# Understanding the Campus Expression Climate
## Supporting Documentation: Methods and Descriptives

## Fall 2019

Note: Data collection was overseen by Sean Stevens, then Research Fellow at Heterodox Academy. This methods overview was prepared by Sean Stevens and Melissa Stiksma. Questions may be directed to questions@heterodoxacademy.org.

## Sampling

Heterodox Academy contracted with Qualtrics, a nonpartisan research firm, to conduct a national online survey of 1,580 18 to 24-year-old undergraduate students enrolled full-time at a four-year educational institution in the United States. Survey respondents were participants in Qualtrics's online, opt-in research panel, which consists of 15,583,457 possible respondents within the United States. Of these participants, 3,428,360 are aged 18 to 24 and 1,558,345 are enrolled as students. A sample based on census region, and then gender and race/ethnicity, was requested. Proportions for census region were obtained from the Gallup/Knight Foundation 2018 report on free expression on campus. We requested that 21% of students surveyed were enrolled at schools in the Northeast, 24% enrolled at schools in the Midwest, 34% enrolled at schools in the South, and 21% enrolled at schools in the West. Within each census region we requested representative samples of respondents by gender and race, based on statistics obtained from the National Center for Educational Statistics.

## Sample

Between October 10, and November 9, 2019, Qualtrics used an online survey to administer the Campus Expression Survey to undergraduate students, in exchange for monetary incentives. Of 1,729 respondents, 149 were removed from the dataset due to excessive time to complete the survey (i.e., 4 times the median completion time or more) or careless responding, identified by lack of variance in their survey responses. Thus, 1,580 respondents were retained for analysis. The reported crosstabs are weighted by region, gender, and race/ethnicity in the proportions

specified above. The total respondents for each item in the cross tabulations may fluctuate slightly due to weighting.

## Sample Descriptives

The final sample consisted of 56.5% female (43.5% male). In terms of race, the final sample was 54.9% White, 20.2% Hispanic/Latinx, 13.3% Black, 6.6% Asian, 3.9% Multiracial, .3% American Indian or Alaska Native, .3% Pacific Islander, .3% Something else, and .2% Middle Eastern. Our sample consisted of 44.5% Democrat, 19.2% Republican, 18.2% Independent, 9.2% Had not thought much about this, 3.6% Libertarian, and 1.7% Something else. As for sexuality, this sample includes 75.7% of students who identify as heterosexual or straight, 13.3% who identify as bisexual, 5.2% who identify as homosexual, 2.4% who identify as asexual, 1.9% preferred not to say, and 1.5% identify as something else. In terms of religion, 55.0% of the sample identify as Christian, 13.7% as agnostic, 11.4% as atheist, 8% preferred not to say, 5.4% said something else, 1.8% identify as Muslim, 1.7% as Jewish, 1.7% as Buddhist, and 1.1% as Hindu. The academic areas were as follows: 19.1% Business, 12.5% Something else, 12.2% Social Science, 10.8% Biological Science, 9.8% Engineering, 7.2% Arts, 6.3% Education, 4.3% Humanities, 2.9% Physical Science, 2.2% Mathematics/Statistics, 2% Prefer not to say, .5% Religion/Theology. Although participants were restricted to be 18 to 24, 21.3% of the sample were 19 years old, 20.3% were 20 years old, 19.7% were 21 years old, 13.3% were 22 years old, 12.7% were 18 years old, 7.5% were 23 years old, and 5.3% were 24 years old.

## Analytic Approach

First, in any analyses all data were weighted by region, gender, and race in order to appropriately understand the sample. A weight for a participant is an estimate of how many units in the target population (e.g., college students in the United States aged 18-24) that the participant represents. Weighting allows researchers to align a dataset with census demographics. We found our weighting system and results to be very similar to other public reports. Although most of the report is descriptive in nature, we used chi-square tests of significance when examining whether there were meaningful differences in the ways that certain people responded to the questions. For example, when examining whether men and women had different rates of reluctance on the same topic, we used a chi-square test to determine whether that difference was statistically meaningful. Those that were significant were surfaced in the report.