

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Jim McLaughlin & Rob Schmidt
RE: Yale Undergraduate Survey Results
Date: April 27th, 2017

SURVEY SUMMARY:

When it comes to opinions among Yale undergraduate students regarding issues of free speech and intellectual diversity on campus, there are significant partisan and ideological divisions. Right of center students are much more likely to disapprove of Yale's handling of these issues, experience political bias in the classroom and feel intimidated to share their opinions in class.

- ***While Yale Undergrads generally approve of how the school is currently handling intellectual diversity and free speech on campus, Republican and conservative students tend to disapprove. Many students, though, largely oppose speech codes.***
- ✓ When it comes to promoting intellectual diversity and differing opinions in the classroom and on campus, 56% approve of the job Yale is doing, while a notable 38% disapprove.
 - Democrats approve by a 67% to 26% margin, while Independents are more divided, 48% approve to 46% disapprove. On the other hand, two-thirds, 67%, of Republicans disapprove, while 32% approve.
 - Two-thirds, 66%, of conservatives disapprove (30% approve), while 70% of liberals approve (23% disapprove). Moderates divide, 47% to 46%.
- ✓ Students are more likely to approve of the job Yale is doing when it comes to promoting free speech, 60% approve to 34% disapprove.
 - Democrats are again strongest in their approval, 75% to 20%, with the majority of Independents also approving, 52% to 43%. By contrast, Republicans disapprove by a higher margin on Yale's promotion of free speech than they do on intellectual diversity, 28% approve to 70% disapprove.
 - Liberal students are more likely to approve, 76% to 17%, while conservatives are more likely to disapprove, 66% to 31%. The majority of moderates approve, 51% to 44%.
- ✓ By a 72% to 16% margin, students oppose Yale having speech codes to regulate speech for students and faculty.
 - Republicans are most likely to oppose speech codes, 81% (10% favor), as do nearly seven in ten Democrats, 68%, (18% favor). Three in four, 75%, Independents also oppose speech codes (14% favor).
 - Conservatives oppose speech codes by an 83% to 9% margin, as do two in three liberals, 65% to 20%. Moderates oppose speech codes as well, 80% to 10%.

- ***Most students have had experiences with political bias in the classroom and there is a sizable amount who has felt intimidated to share differing viewpoints. Republican and conservative students are significantly more likely to say they have been treated unfairly as a result of their political opinions. In addition, the overwhelming majority says their professors are liberal.***
- ✓ Almost six in ten, 57%, feel comfortable voicing their opinions in the classroom and on campus on issues such as politics, race, religion and gender. Greater than four in ten, though, 42%, do not feel comfortable voicing their opinions.
 - By party, Republicans and Democrats are the inverse of one another, with 70% of Democrats feeling comfortable (28% uncomfortable) and 75% of Republicans feeling uncomfortable (24% comfortable). Independents are divided, 53% to 46%.
 - By ideology, liberals and conservatives are also opposite, with 74% of liberals feeling comfortable (24% uncomfortable) and 71% of conservative feeling uncomfortable (27% comfortable). Moderates are slightly more likely to feel uncomfortable, 54% to 45%.
- ✓ Seven in ten, 70%, have had experiences with political bias in the classroom often, while 26% say it has not happened often.
 - Republicans are most likely to have experienced political bias often, 88% to 11%. Even two in three Democrats, 64%, and 74% of Independents have also experienced political bias often.
 - Eighty-four percent (84%) of conservatives have experienced political bias in the classroom, as have 74% of moderates and 64% of liberals.
- ✓ The majority of students often feel intimidated to share their views when it comes to a divergence of opinions with their classmates and peers, 55% often to 44% not often.
 - Eight in ten, 80%, of Republicans often feel intimidated, as do 65% of Independents. A notable 41% of Democrats feel often feel intimidated as well (58% not often).
 - By ideology, conservatives are most likely to often feel intimidated, 81% to 18%, with 70% of moderates also often feeling intimidated. Six in ten, 60%, of liberals do not often feel intimidated, while 38% do.
- ✓ Nearly eight in ten, 78%, say they have not often been treated unfairly on campus by either fellow students or professors as a result of their political opinions and beliefs.
 - Notably, though, the plurality of Republicans, 47%, and 39% of conservatives say they have often been treated unfairly for their opinions. Conversely, only 7% of Democrats and 8% of liberals say they often feel intimidated.
- ✓ Greater than seven in ten, 71%, say they have not often felt intimidated to write a paper espousing their own opinions because they were different than their professors and it would result in a bad grade.
 - Again, majorities of Republican and conservative students were much more likely to often feel intimidated, 61% and 55%, respectively. On the other hand, just 11% of liberals and 12% of Democrats often feel intimidated.

- ✓ Almost nine in ten, 88%, say their professors are liberal. Just 6% say they are moderate and only 1% say they are conservative. Students are largely in agreement that their professors are liberal, regardless of party or ideology.
 - Ninety-four percent, 94%, of Republicans say their professors are liberal, as do 90% to Democrats and 88% of Independents.
 - Nine in ten, 90%, of conservatives say their professors are liberal, as do 90% of liberals and 86% of moderates.

- ✓ By a 70% to 24% margin, students say their professors are generally tolerant of diverse opinions and encourage open debate rather than believing they need to do more to promote diversity and reduce bias in the classroom.
 - While 84% of Democrats believe their professors are tolerant of diverse opinions, by an almost two to one margin of 61% to 35%, Republicans say their professors should be doing more to promote intellectual diversity. Six in ten, 61%, of Independents also believe their professors are tolerant.
 - The majority, 52%, of conservatives believes their professors should be doing more to promote diversity compared to 84% of liberals who say they are tolerant.

KEY TAKEAWAYS: The partisan and ideological differences that accompany much of the national discourse are also embedded within Yale’s student body. Democrats and liberals comprise of the largest cohorts of students and as a result, their sentiments on these issues generally track closely with students at large. Republican and conservatives on the other hand, who account for far less of the student population, depart significantly from most other students when it comes to things like opinions on freedom of speech and intellectual diversity, experience with political bias in the classroom and comfort levels in expressing their personal views on campus. As free speech has become an increasingly debated issue on many college and university campuses, this survey demonstrates that Yale students clearly value free speech and diversity of thought, but have vastly different perceptions of and experiences with them.

Partisan and Ideological Breakdown of Yale Students

Party	Total	Ideology	Total
Republican	14%	Liberal	52%
Democrat	44%	Moderate	21%
Unaffiliated	27%	Conservative	24%
Not Registered	8%		

Methodology: McLaughlin & Associates conducted a survey of 872 Yale undergraduate students from April 17th to 23rd, 2017. All interviews were conducted online and students were contacted through email and promoted Facebook postings where they were provided a hyperlink to a secure survey platform. Only students who provided a verified Yale email address had their responses counted. To encourage participation, students were offered a \$5 gift card of their choice upon successful completion of the survey. Data for this survey have been stratified by age, race/ethnicity and gender using the 2015-2016 Yale Facts and Statistics Report to reflect the actual demographic composition of Yale undergraduate students. Because the sample is based on those who initially self-selected for participation rather than a probability sample, no estimates of sampling error can be calculated. All surveys may be subject to multiple sources of error, including, but not limited to sampling error, coverage error and measurement error. However, a confidence interval of 95% was calculated in order to produce an error estimate of +/- 3.3% for the 872 respondents. This error estimate should be taken into consideration in much the same way that analysis of probability polls takes into account the margin of sampling error. The error estimate increases for cross-tabulations. Totals may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding and refusals.

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