Survey of Wesleyan Students

Conducted by the students in
GOVT372, "Political Communication in a Polarized Age"
Fall 2019 Semester

Fielded September 28-30, 2019 via email

N=700

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This survey was conducted (written and analyzed) by the students in GOVT372, "Political Communication in a Polarized Age," under the supervision of Prof. Erika Franklin Fowler for a class project during the Fall 2019 semester. Wesleyan's IRB reviewed and deemed the research to be exempt on September 24, 2019. The survey was fielded via Qualtrics through an email distribution to 2,933 student email addresses in the Wesleyan directory. Survey respondents were allowed to skip questions. A total of 700 students completed the survey between September 28-30, 2019. The margin of error is plus or minus 3%.

Results presented here are unweighted (see Slide 3 for a demographic comparison of our sample to the population of Wesleyan students).

Sample Representativeness (Percent)
(N=700 student responses)

	Wes 2020-2023 (As reported on website 11/19)	Our full sample	Wes 2023 only (As reported on website 11/19)	Our 2023 sample
Women	54	56	55	57
Men	46	41	45	39
Students of Color	30	32	44	36
Black/African-American	5	8	11	11
Asian/Asian-American	7	17	24	17
Latino/Hispanic	11	8	12	9
International students	14	14	14	16

Our sample has slightly more women and students of color than the Wesleyan population overall as reported on Wesleyan's webpage (https://www.wesleyan.edu/about/glanceatwes.html; click here for an archived version of that page), but the representation varies by different subgroups. For the Class of 2023, for example, our sample has more women but fewer students of color than the class as reported on the same page.

Q2 - Which of the following do you think is the most important problem facing the U.S. today?
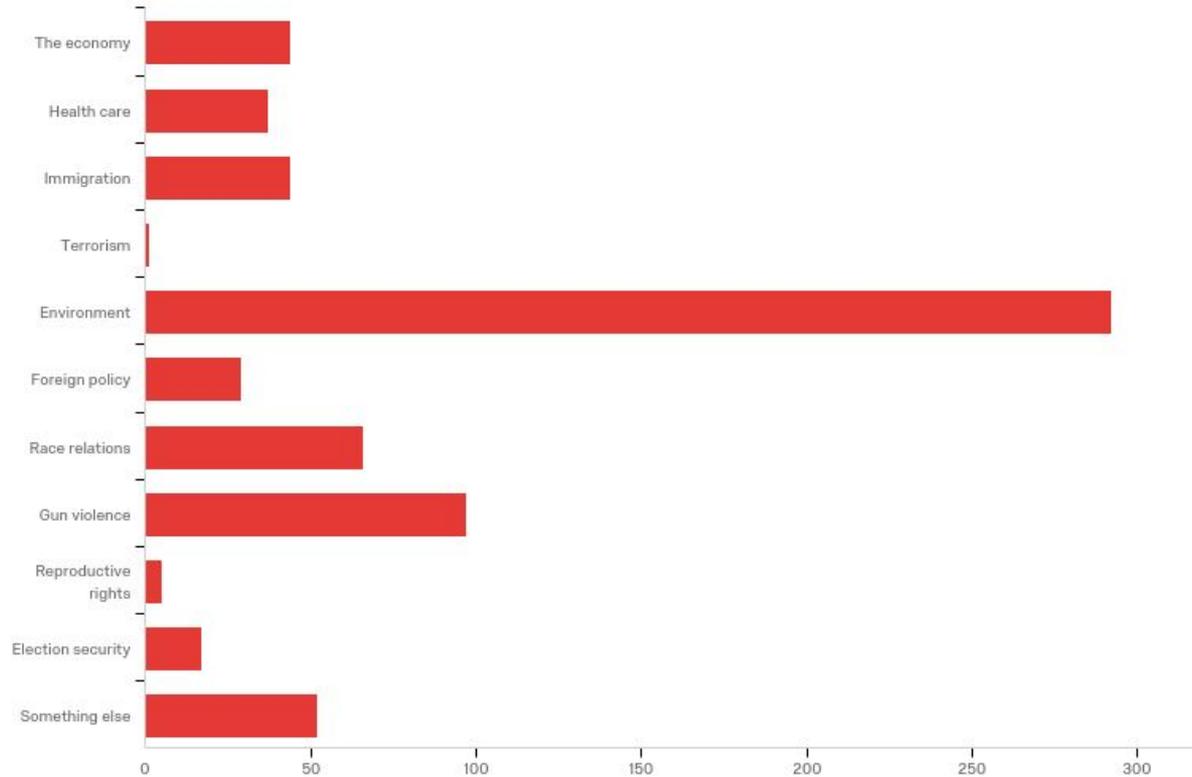
Q2 - Which of the following do you think is the most important problem facing the U.S. today?

| Answer	%	Count
The economy	6.43%	44
Health care	5.41%	37
Immigration	6.43%	44
Terrorism	0.15%	1
Environment	42.69%	292
Foreign policy	4.24%	29
Race relations	9.65%	66
Gun violence	14.18%	97
Reproductive rights	0.73%	5
Election security	2.49%	17
Something else	7.60%	52

Q3 - How closely do you follow news stories about politics and public affairs?
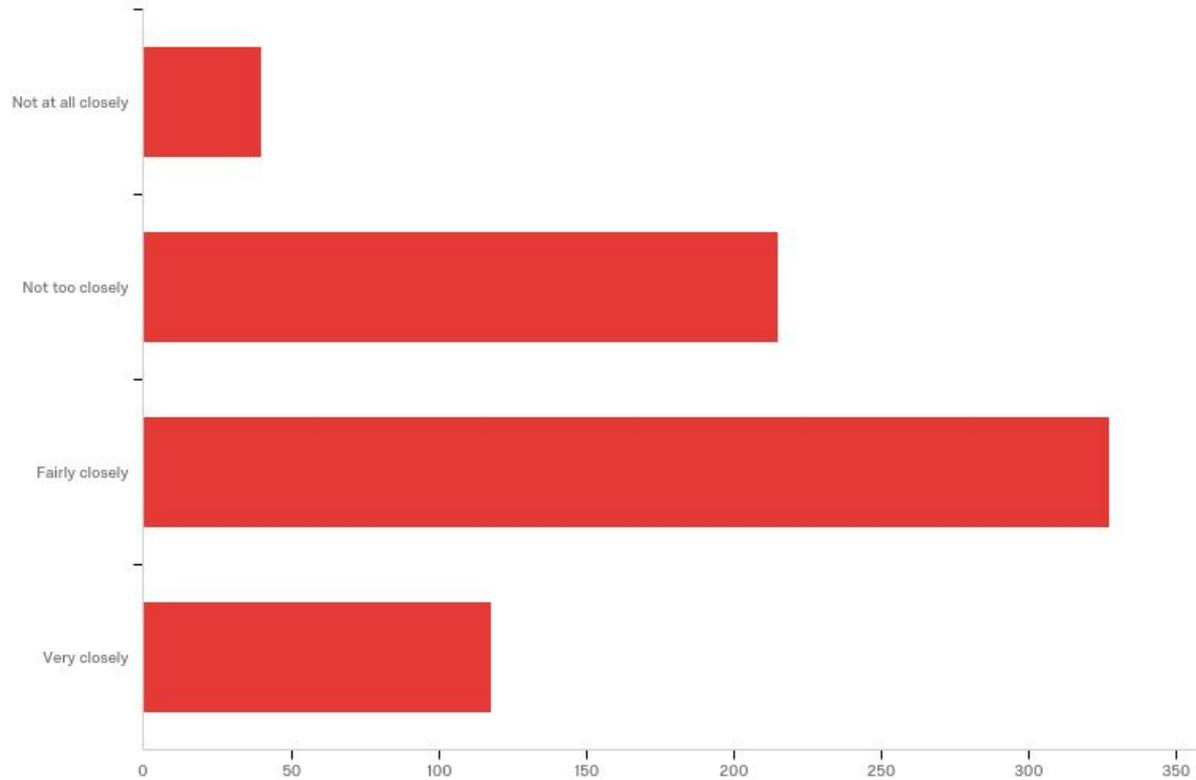
Q3 - How closely do you follow news stories about politics and public affairs?

Answer	%	Count
Not at all closely	5.71%	40
Not too closely	30.71%	215
Fairly closely	46.71%	327
Very closely	16.86%	118
Total	100%	700

Q4 - Where do you prefer to study?
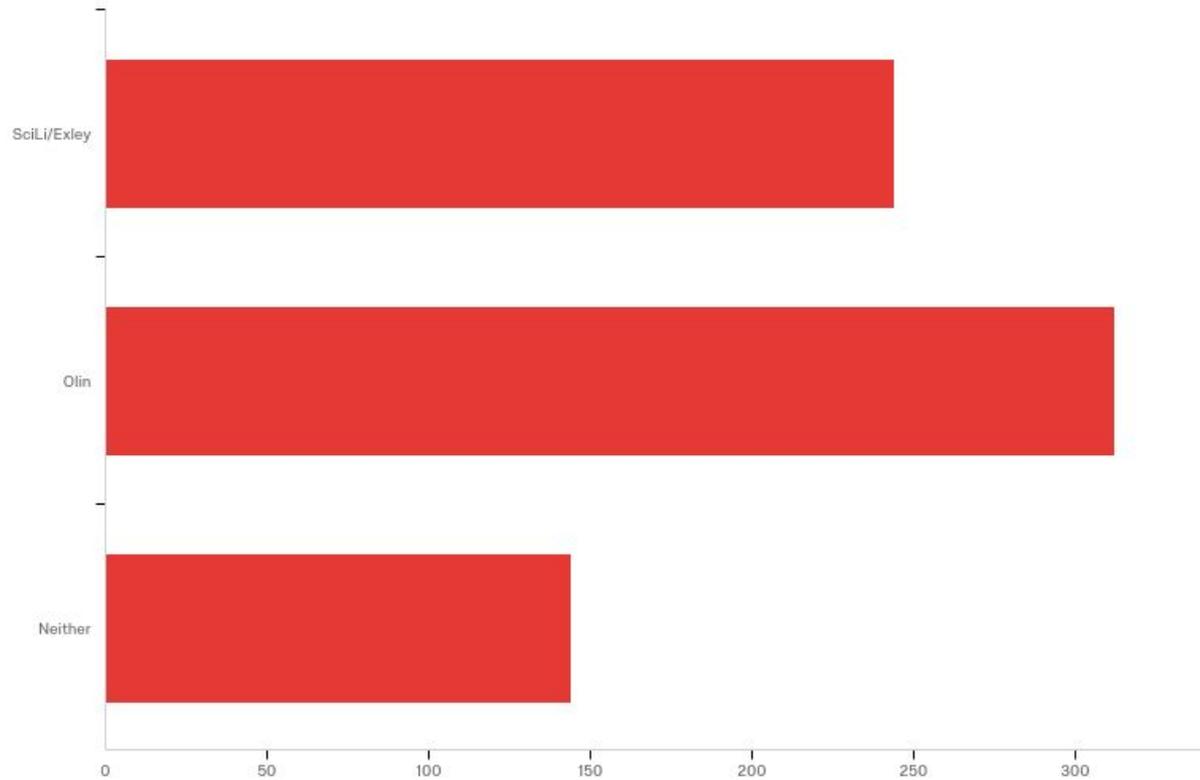
Q4 - Where do you prefer to study?

Answer	%	Count
SciLi/Exley	34.86%	244
Olin	44.57%	312
Neither	20.57%	144
Total	100%	700

Q5 - With which side of Usdan do you identify?
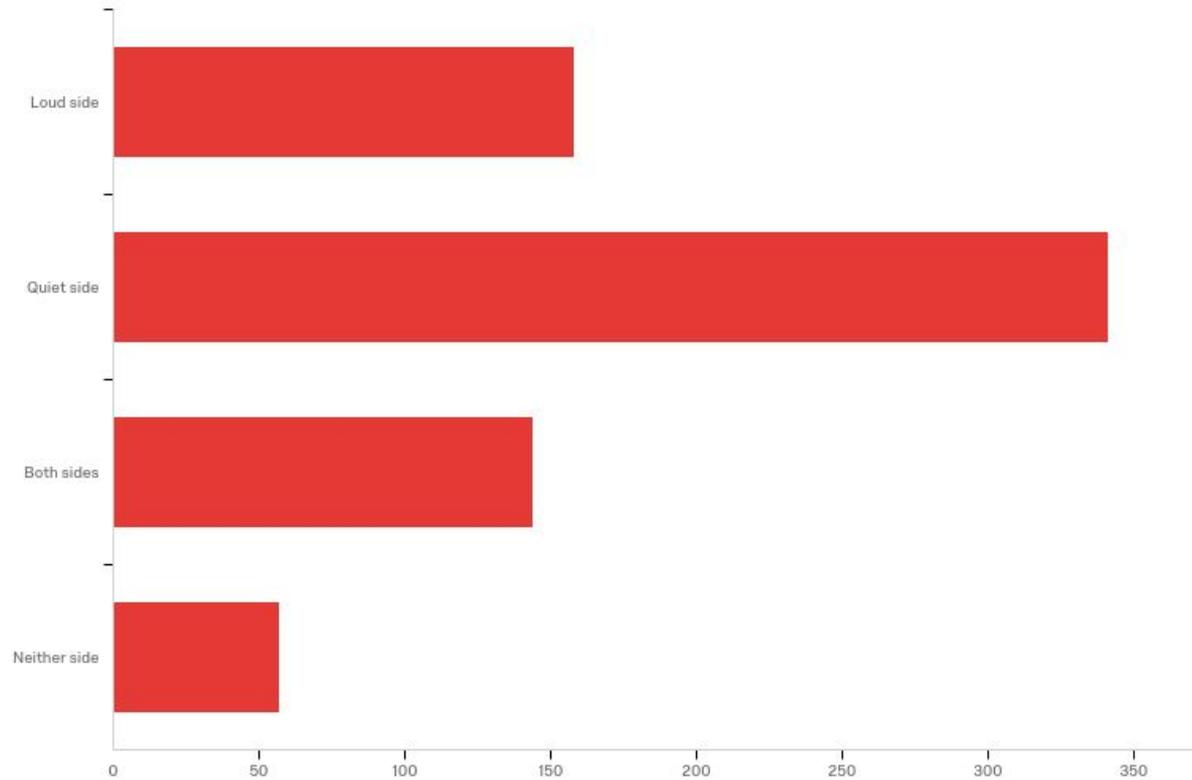
Q5 - With which side of Usdan do you identify?

Answer	%	Count
Loud side	22.57%	158
Quiet side	48.71%	341
Both sides	20.57%	144
Neither side	8.14%	57
Total	100%	700

Q6 - Are you an international student?
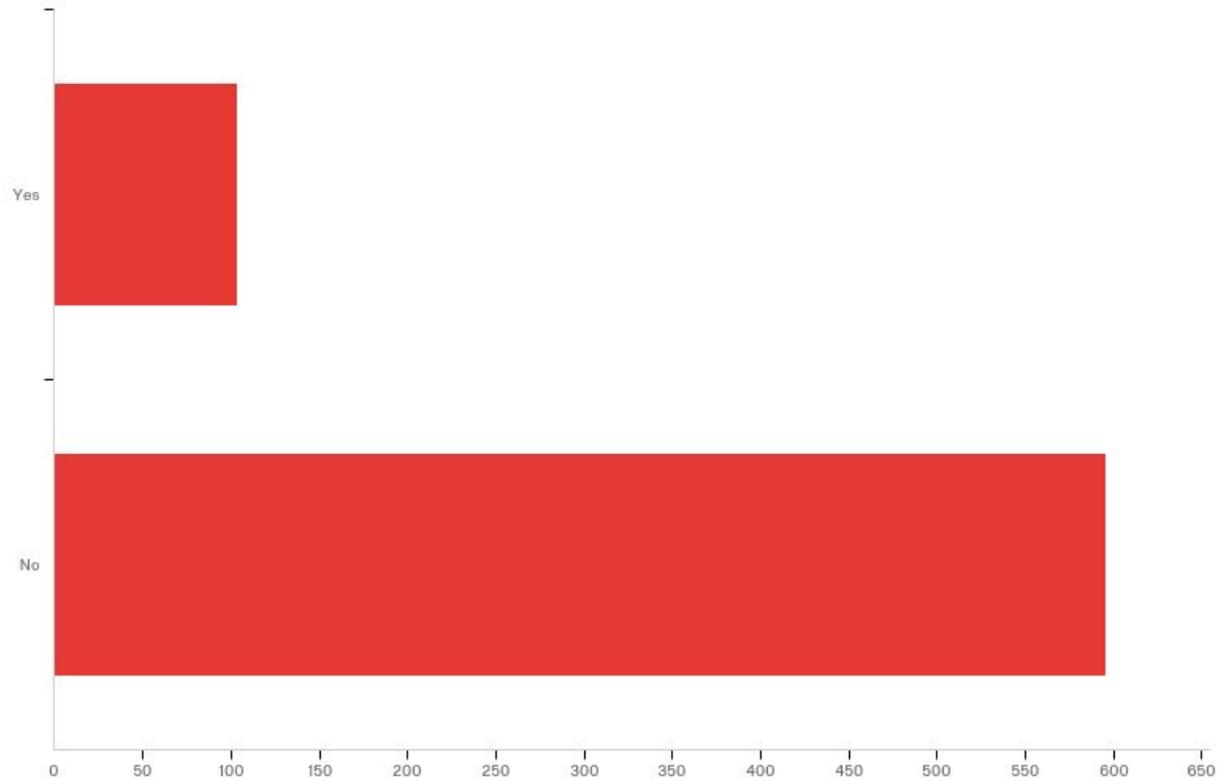
Q6 - Are you an international student?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	14.86%	104
No	85.14%	596
Total	100%	700

Q10 - Below is a list of candidates for the Democratic nomination for president in 2020. If the Democratic primary were being held today, which candidate would you favor?*
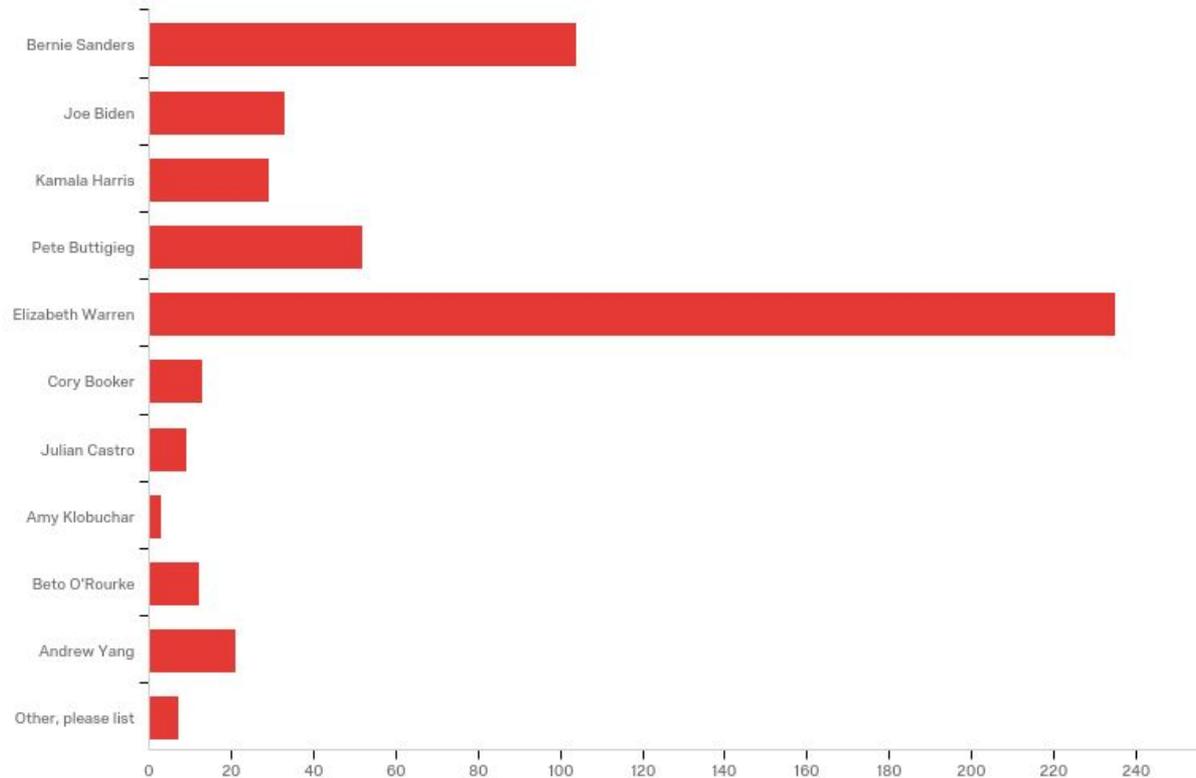
*Asked only of non-international students who identified with or leaned toward the Democratic Party. Candidates listed were those who had qualified for the most recent debate.

Q10 - Below is a list of candidates for the Democratic nomination for president in 2020. If the Democratic primary were being held today, which candidate would you favor?*

| Answer	%	Count
Bernie Sanders	20.08%	104
Joe Biden	6.37%	33
Kamala Harris	5.60%	29
Pete Buttigieg	10.04%	52
Elizabeth Warren	45.37%	235
Cory Booker	2.51%	13
Julian Castro	1.74%	9
Amy Klobuchar	0.58%	3
Beto O'Rourke	2.32%	12
Andrew Yang	4.05%	21
Other, please list	1.35%	7

*Asked only of non-international students who identified with or leaned toward the Democratic Party. Candidates listed were those who had qualified for the most recent debate.

Q11 - Regardless of who you may support, which of the Democratic candidates do you think has the best chance to defeat Donald Trump in the general election?*
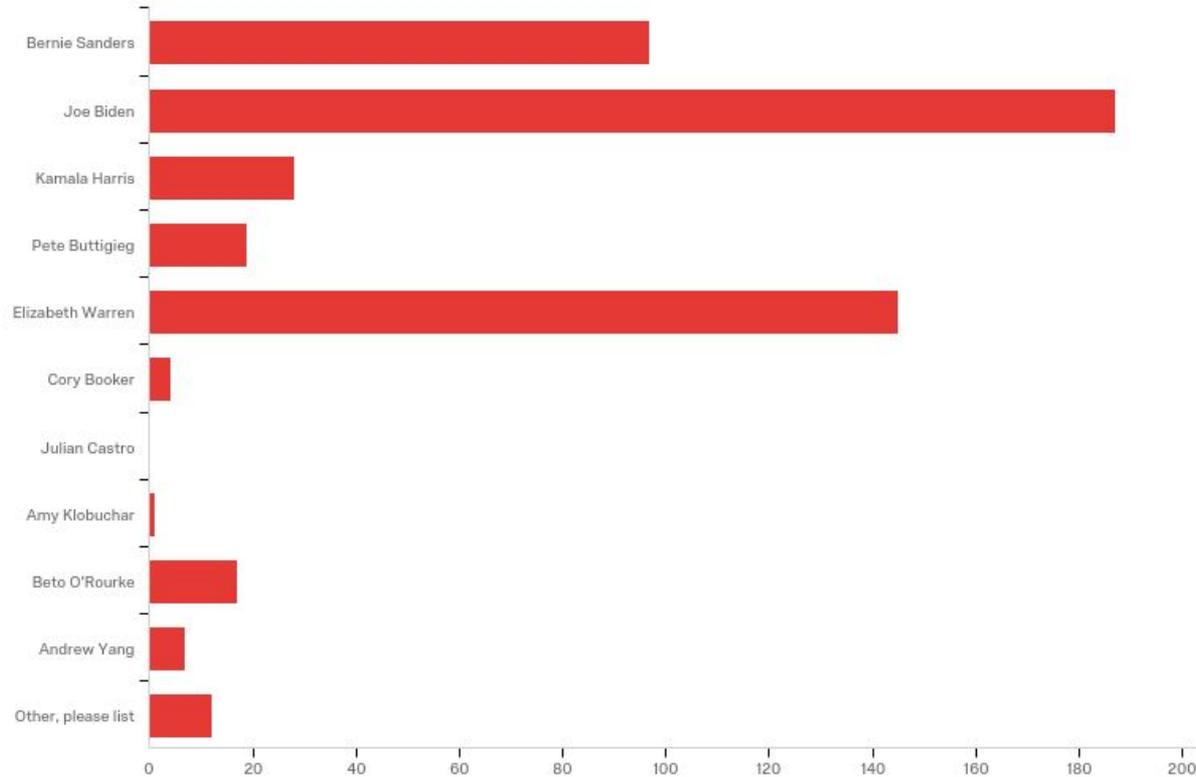
*Asked only of non-international students who identified with or leaned toward the Democratic Party. Candidates listed were those who had qualified for the most recent debate.

Q11 - Regardless of who you may support, which of the Democratic candidates do you think has the best chance to defeat Donald Trump in the general election?*

Answer	%	Count
Bernie Sanders	18.76%	97
Joe Biden	36.17%	187
Kamala Harris	5.42%	28
Pete Buttigieg	3.68%	19
Elizabeth Warren	28.05%	145
Cory Booker	0.77%	4
Julian Castro	0.00%	0
Amy Klobuchar	0.19%	1
Beto O'Rourke	3.29%	17
Andrew Yang	1.35%	7
Other, please list	2.32%	12

*Asked only of non-international students who identified with or leaned toward the Democratic Party. Candidates listed were those who had qualified for the most recent debate.

Q13 - Would you support or oppose replacing private health insurance with a government-run health insurance program?
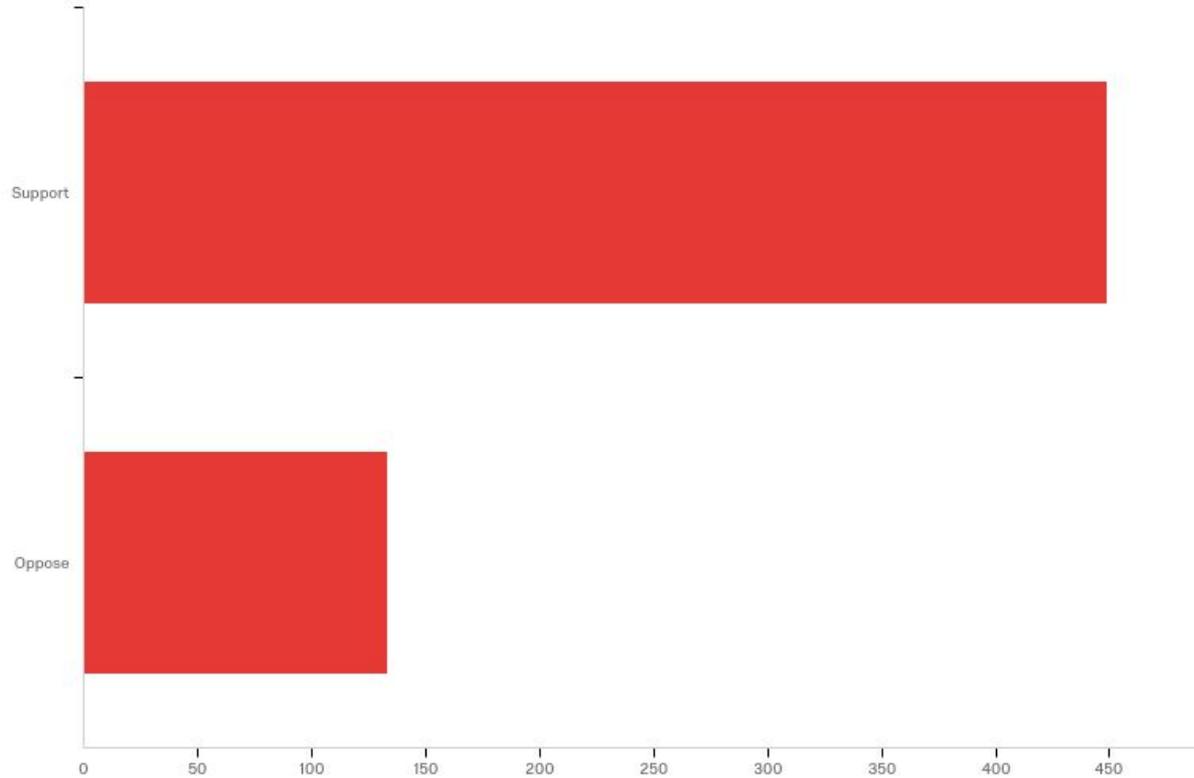
Q13 - Would you support or oppose replacing private health insurance with a government-run health insurance program?

| Answer	%	Count
Support	77.15%	449
Oppose	22.85%	133
Total	100%	582

Q14 - Would you support or oppose making all 4-year public colleges and universities tuition free?
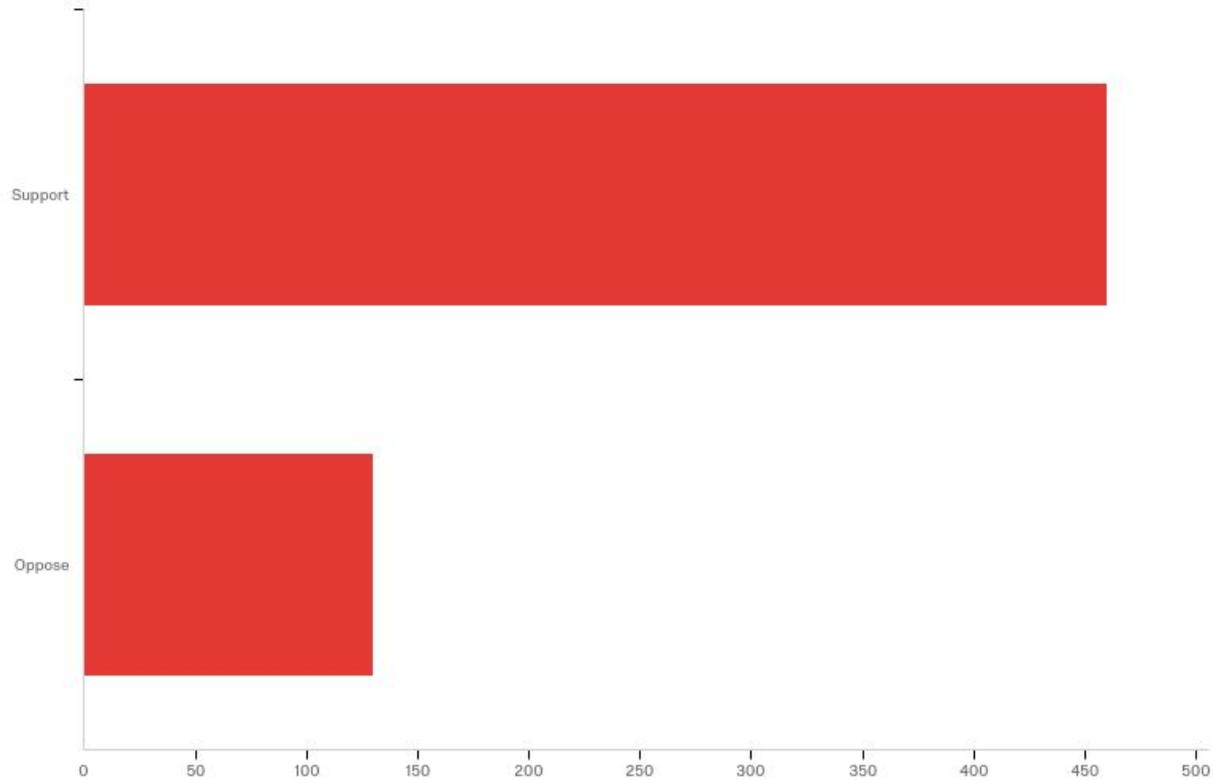
Q14 - Would you support or oppose making all 4-year public colleges and universities tuition free?

Answer	%	Count
Support	77.97%	460
Oppose	22.03%	130
Total	100%	590

Q15 - Where do you think each of the following politicians stands on the following issue: Replacing private health insurance with a government-run health insurance program
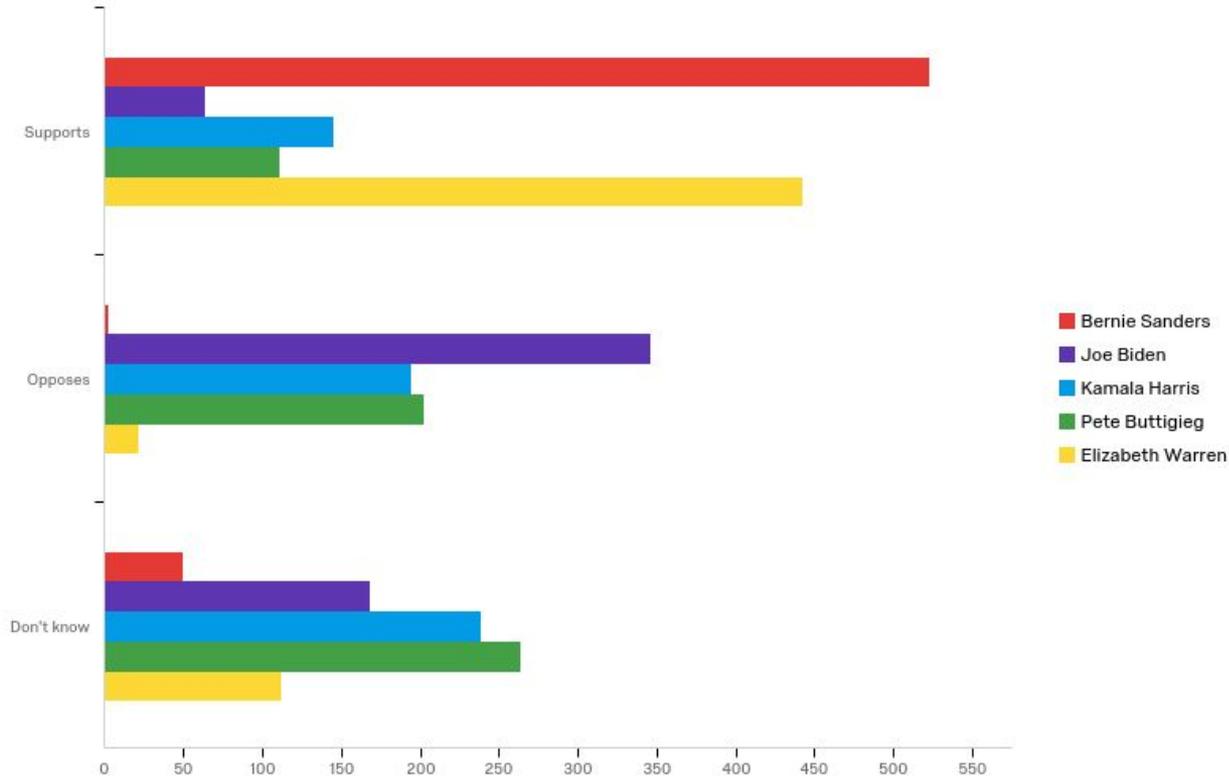
Q15 - Where do you think each of the following politicians stands on the following issue: Replacing private health insurance with a government-run health insurance program

| Question	Supports		Opposes		Don't know		Total
Bernie Sanders	90.80%	523	0.52%	3	8.68%	50	576
Joe Biden	11.07%	64	59.86%	346	29.07%	168	578
Kamala Harris	25.09%	145	33.56%	194	41.35%	239	578
Pete Buttigieg	19.24%	111	35.01%	202	45.75%	264	577
Elizabeth Warren	76.78%	443	3.81%	22	19.41%	112	577

Q16 - Where do you think each of the following politicians stands on the following issue: Making all 4-year public colleges and universities tuition free
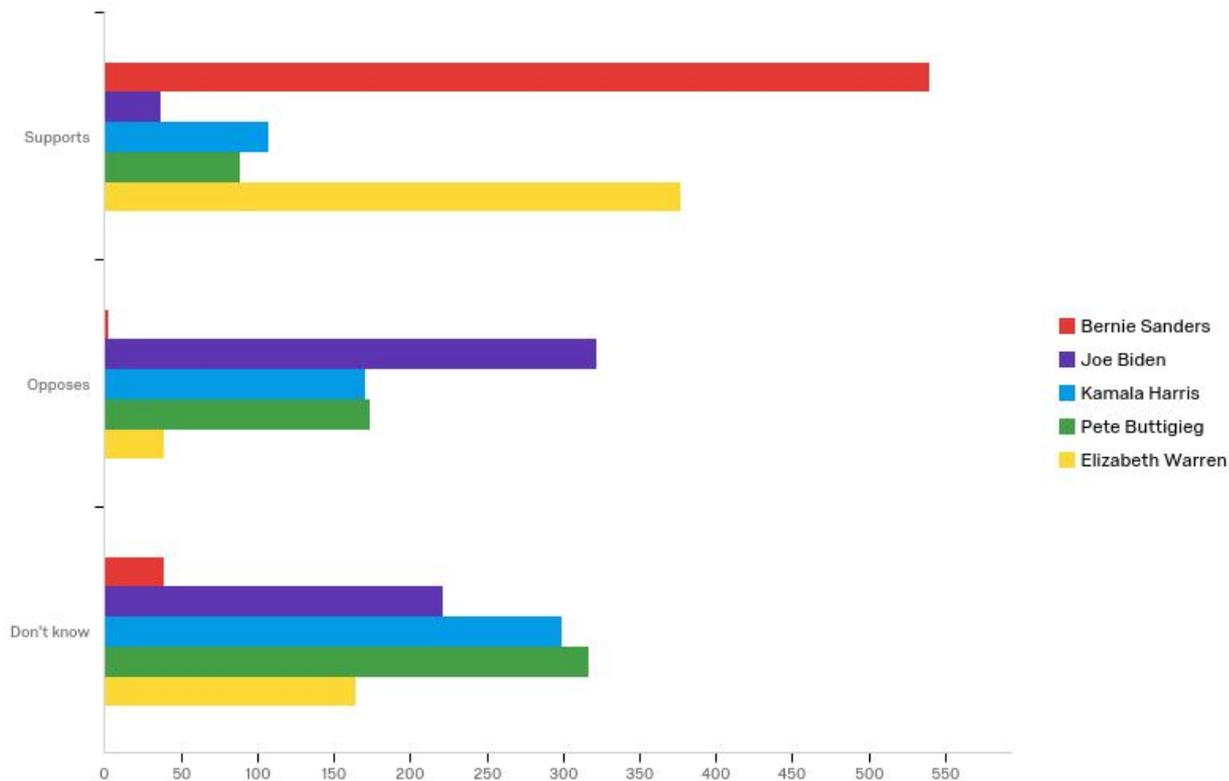
Q16 - Where do you think each of the following politicians stands on the following issue: Making all 4-year public colleges and universities tuition free

Question	Supports		Opposes		Don't know		Total
Bernie Sanders	92.78%	540	0.52%	3	6.70%	39	582
Joe Biden	6.38%	37	55.52%	322	38.10%	221	580
Kamala Harris	18.54%	107	29.64%	171	51.82%	299	577
Pete Buttigieg	15.34%	89	30.00%	174	54.66%	317	580
Elizabeth Warren	65.00%	377	6.72%	39	28.28%	164	580

Q17 - Is there a policy stance X that would be a deal-breaker such that you would not vote for a candidate who disagrees with you on X but agrees with you on all other issues?
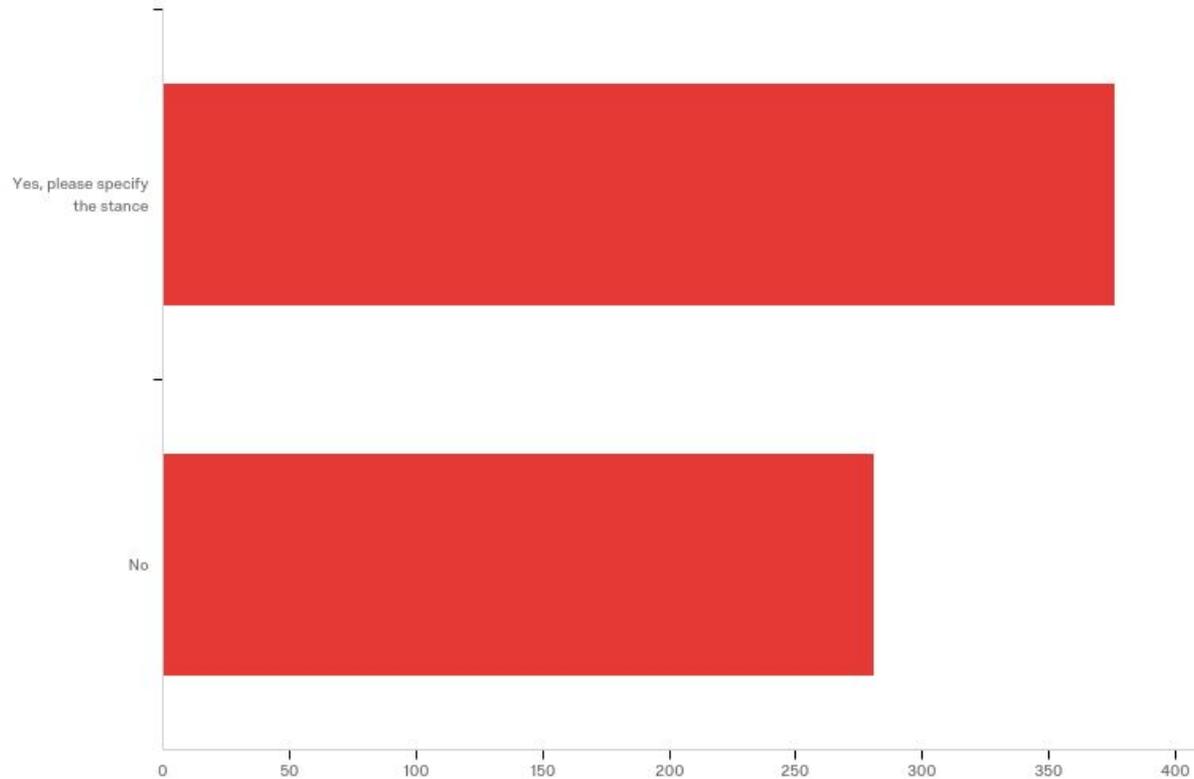
Q17 - Is there a policy stance X that would be a deal-breaker such that you would not vote for a candidate who disagrees with you on X but agrees with you on all other issues?

Answer	%	Count
Yes, please specify the stance	57.23%	376
No	42.77%	281
Total	100%	657

Q18 - When considering your vote in a general election, on how many of the issues would a candidate need to align with you in order to earn your vote?
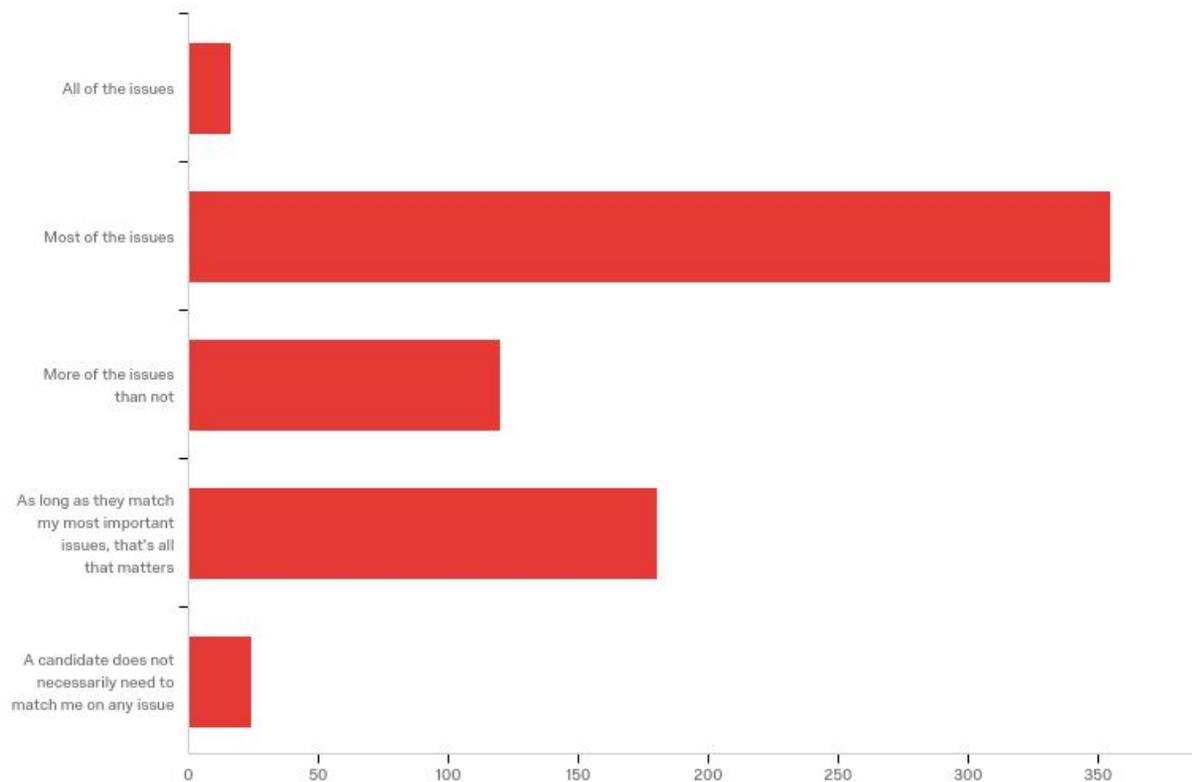
Q18 - When considering your vote in a general election, on how many of the issues would a candidate need to align with you in order to earn your vote?

Answer	%	Count
All of the issues	2.30%	16
Most of the issues	51.08%	355
More of the issues than not	17.27%	120
As long as they match my most important issues, that's all that matters	25.90%	180
A candidate does not necessarily need to match me on any issue	3.45%	24
Total	100%	695

Q19 - Whether or not you were eligible to vote in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, which of the following candidates did you support in the general election?
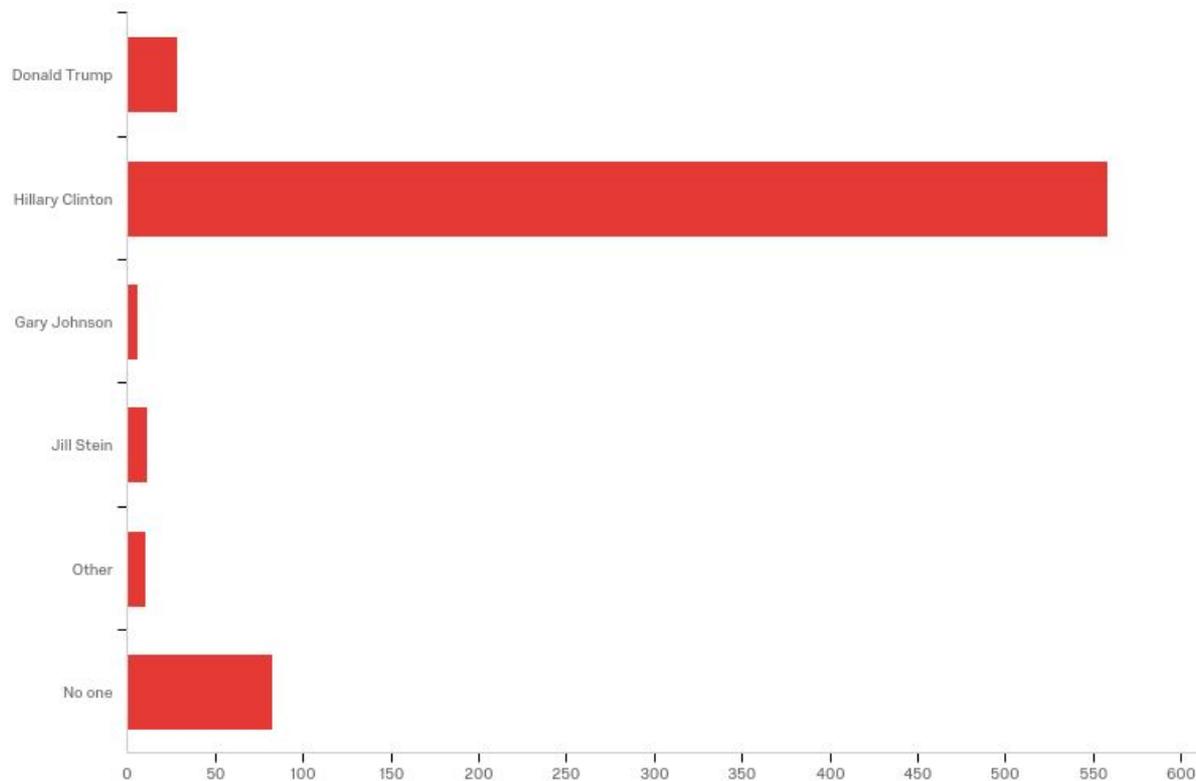
Q19 - Whether or not you were eligible to vote in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, which of the following candidates did you support in the general election?

Answer	%	Count
Donald Trump	4.02%	28
Hillary Clinton	80.17%	558
Gary Johnson	0.86%	6
Jill Stein	1.58%	11
Other	1.44%	10
No one	11.93%	83
Total	100%	696

Q20 - If you had to choose one, whose policies more closely align with your political beliefs?
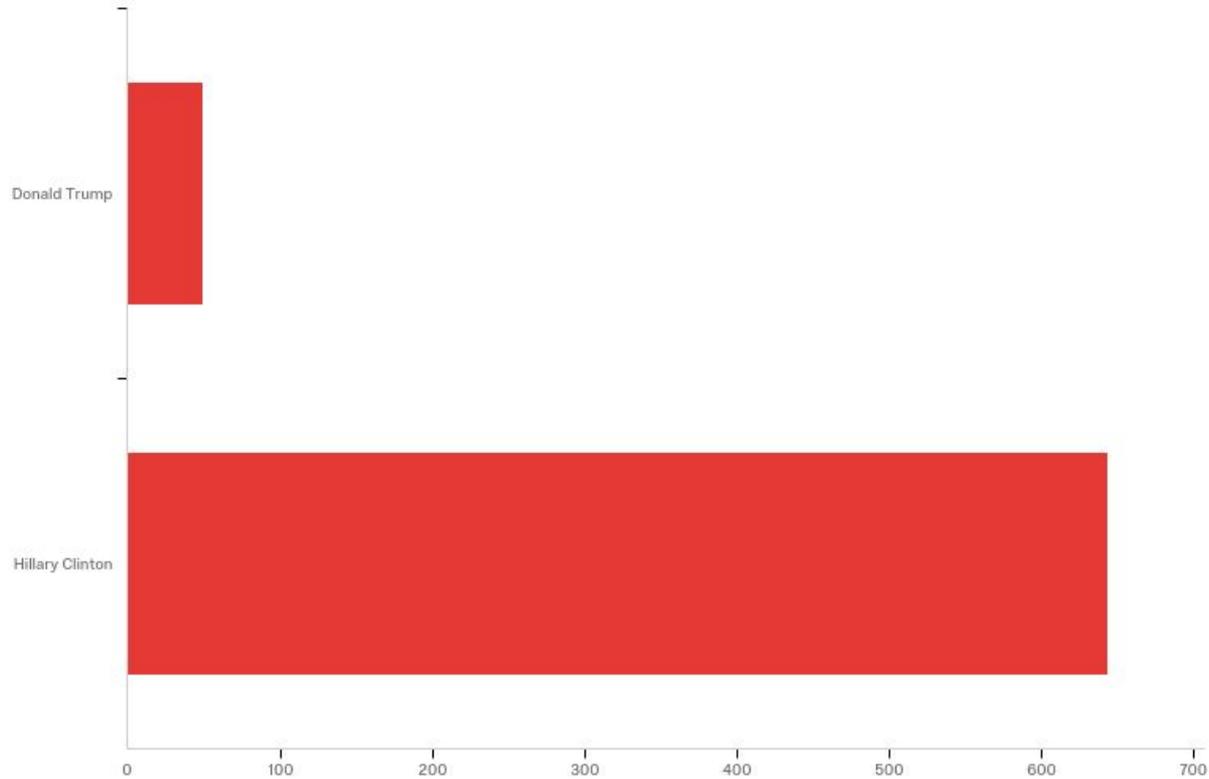
Q20 - If you had to choose one, whose policies more closely align with your political beliefs?

Answer	%	Count
Donald Trump	7.08%	49
Hillary Clinton	92.92%	643
Total	100%	692

Q21 - Did you take part in the Ban the Box Movement?
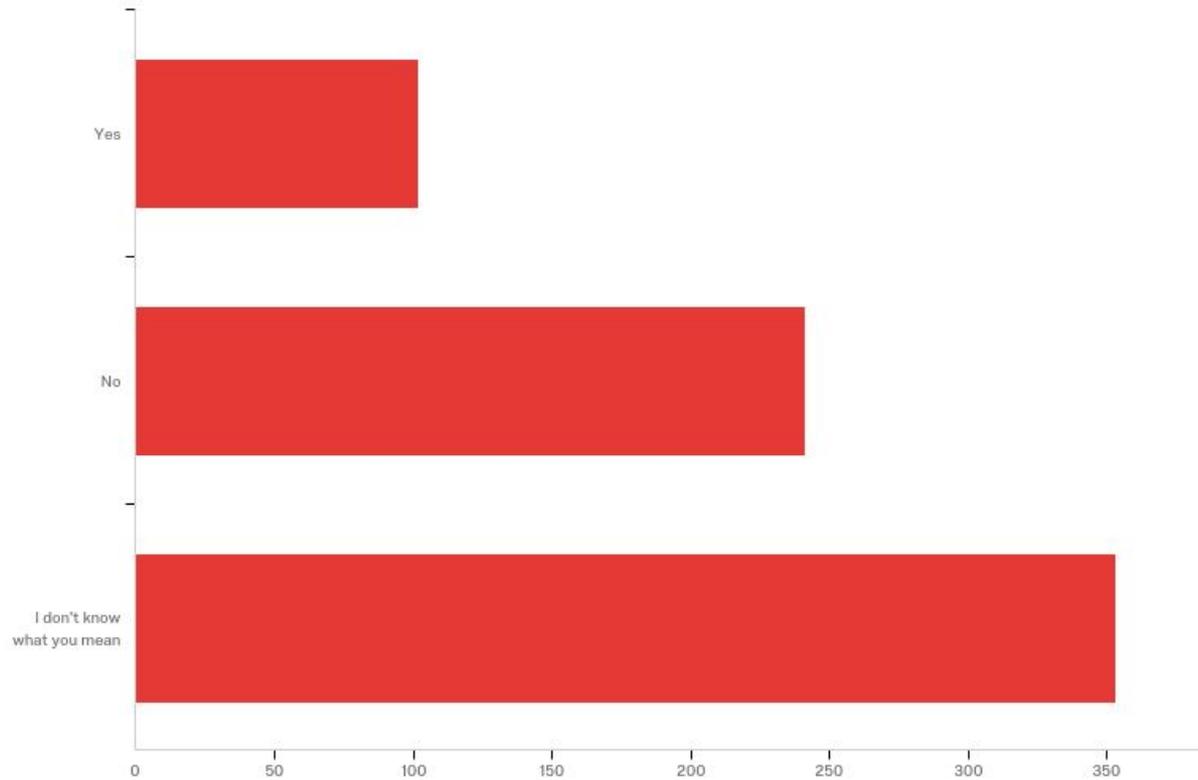
Q21 - Did you take part in the Ban the Box Movement?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	14.66%	102
No	34.63%	241
I don't know what you mean	50.72%	353
Total	100%	696

Q22 - What is your current level of involvement with Ban the Box?
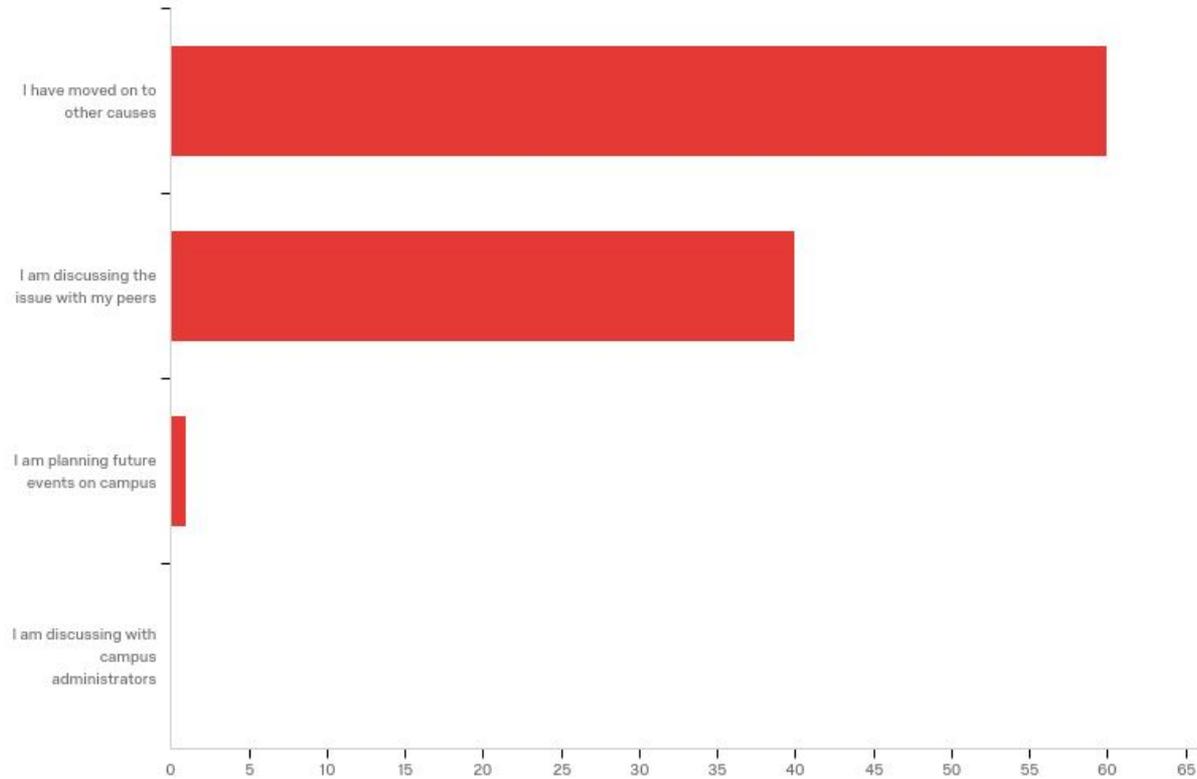
Q22 - What is your current level of involvement with Ban the Box?

Answer	%	Count
I have moved on to other causes	59.41%	60
I am discussing the issue with my peers	39.60%	40
I am planning future events on campus	0.99%	1
I am discussing with campus administrators	0.00%	0
Total	100%	101

Q23 - When there is an important issue you want to raise attention to on campus, to whom do you go in order to garner support? Check all that apply.
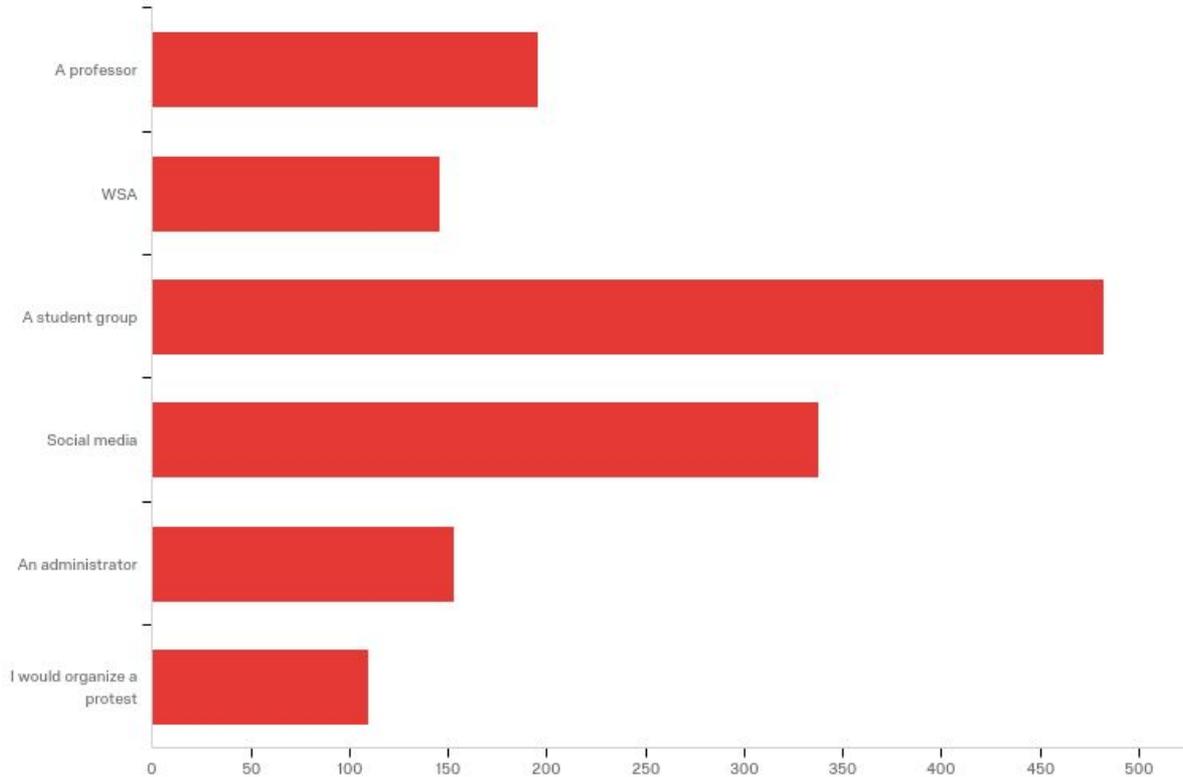
Q23 - When there is an important issue you want to raise attention to on campus, to whom do you go in order to garner support? Check all that apply.

Answer	%	Count
A professor	13.75%	196
WSA	10.25%	146
A student group	33.82%	482
Social media	23.72%	338
An administrator	10.74%	153
I would organize a protest	7.72%	110
Total	100%	1425

Q24 - Now we'd like to ask you a few questions about international affairs. If you don't know the answer, please just mark I'm not sure. Do you have an opinion on Brexit?
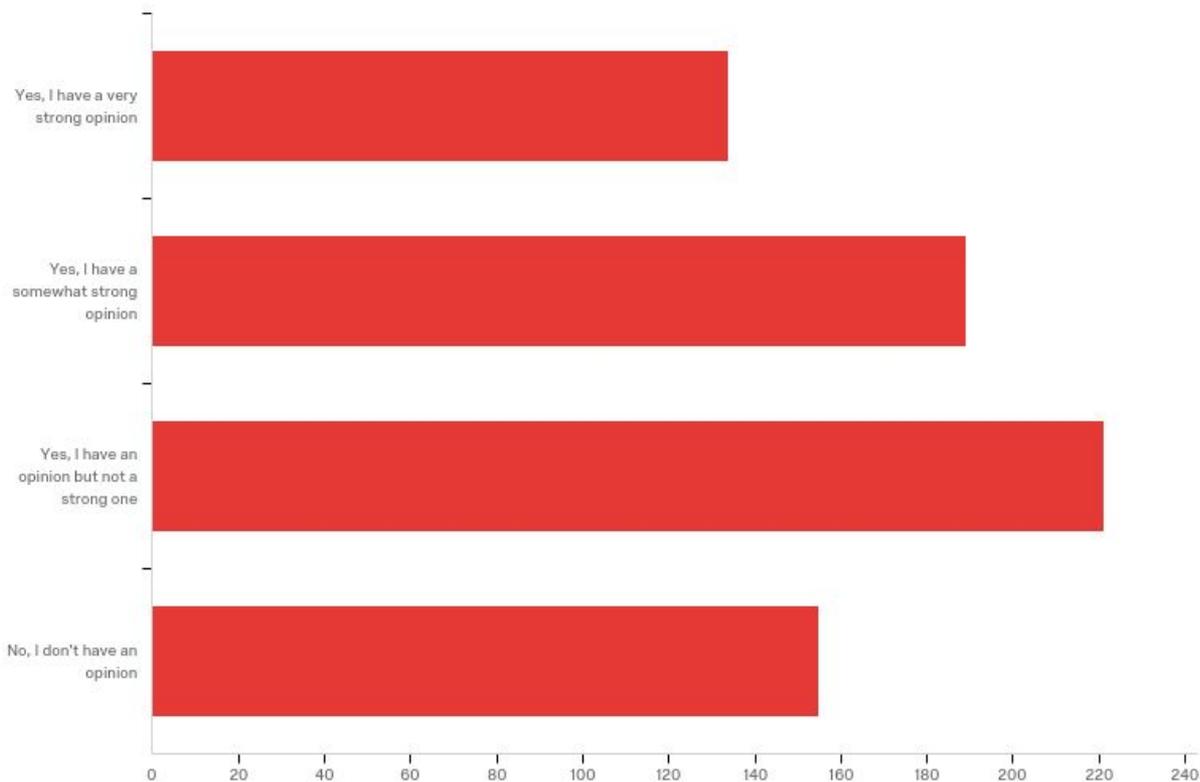
Q24 - Now we'd like to ask you a few questions about international affairs. If you don't know the answer, please just mark I'm not sure. Do you have an opinion on Brexit?

Answer	%	Count
Yes, I have a very strong opinion	19.17%	134
Yes, I have a somewhat strong opinion	27.04%	189
Yes, I have an opinion but not a strong one	31.62%	221
No, I don't have an opinion	22.17%	155
Total	100%	699

Q25 - Who is the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom?
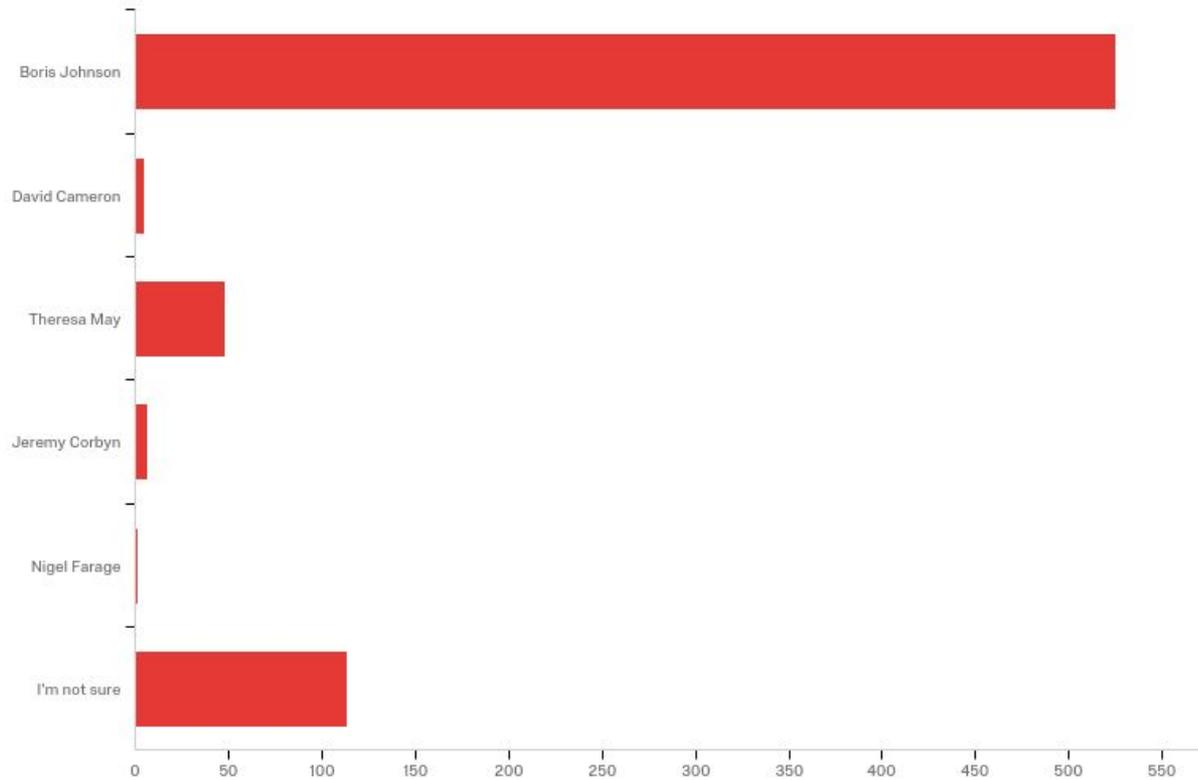
Q25 - Who is the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom?

Answer	%	Count
Boris Johnson	75.21%	525
David Cameron	0.72%	5
Theresa May	6.88%	48
Jeremy Corbyn	0.86%	6
Nigel Farage	0.14%	1
I'm not sure	16.19%	113
Total	100%	698

Q26 - Which plan does the Prime Minister support?
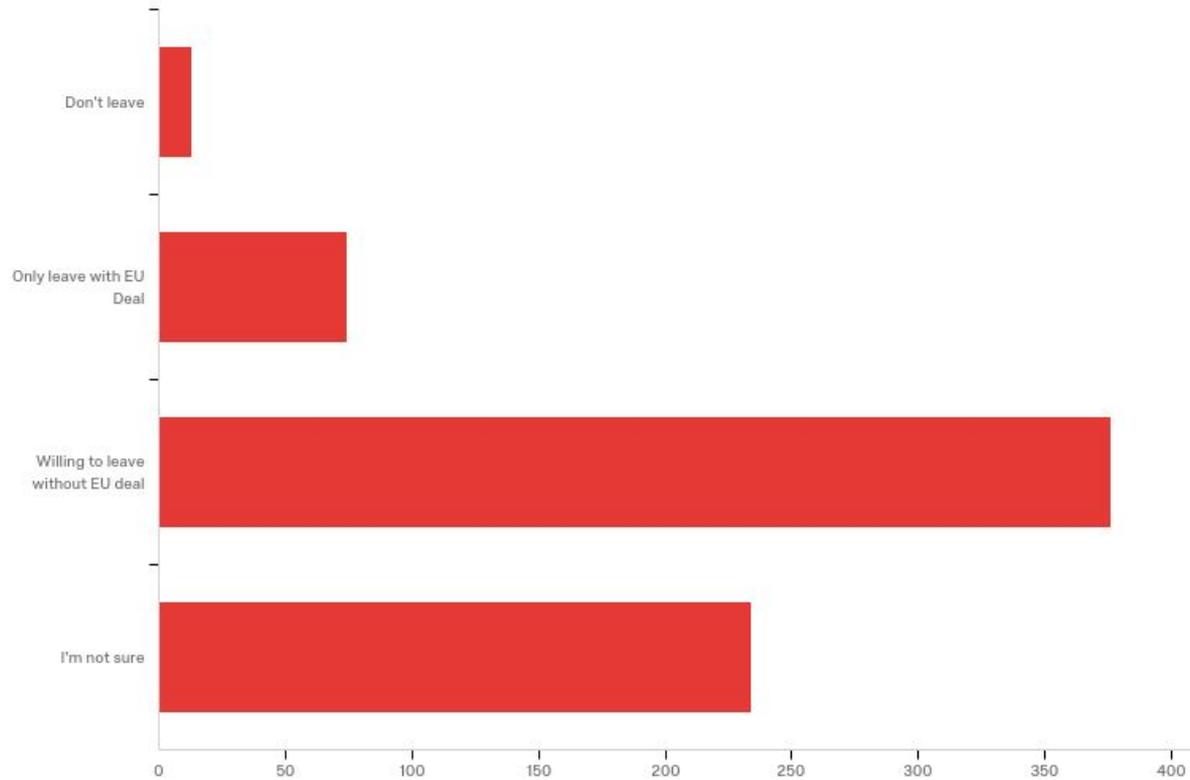
Q26 - Which plan does the Prime Minister support?

Answer	%	Count
Don't leave	1.87%	13
Only leave with EU Deal	10.62%	74
Willing to leave without EU deal	53.95%	376
I'm not sure	33.57%	234
Total	100%	697

Q27 - For each of the following statements, please indicate how much you agree...
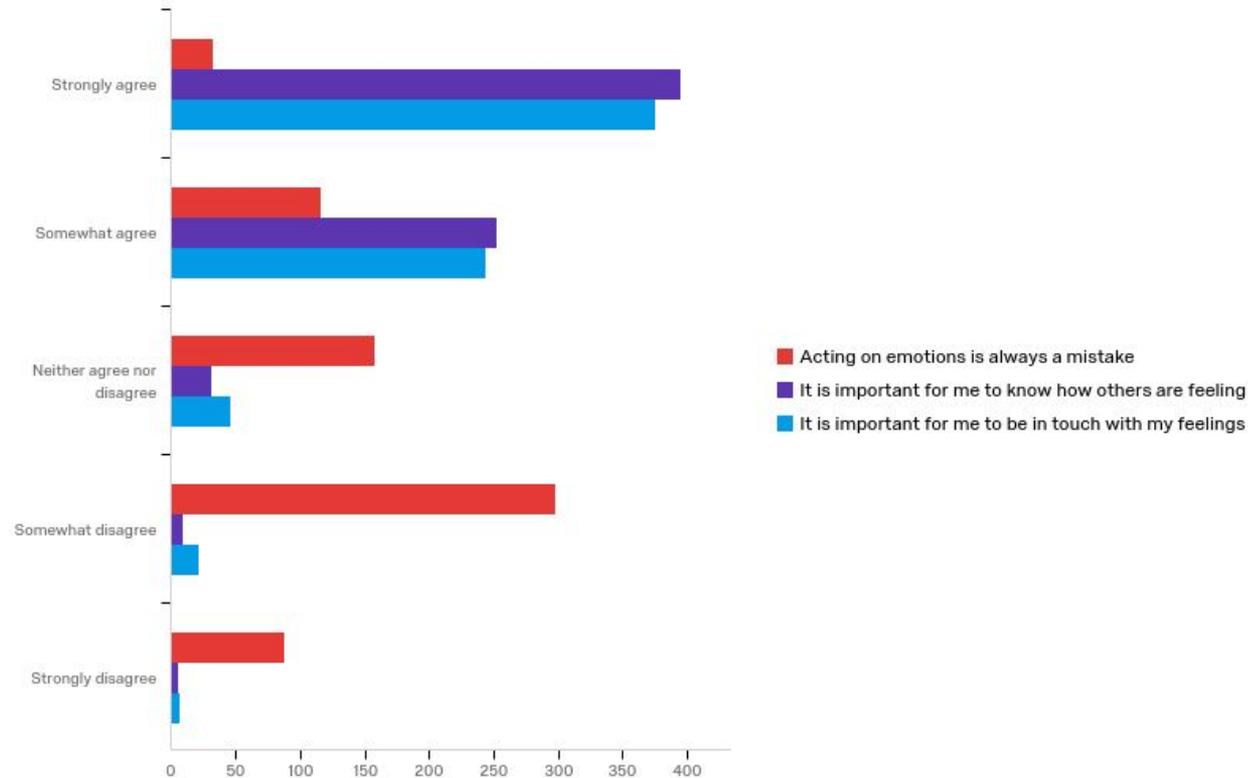
Q27 - For each of the following statements, please indicate how much you agree...

Question	Strongly agree		Somewhat agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat disagree		Strongly disagree		Total
Acting on emotions is always a mistake	4.76%	33	16.74%	116	22.80%	158	43.00%	298	12.70%	88	693
It is important for me to know how others are feeling	57.00%	395	36.51%	253	4.47%	31	1.30%	9	0.72%	5	693
It is important for me to be in touch with my feelings	54.11%	375	35.21%	244	6.64%	46	3.03%	21	1.01%	7	693

Q28 - Below are a list of statements. Please indicate much like you each statement describes you...
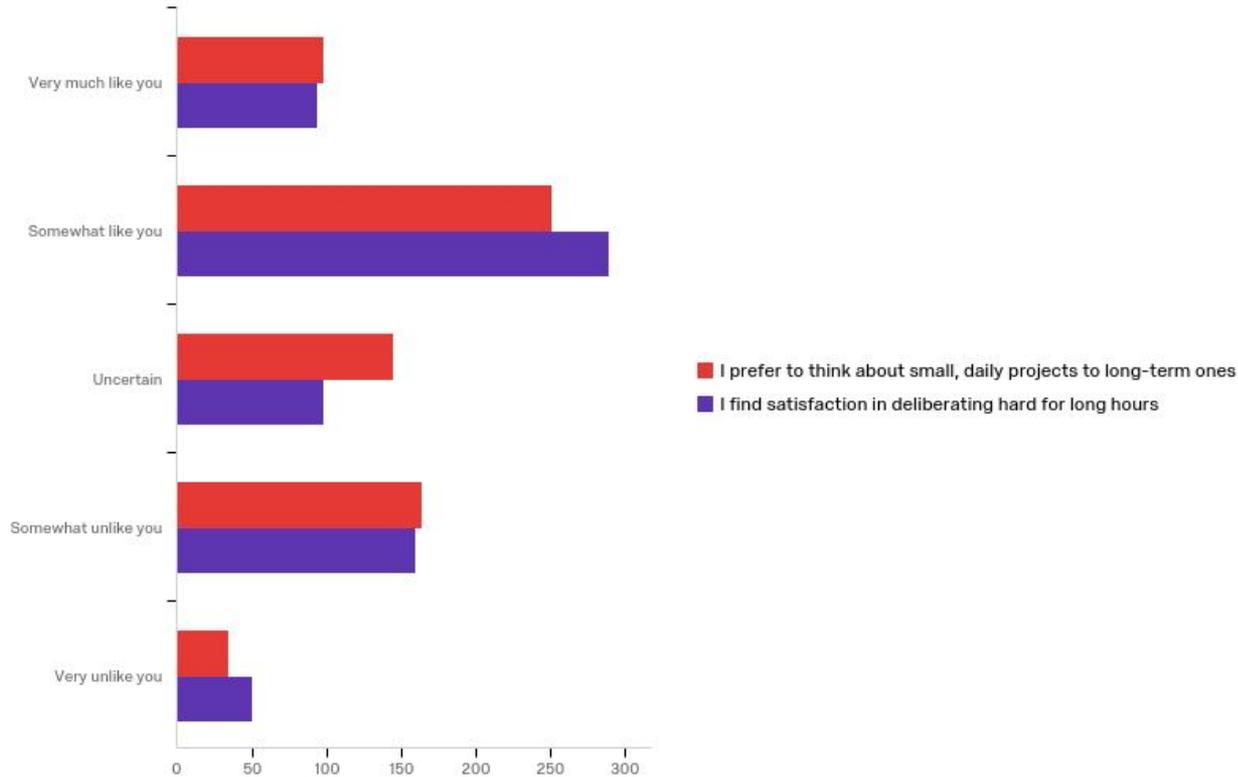
Q28 - Below are a list of statements. Please indicate much like you each statement describes you...

Question	Very much like you		Somewhat like you		Uncertain		Somewhat unlike you		Very unlike you		Total
I prefer to think about small, daily projects to long-term ones	14.16%	98	36.27%	251	20.95%	145	23.70%	164	4.91%	34	692
I find satisfaction in deliberating hard for long hours	13.60%	94	41.82%	289	14.18%	98	23.15%	160	7.24%	50	691

Q29 - Have you had a political discussion with someone on the other end of the ideological spectrum in the past month?
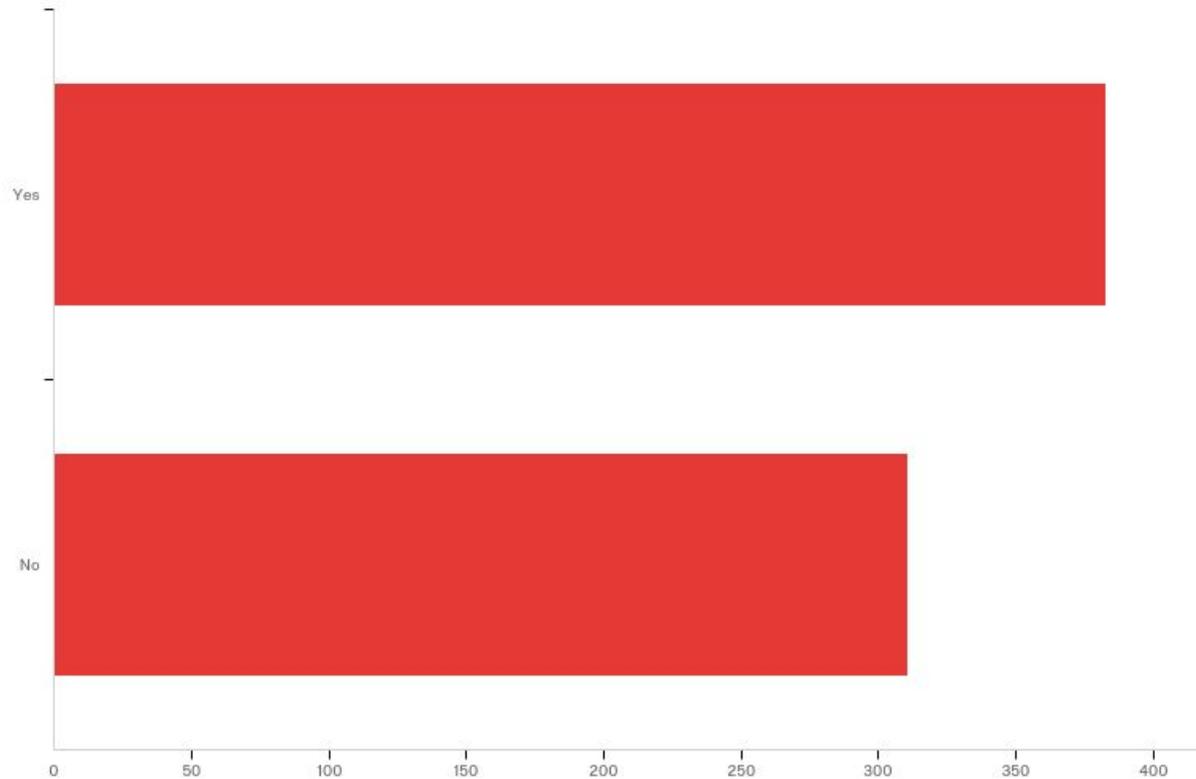
Q29 - Have you had a political discussion with someone on the other end of the ideological spectrum in the past month?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	55.19%	383
No	44.81%	311
Total	100%	694

Q30 - Do you have any close friends who are on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum?
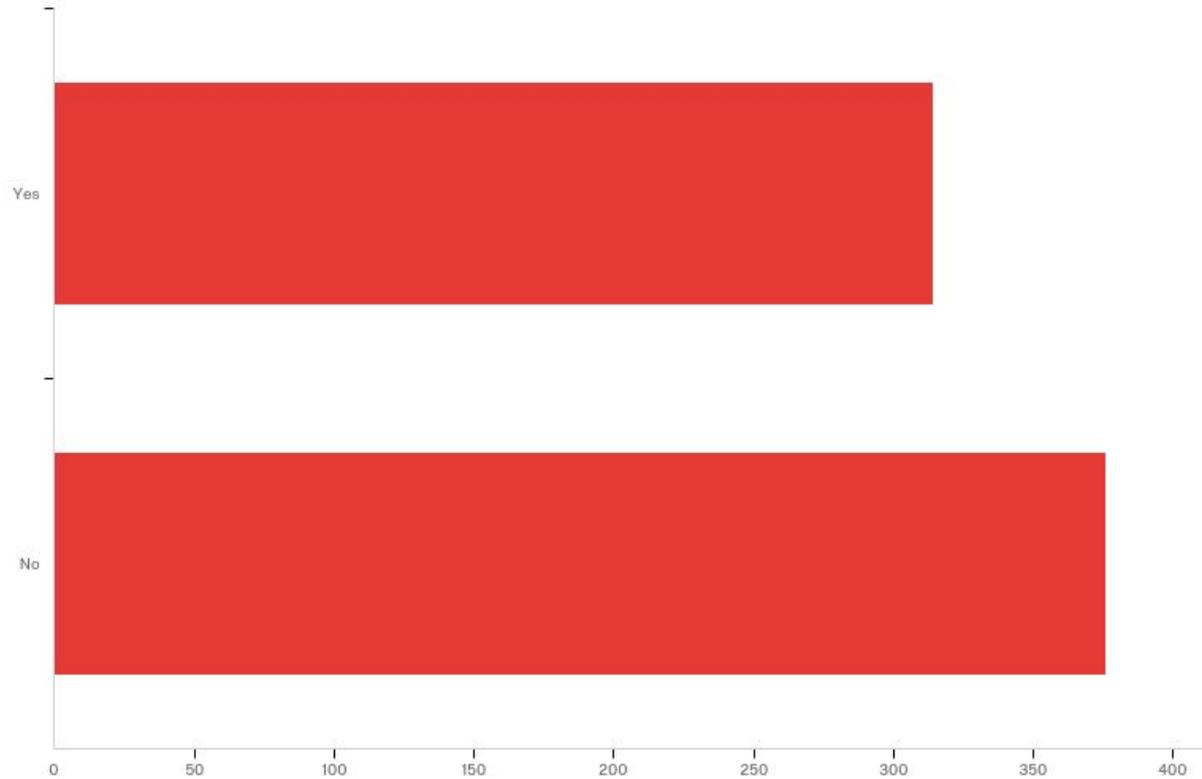
Q30 - Do you have any close friends who are on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	45.51%	314
No	54.49%	376
Total	100%	690

Q31 - Would you date someone who is a member of a different political party than you?
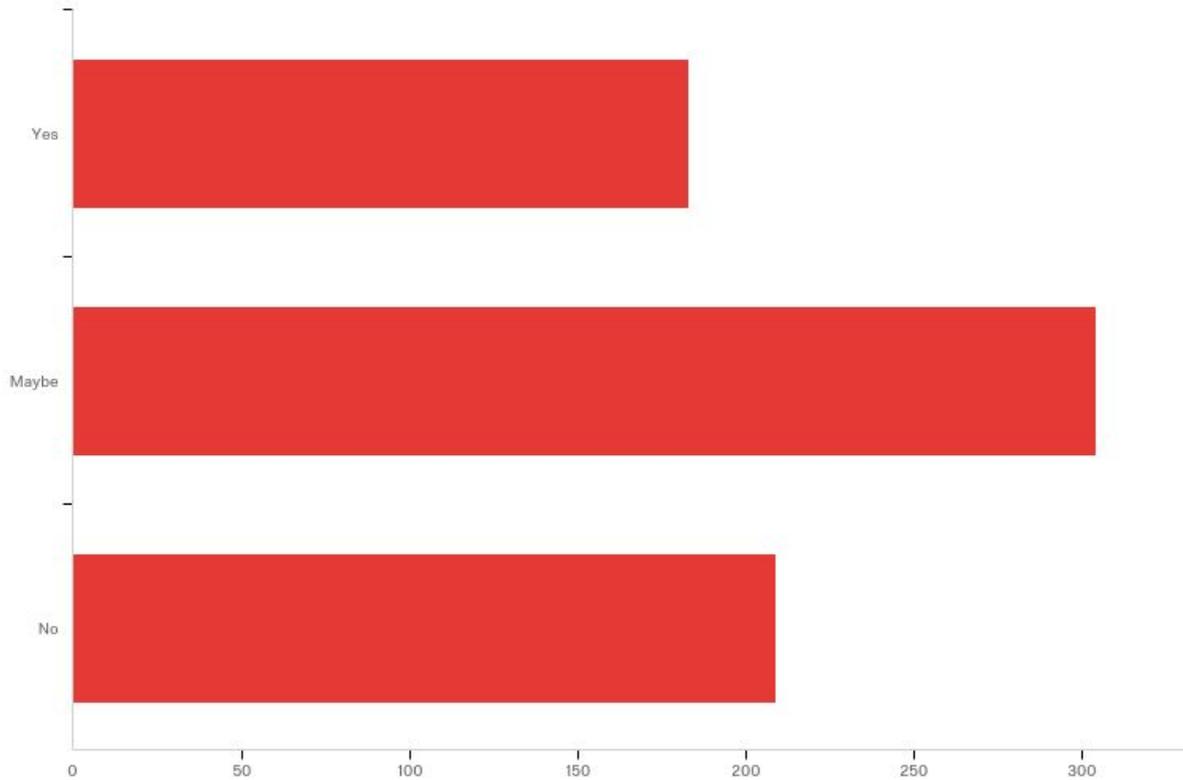
Q31 - Would you date someone who is a member of a different political party than you?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	26.29%	183
Maybe	43.68%	304
No	30.03%	209
Total	100%	696

Q32 - Are you registered to vote in the United States?
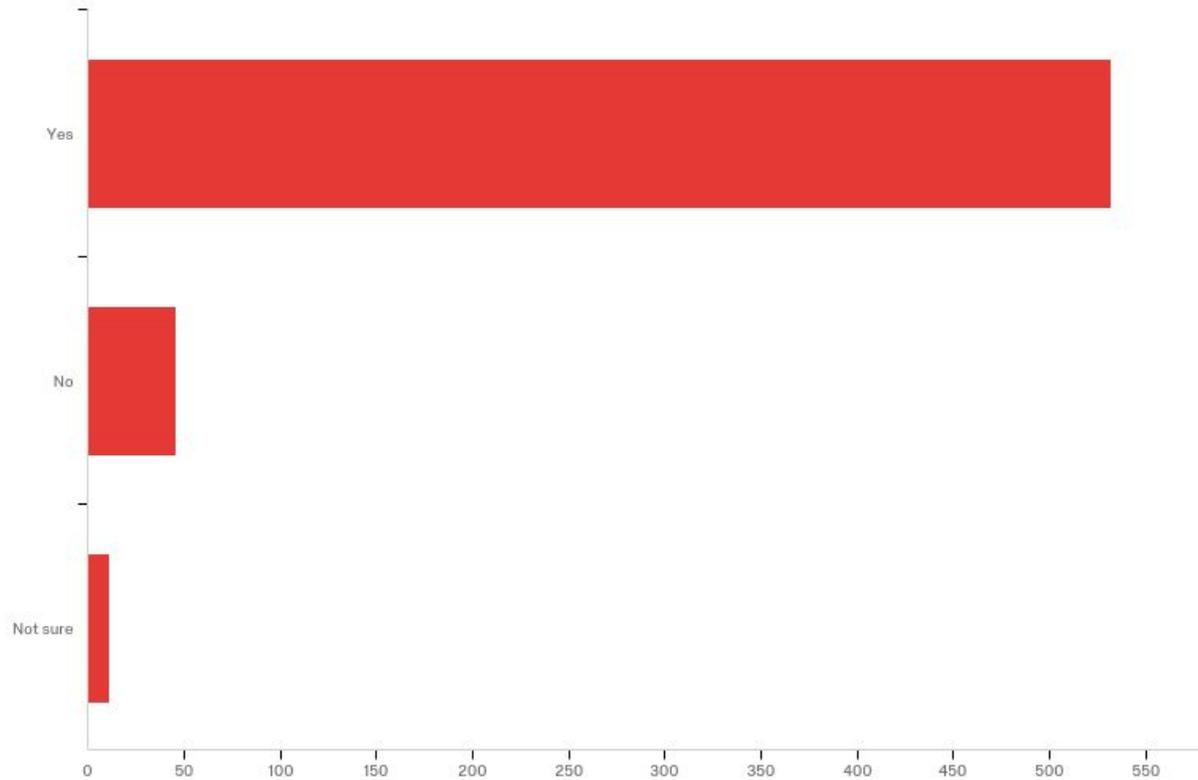
Q32 - Are you registered to vote in the United States?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	90.32%	532
No	7.81%	46
Not sure	1.87%	11
Total	100%	589

Q33 - Are you registered to vote in Middletown or someplace else?
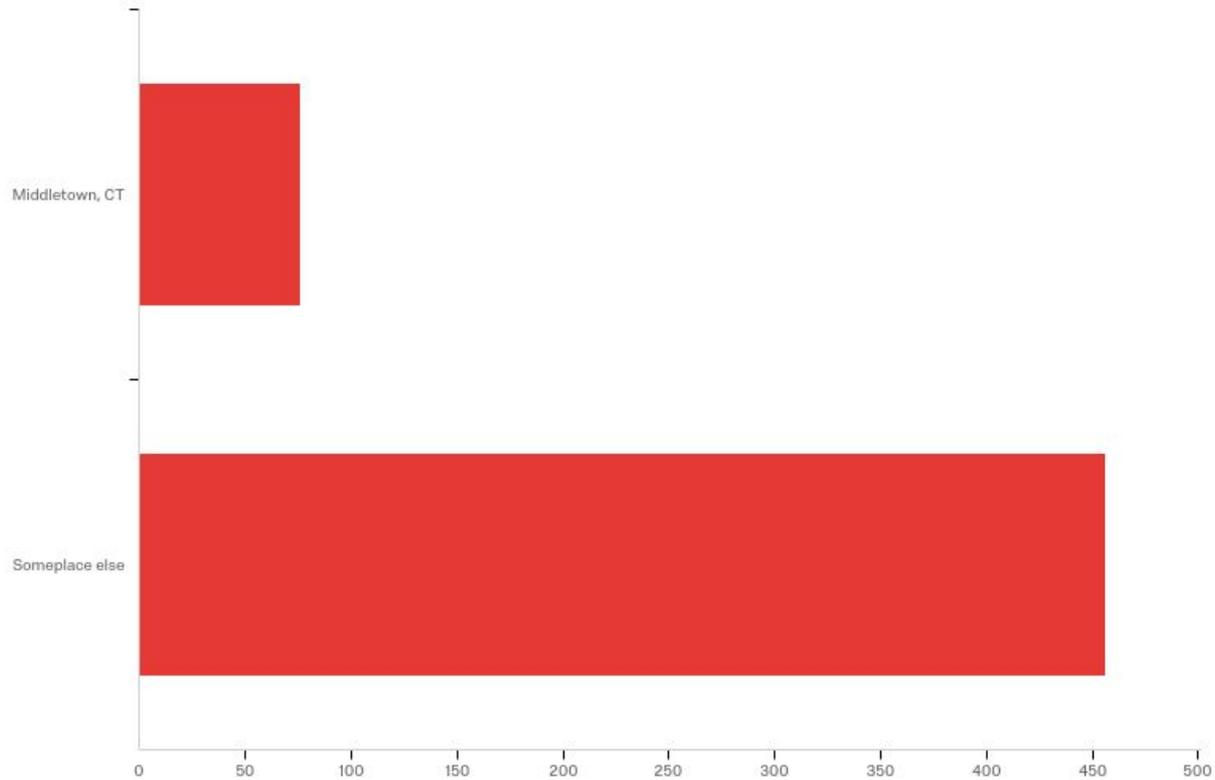
Q33 - Are you registered to vote in Middletown or someplace else?

Answer	%	Count
Middletown, CT	14.29%	76
Someplace else	85.71%	456
Total	100%	532

Q35 - When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as...
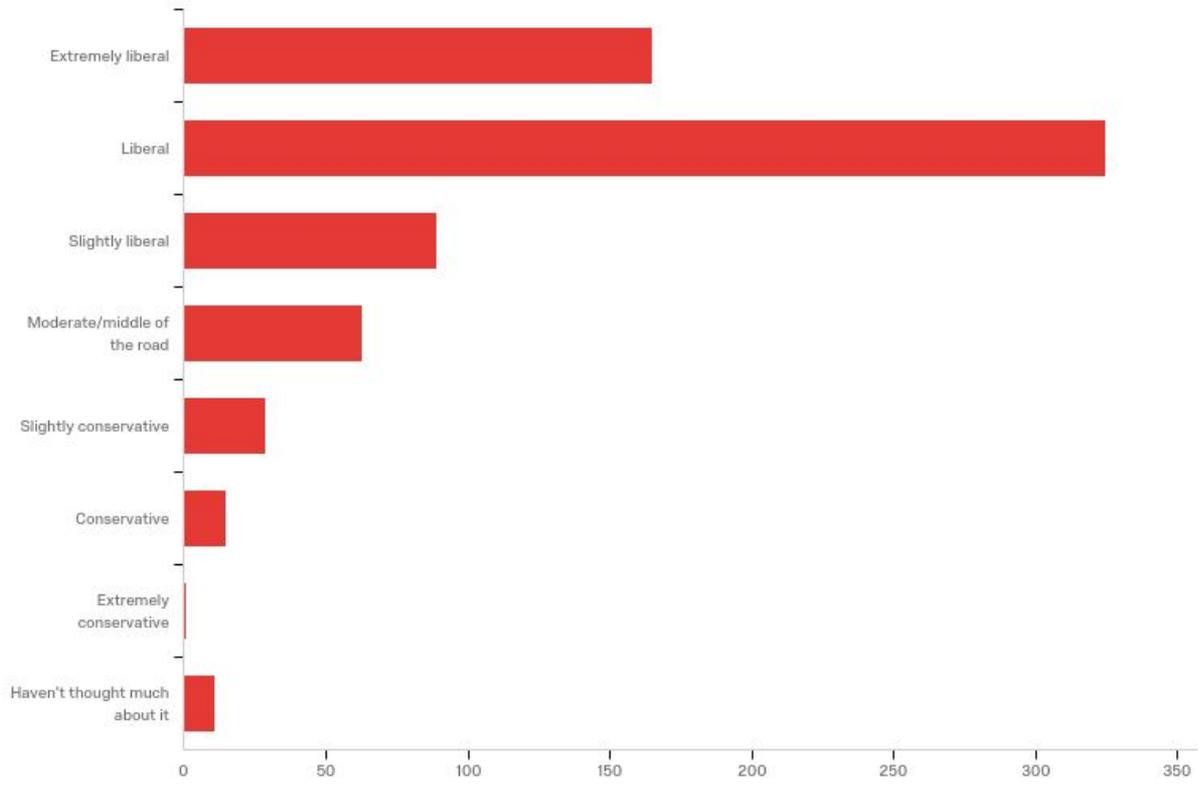
Q35 - When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as...

Answer	%	Count
Extremely liberal	23.64%	165
Liberal	46.56%	325
Slightly liberal	12.75%	89
Moderate/middle of the road	9.03%	63
Slightly conservative	4.15%	29
Conservative	2.15%	15
Extremely conservative	0.14%	1
Haven't thought much about it	1.58%	11
Total	100%	698

Q36 - Would you describe yourself as…(check all that apply)
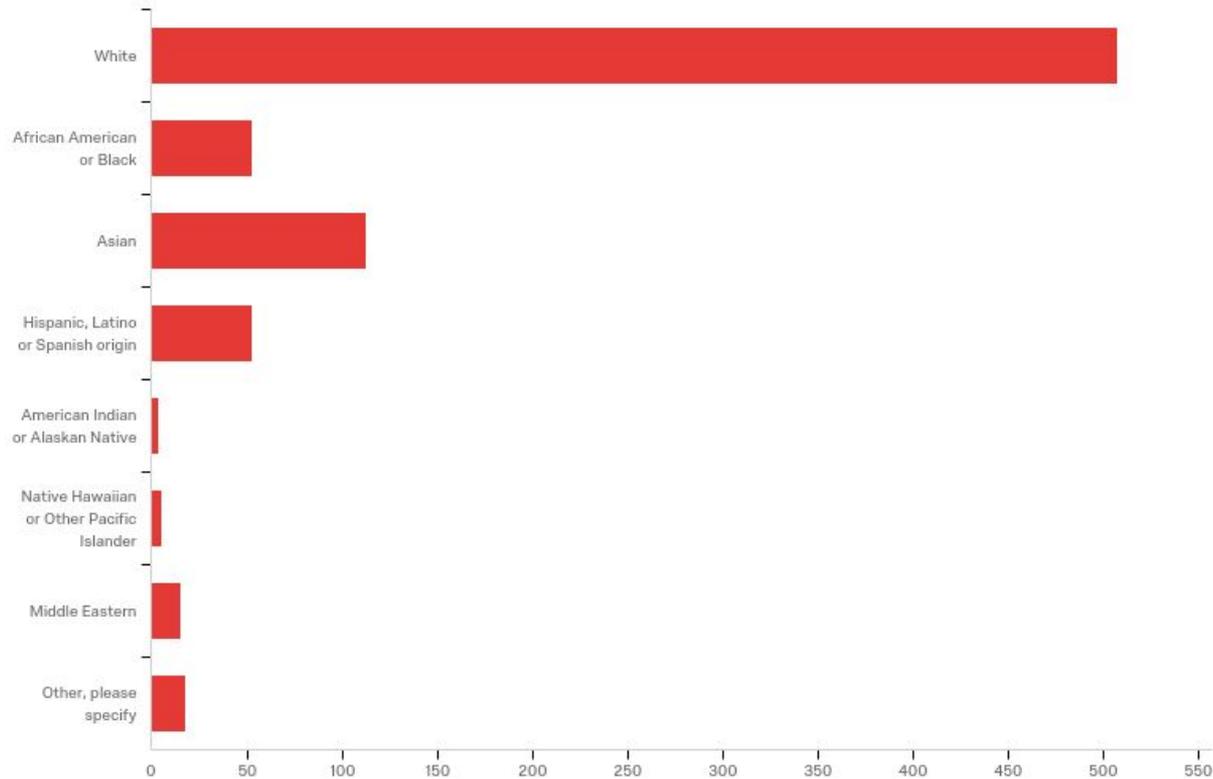
Q36 - Would you describe yourself as…(check all that apply)

Answer	%	Count
White	66.02%	507
African American or Black	6.90%	53
Asian	14.71%	113
Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin	6.90%	53
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.52%	4
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.65%	5
Middle Eastern	1.95%	15
Other, please specify	2.34%	18
Total	100%	768

Q37 - Would you describe yourself as…(check all that apply)
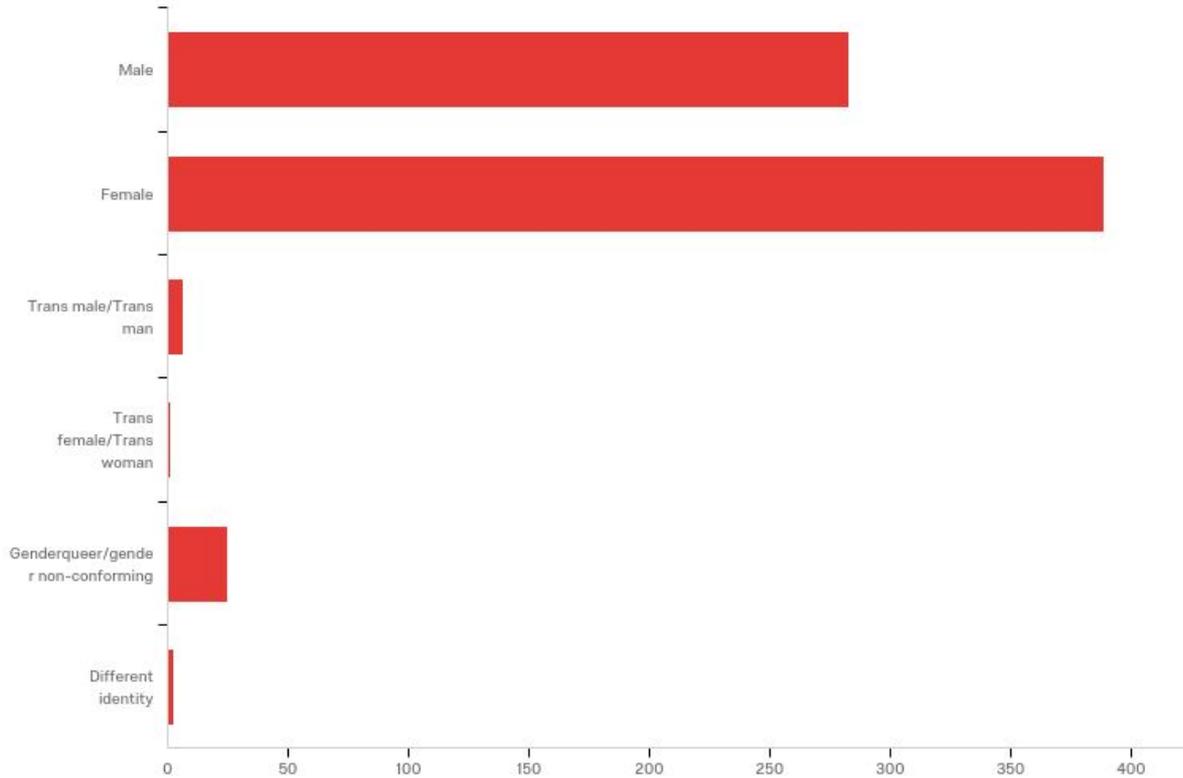
Q37 - Would you describe yourself as…(check all that apply)

Answer	%	Count
Male	40.08%	283
Female	55.10%	389
Trans male/Trans man	0.85%	6
Trans female/Trans woman	0.14%	1
Genderqueer/gender non-conforming	3.54%	25
Different identity	0.28%	2
Total	100%	706

Q38 - Class year
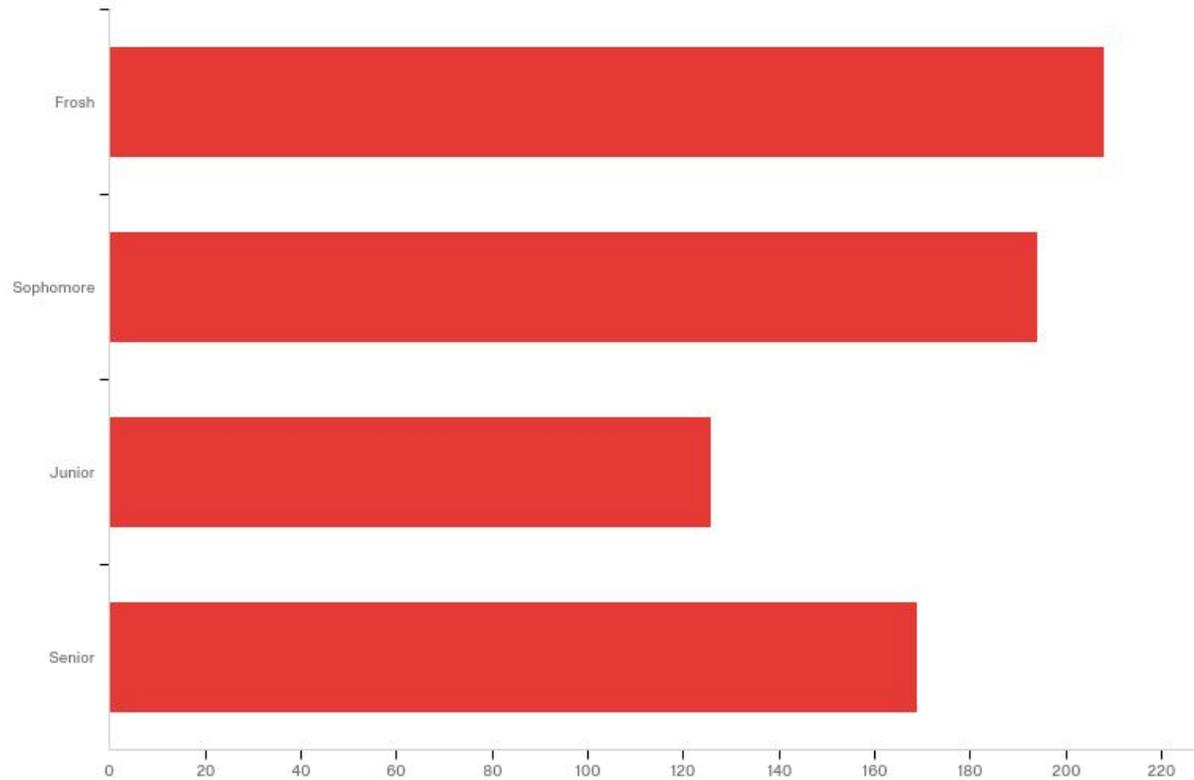
Q38 - Class year

Answer	%	Count
Frosh	29.84%	208
Sophomore	27.83%	194
Junior	18.08%	126
Senior	24.25%	169
Total	100%	697

Q39 - Would you consider your family to be...
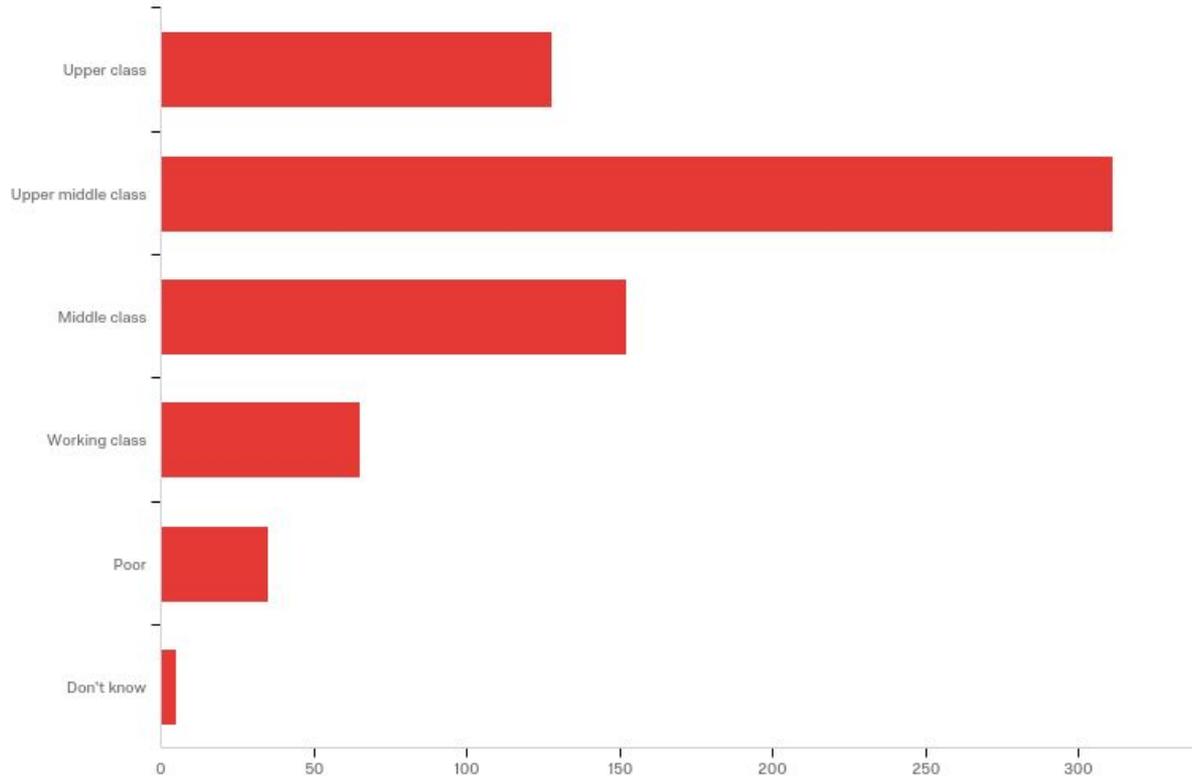
Q39 - Would you consider your family to be...

Answer	%	Count
Upper class	18.39%	128
Upper middle class	44.68%	311
Middle class	21.84%	152
Working class	9.34%	65
Poor	5.03%	35
Don't know	0.72%	5
Total	100%	696

Q40 - How would you characterize your hometown?
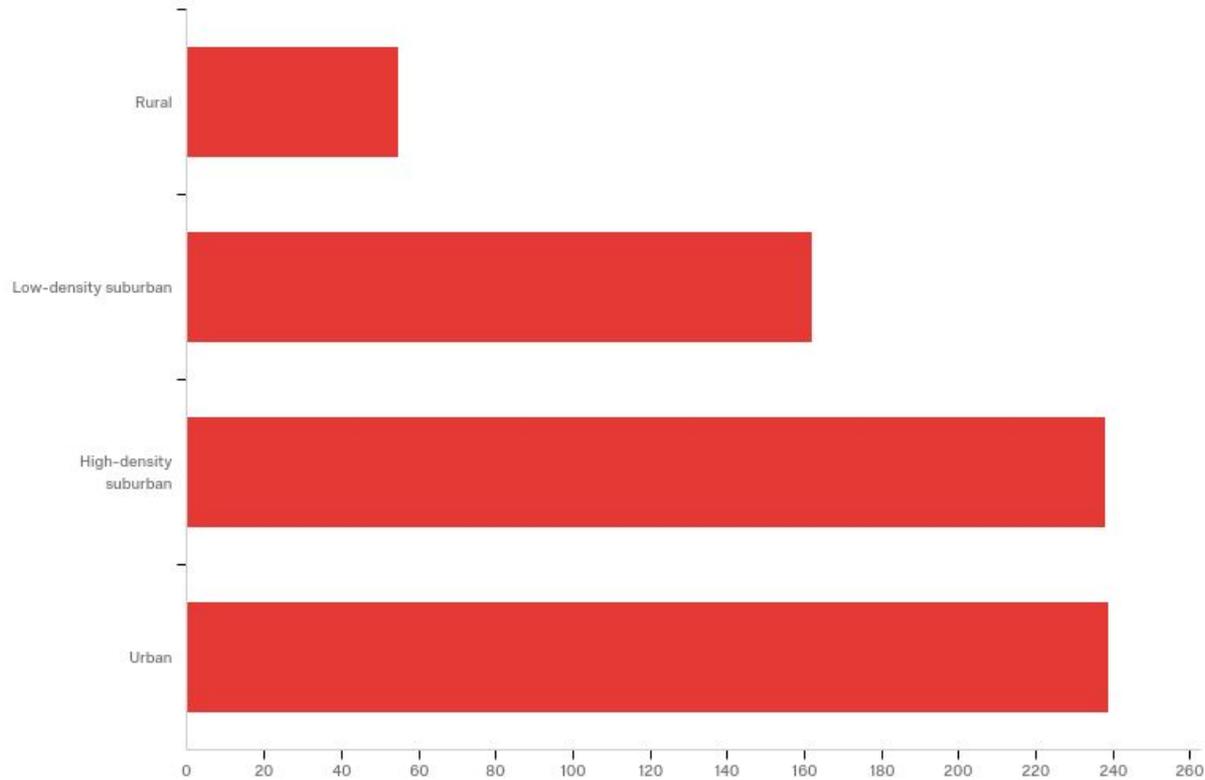
Q40 - How would you characterize your hometown?

Answer	%	Count
Rural	7.93%	55
Low-density suburban	23.34%	162
High-density suburban	34.29%	238
Urban	34.44%	239
Total	100%	694

"Interesting Findings" from Govt372 Students

America's Issue Concerns by Population Density

This table shows the issue that survey takers found the *most* important sorted by the density of their hometown.

Urbanites' most pressing issues relative to the overall averages were race relations and gun violence, while they were significantly less likely to list the environment as the most pressing problem relative to other groups.

Rural students were most likely to select the environment as the most important problem and least likely to select race relations compared to the average of all students.

	Total	Rural	Low-density suburban	High-density suburban	Urban
Total Count	678	53	161	232	232
Election security	2.5%	0.0%	3.7%	2.2%	2.6%
Environment	43.1%	54.7%	44.7%	47.8%	34.5%
Foreign policy	4.1%	7.5%	1.2%	3.0%	6.5%
Gun violence	13.9%	9.4%	9.3%	15.1%	16.8%
Health care	5.5%	3.8%	8.7%	5.6%	3.4%
Immigration	6.3%	7.5%	5.0%	7.8%	5.6%
Race relations	9.7%	1.9%	11.8%	5.6%	14.2%
Reproductive rights	0.7%	0.0%	0.6%	1.3%	0.4%
Something else	7.7%	7.5%	6.8%	6.0%	9.9%
Terrorism	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
The economy	6.5%	7.5%	8.1%	5.6%	6.0%
Overall Stat Test of Percentages	< 0.00001				

Kevin Walek

Geographics and Befriending People with Opposing Ideologies

Stub: Q30: Do you have any close friends who are on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum?

	Q40: Home town				
	Total	Urban	High-density suburban	Low-density suburban	Rural
No	54.6%	68.1%	49.6%	45.3%	44.4%
Yes	45.4%	31.9%	50.4%	54.7%	55.6%

Overall Stat Test of Percentages	0.00001

Cole Harris

At Wesleyan, people who grow up in more urban environments are significantly different than those in suburban or rural environments. Urbanites are less likely to have close friends on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum.

Social Polarization by Geographic Area

Katie Shewfelt

Stub: Q30: Do you have any close friends who are on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum?

Do you have any close friends who are on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum?

		Q40: Hometown			
	Total	Urban	High-density suburban	Low-density suburban	Rural
No	375	162	117	72	24
Yes	312	76	119	87	30
No	54.0%	67.8%	49.2%	44.4%	43.6%
Yes	45.0%	31.8%	50.0%	53.7%	54.5%

- Students from **urban areas** are the **least likely** to have a friend on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum, at 31.8%
- About **half of students** from **high-density suburban** areas have a friend on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum.
- The **majority of students** from **low-density suburban and rural areas** have a friend on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum.

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Usdan Sides and Friends with Different Ideologies

Do you have any close friends who are on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum?

	Q5: With which side of Usdan do you identify?			
	Total	Both sides	Loud side	Quiet side
		A	B	C
No	54.7%	47.5%	44.9%	62.2%
				A, B
Yes	45.3%	52.5%	55.1%	37.8%
		C	C	

Wesleyan students who identify with the quiet side of Usdan are significantly less likely to have a friend on the opposite end of the ideological spectrum.

Stephen Ferruolo

Usdan Side by Openness to Politically Polarizing Dating

Would you date someone from opposite side?

		Q5: With which side of Usdan do you identify?				
		Total	Both sides	Loud side	Neither side	Quiet side
	Maybe	41.7%	34.5%	53.3%	41.7%	42.6%
	No	17.5%	3.4%	20.0%	8.3%	27.7%
	Yes	40.8%	62.1%	26.7%	50.0%	29.8%

Eunes Harun

Those who chose "both sides" are the most likely to be open to dating someone on opposite side of the political spectrum -- indicating indecisiveness

92% of those who choose "neither side" are open to considering a politically divisive relationship indicating open-mindedness

Quiet side individuals are slightly less likely to consider a politically divisive relationship than the loud side (27.7% vs 20.0%)

# Health insurance position by which side you sit on in Usdan
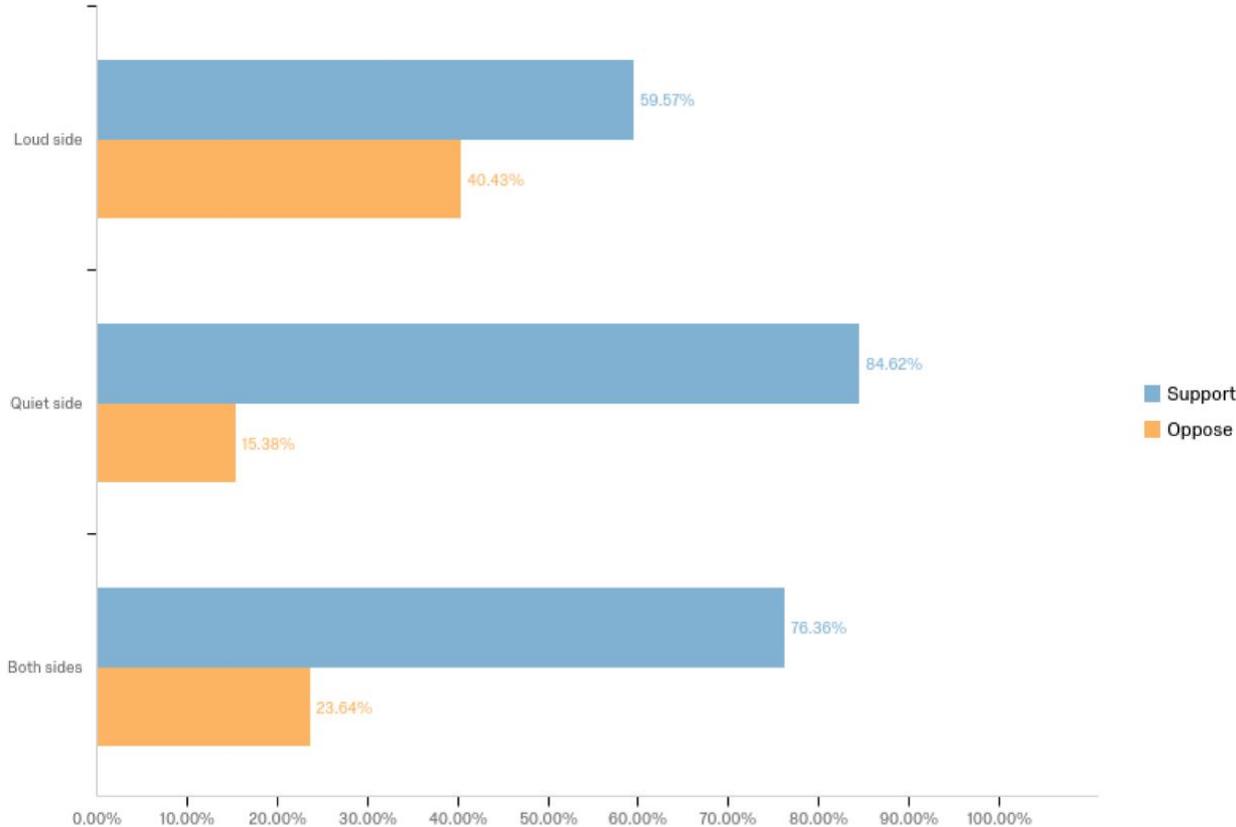
Specific Question: Do you support replacing private health insurance with a government run health insurance

People on quiet side support replacing private health insurance with a government-run health insurance program more than people who sit on the loud side.

(P-value was statistically significant)

Gavin Willis

Loud Side v. Quiet Side Likelihood To Engage With The Opposing Political Spectrum
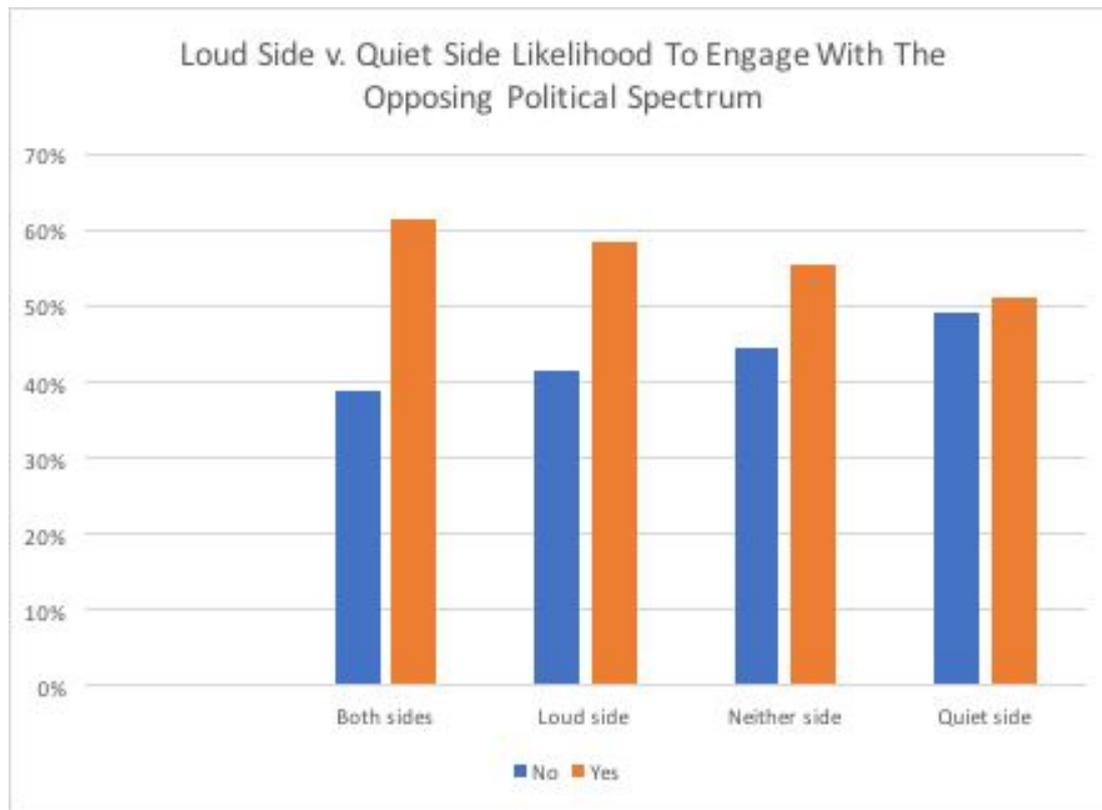
- Overall, the majority of respondents have engaged with someone on the opposite side of the political spectrum in the past month
- The group that engaged the most with political opposites were members of "both sides," at 61.3 percent
- Loud Side respondents we a close second—at 58.6 percent
- Quiet Side was the least likely to engage, at 51 percent

Kaye Dyja

Deal-breaker Issue Polarization

At Wesleyan, people who have a deal-breaker issue are half as likely to consider dating someone from another Political Party.While people without a deal-breaker issue are divided more evenly.

DEALBREAKER ISSUE POLARIZATION
- No Dealbreaker
- Has a Dealbreaker

46.6%   53.4%   33.2%   66.8%

WOULD DATE SOMEONE FROM A DIFFERENT PARTY   WOULD NOT DATE SOMEONE FROM A DIFFERENT PARTY
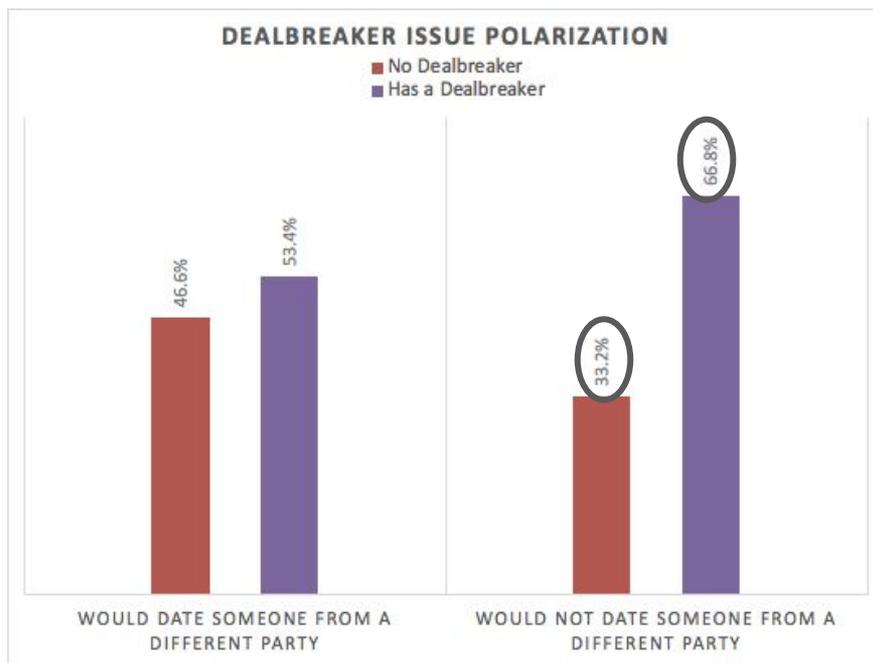
Deal-Breaker Issues by Gender
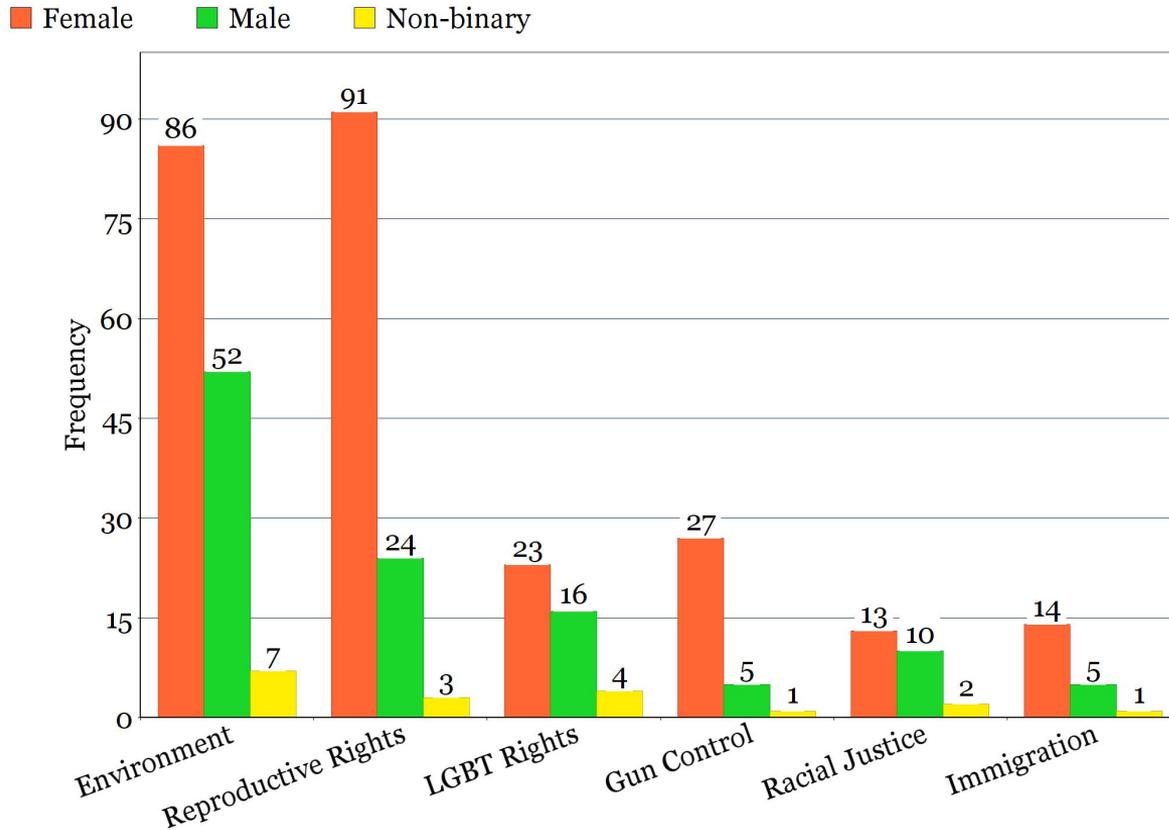
The most common deal-breaker issues were the environment and reproductive rights, both by a large margin.

On the whole, women were likeliest to have a deal-breaker issue (57% of women; 47% non-binary people [n=34]; 45% of men).

After the top two, the most frequent issues listed were LGBT rights, gun control, racial justice, immigration, and healthcare.

Bailey Share-Aizic

# Support for 2020 Candidates and Support for Ban the Box

Democratic primary were being held today, which candidate would you favor? - Selected Choice

	Q21: Did you take pa...an the Box Movement?	
	Total	Yes
Amy Klobuchar	0	0
Andrew Yang	2	2
Bernie Sanders	23	23
Beto O'Rourke	0	0
Cory Booker	5	5
Elizabeth Warren	51	51
Joe Biden	2	2
Julian Castro	2	2
Kamala Harris	4	4
Other, please list	0	0
Pete Buttigieg	3	3

Amy Klobuchar	0.0%	0.0%
Andrew Yang	2.2%	2.2%
Bernie Sanders	25.0%	25.0%
Beto O'Rourke	0.0%	0.0%
Cory Booker	5.4%	5.4%
Elizabeth Warren	55.4%	55.4%
Joe Biden	2.2%	2.2%
Julian Castro	2.2%	2.2%
Kamala Harris	4.3%	4.3%
Other, please list	0.0%	0.0%
Pete Buttigieg	3.3%	3.3%

The majority of people that took part in the Ban the Box Movement plan to vote for Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders. 51 people said that they would vote for Warren and 23 said that they would vote for Sanders and the rest of the Candidates were all under 5 people.

Jonesy Moore

Establishment vs. Anti-Establishment Action Choice by Candidate
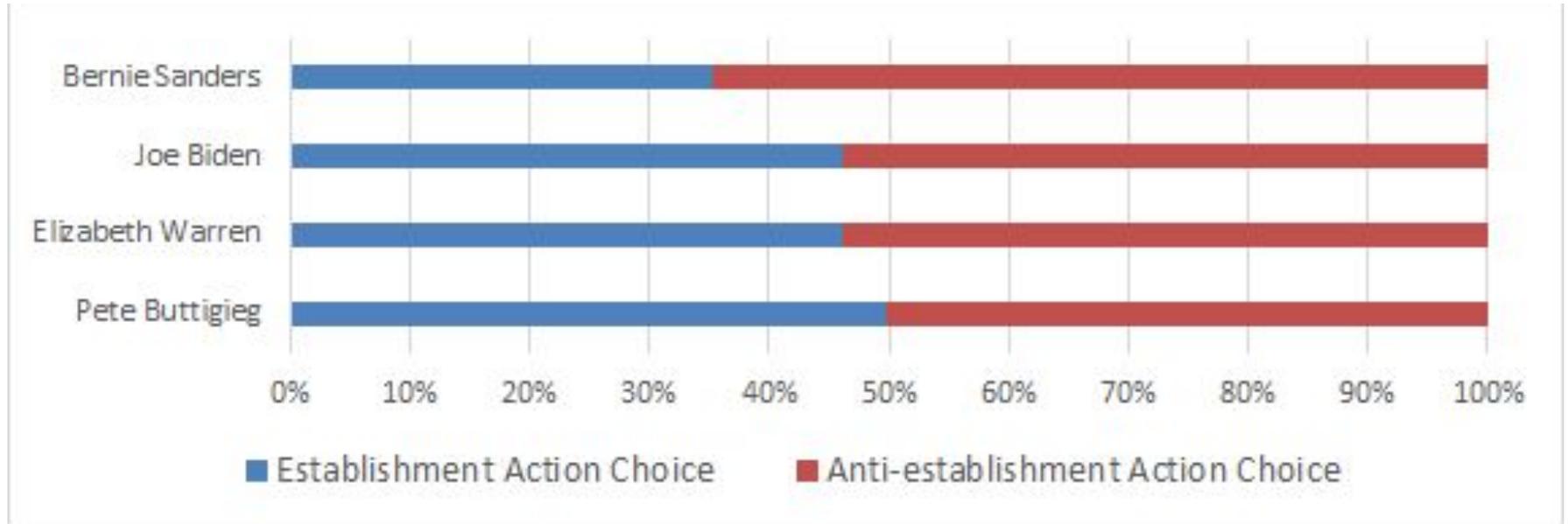
This graph shows the proportion of people who chose establishment (administrator, professor, WSA) vs. anti-establishment (student group, social media, organizing protests) people/actions to raise attention and garner support for an issue, by which candidate they supported.

As one would expect, Sanders supporters are most anti-establishment; curiously, Biden and Warren supporters are equally anti-establishment. Buttigieg supporters are most amenable to the establishment.

Health Care Reform as a Function of Issue Salience
(Alex CC)

Stub: Q13: Would you support or oppose the following proposals? Replacing private health insurance with a government-run health insurance

		Q2: Which of the following do you think is the most important problem facing the U.S. today? - Selected Choice								
	Total	Election security	Environment	Foreign policy	Gun violence	Health care	Immigration	Race relations	Reproductive rights	Something else
Oppose	23.0%	0.0%	17.0%	37.5%	34.3%	28.1%	30.3%	16.4%	20.0%	27.5%
Support	77.0%	100.0%	83.0%	62.5%	65.7%	71.9%	69.7%	83.6%	80.0%	72.5%
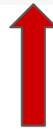
Respondents who said the number one issue facing the United States today is health care, supported 'replacing private health insurance with a government-run health insurance plan' less than respondents who said election security, environment, race relations, or reproductive rights were the number one issue.

Knowledge on International Affairs

Comparing international students and American students, a higher percentage of international students correctly guessed the Prime Minister of the UK (Boris Johnson). Also, American students were more likely than international students to select the "I'm not sure" option.

Stub: Q25: Who is the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom?

	Q6: Are you an international student?		
	Total	No	Yes
Boris Johnson	75.2%	73.4%	85.6% ←
David Cameron	0.7%	0.8%	0.0%
I'm not sure	16.2%	17.3%	9.6% ←
Jeremy Corbyn	0.9%	0.7%	1.9%
Nigel Farage	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%
Theresa May	6.9%	7.6%	2.9%

Tara Ghandour

Library preferences of International Students

Stub: Q4: Where do you prefer to study?

	Q6: Are you an international student?		
	Total	No	Yes
Neither	20.6%	20.6%	20.2%
Olin	44.6%	44.0%	48.1%
SciLi/Exley	34.9%	35.4%	31.7%

Compared to domestic students, the percentage of international students who prefer to study in Olin is higher, contrary to the statistical data that more than 50 percent of international students study STEM.

Zhaoyu Sun