



CAPSTONE
Political Action Committee

A UNIFIED STUDENT INITIATIVE FOR ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

www.capstonepac.org

CAMPUS SURVEY- FALL 2005
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Background

Capstone PAC is a student organization designed to serve as a watchdog group for campus politics at the University of Alabama. The board of Capstone PAC acts as the governing body of the organization. Despite the varied experiences of the governing board members, CapstonePAC is united by a desire to change The University of Alabama for the better. CapstonePAC seeks to utilize the common love for The University of Alabama shared by students and alumni alike to promote more ethical student leadership on campus.

The Capstone PAC hopes to advance ethical student leadership at the University of Alabama by promoting the ideals present in the Capstone Creed. Through critical examination of the current political condition at the Capstone, we seek to educate voters on the electoral process, the impact of student participation in campus elections, and the benefits of a responsive student government. Capstone PAC is not a political party and does not currently endorse candidates.

The Capstone Creed

As a member of The University of Alabama community, I will:
Pursue knowledge;
Act with fairness, honesty, and respect;
Foster civic responsibility; and,
Strive for excellence.

Campus Survey 2005 Information

The following poll was done as an inquiry into public opinion conducted by interviewing a random sample of people. The self-administered survey was completed by a random sampling of individual students in pre-existing courses at The University of Alabama. The survey has a sampling error of +/- 5%. This value was calculated using metrics shared by DSS Research, a professional market research group.

CapstonePAC believes that this poll gave students of various backgrounds an outlet to voice their opinion about SGA elections. We know that administrative policy decisions are being made all the time at The University of Alabama. There are many interest groups who are making their positions known to those decision-makers. This public opinion poll provides an opportunity for the voices of the common student to be heard. The survey was given in various classes on campus with the consent of the corresponding professors/instructors. The survey was also voluntary and results are reported as written by respondents. Percentages not equaling to 100 were a result of students exercising their right to answer questions of their choosing. A list of classrooms polled can be obtained by request. Finally, hard copies of the completed surveys are available for validation purposes.

Survey Snapshot

Number of Survey Respondents	322
Sampling Error	+/- 5% using a 95% confidence interval
Greek Respondents	65 or 20.19%
Independent, Never Greek Respondents	244 or 75.78%
Once But No Longer Greek	13 or 4.04%
Voted in Last Election	40 or 12.42%
Believe that The Machine is Bad	157 or 65.70%

Survey Results

1. In which college are you majoring?

College	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
Arts & Sciences	122	37.89
Commerce & Business Administration	53	16.46
Communication and Information Sciences	89	27.64
Community Health Sciences	4	1.24
Continuing Studies	0	0
Education	14	4.35
Engineering	8	2.48
Graduate	12	3.73
Human Environmental Sciences	13	4.04
Law	0	0
Nursing	2	.62
Social Work	4	1.24

2. How many years have you been attending UA (counting the current year)?

Years	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
1	153	47.52
2	73	22.67
3	42	13.04
4	28	8.70
5	15	4.66
6 or more	6	1.86

3. Are you a member of a Greek-letter fraternity or sorority on this campus?

Affiliation	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
Greek ¹	65	20.19
Independent, Never Greek	244	75.78
Independent, Former Greek ²	13	4.04

¹ of the 65 Greek responders, 33 (50.7%) believe the Machine exists, 48 (73.85%) had heard of the Machine, and 31 (47.7%) believe that there is at least a chance or are sure that it is possible for someone to see the way that they vote in SGA elections.

² of the 13 former Greek responders, 9 (69.2%) believe the Machine exists, 12 (92.3%) had heard of the Machine, and 11 (84.6%) believe that there is at least a chance or are sure that it is possible for someone to see the way that they vote in SGA elections.

4. Did you vote in last year's SGA election?

Vote	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
Yes	69	21.43
No	163	50.62
Was Not Enrolled Last Spring	80	24.84

5. If not, why not? (Circle all that apply)

Reason	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
Too busy	25	7.76
Doesn't matter if I vote, outcome will be the same	55	17.08
Don't care	26	8.07
Unaware of election	10	3.11
Content with any candidates	3	.93
Polling times inconvenient	1	.31
Polling locations inconvenient	3	.93
Other (written) reason	30	9.32

6. Do you think it is possible for anyone to see how you vote in campus elections?

Voting Privacy	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
Yes, definitely	40	12.42
Maybe	127	39.44
No way	42	13.04
Don't know	107	33.23

7. Have you ever heard of “the Machine?”

Heard of Machine	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
Yes	253	78.57
No	69	21.43

8. Do you think that it exists?

Exists	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
Yes, definitely	184	57.14
Maybe	68	21.11
No, just a myth	20	6.21
Never heard of it	50	15.53

9. What is your opinion of “the Machine?” (Circle all that apply)

Opinion	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
Good ¹	13	4.04
Neutral	54	16.77
Bad ²	157	48.76

¹ of those that thought that the Machine was good, 7 (53.85%) were Independent and never Greek, 1 (7.70%) was a former Greek society member, and 5 (38.46%) were Greek.

² Of those that thought the Machine was bad, the explained reasoning is found below

Please Note: More than one answer could be chosen, so percentages will not total 100.

Why the Machine is Bad	Raw Number	Survey Percentage (%)
The best leaders are not always chosen	117	36.34
It is unfair and harms people outside the system	100	31.06
It relies on coercion and intimidation and harms people within the system	84	26.09
It has a reputation for being racist and corrupt and harms the University	91	28.26