

Most college freshmen OK on gay marriages: Sixty percent support right to marry

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More than 60 percent of incoming freshmen in U.S. colleges and universities believe that same-sex couples should have the right to marry—a 3.3 percent rise from the previous year's class.

The annual study, this year based on 271,000 written questionnaires completed last fall at 393 schools nationwide, also showed that while more than 43 percent called themselves “middle-of-the-road,” that was the lowest percentage since the research program at the UCLA Higher Education Research Institute was begun in 1970.

The prevailing polarization on U.S. political-cultural self-identification was evident in the survey. The “liberals”—at 28.4 percent—had their highest number since the 1975 survey, and those identifying as “conservatives” —at 23.9 percent—had their highest level in the survey's history, according the *Los Angeles Times*.

The first-year students are more interested in politics this year—one third saying they had recently discussed politics, up from one-quarter in 2004. Regarding abortion, 78 percent of liberal freshmen agree that the procedure should be legal, compared with only 32 percent of conservatives who agree with that statement.