

FREE EXPRESSION AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

A report by

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* This update to the Feb. 5 draft of our report adds a note clarifying how to interpret the results we report in Finding 11 below.

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Executive Summary

In the Spring of 2019, we conducted an investigation to better understand students' experiences with free speech and constructive dialogue at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The investigation had two components: 1) a survey that all UNC undergraduates were invited to complete and 2) in-depth focus group interviews with members of three politically active student organizations. Our investigation led to twelve principal findings, which we discuss at length in the following report. This summary does not aim to encapsulate *all* of the study's results, but to highlight four thematic conclusions that emerge from these findings:

1) *Students say that (when politics come up in class) the majority of their UNC professors do try to discuss both sides of political issues and encourage opinions from across the political spectrum.*

A common theme in public discourse about colleges is that, given faculty political leanings, instructional time is used in a heavy-handed way to instill specific political views into students. Our results do not support this view. The student survey responses suggest there are few classes in which politics comes up regularly (Finding 2). Furthermore, when politics comes up, both students who identify as liberal and students who identify as conservative generally perceive their instructors as open-minded and encouraging of participation from students across the political spectrum (Finding 3).

2) *The current campus climate does not consistently promote free expression and constructive dialogue across the political spectrum.*

While the first theme above undermines some common critiques of higher education, our research nevertheless points to some areas of concern. Specifically, although most students perceive that instructors generally adopt an inclusive posture in the classroom, many students also worry that if they express their sincere political views openly, instructors and/or peers will think less of them, or do something to embarrass them. Some students even worry their course grades might be affected, and a substantial proportion of students—24.1% to 67.9%, depending on student ideology—report engaging in self-censorship (Finding 5). Overall, though, students report worrying more about censure from fellow students than faculty (Finding 7). The survey results also showed that students harbor negative stereotypes about students who disagree with them (Finding 8), are unwilling to interact socially with people who hold opposing political views, and even disagree that UNC needs political diversity at all (Finding 10). Finally, a substantial proportion of students—over 25%—reported that they would endorse blocking or interrupting events featuring speakers with whom they disagree (Finding 11).

3) *Although students across the political spectrum report facing challenges related to free expression, these challenges seem to be more acute for students who identify as conservative.*

Compared to self-identified liberals, self-identified conservative students express greater concern about potential academic consequences that might stem from expressing their views (Finding 6). Students across ideologies report commonly hearing disparaging comments about political conservatives (Finding 9) and conservative students are at greater risk of social isolation (Finding

10). Additionally, self-identified liberal students are more likely than self-identified conservatives to endorse blocking a campus speaker with whom they disagree (Finding 11).

4) *Students across the political spectrum want more opportunities to engage with those who think differently.*

Students want more opportunities for constructive dialogue with ideologically dissimilar others, and, in particular, they express interest in having more speakers with conservative views on campus in particular (Finding 12).

This investigation's results do not align with any particular narrative about the culture for free expression at universities such as UNC. We hope our findings give pause to those who are eager to characterize universities as wellsprings for progressive orthodoxy as well as to those who dismiss any possibility that the academy's progressive lean might have endemic consequences for students' academic and social experiences. In the full report's concluding section, we offer recommendations for the campus to consider as it decides how best to foster a fully inclusive environment in which ideas can be contested with energy and vigor.

Introduction

In Fall 2018, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s Faculty Council passed a resolution endorsing the University of Chicago Principles for protecting and promoting free speech on college campuses. Discussions surrounding this resolution focused on the potential impact of this endorsement as well as the impetus for it: Did UNC have a free speech problem? If so, what did that problem look like? Were anecdotes from students—both conservative and liberal—who claimed to have been silenced indicative of a broader experience? We realized that the Faculty Council’s resolution needed to signal the beginning of an evidence-based approach to investigating UNC’s climate for free expression and constructive dialogue. We also sought to begin a discussion about how UNC could foster a campus environment that is tolerant and inclusive and where a wide array of views are aired in service of a search for truth.

The pages that follow report results and conclusions from a year-long investigation of UNC undergraduates’ experiences concerning political expression on campus. We make substantial progress in characterizing free expression challenges at UNC. For instance, we show that both self-identified liberal and self-identified conservative students feel that UNC instructors create classroom atmospheres that welcome student participation from across the political spectrum. At the same time, a substantial proportion of students—in particular students who identify as conservative—worry about the social ramifications of expressing their sincere views, both inside and outside the classroom. Taken as a whole, this report underlines the complexity of free expression issues on a diverse college campus, while also identifying opportunities for improvement.

Why We Conducted the Research

This project starts from the premise that the culture surrounding free expression at a university such as UNC is of great importance to the institution’s pedagogical mission. We are hardly the first to note that expressing unpopular views can reveal critical blind spots in prevailing thought patterns or that the eccentric opinion of today can become the orthodoxy of tomorrow. But a culture that is favorable toward free expression serves a pedagogical role even when the views being expressed are wrong. When one person proffers an incorrect idea and someone else refutes it, both parties better apprehend *why* the correct view must be true. Under the right circumstances—those that institutions of higher learning strive to bring about—this exercise also deepens appreciation for a truth-seeking process grounded in civility and reason.

Coming from this perspective, we undertook this study for four more specific reasons:

1. We wanted to better understand what UNC’s culture for free expression looks like in the current, politically-charged moment. We have all seen expression issues play out in the classroom: there are students who are eager to share their opinions on current issues and others who are hard to draw out. We have also witnessed incidents that reveal students’ intense feelings about political issues. For instance, in 2015, students shouted over journalist Clarence Page’s remarks on race and inclusion to read a list of demands.² And in 2019, an undergraduate physically assaulted a pro-life

² See Jane Wester, “Students ask administrators to act on systemic racism,” *The Daily Tar Heel*. Available online at <https://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2015/11/students-ask-administrators-to-act-on-systemic-racism>.

activist displaying a sign on campus.³ These and other episodes raise difficult questions about how to regulate speech in an educational environment. Yet, it is hard to know what these and other incidents imply about the *typical* experience at UNC or about the campus orientation toward free exchange in general.

2. We were aware of a national debate about issues of free expression on college campuses and wanted to better understand UNC's potential place in this debate. It has been argued—often by the political right—that American universities deliberately socialize students into a progressive worldview. Books advancing such theories have dramatic titles such as *Indoctrination U: The Left's War Against Academic Freedom* (Encounter Books, 2007) and *Brainwashed: How Universities Indoctrinate America's Youth* (Thomas Nelson, 2010). Following a series of events in which conservative speakers were disrupted or disinvited from speaking engagements, President Trump even issued an executive order related to campus free speech issues, calling it an “historic action to defend American students and American values that have been under siege.”⁴ Commentators on the political left responded that such concerns were misplaced, arguing that the campus free speech crisis is a “myth”⁵ and that those who argue otherwise are “grifters.”⁶

A better understanding of UNC is informative for this broader debate. UNC is a leading university that attracts engaged students from diverse backgrounds and that maintains a rigorous academic environment. It is also a taxpayer-supported public institution, meaning it has an especially strong mandate to handle political disputes evenhandedly.⁷ Finally, UNC operates within a complex political context: North Carolina is politically divided—one of the pivotal “swing states” in all recent presidential elections. And since UNC, by law, draws at least 82% of its students from within the state, the students are divided as well. UNC therefore serves as a microcosm through which to understand the pressures and controversies that are unfolding in the state and nationally.

3. As we reviewed recent discussions about free expression on college campuses—and there has been no shortage of these—we noticed a paucity of reliable information. Specific episodes—a protest here, a disinvitation there—are interpreted and reinterpreted *ad nauseum* by narrowly-focused commentators eager to cast higher education in a uniquely positive or negative light. These episodes are often captivating, but they reveal little about the real extent and character of any specific, tangible problems. Even where there have been efforts to quantify aspects of free expression culture on college campuses, we saw numerous opportunities to investigate fresh topics or to ask questions in ways that would address limitations of the previous efforts—as we discuss further below.

³ See Julie Wilson, “Anti-abortion group member at UNC attacked; 2 facing charges,” *ABC11.com*. Available online at <https://abc11.com/anti-abortion-group-member-at-unc-attacked;-2-facing-charges/5303214/>.

⁴ See Susan Svrluga, “Trump signs executive order on free speech on college campuses,” *Washington Post*. Available online at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2019/03/21/trump-expected-sign-executive-order-free-speech/>.

⁵ E.g. Zack Beauchamp, “The myth of a campus free speech crisis,” *Vox.com*. Available online at <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/8/31/17718296/campus-free-speech-political-correctness-musa-al-gharbi>.

⁶ Mari Ueyhara, “The Free Speech Grifters,” *GQ.com*. Available online at <https://www.gq.com/story/free-speech-grifting>.

⁷ In fact, in 2017, the North Carolina General Assembly adopted legislation stating, among other things, that it is not the proper role of institutions in the University of North Carolina system “to shield individuals from speech protected by the First Amendment, including, without limitation, ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive” (NC Gen Stat §116-300).

4. We believe that the composition of our research team improves the quality of our effort and, as a result, the credibility of our findings. As our departmental affiliations reflect, we are an interdisciplinary team. We each approached this project with different classroom experiences and perspectives on UNC campus culture. We are also politically diverse—which we believe helped us limit potential blind spots in what questions we posed and how we interpreted our results.⁸ We are committed to providing transparent information to inform a discussion about how UNC can best foster a culture that equips students with the intellectual agility necessary to face the challenges awaiting them after graduation. We hope readers considering the results we present below resist the urge to position our research as falling on one “side” in the debates about free expression—in North Carolina or nationally. We do not see them that way.

What Makes This Project Distinctive

As noted above, much of the recent commentary on campus free expression issues has been driven by particular controversial episodes that have generated a flurry of media attention. Alongside the episodic coverage, however, there have been occasional efforts to examine the culture and climate concerning free expression at American universities more systematically. While we cannot undertake a comprehensive review of all such work, we will briefly highlight some elements of our project that distinguish it from others.

Most importantly, our research focuses on the daily, lived experiences of students at UNC. In the following discussions, we examine what happens in the typical classroom—how students perceive their instructors and peers—as well as what they see and hear on campus in general. We also examine students’ orientations toward political disagreement by exploring what stereotypes they hold toward political opponents and what actions they consider to be appropriate when confronted with disagreement.

Most past research on campus free expression has not focused on students’ experiences. For instance, one much-discussed analysis centered on surveys of the American public at large—examining whether tolerance of unpopular groups (e.g. “communists” and “racists”) have changed over time and whether college graduates appear to be more open-minded than non-graduates.⁹ These results are sociologically intriguing, but they simply have little to say about students’ daily experiences on college campuses. Elsewhere, researchers have attempted to catalogue incidents in which speakers were disinvited or faculty were fired because of their political opinions.¹⁰ These results merit discussion, but they are open to several interpretations, and again, do not speak directly to students’ experiences.

Two studies—both conducted in conjunction with the Gallup organization—do seek to examine students directly.¹¹ However, both of these studies focus on questions that are more general in

⁸ After releasing this report, we expect to publish short essays outlining and explaining our own individual perspectives on the findings herein.

⁹ See Matthew Yglesias, “Everything we think about the political correctness debate is wrong,” *Vox.com*. Available online at <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/3/12/17100496/political-correctness-data>.

¹⁰ Jeffrey Adam Sachs, “There Is No Campus Free Speech Crisis: A Close Look at the Evidence,” *Niskanen Center: Commentary*. Available online at <https://niskanencenter.org/blog/there-is-no-campus-free-speech-crisis-a-close-look-at-the-evidence/>.

¹¹ Gallup. 2016. “Free Expression on Campus: A Survey of U.S. College Students and U.S. Adults.” Available online at <https://knightfoundation.org/reports/free-speech-campus/>; Gallup. 2018. “The University of Nebraska System

nature than ours are, and they do not examine how students' experiences depend on their own political leanings.

Survey of UNC Undergraduates

Our investigation centers on a carefully constructed, in-depth survey of undergraduate students. We use this survey to examine classroom experiences at UNC, students' orientation toward political disagreement, and their opinions about UNC's culture of free expression more generally. Here, we describe who our respondents were, how we approached them, and other operational details.

Recruitment

One difficulty that commonly arises in survey research is *self-selection*: individuals who are most interested in the survey's topic are most likely to complete the questionnaire. Such overrepresentation can result in biased conclusions. It seemed quite plausible that students who are politically active or who felt aggrieved by particular experiences would be most likely to respond to a survey invitation; this could easily exaggerate the true extent of free expression challenges at UNC. So, we adopted a recruitment procedure designed to combat selection bias issues, as well as provide insight into how much selection biases could influence related studies.

Students were recruited to participate in the "2019 Free Expression and Civil Discourse"¹² survey in two waves. In the first wave, 2000 undergraduate students were offered a monetary incentive to complete the survey. Offering an incentive typically diminishes selection issues since it provides individuals who lack intrinsic motivation to complete a survey with an extrinsic motivation.¹³ Students were contacted via their university email addresses and invited to participate in a 15-minute survey, for which they would be compensated with an \$10 Amazon e-gift card. They had one week to complete the survey, and they were sent two reminder emails during that time to encourage participation.¹⁴ The invitation list was a random sample, stratified by students' self-reported gender and class year.¹⁵ There were 519 complete responses, for a completion rate of 25.95%.

After the incentivized portion of the study was completed, we invited all remaining UNC undergraduates (N=18,343) to complete the same study, but without a monetary incentive. As with the incentivized respondents, these students had one week to complete the instrument. There were 568 complete responses, for a completion rate of 3.09%.

Climate Study." Available online at

https://nebraska.edu/~media/UNCA/docs/news/NU_2018_Climate_Study_Full_Report.pdf.

¹² We have since renamed our project to "Free Expression and Constructive Dialogue," a title which we believe better reflects our goals.

¹³ See Eleanor Singer and Cong Ye. 2012. "The Use and Effects of Incentives in Surveys" eds. Douglas S Massey and Roger Tourangeau. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 645(1): 112–41.

¹⁴ For 800 invitees, we increased the incentive offered in the final reminder to \$15. The completion rate among this group of 800 was 26.25%. The completion rate among the 1,200 respondents offered \$10 in all three emails was nearly identical: 25.75%. Hence, the effect of a \$5 increase on response rates appears to be small.

¹⁵ The invitation list was provided by UNC's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, and we are thankful for their assistance in conducting this research.

We conducted the unincentivized portion of the study for three reasons. First, we wanted to maximize the total number of survey responses received, as this would better position us to conduct subgroup analyses (such as analyses of students majoring in specific areas or of liberal- versus conservative-identifying students). Second, we wanted to give all students the opportunity to share their views and experiences, but our budget did not allow us to provide an incentive to all 20,000+ UNC undergraduates. Third, comparing response patterns in the incentivized and unincentivized portions of the sample provides some insight on how our conclusions might have differed if selection into the survey sample relied only on students' intrinsic motivation.

When students were invited to participate in the study, they were sent an email soliciting their views on “free expression at UNC.” The invitation explained that a UNC research team was “conducting a survey of students’ experiences encountering and engaging with different viewpoints on campus. We're writing to find out about *your* perspective on these topics.” (Appendix A shows the full text of recruitment messages.) We chose language that allowed participants to make an informed consent decision, but we did not outline the study’s details. This, too, was an effort to encourage responses from all students—not just those who might be eager for an opportunity to express grievances.

Table 1 reports demographic characteristics for the incentivized and unincentivized portions of the sample. Table 1 also reports characteristics of the pooled sample (a weighted average of the first two columns). It also reports UNC benchmarks (where these are available) for the demographics we examine.

For most characteristics, differences between our sample and UNC benchmarks appear to be small, and neither the incentivized nor the unincentivized sample falls reliably closer to the target. For instance, the incentivized sample somewhat overrepresents female students, but the unincentivized sample somewhat overrepresents whites. Both the incentivized and unincentivized administrations of the survey somewhat overrepresent students who have arrived at UNC recently.¹⁶ Still, we take Table 1 as evidence that our sample represents a meaningful cross section of student opinion at UNC.

Because neither the incentivized nor the unincentivized portions of our sample are reliably closer to UNC benchmarks, the analyses we present will focus on the pooled sample described in column 3 of Table 1. In other words, we use all available survey responses. Focusing on the pooled sample has two major advantages: it simplifies and condenses the presentation of our results substantially, and it roughly doubles our available data, making estimates more precise and improving our ability to conduct subgroup analyses. However, we recognize that the incentivized and unincentivized portions of the sample might differ in ways not reflected in Table 1. For this reason, we repeated all of our analyses, restricting our focus to respondents who were offered an incentive to complete the survey. The results of this additional work support the same conclusions. To be transparent on this point, Appendix E repeats all of our main analyses among incentivized respondents only.

The conventionally calculated 95% margin of error in our study is plus-or-minus 2.97 percentage points for the pooled sample, 4.11 percentage points for the unincentivized sample, and 4.30

¹⁶ We do not think this modest imbalance is problematic for the conclusions we reach below—student class year does not appear to be strongly predictive of the outcomes we examine—but our dataset allows for secondary analyses stratified by class year if these are of interest. Please see footnote 18 below for more details on this comparison.

percentage points for the incentivized sample. Margin of error statistics such as these characterize uncertainty in proportions attributable to sampling error; they do not reflect uncertainty attributable to other factors, such as selection bias.

Data Transparency

The results below required a number of analytical choices that others, of course, might approach differently. Within one year of the release of our final report, we will make available the dataset we analyzed, along with the analysis files necessary to reproduce our quantitative results. Thus, readers who wish to conduct additional (or alternative) analyses are welcome to do so. However, our public dataset will include redactions (questions that provide finely grained demographic information, open-ended responses, etc.) to prevent deductive identification of respondents.

Table 1: Sample Properties

	<u>FECD Survey</u>			<u>UNC Benchmark</u> ¹⁷
	Unincentivized	Incentivized	Pooled	
Entering year				
2018 or 2019	34.6%	29.5%	32.2%	24.4% ¹⁸
2017	27.4	29.3	28.3	20.7
2016	17.2	21.4	19.2	26.8
2015 or earlier	20.7	19.7	20.2	28.4
Residence				
In-state	82.7%	82.2%	82.5%	82.3%
Out-of-state	17.3	17.8	17.5	17.7
Gender				
Female	60.7%	67.0	63.7	59.4%
Male	38.1	32.1	35.2	40.6
Neither	1.2	1.0	1.1	-- ¹⁹
Race				
White	73.3%	60.5%	67.2%	63.2%
Black	7.7	9.3	8.5	8.2
Hispanic	5.6	8.5	7.0	8.8
Asian	8.8	16.6	12.5	14.7
Other	4.6	5.0	4.8	5.6
Partisanship				
Republican	15.5%	10.7%	13.2%	
Democrat	38.3	43.6	40.9	
Independent	46.2	45.7	45.9	
Ideology				
Conservative	22.9%	15.9%	19.6%	
Liberal	60.2	65.6	62.7	
Middle of the road	17.0	18.5	17.7	
N (Complete cases)	568	519	1,087	

¹⁷ Benchmark statistics come from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment's Analytic Reports tool at <https://oira.unc.edu/reports/>.

¹⁸ Respondents to the FECD survey reported what year they began their studies at UNC. The UNC benchmark, in contrast, is derived from a student's academic standing. As such, the categories are not perfectly comparable. For instance, students who transferred to UNC from another institution might have enough transfer credit to hold senior standing but would have stated at UNC in 2018 (at the same time as many first-year students). This difference in categories likely explains some of the overrepresentation of recently-entering students in our sample.

¹⁹ We are not aware of any UNC benchmark for non-binary gender identity.

Focus Groups

To add more depth to our analysis of issues related to free expression and constructive dialogue at UNC, we also conducted focus group interviews. Focus groups complement survey results by giving students an opportunity to elaborate on their thoughts, to provide concrete examples of specific experiences and observations, and/or to reveal new issues that warrant further attention in this specific study and/or future research. Yet, because we concentrated narrowly on political interests for these focus groups, we do not interpret the information gathered in these interviews to represent students' experiences more generally.

To determine which groups to invite for focus group interviews, we looked through a public directory of UNC student groups and identified the groups that appeared to have political interests. We identified and invited eight such groups. We emailed the main student contacts asking if they would be willing to organize approximately 8-10 group members to be interviewed about ways to "better understand UNC-CH students' backgrounds, what they want to get out of their education, and their experiences encountering and engaging with different viewpoints on the UNC-CH campus."

Out of the eight groups contacted, three groups responded favorably to our requests and arranged a time to meet a moderator (one of the report authors) at an on-campus location to conduct the focus group. Two groups did not respond, one group responded outside of the timeframe required for inclusion in the study, one group was not interested in participating, and another group replied that they had disbanded. Of the groups that met with us, one was conservative, and two were liberal—with one of the liberal groups have a more left-leaning and reformist orientation.²⁰

We conducted focus group interviews on the following dates:

- Conservative – April 5, 2019
- Liberal #1 – April 5, 2019
- Liberal #2 – April 12, 2019

When students arrived for the focus group interviews, they were seated around a conference table. Cookies were provided. Once all students had arrived the moderator began the session by explaining the interview objectives. Students were also asked to sign a consent form, and they were informed that the session would be recorded but that they would not be individually identified on the recording or the transcript of that recording. Before proceeding, the moderator confirmed all attendees understood the consent form and agreed to its terms.

After these introductory remarks, the moderator proceeded with a semi-structured focus group protocol. There were approximately two-dozen questions (Appendix C) covering several different themes. Each question served as a conversation starter. Students could speak to each other and elaborate on different ideas or highlight shared experiences. The moderator could ask clarification and follow-up questions as necessary/appropriate. Each focus group had 3-4 participants; all were

²⁰ We were disappointed that we were unable to conduct interviews with a larger number of groups. Our timing unfortunately coincided with the end of the semester, and students' inevitable busyness at this time likely contributed at least in part to their lack of response.

generally open, talkative, and engaged, and students consistently elaborated on each other's ideas. The sessions lasted about 60 minutes. Once the planned questioning was complete, the moderator asked students if they had anything else that they wished to add, thanked them for their participation, and dismissed the group.

After all the focus groups were complete, we transcribed of each session to facilitate closer analysis. Privacy considerations preclude releasing full transcripts since we guaranteed anonymity, and students occasionally revealed identifying details about themselves in their responses. But we provide illustrative quotes—occasionally redacted or edited for clarity or privacy—as appropriate below.

Principal Findings

Our research led us to twelve principal conclusions, which we discuss in detail below.

1) 30.8% of students feel they have become more liberal during their college years; 15.9% feel they have become more conservative; and 47.8% feel their ideological leanings have not changed.

As noted above, critics of American colleges and universities argue that these institutions serve as engines for liberal socialization. Although it has been nearly six decades since conservative commentator William F. Buckley quipped that he would rather be governed by the first two thousand names in the telephone directory than the faculty at Harvard University,²¹ charges of liberal “indoctrination” have intensified, and conservatives have developed a far more negative view of higher education as an institution.²² Against this backdrop, we ask: Is it true that UNC students become more liberal during their college years? And if so, how much more liberal? Do students *generally* move to the left, or is there offsetting movement to both the left and right?

The results below suggest general stability or *moderate* change rather than the cascade of drastic change (conservatives becoming liberal or liberals become radicals) that some alarmist narratives suggest.

Methods

The ideal way to answer these questions would be to conduct a panel survey that measures students’ political attitudes upon their arrival at UNC, then again throughout their college careers, and finally, at graduation. We needed, however, to adopt an alternative approach for a shorter timeframe. As part of our survey instrument, we asked students to report their current ideological leanings on a seven-point scale that allowed them to rank themselves on a spectrum ranging from “extremely conservative” to “extremely liberal.”²³ We also asked them to recall their ideological leanings “when you first came to UNC.” The response options were the same for both questions, which allows us to construct a simple difference measure—one score subtracted from the other—that characterizes how ideological leanings changed over time. Of course, this approach assumes unbiased recollection of the past leanings, but in the absence of panel data, that is an assumption we are willing to make.²⁴

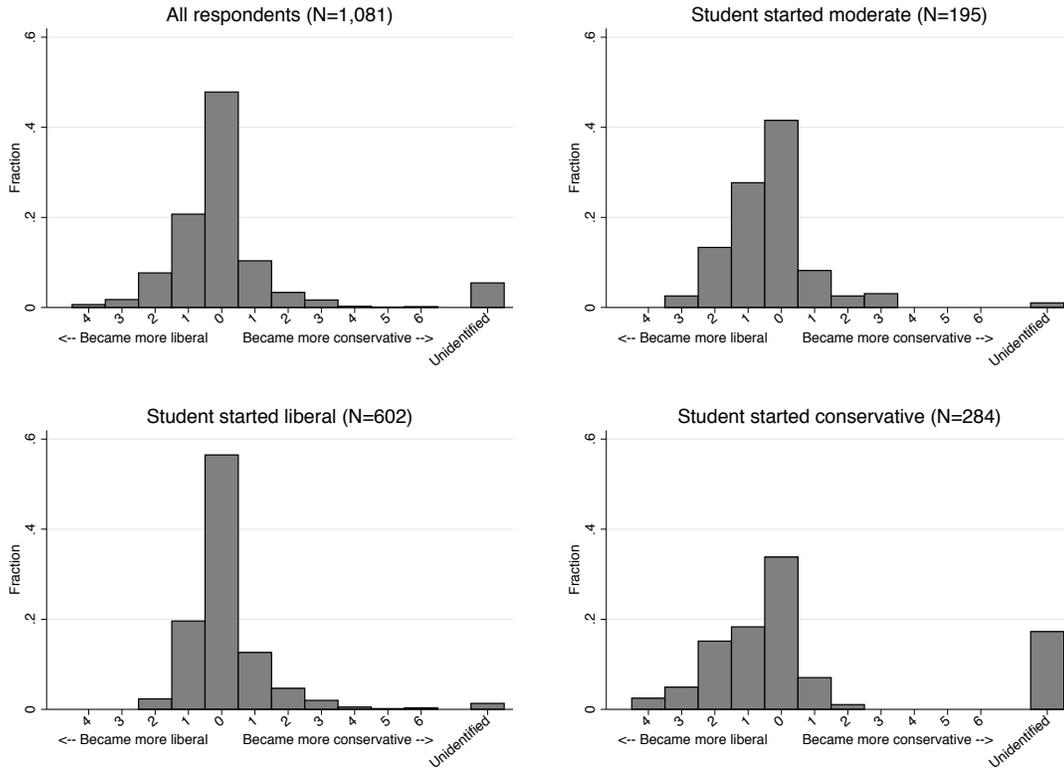
²¹ Buckley’s exact quote has several permutations. See <https://quoteinvestigator.com/2017/10/31/telegovern/>

²² Pew Research Center. 2019. “The Growing Partisan Divide in Views of Higher Education.” Available online at <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/essay/the-growing-partisan-divide-in-views-of-higher-education/>

²³ The question format a standard approach that has been used in many iterations of the American National Election Study. See Appendix B for question wording. Aside from identifying as liberal or conservative, respondents could also say they were “None of these” (1.57%) or “Haven’t thought much about this” (2.31%). We exclude such students from analyses of ideological subgroups.

²⁴ How accurate does individuals’ recall of their prior attitudes tend to be? The answer varies a lot. But there is reason to think that people recall political view more accurately than many other attitudes. Political identities are generally fairly stable, making changes easier to remember. In addition, political attitudes are often associated with specific objective behaviors—such as club memberships or vote choice in a presidential election—that aid recall. For a discussion of the methodological issues, see Tom W. Smith. 1982. “Recalling Attitudes: An Analysis of Retrospective Questions on the 1982 General Social Survey,” National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago.

Figure 1: Students' Ideological Shifts Over Time



Note: Scores represent how many increments on a seven-point liberal/conservative ideological measure a person moved. A score of zero indicates no change. The “Unidentified column” represents students who selected “None of these” or “Haven’t thought much about this” for their ideological position in either the previous or current ideology question.

The approach is also premised on students having a workable understanding of what the terms “liberal” and “conservative” mean. While many people do not have a deep understanding of these terms, they capture a general notion of left and right in politics as well as aspects of a person’s self-concept.²⁵ That is the sense in which we employ them here.

Analysis

The top-left panel of Figure 1 depicts students’ ideological shifts over time. In this panel, a score of 0 signifies no change in political leanings from the start of the student’s time at the UNC to the time of the survey responses. Scores to the right of zero signify that a respondent became more conservative. For instance, students who reported that they identified as “Conservative” when they came to UNC and identify as “Extremely conservative” as of today have shifted one notch to the right on our seven-point ideological scale. Scores to the left of zero reflect liberalization. The “unidentified” column of each panel identifies students who responded with the option “None of these” or “Haven’t thought much about this” for either the past or present measure.

²⁵ For a full discussion, see Kinder, Donald R, and Nathan P. Kalmoe. 2017. *Neither Liberal nor Conservative: Ideological Innocence in the American Public*. University of Chicago Press, as well as Mason, Lilliana. 2018. *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

The remaining panels of Figure 1 present similar analyses, broken down by what students remember their initial ideological orientation to be. This subgroup analysis accounts for the reality that any trends in the top-left panel could be a by-product of UNC students being disproportionately liberal to begin with. It also allows us to assess how much the trends in the top-left panel are driven by *amplification* of existing views (e.g. an initially liberal student becoming even more liberal) versus *conversion* to a different view (e.g. an initially conservative student shifting to become liberal).

Figure 1 ostensibly supports the notion that students become more liberal at UNC. In the top-left panel, for instance, 30.8% of responses, excluding the “unidentified” column, fall left of zero, while only 15.9% fall right. This indicates that students who feel they became more liberal outnumber those who feel they became more conservative approximately 2:1. The trend toward liberalization particularly occurs among students who report starting UNC as moderates and those who report starting UNC as conservative. In contrast, students who report starting UNC as liberal show little movement. For these students, nearly equal proportions moved left and right (21.9% left compared to 20.3% right). Thus, Figure 1’s data initially seem to provide more evidence of conversion than amplification.

With just a minor shift in emphasis, however, the evidence for a leftward shift becomes less impressive. Specifically, while more students move left than move right, the most common pattern—irrespective of a student’s starting position—is no change at all. Nearly half our respondents (47.8%) reported no ideological shift from the start of their time at the UNC to the time of the survey responses. Additionally, 78.9% of the students moved just one notch or less on our seven-point scale.

We wish to emphasize that we present the trends in Figure 1 primarily as context rather than as definitive evidence for specific conclusions about UNC’s culture. Research shows that major life transitions likely influence individuals’ political ideologies,²⁶ and the transition from adolescence to young adulthood might in itself be enough to shift people to the left. Thus, a trend toward liberalization might theoretically be seen not only among UNC students, but also among students who attended conservative institutions or among those who did not attend college at all. Additionally, ideological change is not *per se* evidence of indoctrination or similar. As we discuss in our concluding section, some will argue that ideological change is a natural result of intellectual breadth, evidentiary reasoning, and so forth. The findings that follow, therefore, shift the focus to more direct, concrete information about students’ experiences on campus.

2) *In most classes, politics rarely comes up.*

To examine UNC’s culture for free expression directly, we turned our attention to what goes on in UNC’s classrooms. We wanted to understand if and to what extent the classroom atmosphere is politicized: How ubiquitous are political conversations? How much do instructors reveal about their own political views, and how assertive are they in their attempts to persuade others? Are skepticism and debate encouraged, or are they stifled? And how much do students’ perceptions of these patterns depend on their own political views?

²⁶ See Kinder, Donald R. 2006. “Politics and the Life Cycle.” *Science* 312(5782): 1905–8 for a discussion.

The analyses below find that instructors generally exercise restraint in revealing their political views. Furthermore, the data imply that, while politics plays a role in many classes, politically-focused class discussions are not ubiquitous or inescapable. These results cut against the notion that UNC faculty pervasively attempt to socialize their students into particular political viewpoints.

Methods

We began by assessing where and with what frequency political conversations happen. Studies of the political leanings of the professoriate—across the country in general as well as at UNC specifically—routinely find that, in the vast majority of academic disciplines, it leans to the left.²⁷ Some who express concerns about these imbalances presume that the political atmosphere on college campuses is widely politicized.²⁸ How much of this presumption reflects truth? And to the extent political conversations arise at UNC, are they concentrated in certain academic areas, or are they more ubiquitous?

The most straightforward survey techniques make understanding the prevalence and nature of political conversations difficult. For instance, if we were simply to ask students, “How often does politics come up in your classes?”, they might have difficulty aggregating all the classes they have taken and condensing their thoughts down to a reliable number. Thus, we developed a technique that allows us to characterize the *typical* class at UNC and to describe how experiences in the typical class vary across disciplines. The approach was to randomly sample *one class* that students took in the Fall of 2018 and ask a series of detailed questions about that particular class.

The procedure we developed works as follows: our instrument asked respondents to report how many classes (from one to five) they took in Fall 2018. Then, the survey software asked them to provide a label for each class they took. These labels did not need to have a standard format. For instance, one respondent might write “Poli100,” while another might write “Introduction to Gov in the United States” (POLI 100 is, in fact, “Introduction to Government in the United States” at UNC). The labels simply needed to be recognizable to the respondent. After a respondent entered labels for all of their classes, the computer randomly chose one class about which to ask detailed questions. The survey software notified the respondent about the selection with the following text:

For the next several questions, we will ask about **one** of the courses you took last semester. Based on a random draw, the computer has selected [label student entered] as the course you will focus on for your answers. If you would like to answer questions about a different course, there is an opportunity to do so later in the survey. But for now, please focus on the course you had in mind when you wrote [label student entered].

Notably, this approach gave us a random sample of course *enrollments*, not of *courses*. (The latter would have been the case if we had obtained a list of all classes offered and then randomly sampled

²⁷ On the professoriate in general, see Cardiff, Christopher F, and Daniel B Klein. 2005. “Faculty Partisan Affiliations in All Disciplines: A Voter-Registration Study.” *Critical Review* 17(3-4): 237–55; Langbert, Mitchell. 2018. “Homogenous: the Political Affiliations of Elite Liberal Arts College Faculty.” *Academic Questions* 31(2): 186–97; Rothman, Stanley, S Robert Lichter, and Neil Nevitte. “Politics and Professional Advancement Among College Faculty.” *The Forum* 3(1). On UNC in particular, see Dent, Alex. 2016. “At UNC Chapel Hill, 17 Departments Have Zero Registered Republican Professors, Analysis Finds.” Available at <https://www.thecollegefix.com/unc-chapel-hill-16-departments-zero-registered-republican-professors-analysis-finds/>

²⁸ E.g., “Six Ideas to De-Politicize the American Campus.” *The Martin Center for Academic Renewal*. Available online at <https://www.jamesgmartin.center/2018/05/six-ideas-to-de-politicize-the-american-campus/>.

classes from that list.) In our approach, a class is more likely to be selected if more students took it, simply because it will appear more often in the pool of class choices from which the survey software chose. This approach presents no inferential problem given our objectives. A class many students take leaves a bigger imprint on campus life and therefore *should* carry more weight in our analysis. We emphasize this point only to elucidate what we mean below when we describe the proportion of classes that have certain characteristics.

After providing the notification about the selected class, we asked respondents, “How often did political topics come up in this class?”²⁹ We also asked them, “How often did the instructor for this course say or do something (such as commenting on a current political topic or discussing the instructor's moral perspective) that seemed to reflect the instructor's political leanings?” The response options for both questions were “Never,” “A few times throughout the semester,” “Perhaps every week or two,” “Most class meetings,” and “Almost every class meeting.”

Analysis

Table 2 below reports the responses. Column 1 shows that, in approximately 40% of classes, respondents said that politics did not come up at all. They reported politics coming up in “most class meetings” or more often than that in only about 21% of classes. Similarly, the data in column 2 show that, in more than half of classes, the instructors never revealed their political views. Courses in which the instructor revealed political views regularly—such as in most class meetings—are quite rare (7.5%). Thus, this table suggests that while politics is a common topic in class, it is by no means a ubiquitous one.

Table 2: Politics in the Classroom

	Politics came up	Instructor offered an opinion
Never	39.5%	54.6%
A few times	29.3	30.8
Perhaps every week or two	10.0	7.0
Most class meetings	8.9	5.4
Almost every class meeting	12.3	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0
N	1,235	1,236

We also wanted to understand in what *type* of classes politics is more or less likely to be discussed. Of course, almost every Political Science and Public Policy class will discuss politics. Politics will also at least occasionally be relevant to the course focus in subject areas such as Sociology, Economics, and History, among others. Conversely, politics might come up rarely if at all in subject areas such as Math, Chemistry, and Computer Science.³⁰

²⁹ This question wording leaves it up to the interviewee to decide what counts as “politics.” We preferred this “eye of the beholder” approach to one in which we might provide an explicit definition of politics, since our focus is students’ *own* perceptions of their educational environment.

³⁰ We do not mean to imply that political topics should be *verboten* in these subject areas. Sometimes politics can be relevant in nonobvious ways. For instance, a participant in one of our focus groups described how a class on

Table 3: How Often Does Politics Come Up?, by Subject Area

	Human-ities	Social Sciences	Health Sciences	Natural Sciences	Cultural Studies ³¹	Foreign Language
Never	20.7%	19.5%	55.6%	70.6%	0.0%	29.1%
Few	40.2	29.7	31.9	20.2	20.6	44.2
Week or two	13.8	15.1	2.8	2.9	20.6	12.8
Most meetings	12.6	11.4	6.9	3.6	23.5	9.3
Every	12.6	24.3	2.8	2.7	35.3	4.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.00	100.0
N	246	370	72	415	34	86

To understand how discussion depends on class type, we asked respondents to report what department offered the randomly chosen course. We used these responses to classify the courses into six broad areas: humanities, social sciences, health sciences, natural sciences, cultural studies³², and foreign languages.³³ Appendix D lists what subjects fell into each of these broad headings.

Table 3 reports how often politics comes up in courses, categorized by broad subject area. This table clearly shows that politics is a more common focus in some areas than others. For more than half of the classes in the health sciences and natural sciences, for example, politics never comes up, and very few respondents indicated that politics is commonly discussed in these areas. In the humanities and social sciences, though, the distribution is more even: politics comes up commonly in some courses, but rarely in others.

One subject area that stands out in Table 3 is a category that we have called “cultural studies.”³⁴ We examined the courses in this category separately because they are a common focal point in

Biostatistics assessed whether public policies led to disparities in health outcomes along dimensions of race, gender, and class.

³¹ See a footnote above on the formulation of this category.

³² Although most of the broad areas we examine coincide with standard UNC classifications, “cultural studies” does not. Our cultural studies category includes courses listed under African, African American, and Diaspora Studies; American Studies; Arabic Studies; Asian Studies; German Studies; Latin American Studies; and Women and Gender Studies. We wanted to examine courses in these areas separately, given speculation that departments with a substantive focus on demographic categories might have courses that are highly political in nature. We wanted to examine this possibility, and if it were true, we wanted these courses not to distort understanding of the other broad headings. Our use of this label is not to be confused with the Cultural Studies Program—an interdisciplinary program facilitated by UNC’s Department of Communication. (We thank Lawrence Grossberg for helping us avoid this confusion.)

³³ For this analysis, we have put aside sundry other classes that students listed, but which are not classes in the conventional sense: experiential learning, internships, directed studies, study abroad experiences, and so forth. We also excluded cases where the student’s open-ended response was uninterpretable. These exclusions represent 1.02% percent of the randomly chosen classes.

³⁴ As Appendix D shows, the cultural studies category includes classes from African, African American, and Diaspora Studies; Women and Gender Studies; Asian Studies; American Studies; Arabic Studies; German Studies; and Latin American Studies.

discussions about political biases on college campuses.³⁵ We find that these classes are indeed political—the most politicized category we examine. However, only 34 of them were sampled, representing less than 3% of the classes we examine, so they likely do not typify students' experiences at UNC.

3) Students generally perceive course instructors to be open minded and encouraging of participation from both liberals and conservatives.

Even if faculty lean substantially to the left, this imbalance is less concerning if instructors foster a classroom atmosphere that welcomes disagreement and dialogue. Aside from *whether* politics is discussed is the matter of *how* it is discussed. When controversial topics come up in a classroom, do instructors adopt a stance that signals a willingness to engage with disagreement? Do they encourage participation from across the political spectrum?

On balance, this section accumulates further evidence against the notion that UNC faculty pervasively attempt to socialize particular political attitudes into their students. For the most part, students who identify as liberal, moderate, and conservative all agree that instructors encourage participation from across the political spectrum. There are important deviations from this trend, but these are the exception and thus do not characterize the typical experience in a UNC classroom.

Methods

We attempted to assess UNC instructors' orientation toward political disagreement with two questions about the randomly selected class. First, we asked respondents to agree or disagree with the statement, "The course instructor encouraged participation from liberals and conservatives alike." This question aimed to capture perceptions of instructors' evenhandedness in inducing and facilitating class participation. Next, we asked respondents to agree or disagree with the statement, "The course instructor was interested in learning from people with opinions that differed from the instructor's own opinions." This question aimed to characterize an instructor's epistemic stance in the classroom: did they regard different viewpoints as effrontery or opportunity? Both of these questions offered six response choices: a range of options from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree" and an option for "This question is totally irrelevant for this class." This final option helped ensure that respondents would only provide agree/disagree responses for cases where the questions relevant.

Analysis

Table 4 and Table 5 present our findings. We segmented the results by respondent ideology, using the agreement scale measure described above.³⁶ The questions we analyze here—those about encouraging participation from liberals and conservatives—are essentially irrelevant for classes in which politics never came up. Therefore, to focus our analysis, we limit the crosstabulation to the 60.5% of cases in which the respondent said that politics came up in class more than "never" (using

³⁵ For instance, some people recently tried to criticize an area of inquiry they pejoratively termed "grievance studies" by submitting farcical manuscripts to some academic journals. See <https://www.chronicle.com/article/What-the-Grievance/244753>.

³⁶ For these results and the rest in this report that use ideological segmentation, we use *current* ideology, not ideology upon entering UNC.

the question described in the previous section—see Table 2). This restriction leaves us with 619 cases to examine.

The results are, we think, encouraging. Only a small proportion of students (never more than 14.2%, broken down by ideology) disagree with the two statements we offered. Furthermore, differences between the columns are fairly modest. Self-identified liberal students are more likely to agree with the two statements than other students, but the proportions agreeing never differ by more than about twelve percentage points. Moreover, since Table 4 and Table 5 exclude 39.5% of cases where students thought that politics “never” came up, if anything, they risk overstating the extent to which instructors create an ideologically hostile classroom atmosphere.

The sentiment that the tables describe above was generally echoed in the focus groups we conducted. For instance, in one of the liberal focus groups, one student remarked:

I think there are a lot of professors who pride (themselves) to not bring politics in the classroom, even though they might know that they could since people would generally agree with what they might say. I think that's because they know that the culture of the school is what it is. They try—they try harder to not bring it into the classroom.

Another student in this group replied:

[S]imilar to you [talking to the previous speaker], no one's ever forced their opinion on me. Everyone tries to stay neutral as much as they can. And when students had differences of opinion, usually I find that the professor will back off and just let it kind of happen.

A student in the conservative focus group agreed:

I've never had a professor so openly off to the left where they would shut down another student. I think that even if they are a liberal professor, liberal professors generally do value that discussion, which is a good thing. I do think that's very good, but I've never had a professor like to actively shut down conversation.

While students in our focus groups agreed that their instructors typically keep their opinions in check, there were exceptions. For instance, a student in the conservative focus group said,

There are some professors who do very good job of maintaining a very neutral stance, and I've had other professors that do not do as good of a job and tend to promote personal opinions and values in their classes where they may not be as productive or valuable to the conversation.

A student in the liberal focus group also said:

I've had professors like directly bash Trump in some of my classes.

Table 4: The Instructor Encouraged Participation from Liberals and Conservatives Alike, by Respondent Self-identification

	<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Strongly disagree	0.3%	0.9%	4.4%
Somewhat disagree	1.8	2.7	6.2
Neither	5.6	15.9	10.6
Somewhat agree	10.0	15.0	9.7
Strongly agree	49.0	34.5	41.6
Irrelevant	33.4	31.0	27.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	392	113	113

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

Table 5: The Course Instructor was Interested in Learning from People with Opinions that Differed from the Instructor's Own, by Respondent Self-identification

	<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Strongly disagree	1.8%	4.4%	7.1%
Somewhat disagree	3.8	7.1	7.1
Neither	4.1	9.7	12.3
Somewhat agree	20.1	24.8	15.9
Strongly agree	52.7	38.1	40.7
Irrelevant	17.6	15.9	16.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	393	113	113

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

4) Students almost ubiquitously perceive political liberals to be a majority on campus.

So far, we have presented evidence that politics does not come up in many classes. We also examined how often UNC instructors offer their own political views and whether students perceive instructors to encourage participation from liberal and conservative students alike. The results suggest that instructors keep their views to themselves and encourage involvement from students across the ideological spectrum. From these results, one might suppose that students are unaware of or uncertain about the political leanings among instructors and peers, or that politics is ancillary to student life. Here, we assess how students perceive the political leanings of their peers and instructors.

We find that students perceive the descriptive reality: that faculty and students both lean substantially to the left.

Methods

Our evidence draws from additional questions that we posed in connection to the randomly selected class. First, we asked students, “Based exclusively on the person's behavior in the classroom (and not any preconceptions you might hold), what would you guess the course instructor's political leanings to be?” We also asked, “Based exclusively on their comments and behavior in class, and not on other things, how would you describe the political leanings of students in the class, on balance?” Table 6 and Table 7 report students’ answers to these questions.

Table 6: Based on Behavior, Was the Instructor Liberal or Conservative?

Strong liberal	16.3%
Liberal	33.4
Moderate	6.2
Conservative	1.9
Strong conservative	0.7
Other	0.6
Unsure	40.9
Total	1,236

Table 7: Based on Behavior, How Would you Describe Students’ Political Leanings?

Very liberal	15.4%
Lean liberal	29.1
Even mixture of liberals and conservatives	9.8
Lean conservative	0.8
Very conservative	0.3
Politics didn’t come up / Question is irrelevant	44.6
Total	1,145

Analysis

Table 6 shows that many instructors do not reveal their political views. A substantial plurality (40.9%) of students were unsure of their instructor's political leanings. However, if an instructor's leanings were revealed, those leanings were almost certain to be liberal. Table 6 indicates that less than 3% of instructors were perceived to be conservative, and perceived liberal instructors outnumber perceived conservatives by nearly a 20:1 ratio.

Table 7 shows similar patterns for perceptions about peers. In many classes, again, politics did not come up. However, in cases where the classmate's political leanings were revealed, the class was perceived to be liberal. Less than 2% of respondents perceived their peers to be conservative.

Remarks from the focus group interviews corroborated these perceptions. For instance, in one of the liberal groups, a student remarked,

[A]t this point my college career, it's like I'm always under the impression that the classes are a hundred percent liberal. When I feel like that can't really be the case. It makes me think of who's not in the conversation.

Similarly, a student in the conservative focus group said,

I would say that the University of North Carolina does lean to the left in pretty much every regard. How do I know this? Well I don't know that I have ever had a conservative professor teaching me in any of my classes.

In one sense, these results are unsurprising. As we discuss above, there is abundant evidence that college faculty—both in general and at UNC—lean to the left. The same is true for students. As such, our data merely corroborate that the individuals who participated in our studies perceive the descriptive reality. But we think the perceptions are still important to note for two key reasons. First, the extent of the imbalance is striking. If the perceptions reported in Table 6 do, in fact, reflect reality and less than 3% of UNC instructors are conservative, a student could easily never have a conservative instructor in the course of earning a degree. With so few conservative instructors, how often do liberal students hear well-articulated conservative ideas, as opposed to merely stylized depiction thereof? Do students become aware of potential blind spots held on both the left and the right? We raise these questions not to answer them, but to point out possible points of concern given the imbalance revealed in Table 6.

Second, the fact that students so readily perceive the ideological leanings of the community around as liberal them raises concerns about possible development and reinforcement of narrowly focused social norms and expectations. When people perceive themselves to be similar to those around them—or to share similar goals to the people around them—they feel a sense of common purpose and group identity.³⁷ Group identity, in turn, is a well-known antecedent to outgroup dismissal and derogation.³⁸ In the present context, the shared expectation that UNC instructors and students are generally liberal might help foster a culture in which liberal premises are assumed to be

³⁷ For instance, see Grace Wai-man Ip, Chi-yue Chiu, and Ching Wan. 2006. "Birds of a Feather and Birds Flocking Together: Physical Versus Behavioral Cues May Lead to Trait- Versus Goal-Based Group Perception." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90(3): 368–81.

³⁸ The literature on prejudice, discrimination, and group identity is vast. For one entry point, see Dominic Abrams and Michael A Hogg, 2006. *Social Identifications: a Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes*. Routledge. As used here, "outgroup" refers to a group to which one does not belong and against which one might compete.

shared, where conservative ideas need to be taken a bit less seriously; and in which explicit derogation of conservative people is a bit less taboo. Several of the points we develop below hint that these patterns do indeed occur at UNC.

5) Both liberal and conservative students worry about how students and faculty will respond to their political views, and students across political perspectives engage in self-censorship.

Above, we show that instructors are generally perceived as encouraging participation from students who hold many different political views. Does it follow that students feel comfortable expressing viewpoints with which others might disagree? Not necessarily. Our analyses below suggest that many students worry about the consequences of expressing sincere political views and that they engage regularly in self-censorship.

Methods

Once again, our analysis focuses on the class that was chosen at random from among students' Fall 2018 course lists. For the randomly chosen class, we asked students about six negative consequences that might stem from sharing their "sincere political views." We asked them "How concerned were you that, if you stated your sincere political views, the instructor would give you a lower grade?"; "[...] would have a lower opinion of you?"; or "[...] would embarrass you in front of the class?" We then asked similar questions about peer-related concerns: "How concerned were you that, if you stated your sincere political views, the other students would have a lower opinion of you?"; "[...] would post comments about you on social media?"; or "someone would file a complaint that your comments violated a campus harassment policy of code of conduct?"

Analysis

Table 8 reports how students answered the first three of these questions—those focused on concerns about instructors. Similar to Table 4, we focus on the classes for which this question is pertinent by limiting our analysis to the 60.5% of classes for which students say that politics came up at some point during the semester.

Consistent with the results described in Findings 2 and 3 above, most students were not concerned that expressing their sincere views would affect their course grade (or they believed that the concern was irrelevant to the course the instrument asked about). Still, the proportions that harbor concern are not negligible. For liberal students, the proportion that are at least slightly concerned ranges from 6.2% to 12.5%, depending on the indicated consequence. The proportions for moderate and conservative students are higher—a result we will examine more closely in the next section.

Students' concerns appear to be more acute when applied to peers. Table 9 reports how students answered the three peer-focused questions, again focusing on the 60.5% of classes where politics came up at some point during the semester. In these classes, over 25% of liberal students, over 55% of moderate respondents, and over 75% of conservative student indicated that they were at least slightly concerned that "other students in the class would have a lower opinion" of them as a direct result of sharing their political perspectives. These numbers are lower for concerns about social media posts and harassment/conduct reporting, but even these elements continue to raise significant concerns for conservative students, as we discuss in Finding 6 below.

The most important survey question for this topic, though, asked students to consider “about how many times did you keep an opinion related to class to yourself because you were worried about the potential consequences of expressing that opinion?” Table 10 shows that substantial proportions of students—24.1% to 67.9%, depending on student ideology—engage in self-censorship. A substantial percentage of respondents not only indicate that they self-censor, but that they do so multiple times in a single class.

Table 8: Students' Concerns About Instructors, by Respondent Self-identification

	<i>Instructor would lower grade</i>			<i>Instructor would lower opinion</i>			<i>Instructor would embarrass you</i>		
	<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Not concerned	82.0%	64.6%	54.0%	76.1%	50.4%	44.4%	77.9%	63.7%	55.8%
Slightly concerned	3.8	7.1	14.2	7.9	16.8	13.3	6.6	9.7	9.8
Somewhat concerned	1.3	5.3	7.1	2.8	8.9	7.1	1.5	3.5	8.9
Moderately concerned	0.8	2.7	8.9	1.5	4.4	18.6	1.5	7.1	9.7
Extremely concerned	0.3	5.3	8.0	0.3	4.4	10.6	0.3	1.8	8.9
Irrelevant	11.9	15.0	8.0	11.4	15.0	6.2	12.2	14.2	7.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	394	113	113	394	113	113	394	113	113

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

Table 9: Students' Concerns About Other Students, by Respondent Self-identification

	<i>Students would lower opinion</i>			<i>Students would post on social media</i>			<i>Students would file a complaint</i>		
	<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Not concerned	62.2%	25.7%	15.0%	78.7%	62.8%	46.9%	83.5%	70.8%	52.2%
Slightly concerned	17.3	26.6	16.8	6.4	15.0	15.9	2.0	5.3	15.9
Somewhat concerned	3.3	15.9	12.4	1.8	2.7	8.0	1.0	7.0	8.0
Moderately concerned	4.3	9.7	13.3	1.8	4.4	11.5	0.3	3.5	5.3
Extremely concerned	1.3	6.2	32.7	0.3	2.7	8.0	0.3	0.9	11.5
Irrelevant	11.7	16.0	9.7	11.2	12.4	9.7	13.0	12.4	7.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	394	113	113	394	113	113	393	113	113

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

Table 10: How Often Students Kept an Opinion Related to Class to Themselves, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<u>Ideological Self-identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Never	75.9%	51.3%	32.1%
Once	9.9	20.4	9.8
2-5 times	12.7	18.6	27.7
6-10 times	0.0	5.3	13.4
More than 10 times	1.5	4.4	17.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	395	113	112

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

Conversations about free expression on college campuses also commonly focus on self-censorship arising from cultural or social factors. Thus, we also examined results for the self-censorship question broken down by self-reported gender and race. The results appear in Table 11. In some instances, this approach results in small subgroupings that strain how far we can push our data. Nevertheless, the between-group differences are more muted than those above. Thus, these data do not establish racial or gender biases as a source of UNC students’ anxieties about self-expression.

Table 11: How Often Students Kept an Opinion Related to Class to Themselves, by Gender and Race

	<u>Gender identity</u>			<u>Racial identity</u>				
	Male	Female	Non-binary	White	Black	Latino/a	Asian	Other
Never	55.0%	68.3%	55.6%	63.2%	69.8%	59.5%	66.7%	66.7%
Once	12.9	10.6	22.2	11.0	14.0	11.9	13.3	10.0
2-5 times	18.7	15.6	22.2	16.8	16.3	19.1	16.7	13.3
6-10 times	4.8	2.8	0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.0
> than 10 times	8.6	2.6	0.0	4.5	0.0	9.5	1.7	10.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	209	423	9	464	43	42	60	30

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

We conclude this section by noting two important caveats concerning the results above. First, while we are able to document differences in students’ perceptions that they are holding back sincere views, we do not know what those views are. Perhaps students are holding views back because they wish to reflect on them further; out of sensitivity for others’ feelings; out of a desire to exhibit some form of solidarity; or because they are concerned about causing emotional distress in others. Some

might wonder whether these are views that *should* be held back. This matter is difficult to investigate empirically and by nature involves difficult value judgment.

Second, our questions focus on student *perceptions*. Perceptions, of course, do not always emerge from reality. Our discussion, therefore, is not dispositive of the notion that the anxieties students report feeling (i.e. that UNC professors *will* lower grades based on students' political beliefs or that peers *will* judge them) are rooted in specific experiences.

But perceptions merit attention in their own right. As we argued at the outset, sharing diverse viewpoints serves an indispensable pedagogical and epistemological function. That a substantial proportion of respondents fear social sanction, or even outright grading penalties, for sharing their views raises significant questions about how completely this function is being fulfilled.

We also note that there is something of a disjuncture between the results we present here and the previously discussed finding that instructors are perceived to encourage engagement from across the political spectrum. We speculate about potential explanations for this disjuncture in our concluding section.

6) Anxieties about expressing political views and self-censorship are more prevalent among students who identify as conservative.

While the evidence above suggests that *both* liberal and conservative students sometimes feel as if their opinions aren't valued or welcome by peers and professors, we also wish to examine whether these experiences are shared unevenly. This section examines the potentially divergent experiences of students on the political left versus political right.

The results suggest that, compared to self-identified liberals, self-identified conservatives feel less welcome to express their political perspectives—both in UNC classes and on campus in general.

Analysis

Stark liberal/conservative divides emerge from the data reported in Table 8 – Table 10. For instance, 12.5% of self-identified liberal students worried that expressing sincere views would cause an instructor to have a lower opinion of them, but 49.6% of self-identified conservative students felt this way. And while 26.2% percent of self-identified liberals worried about losing the esteem of their peers, 75.2% of self-identified conservatives had the same concern. Most alarmingly, the proportion of self-identified conservatives who censored themselves at least once (67.9%) is almost three times as large as the proportion of self-identified liberals who did the same (24.1%).

A liberal/conservative divide in experiences concerning free expression is even more evident when we shift our frame of reference from a single randomly selected class to experiences over the full span of students' time at UNC. After the questions pertaining to a specific class, the survey instrument asked students to “think about your **entire** time as a student at UNC, from the time you first came to UNC until now.” We asked them how often they worried that expressing sincere views would result in 1) receiving a lower grade, 2) other students having a lower opinion of them, and 3) having critical comments posted on social media. Table 12 presents how students responded to these questions.

Consistent with the results described in Finding 5 above, a remarkable number of students across political ideologies indicated that they felt such worry at least “once or twice.” Yet, more conservative students feel this worry, and they feel it more often. Only 21.2% of self-identified conservative students—compared to 77.5% of self-identified liberal students and 49.5 of self-identified moderate students—report that they have never felt worried. And 31.0 % of self-identified conservative respondents reported feeling such worry “several” times or “most weeks,” versus 1.5% of self-identified liberal respondents and 10.9% of self-identified moderate respondents.

As with the data discussed in Finding 5 above, these sentiments are amplified for peers. A remarkable number of students across the ideological spectrum indicated that they felt such worry at least “once or twice.” But whereas 50.5% of self-identified liberal respondents have “never” felt worried, only 9.9% of self-identified conservative respondents selected this option. The highest percentage of self-identified conservative respondents (32.5%), rather, reported feeling worried “most weeks,” the most frequent option; 1.69% of self-identified liberal respondents selected this option.

Self-identified Conservative students appear to be especially concerned about “critical comments” on social media. More than half of the self-identified conservative respondents (53.7%) indicated that they worried about such comments “at least one or twice,” but fewer than a quarter of self-identified liberal respondents (19.9%) and fewer than half (40.2%) of self-identified moderate students shared this concern.

The members of our conservative focus group repeatedly reflected on this theme, alluding to substantial social risks associated with expressing their political views:

A lot of conservatives don't feel comfortable speaking out, and I have to say this because I'm pretty outwardly conservative. I have stickers on my laptop, but, you know, it's obvious that I am conservative, and people will come up to me all the time and tell me "oh, I'm conservative too, but I don't feel like I can speak about that in class.”

Another student remarked:

I feel like a large number of those conservatives on campus are not comfortable presenting those views for fear of ridicule in class as well as in the student body. Which is a shame.

Still another said:

[T]here are times when in class discussions, if you're outwardly conservative, sometimes you have to dial what you say back for fear of ridicule by your peers and your professor at the same time. And, uh, and of course I'm not someone who tries to like push political discussion in every facet of my life. So, I mean, it's not as hard for me to withhold political views in like everyday conversation. But when politics come up, you have to find the...you kind of have to tip toe around it. You know, you have to say what you believe, but you also have to say it in a way that you're protecting yourself from being called...a racist or a Nazi or some other derogative names. Just because you believe in a small government, so you really have to tiptoe around the way you present your views.

The asymmetry between left-leaning and right-leaning students' concerns about expressing sincere views raises significant questions about whether a full range of political views are finding voice in campus discussions.

Table 12: Students' Concerns During Entire Time at UNC, by Student Ideological Self-identification

	<i>Would receive a lower grade</i>			<i>Peers would lower opinion</i>			<i>Critical comments on social media</i>		
	<u>Ideological Self-Identification:</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification:</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification:</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Never	77.5%	49.5%	21.2%	50.5%	16.3%	9.9%	81.1%	59.8%	46.3%
Once or twice a year	16.5	23.4	25.6	29.1	25.0	9.4	12.9	19.6	15.8
Few per semester	4.5	16.3	22.2	13.9	28.3	17.2	4.0	12.0	14.8
Several per semester	1.2	7.1	20.2	4.8	21.7	31.0	1.4	5.4	15.3
Most weeks	0.3	3.8	10.8	1.7	8.7	32.5	0.6	3.3	7.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	650	184	203	649	184	203	650	184	203

Note: The response options for all questions were “Never,” “Once or twice a year,” “A few times per semester,” “Several times per semester,” and “Most weeks, or more often than that.”

7) Students worry more about censure from peers than from faculty.

As we note above, concerns about free expression on college campuses often focus narrowly on *faculty*. This focus is understandable; faculty have positions of power. They dictate course agendas, prescribe readings, evaluate student work, and often serve as role models. And yet the focus on faculty might be in error. In our investigation, there are signs that constraints on free expression derive at least as much from students' peers as from faculty. We elucidate those patterns in this section.

Taken together, the peer-focused data further support the conclusion that students struggle to engage in constructive dialogue with their peers and that developing student skills in this area is a pressing campus need.³⁹

Analysis

Here, we do not present additional tables, but instead emphasize some patterns evident in the results above. Comparing Table 8 and Table 9, we note that peer-focused concerns generally appear more profound than faculty-focused concerns. For instance, students across political ideologies are much more concerned that peers will think less of them than they are that faculty will think less of them, or even that faculty will lower their grades. Furthermore, in Table 12, concerns about losing standing among peers seem particularly acute.

These concerns were also evident in the focus groups we conducted. A participant in the one of the liberal focus group stated:

[L]ast year when Sebastian Gorka came to campus, like me and my friend who were both like very liberal, like were planning to go to the event, like sit in the back row and just kind of take a look. But honestly there are so many protests outside of it that like we're making us feel really bad about going. It kind of just backed [sic] away and like not go.

When discussing conservatives, a participant in the other liberal focus group said,

[...] they can stop supporting Trump if they want more friends.

8) Students harbor divisive stereotypes about one another.

At the national level, Republicans and Democrats citizens tend to make drastic assumptions about each other. For instance, one recent study found Republicans, on average, estimated that 38% of Democrats are lesbian, gay, or bisexual (the best estimate is 6%), and Democrats estimated that 44% of Republicans make more than \$250,000 per year (the true figure is approximately 2%).⁴⁰ These estimates likely emerge from stereotypes that media and politicians perpetuate, but the misconceptions are notable because can help underscore the prevailing narrative that Republicans and Democrats are fundamentally different *types* of people, such that differences among them are unbridgeable.

³⁹ For overlapping conclusions drawn from a separate study at Dartmouth College, see <https://www.thedartmouth.com/article/2018/05/a-survey-of-dartmouths-political-and-free-speech-climate>

⁴⁰ Ahler, Douglas J, and Gaurav Sood. 2018. "The Parties in Our Heads: Misperceptions About Party Composition and Their Consequences." *Journal of Politics* 80(3): 964–81.

We wanted to get a sense, then, of assumptions that liberal and conservative students at UNC make about each other, as it seemed possible such assumptions might be less drastic in a community such as UNC's than on the national stage. Liberal and conservative UNC students go through rites of passage, such as first-year orientation, with each other. They live in the same dorms, attend the same classes, cheer for the same beloved athletic teams, and even have shared adversaries (e.g. Duke University). Yet, we find that such shared experiences do not fully dispel negative views toward people who disagree about politics; students from across the political spectrum harbor substantial negative stereotypes about each other.

Methods

To get a sense of what stereotypes respondents harbor about each other, we asked them to report how well they thought various words and phrases describe “students on the liberal side of the political spectrum” and “students on the conservative side of the political spectrum.” Whether students were first asked to describe liberal peers or first asked to describe conservative peers was randomized. The order of the phrases that might describe liberals and conservatives was also randomized. The ten phrases are listed in Table 13. The response options were “Not well at all,” “Slightly well,” “Moderately well,” “Very well,” and “Extremely well.” For ease of presentation, we calculate the proportion of students who said that each phrase describes the opposing group moderately, very, or extremely well. The resulting proportions are what is reported in Table 13.

Table 13: Stereotypes of Liberal and Conservative Students at UNC

	Liberal-identifying students’ perception of conservative students	Conservative-identifying students’ perception of liberal students
<i>Positive Traits</i>		
Well-educated	49.9%	76.2%
Open-minded	8.0	27.7
Well-informed	24.2	44.3
Tolerant	9.7	28.6
Intelligent	52.6	73.4
<i>Negative traits</i>		
Racist	68.9%	29.1%
Sexist	69.7	33.0
Immoral	39.6	37.0
Condescending	70.5	81.8
Follow others without thinking	69.7	78.7

Note: Cells entries indicate the percentage of respondents saying that the trait describes a group moderately well, very well, or extremely well.

Analysis

Table 13’s data shows that students are hesitant to apply positive stereotypes to the ideological outgroup (self-identified liberals’ ratings of conservatives, and vice-versa). For instance, only 27.7% of self-identified conservatives say that liberal students are “open-minded,” and only 8% of self-identified liberals say that conservative students are “open-minded.” In addition, respondents

commonly applied negative attributes to students in the outgroup. Particularly striking is how readily self-identified liberal students—well over half—applied freighted terms such as “racist” and “sexist” to conservative peers. Self-identified Conservatives’ responses on these questions were not symmetrical; only about 30% of self-identified conservatives said that liberal peers were “racist” or “sexist.”

In our focus group interviews, we asked students about the possibility of developing social ties with students who hold different political views. During this part of the interview, a participant from one of the liberal focus groups reported assuming that conservatives are, almost as a matter of definition, bigoted:

If I know someone is conservative, I automatically think that, oh well, they don't like [identity]. They don't want [identity] making your own choices. They don't like [other identity] people. And so, I know that they won't like those two things about me. So, I'm, well, I don't know if I can be your friend.

The frequency and types of negative assumptions represented here warrant further attention, particularly with regard to both the stereotyping itself and how the fear of being pre-judged relates to the trends described in Findings 5-7 above. Are students across the political spectrum self-censoring *because* they perceive their colleagues to be close-minded or intolerant? Or, do they hold back because they fear being immediately labeled racist, sexist, condescending, or uninformed? Or, both?

9) Students across ideologies report commonly hearing disparaging comments about political conservatives.

Finding 6 above shows that, compared to self-identified liberal students, self-identified conservative UNC students have more concerns about expressing their sincere political views and are more likely to engage in self-censorship. Finding 3 casts some doubt on the notion that instructors actively discourage conservatives from speaking up. A theme in Findings 5-7, on the other hand, is that students are quite concerned with responses from their peers. This finding expands the examination of peer relationships by considering the broader campus culture as surrounds free expression and the particular challenges that various social groups might face. The evidence below suggests that UNC community members have not internalized norms of respect and civility toward conservatives to the same extent they have toward other groups.

Methods

Specifically, we examined how often students hear disparaging comments about various groups on campus. Toward the end of the survey, our instrument asked respondents, “About how often do you hear someone at UNC make disrespectful, inappropriate, or offensive comments about each of the following groups?” Twelve groups (listed below) were presented in random order. For each group, the respondent could indicate hearing such comments, “Never,” “Once or twice a year,” “A few times per semester,” “Several times per semester,” or “Most weeks, or more often than that.”

Analysis

To simplify presentation, Table 14 presents the proportions of respondents indicating that they hear disrespectful, inappropriate, or offensive comments *at least* several times per semester.

Table 14: How Often Does Respondent Hear Inappropriate Comments?, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<u>Respondent ideological Self-Identification:</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Women	32.4%	17.5%	10.3%
Men	24.6	39.0	52.2
Whites	22.0	40.1	60.1
African Americans	19.8	9.4	7.4
Hispanics or Latinos	11.6	4.9	5.9
Asians	10.7	8.7	6.4
Students born outside the US	10.3	6.0	4.9
Christians	20.4	32.8	44.6
Muslims	14.2	9.3	8.4
LGBT individuals	21.5	13.0	10.9
Political liberals	21.2	11.4	11.9
Political conservatives	57.1	67.8	82.8
N	644	181	201

Note: Cell entries represent the proportion of students saying that they hear disrespectful, inappropriate, or offensive comments about the listed group several times per semester, or more often than that. The number of respondents for a particular item varies slightly due to item nonresponse.

For several groups, the proportion of students who say they hear inappropriate comments several times or more per semester is below 20%, regardless of the respondent’s political leanings. Such groups include African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, Asians, Students born outside the U.S., and Muslims. For several other groups, the proportions of students who report hearing inappropriate comments is somewhat higher—and sometimes self-identified liberals and self-identified conservatives disagree about how commonly a given group is disparaged. Political conservatives, though, stand apart in Table 14; substantially more students report hearing someone at UNC making inappropriate comments directed at political conservatives than at any other group. Even students who identify as liberal report hearing inappropriate comments directed at conservatives more often than at any of the eleven other groups offered.⁴¹

Since the risk for misunderstanding seems especially high for these results, we wish to emphatically clarify what they *do not* imply. First, they do not imply that difficulties faced by the groups with lower rates of offensive comments are, in any way, insignificant. Second, they do not imply that political conservatives globally face greater challenges at UNC than the other groups listed or that conservatives have greater reason to be aggrieved about their social circumstances than the other groups listed. There is no doubt an array of challenges not reflected in the table above—challenges related to overall inclusion, finding a welcoming friend network, feeling understood, being able to partake in activities, and so forth. Also, inappropriate remarks directed at each of the

⁴¹ The results in Table 14 coincide with recent social scientific research showing that Americans generally have much less apprehension about acting in discriminatory ways toward political opponents than they do toward other (nonpolitical) social groupings. See Iyengar, Shanto, and Sean J Westwood. 2015. “Fear and Loathing Across Party Lines: New Evidence on Group Polarization.” *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3): 690–707.

groups listed in the table are not strictly comparable; disrespectful comments likely hurt more when they are directed at immutable aspects of a person's identity, rather than at political opinions.

With these caveats in mind, we note that the results above raise concerns about intergroup relationships. Does the prevalence of disparaging remarks directed at conservatives open doors to more intense forms of disparagement, or outright discrimination? Does it lead students to hold an exaggerated perception of how wide the rift between liberals and conservatives really is, and thereby miss opportunities for consensus?⁴² If UNC stakeholders seek to nurture a campus climate more conducive to constructive dialogue, these issues are worth greater examination and reflection.

10) Many respondents are open to engaging socially with students who don't share their political views, but a substantial minority is not.

In addition to considering the prevalence of specific stereotypes and remarks, we also wanted to examine students' broader orientation toward political diversity at UNC. In particular, we wanted to better understand the extent to which political disagreements permeate into campus social life—whether students are able to have meaningful and constructive conversations about political topics despite political differences. At the most basic level, they help students understand each other's perspectives on contentious issues. But beyond this, such interactions can help people to *individuate*—to see opponents are distinctive people, rather than simply the embodiment of a stereotype.⁴³ On the other hand, students distancing themselves from opponents may lead to social isolation or development of a zero-sum “us versus them” orientation toward political discourse.

We find that, while many students recognize intellectual diversity's value and are willing to include their ideological opposites in their personal and academic life, many others seek social distance.

Methods

Our survey instrument asked students what kind of social interactions they are willing to have with political liberals and conservatives. (All respondents were asked about both groups, in a random order.) We asked whether they would be willing to have someone from each of these groups as a friend, whether they would be willing to share a room with them, whether they would be willing to date them, and whether they enjoy taking classes with students from the group. There were five response options ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree.” Together, these questions constitute a context-appropriate measure of what psychologists call *preference for social distance*.⁴⁴

⁴² A social psychological literature on metaperceptions—people's guesses about what *others* think of them—is relevant here. For a recent political application that highlights a tendency to overestimate the negativity with which an outgroup regards an ingroup, see Appleby, Jacob. 2018. “Do They Like Us? Meta-stereotypes and Meta-evaluations Between Political Groups.” Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Minnesota.

⁴³ On outgroup homogeneity and individuation, see Thomas M. Ostrom and Constantine Sedikides. 1992. “Out-Group Homogeneity Effects in Natural and Minimal Groups.” *Psychological Bulletin* 112(3): 536; Susan T. Fiske, Steven L. Neuberg, Ann E. Beattie, and Sandra J. Milberg. 1987. “Category-Based and Attribute-Based Reactions to Others: Some Informational Conditions of Stereotyping and Individuating Processes.” *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 23(5): 399–427.

⁴⁴ See Iyengar, Shanto, Gaurav Sood, and Yphtach Lelkes. 2012. “Affect, Not Ideology: a Social Identity Perspective on Polarization.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76(3): 405–31.

Analysis

The top half of Table 15 reports how students answered questions about the political outgroup (self-identified liberal students' answers about conservatives and vice-versa), by respondent ideology. More than half of respondents say they are willing to be friends with or room with someone from the outgroup or would enjoy taking classes with students from the outgroup. Fewer students express a willingness to date a member of the outgroup. At the same time, substantial proportions of students say they are unwilling to engage socially with students from the outgroup and do not enjoy taking classes with them.

We also asked students whether faculty and students from the political outgroup are an important part of the campus community. Again, most respondents—86% of students who identify as conservative and 72.5% of students who identify as liberal say that they are, but a disappointing number—14.4% of students who identify as conservative and 21.9% of students who identify as liberal—say that UNC would be better without the political outgroup.

As seen in other findings detailed above, Table 15 contains evidence of asymmetry, with students who identify as conservative having a friendlier orientation toward liberals than vice-versa. For all rows in Table 15, the proportion of students who identify as conservative and who are favorably disposed toward social interaction with political opponents (column 4) is noticeably higher than students who identify as liberal and who are favorably disposed toward social interaction with political opponents (column 2).

Our focus group interviews also reflected some of the ambivalence about social interactions with the political outgroup. Most respondents, for example, were willing to acknowledge a need for political diversity on campus, as this remark from one of the liberal focus groups illustrates:

I disagree with most of their [conservatives'] viewpoints. I mean, coming from just my point of view, but I think it's definitely helped me to have a diversity (of) political opinion and talk on our campus. I mean I wish they would speak up a little bit more in class every now and then. It just like kind (of) to facilitate a healthy discussion. So, I don't really have a problem with them being in my classes or like speaking up every now and then.

Some participants nevertheless expressed that they had no interest in social interactions with the outgroup:

I don't think I could be friends with the conservatives personally, because I know that our values are completely different. I mean I think that conservatives should be allowed to exist or whatever. But I'm not going to...I wouldn't put someone in my support group that is someone who hates poor people.

These results build on Findings 5, 6, and 9 above in supporting the conclusion that conservative students at UNC face particular obstacles to integrating themselves into the broader campus community. Positive social engagement across political boundaries may increase all students' respect for each other and their capacity to engage in constructive dialogue.

Table 15: Broader Orientations Toward Political Outgroup, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	Self-identified liberals		Self-identified conservatives	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
<i>Social distance</i>				
Would have outgroup member as a friend	23.4%	63.0%	3.0%	92.1%
Would have outgroup member as a roommate	35.2	51.8	5.9	83.7
Enjoys taking classes with students from the outgroup	21.0	51.4	15.4	67.3
Would date member of the outgroup	60.2	25.0	30.2	55.5
<i>Community inclusion</i>				
Students from outgroup are important to campus community	9.5	72.5	3.5	86.0
Faculty from outgroup are important to campus community	13.4	64.8	6.9	81.2
	Would be better without	Would be worse without	Would be better without	Would be worse without
UNC would be better without students from the outgroup	21.9	48.6	14.4	61.4

Note: For all items except the final one, response options were, “Strongly disagree,” “Somewhat disagree,” “Neither agree nor disagree,” “Somewhat agree,” and “Strongly agree.” The percentages do not add up to 100% because, for simplicity, we omit the “neither agree nor disagree” category. For the final item, the response options were “UNC would be [much better / a little better / neither better nor worse / a little worse / much worse] without [liberals / conservatives].” Percentages within groups do not tally to 100% because the neutral category is omitted. This analysis includes approximately 649 liberal and 202 conservative students. (The precise N varies slightly due to item nonresponse.)

11) Approximately 19% of self-identified liberals and 3% of self-identified moderates and conservatives endorse blocking a speaker they disagree with.*

The prospects for constructive dialogue in a diverse community depend critically on what community members regard to be acceptable channels for expressing disagreement. When people with differing views are willing to engage, they frequently learn from each other. On the other hand,

* In the Feb. 5 draft of this report, this finding read, “Over 25% of students endorse blocking a speaker they disagree with.” That statement accurately describes the proportion of students who selected “somewhat appropriate,” “appropriate,” or “entirely appropriate” in response to the “create obstruction” and “form a picket line” items below. However, Table 17 below reports proportions that are calculated in a more restrictive way: only “appropriate” and “entirely appropriate” are coded as endorsement of blocking a speaker. We have updated the wording of the finding to render it consistent with the table and avoid confusion.

when people feel they do not have opportunities to express their sincere views, they tend to become frustrated and resentful. Also, limited opportunities to hear others' sincere views deprives audiences—especially those who might be undecided about a particular topic—the opportunity to weigh one argument against another and come to their own conclusions. This opportunity is a long-standing tenet of knowledge-generating discourse.⁴⁵ Many regard at least some recent episodes on American college campuses—disinvited visitors, interrupted speakers, and even spats of violence—as significant departures from this ideal.

We wanted to better understand how UNC students engage with political disagreement: what they regard as acceptable means of expressing dissent and what core principles of tolerance and free expression they embrace. For the most part, we find that students agree about what are appropriate and inappropriate actions to take when confronting political disagreement. But a small group of students see speaker disruption as appropriate, where most others do not.

Methods

One obstacle we confronted in trying to understand UNC students' orientation toward political tolerance is that views on tolerance are notoriously difficult to measure. In general, people favor tolerance in the abstract. For instance, according to a 2015 Pew Research Center Poll, 71% of Americans agreed that “it is very important that people can say what they want without state/government censorship,”⁴⁶ and 78% of college students interviewed in one survey favored creating “an open learning environment where students are exposed to all types of speech and viewpoints, even if it means allowing speech that is offensive or biased against certain groups of people.”⁴⁷ Such abstract endorsements, though, do not transfer to particular circumstances. For instance, a classic political science study finds that although large proportions of Americans endorse abstract tolerance, they were far less comfortable endorsing free speech by specific controversial groups—e.g., communists, atheists, the Black Panthers, abortion and anti-abortion activists.⁴⁸ In other words, tolerance is easier to preach than to practice.

We employed a technique designed to measure UNC students' tolerance for specific views with which they disagree.⁴⁹ The technique had two stages. In the first stage, students were presented with ten specific political beliefs (listed in a random order) “that people at UNC might hold.” From this list, each respondent was asked to choose the one political belief “that you find **most objectionable**.”

The ten items we presented to respondents are shown in Table 16. We chose five positions that a liberal student might hold, and five that a conservative student might hold. We also attempted to cover several different topical areas in the hope that all respondents would see at least one political position that they strongly disliked. Some of the positions refer to national political issues—e.g.

⁴⁵ See John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859), for the classic statement of these ideas.

⁴⁶ <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2015/11/18/global-support-for-principle-of-free-expression-but-opposition-to-some-forms-of-speech/>

⁴⁷ Gallup, “Free Expression on Campus: A Survey of U.S. College Students and U.S. Adults.” Available online at https://www.knightfoundation.org/media/uploads/publication_pdfs/FreeSpeech_campus.pdf.

⁴⁸ Sullivan, John, James Piereson, and George E. Marcus. 1979. “An Alternative Conceptualization of Political Tolerance: Illusory Increases 1950s-1970s.” *American Political Science Review* 73(3): 781–94.

⁴⁹ See Sullivan et al. (1979) for the origins of this approach.

immigration policy—and some of them allude to significant controversies specific to UNC.⁵⁰ It was not our intention to choose items that *most* or *typical* liberal/conservative students at UNC hold, nor did we attempt to select the most extreme viewpoints in order to manufacture artificial controversy. Rather, we attempted to choose views that are genuinely controversial and that a critical mass of individuals on our campus really do hold. These are views that students will encounter as they navigate their academic and social lives.

Table 16: Controversial Political Positions Presented to Survey Respondents

Positions liberal students might hold

- 1) The Silent Sam statue should be destroyed
- 2) University admissions should give preference to applicants from disadvantaged racial groups in order to help alleviate past injustices
- 3) Most undocumented/illegal immigrants should be granted amnesty and eventually equal rights as US citizens
- 4) A Christian wedding cake maker should be required to design cakes for same-sex weddings, even if the cake maker is opposed to same-sex marriage
- 5) The government has a responsibility to make sure every citizen has equal access to affordable health care

Positions conservative students might hold

- 6) The Silent Sam statue should be restored to its original location
- 7) Affirmative action should end, and an applicant's race should not carry any weight in university admissions
- 8) The United States should build a wall on its southern border to decrease undocumented/illegal immigration
- 9) Same-sex marriages should not be recognized as valid in the United States
- 10) There is no convincing evidence of human-caused global climate change

Note: Controversial positions were listed in a random order.

After respondents chose the view that they considered most objectionable, their responses were recorded, and they advanced to the next screen.⁵¹ Here, the respondents were asked to focus exclusively on the chosen view: “Please think about people at UNC who believe [statement selected on the previous screen]. How appropriate would it be to take each of the following actions?” There were eight actions listed in a random order. Two of the eight—publishing a critical essay or asking a challenging question—are generally considered to be respectful and constructive forms of engagement. Two more actions—interrupting a speaker or blocking entrance to a campus event—

⁵⁰ “Silent Sam” is a Confederate monument that stood in a prominent position on UNC’s campus for many years. At the time of our survey, it had been torn down in a student protest, but its future disposition remains a major campus controversy.)

⁵¹ Which items did respondents choose? This question is somewhat beyond our scope, since the purpose of “Most objectionable position” item is to populate the tolerance items that followed, and not, to understand what positions students see as most objectionable *per se*. But for the curious reader, the most commonly selected items among students who identified as liberal were #10 (33.5%) followed by #9 (25.4%) followed by #8 (22.4%). Among students who identified as conservative the most commonly selected items were #4 (23.2%) followed by #2 (22.2%) followed by #3 (17.2%). The facts that neither groups landed uniformly on a single item reduces any potential concern that our conclusions rely too much on responses to just one particularly controversial position.

have been used by groups around the country, but are generally prohibited by student conduct codes, including UNC's. The remaining four actions—vandalizing a dorm or office; shoving a student; and hurling verbal abuse—clearly violate student conduct codes and are potentially actionable under criminal statutes.

Table 17: Students' Responses to Objectionable Political View

	Ideological Self-Identification		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Write an opinion piece explaining the reasons for your disagreement and submit it to a campus publication.	88.6%	76.6%	84.7%
Ask a challenging question of a speaker who endorsed the idea.	90.3	79.9	86.2
Create an obstruction, such that a campus speaker endorsing this idea could not address an audience.	19.2	3.3	3.0
Form a picket line to block students from entering an event where a speaker will argue for this idea.	18.7	2.7	1.0
Write graffiti on the dorm room of a student who endorses this idea.	1.5	1.1	0.5
Write graffiti on the office of a faculty member who endorses this idea.	3.2	0.0	1.0
Yell profanity at a student who endorses this idea as he or she walks across campus.	3.5	0.0	0.5
Shove a student who endorses this idea when they are speaking about it outside on campus.	1.5	0.5	1.0
N	651	184	203

Note: Cell entries represent the proportion of respondents saying that it would be “appropriate” or “entirely appropriate” to take the specified action. The precise N varies slightly due to item nonresponse.

Table 17 reports the proportion of students who indicate that they regard each of these actions as either “appropriate” or “entirely appropriate.” There are some points of consensus. Across the political spectrum, students generally see writing an opinion piece and asking a question as appropriate forms of engagement.⁵² For the bottom four actions, which are the most serious breaches of conduct, the proportions of students who regard them as appropriate are very small—so low, in fact, that it is difficult to rule out mundane possibilities such as that some respondents accidentally clicked the wrong button on their computer screens.⁵³

Rows 3 and 4 show Table 17's more striking results. First, students who identify as liberal more frequently indicated that obstructing speakers was an appropriate option for expressing disagreement. Specifically, 19.2% these students endorse such actions, whereas trace numbers—approximately 3%—of moderates or conservatives do. These results notwithstanding, the vast majority of students who identify as liberal (over 80%) do *not* endorse speaker obstructions. For this reason, it would be erroneous to say students who identify as liberal endorse disruptive behavior

⁵² We are somewhat surprised that these proportions are not even higher than they are. One possibility is that some respondents interpreted the word “appropriate” to mean “effectual” or “likely to be successful” rather than (our intention) “within the bounds of permissible conduct.” This possibility represents a caveat—although we believe it to be a small one since such misunderstanding likely applies only to very few respondents and since such misunderstanding likely applies uniformly across items and ideological categories.

⁵³ For the “shove a student” item—the most serious action in our array—thirteen respondents said this action was appropriate or entirely appropriate. An additional thirty said it was somewhat appropriate.

while students who identify conservative do not. In fact, *all* subgroups generally believe disruptions are inappropriate.

12) Students across the political spectrum express interest in having more opportunities for constructive dialogue—in particular conversations that include conservative speakers.

Finally, we sought to examine what actions might be taken to support a culture of free expression and constructive dialogue at UNC. The findings above imply some possibilities, and we discuss those possibilities in more depth below. Here, we report how students responded to three specific questions about opportunities to hear and engage with outside speakers. We find broad support for increasing campus opportunities to engage in constructive dialogue—especially opportunities that increase opportunities to hear conservative perspectives.

Methods

Near the end of the survey instrument, we asked students, “How many opportunities does UNC provide for students to have outside speakers visit campus and articulate liberal perspectives?” We repeated the same question for “conservative perspectives.” We also asked, “How many opportunities does UNC provide for students to engage constructively with people who disagree with them?” For all questions, the response options were, “Far too few opportunities,” “Somewhat too few opportunities,” “About the right number of opportunities,” “Somewhat too many opportunities,” and “Far too many opportunities.”

Analysis

Table 18 reports how students answered this question. Only 6.9% of students who identify as liberal say that UNC has too many liberal speakers, and less than 1% of students who identify as conservative (just one respondent in our sample) say that there are too many conservative speakers.⁵⁴ What is most remarkable here, though, is the extent to which responses from across the political spectrum reach a consensus—in-group bias notwithstanding. An overwhelming 91.6% of students who identify as conservative say that UNC invites too few conservative speakers. To an impressive extent, students who identify as liberal agree. More students who identify as liberal (37.4%) say that there are too few conservative speakers than say that there are too many (15.5%). Furthermore, more students who identify as liberal say that there are too few conservative speakers (37.4%) than say that there are too few liberal speakers (21.5%). Students who identify as moderate agree, too: 63.4% of students who identify as moderate in our sample indicated that there are too few opportunities to hear conservative speakers, but only 2.7% indicated that there were too many—a more than 20:1 ratio.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ It is common for questions that contrast opposing groups (e.g. liberals and conservatives) to elicit some in-group bias, and that pattern is apparent here.

⁵⁵ We acknowledge some potential limitations in Table 18’s results: they show students’ *perceptions* of what speakers visit campus, not the actual mixture of speakers. If we could take a full census of all the speakers invited to UNC and attempt to classify them by ideological leaning (or lack thereof), perhaps an entirely different picture would emerge. It is nevertheless clear that students generally crave more opportunities to engage with opposing viewpoints.

One member of the conservative focus group spoke favorably of events that present liberal and conservative speakers together on the same platform and indicated that such events can both neutralize protests and facilitate constructive discussions:

[...] I find the issue is that every time a conservative speaker comes to campus there's a lot of protesting. I think if we have more speakers come to campus and especially alongside of, you know, conservative and liberal speakers together, people will be more willing to listen to them. Part of the issue is that they hear things from other students or from whoever from the media and they sort of bring these preconceived notions about them, you know, this person is just a racist so I can put this in there. But if they actually sat down and listened to them, they might realize they aren't really that.

On the other hand, when asked about a potential “Free Speech Week,” that would include speakers from the political right, students in of the liberal focus group expressed skepticism. Specifically, one student worried such an effort would “put the left and right on equal footing,” which would be improper because “I don’t think much of the right is using logical arguments” and “it would basically just promote far right-wing ideologies.”

These results reveals substantial enthusiasm for more constructive disagreement or dialogue across the political spectrum. Yet, given the concerns raised in the student group focus groups, efforts to change the mixture of speaker events on campus should emphasize such events’ *constructive* goals in order to avoid misunderstanding about the events’ motives or expectations.

Table 18: Students' View of Campus Opportunities to Hear Political Perspectives, by Respondent Ideology

	<u>Self-identified liberals</u>			<u>Self-identified moderates</u>			<u>Self-identified conservatives</u>		
	Too few	About right	Too many	Too few	About right	Too many	Too few	About right	Too many
Hear liberal perspectives	21.5%	71.6%	6.9%	10.4%	57.9%	31.7%	9.9%	31.5%	58.6%
Hear conservative perspectives	37.4	47.1	15.5	63.4	33.9	2.7	91.6	7.9	0.5
Engage with disagreement	58.0	39.5	2.5	61.8	36.0	2.2	75.9	22.2	2.0

Note: Response options were, “Far too few opportunities,” “Somewhat too few opportunities,” “About the right number of opportunities,” “Somewhat too many opportunities,” and “Far too many opportunities.” For simplicity, the table above collapses together students who said there were “somewhat” and “far” too many/few opportunities.

General Discussion

Throughout the analysis above, our purpose has been to characterize UNC students' perspectives on the university's culture for free expression—what has happened to them inside and outside of class, their attitudes toward political disagreement, and their interest in cultural change. To this point, we have stuck narrowly to the particular patterns we uncovered. In the discussion that follows, we conclude with a broader reflection that considers these in light of our own experiences at UNC and in higher education more generally.

Like many universities, UNC has a faculty that leans substantially to the left.⁵⁶ But for the most part, these views do not manifest themselves in the university's classrooms in the way that many critics assume. As we discuss in Findings 2 and 3 above, politics is not a regular topic of conversation in most classes, instructors do not regularly offer political opinions, and even when politics comes up, most instructors are perceived—even by students who identify as conservative—as encouraging participation from liberals and conservatives alike. This result aligns with what we typically hear in private discussions among faculty. Although many faculty members make no secret of their political leanings or their opinions about controversial topics, they also take great pride in their role as educators and see creating a balanced and inclusive classroom atmosphere as key to that mission. To be sure, the term “inclusive atmosphere” might connote myriad different ideas across the faculty, but when faculty discuss classroom political dynamics, remarks such as “I make sure everyone is included,” or “If nobody states the conservative perspective, then I do it,” are common. All of these findings and observations should inspire optimism about and pride in our community.

However, an important upshot from our findings is that, good intentions notwithstanding, instructors could easily fail to perceive important free-expression issues that might not be immediately evident in their courses. As revealed in Findings 5, 6, and 7, student concerns about expressing political views are quite prevalent, and a common coping mechanism is to withdraw and self-censor. Thus, a classroom silence that an instructor might perceive as tacit agreement (or perhaps lackadaisical indifference) might, least for some students, actually come from apprehension about the consequences of expressing specific viewpoints.

This apparent disjuncture between instructors' and students' perspective informs a major theme in the recommendations we provide below: UNC instructors should be more intentional and explicit about their approaches to free expression, as well as about articulating the principles they endorse and their process for adhering to them. Although instructors might care deeply about free expression issues and commit to grading evenhandedly, for instance, students might come to the class expecting otherwise, either on the basis of stereotypes or a past negative experience. We suspect instructors can disabuse students of such misperceptions with practices such as explaining their orientation toward expression issues on the first day of class, including syllabus statements that affirm a commitment to neutrality in assessment, or providing (and using) grading rubrics that specify clear, politically neutral criteria. Such actions would not only help encourage participation, but also establish an expectation that deriding or belittling students for expressing sincere political views has no place in higher education. We believe these steps also have the potential to elevate the

⁵⁶ See references under Finding 2 above.

quality of classroom discussion and class work as students will understand that their class contributions will be evaluated based exclusively on merit.

Another important insight from our report is that, compared to students who self-identify as liberal, self-identified conservative students do in fact face distinct challenges related to viewpoint expression at UNC. Several of these relate to *peer* judgments and sanctions, rather than faculty behavior. Self-identified conservative students are more concerned about censure for expressing their views (Finding 6). They are more often associated with certain negative stereotypes (Finding 8), and respondents see them as more regularly subject to derision (Finding 9). They might face greater risk of social alienation (Finding 10), and speakers that share their views likely face greater risk of obstruction or de-platforming (Finding 11). We see these results as a source of concern, and we hope they inspire a conversation about how the campus can become more accepting of conservative students as well as more willing to hear and engage with conservative ideas.

Some might disagree with how we interpret the results above. One perspective we expect to encounter is that disproportionate hostility toward conservative ideas arises naturally in an enlightened intellectual community. As the argument goes, conservative ideas are historically steeped in elitism and prejudice. A college education aims to reveal this history and to demonstrate how conservatism continues, even in the present, to perpetuate inequality and oppression. As students come to understand this legacy, they naturally respond to conservatism with hostility. Therefore, to frame disproportionate hostility toward conservative ideas as a problem to be solved invalidates a rational response and undermines a critical mechanism for positive social change.

We recognize that this perspective stems from genuine harm and injustice, including injustices that continue today. And yet, it is shortsighted. At a basic level, it brushes aside the enormous variety in ideas that could be filed under the heading of “conservatism.” Conservatism is variously associated with Judeo-Christian moral teachings, an ethic of individualism, skepticism toward change, federalism, nationalism, a preference against government regulation, a free trade orientation, capitalism, and representative democracy—to name just a few strains of thought. One need not accept all, or even most, of these ideas to recognize their credible intellectual history or to acknowledge that at least some merit robust discussion in a liberal arts education. An education that lacked them would be narrower in scope and would lead to an incomplete understanding of the intellectual history of the ideas that continue to shape the world today.

But one need not agree with us on this point to regard the asymmetrical experience of college conservatives as a source of concern. It is a source for concern, too, under a widely shared vision of what values a university should embody. Who would dispute that universities should be places where each idea is considered on its own terms, and not prejudged? Where sincerely held conclusions can be offered up for vigorous and civil contestation? Where students are assumed to be arguing in good faith and where they feel valued and respected, even should they turn out to be wrong? These are core tenets of constructive dialogue because they recognize each person’s innate fallibility, because they respect all members of a community as having something valuable to share, and because they arrest human tendencies toward sectarianism, partisanship, and resentment.

Steps to improve UNC’s culture for free expression might take many forms, certainly more than we can hope to enumerate here. But as a starting point, we hope our report draws increased attention to the particular mores and expectations that can develop—even unintentionally—in a community where most of the community members share common viewpoints, especially on

political issues. All three of us have seen UNC students, faculty, and/or administrators make assumptions about others' political views. We have seen speakers casually disparage conservative ideas in front of students and colleagues on the assumption that everyone in the room would welcome the remark. Students and colleagues have asked us to support political causes we would, in fact, not endorse. We've heard people mischaracterize events in the news and go unchallenged. We did not view these occurrences as intentionally malicious, and we imagine they also happen off campus and on other campuses. They are examples, though, of the overreach that tends to occur when people miscalculate the extent to which individual community members share the majority's views. These mistakes merit special attention at universities, where the ability to consider and contest a full span of ideas is a cardinal value. In the recommendations that follow, we discuss potential ways to develop this ability.

In closing, we emphasize that the wrong way to interpret our report would be to see it as pitting liberals against conservatives. Although our report highlights disparate challenges campus conservatives face, many liberal and moderate students face the very same challenges—most importantly, they are all worried, to some extent, about expressing sincere views in their classes. Moreover, although we document ways in which political hostility emerges disproportionately from the political left at UNC, this hostility often comes from a *minority* of campus liberals. Students who identify as liberal and who say they would be friends or roommates with a conservative student, and/or who think conservatives are important to the campus community, substantially outnumber those who do not (Table 15). Over 80% of students who identify as liberal say it is not appropriate to de-platform speakers proffering objectionable views (Table 17). And the students who identify as liberal and who want more conservative speakers far outnumber those who want fewer (Table 18). Some may be tempted to use our findings as yet another volley for one side or the other in the campus free expression debate. This would be disappointing because it would ignore the substantial cross-ideological agreement about what our campus should strive to be.

This agreement manifests itself in many forms throughout our findings, and we see it as a hopeful entry point for productive and healing dialogue. But even the most troubling survey results help reveal the key questions we should be asking to better understand free expression issues and to think about what role classes and campus programming need play in promoting free expression. We may never have or agree on the answers to these questions—many of them have been asked and re-asked for decades, or even centuries—but by listening with open minds to the many voices on campus, we will improve our campus and ourselves.

Recommendations

Here, we offer initial recommendations based on the above findings and analysis. The recommendations are broad, and we intend them to be taken not as a formal or final proposal, but rather as the start of conversations about how to improve the climate for free expression and constructive dialogue at UNC.

1) Remind students of the importance of free expression and teach them appropriate ways to engage in constructive dialogue.

It is imperative students understand the importance of free expression for learning and for becoming informed citizens. It is also crucial they develop attitudes and skills, including listening, reflection, resilience, and constructive argumentation. Potential implementation actions include:

- First-year orientation programming focused on the value of free expression and constructive dialogue in a productive and inclusive learning environment. This programming would also inform students of their and others' free speech rights, as well as explain and model appropriate methods for expressing disagreement.⁵⁷
- Regularly clarify and communicate university policies related to free expression via an annual online refresher on campus free speech.
- Offer student training sessions on how to effectively voice their ideas in classes.
- Work with groups across campus to create and promote social gatherings that attract students from different political groups and that focus on social engagement rather than politics.

2) Support faculty by offering suggestions for and training on how to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment in the classroom. Potential implementation actions include:

- Adding a section to syllabi that 1) establishes a commitment to encouraging free expression and constructive dialogue and 2) explains how this commitment will be evident in the course, as well as processes that ensure fair and impartial grading
- Encouraging faculty to engage in deliberation and debate in the classroom. Such efforts might have natural overlap with efforts to increase active and inclusive learning in UNC classrooms.
- Creating workshops that help instructors improve their ability to model epistemic humility, active listening, honest reflection, intellectual resilience, and constructive dialogue.
- Incorporating questions about classroom free expression issues into students' end-of-semester evaluations.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Indeed, some of this curriculum is required by the state law mentioned in footnote 7.

⁵⁸ One of us (Ryan) has piloted potential measures on his own and is happy to share the results.

3) Provide students, faculty, and staff more opportunities to hear external speakers presenting ideas from across the political, social and cultural spectrum.

UNC currently relies on professors, students, and administrators to invite guest speakers. This practice might result in an imbalance among invited speakers. A potential implementation action for this item is the creation of a campus office that would:

- report to and be funded by the Provost's office.
- have the mission of organizing campus events (debates, forums, panels, lectures) on important political, social, and cultural issues with speakers representing views from across ideological spectrum with an eye toward slating events with speakers from under-represented groups.
- publicize these events widely on campus and record them with the purpose of hosting and sharing them on a public website.
- encourage and foster connections between speakers and classroom discussion.
- ensure these events were open and available to all students, faculty, and staff who wish to attend.

4) Expand research on free expression and constructive dialogue to include issues confronting faculty, staff, and the administrators; and perform the research at regular intervals to track progress and identify emerging issues.

To better understand other facets of free expression on campus, it would be helpful to expand the scope of the research by also surveying faculty and administration about their attitudes and behaviors.

To determine what progress is being made vis-à-vis free expression and constructive dialogue on campus and what new issues may be arising, it would also be helpful to build a time series by repeating some of our measures on a regular basis—perhaps biannually.

Appendix A: Recruitment Message

Incentivized respondents:

Subject: Earn \$10 for your views on free expression at UNC

Dear \${m://FirstName},

We are a UNC research team conducting a survey of students' experiences encountering and engaging with different viewpoints on campus. You have been randomly selected for an invitation to this survey.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. If you decide to participate, you will be asked questions about your experiences inside and outside of classrooms, as well as what experiences are important to have as part of your education.

To thank you for your participation, we are able to offer an Amazon e-gift card valued at \$10 to each participant who completes the full survey. You will receive this e-gift card via email 1-2 weeks after you complete the survey.

Participation is anonymous. No identifying information will be associated with your survey responses or made public.

Follow this \${l://SurveyLink?d=link} to see consent-related information and to begin the survey. Or copy and paste this URL below into your internet browser: \${l://SurveyURL}

This survey will be open for you to complete until March 27 at noon.

Thank you for your help with this research,

Jennifer Larson, Department of English & Comparative Literature
Mark McNeilly, Kenan-Flagler Business School
Timothy Ryan, Department of Political Science
Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

\${l://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}

Unincentivized respondents:

Subject: We're seeking your views on free expression at UNC

Dear \${m://FirstName},

We are a UNC research team conducting a survey of students' experiences encountering and engaging with different viewpoints on campus. We're writing to find out about *your* perspective on these topics.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. If you decide to participate, you will be asked questions about your experiences inside and outside of classrooms, as well as what experiences are important to have as part of your education.

Participation is anonymous. No identifying information will be associated with your survey responses or made public.

Follow this [\\${://SurveyLink?d=link}](#) to see consent-related information and to begin the survey. Or copy and paste this URL below into your internet browser: [\\${://SurveyURL}](#)

This survey will be open for you to complete until April 19 at noon.

Thank you for your help with this research,

Jennifer Larson, Department of English & Comparative Literature
Mark McNeilly, Kenan-Flagler Business School
Timothy Ryan, Department of Political Science

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
[\\${://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}](#)

Appendix B: Question Wording

Count of classes

How many classes did you take at UNC in the Fall of 2018--the most recently completed semester?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (or more)

Class labels

In the spaces below, please write the names of each course you took in the Fall of 2018. The name doesn't need to match the name listed in the course catalogue exactly. This is just to help us ask you questions about specific classes.

[There were open-ended response boxes for the number of classes indicated in the “Count of classes” item.]

Introduction to class-specific items

For the next several questions, we will ask about **one** of the courses you took last semester. Based on a random draw, the computer has selected **#{e://Field/class}** as the course you will focus on for your answers. If you would like to answer questions about a different course, there is an opportunity to do so later in the survey. But for now, please focus on the course you had in mind when you wrote **#{e://Field/class}**.

[The text **#{e://Field/class}** was filled in with one of the labels provided for the “Class labels” item.]

Class department

What department was this course part of? Please write the department name below. [Open-ended response.]

Frequency of political topics

How often did political topics come up in this class?

- Never
- A few times throughout the semester
- Perhaps every week or two

- Most class meetings
- Almost every class meeting

Frequency of instructor's political comments

How often did the instructor for this course say or do something (such as commenting on a current political topic or discussing the instructor's moral perspective) that seemed to reflect the instructor's political leanings?

- Never
- A few times throughout the semester
- Perhaps every week or two
- Most class meetings
- Almost every class meeting

Perceived political leanings of instructor

Based **exclusively** on the person's behavior in the classroom (and not any preconceptions you might hold), what would you guess the course instructor's political leanings to be? If the instructor did not engage in any politically revealing behavior, please select, "I'm unsure."

- Strong conservative
- Leans conservative
- Moderate / Middle of the road
- Leans liberal
- Strong liberal
- Some other political leaning
- I'm unsure

Instructor's encouragement of liberal/conservative participation

The course instructor encouraged participation from liberals and conservatives alike.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree
- This question is totally irrelevant for this class

Instructor's interest in learning from disagreement

The course instructor was interested in learning from people with opinions that differed from the instructor's own opinions.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree
- This question is totally irrelevant for this class

Concerns about grading

How concerned were you that, if you stated your sincere political views, the instructor would give you a lower grade?

- Not at all concerned
- Slightly concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Moderately concerned
- Extremely concerned
- This question is totally irrelevant for this class

Concerns about instructor's opinion

How concerned were you that, if you stated your sincere political views, the instructor would have a lower opinion of you?

- Not at all concerned
- Slightly concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Moderately concerned
- Extremely concerned
- This question is totally irrelevant for this class

Concerns about embarrassment

How concerned were you that, if you stated your sincere political views, the instructor would embarrass you in front of the class?

- Not at all concerned
- Slightly concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Moderately concerned
- Extremely concerned
- This question is totally irrelevant for this class

Perception of students' political leanings

Based **exclusively** on their comments and behavior in class, and not on other things, how would you describe the political leanings of students in the class, on balance? If nothing political ever came up in this class, choose the final response option.

- Very conservative (1)
- Lean conservative (2)
- Roughly even mixture of liberals and conservatives (3)
- Lean liberal (4)
- Very liberal (5)
- This question is totally irrelevant for this class (6)

Concerns about students lowering opinion

How concerned were you that, if you stated your sincere political views, the other students in the class would have a lower opinion of you?

- Not at all concerned
- Slightly concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Moderately concerned
- Extremely concerned
- This question is totally irrelevant for this class

Concerns about being accused of a code of conduct violation

How concerned were you that, if you stated your sincere political views, someone would file a complaint that your comments violated a campus harassment policy or code of conduct?

- Not at all concerned
- Slightly concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Moderately concerned
- Extremely concerned
- This question is totally irrelevant for this class

Students' self-censoring

Finally, in the class **{e://Field/class}**, about how many times did you keep an opinion related to class to yourself because you were worried about the potential consequences of expressing that opinion?

- Never
- Once
- Between two and five times
- Between six and ten times

- More than ten times

Introduction to section on overall UNC experiences

Now, please think about your **entire** time as a student at UNC, from the time you first came to UNC until now.

Concerns about grading during entire time at UNC

During your entire time at UNC, how often have you worried that, if you stated your sincere political views, a course instructor would give you a lower grade?

- Never
- Once or twice a year
- A few times per semester
- Several times per semester
- Most weeks, or more often than that

Concerns about students lowering opinions during entire time at UNC

During your entire time at UNC, how often have you worried that, if you stated your sincere political views, the other students in the class would have a lower opinion of you?

- Never
- Once or twice a year
- A few times per semester
- Several times per semester
- Most weeks, or more often than that

Concerns about critical posts on social media during entire time at UNC

During your entire time at UNC, how often have you worried that, if you stated your sincere political views, someone would post critical comments about you on social media?

- Never
- Once or twice a year
- A few times per semester
- Several times per semester
- Most weeks, or more often than that

Frequency of hearing disrespectful comments

About how often do you hear someone at UNC making disrespectful, inappropriate, or offensive comments about each of the following groups?

[This question was a grid response, with the following response options: Never; Once or twice a year; a few times per semester; several times per semester; most week, or more often than that. The groups, listed in a random order, were: Women, Men, Whites, African Americans, Asians; Hispanics or Latinos; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender individuals; Students born outside the U.S.; Muslims; Christians; Political liberals; Political conservatives.]

Selection of an objectionable view

Below is a list of political beliefs that people at UNC might hold. Of these, which one do you find **most objectionable**?

- The Silent Sam statue should be restored to its original location
- The United States should build a wall on its southern border to decrease undocumented/illegal immigration
- Affirmative action should end, and an applicant's race should not carry any weight in university admissions
- There is no convincing evidence of human-caused global climate change
- Same-sex marriages should not be recognized as valid in the United States
- Most undocumented/illegal immigrants should be granted amnesty and eventually equal rights as US citizens
- The Silent Sam statue should be destroyed
- University admissions should give preference to applicants from disadvantaged racial groups in order to help alleviate past injustices
- The government has a responsibility to make sure every citizen has equal access to affordable health care
- A Christian wedding cake maker should be required to design cakes for same-sex weddings, even if the cake maker is opposed to same-sex marriage

Appropriateness of actions toward an objectionable view

Please think about people at UNC who believe [statement chosen in the item above] How appropriate would it be to take each of the following actions?

[This question was a grid response, with the following response options: Not appropriate; Somewhat appropriate; Appropriate; Entirely appropriate. The actions listed in a random order were: Write an opinion piece explaining the reasons for your disagreement and submit it to a campus publication; Ask a challenging question of a speaker who endorsed the idea; Create an obstruction, such that a campus speaker endorsing this idea could not address an audience; Form a picket line to block students from entering an event where a speaker will argue for this idea; Write graffiti on the dorm room of a student who endorses this idea; Write graffiti on the office of a faculty member who endorses this idea; Shove a student who endorses this idea when they are speaking about it outside on campus; Yell profanity at a student who endorses this idea as he or she walks across campus.]

Stereotypes of liberal and conservative students

[The following prompt was presented with both liberals and conservatives as the target. The order of the ideological groups was randomized.]:

Next, we would like your opinion about students on the [liberal/conservative] side of the political spectrum. How well do each of the following words or phrases describe political [liberals/conservatives]?

[This question was a grid response, with the following response options: Not well at all; Slightly well; Moderately well; Very well; Extremely well. The adjectives, presented in a random order, were Well-educated; Open-minded; Well-informed; Tolerant; Intelligent; Racist; Sexist; Immoral; Condescending; Follow others without thinking.]

Opportunities to hear liberal speakers

How many opportunities does UNC provide for students to have outside speakers visit campus and articulate liberal perspectives?

- Far too few opportunities
- Somewhat too few opportunities
- About the right number of opportunities
- Somewhat too many opportunities
- Far too many opportunities

Opportunities to hear conservative speakers

How many opportunities does UNC provide for students to have outside speakers visit campus and articulate conservative perspectives?

- Far too few opportunities
- Somewhat too few opportunities
- About the right number of opportunities
- Somewhat too many opportunities
- Far too many opportunities

Opportunities to engage with political disagreement

How many opportunities does UNC provide for students to engage constructively with people who disagree with them.

- Far too few opportunities
- Somewhat too few opportunities
- About the right number of opportunities

- Somewhat too many opportunities
- Far too many opportunities

Ideological self-placement—upon coming to UNC and today

Below are two scales that represent political leanings from extremely liberal to extremely conservative.

On the first scale, please indicate what your political leanings were **when you first came to UNC**.

- Extremely liberal
- Liberal
- Slightly liberal
- Moderate; middle of the road
- Slightly conservative
- Conservative
- Extremely conservative
- None of these
- Haven't thought much about this

Social distance measures—Introduction

[The social distance questions were presented twice—once for political liberals and once for political conservative—in a random order.]

Please think about [political liberals / political conservatives]. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Social distance—Willingness to be friends

I would be willing to have a person from this group as a close personal friend.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Social distance—Willingness to be roommates

I would be willing to have a person from this group as a roommate.

[Same response options.]

Social distance—Willingness to date

I would be willing to date someone from this group.

[Same response options.]

Social distance—Enjoy taking classes

I enjoy taking classes with students from this group.

[Same response options.]

Social distance—Students' importance to campus community

Students from this group are an important part of the campus community.

[Same response options.]

Social distance—Faculty's importance to the campus community

Faculty from this group are an important part of the campus community.

[Same response options.]

Social distance—UNC better without

Is UNC better with political [liberals / conservatives] as part of the campus community, or would UNC be better without political liberals?

- UNC would be much better without liberals
- UNC would be a little better without liberals
- UNC would be neither better nor worse without liberals
- UNC would be a little worse without liberals
- UNC would be much worse without liberals

Year of entry

In what year did you begin your studies at UNC?

- 2019
- 2018
- 2017
- 2016
- 2015
- 2014
- Earlier than 2014

Gender

Are you...

- Male
- Female
- Neither best describes me

Residency

When you applied to UNC, were you...

- An in-state applicant
- An out-of-state applicant
- An international applicant

Partisan self-identification

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an independent, or what?

- Strong Democrat
- Democrat
- Independent, but lean Democratic
- Independent
- Independent, but lean Republican
- Republican
- Strong Republican
- Other
- Don't know

Race

With which race or ethnicity do you most identify?

- Native American
- Asian
- Black
- Hispanic / Latino
- White
- Other

Appendix C: Focus Group Protocol

Focus groups were asked the following questions in semi-structured format. (The moderator had the freedom to ask clarifications and follow-ups.)

Warm-up Questions

- 1) In your own words what is the goal of your group?
- 2) What topics do you discuss in your group? What have been hot topics of conversation?

Climate Questions

- 1) Do you think UNC is primarily a moderate, liberal or conservative campus? How do you know?
 - a) Do professors and/or students assume everyone is liberal or no?
- 2) How often do political, gender, race or religious topics come up in classes where this is not the subject of the class?
 - a) Who tends to bring them up? The professor? The students?
 - b) Is there a diversity of viewpoints expressed in those classes? Why or why not?
 - c) Do professors encourage a diverse range of viewpoints?
- 3) Are you comfortable sharing your views in class? In your dorm/apartment? On social media? On campus? Why or why not?
- 4) What are your views on the topic of free speech? Should all currently legal types of speech be allowed on campus or not? If not, why not?
- 5) Which do you think is more important for the university to do: To protect students from ideas and words that might distress them or expose them to new ideas that may challenge their beliefs?
- 6) How should students deal with viewpoints they hear on campus with which they disagree, offend them or they think could offend others?
- 7) Do you think there is anything you can learn from discussing political ideas with someone with beliefs opposed to yours?
- 8) How would you create a better climate for improving viewpoint diversity and civil discourse on campus?
- 9) What do you think of the following ideas in terms of creating a better climate for viewpoint diversity and civil discourse on campus?

- a) Add a question to the student feedback survey for the professor to see if they encourage diverse points of view from students, listen to those whom with they disagree and encourage constructive debate on hot button political issues.
 - b) Add sessions in orientation on free speech and constructive public discourse.
 - c) UNC Free Speech week which would feature speakers from across the political spectrum on various topics.
 - d) Create an Office of Public Policy Events on campus that would Organizing, publicizing, and staging debates, group forums, and individual lectures that address from multiple, divergent, and opposing perspectives an extensive range of public policy issues widely discussed and debated in society at large.
- 10) Is there anything else you'd like to discuss or share with us?

Appendix D: Class Classification Scheme

Humanities (20.25%)

- Music
- History
- Philosophy
- English
- Religion
- Arts
- Drama
- Art History
- Information and Library Sciences
- Classics
- Comparative Literature
- Linguistics

Social Sciences (29.79%)

- Psychology
- Education
- Media & Journalism
- Economics
- Sociology
- Business
- Public Policy
- Political Science
- Information and Library Sciences
- Global Studies
- European Studies
- Peace, War, and Defense
- Communications
- Interdisciplinary Studies
- City and Regional Planning

Health Sciences (5.86%)

- Health Policy
- Exercise & Sports Sciences
- Lifetime Fitness
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- Allied Health Sciences
- Student Recreation

Natural Sciences (33.31%)

- Biology
- Math
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Statistics
- Environment and Ecology
- Biomedical Engineering
- Geography
- Clinical Laboratory Science
- Anthropology
- Computer Science
- Archaeology
- Geology
- Dentistry
- Astronomy
- Marine Sciences
- Applied Physical Sciences

Cultural Studies (2.74%)

- African, African American, and Diaspora Studies (AAAD)
- Women and Gender Studies
- Asian Studies
- American Studies
- Arabic Studies
- German Studies
- Latin American Studies

Foreign Language (7.04%)

- Spanish
- Latin
- French
- Romance Studies
- Russian
- Chinese
- Arabic
- Japanese
- Germanic and Slavic Languages

Other classes (1.02%)

- Experiential and Special Studies
- Honors Capstone
- Study Abroad
- Indecipherable or uninterpretable text (N=10)

Appendix E: Results for Incentivized Sample Only

The tables below replicate the equivalent tables in the main text, but the analysis is restricted to respondents who were offered an incentive for participation.

Table E2: Politics in the Classroom

	Politics came up	Instructor offered an opinion
Never	42.9%	56.3%
A few times	27.9	30.5
Perhaps every week or two	11.6	7.0
Most class meetings	8.2	4.7
Almost every class meeting	9.5	1.5
Total	100.0	100.0
N	527	528

Table E3: How Often Does Politics Come Up?, by Subject Area

	Human- ities	Social Sciences	Health Sciences	Natural Sciences	Cultural Studies	Foreign Language
Never	18.5%	21.3%	58.8%	74.9%	0.0%	40.0%
Few	44.4	26.0	29.4	17.7	14.3	46.7
Week or two	17.6	22.0	2.9	2.1	14.3	6.7
Most meetings	13.9	12.0	2.9	3.2	21.4	0.0
Every	5.6	18.7	5.9	2.1	50.0	6.7
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	108	150	34	187	14	30

Table E4: The Instructor Encouraged Participation from Liberals and Conservatives Alike, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<u>Ideological Self-identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Strongly disagree	0.6	0.0	2.4
Somewhat Disagree	1.7	5.7	12.2
Neither	5.8	18.9	7.3
Somewhat Agree	8.7	11.3	9.8
Strongly agree	51.2	37.7	46.3
Irrelevant	32.0	26.4	22.0
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	172	53	41

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

Table E5: The Course Instructor was Interested in Learning from People with Opinions that Differed from the Instructor's Own, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<u>Ideological Self-identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Strongly disagree	1.2%	5.7%	4.9%
Somewhat Disagree	2.3	9.4	7.3
Neither	3.5	9.4	9.8
Somewhat Agree	18.6	28.3	22.0
Strongly agree	58.1	37.7	43.9
Irrelevant	16.3	9.4	12.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	172	53	41

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

Table E6: Based on Behavior, Was the Instructor Liberal or Conservative?

Strong Liberal	15.2%
Liberal	33.1
Moderate	5.5
Conservative	1.9
Strong Conservative	1.1
Other	0.4
Unsure	42.8
Total	528

Table E7: Based on Behavior, How Would you Describe Students' Political Leanings?

Very Liberal	11.1%
Lean liberal	29.2
Even mixture of liberals and conservatives	11.6
Lean conservative	1.0
Very conservative	0.4
Politics didn't come up / Question is irrelevant	46.6
Total	517

Table E8: Students' Concerns About Instructors, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<i>Instructor would lower grade</i>			<i>Instructor would lower opinion</i>			<i>Instructor would embarrass you</i>		
	<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Not concerned	85.0%	54.7%	53.7%	79.2%	47.2%	51.2%	79.8%	60.4%	68.3%
Slightly concerned	2.3	11.3	14.6	6.4	15.1	17.1	5.8	15.1	9.8
Somewhat concerned	1.7	11.3	9.8	2.9	15.1	9.8	1.2	1.9	9.8
Moderately concerned	0.6	1.9	9.8	1.2	5.7	12.2	2.3	9.4	0.0
Extremely concerned	0.0	3.8	2.4	0.0	1.9	2.4	0.0	0.0	2.4
Irrelevant	10.4	17.0	9.8	10.4	15.1	7.3	11.0	13.2	9.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	173	53	41	173	53	41	173	53	41

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

Table E9: Students' Concerns About Other Students, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<i>Students would lower opinion</i>			<i>Students would post on social media</i>			<i>Students would file a complaint</i>		
	<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Not concerned	61.3%	30.2%	24.4%	80.4%	60.4%	56.1%	83.7%	66.0%	61.0%
Slightly concerned	20.8	24.5	19.5	5.2	17.0	14.6	2.9	3.8	7.3
Somewhat concerned	3.5	17.0	7.3	1.7	5.7	7.3	1.2	7.6	12.2
Moderately concerned	2.9	11.3	17.1	1.2	1.9	7.3	0.0	7.6	7.3
Extremely concerned	0.0	5.7	17.1	0.0	3.8	2.4	0.0	1.9	2.4
Irrelevant	11.6	11.3	14.6	11.6	11.3	12.2	12.2	13.2	9.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	173	53	41	173	53	41	172	53	41

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

Table E10: How Often Students Kept an Opinion Related to Class to Themselves, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Never	79.8%	41.5%	32.5%
Once	6.4	32.1	17.5
2-5 times	12.7	17.0	25.0
6-10 times	0.0	3.8	17.5
More than 10 times	1.2	5.7	7.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	173	53	40

Note: Analysis is limited to classes for which the respondent indicated that politics came up more than “never.”

Table E12: Students' Concerns During Entire Time at UNC, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<i>Would receive a lower grade</i>			<i>Peers would lower opinion</i>			<i>Critical comments on social media</i>		
	<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>			<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Never	77.3	48.4	28.2	52.0	16.5	12.8	80.4	60.4	56.4
Once or twice a year	16.2	27.5	29.5	29.3	33.0	12.8	13.0	23.1	16.7
Few per semester	5.3	18.7	23.1	13.7	27.5	21.8	4.7	9.9	9.0
Several per semester	0.6	3.3	14.1	3.7	17.6	33.3	1.2	5.5	14.1
Most weeks	0.6	2.2	5.1	1.3	5.5	19.2	0.6	1.1	3.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	322	91	78	321	91	78	322	91	78

Note: The response options for all questions were “Never,” “Once or twice a year,” “A few times per semester,” “Several times per semester,” and “Most weeks, or more often than that.”

Table E13: Stereotypes of Liberal and Conservative Students at UNC

	Self-identified liberals' perception of conservative students	Self-identified conservatives' perception of liberal students
<i>Positive Traits</i>		
Well-educated	50.2%	71.8%
Open-minded	7.8	28.2
Well-informed	27.4	48.7
Tolerant	11.3	29.5
Intelligent	53.9	75.6
<i>Negative traits</i>		
Racist	69.5%	29.5%
Sexist	67.3	29.5
Immoral	37.8	28.2
Condescending	70.7	74.4
Follow others without thinking	71.6	66.7

Note: Cells entries indicate the percentage of respondents saying that the trait describes a group moderately well, very well, or extremely well.

Table E14: How Often Does Respondent Hear Inappropriate Comments?, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<u>Ideological Self-Identification</u>		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Women	33.1%	14.4%	9.0%
Men	25.1	37.8	51.3
Whites	23.4	41.6	52.6
African Americans	21.6	9.1	6.4
Hispanics or Latinos	12.5	2.2	5.1
Asians	10.6	13.3	9.0
Students born outside the US	9.0	8.8	3.8
Christians	21.4	35.6	33.3
Muslims	12.1	10.0	10.3
LGBT individuals	21.1	14.3	10.3
Political liberals	19.7	7.7	15.6
Political conservatives	60.6	64.4	76.9
N	322	91	78

Note: Cell entries represent the proportion of students saying that they hear disrespectful, inappropriate, or offensive comments about the listed group several times per semester, or more often than that. The number of respondents for a particular item varies slightly due to item nonresponse.

Table E15: Broader Orientations Toward Political Disagreement, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<u>Self-identified liberals</u>		<u>Self-identified conservatives</u>	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
<i>Social distance</i>				
Would have outgroup member as a friend	21.1%	63.7%	5.1%	87.2%
Would have outgroup member as a roommate	36.0	51.2	5.1	80.8
Enjoys taking classes with students from the outgroup	20.9	51.1	15.4	65.4
Would date member of the outgroup	61.8	24.8	23.1	56.4
<i>Community inclusion</i>				
Students from outgroup are important to campus community	6.5	73.9	2.6	84.6
Faculty from outgroup are important to campus community	10.6	64.9	3.9	80.8
	Would be better without	Would be worse without	Would be better without	Would be worse without
UNC would be better without students from the outgroup	19.3	46.7	12.8	60.3

Note: For all items except the final one, response options were, “Strongly disagree,” “Somewhat disagree,” “Neither agree nor disagree,” “Somewhat agree,” and “Strongly agree.” For the final item, the response options were “UNC would be [much better / a little better / neither better nor worse / a little worse / much worse] without [liberals / conservatives].” Percentages within groups do not tally to 100% because the neutral category is omitted.

Table E17: Students' Responses to Objectionable Political View

	Ideological Self-Identification		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Write an opinion piece explaining the reasons for your disagreement and submit it to a campus publication.	86.6%	71.4%	85.9%
Ask a challenging question of a speaker who endorsed the idea.	88.1	73.6	82.1
Create an obstruction, such that a campus speaker endorsing this idea could not address an audience.	15.3	3.3	2.6
Form a picket line to block students from entering an event where a speaker will argue for this idea.	17.1	3.3	0.0
Write graffiti on the dorm room of a student who endorses this idea.	1.2	2.2	0.0
Write graffiti on the office of a faculty member who endorses this idea.	1.9	0.0	0.0
Yell profanity at a student who endorses this idea as he or she walks across campus.	2.2	0.0	0.0
Shove a student who endorses this idea when they are speaking about it outside on campus.	1.3	1.1	0.0
N	322	91	78

Note: Cell entries represent the proportion of respondents saying that it would be "appropriate" or "entirely appropriate" to take the specified action. The precise N varies slightly due to item nonresponse.

Table E18: Students' View of Campus Opportunities, by Respondent Ideological Self-identification

	<u>Self-identified liberals</u>			<u>Self-identified moderates</u>			<u>Self-identified conservatives</u>		
	Too few	About right	Too many	Too few	About right	Too many	Too few	About right	Too many
Hear liberal perspectives	21.5	71.7	6.9	11.0	63.7	25.3	9.0	35.9	55.1
Hear conservative perspectives	38.9	46.7	14.3	60.4	38.5	1.1	88.5	11.5	0.0
Engage with disagreement	60.6	51.7	8.0	59.3	40.7	0.0	70.5	26.9	2.6

Note: Response options were, “Far too few opportunities,” “Somewhat too few opportunities,” “About the right number of opportunities,” “Somewhat too many opportunities,” and “Far too many opportunities.” For simplicity, the table above collapses together students who said there were “somewhat” and “far” too many/few opportunities.