

Political Science In An Election Year

Fall 2008



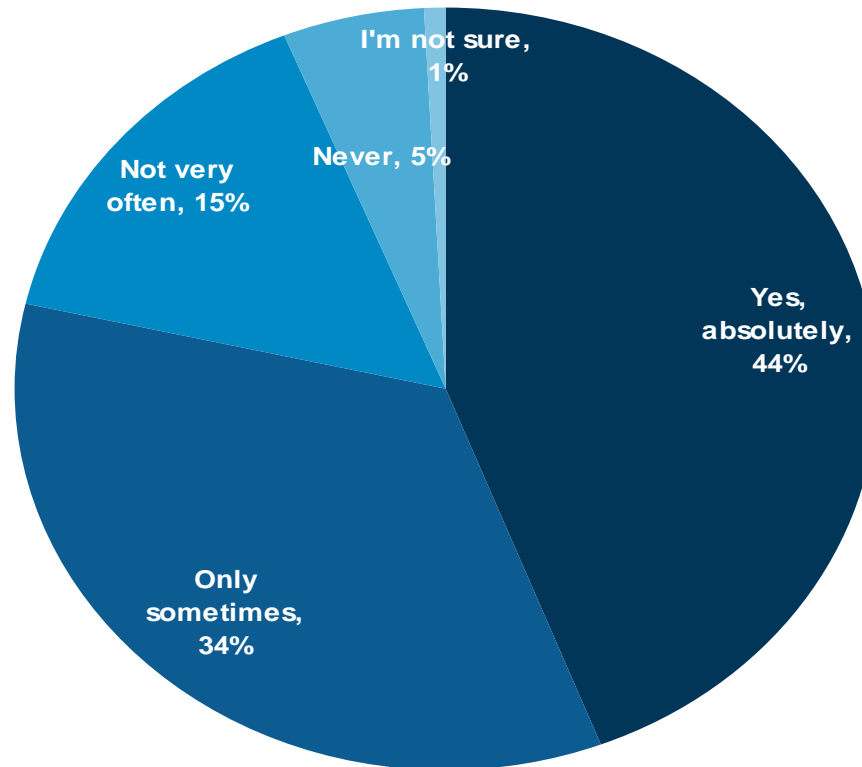
Survey Pool: Who Are They?

1095 persons surveyed via a 20-question online questionnaire

More than half (55.6 percent) have been teaching political science for more than 15 years. More than 33 percent have been teaching political science for 5-14 years.

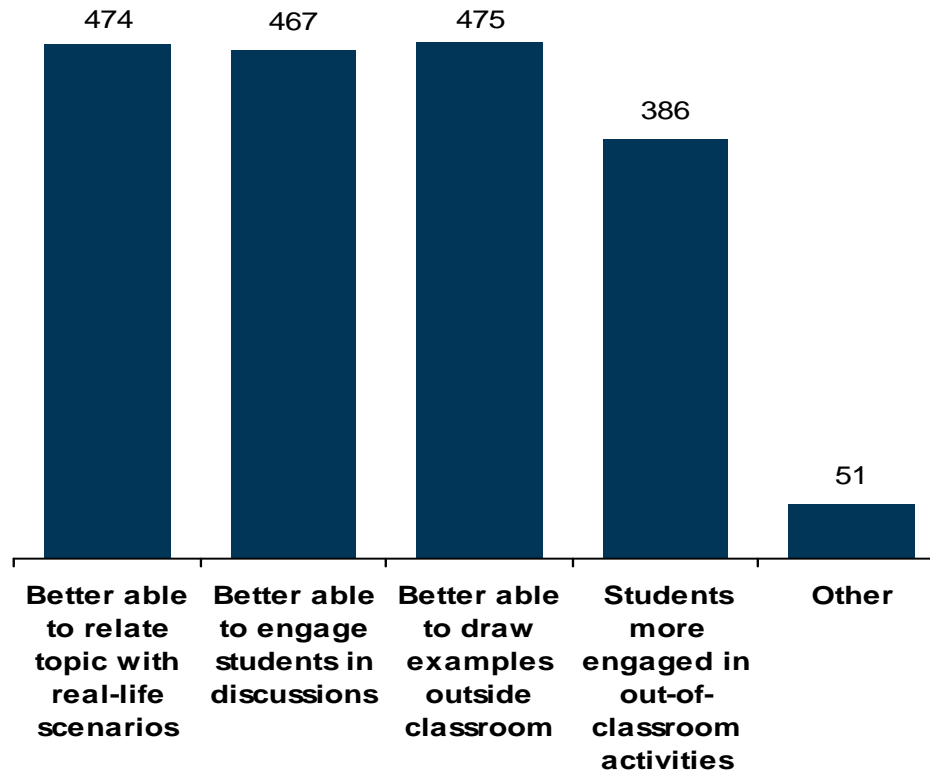
More than three-fourths of those surveyed (77.6 percent) teach at a four-year public/state or private institution. Nearly 20 percent teach at a community college.

Does an election year affect the manner in which you teach?



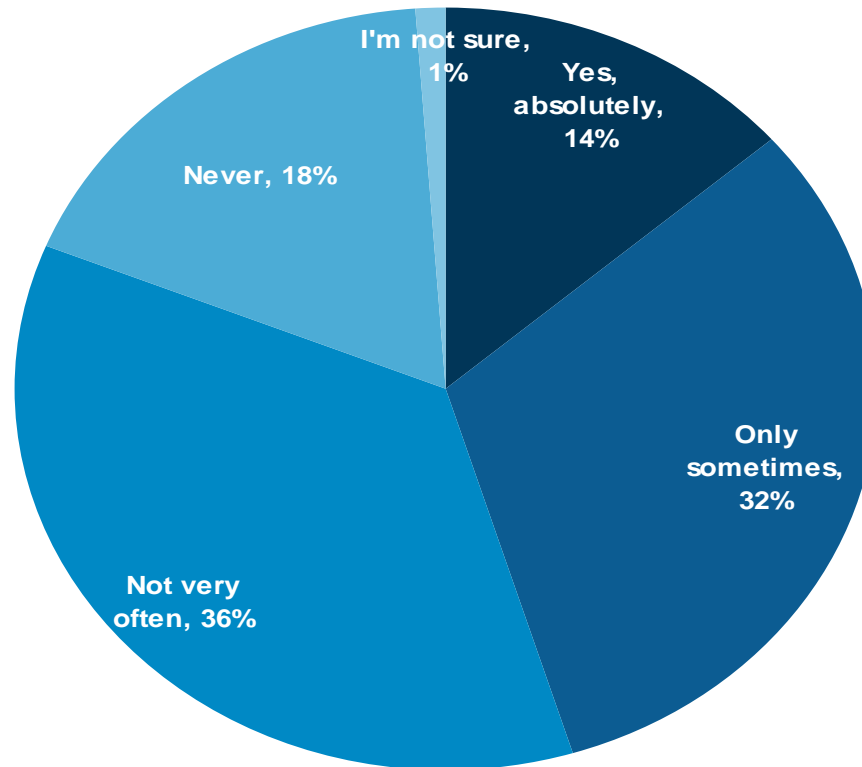
Key Take-Away: Forty-four percent of instructors surveyed said an election year absolutely affects the manner in which they teach.

Please specify how an election year affects the manner in which you teach (select all that apply).



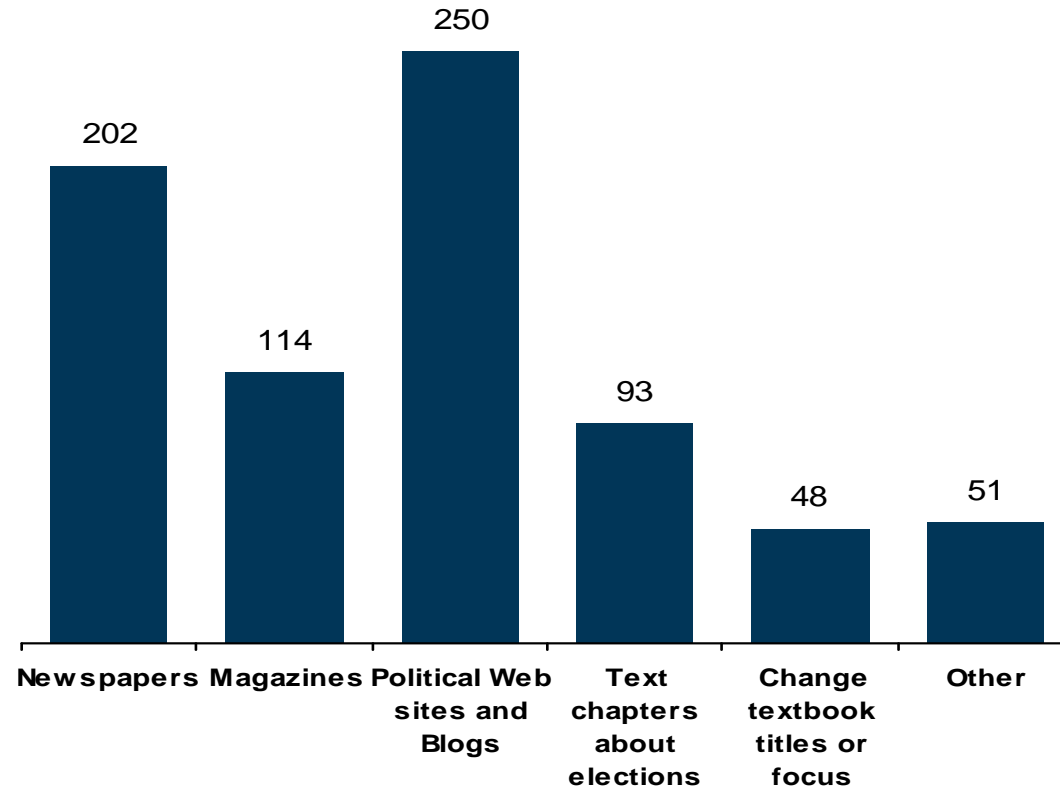
Key Take-Away: Three-fourths said they are better able to relate course material to real-world scenarios; draw on examples outside the classroom; and engage students in classroom discussions. More than 60 percent said students are more engaged outside the classroom during an election year, including joining political groups or attending demonstrations on campus, watching debates, etc.

Does an election year affect the kinds of classroom supplements and texts you use?



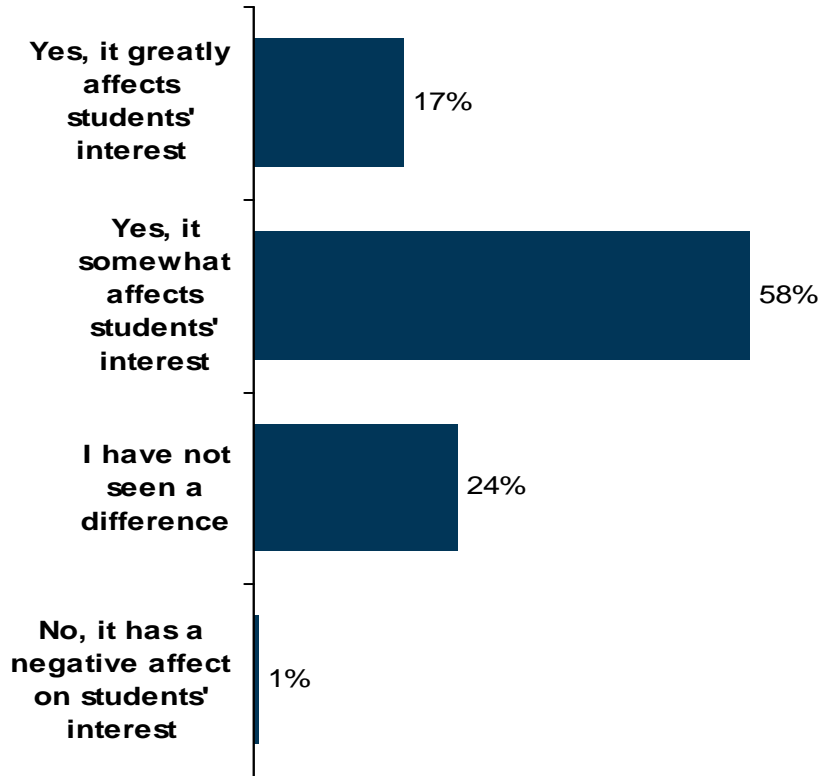
Key Take-Away: Nearly half (45.3 percent) of instructors surveyed said an election year affects the supplements and texts they use.

Please specify which supplements or texts you rely on more during an election year versus a non-election year.



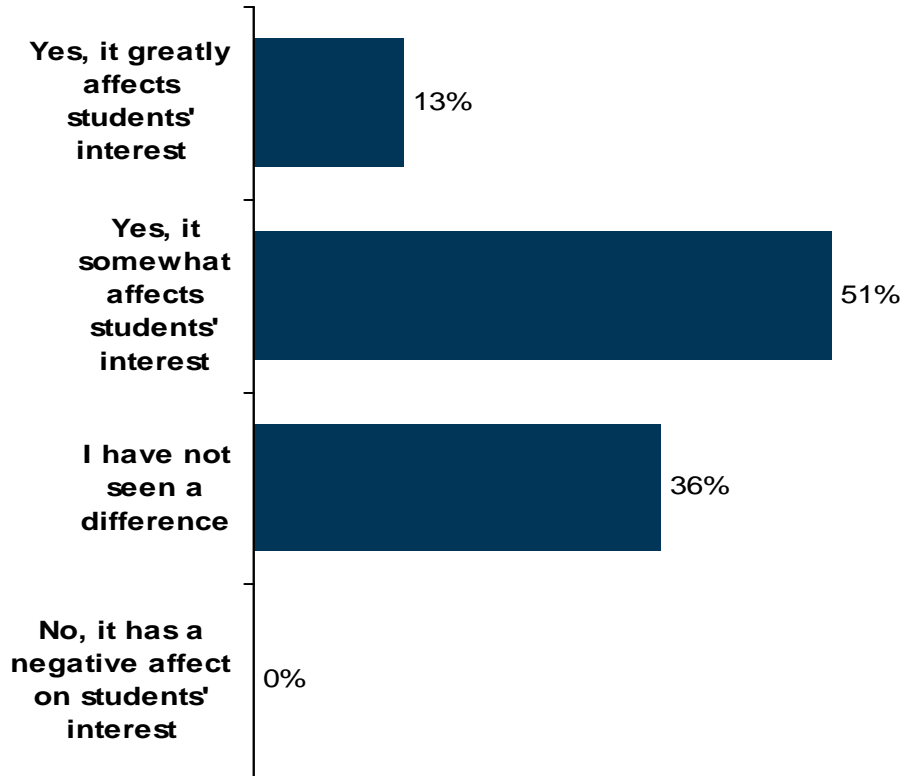
Key Take-Away: More than two-thirds of instructors said they use political Web sites and blogs more often as a classroom supplement during an election year than during a non-election year. More than half (55.5 percent) said they use newspapers more often. Only 13 percent said they change the actual textbook title and/or focus of the textbook; about one-fourth said they rely more on textbook chapters that focus on political elections.

In your opinion, does an election year affect the number of students interested in political science?



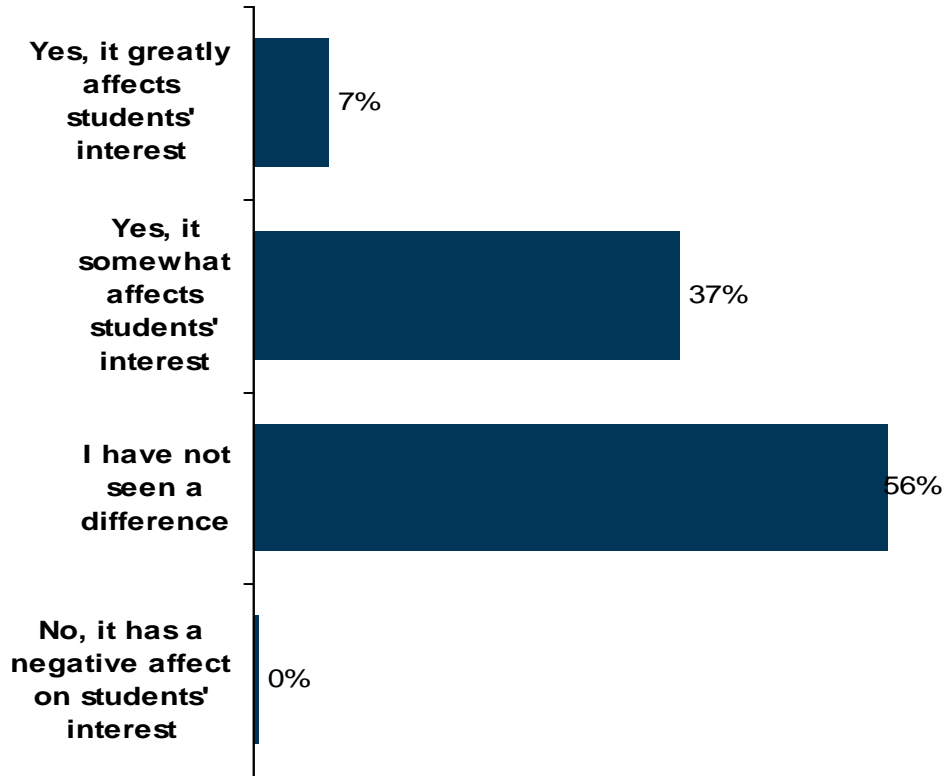
Key Take-Away: More than three-fourths (75.6 percent) of instructors said an election year affects students' interest in political science. More than 17 percent said it greatly affects their interest.

In your opinion, does the amount of attention politicians place on younger audiences affect the involvement of students in the classroom?



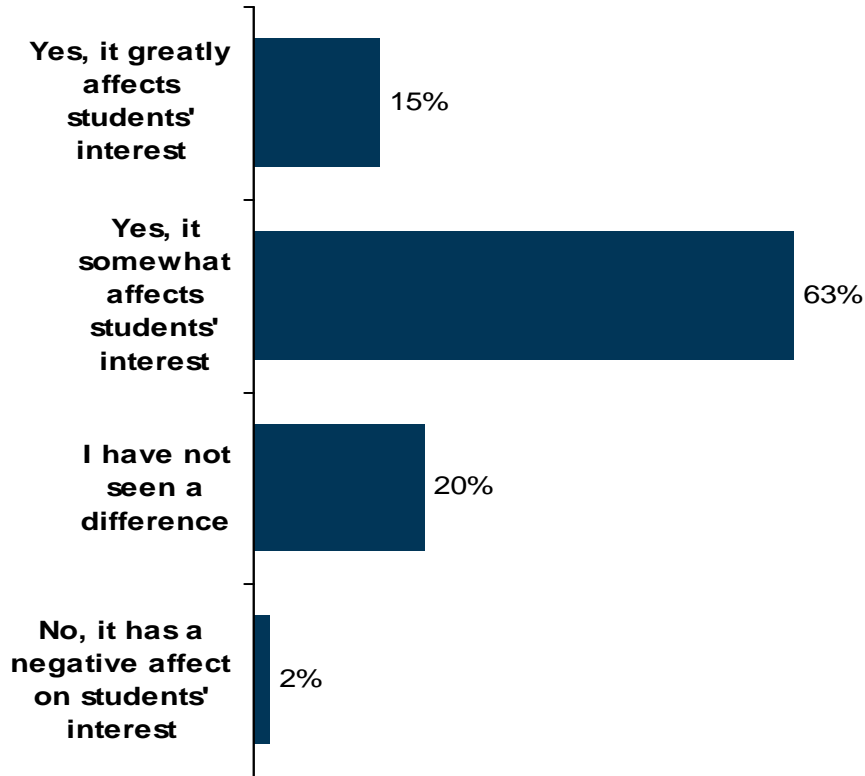
Key Take-Away: Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of instructors said the amount of attention politicians place on younger audiences affects the level of student involvement in the classroom.

In your opinion, does the amount of attention politicians place on social networking affect the involvement of students in the classroom?



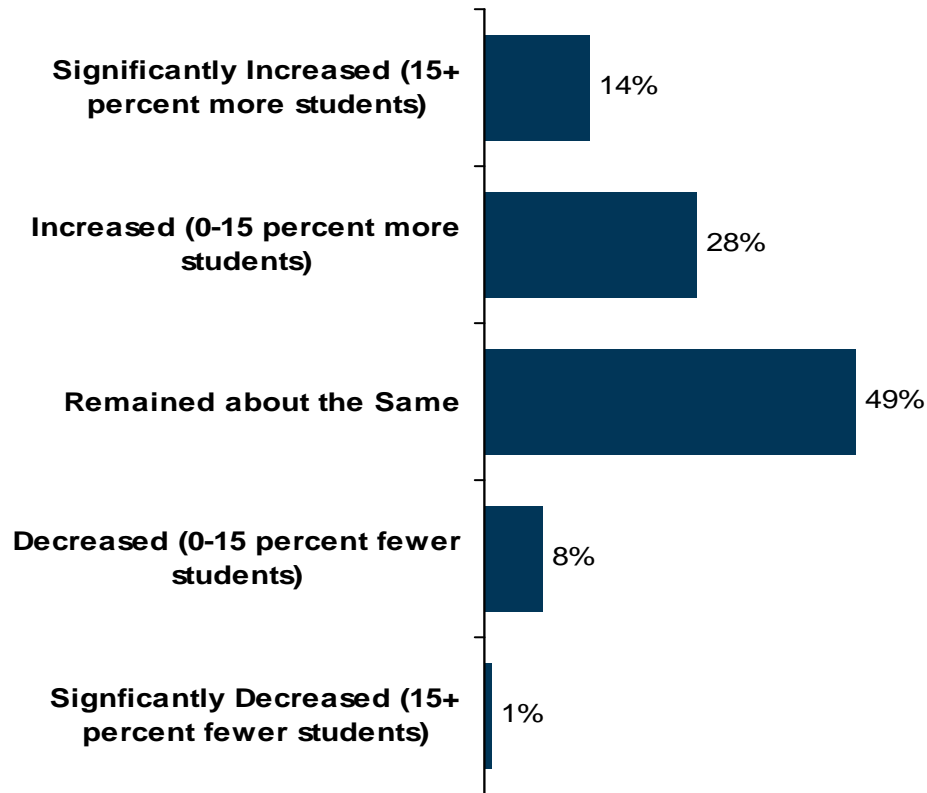
Key Take-Away: More than half (55.7 percent) of instructors surveyed said the amount of attention politicians place on social networking does not have an affect on students' involvement in the classroom.

In your opinion, does the amount of attention the media places on politics during an election year affect the involvement of students in the classroom?



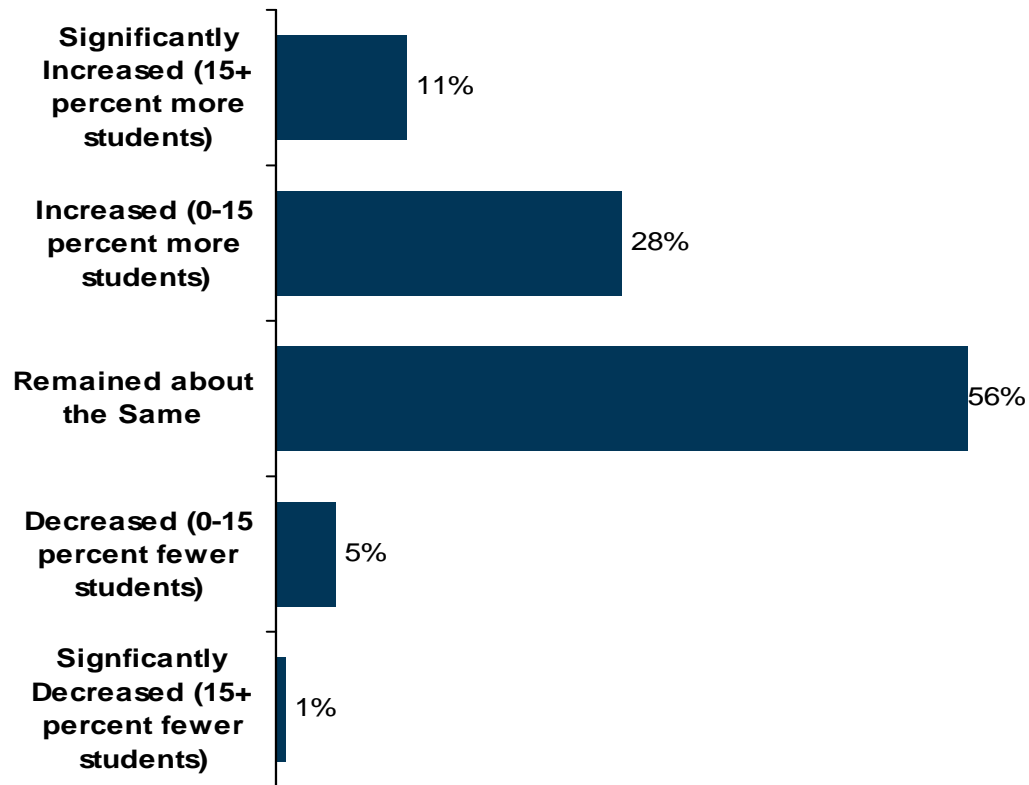
Key Take-Away: More than three-fourths (78.3 percent) of instructors surveyed said the amount of attention the media placed on politics during an election year has an affect on students' involvement in the classroom.

In the past 5 years, the number of students enrolled in political science courses has:



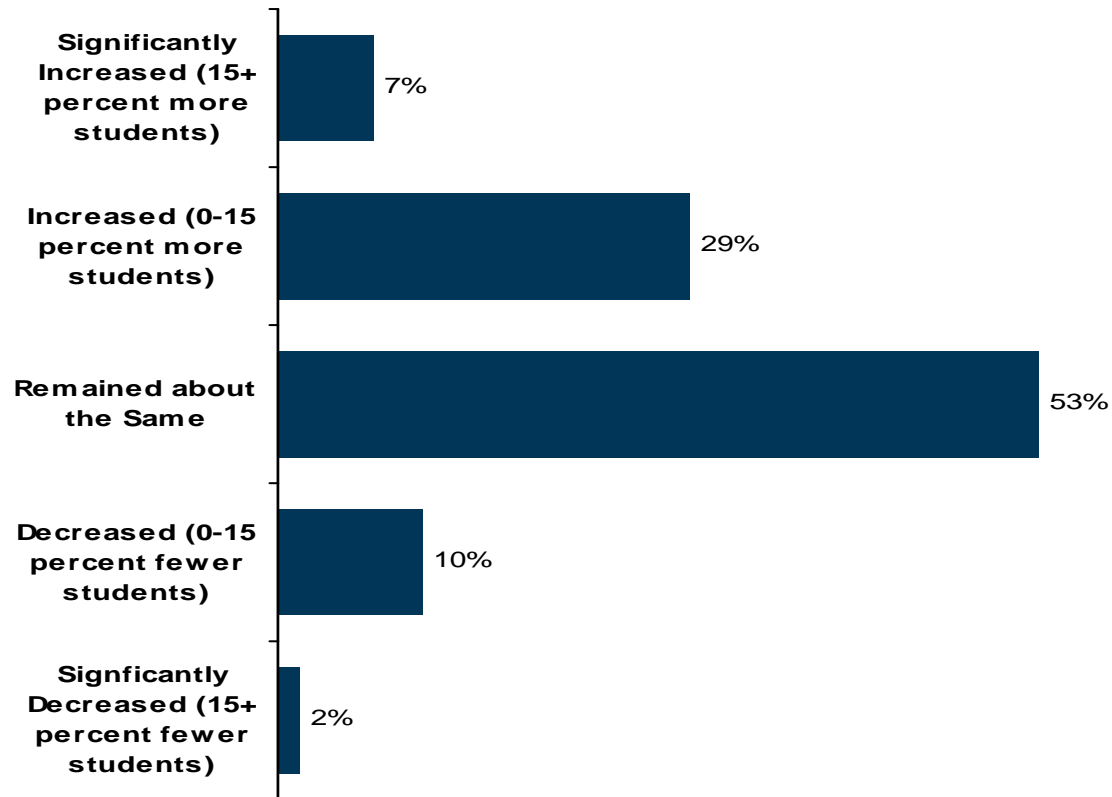
Key Take-Away: Nearly half (49 percent) of instructors surveyed said the number of students enrolled in their political science courses has not increased in the past 5 years.

In the past year, the number of students enrolled in political science courses has:



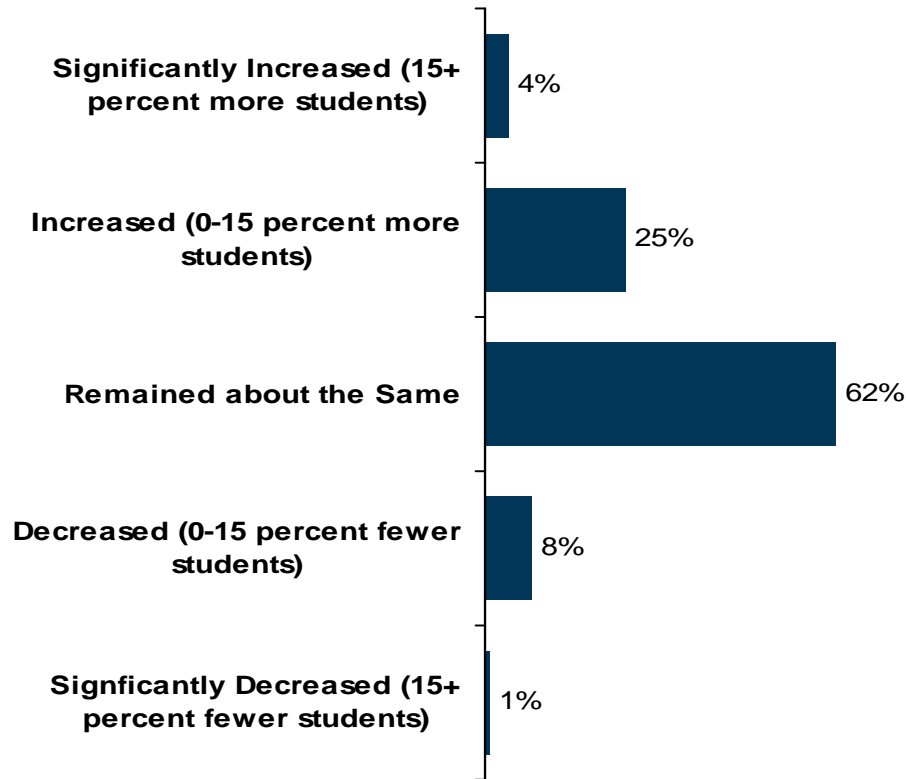
Key Take-Away: More than two-thirds (38.5 percent) of instructors said the number of students enrolled in their political science courses has increased in the past year.

In the past 5 years, the number of students adopting political science as their major has:



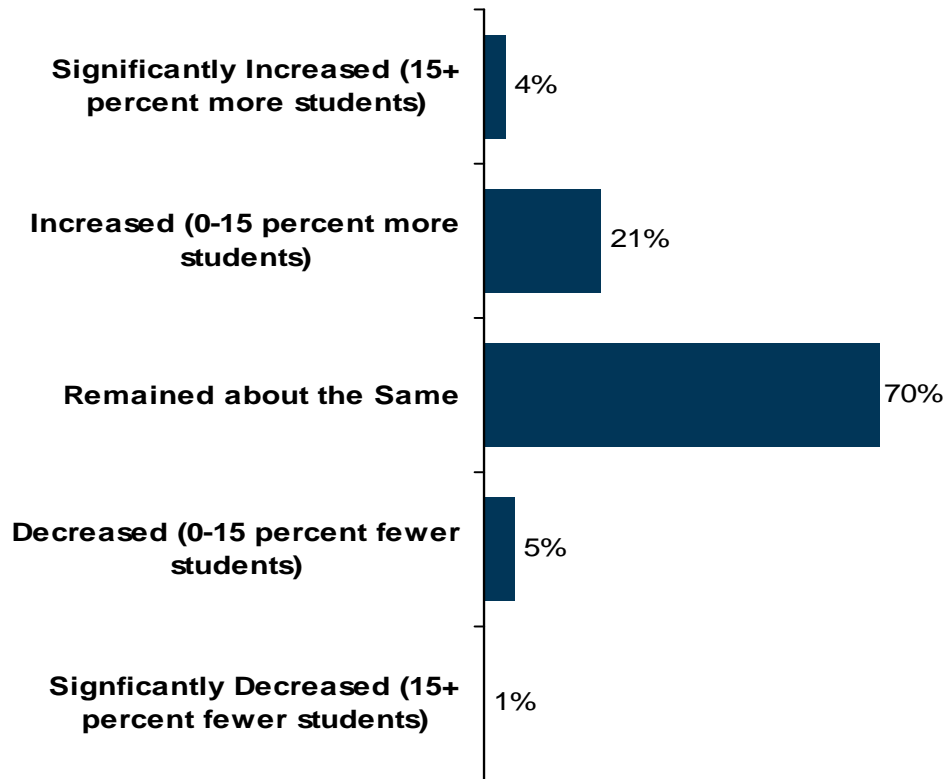
Key Take-Away: More than one-third (36 percent) of instructors said the number of students adopting political science as their major has increased in the past 5 years.

In the past year, the number of students adopting political science as their major has:



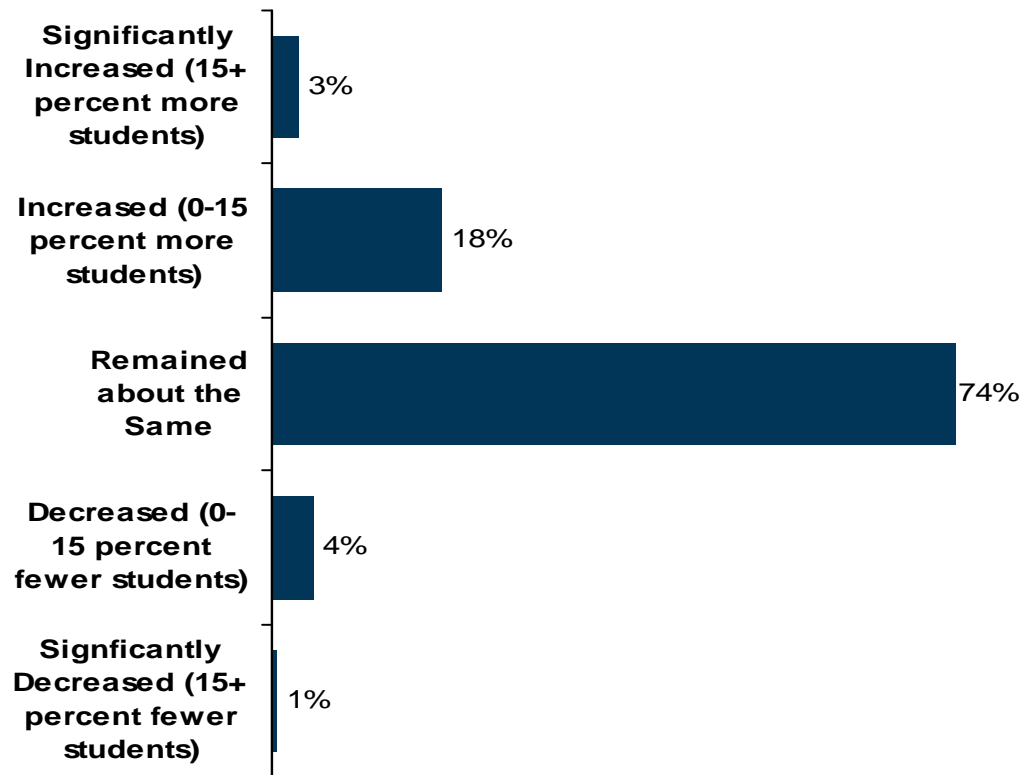
Key Take-Away: More than one-fourth (29 percent) of instructors said the number of students adopting political science as their major has increased in the past year.

In the past 5 years, the number of students adopting political science as their minor has:



Key Take-Away: one-fourth (25 percent) of instructors said the number of students adopting political science as their major has increased in the past 5 years.

In the past year, the number of students adopting political science as their minor has:



Key Take-Away: More than one-fourth (21 percent) of instructors said the number of students adopting political science as their major has increased in the past year.

Key Points

An overwhelming majority of instructors surveyed, 90 percent, said they think an election year changes the level of involvement of their students.

More than three-fourths of instructors said students are more interested in political science during an election year.

Nearly two-thirds of instructors said they think the amount of attention politicians place on younger audiences affects student involvement in political science courses.

More than 78 percent said they think the amount of attention media places on politics during an election year affects student involvement in political science courses.

One-third of instructors surveyed said they relied on political Web sites and blogs more often during an election year as a classroom supplement. More than 18 percent said the same for newspapers.