

Survey of Young Americans' Attitudes
Toward Politics and Public Service:
19th Edition

Institute of Politics, Harvard University



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Introduction

Conceived by two Harvard undergraduate students during the winter of 1999, Harvard University's Institute of Politics Survey of Young Americans' Attitudes toward Politics and Public Service began in 2000 as a national survey of 18-to-24-year-old college undergraduates. Over the last eleven years, this research project has grown in scope and mission, as this report now includes an analysis of 18 to 29 year olds on a broad set of longitudinal and current events issues.

Methodology

The first survey of N=800 college undergraduates was completed in the Spring of 2000 and all interviews were conducted over the telephone; since that time, 18 subsequent surveys have been released. Over this period, a number of modifications have been made to the scope and methodology in order to ensure that sampling methods most accurately capture the view of the population of young adults in a manner that will be useful to both the Institute of Politics and the broader research and political communities.

- In 2001, the survey was expanded from N=800 to N=1,200 college students in order to capture a robust sample of the undergraduate population.
- In 2006, the survey expanded to N=2,400 interviews, as we began interviewing members of the 18-to-24-year-old cohort who were not currently attending a four-year college or university. In addition, because of changing uses of technology among younger Americans, in 2006 the survey moved from a telephone poll to a survey that was administered online.
- In 2009, we expanded our scope a third time to include the population of young

adults aged 18 to 29. While we will continue to report on the attitudes and opinions of U.S. college students, this change in our research subject was made to allow for better and more direct comparisons to the broader set of election and general public opinion research tracking data which tends to track the 18- to 29-year-old demographic group. Our Fall political tracking surveys will include samples of N=2,000 while the Spring semester's research project will be more in-depth and include N=3,000 interviews. All of our interviewing is conducted in both English and Spanish. Using Knowledge Networks as our research partner, the Institute of Politics surveys use RDD and Address-Based Sampling (ABS) frames and are administered online (see Appendix for more information).

The interviewing period for this survey of N=3,018 18 to 29 year olds was February 11 to March 2, 2011. The margin of error for the poll is +/- 2.4 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. During the interviewing period, major media stories included Mubarak's resignation, release of Obama's budget, public employee protests in Wisconsin, the Supreme Court ruling in favor of military funeral protestors and the formation of Newt Gingrich's exploratory committee.

IOP Polling Director John Della Volpe supervised the survey group of undergraduate students. As always, the IOP survey group would like to thank IOP Director Trey Grayson and Executive Director Catherine McLaughlin for their insight and support over the course of this and all IOP projects.

Overview

Until the 2010 midterm elections, every election since the first Harvard Institute of Politics survey was released in the Spring of 2000 saw increased levels of participation among America's youth (18 to 29 year olds) compared to the last comparable election.¹

- The 2000 election for president saw an increase of .7 points (to 40.3% turnout of all eligible 18 to 29 year olds) compared to the 1996 presidential election;
- In the 2002 midterms, there was a slim increase of .2 points over the 1998 elections;
- In the 2004 Bush/Kerry election, there was an increase of 8.7 points over Bush/Gore in 2000;
- In 2006, the midterm election increase was 3 points over President Bush's first midterm in 2002; and
- In 2008's Obama/McCain election, the increase was 2.1 points over the 2004 presidential election.

Compared to the last midterm election of 2006 however -- in 2010, the youth turnout decreased 2.7 points from 25.5 percent to 22.8 percent of eligible voters.

One of the lessons one might glean from this decade's worth of data, or the events in the Middle East of late, is that young voters can make the difference when inspired. And before inspiration happens, it's important to understand how Millennials today see the world, domestic issues, foreign policy, the standing of the United States in the broader world community -- and

how they communicate and choose to receive news and information.

This survey, the 19th edition of the Harvard University Institute of Politics Survey of Young Americans' Attitudes Toward Politics and Public Service focuses on these issues, closely investigating:

- Opinions of President Obama and Congress;
- Trust in American and international institutions;
- Political ideology and world view;
- Views toward the economy and education;
- Interest and level of activity in community service;
- The use of social networking tools like Facebook, MySpace and Twitter for political engagement; and
- Most preferred means of gathering news and information about the 2012 campaign for president.

In addition to this report, a top-line report is available that provides responses of the total sample and college students. A SPSS data-file and verbatim responses to relevant questions are available upon request.

¹ <http://www.civicyouth.org/quick-facts/youth-voting/>

Demographic and Political Profile

For this survey, we completed N=3,018 web-enabled interviews with 18- to 29-year-old young adults in the United States.

Demographic profile:

- 50 percent male, 50 percent female;
- 58 percent are between the ages of 18 and 24; 42 percent are between the ages of 25 and 29;
- 60 percent White (non-Hispanic), 19 percent Hispanic, 13 percent African-American (non-Hispanic), 6 percent other and 2 percent 2+ races;
- 22 percent are Catholic, 11 percent Fundamental/Evangelical, 10 percent Protestant, 2 percent Jewish, 2 percent Mormon, 1 percent Muslim, 12 percent another religion, 23 percent cite no religious preference, and 13 percent decline to answer;
- 20 percent are married, 14 percent are living with a partner, 1 percent are divorced, 2 percent are separated and 63 percent have never been married;
- 86 percent own a cell phone, 29 percent have a landline, and 3 percent have VOIP;
- 87 percent have Internet access at home.

Current educational status:

- 11 percent of the sample indicated that they are in a two-year junior or community college, 22 percent in a four-year college, 5 percent in graduate school, 2 percent in a business or professional school, 2 percent are not enrolled but taking at least one

class, and 51 percent of 18 to 29 year olds surveyed are not enrolled in any of these categories;

- 71 percent of college students attend a public institution, 29 percent a private one;
- 53 percent of students attend college in an urban area, 22 percent in a suburb and 24 percent in a small town or rural area.

Political and ideological profile:

- 67 percent say they are registered to vote;
- 59 percent said they voted in the 2008 general election (42 percent at a polling place, 10 percent by absentee ballot and 7 percent early);
- 22 percent consider themselves to be politically engaged or active;
- 39 percent self-identify as liberal or leaning liberal, 25 percent moderate, and 34 percent conservative or leaning conservative;
- 38 percent consider themselves Democrats, 22 percent Republicans, and 37 percent Independents;
- 10 percent are supporters of the Tea Party, 39 percent are not supporters, and 49 percent are not sure;
- 34 percent volunteered for community service in the last year.

Employment status:

- 56 percent are working as a paid employee, 4 percent are self employed, and 22 percent are looking for work.

President Obama's Job Approval Ratings On the Rise; Economy Still Bleak for Nearly Half of 18-29 Year Olds

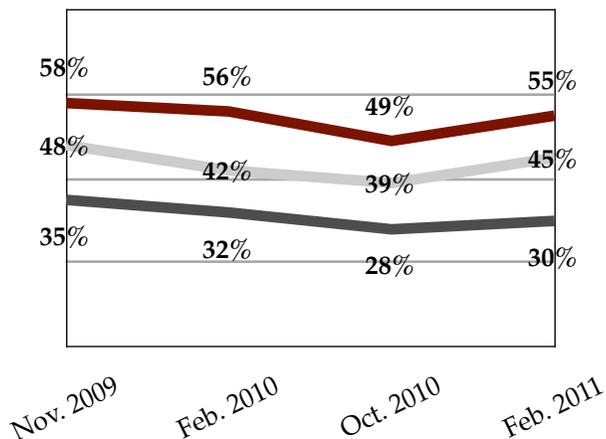
Job Performance Rating is on the Rise for Obama, Especially on Campus

After a difficult midterm election season, where President Obama's job approval ratings among 18 to 29 year olds dipped below 50 percent, the President seems to be regaining some support from key segments of the youth community. After three consecutive surveys of falling approval ratings among all 18 to 29 year olds, the President's job approval stands at 55 percent, six points higher than it was in the Fall of 2010 and close to the level of February 2010.

DO YOU APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE OF THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF ____:

-- APPROVAL RATINGS --

- Barack Obama
- Democrats in Congress
- Republicans in Congress



In the past, our research has cited correlations between approval ratings of White House administrations with those of Congress, and that is evident here as well. As the President's approval rating increased six percentage points in four months, so did the approval ratings of Democrats in Congress. Approval of the Republicans in Congress increased two percentage points, inside the margin of error.

Among young voters who do not affiliate with either political party and consider themselves Independent, their approval rating of the Democrats in Congress remains largely unchanged since our last survey. Currently, 26 percent of Independents approve of the way Democrats are handling their job in Congress (was 25% in October 2010), and 23 percent feel the same about Republicans in Congress (unchanged since October 2010).

The table on the following page illustrates the President's approval rating by key subgroups; the increases are most noteworthy among students at four-year colleges (9 percentage point increase since October) and 18 to 29 year olds who live in the Midwestern states (10 percentage point increase since October). While the President still enjoys very solid support within the 18- to 29-year-old black community (83% approval) -- his support among whites (+7, now 44%) and Hispanics (+6, now 68%) is beginning to rebound after three polls showed these ratings headed in a negative direction.

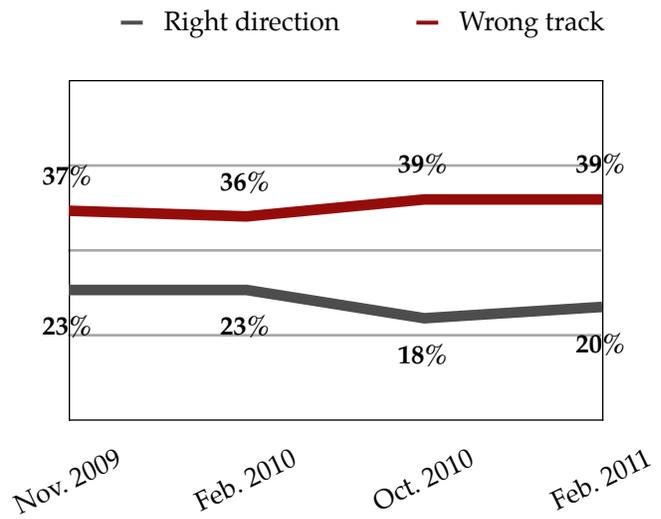
OBAMA APPROVAL RATING
BY SUBGROUP

	NOV. 2009	FEB. 2010	OCT. 2010	FEB. 2011
18-29 TOTAL	58%	56%	49%	55%
18-24	60%	55%	48%	55%
25-29	56%	57%	52%	55%
IN 4-YR COLL	57%	60%	51%	60%
DEMO- CRAT	86%	84%	79%	81%
REPUBLICAN	21%	21%	18%	17%
IND.	49%	49%	42%	46%
WHITE	48%	45%	37%	44%
BLACK	84%	83%	83%	83%
HISPANIC	81%	69%	62%	68%
MALE	56%	53%	47%	52%
FEMALE	60%	59%	52%	57%
NORTH- EAST	66%	56%	52%	55%
MIDWEST US	57%	51%	46%	56%
SOUTH US	52%	53%	46%	52%
WEST US	64%	64%	56%	57%

Direction of the Nation and the Economy
Remains Bleak

Despite more favorable ratings from the President and Congress, the general direction of the country and the ranking of top issues has remained largely unchanged since our last survey was conducted in the Fall of 2010. By a nearly 2-to-1 margin, young Americans believe the country is headed off on the wrong track (39%), rather than the right direction (20%).

ALL IN ALL, DO YOU THINK THAT THINGS
IN THE NATION ARE ...



In the eyes of 18 to 29 year olds, “jobs and economy” remains the most dominant issue of concern by far (57% say that this is their top concern), followed by health care (10%), immigration (6%), national security issues (6%), and education (4%).

Similar to the last poll we conducted, a majority of young Americans still disapprove of the way that the President is handling the economy (42% approve, 55% disapprove) and Afghanistan (44%

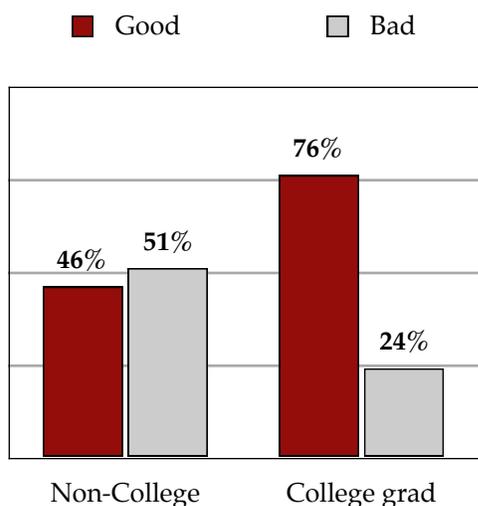
approve, 52% disapprove). A majority (55%), however, approved of the way he handled the crisis in Egypt.

Overall, still two-in-five (43%) young Americans rate their personal financial situation as fairly (31%) or very bad (12%) these days, and this tracks closely with our results from the survey released in March 2010 when 34 percent (fairly bad) and 12 percent (very bad) said the same. Seven percent (7%) say that their personal financial situation is very good in our survey and 49 percent say fairly good.

A stark difference appears when college graduates within this segment are compared to those 18 to 29 year olds who have never graduated from college. College graduates within this age cohort are 30 percentage points more likely to view their financial situation as good compared to those who did not graduate or attend college.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR PERSONAL FINANCIAL SITUATION THESE DAYS?

- NON-COLLEGE VS. COLLEGE GRADUATES -



Looking Ahead to 2012

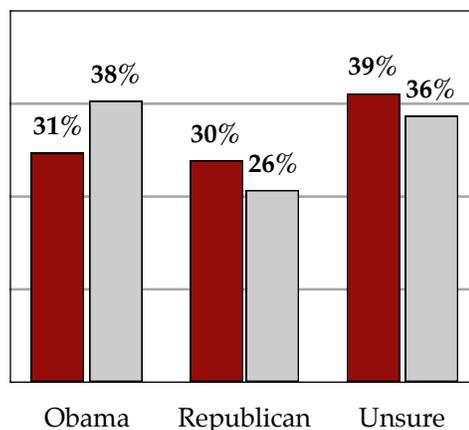
Compared to the Fall 2010 midterm poll, when President Obama was in a statistical dead heat with a “generic Republican” candidate for President in 2012 -- the horse race among 18 to 29 year olds has changed dramatically.

President Obama currently leads the generic candidate by 12 percentage points (38% to 26%) -- with an important 36 percent still undecided. Among Independent voters, more than two-thirds, or 69 percent, are undecided. Obama holds 67 percent of young Democrats and the generic GOP candidate holds 74 percent of young Republicans.

Among 18 to 24 year olds who are enrolled in a four-year college, President Obama leads 43 percent to 30 percent.

BARACK OBAMA VS. GENERIC REPUBLICAN (n=2,985)

■ October 2010 □ February 2011



A Look at High School Education Through the Eyes of Millennials; The Honor of Running for Office Still Questioned by Most

Millennials Look Back on Their High School Education

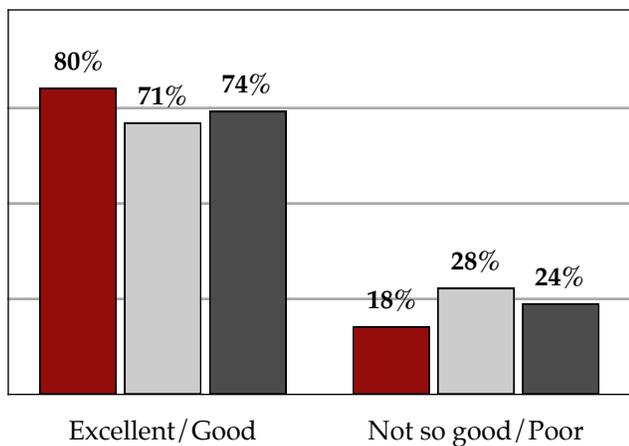
Overall, one-quarter (25%) of 18 to 29 year olds in America rate the quality of their high school education as “excellent.” Slightly more than half (52%) rate their education as “good,” 16 percent say that it was “not so good,” and 5 percent say that it was “poor.”

Those closest to their high school careers (18 to 19 year olds) are more likely than any other age group in the 18- to 29-year-old segment to rate their high school education as either excellent or good (84%, which is 7 to 11 points higher than the same category for other age groups).

There are significant statistical differences between the way that whites and Hispanics in America view their high school education.

USING THE FOLLOWING SCALE HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE OVERALL QUALITY OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION?

■ White ■ Hispanic ■ Black



The most civically-minded members of the Millennial generation, those who volunteer or are active in politics, are significantly more likely to rate their high school education as excellent.

- 36 percent of 18 to 29 year olds who are politically active rated their high school education as “excellent” (compared to 22% who are not active).
- 32 percent of 18 to 29 year olds who are involved in community service rated their high school education as “excellent” (compared to 21% who are not involved).

Nearly Half View Their High School Careers as “Above Average”

It is likely that young Americans view their academic achievement differently than their teachers and parents: 81 percent of 18 to 29 year olds consider themselves to be either above average (49%) or average (42%) students; only 6 percent consider themselves to be below average.

Rating Eight Elements Connected to High School Education

In addition to overall ratings, young Americans were also asked to rate eight different factors associated with their overall high school education -- in each category, whites were more likely than others to provide excellent or good ratings.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION FOR:

	EXCEL- LENT/ GOOD	NOT SO GOOD/ POOR
SAFE AND SECURE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	79%	19%
QUALITY OF YOUR TEACHERS	77%	20%
CLASS SIZE	75%	22%
QUALITY OF YOUR CURRICULUM	74%	28%
QUALITY OF YOUR SCHOOL BUILDING	74%	24%
ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY	73%	25%
UPDATED BOOKS	72%	26%
QUALITY OF THE CIVICS CURRICULUM	69%	28%

The Latest on the Disconnect Between Community Service and Politics

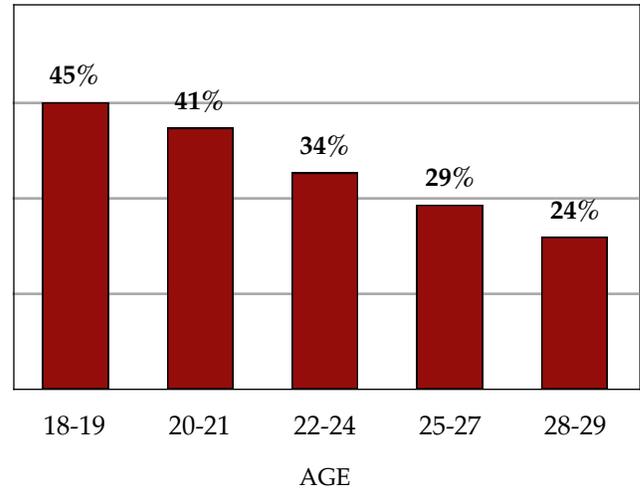
For over a decade, our qualitative research has strongly suggested that it was America’s public education system that helped create thousands of opportunities for young people to engage in and serve their community. Whether it was for community service hours, for college application credit -- along with church, high schools helped encourage a generation of young Americans to help their neighbors.

Today, slightly more than one-third (34%) of Millennials between 18 and 29 have engaged in community service in the last 12 months -- with

the percentage rising over 50 percent among those in college (57%) and grad school (55%).

By age, the younger you are, the more likely you are to engage in community service.

HAVE YOU VOLUNTEERED FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?



Community Service vs. Politics

While nearly seven-in-ten (69%) young Americans view community service as an “honorable thing to do,” sadly about half that number (36%) believe the same about running for office. These findings have not changed significantly in the last year, when 70 percent found community service honorable, and 35 percent found running for office the same.

One-third (33%) report that working in some form of public service is appealing to them -- those most likely to pursue these kinds of opportunities are those with graduate degrees (50%) and women (36%). Statistically, young Democrats (37%) and young Republicans (34%) are equally as interested.

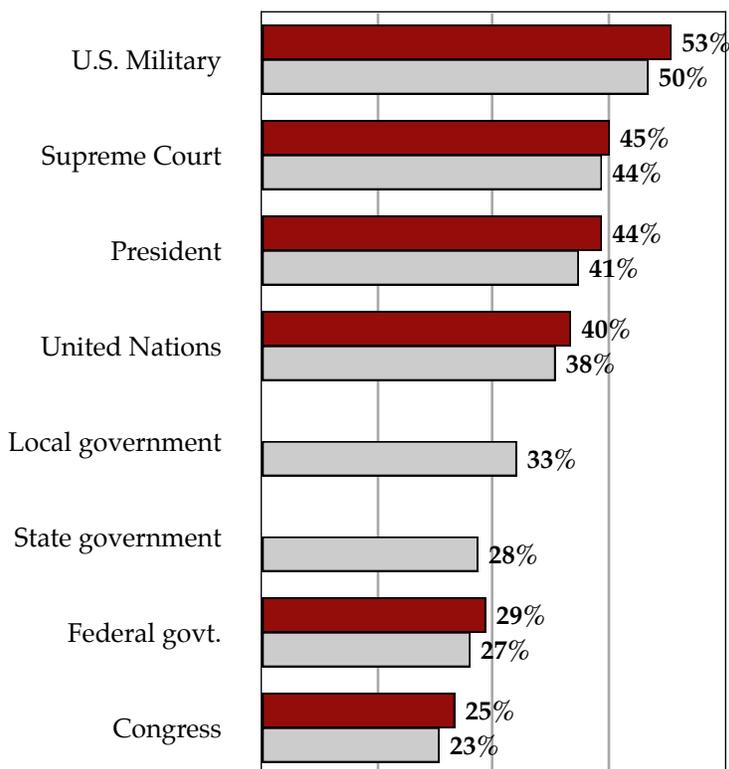
Trust in Public Institutions Weakening; U.S. Standing in the World of Great Concern

Trust in Public Institutions Weakens Over the Last Year

Across the board, the level of trust that Millennials place in the public institutions we tested in our survey has decreased over the last year, mostly though within the margin of error. The U.S. military remains the most trusted institution, though only 50 percent of young Americans trust the military to do the right thing all or most of the time. Congress was the least trusted institution tested in this year's survey.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU TRUST ...
TO DO THE RIGHT THING?
(ALL OF THE TIME / MOST OF THE TIME)

■ Feb. 2010 □ Feb. 2011



When issues of trust in institutions are viewed through the lens of race and ethnicity, some noteworthy differences appear. For example,

- There is no institution in the survey that garners trust ratings (all/most of the time) of more than 45 percent among 18- to 29-year-old Hispanics. Among Hispanics, 45 percent trust the President to do the right thing all or most of the time; 42 percent trust the military; 40 percent the Supreme Court. All other institutions received trust ratings of less than 40 percent.
- While 60 percent of 18- to 29-year-old blacks trust the President to do the right thing all or most of the time, there is no other institution that received a rating of more than 47 percent among this segment.
- There is a 19 percentage point “trust gap” between the military (54%) and the President (35%) among whites -- in favor of the military; and a 13 percent gap among blacks -- in favor of the President (60% President, 47% military).

HOW OFTEN DO YOU TRUST ...
TO DO THE RIGHT THING?
(ALL OF THE TIME / MOST OF THE TIME)
-- SELECTED Q BY RACE / ETHNICITY --

	WHITE	BLACK	HIS- PANIC	OTHER
MILITARY	<u>54%</u>	47%	42%	40%
PRESIDENT	35%	<u>60%</u>	45%	44%
CONGRESS	22%	27%	25%	22%

Millennials Are Not Optimistic About the U.S. Role in an Emerging New World

Our undergraduate students this semester were particularly intrigued with understanding how other members of their generation view the standing of the United States in the world. We drafted five questions designed to help us begin to understand whether or not young Americans ages 18 to 29 believe that the standing of the U.S. would improve or decline in the next decade -- and overall, the feeling about America's future was fairly pessimistic.

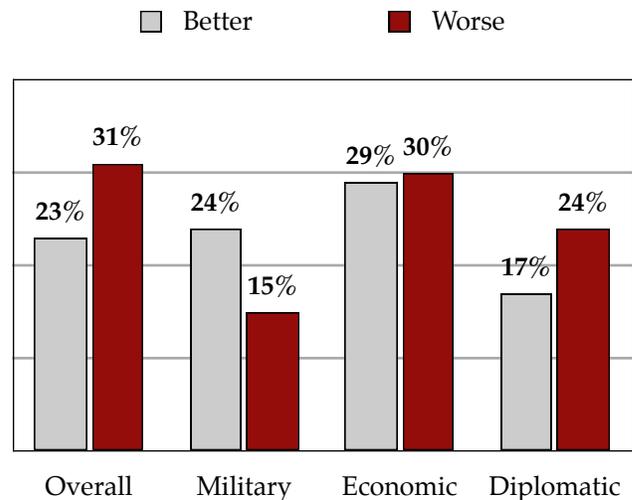
Thirty-one percent (31%) of young Americans believe that the overall standing of the U.S. in the world will be worse in 10 years and 23 percent believe it will be better (25% say about the same; 22% are not sure or did not answer).

Young Americans seem most concerned about America's diplomatic standing -- as 24 percent reported that it is likely to be worse in 10 years compared to 17 percent who said it would get better (a difference of 7 percentage points). When it comes to the economy, Millennials are split regarding the future -- 30 percent worse and 29 percent better.

Of the three categories that were measured, it was only the military standing of the United States that Millennials believed would improve in the next decade:

- 24 percent reported that the U.S. military standing in the world would be better in 10 years; while
- 15 percent reported that it will likely worsen.

IN 10 YEARS, DO YOU THINK THE UNITED STATES STANDING IN THE WORLD WILL BE BETTER THAN IT IS TODAY, WORSE, OR ABOUT THE SAME?



Overall, this apparent weakening of the U.S. position in the world is of great concern to this generation of young Americans. More than three-in-four (77%) reported that the U.S. overall standing in the world concerns them either a great deal (30%) or somewhat (47%). Fifteen percent (15%) said that this did not concern them very much and 6 percent said not at all.

Among college students, 83 percent reported that they were concerned either a great deal (34%) or somewhat (49%). Thirteen percent (13%) said that this did not concern them very much and 3 percent said not at all.

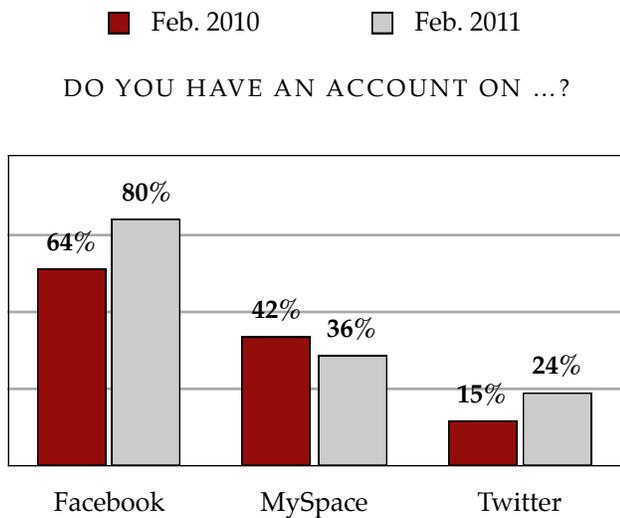
Democrats (80%) and Republicans (81%) are nearly equally concerned about the standing of the United States, as are men (75%) and women (79%), younger Millennials ages 18 to 24 (77%) and older ones ages 25 to 29 (77%).

Defining Political Engagement in the Facebook Era; Online Tools Believed to Make Greater Impact than In-Person Advocacy

Facebook Adoption Rates Continue to Climb, Outpaces Twitter by More Than 3:1

Conducted approximately two weeks after the beginning of the protests in Egypt, our survey focused for the first time on how young Americans view Facebook and other social media platforms relative to politics and political advocacy.

Over the last year, Facebook adoption has grown significantly from 64 to 80 percent, while MySpace has shed 6 percent of the 18- to 29-year-old market. Twitter, currently a far less relevant tool among 18 to 29 year olds compared to Facebook, has grown from 15 to 24 percent in the last year.



While Facebook is nearly ubiquitous on college campuses (90% adoption), as the following table indicates, there are significant differences on adoption levels based on generational cohort, including race, gender -- and political party.

For example, Republicans (87%) are more likely to be on Facebook than Democrats (81%), women (86%) are more likely than men (74%) -- and whites (85%) are nearly 20 points more likely than Hispanics (66%) and 12 points more likely than blacks (73%) to be on the social platform.

DO YOU HAVE AN ACCOUNT ON ...?
-- BY SUBGROUP --

	FACE-BOOK	MY-SPACE	TWITT-ER
TOTAL	80%	36%	24%
18-24	84%	39%	26%
25-29	74%	31%	22%
IN 4-YR COLL	90%	36%	31%
DEMOCRAT	81%	39%	29%
REPUBLICAN	87%	34%	23%
IND.	70%	33%	16%
WHITE	85%	36%	24%
BLACK	73%	35%	27%
HISPANIC	66%	35%	21%
MALE	74%	31%	22%
FEMALE	86%	41%	27%
NORTHEAST	84%	37%	26%
MIDWEST US	84%	32%	22%
SOUTH US	78%	34%	23%
WEST US	74%	42%	26%

Political Views and Facebook

Although Facebook continues to gain traction in very significant ways among 18- to 29-year-old members of the Millennial generation, one area where adoption rates may not be as high as some might expect is that of politics.

Currently, less than three-in-ten 18 to 29 year olds use Facebook as a means of political expression. In the world of Facebook, Democrats and Republicans are using the tools (“likes” and “shares”) at approximately the same level -- with the exception of sharing their political views within their Facebook profile -- where Republicans (31%) are statistically slightly more likely to do so than Democrats (26%).

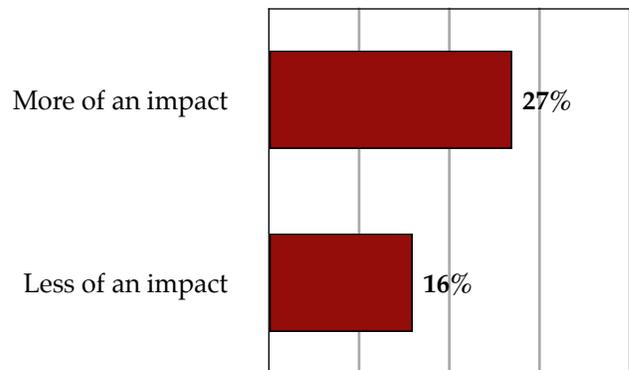
- 29 percent of 18 to 29 year olds (and 37% of college students) have “liked” a political issue on Facebook;
- 24 percent of 18 to 29 year olds (and 31% of college students) have “liked” a political candidate on Facebook;
- 24 percent of 18 to 29 year olds (and 32% of college students) currently share their political views as part of the standard Facebook profile; and
- 21 percent of 18 to 29 year olds (and 29% of college students) have used their Facebook status to advocate for a political position.

The Political Impact of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Blogs

Despite the relatively modest use of Facebook for politics currently, in the wake of Tunisia and Egypt, 18 to 29 year olds seem fairly optimistic about the use of online tools impacting the offline world.

Overall, 27 percent of 18 to 29 year olds reported that “compared to in-person advocacy, they believe that advocating for a political position by using online tools like Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and YouTube” makes more of an impact -- while 16 percent reported that it made less of an impact. Approximately a quarter (24%) believe the impact is about the same and one-third (33%) either did not know or did not answer the question.

COMPARED TO IN-PERSON ADVOCACY, DO YOU BELIEVE ADVOCATING FOR A POLITICAL POSITION BY USING ONLINE TOOLS LIKE FACEBOOK, TWITTER, BLOGS AND YOUTUBE MAKES...



The groups that are most likely to believe that these on-line social frameworks make more of an impact than in-person advocacy include:

- Democrats (31% more impact, 15% less impact), compared to Republicans (25% more impact, 21% less impact);
- Blacks (34% more impact, 9% less impact) and Hispanics (30% more impact, 9% less impact), compared to whites (24% more impact, 20% less impact); and
- Those who live in urban (35% more impact, 22% less impact) and suburban America (39% more impact, 20% less impact), compared to rural America (18% more impact, 24% less impact).

Media Preferences for the 2012 Campaign for President

Looking ahead to the 2012 campaign for President, we were interested in how 18 to 29 year olds preferred to receive political and campaign information.

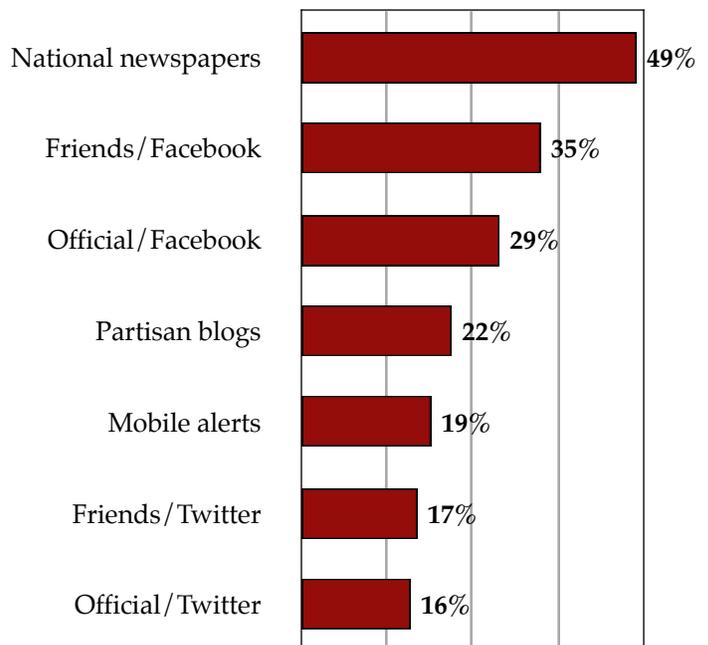
Major national newspapers, by far, were considered the most preferred sources for political news and information; 49 percent of 18 to 29 year olds and 60 percent of college students report that they are interested in receiving information from this source.

Friends who share using Facebook (35% of 18 to 29 year olds are interested in this medium and 42% of college students) was the second most valuable source among those that we tested. The remaining sources included: official campaign feeds from Facebook (29% 18-29 year olds, 35% college students); partisan, political blogs (22% 18-29 year olds, 27% college students); friends

sharing on Twitter (16% 18-29 year olds, 17% college students); official campaign feeds from Twitter (15% 18-29 year olds 17% college students); and text or mobile alerts (19% 18-29 year olds, 20% college students).

THINKING ABOUT THE 2012 CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENT, HOW MUCH INTEREST DO YOU HAVE IN RECEIVING INFORMATION FROM THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF SOURCES?

-- % WHO SAY A GREAT DEAL AND SOME --



Understanding the Political Typology of the Emerging Generation; More Than Half Do Not Fit Into the Traditional Left-Right Spectrum

Political Typology of an Emerging Generation

Since 2004, our Spring survey has focused on tracking the attitudes of 18 to 29 year olds toward 15 issues and values that are often reflected in the public discourse. Designed to transcend any particular piece of legislation or budget item, these questions help us better understand the emerging political values of this generation.

Over the 12 months since our last poll was released, of the 15 issues that we tested, five have changed outside the margin of error.

In the last year, 18 to 29 year olds have:

- Grown more tolerant of homosexual relationships; the percentage of young Americans who believe they are morally wrong has decreased from 30 to 25 percent.

Additionally,

- Fewer believe that government spending is an effective way to increase economic growth (21% agree, which is a 4 percentage point decrease in the last year);
- Fewer believe that religious values should play a more important role in government (21% agree, which is a 4 percentage point decrease in the last year);

- Fewer agree that in today's world, it is sometimes necessary to attack potentially hostile countries, rather than waiting until we are attacked to respond (19% agree, which is a 4 percentage point decrease in the last year); and
- Fewer tell us they are willing to give up some personal freedom and privacy for the sake of national security (24% agree, which is a 4 point decrease in the last year).

The remaining issues in our survey did not change more than three points over the last 12 months. Following are tables representing the 15 issues in our survey, by category.

HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?²
-- % WHO STRONGLY / SOMEWHAT AGREE --

FOREIGN POLICY/ NATIONAL SECURITY	FEB. 2010	FEB. 2011
I AM WILLING TO GIVE UP SOME PERSONAL FREEDOM AND PRIVACY FOR THE SAKE OF NATL. SECURITY.	28%	24%
IN TODAY'S WORLD, IT IS SOMETIMES NECESSARY TO ATTACK POTENTIALLY HOSTILE COUNTRIES, RATHER THAN WAITING UNTIL WE ARE ATTACKED TO RESPOND.	23%	19%

² Full question offered 5-point scale, with option for neutral response.

HEALTH CARE, POVERTY, EDUCATION & ENVIRONMENT	FEB. 2010	FEB. 2011
BASIC HEALTH INSURANCE IS A RIGHT FOR ALL PEOPLE, AND IF SOMEONE HAS NO MEANS OF PAYING FOR IT, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE IT.	47%	50%
BASIC NECESSITIES, SUCH AS FOOD AND SHELTER, ARE A RIGHT THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE TO THOSE UNABLE TO AFFORD THEM.	46%	46%
THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SPEND MORE TO REDUCE POVERTY.	40%	40%
IF PARENTS HAD MORE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE WHERE THEY COULD SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO SCHOOL, THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THIS COUNTRY WOULD BE BETTER.	38%	38%
GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO MORE TO CURB CLIMATE CHANGE, EVEN AT THE EXPENSE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH.	29%	28%

ECONOMY/TRADE/ STIMULUS	FEB. 2010	FEB. 2011
CUTTING TAXES IS AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO INCREASE ECONOMIC GROWTH.	42%	38%
OUR COUNTRY'S GOAL IN TRADE POLICY SHOULD BE TO ELIMINATE ALL BARRIERS TO TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT SO WE HAVE A TRULY GLOBAL ECONOMY	24%	25%
GOVT. SPENDING IS AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO INCREASE ECONOMIC GROWTH.	25%	21%

IMMIGRATION, AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, MORALITY	FEB. 2010	FEB. 2011
I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE MORAL DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY.	51%	48%
HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE MORALLY WRONG.	30%	25%
RECENT IMMIGRATION HAS DONE MORE GOOD THAN HARM.	23%	22%
RELIGIOUS VALUES SHOULD PLAY A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE IN GOVT.	25%	21%
QUALIFIED MINORITIES SHOULD BE GIVEN SPECIAL PREFERENCES IN HIRING AND EDUCATION.	15%	14%

Millennial Views More Comfortably Fall into Four Segments Rather than Two Parties

As Millennials begin to age and further develop their personal and political personas, we see four distinct ideological groups emerge from our statistical modeling³ that are based on the responses to the 15 issues and values questions that were developed beginning in 2004.

Two of the segments mirror the traditional view of American politics and ideology: progressives and conservatives. Combined, these two segments, which are more politically active than their counterparts, represent less than three-in-ten (29%) of all 18 to 29 year olds. An additional 52 percent can be divided into two segments that were re-defined in last year's IOP polling as the "New Religious" and the "New Passive" segments.

New Progressives

New Progressives, 19 percent of the total sample,

- Are very supportive of President Obama (81% job approval rating overall, 68% on the economy, 55% on Afghanistan, and 75% on Egypt);
- Agree strongly that basic health insurance (99% agree) and other necessities like food and shelter (85% agree) should be provided for those who cannot afford them;
- Are more likely than others to believe that the government should do more to curb climate change (57% agree).

Eighty percent (80%) of the members of the New Progressive group are Democrats (or lean

Democrat), 15 percent are Independents, and 5 percent are Republicans. Nearly two-thirds (64%) are white, 18 percent are Hispanic and nine percent are black.

New Conservatives

Ten percent (10%) of the 18- to 29-year-old population, the New Conservatives are 83 percent Republican (or lean Republican), 12 percent are Independents, and five percent say they are Democrats (5%). Forty-one percent (41%) support the Tea Party. They -

- Are very concerned about the moral direction of our country (98% agree); believe homosexual relationships are morally wrong (82%); believe religious values should play a more important role in government (64%);
- Disagree strongly that qualified minorities should be given special preferences in hiring and education (97% disagree);
- Disagree that government spending is an effective way to increase economic growth (85%); and that basic health care is a right for all people (82%); and
- 50 percent agree that in today's world, it is sometimes necessary to attack potentially hostile countries, rather than waiting until we are attacked to respond.

New Conservatives are 91 percent White, 59 percent male, and 93 percent say that religion plays either a very (64%) or somewhat (30%) important part in their lives. Nearly half (47%) consider themselves to be born-again Christians.

³ Analysis based on Latent Class GOLD Analysis; 83% of total sample classified.

New Religious

Representing one-in-four (25%) 18 to 29 year olds, the New Religious are shaping up to be one of the most influential voter segments in American politics. Looking back to their voting patterns in the last two presidential elections, this group split evenly between George W. Bush and John Kerry in 2004 and closely mirrored the youth vote in 2008, with 66 percent supporting Barack Obama.

Currently, 41 percent support President Obama for re-election against the generic Republican candidate (20%), with 39 percent undecided. From an ideological perspective, 38 percent say they are liberal, 32 percent conservative, with 30 percent saying they are moderate.

While not as politically active (16% consider themselves politically active compared to 37% for both the Progressives and Conservatives) as the two more traditional groups, the New Religious have proven that they will respond if targeted and connected with by a political campaign.

Multi-cultural, less than half-white (41%), this group boasts the highest percentage and numbers of Hispanics/Latinos (29%) and blacks (23%) than any of the other three segments. Nearly 9-in-10 (88%) say that religion plays an important part in their lives. While a plurality (30%) of the New Conservatives are Fundamentalist/Evangelical Christians, a plurality (24%) of this segment is Catholic.

Their views do not fit neatly into traditional left-right categories, as they balance their strong feelings toward religion and morality -- with views of an active federal government. The New Religious tend to track very closely with the

New Conservatives when it comes to issues related to:

- Concern over the moral direction of the country (70% agree);
- A greater role for religious values in government (44% agree);
- The morality of homosexual relationships (47% believe that they are morally wrong); and
- School choice (59% agree that the education system would be better if parents had more freedom to choose).

However, the New Religious track closely with New Progressives when issues like the following are discussed:

- Health insurance as a right (77% agree);
- Increased government spending to reduce poverty (74% agree); and
- Eliminating barriers to free trade (37% agree).

New Passives

The fourth and final segment is the largest at 27 percent; and this group looks very similar to the New Religious from traditional ideological lens:

- 34 percent liberal, compared to 38 liberal;
- 37 percent conservative, compared to 32 percent; and
- 27 percent moderate, compared to 30 percent.

Their differences of opinion on issues and values are significant, driven mainly by their level of

religiosity. Compared with the New Religious, this moderate group of New Passives is more than half as likely to say that religion plays a very important part in their lives (26% compared to 59% for the New Religious).

And while this group earned the name New Passives for their lack of political engagement, this current segment shows some willingness to participate in 2012; 70 percent are registered to vote.

For many of the 15 issues that were tested in the survey, this segment's responses were clustered toward neutral -- showing a relative lack of familiarity or passion with the subject. However, there are a number of issues where their passion was highlighted, mostly along libertarian lines:

- 70 percent disagreed that qualified minorities should be given special preferences in hiring and education;
- 66 disagreed that religious values should play a more important role in government;
- 60 percent disagreed that homosexual relationships are morally wrong; and
- 29 percent agree that basic health insurance is a right.

Conclusion

In the early months of 2000, when Harvard undergraduates, staff, professors and pollsters came together at the Institute of Politics for the first time on this survey project, one of the key findings from our study of N=800 college students was that “students have little trust in federal and state government.”

Eleven years later, we can report that little has changed on this front for the better. In that first survey, 64 percent of college students indicated that they did not trust the federal government to do the right thing all or most of the time. Today, among college students, that number holds at exactly the same point, 64 percent. At the time of that first survey, 49 percent felt the same way about state government; today, unfortunately, the 15 point difference between federal and state government has all but dissolved as 63 percent of college students do not trust state government to do the right thing all or most of the time.

While the lack of trust in America’s government has been consistent over the time of the survey, another thing that has also been consistent is the commitment that we see by young people to their community. In that first poll, 60 percent of college students told us they volunteered in their community, today that numbers holds at 57 percent.

The well-documented increased levels of youth participation in politics and public life over the last decade has not been a surprise to us -- we have seen since 2000 that young people are committed to each other and believe in doing their small share to make America better.

Our concern though, is that after a decade’s worth of polling data that shows consistent levels of community participation among America’s youth, but falling levels of institutional trust -- the biggest issues surrounding our democracy may not be addressed by the best and brightest the Millennial generation has to offer if the current trends continue.

In the eyes of the Millennial generation, community service is a noble and honorable calling; for far too many young Americans today, running for office and politics is not. The lack of trust emanating from Washington and state capitols is no doubt turning some of our finest potential public servants toward private sector careers. Before the majority of this generation’s career path is set, perhaps it is time that the men and women who serve the public at the federal and state level consider their most important legacy -- reverse course, and leave the institution in better shape than they found it.

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Harvard University's Institute of Politics (IOP), located at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, was established in 1966 as a memorial to President Kennedy. The IOP's mission is to unite and engage students, particularly undergraduates, with academics, politicians, activists, and policymakers on a non-partisan basis to inspire them to consider careers in politics and public service. The Institute strives to promote greater understanding and cooperation between the academic world and the world of politics and public affairs. More information is available online at www.iop.harvard.edu

Appendix

Methodology

Knowledge Networks conducted a study of young adults on political issues on behalf of Harvard University's Institute of Politics. The goal of the project was to collect 3,000 completed interviews with young Americans between 18 and 29 years old. Approximately 2,100 cases were to be collected on the KnowledgePanel® with the remaining 900 coming from an opt-in panel sample source. The main sample data collection took place from February 11 to March 2, 2011. A small pretest was conducted prior to the main survey to examine the accuracy of the data and the length of the interview.

Three thousand, six hundred and twenty-six (3,626) KnowledgePanel members were assigned to the study. The cooperation rate was 57.7 percent resulting in 2,091 completed interviews. One hundred sixty eight (168) interviews were conducted in Spanish with the remainder done in English. For the opt-in data source, 927 interviews were completed, the cooperation rate was 4.9 percent.

The web-enabled KnowledgePanel® is a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. population. Initially, participants are chosen scientifically by a random selection of telephone numbers and residential addresses. Persons in selected households are then invited by telephone or by mail to participate in the web-enabled KnowledgePanel®. For those who agree to participate, but do not already have Internet access, Knowledge Networks provides a laptop and ISP connection at no cost. People who already have computers and Internet service are permitted to participate using their own equipment. Panelists then receive unique

log-in information for accessing surveys online, and are sent e-mails throughout each month inviting them to participate in research. More technical information is available at <http://www.knowledgenetworks.com/ganp/reviewer-info.html> and by request to the IOP.

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About Knowledge Networks

Knowledge Networks delivers quality and service to guide leaders in business, government, and academia – uniquely bringing scientifically valid research to the online space through its probability-based, online KnowledgePanel®. The company delivers unique study design, science, analysis, and panel maintenance, along with a commitment to close collaboration at every stage of the research process. Knowledge Networks leverages its expertise in brands, media, advertising, and public policy issues to provide insights that speak directly to clients' most important concerns. For more information: www.knowledgenetworks.com