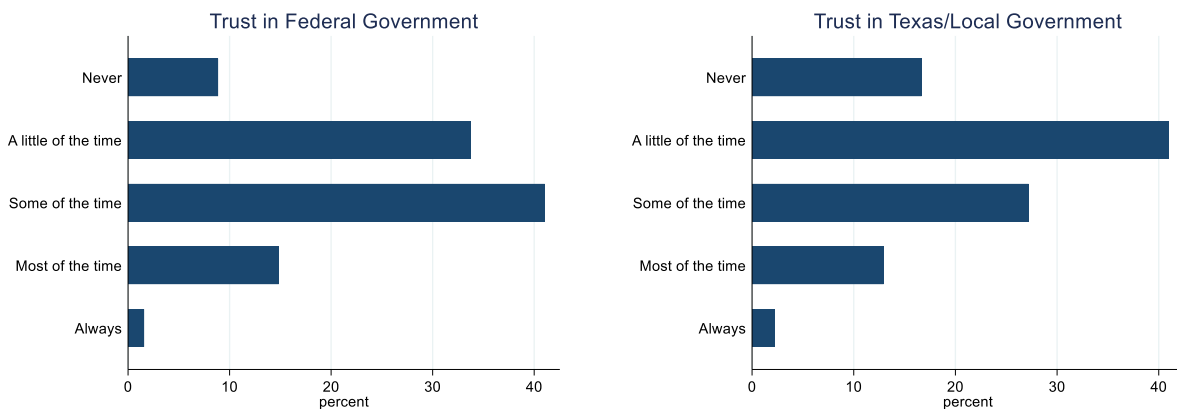


**New UTRGV Student Pulse Survey 2022: Trust in Government**

A team of UTRGV Political Science Professors, Drs. Dongkyu Kim, Natasha Altema McNeely, and Mi-son Kim, fielded the UTRGV Student Pulse Survey through the UTRGV Center for Survey Research & Policy Analysis (CSRPA) in Spring 2022. A total of 2,116 students enrolled at UTRGV during the 2021-2022 academic year answered a set of questions on social and political issues.

The survey found that:

- About 4 out of 10 UTRGV students do not trust the U.S. Government, while only about 16 percent have a high level of trust that the government in Washington is doing what is right.
- About 6 in 10 UTRGV students do not trust the state of Texas or local governments, while only about 15 percent have a high level of trust that state and local governments are doing what is right.



UTRGV students were asked, “How much of the time do you trust the U.S. Government in Washington to do what is right?” Only 8.86 percent said they never trusted the national government, and 32.76 percent said they trust the government a little of the time. Putting together, about 41.39 percent of UTRGV students express distrust of the U.S. government. UTRGV students were also asked, “How much of the time do you trust the state (Texas) or local governments to do what is right?” About 16.28 percent said they never trusted the state or

local governments to do what is right, and about 40.04 percent said they trusted the state and local government a little of the time. Putting together, about 57.65 percent of UTRGV students express distrust of local governments. Thus, UTRGV students distrust Texas or local governments more than national ones. The percentage difference is about 15 percent.

The percentage of UTRGV students who have a higher level of trust in governments does not show a significant difference between the national and local governments. About 16.42 percent of UTRGV students said they trust the federal government either “Most of the time” or “Always.” UTRGV students’ trust in the national government follows the national trend. According to the [Pew Research Center](#), only two in ten Americans trust the government in Washington to do what is right. At UTRGV, 16.42 percent trust the government in Washington. Concerning the state or local governments, about 15.16 percent said they trust the state and local governments. However, the middle category of “some of the time” shows about 14 percent difference between the national and local government trust among UTRGV students. These overall patterns of trust in government among UTRGV students align well with the declining trust in political systems among the public nationwide. According to the [New York Times](#), a majority of American voters believe that the American political system needs major reforms or a complete overhaul.

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**Methodology:** In spring 2022, the UTRGV Center for Survey Research & Policy Analysis fielded the 2022 UTRGV Student Pulse Survey. UTRGV students, who are enrolled in the 2021-2022 academic year and are 18 years or older, were asked about their perceptions and opinions of various social and political issues. The survey was approved by the Institutional Review Board of UTRGV (IRB-210521). For more information regarding survey methodology, please contact [csr@utrgv.edu](mailto:csr@utrgv.edu).

**About the Center for Survey Research & Policy Analysis:** The Center for Survey Research & policy Analysis ([www.utrgv.edu/center-for-survey-research](http://www.utrgv.edu/center-for-survey-research)) at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley was established in 1998 to study and report on issues of local concern in the Rio Grande Valley and to provide training opportunities and research experience to students in survey research methods. Today, the Center continues its mission to provide timely applied research, technical assistance and consulting services to local and state agencies, non-profit organizations and private business associations throughout the Rio Grande Valley, as well as to the UTRGV community. The Center’s capabilities include survey design and administration, public opinion polling, data collection and analysis, program evaluation, needs assessment, technical assistance and policy analysis. For more information or to discuss a potential project, contact [csr@utrgv.edu](mailto:csr@utrgv.edu).

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