



INDIANA
CAMPUS
FREE SPEECH
REPORT
2023



INDIANA COMMISSION *for*
HIGHER EDUCATION

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The 2021 Indiana General Assembly passed House Enrolled Act 1549-2021, tasking the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (Commission) with developing and administering a Campus Free Speech survey to students attending Indiana’s public colleges and universities.

As required by legislation, the purpose of the survey was to determine current perceptions about whether free speech and academic freedom are recognized and fostered by public colleges and universities in a manner that welcomes the expression of different opinions and ideologies.

The Commission formed a **Free Speech Advisory Group** in the fall of 2021 to support the project, and the group was comprised of stakeholders from each public campus. Additionally, the Commission partnered with Gallup, a national polling organization, to assist with the development and distribution of the survey.

The survey was emailed on April 5, 2022, to every full-time undergraduate student at all Indiana public institutions, including part-time students at Vincennes University and Ivy Tech Community College. In total, 18,559 students responded.

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Questions	Options	All consenting respondents	
		Column N %	Unweighted Count
At [University], students can express their opinions freely	Strongly agree & agree	78.1%	14,471
	Disagree & strongly disagree	6.4%	1,177
	Neutral	15.5%	2,872
	Total	100.0%	18,520
Free speech is highly valued at [University]	Strongly agree & agree	75.4%	13,955
	Disagree & strongly disagree	7.3%	1,348
	Neutral	17.3%	3,212
	Total	100.0%	18,515
[University] is a place where students can freely express opinions on issues like: Race	Strongly agree & agree	69.6%	12,865
	Disagree & strongly disagree	10.1%	1,875
	Neutral	20.3%	3,750
	Total	100.0%	18,490
[University] is a place where students can freely express opinions on issues like: Politics	Strongly agree & agree	62.9%	11,637
	Disagree & strongly disagree	13.1%	2,430
	Neutral	23.9%	4,426
	Total	100.0%	18,493
[University] is a place where students can freely express opinions on issues like: Religion	Strongly agree & agree	72.1%	13,337
	Disagree & strongly disagree	7.5%	1,381
	Neutral	20.4%	3,772
	Total	100.0%	18,490
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Male students	Strongly agree & agree	73.8%	13,602
	Disagree & strongly disagree	5.6%	1,037
	Neutral	9.4%	1,729
	Don't know/No answer	11.2%	2,067
	Total	100.0%	18,435
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Female students	Strongly agree & agree	70.9%	13,073
	Disagree & strongly disagree	5.7%	1,050
	Neutral	14.2%	2,628
	Don't know/No answer	9.2%	1,694
	Total	100.0%	18,445
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Muslim students	Strongly agree & agree	51.5%	9,487
	Disagree & strongly disagree	6.4%	1,180
	Neutral	12.8%	2,367
	Don't know/No answer	29.3%	5,390
	Total	100.0%	18,424
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Christian students	Strongly agree & agree	69.6%	12,839
	Disagree & strongly disagree	6.3%	1,165
	Neutral	10.3%	1,892
	Don't know/No answer	13.8%	2,538
	Total	100.0%	18,434
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Jewish students	Strongly agree & agree	52.8%	9,738
	Disagree & strongly disagree	4.1%	756
	Neutral	11.6%	2,136
	Don't know/No answer	31.5%	5,801
	Total	100.0%	18,431



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Data note: Data come from responses from 18,559 full-time undergraduate students at all Indiana public institutions, including part-time students at Vincennes University and Ivy Tech Community College.

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		Column N %	Unweighted Count
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: African American/Black students	Strongly agree & agree	62.9%	11,593
	Disagree & strongly disagree	6.6%	1,223
	Neutral	12.1%	2,234
	Don't know/No answer	18.4%	3,388
	Total	100.0%	18,438
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Hispanic/Latino/Latinx students	Strongly agree & agree	59.5%	10,969
	Disagree & strongly disagree	4.5%	827
	Neutral	12.1%	2,232
	Don't know/No answer	23.9%	4,406
	Total	100.0%	18,434
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Asian students	Strongly agree & agree	60.6%	11,186
	Disagree & strongly disagree	4.6%	850
	Neutral	12.7%	2,350
	Don't know/No answer	22.0%	4,059
	Total	100.0%	18,445
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Native American students	Strongly agree & agree	49.9%	9,192
	Disagree & strongly disagree	5.6%	1,025
	Neutral	11.1%	2,038
	Don't know/No answer	33.5%	6,173
	Total	100.0%	18,428
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: White students	Strongly agree & agree	75.7%	13,965
	Disagree & strongly disagree	6.7%	1,227
	Neutral	8.9%	1,640
	Don't know/No answer	8.7%	1,612
	Total	100.0%	18,444
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Politically liberal students	Strongly agree & agree	72.6%	13,380
	Disagree & strongly disagree	3.4%	622
	Neutral	10.0%	1,852
	Don't know/No answer	14.0%	2,577
	Total	100.0%	18,431
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Politically conservative students	Strongly agree & agree	55.5%	10,229
	Disagree & strongly disagree	14.8%	2,719
	Neutral	13.9%	2,558
	Don't know/No answer	15.8%	2,920
	Total	100.0%	18,426
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: LGBTQ+ students	Strongly agree & agree	66.8%	12,323
	Disagree & strongly disagree	5.0%	924
	Neutral	12.1%	2,225
	Don't know/No answer	16.1%	2,969
	Total	100.0%	18,441
At [University], members of each of the following groups can openly express their opinions: Students born outside of the U.S.	Strongly agree & agree	61.4%	11,318
	Disagree & strongly disagree	5.9%	1,086
	Neutral	13.3%	2,461
	Don't know/No answer	19.4%	3,577
	Total	100.0%	18,442



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Questions	Options	All consenting respondents	
		Column N %	Unweighted Count
At [University], do instructors listen to people with different opinions?	Strongly agree & agree	70.1%	12,830
	Disagree & strongly disagree	8.9%	1,630
	Neutral	20.9%	3,832
	Total	100.0%	18,292
At [University], do other students listen to people with different opinions?	Strongly agree & agree	59.3%	10,916
	Disagree & strongly disagree	12.8%	2,363
	Neutral	27.9%	5,130
	Total	100.0%	18,409
Speakers at [University] represent a wide range of political views and ideologies	Strongly agree & agree	62.4%	11,452
	Disagree & strongly disagree	12.6%	2,321
	Neutral	25.0%	4,586
	Total	100.0%	18,359
Do you think each of the following actions that could be taken by college students are always acceptable, sometimes acceptable, or never acceptable: Boycotting a vendor or event at [University]	Always acceptable	39.9%	7,321
	Sometimes acceptable	48.7%	8,930
	Never acceptable	11.4%	2,099
	Total	100.0%	18,350
Do you think each of the following actions that could be taken by college students are always acceptable, sometimes acceptable, or never acceptable: Distributing pamphlets or literature on controversial issues at [University]	Always acceptable	43.0%	7,879
	Sometimes acceptable	48.6%	8,908
	Never acceptable	8.4%	1,545
	Total	100.0%	18,332
Do you think each of the following actions that could be taken by college students are always acceptable, sometimes acceptable, or never acceptable: Engaging in protests against speakers at [University]	Always acceptable	35.4%	6,472
	Sometimes acceptable	49.2%	9,003
	Never acceptable	15.5%	2,832
	Total	100.0%	18,307
Do you think each of the following actions that could be taken by college students are always acceptable, sometimes acceptable, or never acceptable: Engaging in sit-ins or similar attempts to disrupt operations at [University]	Always acceptable	23.2%	4,239
	Sometimes acceptable	49.4%	9,035
	Never acceptable	27.4%	5,016
	Total	100.0%	18,290
Do you think each of the following actions that could be taken by college students are always acceptable, sometimes acceptable, or never acceptable: Denying the news media access to cover a protest or rally at [University]	Always acceptable	9.3%	1,695
	Sometimes acceptable	35.2%	6,424
	Never acceptable	55.5%	1,0141
	Total	100.0%	18,260
Do you think each of the following actions that could be taken by college students are always acceptable, sometimes acceptable, or never acceptable: Shouting down speakers or trying to prevent them from talking at [University]	Always acceptable	6.6%	1,202
	Sometimes acceptable	36.3%	6,636
	Never acceptable	57.1%	10,453
	Total	100.0%	18,291
Do you think each of the following actions that could be taken by college students are always acceptable, sometimes acceptable, or never acceptable: Using violence to stop a speech, protest or rally at [University]	Always acceptable	3.9%	706
	Sometimes acceptable	12.0%	2,198
	Never acceptable	84.1%	15,409
	Total	100.0%	18,313



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Questions	Options	All consenting respondents	
		Column N %	Unweighted Count
In classes I am taking or have taken that are related to political, historical, or cultural topics at [University], my peers discourage me from sharing my political or social views	Strongly agree & agree	12.3%	2,239
	Disagree & strongly disagree	66.1%	12,056
	Neutral	21.6%	3,932
	Total	100.0%	18,227
In classes I am taking or have taken that are related to political, historical, or cultural topics at [University], my instructors discourage me from sharing my political or social views	Strongly agree & agree	12.3%	2,239
	Disagree & strongly disagree	67.2%	12,244
	Neutral	20.5%	3,743
	Total	100.0%	18,226
In classes I am taking or have taken that are related to political, historical, or cultural topics at [University], my instructors have exposed me to scholarly ideas from different political viewpoints	Strongly agree & agree	50.4%	9,183
	Disagree & strongly disagree	20.4%	3,709
	Neutral	29.3%	5,331
	Total	100.0%	18,223
Which best describes your political views?	Very conservative	3.9%	712
	Conservative	15.5%	2,846
	Moderate	27.4%	5,030
	Liberal	22.0%	4,039
	Very liberal	11.6%	2,119
	None of the above	8.4%	1,542
	Prefer not to say	11.2%	2,055
Total	100.0%	18,343	
Which of the following best describes where you are from?	Indiana	59.8%	10,998
	Another U.S. state	29.8%	5,475
	Another country	10.4%	1,908
	Total	100.0%	18,381
What is your gender?	Male	45.8%	8,409
	Female	51.8%	9,506
	Other	2.4%	449
	Total	100.0%	18,364
Race (Recorded)	Asian	14.1%	2,549
	Black	5.4%	976
	Hispanic	8.6%	1,560
	Multiracial	3.2%	584
	Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.9%	168
	White	67.7%	12,212
Total	100.0%	18,049	

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MISSION

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education is a 14-member public body created in 1971 to define the missions of Indiana's colleges and universities, plan and coordinate the state's postsecondary education system, administer state financial aid, and ensure that Indiana's higher education system is aligned to meet the needs of students and the state.



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