

# DAVIDSON COLLEGE SURVEY

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Topline & Methodology

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**DAVIDSON COLLEGE SURVEY TOPLINE**  
**N=148 COLLEGE STUDENTS**

Q.1 At Davidson College, how comfortable do you feel: Publicly disagreeing with a professor about a controversial topic?

14%	Very comfortable
39%	Somewhat comfortable
29%	Somewhat uncomfortable
18%	Very uncomfortable
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.2 At Davidson College, how comfortable do you feel: Expressing an unpopular opinion on a social media account tied to your name?

9%	Very comfortable
20%	Somewhat comfortable
31%	Somewhat uncomfortable
40%	Very uncomfortable
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.3 At Davidson College, how comfortable do you feel: Expressing your views on a controversial political topic during an in-class discussion?

16%	Very comfortable
29%	Somewhat comfortable
27%	Somewhat uncomfortable
27%	Very uncomfortable
0%	



0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.4 At Davidson College, how comfortable do you feel: Expressing disagreement with one of your professors about a controversial topic in a written assignment?

18%	Very comfortable
38%	Somewhat comfortable
30%	Somewhat uncomfortable
14%	Very uncomfortable
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.5 At Davidson College, how often have you felt that you could not express your opinion on a subject because of how students, a professor, or the administration would respond?

15%	Quite often
19%	Often
37%	Occasionally
19%	Rarely
10%	Never
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.6 Please share a moment where you personally felt you could not express your opinion on campus.

Question only shown to students who:

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(1) Did not answer "Never" to "At Davidson College, how often have you felt that you could not express your opinion on a subject because of how students, a professor, or the administration would respond?"

Q.7 How acceptable would you say it is for students to engage in the following action to protest a campus speaker: Blocking other students from entering a campus event?

3%	Always acceptable
18%	Sometimes acceptable
20%	Rarely acceptable
59%	Never acceptable
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.8 How acceptable would you say it is for students to engage in the following action to protest a campus speaker: Shouting down a speaker or trying to prevent them from speaking on campus?

4%	Always acceptable
15%	Sometimes acceptable
19%	Rarely acceptable
61%	Never acceptable
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.9 How acceptable would you say it is for students to engage in the following action to protest a campus speaker: Using violence to stop a speech or event on campus?

<1%	Always acceptable
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1%	Sometimes acceptable
10%	Rarely acceptable
89%	Never acceptable
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.10 How clear is it to you that Davidson's administration protects free speech on campus?

7%	Extremely clear
26%	Very clear
33%	Moderately clear
20%	Slightly clear
14%	Not at all clear
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.11 If a controversy over offensive speech were to occur at Davidson, how likely is it that the administration would defend the speaker's right to express their views?

7%	Extremely likely
20%	Very likely
35%	Somewhat likely
29%	Not very likely
10%	Not at all likely
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused



100% Total

Q.12 The Chicago Principles of Free Expression have been adopted by 83 U.S. universities and colleges, including Princeton, Johns Hopkins, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Brandeis, and Smith. The Principles state that “...the University has a solemn responsibility not only to promote a lively and fearless freedom of debate and deliberation, but also to protect that freedom when others attempt to restrict it.”

How much do you agree or disagree that Davidson College should adopt the Chicago Principles of Free Expression?

39%	Strongly agree
39%	Somewhat agree
11%	Somewhat disagree
1%	Strongly disagree
9%	I'm not sure
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.13 Some students say it can be difficult to have conversations about certain issues on Davidson’s campus. Which of the following issues, if any, would you say are difficult to have an open and honest conversation about at Davidson? [Select up to 15 options]

45%	Abortion
46%	Affirmative action
42%	Capitalism
43%	Economic inequality
37%	Gender inequality
38%	Gun control



41%	Immigration
37%	The Israeli/Palestinian conflict
58%	Racial inequality
49%	Sexual assault
36%	Socialism
45%	Transgender issues
6%	None of the above
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused

Q.14 How satisfied are you with your learning experience at Davidson College?

50%	Very satisfied
35%	Somewhat satisfied
12%	Somewhat unsatisfied
3%	Very unsatisfied
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.15 Did you attend New Student Orientation at Davidson?

87%	Yes
3%	No
10%	I don't recall
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.16



How much do you agree that New Student Orientation was ideologically balanced?

Question only shown to students who:

(1) Did not answer "No" or "I don't recall" to "Did you attend New Student Orientation at Davidson?"

15%	Strongly agree
57%	Somewhat agree
25%	Somewhat disagree
3%	Strongly disagree
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.17 How much do you agree that New Student Orientation included sufficient emphasis on free expression and open discourse at Davidson?

Question only shown to students who:

(1) Did not answer "No" or "I don't recall" to "Did you attend New Student Orientation at Davidson?"

6%	Strongly agree
44%	Somewhat agree
44%	Somewhat disagree
5%	Strongly disagree
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.18 How much do you agree that New Student Orientation included sufficient emphasis on the honor code at Davidson?

Question only shown to students who:

(1) Did not answer "No" or "I don't recall" to "Did you attend New Student



Orientation at Davidson?"

79%	Strongly agree
18%	Somewhat agree
3%	Somewhat disagree
0%	Strongly disagree
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.19 How much do you agree that New Student Orientation helps promote racial harmony on campus?

Question only shown to students who:

(1) Did not answer "No" or "I don't recall" to "Did you attend New Student Orientation at Davidson?"

21%	Strongly agree
38%	Somewhat agree
34%	Somewhat disagree
7%	Strongly disagree
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.20 I would feel freer to discuss controversial subjects at Davidson if: [Select up to 10 options]

50%	Davidson hosted a broader diversity of guest speakers
48%	There was greater viewpoint diversity among faculty members
27%	Senior administrators (presidents, provosts, deans, and department chairs) did more to encourage a free speech culture
60%	Other students were more open to discussing viewpoints with



which they disagree

- 15% First year orientation included more discussion about the importance of free expression on campus
- 31% There were more student groups and activities dedicated to fostering wide-ranging debate and discussion
- 23% Davidson reformed existing policies that discourage free and open discussion
- 25% I didn't have to worry about other students misrepresenting my comments on social media
- 14% Other
- 8% None of the above
- 2% Refused

Q.21 If you could suggest one other reform to senior College leaders to foster freer deliberation at Davidson, what would it be?

Question only shown to students who:

(1) Answered "Other" to "I would feel freer to discuss controversial subjects at Davidson if:"

Q.22 Which of the following changes would do the most to improve the climate for open dialogue at Davidson?

- 12% Davidson hosted a broader diversity of guest speakers
- 19% There was greater viewpoint diversity among faculty members
- 3% Senior administrators (presidents, provosts, deans, and department chairs) did more to encourage a free speech culture
- 39% Other students were more open to discussing viewpoints with which they disagree
- 2% First year orientation included more discussion about the importance of free expression on campus
- 9% There were more student groups and activities dedicated to fostering wide-ranging debate and discussion
- 9% Davidson reformed existing policies that discourage free and open discussion



5% I didn't have to worry about other students misrepresenting my comments on social media  
 3% Other  
 0% None of the above  
 0% Refused  
 100% Total

Q.23 As you may know, the Davidson Board of Trustees have a search underway to select the College's next president, who will take office in the fall of 2022. How closely have you been following Davidson's search for a new president?

2% Very closely  
 14% Somewhat closely  
 42% Not very closely  
 42% Not at all  
 0%  
 0%  
 0% Refused  
 100% Total

Q.24 College presidents oversee a range of important matters to a college and the wider community. Considering the list below, which are the two most important priorities Davidson's new president should address?  
 [Select up to 2 options]

22% Quality of instruction  
 22% Free expression and civil discourse  
 8% Campus safety and security  
 6% Policies related to Covid-19  
 27% Improving campus facilities  
 32% Increasing the diversity of Davidson's faculty  
 28% Improving race relations on campus



40% Improving affordability of the College  
 4% Something else  
 0% Refused

Q.25 We are interested in your views on the criteria the Presidential Search Committee should use in choosing the next president and on what the next president's priorities should be. Please indicate your degree of support for or lack of support for the following criteria/priorities.

Q.26 Davidson's next president should make freedom of speech and open, civil discourse on campus a high priority.

42% Strongly agree  
 46% Somewhat agree  
 10% Somewhat disagree  
 2% Strongly disagree  
 0%  
 0% Refused  
 100% Total

Q.27 Davidson's next president should make the adoption and implementation of the Chicago Principles of Free Expression throughout campus life a high priority.

18% Strongly agree  
 61% Somewhat agree  
 15% Somewhat disagree  
 6% Strongly disagree  
 0%  
 0% Refused  
 100% Total

Q.28



Davidson's next president should not take public positions on controversial social and political issues in messaging to faculty, staff, and students.

21%	Strongly agree
26%	Somewhat agree
30%	Somewhat disagree
22%	Strongly disagree
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.29 Davidson's next president should be respectful of those with political and ideological positions different from their own.

71%	Strongly agree
20%	Somewhat agree
5%	Somewhat disagree
4%	Strongly disagree
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.30 Davidson's next president should make achieving ideological and political balance at the College a priority (e.g., on the Board of Trustees, in the administration, on the faculty).

38%	Strongly agree
39%	Somewhat agree
21%	Somewhat disagree
1%	Strongly disagree



0%  
0% Refused  
100% Total

Q.31 Davidson's next president should be an individual whose life evidences a strong Christian faith.

10% Strongly agree  
18% Somewhat agree  
28% Somewhat disagree  
44% Strongly disagree  
0%  
0%  
0%  
0%  
0% Refused  
100% Total

Q.32 Davidson's next president should make slowing down the rate of increase in college costs and tuition a priority.

66% Strongly agree  
25% Somewhat agree  
2% Somewhat disagree  
7% Strongly disagree  
0%  
0%  
0% Refused  
100% Total

Q.33 Davidson's next president should give close attention to how well the College is preparing graduates for productive working lives.



67%	Strongly agree
26%	Somewhat agree
4%	Somewhat disagree
3%	Strongly disagree
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.34 If you have thoughts on the qualities most important for Davidson's next president and on what their priorities should be, feel free to state them here.

Q.35 Using a scale from extremely liberal to extremely conservative where would you place yourself on this scale?

16%	Extremely liberal
30%	Liberal
16%	Slightly liberal
26%	Moderate
5%	Slightly conservative
7%	Conservative
0%	Extremely conservative
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

Q.36 Considering all of your time at Davidson College, have your courses been all online, mostly online, mostly in person, all in person, or an equal mix of online and in person?

<1%	All online
11%	Mostly online



40%	An equal mix of online and in person
40%	Mostly in person
8%	All in person
0%	
0%	
0%	Refused
100%	Total

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## Survey Methodology

This survey was designed and conducted by College Pulse. Interviews were conducted in English among a sample of 148 undergraduate students who are currently enrolled in the U.S.

The initial sample was drawn from College Pulse's Undergraduate Student Panel that includes over 400,000 verified students representing more than 1,000 different colleges and universities in all 50 states. Panel members are recruited by a number of methods to help ensure diversity in the panel population, including web advertising, permission-based email campaigns, and partnerships with university organizations.

To reduce the effects of any non-response bias, a post-stratification adjustment was applied based on demographic distributions from the 2017 Current Population Survey (CPS). The post-stratification weight rebalanced the sample based on the following benchmarks: age, race and ethnicity, and gender. The sample weighting was accomplished using an iterative proportional fitting (IFP) process that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results.

The margin of error for this survey is  $\pm 9.2\%$ . Margins of error are typically calculated on probability-based samples and are not technically correct for non-probability online samples. We supply them here to provide a general assessment of error ranges that may be associated with the data.



## About College Pulse

College Pulse is an online survey and analytics company dedicated to understanding the attitudes, preferences, and behaviors of today's college students. College Pulse offers custom data-driven marketing and research solutions, utilizing its unique Undergraduate Student Panel that includes 400,000 undergraduate college student respondents from more than 1,000 four-year colleges and universities in all 50 states.

For more information, visit <https://collegepulse.com>

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