



Jonathan M. Tisch
College of Citizenship
and Public Service

Civic and Political Engagement of America's Youth:

A Report from the Tisch College *“National Survey of Civic and Political Engagement of Young People”*

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During the fall of 2006, political science students at Tufts University, working under the auspices of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, conducted the “National Survey of Civic and Political Engagement of Young People,” a survey of 1,000 people aged 18 to 24 years old. The purpose of this “Tisch Survey” was to examine two specific sub-groups of young people – full-time students in 4-year colleges, and non-college young people – to obtain information about their political and civic attitudes and behavior. The questionnaire was designed at Tufts, and was administered online by an experienced professional survey research organization. The result was a sample of 1,000 non-military young people, 500 students enrolled full-time four year colleges, and 500 young people who were not full time students.

The Questionnaire: In order to survey young people aged 18 to 24, a questionnaire was developed with a special focus on civic and political engagement. The foundation of this questionnaire was the questionnaire previously developed by the staff of Tisch College and the Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation at Tufts University to measure civic engagement outcomes among Tufts

undergraduate students.¹ Students in Political Science 115, Public Opinion and Survey Research, modified these questions where needed so that they would be applicable to a national sample, and added selected questions to obtain additional information. Once a draft of the questionnaire was completed, it was converted by Lisa O’Leary, Assistant Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation, into an Internet (WebSurveyor) counterpart, and it was placed on an Internet server. Students and others² then field-tested the survey, checking to make sure that the questions appeared in the designated order, that there were no clerical errors, and that the logic and flow of the questionnaire worked properly under all branching conditions. The questionnaire developed for this project was then transmitted to an outside survey research organization, Polimetrix, Inc., of Palo Alto, CA. Once the questionnaire was posted on the Polimetrix web server, students and others again field-tested the questionnaire to identify any problems. A plain text version of the final questionnaire is found in the Appendix.

Sampling and Survey Administration: Since the target population for this survey was non-military people in the US between the ages of 18 and 24, all potential respondents not meeting these characteristics were excluded. The survey was designed to elicit responses from two specific groups of young people: those who are enrolled full-time in four-year colleges or universities; and those who are not enrolled full-time. The total target sample and final sample size of 1,000 respondents was evenly split between these two groups.

Largely because of the difficulty in reaching young people through traditional telephone techniques, a decision was made to rely on the Internet as the preferred method of questionnaire administration. The sample was produced as a result of email contacts with the permanent PollingPoint panel maintained by Polimetrix. This panel consists of hundreds of thousands of potential respondents who have volunteered in exchange for earning award points and raffle prizes. Email messages were sent to all people in the panel matched against a frame of records randomly selected from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2004 American Community Survey³, and invitees were chosen based on the strength of match to the frame and their expected response rate to the survey.⁴ Each invitee was asked to visit web site maintained by Polimetrix containing the questionnaire. Initial screening questions were used in the questionnaire to determine whether each respondent qualified based on age and non-military status. Another question was used to determine whether qualifying respondents were full-time college students or non-college people. Responses were accepted from qualified respondents until the quotas of 500 questionnaires were completed. The

¹ Information about the “Outcomes” study may be found at: <http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/?pid=17&c=13>

² An advisory panel was created to assist in the development of this project. Serving on this panel were: Professor Richard Niemi, University of Rochester; Cynthia Gibson, Principal, Cynthesis Consulting, NY, and Professor David King, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard; Molly Mead and Nancy Wilson, Tisch College, Tufts; Dawn Terkla and Lisa O’Leary, Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation, Tufts; Professor Deborah Schildkraut, Department of Political Science, Tufts; and Professor Rich Lerner, Department of Child Development, Tufts.

³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *American Community Survey*, 2004. <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>

⁴ For more information, see Doug Rivers, “Sample Matching: Representative Sampling from Internet Panels.” Whitepaper available on the Polimetrix web site, found at: http://www.polimetrix.com/documents/Polimetrix_Whitepaper_Sample_Matching.pdf

survey was conducted during the period November 17, 2006 through November 27, 2006. Average time of completion for participating respondents was approximately 22 minutes.

Polimetrix created a target sample of 1,000 respondents by drawing a random sub-sample of 1,000 respondents aged 18-24 from the American Community Study conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. They conducted a total of 1,639 interviews with panelists, and selected the 1,000 closest matching cases to the target sample. There were two groups of respondents for this study: 681 respondents were invited directly to this study from the set of active panelists. Of these, 92.0% qualified for the study. The within-panel response rate for those invited was 31.1% (using a formula similar to AAPOR's RR1 with an estimated eligibility of 92.0%). The remaining 958 interviews were conducted from screenouts and non-responders to another study of 18-24 year olds that was fielded at the same time. Of the respondents who were redirected to this study, 64.7% completed.

Post-stratification weights were also calculated for the final sample by raking the sample marginals to the population marginals for age, race, education, and gender based on information from the 2004 American Community Survey. A comparison between these characteristics in the population and in the final unweighted sample, as shown below, suggest that the sample appears highly representative. While the nation's population of non-military young people is estimated to be 48.6% male and 51.4% female, the final unweighted sample of young people who responded was 48.7% male and 51.3% female. While the population is estimated to be 73.7% white, 9.6% African American, and 9.9% Hispanic or Latino, the unweighted sample is 71.8% white, 9.6% African American, and 9.9% Hispanic.

Characteristic	Population*	Final Unweighted Sample**
Gender		
Male	48.6%	48.7%
Female	51.4%	51.3%
Race/ethnicity		
White	73.7%	71.8%
African American	9.6%	9.6%
Hispanic	9.9%	9.9%

* From the 2005 American Community Survey

** Among those who answered

Although Polimetrix, Inc., the sampler and survey administrator, refined the representativeness of the sample by providing computed post-stratification weights based on these and other characteristics, the closeness of the population and sample characteristics above justifies reporting the analysis that follows based on the raw or unweighted sample. The weighted sample is available for comparison analysis.

Although we are tempted enough to report a standard level of precision or sampling area in the range of $\pm 3.0\%$ typically associated with a random sample of 1,000 respondents from a large underlying population, it is not entirely clear that such sampling error estimates are appropriate with internet-based surveys of this type.

What follows is a report on some of the basic overall findings of the survey. The report shows answers to most of the civic and political engagement questions, separating the college and non-college young people for comparisons. Differences that are “statistically significant” are identified in each table. Future analysis and companion reports will provide much more detailed and refined analysis.

College and Non-College Young People

While there is considerable common wisdom about the civic and political engagement of young people, there is surprising little systematic evidence to support that common wisdom. When media commentator Joe Scarborough laments that you can’t count on young people to participate or they will “leave you at the altar,” he contributes to a perception that young people are not engaged.⁵ Yet a comprehensive look at how engaged America youth is not just in politics but in the whole of civil society, a somewhat different picture begins to emerge. In common parlance, a distinction is often made between civic and political engagement, where sometimes these are considered activities that are independent, and at other times political engagement is thought of as a special type of civic engagement. For the purposes of this report, an effort is made to honor the distinction between civic engagement – participation and involvement in organizations and activities that are not related to electoral politics – and political engagement, which does involve a wide array of electoral related activities, but in the analysis of civic engagement activities, many clearly electoral activities are included. No effort is made here to examine whether they are related in some way.

The Civic Engagement of America’s Young People

Civic engagement usually refers to the activities of people in the various organizations and associations that make up what scholars call “civil society.” When people participate in local, state, and national organizations, they are civically-engaged. Of course, much has been written in recent years about how civic engaged, generally, has been on the decline in the U.S. Perhaps most notable among the proponents of this observation is Robert Putnam, whose work on “bowling alone” is meant to capture an image of people who perhaps once bowled in leagues and teams now doing so without the organized foundation of those leagues and teams.⁶ Yet little information exists to establish whether the relatively lower rates of engagement found generally for the U.S. population apply specifically to young people. By inference they must apply to the young, so the logic seems to go, because all the social pressures and forces faced by young people push them away from being civically and politically engaged. The National Survey reported here provides substantial information about the state of engagement of America’s youth.

⁵ <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6385026/#041102r>

⁶ Robert Putnam. *Bowling Alone*.

The Tisch Survey included a wide array of questions designed to identify whether and to what extent young people are active in civic organizations, and what kind of role they played in those organizations. The most generic question asked respondents: **How would you describe your level of community involvement?** Response categories included “Very involved,” “Moderately involved,” “Somewhat involved,” “Not very involved,” and “don’t know” and “other” responses.

The table below shows the breakdown of responses to this question.

Level of community involvement*	College Students	Non-College
Very involved	8.5%	4.7%
Moderately involved	19.4	9.7
Somewhat involved	30.7	22.3
Not very involved	39.8	59.0
Don’t know, other	1.6	4.3
Totals	100.0%	100.0%
N =	505	493

* difference is statistically significant at the .01 level or beyond

These results show clearly that only a small proportion of young people are “very involved,” but college students are almost twice as likely to be very involved as non-college young people. Indeed, nearly 60% of college students report being at least somewhat involved in the community, while only 35% of non-college young people do so.

It is not clear that such a generic question about community involvement would capture the full range of possible civic engagement. Consequently, the Survey offered questions about involvement in numerous specific kinds of community and civic organizations or activities. A series of questions asked respondents to reveal how often they participated in activities of an **Academic or Pre-Professional Society, a Civic issue related conference or seminar, a Community Service Organization, an Outreach Organization, a Civil Liberties Organization (e.g., ACLU, etc.), Volunteer service trips (e.g. Trip to New Orleans to aid with hurricane relief), a Cultural, religious or gender-based organization, a Government or Political Organization, the Media (newspaper, radio, etc.), Performing Arts (theater, music, etc.), and Sports or Recreation.** The questions specifically asked how many hours the respondent spent doing each of these over the previous twelve months, and the response categories for these questions were “None,” “10 hours or less,” “11-25 hours,” “26-60 hours,” “61-120 hours,” and “More than 120 hours.”

The table below shows the percentage of respondents who reported that they participated in any of these activities at all (the percentage who gave any response other than “none”).

Type of Organization or Activity	College Students	Non-College
Academic or Pre-Professional Society*	37.2%	16.2%
Civic issue related conference or seminar*	26.5%	11.3%
Community Service Organization*	47.2%	24.4%
Outreach Organization	19.1%	10.9%
Civil Liberties Organization	11.3%	8.6%
Volunteer service trips*	17.6%	9.4%
Cultural, religious or gender-based organization*	45.5%	26.7%
Government or political organization*	30.9%	22.5%
Media organization	20.1%	17.8%
Performing arts organization*	34.4%	24.1%
Sports or recreation organization*	49.5%	38.4%
N =	491	482

* difference is statistically significant at the .01 level or beyond

Consistent with the first set of results, this table reveals that the propensity to be engaged depends a lot on whether or not the respondent is a college student. This table also shows that the propensity to be engaged at all depends on the type of organization. For only two types of organizations does the propensity to participate come close to the 50% mark, and that is for cultural and religious organizations and sports and recreations organizations among college students. Clearly, participation in community service organizations, cultural and religious organizations, performing arts, and sports organizations is higher than participation in others. Almost across the board, college students are more likely to be involved than non-college young people. That is to be expected of some of the more academically-oriented types of organizations, such as pre-professional associations, where the difference is substantial. But the pattern holds across all types of organizations, with only outreach, civil liberties, and media organizations showing little difference. Despite the fact that college students often do not feel particularly connected to the

communities where they attend college, engagement in community service organizations is almost twice as prevalent among college students as among those not in college.

Another series of questions asked respondents how often they **Participated in community service, Conducted community-based research, Wrote a policy analysis paper, Worked or volunteered for a political campaign, Participated in a protest, march or demonstration, Helped to raise money for a charitable cause, Participated in online political discussions or visited a politically oriented website, Contacted or visited a public official (at any level of government) to ask for assistance or to express my opinion, Contacted a newspaper, magazine, radio, or television program to express my opinion on an issue or candidate, Attended a meeting of town or city council, school board or neighborhood association, Volunteered through a social or non-profit organization, Helped to raise awareness around a particular social issue, Attended a civic issue related conference or seminar, Attended a speaker event on a particular issue, Helped to organize efforts aimed at solving environmental issues, or Helped to promote political involvement or assisted with voter registration.** The questions specifically asked how many hours the respondent spent doing each of these over the previous twelve months, and the response categories for these questions were “None,” “10 hours or less,” “11-25 hours,” “26-60 hours,” “61-120 hours,” and “More than 120 hours.”

Several of these types of participation seem clearly more applicable to students than to non-students, such as writing a policy analysis paper or conducting community-based research.⁷ And being a college student probably offers more opportunities to attend speaker events. But the other kinds of activities would not seem, on their face, to be biased in favor of people in the academic world other than through requiring significant investments of time. Some of these types of engagement are more political and electoral in nature, such as volunteering for a political campaign or assisting with voter registration.

The table below shows the percentage of respondents who reported that they participated in any of these activities at all (the percentage who gave any response other than “none”). The results continue to reveal that college students report being more engaged than non-college young people. The differences are very large in those areas where you would expect college students to have greater opportunities. But the differences are also substantial with respect to other types of engagement as well. College students are more likely to be engaged in raising money for charities, contacting local officials or the media, volunteering in non-profit organizations, and even attending meetings of local city councils, boards of education, or neighborhood associations. And they are more likely to be engaged in the overtly political activities related to volunteering in a campaign, assisting in voter registration, and participating in protest marches.

⁷ Community-based research usually involves a researcher or group of researchers working collectively with a community to define a research problem, devise an appropriate methodology to examine the problem, collect needed data, and interpret the results.

Type of Engagement	College Students	Non-College
Participated in community service*	61.3%	30.1%
Conducted community-based research*	19.1%	9.0%
Wrote a policy analysis paper*	25.2%	11.2%
Worked or volunteered for a political campaign*	23.6%	15.4%
Participated in a protest march or demonstration*	23.5%	14.6%
Helped to raise money for a charitable cause*	51.2%	34.7%
Participated in online political discussions or visited a politically oriented website*	61.3%	48.7%
Contacted or visited a public official to ask for assistance or to express my opinion	34.2%	27.7%
Contacted a newspaper, magazine, radio, or television program to express my opinion on an issue or candidate	21.0%	17.5%
Attended a meeting of town or city council, school board or neighborhood association*	23.5%	14.1%
Volunteered through a social or non-profit organization*	47.4%	25.3%
Helped to raise awareness around a particular social issue*	40.7%	30.2%
Attended a civic issue related conference or seminar*	20.9%	11.0%
Attended a speaker event on a particular issue*	65.4%	28.6%
Helped to organize efforts aimed at solving environmental issues	19.7%	13.2%
Helped to promote political involvement or assisted with voter registration*	27.9%	17.3%
N =	495	474

* difference is statistically significant at the .01 level or beyond

In addition to these activities, the questionnaire also asked respondents to reveal how often they **Wore a button, put a sticker on my car or placed a sign in front of my house in support of an issue or candidate, Contributed money to a candidate, political party or any organization that supported candidates, Donated money, clothes, or food to a community or religious organization, Signed a petition (paper or email) about a political or social issue, Not bought something because of the conditions under which the product is made, Bought a certain**

product or service because I like the social or political values of the company that produced it. The response categories were “Often,” “Seldom,” and “Never.”

The table below shows the percentage of respondents who said “often.”

Type of Engagement or activity	College Students	Non-College
Wore a button, put a sticker on my car or placed a sign in front of my house in support of an issue or candidate	24.0%	21.4%
Contributed money to a candidate, political party or any organization that supported candidates	5.8%	8.4%
Donated money, clothes, or food to a community or religious organization	26.3%	26.6%
Signed a petition (paper or email) about a political or social issue	25.0%	24.6%
Not bought something because of the conditions under which the product is made	26.3%	24.1%
Bought a certain product or service because I like the social or political values of the company that produced it	27.0%	26.0%
N =	500	486

These results indicate that the differences observed previously are not as clear-cut when it comes to these kinds of activities and behaviors. None of these differences is statistically significant, and indeed, when it comes to contributing money, non-college young people are more likely to be engaged. This very probably has to do with the tendency for college students to have fewer financial resources, but it does clearly favor non-college people. Except in the case of contributing money, about a quarter of the respondents report “often” engaging in all of these kinds of activities.

Political Knowledge and Political Engagement of America’s Young People

The results presented thus far paint a picture where, among young people, there is greater engagement of college students than of those not in college. A handful of questions asked about activities related politics and political engagement, but there is a more complete picture that emerges from the answers to additional questions.

The most common image of young people is that of a cohort not particularly connected to politics and government, who are not very interested in, and perhaps apathetic about, politics and elections, who don’t pay much attention to the news and virtually never read a newspaper, and consequently they are not very knowledgeable about news of politics and public affairs. What isn’t as clear is whether college students tend to be like non-college young people when it comes to politics. The Tisch Survey asked a number of questions that permit analysis of whether and to what extent these images might seem to be true.

News and News Media

How connected are young people to the news, current events, and public affairs? One basic way to examine this is to ask respondents how often they engage in activities that would help inform them about such issues. This survey asked respondents how frequently they **Read a newspaper, Watch the news on TV, Read the news on-line, Listen to the news on the radio, Personally read "blogs" on the Internet that deal with political issues, Personally read "blogs" or campaign websites of candidates for office, Discuss politics or social issues with your friends, or Talk with one or both of your parents about politics or social issues?** The response categories were “Every day,” “Several times a week,” “Several times a month,” “Never.”

The table below shows the percentage of young people who indicated that they do each activity “every day” or “several times a week.”

Type of News or Information Activity	College Students	Non-College
Read a newspaper*	56.2%	46.9%
Watch the news on TV	58.4%	64.3%
Read the news online*	78.6%	71.1%
Listen to the news on radio*	34.6%	43.8%
Personally read “blogs” on political issues	24.2%	22.3%
Personally read candidate’s “blogs”	12.2%	8.6%
Discuss politics with friends*	56.5%	41.6%
Discuss politics with parents	31.5%	29.8%
N =	500	490

* difference is statistically significant at the .01 level or beyond

These results begin to build a picture where significant numbers of young people certainly seem to take advantage of the opportunity to become informed. Substantial numbers of people read the news online on in newspapers, or watch the news on TV. Except when it comes to listening to the news on radio, college students seem to have somewhat greater opportunities to be informed. Moreover, college students are far more likely to engage in political discussion with friends, and slightly more likely to discuss politics with family. Perhaps surprisingly, political blogs, especially candidate blogs, do not emerge as significant sources of information for young people, and college students are not more likely to read political blogs.

Knowledge About Public Officials

While self-reports on the opportunity to be informed are an important piece of the picture, it is also important to assess the level of actual knowledge that young people have about politics and government. Some surveys approach this type of issue by administering a sort of public affairs knowledge quiz focusing on whether respondents can accurately report on recent world or national events. This Survey focused specifically on knowledge about public officials. Here, a number of questions were asked that allow us to make such an assessment of factual knowledge. The focus on this effort was on knowledge of elected officials – members of Congress. To what extent can young people accurately name their respective members of Congress? Are college students better informed than non-college young people?

There are “structural” reasons why one might expect college students to be less informed about their representatives because they often live some distance away from their home towns. Accurate knowledge of members of the House of Representatives is a challenge for college students because, even when they attend college in the same state as their permanent residence, they may live in different Congressional districts, so their representatives would be different. This would not be a problem for members of the Senate for students who attend college in the same state as their permanent residences. Moreover, because college students often find it difficult or impossible to register to vote in the city or town where they attend college, the sense of connectedness to the Congressperson who represents the area where the college is located may be weak at best.

In order to assess the level of knowledge, the Survey asked respondents whether they knew the names of their U.S. Senators or members of the U.S. House of Representatives. Non-college young people were asked: **Do you know the name of the member of Congress for the district where your permanent residence is? If you know the name, please type it here.** They were also asked: **Do you know the name of either one of the U.S. Senators for the state where your permanent residence is? If so, please type the name(s) here.**

The questions were a little more elaborate for college students. First, they were asked: **Do you know the name of the member of Congress for the district where your college/university is? If you know the name, please type it here.** Then they were asked: **Do you know the name of the member of Congress for the district where your permanent residence is? If you know the name, please type it here.** This was followed by the question: **Do you know the name of either one of the U.S. Senators for the state where your permanent residence is? If so, please type the name(s) here;** then: **Do you know the name of either one of the U.S. Senators for the state where your college/university is? If so, please type the name(s) here.** Each of the responses was evaluated to determine whether it was correct based on where the respondent reported living and, where applicable, going to college.

The table below shows the results of these responses. For the respective members of the U.S. House, the answers are reported as “Yes,” reflecting the fact that the respondent accurately gave the name of his or her House member, or “No,” reflecting either that no name was provided or the

name that was provided was incorrect.⁸ For members of the U.S. Senate, the respondent was credited with knowing both of the two Senators if both names were accurately given, one Senator if the name of either Senator was accurately provided, and no Senators if either no name was provided or if the name provided was incorrect.⁹

Type of Knowledge		College Students	Non-College
Accurately named the member of the U.S. House of Representatives representing them at their permanent residence*	Yes	49.9%	39.9%
	No	50.1%	60.1%
Accurately named member(s) of the U.S. Senate representing them at their permanent residence*	Knew both Senators	22.3%	16.0%
	Knew one Senator	42.9%	35.2%
	Didn't know either	34.8%	48.8%
Accurately named the member of the U.S. House of Representatives representing them at their college	Yes	34.1%	-----
	No	65.9%	-----
Accurately named member(s) of the U.S. Senate representing them at their college	Knew both Senators	17.6%	-----
	Knew one Senator	36.0%	-----
	Didn't know either	46.4%	-----
Accurately named the winner of <i>American Idol</i>	Yes	13.4%	15.4%
	No	86.6%	84.6%
Accurately named the winner of <i>Dancing with the Stars</i>	Yes	9.2%	10.2%
	No	90.8%	89.8%

* difference is statistically significant at the .01 level or beyond

Here it is clear that college students are more knowledgeable about their members of Congress than non-college young people. College students are significantly more likely to know the names of their U.S. Senators and their members of the House at their permanent residences than non-college

⁸ Because the survey was conducted the week after the 2006 mid-term elections, a decision was made to consider an answer correct if the respondent gave name of either the current member of Congress or any newly elected member. This issue arose in a total of only six cases.

⁹ There were no cases where two Senators' names were given but one Senator's name was correct and one was incorrect.

people. Among college students, more than half knew the name of at least one of the U.S. Senators representing them in the state where they were attending college, and over a third knew the name of the member of the House. In fact, college students were slightly more likely to have knowledge of the names of their U.S. Senators for the state where they were going to college than non-college young people were to have knowledge of the names of their Senators where they live permanently. Of course, many college students live and attend college in the same state, so this difference may be exaggerated.

As a point of comparison, the Survey also looked at knowledge of two high-profile television shows, *American Idol* and *Dancing with the Stars*. Respondents were asked: **Did you watch *American Idol* last season?** Those who answered “yes” were then asked: **Who was the winner of last season's "*American Idol*"? Please list the winner.** Respondents were also asked: **Did you watch *Dancing with the Stars* last season?** For those who answered yes, respondents were asked: **Who was the winner of last season's "*Dancing with the Stars*"? Please list the winner.** As with the questions about the members of Congress, the names that were entered were evaluated to determine whether they were correct. Respondents who either did not enter a name or who entered a name that was incorrect are reported as not accurately naming the winners. The purpose of asking these questions was to provide a popular culture comparison based on the expectation that young people would generally be more interested in and knowledgeable about these TV programs than their public officials. The comparison turned out to be fairly apt, at least in the case of *Dancing with the Stars*. While the Survey was conducted just a week after the mid-term elections, it was conducted not more than a month after the latest *Dancing with the Stars* winner was selected.

Two important patterns emerge from these results. First, the proportion of young people who were able to report the winners is not exceedingly high – only between 10 and 15 percent of young people were able to identify the winners. This number seems quite small in comparison to the numbers who were able to accurately identify their members of Congress. While one might expect levels of knowledge of popular culture to far exceed knowledge of politics and public affairs, this is not the case here. Young people seem to know much more about politics than they know about popular culture. The second pattern suggests that college students are no different from non-college young people in this regard. College students were not less likely to know the winners than non-college people.

In order to look at the structural issue regarding the importance of living away from home for college students, we can look at college students according to whether they attend college in-state or out-of-state. Much has been written about the fact that college students have particular difficulty getting connected to the community where they attend college, and that this is especially problematic for students who attend college out-of-state. Additionally, many college students face the obstacle that they cannot, or cannot easily, register to vote where they attend college, and the result often is that students have little incentive to learn and become knowledgeable about the public officials for the areas where they attend college. Examining the in-state/out-of-state issue does not capture the full range of possible locational obstacles facing college students. Simply moving from one part of a state to another could pose nearly as great a structural obstacle. But the in-state/out-of-state distinction represents one of the more robust versions of this obstacle.

The table below reveals the patterns of knowledge among college students according to the state where they attend college.

Type of Knowledge		Attending College in Same State as Permanent Residence	Attending College Out-of-State
Accurately named the member of the U.S. House of Representatives representing them at their permanent residence	Yes	51.5%	43.9%
	No	48.5%	56.1%
Accurately named member(s) of the U.S. Senate representing them at their permanent residence	Knew both Senators	20.4%	28.9%
	Knew one Senator	44.6%	36.8%
	Didn't know either	34.9%	34.2%
		} 65.0%	} 65.7%
Accurately named the member of the U.S. House of Representatives representing them at their college*	Yes	37.2%	23.5%
	No	62.8%	76.5%
Accurately named member(s) of the U.S. Senate representing them at their college*	Knew both Senators	19.4%	11.4%
	Knew one Senator	38.8%	26.3%
	Didn't know either	41.8%	62.3%
		} 58.2%	} 37.7%

* difference is statistically significant at the .01 level or beyond

These results demonstrate clearly that students attending college out-of-state are significantly less likely to know who their representatives are where they go to college. They are also somewhat less likely to know the names of their House members at their permanent residences, and not less likely to know the names of their U.S. Senators. Whether it is because of structural obstacles, such as difficulty registering to vote, or because of a sense of temporariness associated with attending college, or some other factor, college students tend not to know very much about their members of Congress when they attend college out-of-state.

Engagement in Cyberspace

Much has been written in recent years about the growth of reliance on cyberspace – the Internet and World Wide Web – as a mechanism for the engagement of America’s youth. The exact manifestation of this reliance changes fairly often, but today much attention is on young peoples’ use of on-line resources rather than more traditional newspapers for information, and participation in various kinds of “blogs,” as well as participating in *Facebook*, *MySpace* and *YouTube*, to form interpersonal connections and interactions. Earlier in this report, reference was made to the fact that around three quarters of the young people surveyed reported that they read news online, considerably more than read traditional newspapers. We also saw that nearly a quarter say they read political blogs, and around 10% say they read blogs for particular candidates. While college students were more likely to engage in these cyberspace-related activities than non-college young people, the differences are not great. Does this pattern carry over to other potential forms of online civic and political engagement?

The Tisch Survey asked some questions that looked specifically at reliance on *Facebook* as a vehicle for civic engagement. Respondents were asked: **Do you currently belong to any groups on Facebook?** Those who answered “Yes” were asked: **How many different Facebook groups do you belong to?** This was followed by two questions regarding the frequency of engagement: **How many days a week do you log into Facebook?** and **How many hours per week do you spend logged on to Facebook?**

The following table shows which group tends to be more likely to take advantage of *Facebook*.

Currently Belong to Any Facebook Groups?*	College Students	Non-College
Yes	68.7%	26.1%
No	30.7	73.3
Totals	100.0%	100.0%
N =	505	494

* difference is significant at the .01 level or beyond.

A large portion of young people do, in fact, participate in *Facebook* in some way, but college students are considerably more likely to be the ones engaged in this medium. Indeed, over two-thirds of college students use *Facebook*, while only about a quarter of non-college young people do. This represents a very substantial difference. Just in terms of whether respondents aged 18 to 24 reported belonging to any *Facebook* groups, this is a college-student dominated medium.

The difference in using *Facebook* between college and non-college young people is borne out even further in terms of the number of *Facebook* groups respondents report using. The following table shows the percentage of respondents reporting belonging to “more than twenty” *Facebook* groups.

Number of Facebook Groups? ^a *	College Students	Non-College
Between 1 and 20 groups	50.0%	69.3%
More than 20 groups	50.0	30.7
Totals	100.0%	100.0%
N =	346	127

^a Among those who reported belonging to at least one group

* difference is significant at the .01 level or beyond.

Even among those who report belonging to at least one *Facebook* group, the differences are substantial. Half of all college students reported belonging to more than 20 groups, while only a little over 30% of the non-college young people belong to that many groups. College students are not only more likely to belong to *Facebook*, they are also considerably more likely to be heavy users of it.

Differences between college and non-college young people in the use of *Facebook* are also evident from the questions concerning frequency of use, both in terms of hours and days. The table below shows the percentage of respondents who reported being logged onto *Facebook* five or fewer hours and more than five hours a week, followed by a table showing how many days a week respondents were logged onto *Facebook*.

Number of Hours on Facebook per week ^a *	College Students	Non-College
One to five hours a week	74.2%	90.2%
More than five hours a week	25.8	9.8
Totals	100.0%	100.0%
N =	310	122
Average number of hours	4.39	2.66

^a Among those who reported belonging to at least one group

* difference is significant at the .01 level or beyond.

College students report logging onto *Facebook* considerably more hours in a week (4.39 hours a week) than non-college (2.66 hours). This same pattern is borne out when we look at the number of days per week as well.

Number of Days on Facebook per week^{a *}	College Students	Non-College
One to four days a week	32.5%	63.8%
More than four days a week	67.5	36.2
Totals	100.0%	100.0%
N =	338	130

^a Among those who reported belonging to at least one group

* difference is significant at the .01 level or beyond.

Perhaps the more important issue surrounding the use of *Facebook* and other online resources by young people concerns the frequency of uses for social and political engagement. In what ways is *Facebook* used as a mechanism for young people to voice their views on political and social issues? In order to get at this, respondents who reported belonging to at least one group were then asked: **Do any of the *Facebook* groups you belong to take stands for or against a specific political or social cause or issue? If so, what causes do these groups address? Please list as many as you can.**

The table below shows the average numbers of *Facebook* groups young people reported they belong to that serve some form of advocacy purposes.

Type of Facebook Advocacy Group	College Students	Non-College
Total Number of Facebook Advocacy Groups	3.89	3.86
Number of Democratic Candidate Groups	1.44	1.17
Number of Republican Candidate Groups	1.17	1.00
Number of "Other" Candidate Groups	1.10	1.00
Number of Liberal/Democrat Advocacy Groups	3.64	3.58
Number of Conservative/Republican Advocacy Groups	3.29	3.13
Number of Non-partisan/Non-ideological Advocacy Groups	1.77	1.61
N =	198	71

Two facts emerge from this table. First, *Facebook* tends to be used more for advocacy of Democratic political candidates than Republican candidates, and liberal or Democratic causes than conservative or Republican causes. Second, the differences between college students and non-college young people are extremely small, and none of these differences are statistically significant. While college students, on average, belong to more *Facebook* issue or candidate advocacy groups than non-college young people, they also belong to slightly more groups of all kinds, liberal, conservative, and non-partisan or non-ideological.

Electoral Participation

Access to public affairs knowledge through the media and knowledge of one's representatives are important components of being an educated member of society, but they tell us little directly about political engagement. There is perhaps more known about the political and electoral participation of young people than about other types and forms of civic engagement, but the Tisch Survey included an effort to discover possible differences between college and non-college young people. Recent studies suggest that voter turnout among people aged 18-24 has been consistently lower than that of people aged 25 and over, and has been declining in midterm elections, possibly by as much as 6% between 1978 and 2002. Donovan, Lopez, and Sagoff found that in the midterm elections of 2002, about half of people aged 25 and over who were eligible to register actually voted, while only about 19% of people between 18 and 24 years old voted. Estimates of turnout among young people in Presidential elections are higher, with an analysis of exit polls after the 2004 election suggesting that about 42% of all people aged 18-24 had voted. The Census Bureau's Current Population Survey suggests that in 2004, 57.6% of eligible 18-24 year olds were registered to vote; 46.7% of eligible 18-24 years old reported voting; and 81.2% of 18-24 year old who were registered actually voted.¹⁰ Of course, turnout in presidential election years is always somewhat higher than that in midterm election years.

If electoral participation among young people is low, it would not seem to be because of college students. Studies focusing on the electoral engagement of college students suggest that registration and voting rates are quite high. Analysis by Richard Niemi after the 2004 Presidential election found that 88% of college students said they were registered to vote, and 88% of these people reported that they voted. This means that, overall, about 77% of college students said they voted.

The Tisch Survey examined voter registration and voting in a straightforward way. For respondents who we identified as being eligible to register to vote, we asked: **Are you currently registered to vote?** For those who said "yes," we asked for information about the location where the respondent was registered and the political party, if any, of that registration. Then we asked: **Have you ever voted?** For those who reported having voted, we asked respondents to identify the type of election in which he or she last voted, distinguishing "National," "State only," "Local only," "State and local only," and "Party primary" elections. Then we asked the respondent to identify the year and month of that last voting experience.¹¹

The table below shows the registration and voting experiences of the respondents. The table shows the percentage of respondents eligible to register who reported being registered to vote, and the proportion of registered voters who reported having voted in the most recent midterm election (in November, 2006), just a week prior to the conduct of the Survey.

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey*, November 2004.

¹¹ Random sample survey-based estimates of voter turnout consistently show higher turnout rates than other forms of data collection. There is, however, no evidence that such over-estimates are higher for college students or for non-college young people, which is the issue addressed in this report. A pilot registration and vote verification study conducted at Tufts prior to the Presidential election of 2004 showed that a very small percentage of students reporting being registered were not registered, and an even smaller percentage of students who reported voting did not vote. See Kent E. Portney et al., "Tufts Voted! A Report on the Activities of Tufts Students in Election 2004: The Results of a Class Project," February 2005, available at <http://ase.tufts.edu/polsci/faculty/portney/tuftsvoted.pdf>.

Voter Registration and Voting	College Students	Non-College
Registered to vote ^{a*}	91.0%	82.4%
Voted in November 2006 ^b	79.1%	73.6%
Ever Voted ^b	93.3%	89.4%

^a Among those eligible to vote based on citizenship status

^b Among those who reported being registered to vote

* difference is statistically significant at the .01 level or beyond

This information confirms that voter registration and voting rates are quite high among young people, including non-college young people. Although the difference between college and non-college people is statistically significant, over 83% of non-college young people still report being registered. There is much reason to believe that self-reports of registration and voting over-estimate the true rates, there is no particular reason to think that college students are more or less likely to report being registered and voting than non-college. The fact that reports of electoral participation among non-college young people is so high suggests that efforts to engage these people may well have paid off.

Are students attending college out-of-state less likely to vote? Difficulties for out of state students to vote are clear and well documented. Oftentimes, students find it difficult to register to vote in their college towns, and when this happens, students have the added burden that they must request and return an absentee ballot.

The table below reveals the percentage of college students who voted divided by their in-state versus out-of-state residence status.

Voter Registration and Voting	Attending College in Same State as Permanent Residence	Attending College Out-of-State
Registered to vote ^a	91.3%	90.1%
Voted in November 2006 ^b	81.4%	71.0%
Ever Voted ^b	94.2%	90.9%

^a Among those eligible to vote based on citizenship status

^b Among those who reported being registered to vote

College students' propensity to register to vote does not depend on whether they are attending college in the same state as their permanent residence or out of state. About 90% of all college students reported being registered. However, there is a difference in voting rates, with out-of-state students being far less likely to have voted in the 2006 elections. Out-of-state students also reported being far less likely to have ever voted. Undoubtedly, the structural impediments and the lack of familiarity of the students with "local candidates and issues" plays a role in this differential.

As a point of comparison that arises from popular culture, the Survey asked respondents whether they participated in the selection of the winners in the *American Idol* and *Dancing with the Stars* television programs. These two programs, part of the "reality show" genre of contemporary television programming, purport to offer viewers the opportunity to "vote" in the selection of the winning contestant. To what extent do young people actually participate in these processes? Common wisdom might suggest that participation should be quite high. To examine this, after asking respondents whether they watch each show, the Survey asked respondents: **Did you cast at least one vote last season during the contest?** Respondents were also asked for whom they voted.

The table below provides information about the percentage of respondents who reported watching, and voting at least once in, *American Idol* and *Dancing with the Stars*. Viewers have the opportunity to "cast ballots" at multiple stages, and the question that was asked simply captures whether the respondent voted as least once.

Viewing and Voting in "Reality TV"	College Students	Non-College
Watched <i>American Idol</i>	23.0%	25.4%
Watched <i>Dancing with the Stars</i>	14.9%	18.1%
Voted at least once in the <i>American Idol</i> program		
As a percentage of entire group	10.2%	11.9%
As a percentage of viewers	44.8%	47.2%
Voted at least once in the <i>Dancing with the Stars</i> program		
As a percentage of entire group	3.5%	4.4%
As a percentage of viewers	24.7%	25.0%

Around a quarter of the surveyed young people reported watching *American Idol*, while only around one-sixth reported watching *Dancing*. College students were slightly less likely to watch either show. Almost half of the *Idol* viewers and a quarter of the *Dancing* viewers reported voting in the contest. College students were also slightly less likely to have voted in either contest. While

college students take part in electoral politics more frequently than do non-college young people, this same pattern is not borne out with respect to participation in television contest outcomes.

Summary

The Tisch Survey has provided data to demonstrate that, among young people aged 18 to 24, there are many differences between those who are full-time college students and those who are not. The overall pattern is unmistakable. Full-time college students are much more civically and politically engaged than their non-college counterparts. College students report greater levels of community involvement and engagement in a wide variety of types of organizations. They volunteer more often; they more frequently take part in cultural and religious organizations; they are engaged in the political and electoral processes; they are more active in raising funds for charitable organizations and causes; and they are more likely to be engaged in online discussions about political and social issues.

Additionally, college students are more likely to be connected to current political and social events by virtue of spending more time reading, watching, and discussing the news. Whether it is through reading conventional newspapers, online news sources, watching news programs on television, or engaging in political discussions with friends and family, college students are more engaged than non-college young people.

Perhaps the result of this is that college students appear to be more knowledgeable about their political representatives in Congress. College students more frequently knew the names of their representatives from their permanent places of residence than did not college young people. Yet college students attending college outside of their home states clearly had greater difficulty knowing the representatives for the districts where their colleges are located. If there is an impediment to greater engagement for out-of-state college students, it would appear to be related to the displacement they experience when going away to school.

College students are considerably more likely than non-college young people to use *Facebook* as an online resource. By virtue of this, college students are also more likely to use *Facebook* as a form of engaging in discussions about social and political issues. There are only slight differences between college and non-college young people in terms of the types of groups they belong to.

Finally, college students are more likely to report being registered to vote, and to have voted in general elections, than non-college young people. Although survey research tends to over-estimate the levels of voter registration and voting, college students are consistently more engaged than non-college young people. Among college students, there is a slight tendency for those attending college out-of-state to be less likely to vote than those attending in-state.

Appendix

The Questionnaire Used in the Tisch Survey

**The Tisch College
National Civic and Political Engagement of Young People Survey**

Questionnaire

(Question wording in **bold**; Variable names in square brackets)

Thank you for your participation in our survey. The next few screens will collect some background information about you and then you will be asked some more specific questions about issues in the news today and your lifestyle choices. We look forward to hearing your opinions and hope that you enjoy your survey experience.

[fullmi] (A screening question) **Are you currently serving full-time in the US military?**

- <1> Yes
- <2> No

[birthyr] **In what year were you born?**

[wsb216] **Are you currently enrolled full-time in a four year college or university?**

- <1> Yes
- <2> No

[statesc] **In what state do you attend college?**

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <1> Alabama | <27> Montana |
| <2> Alaska | <28> Nebraska |
| <3> Arizona | <29> Nevada |
| <4> Arkansas | <30> New Hampshire |
| <5> California | <31> New Jersey |
| <6> Colorado | <32> New Mexico |
| <7> Connecticut | <33> New York |
| <8> Delaware | <34> North Carolina |
| <9> District of Columbia | <35> North Dakota |
| <10> Florida | <36> Ohio |
| <11> Georgia | <37> Oklahoma |
| <12> Hawaii | <38> Oregon |
| <13> Idaho | <39> Pennsylvania |
| <14> Illinois | <40> Rhode Island |
| <15> Indiana | <41> South Carolina |
| <16> Iowa | <42> South Dakota |
| <17> Kansas | <43> Tennessee |
| <18> Kentucky | <44> Texas |
| <19> Louisiana | <45> Utah |
| <20> Maine | <46> Vermont |
| <21> Maryland | <47> Virginia |
| <22> Massachusetts | <48> Washington |
| <23> Michigan | <49> West Virginia |
| <24> Minnesota | <50> Wisconsin |
| <25> Mississippi | <51> Wyoming |
| <26> Missouri | <52> Outside of the U.S. |

[acadstand] **If you are a college student, what is your current academic standing (in September, 2006)?**

- <1> Freshman
- <2> Sophomore
- <3> Junior
- <4> Senior
- <0> I don't know
- <99> Not applicable

[stateper] **In what state is your permanent residence?**

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <1> Alabama | <27> Montana |
| <2> Alaska | <28> Nebraska |
| <3> Arizona | <29> Nevada |
| <4> Arkansas | <30> New Hampshire |
| <5> California | <31> New Jersey |
| <6> Colorado | <32> New Mexico |
| <7> Connecticut | <33> New York |
| <8> Delaware | <34> North Carolina |
| <9> District of Columbia | <35> North Dakota |
| <10> Florida | <36> Ohio |
| <11> Georgia | <37> Oklahoma |
| <12> Hawaii | <38> Oregon |
| <13> Idaho | <39> Pennsylvania |
| <14> Illinois | <40> Rhode Island |
| <15> Indiana | <41> South Carolina |
| <16> Iowa | <42> South Dakota |
| <17> Kansas | <43> Tennessee |
| <18> Kentucky | <44> Texas |
| <19> Louisiana | <45> Utah |
| <20> Maine | <46> Vermont |
| <21> Maryland | <47> Virginia |
| <22> Massachusetts | <48> Washington |
| <23> Michigan | <49> West Virginia |
| <24> Minnesota | <50> Wisconsin |
| <25> Mississippi | <51> Wyoming |
| <26> Missouri | <52> Outside of the U.S. |

[xgender] **Please indicate your gender.**

- <1> Male
- <2> Female

[citizenship] **What is your citizenship status?**

- <1> U.S. Citizen
- <2> Dual citizenship with U.S.
- <3> U.S. Permanent resident status
- <4> Other Non-U.S. Citizen

[xrace] **What is your race?**

- <0> Black/African-American
- <1> Asian/Asian-American
- <2> Hispanic
- <3> Native American
- <4> White
- <5> I don't know
- <6> I'd prefer not to answer
- <7> Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name: xrace_t)

[sociohome] **How would you describe the socio-economic category of the household where you grew up?**

- <6> Upper Class
- <5> Upper-Middle Class
- <4> Middle Class
- <3> Lower Middle Class
- <2> Lower Class
- <1> Poor
- <0> Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name: sociohome_t)

[hhinc] **Which of the following income categories includes your parents' total household income for 2005?**

- <1> Less than \$20,000
- <2> \$20,000 - \$29,999
- <3> \$30,000 to \$39,999
- <4> \$40,000 to \$49,999
- <5> \$50,000 - \$74,999
- <6> \$75,000 - \$99,999
- <7> More than \$100,000
- <0> I don't know/I'd prefer not to answer

[hhinc2] **Which of the following income categories includes your total household income for 2005?**

- <1> Less than \$20,000
- <2> \$20,000 - \$29,999
- <3> \$30,000 to \$39,999
- <4> \$40,000 to \$49,999
- <5> \$50,000 - \$74,999
- <6> \$75,000 - \$99,999
- <7> More than \$100,000
- <0> I don't know/I'd prefer not to answer

[polenviron] **How would you describe the dominant political environment of the**

household where you grew up?

- <5> Very conservative
- <4> Conservative
- <3> Moderate
- <2> Liberal
- <1> Very liberal
- <0> I don't know
- <9> Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name: polenviron_t)

[polorient] How would you describe your own personal political orientation?

- <5> Very conservative
- <4> Conservative
- <3> Moderate
- <2> Liberal
- <1> Very liberal
- <0> I don't know
- <9> Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name: polorient_t)

[pid] Do you consider yourself:

- <3> Democrat
- <2> Republican
- <1> Independent
- <0> I don't know
- <9> Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name: pid_t)

[wsb168] What is the highest level of education and the political party identification of your parents, step-parents, or guardians? (Please provide answers for up to two parents or guardians):

For your first parent:

[genderf] Gender:

- <1> Male
- <2> Female

[educlevelf] Highest level of education:

- <0>Some high school/No diploma
- <1>High school diploma/GED
- <2>Associates degree
- <3>Bachelors degree
- <4>Masters degree
- <5>Doctoral degree
- <6>Not sure

[par1pidf] Political party identification:

- <0>Democrat
- <1>Republican
- <2>Independent
- <3>I don't know
- <9>Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name par1pidf_t)

For your second parent:

[genders] **Gender:**

- <1> Male
- <2> Female

[educulevels] **Highest level of education:**

- <0>Some high school/No diploma
- <1>High school diploma/GED
- <2>Associates degree
- <3>Bachelors degree
- <4>Masters degree
- <5>Doctoral degree
- <6>Not sure

[par1pids] **What is your political party identification:**

- <0>Democrat
- <1>Republican
- <2>Independent
- <3>I don't know
- <9>Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name: par1pids_t)

[disagreepar] **How often do you disagree with one or both of your parents when it comes to politics or social issues?**

- <4> Frequently
- <3> Occasionally
- <2> Seldom
- <1> Never
- <0> I don't talk to them about politics or social issues

[wsb98x] **Please specify the number of hours you spent on schoolwork per week between October 2005 and September 2006:_____**

[wsb97x] **Please specify the number of hours per week you worked at a job for pay between October 2005 and September 2006:_____**

Participation in Organizations and Programs

Please indicate which organizations or programs, if any, you were involved with in the last twelve months and how much you were involved. If you were involved in organizations or programs that are not listed here, please describe them in "other."

[wsb87 series] **How many hours were you involved with this organization or program in the last twelve months?**

- <1> None
- <2> 10 hours or less
- <3> 11 -25 hours
- <4> 26 -60 hours
- <5> 61 -120 hours
- <6> More than 120 hours

- [wsb87_acaprepro] **Academic or Pre-Professional Society**
- [wsb87_civicconf] **Civic issue related conference or seminar**
- [wsb87_commservorg] **Community Service Organization**
- [wsb87_outreach] **Outreach Organization**
- [wsb87_civilibs] **Civil Liberties Organization (e.g., ACLU, etc.)**
- [wsb87_volservtrips] **Volunteer service trips (e.g. Trip to New Orleans to aid with hurricane relief)**
- [wsb87_culrelgen] **Cultural, religious or gender-based organization**
- [wsb87_govpolgrp] **Government or Political Organization**
- [wsb87_media] **Media (newspaper, radio, etc.)**
- [wsb87_perfmarts] **Performing Arts (theater, music, etc.)**
- [wsb87_sportsrec] **Sports or Recreation**
- [wsb87_othera] **Other1 (please specify): _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)
- [wsb87_otherb] **Other2 (please specify): _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[wsb24 series] **What proportion of your time in each activity was for political or societal improvement purpose?**

- <4> All
- <3> Most
- <2> Some
- <1> None

- [wsb24_acaprepro] **Academic or Pre-Professional Society**
- [wsb24_civicconf] **Civic issue related conference or seminar**
- [wsb24_commservorg] **Community Service Organization**
- [wsb24_outreach] **Outreach Organization**
- [wsb24_civilibs] **Civil Liberties Organization (e.g., ACLU, etc.)**
- [wsb24_volservtrips] **Volunteer service trips (e.g. Trip to New Orleans to aid with hurricane relief)**
- [wsb24_culrelgen] **Cultural, religious or gender-based organization**
- [wsb24_govpolgrp] **Government or Political Organization**
- [wsb24_media] **Media (newspaper, radio, etc.)**
- [wsb24_perfmarts] **Performing Arts (theater, music, etc.)**
- [wsb24_sportsrec] **Sports or Recreation**
- [wsb24_othera] **Other1 (please specify): _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)
- [wsb24_otherb] **Other2 (please specify): _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[leadrole series] **Did you play a leadership role?**

- <1> Yes
- <2> No

- [leadrole_acaprepro] **Academic or Pre-Professional Society**
- [leadrole_civicconf] **Civic issue related conference or seminar**

[leadrole_commservorg] **Community Service Organization**
 [leadrole_outreach] **Outreach Organization**
 [leadrole_civilibs] **Civil Liberties Organization (e.g., ACLU, etc.)**
 [leadrole_volservtrips] **Volunteer service trips (e.g. Trip to New Orleans to aid with hurricane relief)**
 [leadrole_culrelgen] **Cultural, religious or gender-based organization**
 [leadrole_govpolgrp] **Government or Political Organization**
 [leadrole_media] **Media (newspaper, radio, etc.)**
 [leadrole_performarts] **Performing Arts (theater, music, etc.)**
 [leadrole_sportsrec] **Sports or Recreation**
 [leadrole_othera] **Other1 (please specify): _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)
 [leadrole_otherb] **Other2 (please specify): _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[wsb103] **How would you describe your level of community involvement?**

<4> Very involved
 <3> Moderately involved
 <2> Somewhat involved
 <1> Not very involved
 <0> I don't know
 <9> Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name: wsb103_t)

[wsb100] **Please briefly describe any factors that influence your level of community involvement.**
 (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

Participation in Activities, by Duration.

Please indicate which types of activities, if any, you were involved in the last twelve months and how much you were involved. If you were involved in civic or political activities that are not listed here, please describe them in "other."

[wsb88 series] **How many hours were you involved with this organization or program in the last twelve months?**

<1> None
 <2> 10 hours or less
 <3> 11 -25 hours
 <4> 26 -60 hours
 <5> 61 -120 hours
 <6> More than 120 hours

[wsb88_partcomm] **Participated in community service**
 [wsb88_commbased] **Conducted community-based research**
 [wsb88_polanpaper] **Wrote a policy analysis paper**
 [wsb88_polcampgn] **Worked or volunteered for a political campaign**
 [wsb88_protestmarch] **Participated in a protest, march or demonstration**
 [wsb88_raisecharit] **Helped to raise money for a charitable cause**
 [wsb88_polwebsite] **Participated in online political discussions or visited a politically oriented website**
 [wsb88_cntpuboff] **Contacted or visited a public official (at any level of government) to ask for assistance or to express my opinion**
 [wsb88_cntnewsp] **Contacted a newspaper, magazine, radio, or television program To express my opinion on an issue or candidate**

[wsb88_atndtown] **Attended a meeting of town or city council, school board or association** neighborhood
[wsb88_volnonprof] **Volunteered through a social or non-profit organization**
[wsb88_raiseaware] **Helped to raise awareness around a particular social issue**
[wsb88_offcampissue] **Attended an off-campus civic issue related conference or seminar**
[wsb88_oncampskr] **Attended an on-campus speaker on a particular issue**
[wsb88_organviro] **Helped to organize efforts aimed at solving environmental issues**
[wsb88_promopol] **Helped to promote political involvement or assisted with voter registration**

[leadroleb series] **Did you play a leadership role?**

<1> Yes
<2> No

[leadroleb_partcomm] **Participated in community service**
[leadroleb_commbased] **Conducted community-based research**
[leadroleb_polanpaper] **Wrote a policy analysis paper**
[leadroleb_polcampgn] **Worked or volunteered for a political campaign**
[leadroleb_protestmarch] **Participated in a protest, march or demonstration**
[leadroleb_raisecharit] **Helped to raise money for a charitable cause**
[leadroleb_polwebsite] **Participated in online political discussions or visited a politically oriented website**
[leadroleb_cntpuboff] **Contacted or visited a public official (at any level of government) to ask for assistance or to express my opinion**
[leadroleb_cntnewsp] **Contacted a newspaper, magazine, radio, or television program to express my opinion on an issue or candidate**
[leadroleb_atndtown] **Attended a meeting of town or city council, school board or neighborhood association**
[leadroleb_volnonprof] **Volunteered through a social or non-profit organization**
[leadroleb_raiseaware] **Helped to raise awareness around a particular social issue**
[leadroleb_offcampissue] **Attended an off-campus civic issue related conference or seminar**
[leadroleb_oncampskr] **Attended an on-campus speaker on a particular issue**
[leadroleb_organviro] **Helped to organize efforts aimed at solving environmental issues**
[leadroleb_promopol] **Helped to promote political involvement or assisted with voter registration**

[prompteda series] **What originally prompted your involvement in this activity? Please select the most influential factor in your involvement:**

<0> Course requirement
<1> On-campus organization
<2> A family member/friend
<3> Faculty member
<4> Advertisement
<5> Personal interest
<6> Job/internship requirement
<7> A colleague/mentor/neighbor
<9> Other

[prompteda_partcomm] **Participated in community service**

[prompteda_commbased] **Conducted community-based research**
 [prompteda_polanpaper] **Wrote a policy analysis paper**
 [prompteda_polcampgn] **Worked or volunteered for a political campaign**
 [prompteda_protestmarch] **Participated in a protest, march or demonstration**
 [prompteda_raisecharit] **Helped to raise money for a charitable cause**
 [prompteda_polwebsite] **Participated in online political discussions or visited a politically oriented website**
 [prompteda_cntpuboff] **Contacted or visited a public official (at any level of government) to ask for assistance or to express my opinion**
 [prompteda_cntnewsp] **Contacted a newspaper, magazine, radio, or television program to express my opinion on an issue or candidate**
 [prompteda_atndtown] **Attended a meeting of town or city council, school board or neighborhood association**
 [prompteda_volnnonprof] **Volunteered through a social or non-profit organization**
 [prompteda_raiseaware] **Helped to raise awareness around a particular social issue**
 [prompteda_offcampissue] **Attended an off-campus civic issue related conference or seminar**
 [prompteda_oncampskr] **Attended an on-campus speaker on a particular issue**
 [prompteda_organviro] **Helped to organize efforts aimed at solving environmental issues**
 [prompteda_promopol] **Helped to promote political involvement or assisted with voter registration**
 [otherc] **If you selected "other" as the main motivation for one or more of the activities above, please specify your main reasons for getting involved in that activity: _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

Participation in Activities, by Action

Please indicate which types of activities, if any, you were involved in the last twelve months and how much you were involved.

[wsb89 series] **How often did you do any of the following in the last twelve months?**

<3> Often
 <2> Seldom
 <1> Never

[wsb89_button] **Wore a button, put a sticker on my car or placed a sign in front of my house in support of an issue or candidate**

[wsb89_contribmon] **Contributed money to a candidate, political party or any organization that supported candidates**

[wsb89_donatemon] **Donated money, clothes, or food to a community or religious organization**

[wsb89_signedpet] **Signed a petition (paper or email) about a political or social issue**

[wsb89_notbought] **Not bought something because of the conditions under which the product is made**

[wsb89_bought] **Bought a certain product or service because I like the social or political values of the company that produced it**

[leadrolec series] **Did you play a leadership role?**

<1> Yes
 <2> No

[leadrolec_button] **Wore a button, put a sticker on my car or placed a sign in front of my house in support of an issue or candidate**

[leadrolec_contribmon]**Contributed money to a candidate, political party or any organization that supported candidates**

[leadrolec_donatemon]**Donated money, clothes, or food to a community or religious organization**

[leadrolec_signedpet]**Signed a petition (paper or email) about a political or social issue**

[leadrolec_notbought]**Not bought something because of the conditions under which the product is made**

[leadrolec_bought]**Bought a certain product or service because I like the social or political values of the company that produced it**

[promptedb series] **What originally prompted your involvement in this activity? Please select the most influential factor in your involvement**

<0> Course requirement

<1> On-campus organization

<2> A family member/friend

<3> Faculty member

<4> Advertisement

<5> Personal interest

<6> Job/internship requirement

<7> A colleague/mentor

<9> Other

[promptedb_button]**Wore a button, put a sticker on my car or placed a sign in front of my house in support of an issue or candidate**

[promptedb_contribmon]**Contributed money to a candidate, political party or any organization that supported candidates**

[promptedb_donatemon]**Donated money, clothes, or food to a community or religious organization**

[promptedb_signedpet]**Signed a petition (paper or email) about a political or social issue**

[promptedb_notbought]**Not bought something because of the conditions under which the product is made**

[promptedb_bought]**Bought a certain product or service because I like the social or political values of the company that produced it**

[promptedb_otherd]**If you selected "other" as the main motivation for one or more of the activities above, please specify your main reasons for getting involved in that activity: _____**
(Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[wsb206] **Do you know the name of the member of Congress for the district where your permanent residence is? If you know the name, please type it here: _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[PHouse] Created variable indicating whether wsb206 was correct or incorrect.

<1> Accurately knew member of Congress

<0> Did not accurately know member of Congress

[wsb207] **Do you know the name of the member of Congress for the district where your college/university is? If you know the name, please type it here: _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[CHouse] Created variable indicating whether wsb207 was correct or incorrect.

- <1> Accurately knew member of Congress
- <0> Did not accurately know member of Congress

[wsb209] **Do you know the name of either one of the U.S. Senators for the state where your permanent residence is? If so, please type the name(s) here:**_____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[PSenate] Created variable indicating whether wsb209 was correct or incorrect.

- <2> Accurately knew both Senators
- <1> Accurately knew one Senator
- <0> Did not accurately know either Senator

[wsb226] **Do you know the name of either one of the U.S. Senators for the state where your college/university is? If so, please type the name(s) here:**_____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[CSenate] Created variable indicating whether wsb226 was correct or incorrect.

- <2> Accurately knew both Senators
- <1> Accurately knew one Senator
- <0> Did not accurately know either Senator

[wsb45] **Are you currently registered to vote?**

- <1> Yes
- <2> No
- <0> I don't know

[wsb210] **What is the political party of your registration?**

- <0> Democrat
- <1> Republican
- <2> Independent or "unenrolled"
- <3> No party registration
- <9> Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name: wsb210_t)

[wsb211] **In what state are you registered to vote?**

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <1> Alabama | <13> Idaho |
| <2> Alaska | <14> Illinois |
| <3> Arizona | <15> Indiana |
| <4> Arkansas | <16> Iowa |
| <5> California | <17> Kansas |
| <6> Colorado | <18> Kentucky |
| <7> Connecticut | <19> Louisiana |
| <8> Delaware | <20> Maine |
| <9> District of Columbia | <21> Maryland |
| <10> Florida | <22> Massachusetts |
| <11> Georgia | <23> Michigan |
| <12> Hawaii | <24> Minnesota |

<25> Mississippi
<26> Missouri
<27> Montana
<28> Nebraska
<29> Nevada
<30> New Hampshire
<31> New Jersey
<32> New Mexico
<33> New York
<34> North Carolina
<35> North Dakota
<36> Ohio
<37> Oklahoma
<38> Oregon

<39> Pennsylvania
<40> Rhode Island
<41> South Carolina
<42> South Dakota
<43> Tennessee
<44> Texas
<45> Utah
<46> Vermont
<47> Virginia
<48> Washington
<49> West Virginia
<50> Wisconsin
<51> Wyoming
<52> Outside of the U.S.

[wsb229] **Have you ever voted?**

<1> Yes
<2> No

Please describe the last time you voted:

[electype] **Type of election:**

<12>National
<13>State only
<14>Local only
<15>State and local only
<16>Party primary
<17>I don't know, can't remember
<9>Other (please specify): _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file; variable name: electype_t)

[month]**Month of the election:**

<1> January
<2> February
<3> March
<4> April
<5> May
<6> June
<7> July
<8> August
<9> September
<10> October
<11> November
<12> December

[year]**Year of the election:**

<1> 2006
<2> 2005
<3> 2004
<4> 2003
<5> 2002
<6> 2001
<7> 2000

[wsb94] **Have you ever voted in an election at your college or university?**

<1> Yes
<2> No
<0> I don't know

[wsb157 series] **How often do you:**

- <4> Every day
- <3> Several times a week
- <2> Several times a month
- <1> Never

- [wsb157_newspaper] **Read a newspaper?**
- [wsb157_watchtvn] **Watch the news on TV?**
- [wsb157_readonline] **Read the news on-line?**
- [wsb157_listenradio] **Listen to the news on the radio?**
- [wsb157_netblogs] **Personally read "blogs" on the Internet that deal with political issues?**
- [wsb157_campblogs] **Personally read "blogs" or campaign websites of candidates for office?**
- [wsb157_discusspol] **Discuss politics or social issues with your friends?**
- [wsb157_talkparents] **Talk with one or both of your parents about politics or social issues?**

[wsb183 series] **How many days a week do you watch any of the news shows listed below?**

- <0> Zero
- <8> Less than once/week
- <1> One day/week
- <2> Two days/week
- <3> Three days/week
- <4> Four days/week
- <5> Five days/week
- <6> Six days/week
- <7> Seven days/week

- [wsb183_cnn] **CNN**
- [wsb183_cbs] **CBS Evening News**
- [wsb183_nbc] **NBC Nightly News**
- [wsb183_abc] **ABC World News**
- [wsb183_msnbc] **MSNBC**
- [wsb183_fox] **Fox News**
- [wsb183_dailyshow] **The Daily Show with Jon Stewart**
- [wsb183_other] **Other (please specify): _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[wsb185] **What are your preferred web sites to read the news online?**
(Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

Please describe your behaviors with regard to the following reality television competitions:

[wsb198 series] **Did you watch the following television shows last season?**

- <1> Yes
- <2> No
- <0> I don't know, can't remember
- [wsb198_ameridol] **American Idol**
- [wsb198_dancing] **Dancing with the Stars**

[wsb187] **Who was the winner of last season's "American Idol"? Please list the winner: _____**
(Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[wsb190] **Who did you want to win last season? Please list your preferred winner:**

_____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[wsb191ai] **Did you cast at least one vote last season during the contest?**

<0> Yes

<1> No

<2> I don't know, can't remember

[wsb187dc] **Who was the winner of last season's "Dancing with the Stars"? Please list the winner:**
_____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[wsb190dc] **Who did you want to win last season? Please list your preferred winner:** _____
(Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[wsb191dc] **Did you cast at least one vote last season during the contest?**

<0> Yes

<1> No

<2> I don't know, can't remember

[wsb200] **Do you currently belong to any groups on Facebook?**

<0> Yes

<1 > No

<2> I don't know, Not sure

[wsb203] **How many different Facebook groups do you belong to?**

<1> 1-10

<2> 11-20

<3> 21-30

<4> 31-40

<5> 41-50

<6> 51-100

<7> 100 or more

[wsb202] **Do any of the Facebook groups you belong to take stands for or against a specific political or social cause or issue? If so, what causes do these groups address? Please list as many as you can.** _____ (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)

[wsb201] **How many days a week do you log into Facebook?**

- <1> One day/week
- <2> Two days/week
- <3> Three days/week
- <4> Four days/week
- <5> Five days/week
- <6> Six days/week
- <7> Seven days/week

[wsb204] **How many hours per week do you spend logged on to Facebook?** _____

Overall Opinions

[wsb33 series] **Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:**

- <5> Strongly agree
- <4> Agree
- <3> Neither agree nor disagree
- <2> Disagree
- <1> Strongly disagree

[wsb33_poor] **I don't understand why some people are poor when there are boundless opportunities available to them.**

[wsb33_choose] **People are poor because they choose to be poor.**

[wsb33_misfort] **Individuals are responsible for their own misfortunes.**

[wsb33_indiv] **We need to look no further than the individual in assessing his or her problems.**

[wsb33_policy] **In order for problems to be solved, we need to change public policy.**

[wsb33_reform] **We need to institute reforms within the current system to change our communities.**

[wsb33_attitude] **We need to change people's attitudes in order to solve social problems.**

[wsb4 series] **Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:**

- <0> Strongly agree
- <1> Agree
- <2> Neither agree nor disagree
- <3> Disagree
- <4> Strongly disagree

[wsb4_opportun] **It is important that equal opportunity be available to all people.**

[wsb4_genuine] **It is hard to get me genuinely interested in what is going on in my community.**

[wsb4_unself] **I unselfishly contribute to my community.**

[wsb4_service] **Meaningful public service is very important to me.**

[wsb4_officials] **I would prefer seeing public officials do what is best for the whole community even if it harmed my interests.**

[wsb4_civic] **I consider public service my civic duty.**

[wsb4_adults] **Adults should give some time for the good of their community or country.**

[wsb12 series] **Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:**

- <0> Strongly agree
- <1> Agree
- <2> Neither agree nor disagree
- <3> Disagree
- <4> Strongly disagree

[wsb12_impact] **Having an impact on the world is within reach of most individuals.**

[wsb12_misfortune] **Most misfortunes that occur to people are frequently the result of circumstances beyond their control.**

[wsb12_justice] **If I could change one thing about society, it would be achieve greater social justice.**

[wsb12_homeless] **I tend to make certain assumptions about how homeless people got to where they are.**

[wsb12_success] **People, regardless of whether they have been successful or not, ought to help those in need.**

[wsb12_payback] **People ought to help those in need as a "payback" for their own opportunities, fortunes, and successes.**

[wsb12_worlddiff] **I feel that I can make a difference in the world.**

[wsb12_judgments] **I make quick judgments about people based on their apparent economic status.**

[wsb205 series] **Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:**

- <0> Strongly agree
- <1> Agree
- <2> Neither agree nor disagree
- <3> Disagree
- <4> Strongly disagree

[wsb205_officials] **Public officials don't care much about what people like me think**

[wsb205_congress] **Those we elect to Congress lose touch with the people pretty quickly**

[wsb205_gvmt] **In general, people getting together in their own communities can solve their problems better than the government in Washington**

[wsb205_wastemoney] **The people in government do not waste the money we pay in taxes**

[wsb205_smart] **Most of the people running for office are smart people who know what they are doing**

[wsb205_crooked] **Hardly any of the people running government are crooked**

Impression of Importance

[q34imp series] **Please indicate the importance to you personally of the following:**

- <0> Essential
- <1> Very important
- <2> Somewhat important
- <3> Not at all important

[q34imp_citizens] **Working toward equal opportunity for all U.S. citizens.**

[q34imp_phil] **Developing a meaningful philosophy of life**

[q34imp_improve] **Becoming involved in a program to improve my community.**

[q34imp_financial] **Being well off financially.**

[q34imp_volunteer] **Volunteering my time helping people in need.**
[q34imp_helpneed] **Giving 3% or more of my income to help those in need.**
[q34imp_career] **Finding a career that provides the opportunity to be helpful to others or useful to society.**

For the following section, terms are defined as follows:

Community service: work provided with or through a community organization, providing direct service to individuals or involving work in a community, and related activities.

Political activities: running for or holding public office, advocacy, organizing, public policy, participating in politically-affiliated organizations, running an issue-based campaign to influence citizen or legislative voting, voter registration, and related activities.

My community: you may consider your current residential community, the community where you grew up, or some other community with which you relate.

[wsb6 series] **Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:**

- <0> Strongly agree
- <1> Agree
- <2> Neither agree nor disagree
- <3> Disagree
- <4> Strongly disagree

[wsb6_meaning] **If I choose to participate in community service in the future, I will be able to make a meaningful contribution.**

[wsb6_relevant] **In the future, I will be able to find community service opportunities which are relevant to my interests and needs.**

[wsb6_justice] **I am confident that, through community service, I can help in promoting social justice.**

[wsb6_difference] **I am confident that, through community service, I can make a difference in my community.**

[wsb6_help] **I am confident that I can help individuals in need by participating in community service activities.**

[wsb6_prof] **I am confident that, in future community service activities, I will be able to interact with relevant professionals in ways that are meaningful and effective.**

[wsb6_equal] **I am confident that, through community service, I can help in promoting equal opportunity for citizens.**

[wsb6_reallife] **Through community service, I can apply knowledge in ways that solve "real-life" problems.**

[wsb6_help] **By participating in community service, I can help people to help themselves.**

[wsb6_partic] **I am confident that I will effectively participate in community service activities in the future.**

[wsb15 series] **Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:**

- <0> Strongly agree
- <1> Agree
- <2> Neither agree nor disagree
- <3> Disagree
- <4> Strongly disagree

[wsb15_meaning] **If I choose to participate in political activities in the future, I will be able to make a meaningful contribution.**

[wsb15_relevant] **In the future, I will be able to find political activities which are relevant to my interests and needs.**

[wsb15_justice] **I am confident that, through political activities, I can help in promoting social justice.**

[wsb15_differ] **I am confident that, through political activities, I can make a difference.**

[wsb16_series] **Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:**

<0> Strongly agree

<1> Agree

<2> Neither agree nor disagree

<3> Disagree

<4> Strongly disagree

[wsb16_prof] **I am confident that, in future political activities, I will be able to interact with relevant professionals in ways that are meaningful and effective.**

[wsb16_equal] **I am confident that, through political activities, I can help in promoting equal opportunity for citizens.**

[wsb16_know] **Through political activities, I can apply knowledge in ways that solve "real life" problems.**

[wsb16_help] **By participating in political activities, I can help people to help themselves.**

[wsb16_future] **I am confident that I will participate in political activities in the future.**

[wsb16_littleknow] **I don't know a lot about what is happening in my community.**

[wsb16_localevents] **I have a lot to learn about local or national events.**

[wsb18_series] **Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:**

<0> Strongly agree

<1> Agree

<2> Neither agree nor disagree

<3> Disagree

<4> Strongly disagree

[wsb18_seekinfo] **I am interested in seeking information about local or national issues.**

[wsb18_diverse] **It is hard for a group to function effectively when the people involved come from very diverse backgrounds.**

[wsb18_similar] **I prefer the company of people who are very similar to me in background and expressions.**

[wsb18_difrace] **I find it difficult to relate to people from a different race or culture.**

[wsb18_meetdiff] **I enjoy meeting people who come from backgrounds very different from my own.**

[wsb18_inter] **Cultural diversity within a group makes the group more interesting and effective.**

[wsb18_circle] **I don't spend much time with people outside my immediate circle of friends.**

[wsb18_diffrel] **I actively seek out and maintain relationships with individuals very different from me.**

[wsb20_series] **Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:**

<0> Strongly agree

<1> Agree

<2> Neither agree nor disagree

<3> Disagree

<4> Strongly disagree

[wsb20_comattach] **I have a strong attachment to my community.**

[wsb20_dispol] **I often discuss and think about how larger political and social issues affect my community.**

[wsb20_aware] **I am aware of what can be done to meet the important needs in my community.**

[wsb20_differ] **I feel I have the ability to make a difference in my community.**

[wsb20_posdiff] **I try to find the time or a way to make a positive difference in my community.**

[wsb20_inffact] **What factors (individuals, experiences, etc.) do you feel have influenced your overall opinions on civic and political issues? _____** (Open-ended; responses in verbatim file)