2022 Ram Poll

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education

Election Survey

Summary of Findings

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KEY FINDINGS

(OCTOBER 13-19, 2022, n=**948**)

The 2022 Ram Poll received 948 responses from undergraduate students attending 13 universities in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. In all, 87% of the undergraduate students indicate that they are registered to vote. Of those who are registered, 31% are Republican, 53% are Democrat and 15% are Independent. PASSHE students are enthusiastic about this election with 89% stating that they will probably or certainly vote, or that they have already voted.

For the Pennsylvania governor election, 59% of PASSHE undergraduate students favor Democrat Josh Shapiro, 21% chose the Republican Doug Mastriano, and 19% do not know. For the U.S. Senator election, 56% of students chose the Democrat John Fetterman, 22% of students chose Republican Mehmet Oz, and 19% of students do not know.

Students were asked to rate the job performance for both Governor Tom Wolf and President Joe Biden. Governor Wolf fared much better, with 47% rating his performance as "excellent" or "good." Meanwhile, 40% of students feel that President Biden has done "a poor job." In addition, students were asked how they felt they aligned politically. Overall, 36% of students identified as liberal, 36% identified as moderate, 17% identified as conservative, and 11% did not know.

Finally, students were asked how important certain policies are when voting. The most important policies for students were education (74%), abortion (68%), healthcare (66%) and the economy (66%). Meanwhile the policies students found to be the least important were Covid policies (26%) , energy policies (41%), and Supreme Court appointments (43%). When ranking issues that are most important to them, students most frequently chose abortion (18%), then the economy (15%), education (14%), gun policy (11%), and healthcare (10%).

INTERESTING CROSSTABULATIONS

*VOTE CHOICE BY REGION-PA GOVERNOR (N=**822**)*

Each respondent's county of permanent residence was recorded and aggregated to its respective region of Pennsylvania. Regions are described in Appendix table A3. **Current Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro** leads in every region, with a majority in every region except for the Central. In the Allegheny, Philadelphia, and Northeast regions, the "don't know" proportion exceeds Doug Mastriano's share.

REGION (N)	SHAPIRO	MASTRIANO	OTHER	DON'T KNOW
ALLEGHENY *(50)*	**64%**	**10%**	**0%**	**26%**
PHILADELPHIA *(43)*	**64%**	**14%**	**0%**	**23%**
SOUTHEAST *(194)*	**59%**	**22%**	**1%**	**19%**
NORTHEAST *(114)*	**61%**	**15%**	**3%**	**22%**
DUTCH *(167)*	**65%**	**21%**	**1%**	**13%**
WEST *(130)*	**58%**	**22%**	**0%**	**20%**
CENTRAL *(124)*	**49%**	**32%**	**3%**	**16%**

*VOTE CHOICE BY REGION-US SENATOR (N=**822**)*

John Fetterman leads in every region, with a majority in every region except for the Central. Fetterman's lead in the Allegheny (Pittsburgh) region is not surprising, as his hometown of Braddock is nearby. One in five PASSHE students hail from the Dutch region, and **60%** of these students supporting **Fetterman**. Many students are unsure of their choice, with "Don't know" response ranging from 15 to 26%. **The Central region** is the closest margin, where the differential is 16%.

REGION (N)	FETTERMAN	OZ	OTHER	DON'T KNOW
ALLEGHENY *(50)*	**74%**	**8%**	**2%**	**16%**
PHILADELPHIA *(43)*	**55%**	**18%**	**2%**	**25%**
SOUTHEAST *(194)*	**59%**	**22%**	**2%**	**18%**
NORTHEAST *(114)*	**50%**	**18%**	**5%**	**26%**
DUTCH *(167)*	**60%**	**22%**	**2%**	**16%**
WEST *(130)*	**56%**	**22%**	**2%**	**21%**
CENTRAL *(124)*	**48%**	**32%**	**3%**	**15%**

*MODE OF VOTING BY PARTY (N=**822**)*

Pennsylvania passed a law in 2019 allowing individuals to cast a mail ballot without needing an excuse. In the 2020 election, over 2.6 million votes were cast by mail and counted in the Commonwealth[1]. We asked students to disclose their method of voting, which is cross tabulated by party in the table below. We considered "By mail" to be either mailing a ballot or submitting a mail ballot in person at an Election Center. VBM held a higher %age with Democratic students (**59**%) than Republican students (**41**%), perhaps not surprising given the emphasis placed on VBM by the Democrats as well as Republican negative rhetoric, such as President Trump's claims of potential fraud.

METHOD OF VOTING	DEMOCRATIC	REPUBLICAN	INDEPENDENT	OTHER	OVERALL
BY MAIL	**41%**	**14%**	**25%**	**24%**	**30%**
IN PERSON	**59%**	**86%**	**75%**	**76%**	**70%**

[1] Pennsylvania Department of State website: https://www.dos.pa.gov/VotingElections/BEST/Pages/BEST-Election-Stats.aspx

*TRUST IN POLLS BY PARTY (N=**948/822**)*

The 2016 presidential election shook voters' faith in election polls. Many forecasters predicted a Clinton win. Combine this with recent rhetoric from candidates about polls being "phony"[2] and "unfair"[3] and it stands to reason that trust in election polls would be low. We asked the question, "How much do you trust public opinion polls?" The responses to this question are cross tabulated with Party in the table below. When combining the categories "A great deal" and "A good amount," trust in polls is higher with Democratic students (**65**%) than Republican students (**47**%), indicating that the opinions of Republican students may have been influenced by the rhetoric of their **previous president**.

Commented [D1]: This section is from the old poll but I think it still stands so I kept it.

Commented [D2]: Changed candidate to previous president because to my knowledge there aren't any current republican candidates claiming voter fraud

TRUST IN POLLS	DEMOCRATIC	REPUBLICAN	INDEPENDENT	OTHER	OVERALL (INCLUDING NONREG VOTERS)
A GREAT DEAL	**6%**	**4%**	**3%**	**18%**	**5%**
A GOOD AMOUNT	**59%**	**43%**	**48%**	**29%**	**40%**
NOT VERY MUCH	**33%**	**46%**	**46%**	**47%**	**52%**
NOT AT ALL	**1%**	**6%**	**4%**	**6%**	**3%**

[2] https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/10/politics/trump-campaign-cnn-poll/index.html

[3] https://americanindependent.com/donald-trump-polls-2020-election-joe-biden-white-house-cnn/

THE
RAM
POLL

METHODOLOGY

POPULATION OF INTEREST

Our intention is to capture the opinions of Pennsylvania college students. The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) is comprised of 14 universities across the state. The PASSHE system universities "enroll the largest number of Pennsylvania residents among all four-year colleges and universities in the Commonwealth."[4] Over 73,000 students currently attend PASSHE schools as undergraduates. Students who attend and graduate from PASSHE schools are likely to be lifetime Pennsylvania residents, so capturing their political opinions may give an indication of which direction the state is moving. This year, 13 of the 14 universities agreed to participate in the 2020 Ram Poll. They are listed in Table A1 the Appendix. **Our target population was undergraduate students who are permanent Pennsylvania residents above the age of 18.**

SURVEY

The survey findings in this report are based on a web-based survey conducted between October 13, 2022 and October 19, 2022. We obtained random samples of email addresses from each participating university from the PASSHE Advanced Data Analytics Office. All email addresses were taken from our target population; the sample excluded out-of-state and international students as well as any students not of voting age.

Over 15,000 students received an email on Thursday, October 13 with a link to the Qualtrics

[4] https://www.passhe.edu/About/Pages/About.aspx

survey. The initial email and all reminder emails are contained in a separate document and are available upon request. Each email explained that the survey was about the upcoming election and contemporary issues, that it would take no longer than 3 minutes to complete.

INCENTIVE

Campuses were randomized into two groups: incentive and control. Students at the incentive campuses (WCU, Approximately half of the students were informed that upon completion they would receive a $5 electronic gift card worth $5 from Tango. The incentive was funded by a Lindback Teaching Award grant. The remaining campuses () did not receive an completion incentive. The survey closed at 11:59PM on Sunday, October 19.

SAMPLE SIZE

The resulting sample size was n = 948 students. Our response rate was 6.2%. Our sample of 948 students represent 1.4% of the target population.

STUDENTS NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE

At the beginning of the survey, students were asked if they are registered to vote. If they answered no, they were not permitted to answer the questions about voting (candidate, party and voting mode). As a result, the sample sizes for those questions are n=822.

WEIGHTING

The purpose of weighting survey data is to rectify an imbalance between the target population and the sample data. If the sample does not match the population for variables that are suspected to affect responses (like sex and race), weighting can fix that imbalance. However, weighting is not "free." The cost of weighting survey data is larger margins of error and reduced accuracy. For the 2022 Ram Poll, we considered weighting based on sex, race, and region of the state of permanent residence because we believed that these variables might influence a respondent's choices. Therefore, the responses were weighted by these variables using the ANESRAKE procedure in R. The population and sample proportions for region, sex, and race are found in the Appendix in tables A3-A5. All demographic data for the population were obtained from Dr. Kate Akers' team in the PASSHE Data Analytics Office.

MARGIN OF ERROR CALCULATIONS

QUESTIONS	N	MARGIN OF ERROR
REG, TRUST, ISSUES, RATEGOV, RATEPRES, IDEO	**948**	**+/- 3.2%**
VOTENOV, VOTEGOV, MODE, PARTY, ADDRESS	**822**	**+/- 3.4%**

MARGINAL FREQUENCIES

TRUST – How much do you trust public opinion polls?

5%	*A great deal*
50%	*A good amount*
42%	*Not very much*
3%	*Not at all*

REG - Are you currently registered to vote in Pennsylvania?

87%	*Yes*
13%	*No*

PARTY - Are you currently registered as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

31%	*Republican*
53%	*Democrat*
15%	*Independent*
2%	*Something else*

VOTENOV - What would you say are the chances that you will vote in the November election?

56%	*Certain to vote or already voted*
33%	*Probably vote*
6%	*Will probably not vote*
1%	*Will not vote*
4%	*Do not know*

ADDRESS - At which address are you registered to vote?

10%	*School residence*
87%	*Permanent residence*
3%	*Other address*

MODE - If you intend to vote, how will you vote?

70% *In person: I will visit a polling place on election day*
30% *By mail: I will mail (or have already mailed) in my ballot, or I will submit my mail ballot in person at an election center*

VOTEGOV – If the 2022 election for Pennsylvania governor were being held today, for whom would you vote?

56% *Josh Shapiro (D)*
21% *Doug Mastriano (R)*
19% *Do not know*
1% *Other*

VOTESEN – If the 2022 election for U.S. Senator for Pennsylvania were being held today, for whom would you vote?

56% *John Fetterman (D)*
22% *Mehmet Oz (R)*
19% *Do not know*
3% *Other*

RATEGOV - How would you rate the way that Tom Wolf is handling his job as Governor?

9% *Excellent job*
38% *Good job*
23% *Only a fair job*
22% *A poor job*
7% *Do not know*

RATEPRES - How would you rate the way that Joe Biden is handling his job as president?

5% *Excellent job*
19% *Good job*
34% *Only a fair job*
40% *A poor job*
2% *Do not know*

IDEO - Politically speaking, do you consider yourself to be a liberal, a moderate, or a conservative?

36%	*Liberal*
36%	*Moderate*
17%	*Conservative*
11%	*Do not know*

ISSUES- How important are each of the following issues in making your election day decisions:

Commented [D3]: Added this I am not sure if this is exactly what you're looking for so definitely let me know!

Abortion1

68%	*Very Important*
21%	*Somewhat Important*
7%	*Not Too Important*
3%	*Not At All Important*

The Economy2

66%	*Very Important*
30%	*Somewhat Important*
3%	*Not Too Important*
<1%	*Not At All Important*

Climate Change 3

56%	*Very Important*
26%	*Somewhat Important*
13%	*Not Too Important*
5%	*Not At All Important*

Health Care4

66%	*Very Important*
27%	*Somewhat Important*
6%	*Not Too Important*
<1%	*Not At All Important*

Issues around race and ethnicity

57%	*Very Important*
24%	*Somewhat Important*
11%	*Not Too Important*
<1%	*Not At All Important*

Education6

74%	*Very Important*
22%	*Somewhat Important*
4%	*Not Too Important*
<1%	*Not At All Important*

Immigration7

48%	*Very Important*
34%	*Somewhat Important*
15%	*Not Too Important*
3%	*Not At All Important*

Gun Policy8

61%	*Very Important*
25%	*Somewhat Important*
11%	*Not Too Important*
3%	*Not At All Important*

Supreme Court Appointments9

43%	*Very Important*
32%	*Somewhat Important*
20%	*Not Too Important*
6%	*Not At All Important*

Energy Policy10

41%	*Very Important*
37%	*Somewhat Important*
18%	*Not Too Important*
3%	*Not At All Important*

COVID-19 Policies11

26% *Very Important*
34% *Somewhat Important*
24% *Not Too Important*
16% *Not At All Important*

Violent Crime12

53% *Very Important*
35% *Somewhat Important*
10% *Not Too Important*
2% *Not At All Important*

Voting Policies13

44% *Very Important*
33% *Somewhat Important*
18% *Not Too Important*
5% *Not At All Important*

TOP 3 – Of the issues above which would you consider the top three you care about the most?

% *Abortion*
% *The economy*
% *Climate Change*
% *Health Care*
% *Issues around race and ethnicity*
% *Education*
% *Immigration*
% *Gun Policy*
% *Supreme Court Decisions*
% *Energy Policy*
% *COVID-19 Policy*
% *Violent Crime*
% *Voting Policies*

FIRSTGEN - Are you a first-generation college student?

62% *Yes*
38% *No*

REGION - In which county is your permanent residence?

5%	*Allegheny*
3%	*Philadelphia*
26%	*Southeast*
10%	*Northeast*
21%	*Dutch*
16%	*West*
18%	*Central*

RACE – Which of the following categories best describes your racial or ethnic background?

5%	*Hispanic*
83%	*White*
7%	*Black or African American*
2%	*Asian*
4%	*Other*

REL - What is your religious affiliation, if any?

16%	*Catholic*
36%	*Christian*
1%	*Jewish*
<1%	*Muslim*
42%	*No religion*
4%	*another religion*

SEX- What is your legal sex?

67%	*Female*
33%	*Male*

GENDER – To which gender identity do you most identify?

Commented [D4]: This question is phrased differently in the PDF it asks for county and the word doc asks for permanent residence. However, the question in the pdf is a drop down box so I cannot look at the options, so I would assume they are the same question but I am unsure. If the answers are different let me know and I can change them!

64%	*Female*
31%	*Male*
0.5%	*Transgender female*
0.1%	*Transgender male*
3%	*Gender Variant/Non-conforming*
1%	*Not Listed*
0.5%	*Preferred Not to Answer*

NUDGE - If you are not registered to vote, you can still do so until October 24th. Registering to vote online is easy. It takes only a few minutes. You will just need your driver's license or social security number. Knowing this, will you now register to vote?

82%	*I am already registered to vote.*
9%	*Yes! I will register to vote.*
3%	*No, I do not want to register.*
5%	*I'm still thinking about it.*

APPENDIX

TABLE A1 PARTICIPATING PASSHE UNIVERSITIES

PASSHE CAMPUS	*TOTAL UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT*	*PROPORTION OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT*
BLOOMSBURG	*7095*	*10%*
CALIFORNIA	*4321*	*6.1%*
CLARION	*3310*	*4.7%*
EAST STROUDSBURG	*4011*	*5.7%*
EDINBORO	*2716*	*3.9%*
INDIANA	*7530*	*10.7%*
KUTZTOWN	*6055*	*8.6%*
LOCK HAVEN	*2604*	*3.7%*
MANSFIELD	*1466*	*2.1%*
MILLERSVILLE	*5923*	*8.4%*
SHIPPENSBURG	*4896*	*7%*
SLIPPERY ROCK	*6706*	*9.5%*
WEST CHESTER	*13311*	*18.9%*

TABLE A2 CAMPUS EMAIL REQUESTS AND RESPONSE RATES

PASSHE CAMPUS	*EMAIL ADDRESSES REQUESTED*	*RESPONSE COUNT*	*RESPONSE RATE*	*PROPORTION OF TOTAL SAMPLE*
BLOOMSBURG	*1539*	*10*	*0.6%*	*1%*
CALIFORNIA	*943*	*57*	*6.0%*	*6%*
CLARION	*723*	*58*	*8.0%*	*6%*
EAST STROUDSBURG	*877*	*27*	*3.1%*	*3%*
EDINBORO	*593*	*46*	*7.8%*	*5%*
INDIANA	*1645*	*70*	*4.3%*	*7%*
KUTZTOWN	*1322*	*20*	*1.5%*	*2%*
LOCK HAVEN	*570*	*41*	*7.2%*	*4%*
MANSFIELD	*320*	*29*	*9.1%*	*3%*
MILLERSVILLE	*1294*	*70*	*5.4%*	*7%*
SHIPPENSBURG	*1070*	*99*	*9.3%*	*10%*
SLIPPERY ROCK	*1465*	*88*	*6.0%*	*9%*
WEST CHESTER	*2906*	*333*	*11.5%*	*35%*
OVERALL	*15384*	*948*	*6.2%*	

TABLE A3 REGION ASSIGNMENT

REGION	*COUNTIES*	*POPULATION PROPORTION*	*SAMPLE PROPORTION*
ALLEGHENY	*Allegheny*	*6%*	*5%*
PHILADELPHIA	*Philadelphia*	*5%*	*3%*
SOUTHEAST	*Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery*	*23%*	*26%*
NORTHEAST	*Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northhampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming*	*14%*	*10%*
DUTCH	*Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York*	*20%*	*21%*
WEST	*Beaver, Butler, Cambria, Crawford, Erie, Fayette, Greene, Lawrence, Mercer, Somerset, Washington, Westmoreland*	*16%*	*17%*
CENTRAL	*Armstrong, Bedford, Blair, Bradford, Cameron, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Elk, Forest, Fulton, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Juniata, Lycoming, McKean, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga, Union, Venango, Warren*	*16%*	*18%*

TABLE A4 SEX DISTRIBUTION

SEX	*POPULATION PROPORTION*	*SAMPLE PROPORTION*
FEMALE	*59%*	*67%*
MALE	*41%*	*33%*

TABLE A5 RACE DISTRIBUTION

RACE	*POPULATION PROPORTION*	*SAMPLE PROPORTION*
ASIAN	*2%*	*2%*
BLACK	*10%*	*7%*
HISPANIC	*7%*	*5%*
OTHER	*6%*	*4%*
WHITE	*75%*	*83%*