



**October 2018**

**Inaugural Ram Poll**

**West Chester University**

**Summary of Findings**

**Prepared by:**

**WCU Election Research Team**

*Laura Pyott*

*Chris McCann*

*Emma Wanchisen*

*Kathleen Weber*

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## Key Findings

The West Chester University 2018 midterm election Ram Poll found that nearly nine out of ten students (88%) who are permanent Pennsylvania residents are registered voters. More than half of the registered students are Democrats (57%). More students consider themselves to be liberal (41%) or moderate (35%) than conservative (14%). Three out of four students say they are either certain to vote (56%) or probably will vote (21%). Voter enthusiasm differed by party. When looking at Democrats versus Republicans, there was a significant difference in enthusiasm ( $z = 2.05, p = .020$ ).

		Republican	Democrat	
Probability to Vote	Certain to vote	75 44.64%	236 65.92%	Enthusiastic
	Probably vote	50 29.76%	58 16.20%	
	Chances are 50-50 that you will vote	23 13.69%	40 11.17%	Non-Enthusiastic
	Don't think that you will vote	17 10.12%	16 4.47%	
	Do not know	3 1.79%	8 2.23%	
Total		168 100.00%	358 100.00%	

*Figure 1. Democrat vs. Republican Voter Enthusiasm*

West Chester students have a somewhat favorable view of the job performance of Governor Tom Wolf (47% rate “excellent” or “good”). Students have a mostly unfavorable view of the job performance of President Trump (only 17% rate “excellent” or “good”).

Nearly 60% of students rate President Trump at “a poor job”. The approval rating of the president was significantly dependent on sex ( $\chi^2 = 25.32, df = 4, p = 0.00$ ). This is not surprising, given his current very low popularity among women nationally.

		How would you rate the way that Donald Trump is handling his job as president?					Total
		Excellent job	Good job	Only a fair job	Poor job	Do not know	
What is your legal sex?	Male	22 12.72%	22 12.72%	32 18.50%	87 50.29%	10 5.78%	173 100.00%
	Female	18 3.31%	51 9.38%	113 20.77%	333 61.21%	29 5.33%	544 100.00%
	Total	40 5.58%	73 10.18%	145 20.22%	420 58.58%	39 5.44%	717 100.00%

*Figure 2. Presidential Approval by Sex*

In choosing candidates in the upcoming election, the students favor the Democratic candidates, with Tom Wolf (59%) over Scott Wagner (17%), and Bob Casey (56%) over Lou Barletta (18%). In the generic house ballot question, students favored the Democratic candidate (60%) over the Republican candidate (21%). However, in each of these three questions, about one in five students answered “I don’t know”. When looking at the October 23-28 F&M poll, WCU students had a higher percentage of “I don’t know” responses to most key questions,

## Methodology

The survey findings in this report are based on a web-based survey that was conducted during the time period of October 15 to October 28. Email addresses from a random sample of 5,000 students were provided by the Office of Institutional Research at West Chester University. This sample was taken from our target population: the overall undergraduate population, after

removing students who were at the time less than 18 years old and/or had their permanent residence outside of Pennsylvania. Our target population size was 13,017.

The questions on the poll (with the exception of the voter motivation question and a question regarding gender identification) were written by the staff of the Center for Opinion Research (COR) at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The Franklin and Marshall Poll is the longest running statewide political poll in Pennsylvania. The directors of the F&M Center for Opinion Research, Terry Madonna and Berwood Yost, have been instrumental to the success of this survey, and we are indebted to them for their generosity and guidance on this project. Dr. Madonna is also the Director for the Center of Politics and Public Affairs.

Students in the sample received an email on Monday, October 15 at 12:00pm with a link to the Qualtrics survey. The email (Attachment #1) explained that the survey was about the upcoming election, that it would take no more than three minutes to complete, and that upon completion they would receive a voucher (Attachment #2) for any free drink at Saxbys, a new campus coffee shop. The incentive was funded by a grant from the WCU Teaching, Learning and Assessment Center (TLAC). The selected students then received two more emails reminders on Tuesday, October 23 and Friday, October 26. The survey closed at 6:00pm on Sunday, October 28. The resulting sample size was n=717 respondents. Our response rate was 14.3%. Our sample of 717 respondents represent 5.5% of the target population.

Survey results were weighted by sex and race (white vs. non-white). The demographic data for weights were obtained from the “WCU Fun Facts” page on the WCU website.

Margin of Error:

<i>Questions</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Margin of error</i>
<i>RegParty, Vote_nov, Vote_gov, Vote_sen, GenBalH, Mot_reg</i>	630	3.56%
<i>Rate_Pres, Rate_gov, Ideo</i>	717	3.81%

There are several sources of errors that concern survey data analysts, including non-response bias (refusal to participate by a defined population sub-group) and response errors (misunderstanding of a question). In this survey, we had a slight concern with bias being introduced when students may have shared the link with fellow students to take the survey. While this increased our overall response rate, it may have introduced bias into the results, as students may have shared the survey with friends with similar political views. Additionally, these students may not be in our target population; that is, they may be under the age of 18 and/or they may not consider Pennsylvania their primary residence. However, after a thorough inspection of the data, only a few responses were found and deleted. Another form of error is what I have named “cheater repeater” error. In an effort to get the incentive twice, some students managed to take the survey twice, most likely by using a different browser to open the link. These students answered the questions differently in two different surveys. Both responses were deleted. The offenders were hunted down and arrested for “survey data manipulation” and “reckless endangerment of research”.

## Marginal Frequencies

**REG** - Some people are registered to vote in Pennsylvania, and many others are not. Are you currently registered to vote in Pennsylvania?

88%	Yes
12%	No

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

25%	Republican
57%	Democrat
16%	Independent
2%	Other

**Vote\_nov** - Many people will vote in the election for governor and senator in November, however, many other people will not. What would you say are the chances that you will vote in the November election?

56%	Certain to vote
21%	Probably vote
13%	Chances are 50-50 that you will vote
7%	Don't think that you will vote
3%	Do not know

**Vote\_gov** - If the 2018 election for governor were being held today, for whom would you vote?

17%	Scott Wagner, the Republican
59%	Tom Wolf, the Democrat
4%	Some other candidate
20%	Do not know

**Vote\_sen** - If the 2018 general election for U.S. Senator was being held today, for whom would you vote?

18%	Lou Barletta, the Republican
56%	Bob Casey, Jr., the Democrat
5%	Some other candidate
22%	Do not know

**GenBalH** - If the 2018 elections for the U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, for whom would you vote?

21%	Republican Party's candidate
60%	Democratic Party's candidate
19%	Do not know

**Rate\_Pres** - How would you rate the way that Donald Trump is handling his job as president?

7%	Excellent job
10%	Good job
19%	Only a fair job
59%	A poor job
6%	Do not know

**Rate\_gov** - How would you rate the way that Tom Wolf is handling his job as Governor?

7%	Excellent job
40%	Good job
18%	Only a fair job
6%	A poor job
30%	Do not know

**Mot\_reg** - Which of the following motivated you to register to vote?

7%	I registered through a get out the vote campaign or registration drive.
30%	I was encouraged by my family or my peers.
7%	I registered to vote while at the DMV.
56%	I was self-motivated to register.

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

41%	Liberal
35%	Moderate
14%	Conservative
9%	Do not know

**CNTY** - In which region of the state are you from? (Please find your home county)

14%	Central
61%	Southeast
12%	Philadelphia
11%	Northeast
1%	Allegheny
0%	Southwest
1%	Northwest

**HISP** - Are you Hispanic or Latino, or not?

5%	Yes
95%	No

**RACE** - Which of the following categories best describes your racial background?

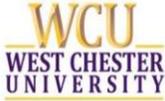
88%	White
12%	Non-white

**SEX** - What is your legal sex?

24%	Male
76%	Female

## Attachment #1: Email invitation to complete survey, sent 10/15/18 at 12:00pm

 Professor Laura Pyott, WCU Math <noreply@qemailserver.com> Pyott, Laura  
Quick WCU Survey for Free Saxbys!



Hello!

The WCU Election Pollsters are conducting a VERY SHORT survey regarding the upcoming elections on November 6. The survey will take less than 3 minutes to complete. Once you've finished the survey, you will receive an email that you can bring to the WCU Saxbys for any free drink. (While supplies last. No purchase necessary. Expires 11/30/18.)

[Survey link for free coffee!](#)

Thanks for participating!  
WCU Election Pollsters  
Professor Laura Pyott  
Kathleen Weber  
Chris McCann  
Emma Wanchisen

## Attachment #2: Email voucher for Saxbys free drink

 2018 WCU Election Poll <noreply@qemailserver.com> Pyott, Laura  
Free Saxbys Drink Voucher

Thank you for completing our survey! Show this email at the Saxbys register for one free drink of your choice!



No purchase necessary. One time use. Valid until 11/30/18 or until supplies last. 701 S High St, West Chester, PA 19382

## Attachment #3: First email reminder, sent 10/23/18 at 12:12pm



A QUICK REMINDER!

Have YOU taken the short survey regarding the upcoming elections?  
The survey will take *less than 3 minutes* to complete.  
So far, over 600 of your fellow students have participated in the inaugural Ram Poll.  
They have made their voices heard and got caffeinated at the same time.

### TO GET YOUR ONE FREE DRINK:

1. Click on the link below and take the survey.
2. Come get your **ONE FREE DRINK CARD** at 25 University Ave, room 115 (that's the Math building). Professor Pyott will be distributing free drink cards every day from 11:30-1:30. (While supplies last, so don't wait!)
3. Thanks to all of you who have already participated and enjoyed your ONE free drink. If you haven't yet enjoyed your ONE free drink, come and get a free drink card, as we are phasing out the email vouchers.

[Click here for free coffee!!](#)

**Thanks for participating!**

2018 Ram Poll Team

*Professor Laura Pyott (25 University Ave., Room 115)*

*Kathleen Weber, Chris McCann, Emma Wanchisen*

## Attachment #4: Second/final email reminder, sent Friday, 10/26 at 12:00pm



LAST CHANCE!

Nearly 800 students have taken our 2018 midterm election Ram Poll. The poll closes Sunday at 6:00pm.

### TO GET YOUR ONE FREE DRINK:

1. Click on the link below and take the survey.
2. Come get your **ONE FREE DRINK CARD** at 25 University Ave, room 115 (that's the Math building). Professor Pyott will be distributing free drink cards everyday from 11:00am-1:00pm. (While supplies last, so don't wait!)
3. Thanks to all of you who have already participated and enjoyed your ONE free drink. If you haven't yet enjoyed your ONE free drink, come and get a free drink card, as the email vouchers are no longer being accepted.

[SURVEY LINK FOR FREE COFFEE!!](#)

**Thanks for participating! GO VOTE!**

2018 Ram Poll Team  
*Professor Laura Pyott (25 University Ave., Room 115)*  
*Kathleen Weber*  
*Chris McCann*  
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