As the next generation of voters, leaders, and decision-makers of our society, it is pertinent to discuss the political affiliations of our students, their involvement in political affairs, and their perspectives on diverse backgrounds, particularly with 2020 being a presidential election year.

First-year students’ political views tend to closely resemble those of their parents, with the majority leaning left.

- 10% Far left
- 45% Liberal
- 35% Middle-of-the-road
- 9% Conservative
- 1% Far right

58% Agree their political views closely resemble those of their parents

Most first-year students view their ability to understand diverse perspectives and backgrounds as a major strength...

- 68% Ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues
- 78% Tolerance of others with different beliefs
- 79% Ability to see the world from others’ perspectives
- 69% Openness to having their views challenged
- 86% Ability to work cooperatively with diverse people

...And many students deem it a very important or essential goal to be politically involved.

- 31% Influencing the political structure
- 48% Keeping up to date with political affairs
- 76% Are registered to vote
- 77% Have discussed politics
- 22% Have demonstrated for a cause
- 37% Have publicly communicated their opinion about a cause
- 37% Have voted in a national, state, or local election
- 21% Have helped raise money for a cause or campaign
- 8% Have worked on a political campaign etc.

However, very few first-year students have yet to be politically engaged.

- 37% Have voted in a national, state, or local election
- 22% Have demonstrated for a cause
- 37% Have publicly communicated their opinion about a cause
- 8% Have worked on a political campaign etc.

With insight from HERI’s Your First College Year Survey, the most comprehensive tool addressing first-year programming and retention strategies, you’ll be one step closer to helping your students adjust to campus life while providing the best environment for learning.