

Survey, from page 1

ence, and motivation. All these things are completely independent of a geographic location, religious affiliation, or skin tone," Pitts said.

Party lines

This difference of opinion mirrors comparisons between Democrat and Republican respondents in the importance of diversity.

In another question, the survey asked questions about political party identification: students chose from seven levels, ranging from independent to strong party affiliation as either Democrat or Republican. Respondents identifying with the Democratic Party consistently had higher percentages for the importance of diversity than those identifying with the Republican Party.

The largest disparities between party lines appear in racial and socioeconomic diversity. On both issues, 74 percent of students leaning Democratic believed racial and socioeconomic diversity to be "very important."

Conversely, 35 percent and 36 percent of Republican-identified students considered racial and socioeconomic diversity to be "very important," respectively.

"This is not to say that diversity is not important, we just need to make sure we approach diversity in a way which is both fair and effective at building the best possible college," Pitts said.

Other students believe all types of diversity have a positive impact on the college's atmosphere.

"An academic experience isn't just about inside the classroom," Gagan Gupta '07 said. "Diversity and lack of diversity can both teach you something."

Racial differences

Besides partisanship, race also divides opinions on certain diversity issues.

The difference between the two on racial diversity is six percent, where 63 percent of non-white students and 57 percent of white students felt racial diversity is "very important."

Race factors into the diversity equation, Gupta said. He explained he felt minorities in his hometown were underrepresented, but when he returned after fall break, he realized that Davidson has much less minority representation.

A larger difference rests between the opinions of white and non-white students on socioeconomic issues. 55 percent of white students felt socioeconomic diversity is "very important," while 71 percent of non-white students said it was "very important."

"If we had a better financial aid system we could actively seek students from diverse backgrounds," Quinn said.

Religion and the college

Quinn said he was not surprised religious diversity received only 47 percent of support as a "very important" form of diversity on campus, giving it the lowest percentage in this category of importance.

"The first thing I noticed when I came to Davidson was a large Christian majority on my hall," Quinn said.

College Chaplain Rob Spach explained that as a college affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, part of the College's statement of purpose includes being "a place where there is 'a loyalty to the whole human community and...an openness to and a respect for the world's various religious traditions.'"

Nine percent of students surveyed believed that religious diversity is "not at all important" for a better educational experience.

"I wonder if people don't think that diversity is important or they're hesitant to say they don't want that kind of diversity," Sellers said in response to the ambiguous category.

Spach believes that plenty of students do feel that religious diversity is important but more growth remains for the future of the college.

"I also think another kind of 'work' to be done at Davidson is continuing to encourage greater understanding and appreciation of each others' faith and religious traditions, so that we be a place where there is respect, appreciation and genuine caring between people of different religions," Spach said.

Diversity at its face value

"It's a common misunderstanding that diversity is racial diversity," Gupta said. "We're not just going to encounter racial diversity."

Nancy Cable, Vice President and Dean of Admission and Financial Aid, argues that while racial diversity is the most visibly definable type of diversity, the goal of the Admissions Office "is to have the most broad-gauged exchange of ideas."

"The Supreme Court this summer said that diversity allows for a rich set of perspectives," Cable said. "I like to have a variety of life experiences, and that is infinite."

Cable explained that for admissions, the College looks for all the categories surveyed, but also looks for other types of diversity, such as a balance between genders and students from rural, urban and suburban backgrounds.

Jacquie Gilchrist '05 is in the Public Opinion class that organized the poll. He agrees that diversity means more than just race, geography and socioeconomics.

"The key is that each member of a group only represents themselves," Gilchrist said. "You take a group and say they think a certain way, but you can't do that. There's a lot of diversity between each person."

Pre-Law Society revived

Group to 'serve as a pro-active yet responsive resource'

By JOE TAYLOR
Staff Writer

In the 2003-2004 academic year, the Davidson College Pre-Law Society will be transformed into an active student run organization.

According to Monica White, Pre-Law Advisor and Associate Director of Career Services, the Pre-Law Society was previously run by the Pre-Law Advisors.

This year, the organization is guided by students themselves.

Kristal High '04 and David Dupee '04, co-chairs of the Pre-Law Society, are both eager to revive the organization.

"We're excited about the new direction of the Pre-Law Society" said Dupee.

"We've developed a new mission statement: 'While primarily a service organization for students contemplating careers in the legal profession, the mission of the Davidson Pre-Law Society is to serve as a proactive yet responsive resource for the Davidson College community on relevant legal issues and related concerns.'"

High explained that in previous years the Pre-Law Society was an inactive organization with a "somewhat ineffective" executive board. This inspired her to take action.

"I did some planning this summer and by the time I got back to school David Dupee and I began restructuring the Pre-Law Society" said High.

Dupee and High have implemented a number of changes to the Pre-Law society, including mandatory membership requirements, an induction ceremony and a completely revamped executive board comprised of students.

The board is apportioned as follows: Newsletter,

Web site, Community/Social Service, Internships, Panels/Speakers, Publicity and Research Team.

"Basically, we're trying to become more proactive and more of a student run organization that focuses on student needs" explained Dupee.

High agreed: "We both have a vision of the Pre-Law Society being an active student organization on campus, not just a list-serve distributed by Career Services."

Currently, the Davidson Pre-Law Society has 50 active student members and continues to grow each week.

The organization has had a number of successful events this semester, including career panels and a school fair.

Most recently, the Pre-Law Society organized a law school fair in the atrium of the Union.

More than 150 students attended the fair and browsed through information from 60 of the most well-respected law schools in the country.

According to Monica White, the national average for law school applications has risen 34 percent in the past two years.

"Despite this rise," said White, "more and more law schools continue to recruit here at Davidson. We had to turn some down this year because of space."

White added that many of the law school representatives declared the event "the biggest and best fair they have ever been to."

The Pre-Law Society has many events planned for upcoming months, including:

- Tour of Wake Forest University Law School
- Careers in Legal Industry Panel
- Lectures by Julian Bond, chairman of the NAACP, and Mel Watt, Congressman from the 12th district of North Carolina.

Eye on Politics

Students look ahead to key Southern elections

By ZACH KAZIOR
Staff Writer

Southern politics have dominated the domestic coverage in the national media recently. While Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean made headlines with his "Confederate flag" remark, last week also boasted two gubernatorial elections in Kentucky and Mississippi and will host another later this week in Louisiana. Louisiana's election is scheduled for Nov. 15.

The national media have portrayed these races as "bellwether elections," testing the ability of the Democratic Party to win in what once was FDR's "Solid South" as it has grown increasingly hospitable to Republicans.

Davidson College sits at the crossroads of this debate as a southern school boasting a student body drawn about half from the South, while remaining a nationally recognized liberal arts college. Its students might be in a unique position to understand this confluence of southern and national politics.

Mill Graves '07 of Kentucky said, "Kentucky is conservative nationally, but we've had Democratic officials in the past... Local depends on where you are from."

Mill said that people would vote Democrat or Republican depending upon region. For example, eastern Kentucky tends to vote Republican, while more industrial areas such as Lexington or Louisville vote Democratic. George W. Bush won Kentucky in the 2000 presidential election, but Kentucky has had a Democrat in the governor's seat for over three decades.

When discussing the prospects of Louisiana electing a Democratic governor, Adrienne Langlinais '06 said, "I think it's possible but not probable," indicating that conservatism is very much established in her state. She was unsure about how Louisiana voted in national versus

local-state elections.

Francois Trappey '06, also of Louisiana, said, "Louisiana is a hard state to pin down to one or the other party, but for the most part, I'm pretty sure we vote Republican on both the national and state levels."

Despite past Democratic traditions in Louisiana and Kentucky, election results indicate these students may be on to something.

In Kentucky, Representative Ernie Fletcher attempted to curb more than three decades of Democratic rule as he faced off against state Attorney General Ben Chandler. Democratic incumbent Ronnie Musgrove tried to hold off Republican challenger Haley Barbour, a Washington lobbyist and former chairman of the Republican National Committee, in Mississippi's very close race. In Louisiana, former state and federal health department official Bobby Jindal, of Indian descent, is running against Lt. Gov. Kathleen Blanco, a Democrat.

Dr. Pat Sellers, Associate Professor of Political Science, offered his interpretation of the elections. He said, "the possibility of slowing the Republicans difficult but not impossible."

Dr. Sellers cited Senator Mary Landrieu from Louisiana, who won reelection in 2002, and Erskine Bowles from North Carolina, running for the Senate seat left vacant by John Edwards, as Democrats who are talented and experienced enough to make an impact in the southern bubble.

At this time, however, it seems that the ball is in the Republicans' court. In Kentucky, Mr. Fletcher defeated Chandler. Haley Barbour also handily defeated Democratic incumbent Ronnie Musgrave in Mississippi by seven points.

Only November 15 will see whether the Republicans will be able to successfully sweep the elections, thus implying a new "Solid South" for President Bush in 2004.

'Who's Who' Announces Selections

Because of their outstanding record of service, leadership and scholarship the following students were selected by faculty, staff and fellow students as members of *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*.

2003/2004

Emmanuel Amos-Abanyie
Melinda Clare Baldwin
Owen Edwards Barrow
Eric Vincent Benjamin, Jr.
Melissa Carole Breedlove
Sean Patrick Brooks
Janeen Lynnette Bryant
Mary Ashley Cain
Mary Faith Carpenter
William Adam Chalker
Beau Ryan Dasher
Elizabeth Driscoll Devlin
Mary Kathleen Donoghue
Emily Marie Drew
Zachary Luke Farmer
Andrew Thomas Foerster
Maele Edith Fonteneau
Hannah-Marie Fuhr
Tiffany Nicole Hollis
Barbara Rae Kauffman
Robert Douglas Koch

Megan Newport Kota
Jeffrey Harold Larrimore
Elizabeth Randolph Matthews
Rachel Gene May
James Riley McNab III
Emily Ann Mendenhall
Katherine Belk Morris
Robert Blackerby Neuman
Kristin Maria Nickel
Mbye Baboucar Njite
Katrina Lilian Papadopoulou
Chandra Nicole Payne
Jacqueline Jones Protos
Erin Lee Raffety
Susan Grams Robison
Jason Melvin Scott
Alexander Bamford Sibley
Elizabeth Kathleen Beck Smith
Adam Kaback Sperling
Emily Marie Van Leeuwen
Courtney Nicole Ward
Charles Lee Washington, Jr.
Jonathan Chung-Yin Wu