

UW System: President Jay Rothman announces results of free speech survey

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MADISON, Wis. – University of Wisconsin System President Jay Rothman today announced the results of the System’s survey of student attitudes on free speech and free expression.

Rothman said more than 10,000 students responded to the survey, with a profile that parallels the UW System student body resulting in a solid sample with low margins of error.

“The student response to this survey was strong,” Rothman said. “It provides a foundation for us to evaluate critically what we can do better to enhance civil dialogue at our universities.”

The survey will also provide a roadmap for UW System universities to help students better understand their First Amendment rights and responsibilities.

“There’s no better place than a university for the marketplace of ideas to flourish,” Rothman said. “It’s our goal to make the UW System an even stronger voice for passionate debate and civic engagement.”

Rothman released some of survey results on his Twitter account, @JayORothman, earlier today. Full results are available here: [wisconsin.edu/civil-dialogue/](https://www.wisconsin.edu/civil-dialogue/).

Eric Giordano, executive director of the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service, which oversaw the survey, said the strong response rate meant low margins of error, typically between 1 and 5 percentage points. The error margin will differ according to each question and respondent subset, he said.

Giordano was assisted by Tim Shiell, professor of philosophy and director of the Menard Center for the Study of Institutions and Innovation at UW-Stout; April Bleske-Rechek, professor of psychology at UW-Eau Claire; Geoffrey Peterson, professor of political science at UW-Eau Claire; and Eric T. Kasper, professor of political science and director of the Menard Center for Constitutional Studies at UW-Eau Claire. The team was advised by a bipartisan advisory panel of faculty members, advocates, and others across Wisconsin.