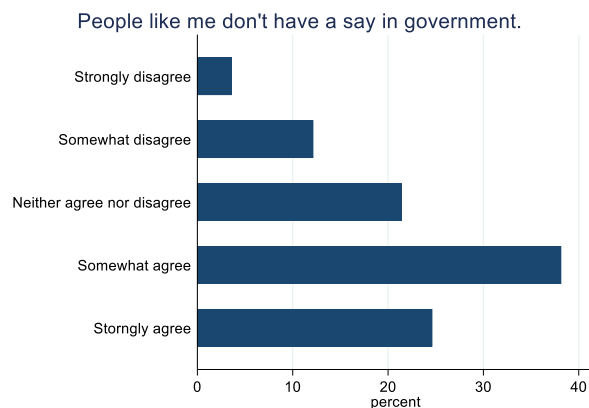
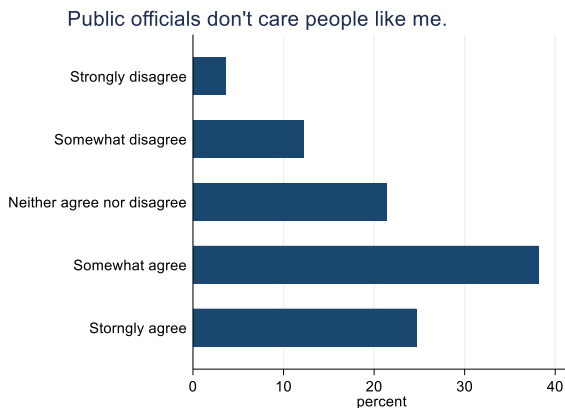


New UTRGV Student Pulse Survey 2022: Political Efficacy

In the Spring 2022 semester, 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 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.

- About 6 in 10 UTRGV students voiced pessimism that public officials do not care about what people think.
- About 1 in 2 UTRGV students believe that they have no influence in government.



Students were asked questions about their perceptions on a variety of social topics. In this case, their general perception of their relationship and influence with the government and the public officials elected into it. One of the two questions on this topic reads as follows: “Public officials don’t care about people like me.” Responses to this question leaned quite heavily toward believing this statement to be true, with nearly 63% of respondents agreeing with the statement— about 6 in every 10 UTRGV students. At least 21% did not have much of an opinion of the subject, while approximately 16% of respondents felt the statement to be untrue.

The following question asked participants to decide to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: “People like me don’t have a say in government.” Essentially

gauging how people feel about their ability to impact what the government does. While responses were not as pessimistic as the previous results, the negative perception of one's impact on government remained evident; nearly 47% believing they did not have a say in what the government does either most of the time or always. Conversely, approximately 33% of respondents answered they do have a say in what the government does.

In conclusion, the results indicate that the perception of our public officials' attentiveness and care towards their constituents are mostly negative. The overall pattern of political efficacy among UTRGV students is in line with the American general public. According to the [Pew Research Institute's Global Attitudes Survey in 2020](#), 71% believed that elected officials did not care about average citizens. At the same time, According to the [Pew Survey Institute](#), about 50% believed that ordinary citizens can influence the government if they make an effort. All in all, the UTRGV student sample in 2022 reflects the national trend of government distrust in terms of political efficacy.

Dongkyu Kim
Natasha Altema McNeely
Mi-son Kim
Mark Decker

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.

About the Center for Survey Research & Policy Analysis: The Center for Survey Research & policy Analysis (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.

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