

Spring 2023 empathy survey

To see how the survey looks to the respondent on the screen, click here:

https://uofsc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a477PDbjeuZHP2S

Dear Participant,

My name is Ryan Strickler, and I am a researcher from Colorado State University at Pueblo in the History department. I am conducting a survey on attitudes towards current events. The title of our project is “Spring 2023 Politics and Elections Survey.” I am the principal investigator (PI) for this project.

I would like you to take an online survey. Participation will take approximately 8-10 minutes, and it will include watching a video that is less than one minute. I will be asking about facets of your political perspective, such as your partisanship, ideology, and attitudes towards different political actors and organizations. I will also ask for your perspective on recent events related to the 2022 midterm election.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty. You may also skip any question you wish. With your participation, I hope to gain more knowledge concerning what influences public attitudes towards current events.

For this survey, I am working with Cint (<https://www.cint.com/academic-research>), which partners with marketing and research firms to provide survey respondents for academic researchers. With my survey, I will not collect your name or personal identifiers. When I report and share the data with others, I will combine the data from all participants. In the survey, I have a handful of questions that collect demographic information (race, gender, age, etc.); however, I will only analyze aggregate trends, and I will not share information from individual respondents. The individual research or marketing firm you are working with may collect additional information, but I do not have access to it. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but I have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential (but unknown) risks.

To indicate your consent to participate in this research and to continue on to the survey, please click the “next” button below.

If you have any questions about the research, please contact me, Dr. Ryan Strickler, at ryan.strickler@csupueblo.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Dr. Barbara Brett-Green, CSU-Pueblo IRB chair, at barbara.brettgreen@csupueblo.edu.

- Ryan Strickler
Assistant Professor of Political Science
Colorado State University at Pueblo

Q83 To proceed, click the "I'm not a robot" box below, then click the "Next" button.

Page Break

Q128 We care about the quality of our survey data. For us to get the most accurate measures of your opinions, it is important that you provide thoughtful answers to each question in this survey.

Do you commit to providing thoughtful answers to the questions in this survey?

- I can't promise either way (1)
- Yes, I will (2)
- No, I will not (3)

End of Block: Consent Form

Start of Block: Political Awareness questions 1

Q112 First, I would like to ask you about your attitudes concerning politics. How often do you pay attention to what's going on in government and politics?

- Always (1)
 - Most of the time (2)
 - About half of the time (3)
 - Some of the time (4)
 - Never (5)
-

Q113 Some people didn't pay much attention to political campaigns last year. How about you? Would you say that you were very much interested, somewhat interested or not much interested in the political campaigns over the last year?

- Very much interested (1)
- Somewhat interested (2)
- Not much interested (3)

End of Block: Political Awareness questions 1

Start of Block: Party ID

Q2 Now, I would like to ask you about your party affiliation. Generally speaking, do you consider you're a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or what?

- Democrat (1)
- Republican (2)
- Independent (3)
- Other/Third Party (4)

Display This Question:

If Now, I would like to ask you about your party affiliation. Generally speaking, do you consider y... = Democrat

Q3 Would you call yourself a strong Democrat, or a not very strong Democrat?

- Strong Democrat (1)
- Not very strong Democrat (2)

Display This Question:

If Now, I would like to ask you about your party affiliation. Generally speaking, do you consider y... = Republican

Q4 Would you call yourself a strong Republican, or a not very strong Republican?

- Strong Republican (1)
- Not very strong Republican (2)

Display This Question:

If Now, I would like to ask you about your party affiliation. Generally speaking, do you consider y... = Independent

Or Now, I would like to ask you about your party affiliation. Generally speaking, do you consider y... = Other/Third Party

Q5 Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?

- Closer to Democratic Party (1)
- Neither (2)
- Closer to Republican Party (3)

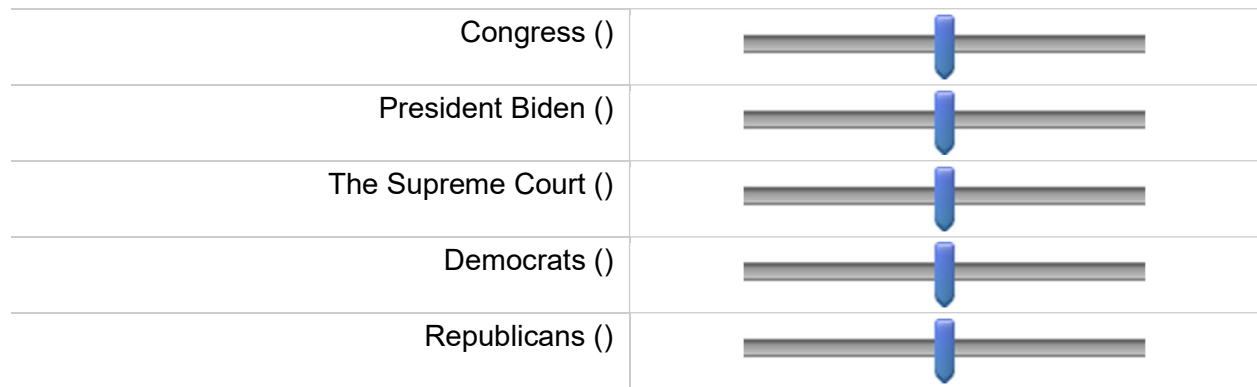
End of Block: Party ID

Start of Block: Feeling Thermometers

Q18 We would now like to get your feelings toward various groups who are in the news these days. We will show the name of a group and we'd like you to rate that person using something we call the feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the group. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the group and that you don't care too much for that group. You would rate the person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the group.

Please rate the following groups on the feeling thermometers below.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



End of Block: Feeling Thermometers

Start of Block: Ideology

Q52 We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Imagine a scale from 1 to 7, where one stands for “strongly liberal,” 7 stands for “strongly conservative” and 4 stands “moderate” or “middle of the road.” Where would you place yourself, from 1 to 7, in this scale?

- 1 - Strongly Liberal (1)
 - 2 - Liberal (2)
 - 3 - Slightly Liberal (3)
 - 4 - Middle of the Road (4)
 - 5 - Slightly Conservative (5)
 - 6 - Conservative (6)
 - 7 - Strongly Conservative (7)
-

Q190 To show that you have been reading, please select “a different channel” for your answer below, despite what the question text says.

Q191 Many people follow politics through cable news. Which cable TV news channel do you watch the most?

- CNN (1)
- Fox News (2)
- MSNBC (3)
- A different channel (4)
- I don't watch cable news (5)

End of Block: Ideology

Start of Block: Political awareness 2

Q127 Here are a few questions about the government in Washington. Many people don't know the answer to these questions, so if there are some you don't know just select that response and go on.

Q2 Do you happen to know what job or political office Kamala Harris holds now?

- President (1)
 - Vice President (2)
 - Speaker of the House (3)
 - Senate Majority Leader (4)
 - Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (5)
 - Don't Know (6)
-

Q4 How much of a majority is required for the U.S. Senate and House to override a presidential veto?

- 51% (1)
 - 60% (2)
 - 67% (3)
 - 75% (4)
 - 90% (5)
 - Don't Know (6)
-

Q3 Whose responsibility is it to determine if a law is constitutional or not?

- The President (1)
 - Congress (2)
 - The Supreme Court (3)
 - Don't Know (4)
-

Q5 Do you happen to know which party currently has the most members in the House of Representatives in Washington?

- The Democratic Party (1)
 - The Republican Party (2)
 - Don't Know (3)
-

Q6 Which party, would you say, is more conservative at the national level?

- The Democratic Party (1)
- The Republican Party (2)
- Don't Know (3)

End of Block: Political awareness 2

Start of Block: GEI

Q73 Now, I would like to ask you some questions related to your personality.

Q54 How often would you say you try to better understand people of other racial or ethnic groups by imagining how things look from their perspective?

- Not often at all (1)
 - Not too often (2)
 - Somewhat often (3)
 - Very often (4)
 - Extremely often (5)
-

Q55 Before criticizing somebody from another racial or ethnic group, how often do you try to imagine how you would feel if you were in their place?

- Not often at all (1)
 - Not too often (2)
 - Somewhat often (3)
 - Very often (4)
 - Extremely often (5)
-

Q56 How often would you say that you have tender, concerned feelings for people from another racial or ethnic group who are less fortunate than you?

- Not often at all (1)
 - Not too often (2)
 - Somewhat often (3)
 - Very often (4)
 - Extremely often (5)
-

Q57 When you see someone being taken advantage of due to their race or ethnicity, how often do you feel protective toward them?

- Not often at all (1)
- Not too often (2)
- Somewhat often (3)
- Very often (4)
- Extremely often (5)

End of Block: GEI

Start of Block: Election integrity intro - R Democrat

The text below is provided to the respondent if they identify with, or lean toward, the Democratic party (they are in the “Democratic” condition). If the respondent does not identify with or lean toward a party, they are randomized into receiving this text, or the “R Republican” text (the “Republican” condition) below

Q78 Now, I would like to get your perspective on some recent political activity related to the 2022 midterm elections. Please read the description below carefully. When you are done, click "I am done carefully reading" to proceed.

Last summer, groups associated with the Democratic Party were accused of "meddling" in the Republican party's primary elections. These groups provided significant financial support for controversial Republican candidates whom they considered easier to defeat in the November 2022 general elections.

As just one example, in Michigan's third Congressional district, incumbent Peter Meijer narrowly lost to John Gibbs in the Republican primary in August 2022. Meijer is a moderate and fairly popular political figure in Michigan. Gibbs, however, is a staunch conservative who denies the legitimacy of the 2020 Presidential election. In the past, he also has argued against women having the right to vote.

According to NPR, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee spent \$425,000 on advertising designed to help Gibbs defeat Meijer the Republican primary. After winning the primary, Gibbs lost in the general election to Democrat Hillary Schloten. Commentators say Schloten would have had a much tougher race if Meijer won the Republican primary.

Former members of the Senate and the House have written an open letter condemning this and other instances of Democratic groups "meddling" in Republican primaries. They believe it poses a threat to fair elections. Moreover, the tactic could backfire if the extreme and anti-democratic candidates supported this way end up elected.

Supporters of the practice, however, say that the practice is "smart politics." They argue that Democratic groups should do what it takes to win, as long as it is legally allowed.

I am done carefully reading (4)

End of Block: Election integrity intro - R Democrat

Start of Block: Election Integrity intro - R Republican

The text below is provided to the respondent if they identify with, or lean toward, the Democratic party (they are in the "Republican" condition). If the respondent does not identify with or lean toward a party, they are randomized into receiving this text, or the "R Democrat" text (the "Democratic" condition) above

Q79 Now, I would like to get your perspective on some recent political activity related to the 2022 midterm elections. Please read the description below carefully. When you are done, click "I am done carefully reading" to proceed.

Election laws and voting rights have been in the news across the country lately. During September 2021, Texas adopted an election law bill (SB1) that, among other things, placed new restrictions and verification requirements on mail-in ballots. Supporters argue that they help ensure election security, but critics argue that the law is unnecessarily burdensome and prevents eligible citizens from voting.

In the March 2022 Texas primary, 12%, or one in eight, of all mail-in ballots were rejected statewide, largely due to the requirements the new law put in place. This is much higher than with the 2020 Presidential election, where the rejection rate was 1%. Ballot rejections heavily impacted the Democratic-leaning Austin area. What's more, mail ballot rejection rates were higher than the average for Democratic-leaning demographic groups, such as Black, Hispanic, and Asian voters.

A legal challenge to SB1 is currently being heard in US District Court.

I am done carefully reading (4)

End of Block: Election Integrity intro - R Republican

Start of Block: Treatment: R Republican

Respondents in the “Republican” condition are placed into one of six treatment conditions, or a control condition. If the respondent is in the control condition, they do not receive this text or video, and they go straight to the dependent variable questions. Respondents in treatment groups receive the text below, then one of six short video testimonials (less than a minute). The video testimonial conditions and links are below.

Q109 The following page contains a short video testimonial, which is typical of the response a number of voters have to this new law. *(those not in the ‘informational condition get this additional two sentences following)* I encourage you to put yourself in the individual's shoes. Imagine how they feel about what the legislature has done and how it affects them.

This video is about a minute long, and you will be able to advance once it is complete.

Page Break

Republican respondent, white male, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/p2F-esi6yb0>

Republican respondent, white male, informational condition: <https://youtu.be/EEKZBAnRfgU>

Republican respondent, white female, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/tzoURu5JzrQ>

Republican respondent, black male, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/-85tEYyX5tg>

Republican respondent, non-binary, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/ILu8-dyv9PQ>

Republican respondent, foreign born, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/jPEIcZoUYdI>

End of Block: Treatment - R Republican

Start of Block: Treatment - R Democrat

Respondents in the “Democratic” condition are placed into one of six treatment conditions, or a control condition. If the respondent is in the control condition, they do not receive this text or video, and they go straight to the dependent variable questions. Respondents in treatment groups receive the text below, then one of six short video testimonials (less than a minute). The video testimonial conditions and links are below.

Q91 The following page contains a short video testimonial, which is typical of the response a number of voters have had to these recent events. *(those not in the ‘informational condition get this additional two sentences following)* I encourage you to put yourself in the individual's shoes. Imagine how they feel about what the legislature has done and how it affects them.

This video is less than a minute, and you can advance after it is complete.

Page Break

Democratic respondent, white male, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/u6ykaQGCQLc>

Democratic respondent, white male, informational condition: <https://youtu.be/PN-7IUij304>

Democratic respondent, white female, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/FQqm9eQFXFs>

Democratic respondent, black male, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/EmaPSscn4ug>

Democratic respondent, non-binary, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/OYzycylMX-M>

Democratic respondent, foreign born, perspective taking condition: <https://youtu.be/hgBchPlkHmk>

End of Block: Treatment - R Democrat

Start of Block: Dependent variables - R Republican

These questions are given to respondents in the "Republican" condition

Q326 Now, I would like your perspective on Texas's new mail voting law, SB1. Here, I will provide two statements, and I would like to know which is closer to your view:

- The new mail voting law is unfair and should be revoked.
- The new mail voting law is fair and should remain in place.

Imagine a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 indicates you strongly feel that the law is unfair, 10 indicates you strongly feel the law is fair, and 5 indicates you are neutral. Where would you place yourself, from 0 to 10, regarding these statements?

- 0 - The new law is unfair (1)
- 1 (2)
- 2 (3)
- 3 (4)
- 4 (5)
- 5 - Neutral (6)
- 6 (7)
- 7 (8)
- 8 (9)
- 9 (10)
- 10 - The new law is fair (11)

Q115 Why do you say that the law is fair or unfair? (**Open ended**)

Q114 In general, which is **more** of a concern to you: making sure everybody who wants to vote can do so, or making sure no one votes who is not eligible?

- Making sure everybody who wants to vote can do so (1)
 - Making sure no one votes who is not eligible (2)
 - Unsure (3)
-

Q116 I would like to ask a few more questions about election law. In general, do you favor or oppose requiring all people to show a government issued photo ID when they vote?

- Strongly favor (1)
 - Favor (2)
 - Neither favor nor oppose (3)
 - Oppose (4)
 - Strongly oppose (5)
-

Q117 Do you favor or oppose allowing people to vote by mail if they choose, instead of voting in-person?

- Strongly favor (1)
 - Favor (2)
 - Neither favor nor oppose (3)
 - Oppose (4)
 - Strongly oppose (5)
-

Q118 Do you favor or oppose allowing convicted felons to vote once they complete their sentence?

- Strongly favor (1)
- Favor (2)
- Neither favor nor oppose (3)
- Oppose (4)
- Strongly oppose (5)

Page Break

Q328 Recently, the U.S. Congress considered legislation designed to reform the electoral process across the nation. This legislation would, among other things, require every state to allow registered voters to vote by mail if they choose to do so (often called "no excuse absentee voting"). It would also put limits on the verification requirements states can place on mail ballots.

Proponents of the legislation say that it will improve electoral access, and it would ensure that minority groups or other individuals are not prevented from voting due to excessive or complex paperwork.

Opponents, however, say that election law should be set at the state level, and the proposed law from Congress is an unwelcome intrusion from the federal government. Some also argue that limiting verification requirements enhances the potential for electoral fraud.

What do you think? Do you support or oppose this Congressional legislation to reform the electoral process?

- Strongly support the Congressional legislation (1)
- Support the Congressional legislation (2)
- Neither support nor oppose the Congressional legislation (3)
- Oppose the Congressional legislation (4)
- Strongly oppose the Congressional legislation (5)

End of Block: Dependent variables - R Republican

Start of Block: Dependent variables - R Democrat

These questions are given to respondents in the "Democratic" condition

Q123 I would like your perspective on Democratic groups' involvement in Republican primaries last year. Here, I will provide two statements, and I would like to know which is closer to your view:

- Democratic groups donating to controversial candidates in Republican primaries is "meddling" and is unacceptable.
- Democratic groups donating to controversial candidates in Republican primaries is "smart politics" and is acceptable.

Imagine a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 indicates you strongly feel that what Democratic groups are doing is unacceptable, 10 indicates you strongly feel that what Democratic groups are doing is acceptable, and 5 indicates you are neutral. Where would you place yourself, from 0 to 10, regarding these statements?

0 - Democratic groups donating to controversial candidates in Republican primaries is unacceptable. (1)

1 (2)

2 (3)

3 (4)

4 (5)

5 - Neutral (6)

6 (7)

7 (8)

8 (9)

9 (10)

10 - Democratic groups donating to controversial candidates in Republican primaries is acceptable (11)



Q124 Why do you say what Democratic groups are doing is acceptable or unacceptable?

Page Break

Q125 Which of the following statements below comes closest to your view?

- As a matter of free speech, organized groups should be able to spend as much money as they want on political campaigns and advertising. (1)
- As a matter of fairness, there should be strict limits on how much organized groups spend on political campaigns and advertising. (2)
- Unsure (3)

Page Break

Q126 Recently, Congress introduced legislation to reform the campaign finance system. Among other things, it puts limits on the ability of outside groups to spend heavily in primary or general election campaigns. It also requires greater funding transparency, so the average voter would be more likely to tell when Democratic groups are funding ads for Republican primary candidates, or Republican groups are funding ads for Democratic primary candidates.

Proponents of the legislation argue that it would make for more transparent campaigns, and that it would prevent well financed groups from unduly influencing the will of the voters.

Opponents, however, argue that campaign activity and advertisements are political free speech protected by the First Amendment. What's more, when campaigns spend more money on advertisements and events, it serves to inform voters.

What do you think? Do you support or oppose this Congressional legislation to reform the campaign finance system?

- Strongly support campaign finance legislation (1)
- Support campaign finance legislation (2)
- Neither support nor oppose campaign finance legislation (3)
- Oppose campaign finance legislation (4)
- Strongly oppose campaign finance legislation (5)

End of Block: Dependent variables - R Democrat

Start of Block: Individual questions

These questions are given to all respondents that were not in a control condition

Q471 I would like to get your perspective on the individual in the video and their testimonial specifically.

Q472 How sympathetic do you feel towards the individual's perspective?

- Not at all sympathetic (1)
 - A little sympathetic (2)
 - Somewhat sympathetic (3)
 - Very sympathetic (4)
 - Extremely sympathetic (5)
-

Q473 How concerned are you about the situation the individual faces?

- Not at all concerned (1)
 - Slightly concerned (2)
 - Somewhat concerned (3)
 - Moderately concerned (4)
 - Extremely concerned (5)
-

Q474 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"The individual in the video has been treated unfairly."

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly disagree (5)

Q138 For the next question, please select "Strongly agree," despite what the statement below says:

"The individual in the video has been treated fairly."

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly disagree (5)

End of Block: Individual questions

Start of Block: Demographics

These questions, and the debrief that follows, are given to all respondents

Q181 Finally, I want to ask a few more questions about you.

Q182 What is your age?

Q183 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Non-binary (3)
 - Prefer not to answer (5)
-

Q129 Are you a member of the LGBTQ+ community?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - No, but I identify as an ally (3)
 - Prefer not to answer (4)
-

Page Break

Q184 Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q185 In the list of race categories below, please choose one or more categories that you consider yourself to be:

White or Caucasian (1)

Native American or Alaskan Native (2)

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (3)

Black or African-American (4)

Asian (5)

Other (6)

Page Break

Q186 What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- Some high school, no diploma (1)
 - High school diploma (2)
 - Some college, no degree (3)
 - Associate degree (4)
 - Bachelors degree (5)
 - Masters degree (6)
 - Doctoral/Professional Degree (for example, PhD, MD, or JD) (7)
-

Q130 Were you born inside of, or outside of, the United States or its territories?

- Inside the United States or its territories (1)
- Outside of the United States or its territories (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: debrief

Q97 Thank you very much for your participation! With your help my study will gain a greater understanding of what influences attitudes toward our electoral system. For more information about the survey, the research project it supports, and our results, please email me, Dr. Ryan Strickler, at ryan.strickler@csupueblo.edu.

The survey explores whether perspective taking can influence attitudes towards electoral fairness - in particular, whether a perspective taking appeal can induce support for fair electoral processes even at the expense of outcomes benefitting one's own party. Those that identified with, or leaned towards, the Democratic party received information about Democratic groups' efforts to influence (or 'meddle with') Republican primaries. [Here](#) is an article about these groups' efforts and the ethical debate they have engendered.

Those that identified with, or leaned towards, the Republican party received information about a new mail voting law in Texas that led to the rejection of over 12% of all mail-in votes in the March 2022 primary. More information on this new law and how the rejections, in particular, impacted Democratic-leaning constituencies can be found [here](#). Respondents that did not identify with or lean toward either of the major parties received information on one of the two stories above at random.

After receiving this information, most respondents (aside from a control group) viewed a scripted video testimonial typical of many voters from the opposite party. Those that got information about Democratic meddling efforts saw a testimonial typical of many Republican voters' reaction to these efforts, and those that got information about mail ballot rejections in Texas got a testimonial the perspective of many Democrats who had their ballot rejected. While the testimonials were scripted, again, they are based off of real events that transpired in the 2022 election.

From there, respondents answered a series of questions about the political event they read about, broader questions regarding electoral law and reform in the United States, and (aside from the control group) questions about the individual in the video specifically. The 'recent Congressional legislation' referenced in these questions is the [For The People Act](#), which was introduced to Congress in 2021 but never passed

Please click 'Next' to complete the survey. Thank you again!

End of Block: debrief
