populations, and therefore will often rely on descriptions of the relationships between variables, rather than simple description of percentages, when discussing the student data.