

4-2021

Legalization of Recreational Marijuana and COVID Vaccinations for College Students

Edward Chervenak
University of New Orleans, echerven@uno.edu

Anthony Licciardi
University of New Orleans, aliccia2@uno.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uno.edu/src_pubs



Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Chervenak, Edward and Licciardi, Anthony, "Legalization of Recreational Marijuana and COVID Vaccinations for College Students" (2021). *Survey Research Center Publications*. Paper 59.
https://scholarworks.uno.edu/src_pubs/59

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Survey Research Center (UNO Poll) at ScholarWorks@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Survey Research Center Publications by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UNO. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uno.edu.

**LEGALIZATION OF RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA AND COVID
VACCINATIONS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS**



April 2021

UNO Survey Research Center

Dr. Edward E. Chervenak, Director
echerven@uno.edu

Dr. Anthony Licciardi, Research Associate
alicia2@uno.edu

(504) 280-3217

You can view SRC surveys on:

<https://www.uno.edu/academics/colaehd/la/political-science/survey-research-center/studies>

LEGALIZATION OF RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA AND COVID VACCINATIONS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

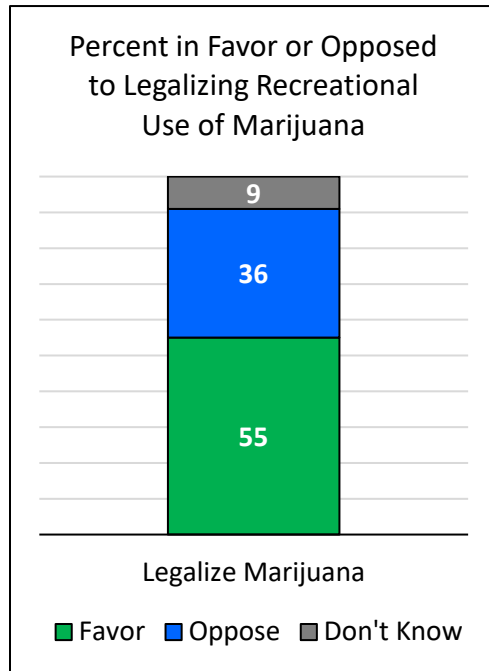
The University of New Orleans' Survey Research Center (SRC) conducted a statewide survey asking Louisiana registered voters whether they favored or opposed the legalization of the recreational use of marijuana. We also asked respondents if they thought college students should be required to receive a covid vaccination before returning to classes in person.

Data for this survey was collected using two modes of contact. An interactive voice response (IVR) survey was used to reach respondents on landlines and live interviewers called cell phone numbers. Landlines accounted for 55 percent of the sample and mobile phones accounted for 45 percent. The survey was conducted on April 26 through April 28, 2021.

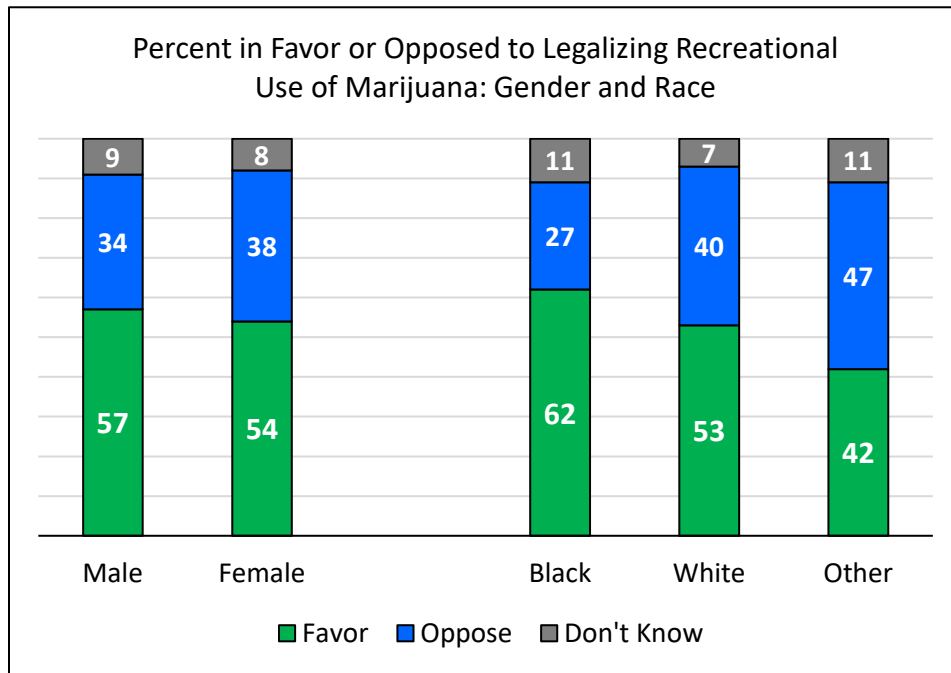
Registered voters were randomly selected from the Louisiana Secretary of State's voter file. The sample of 692 respondents yields a margin of error of +/- 3.7% with 95% confidence. Readers should be cautious in making inferences about sub-categorical cross tabulations of survey results. While a sample size of 692 random respondents yields a +/- 3.7% margin of error, sub-categories of groups by race, age, sex, and partisanship are smaller than the total sample size, thus, leading to wider margins of error when they are reported in cross tabulations.

- A majority of registered voters support legalization of recreational marijuana.
- Opinions on legalization are polarized along party lines.
- Attitudes toward legalization are influenced by age and race.
- Respondents are evenly divided on whether returning college students should be required to receive a covid vaccination.
- Respondents are split along race, age, household income on vaccinating college students.
- Democrats and Republicans are highly polarized on covid vaccinations.

LEGALIZATION OF RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA

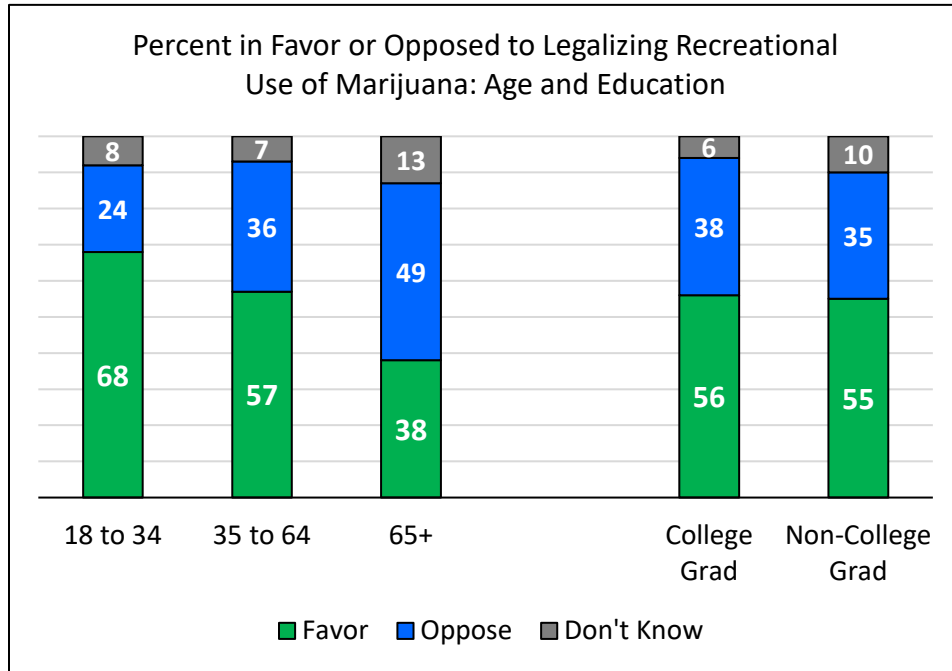


The results of the survey indicate that a solid majority of registered voters in Louisiana are in favor of legalizing the recreational use of marijuana. Just over one-third (36%) are opposed to the idea. Nearly 10% said they did not have an opinion on the matter.



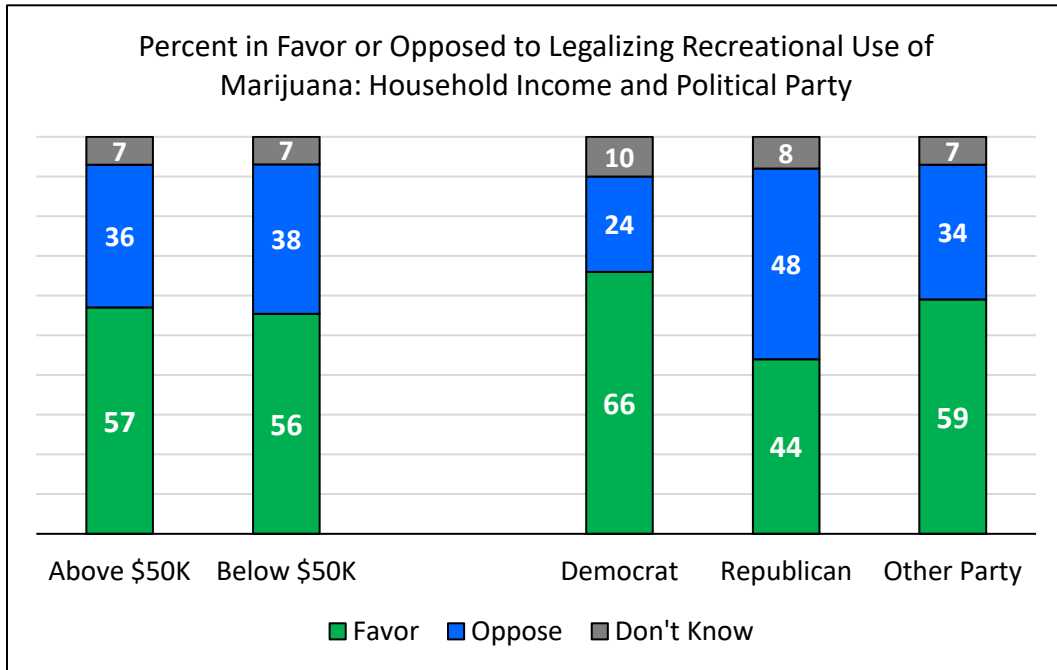
A breakdown of how men and women view the idea of legalizing recreational marijuana indicates there is not a great deal of distance between them, although men are slightly more in favor of the idea.

There is a racial divide on this question. Blacks are more supportive of legalization than are whites by a statistically significant margin. Non-black minorities are more opposed than in favor of legalization. A near majority of them oppose legalization compared to approximately one-quarter of black respondents.



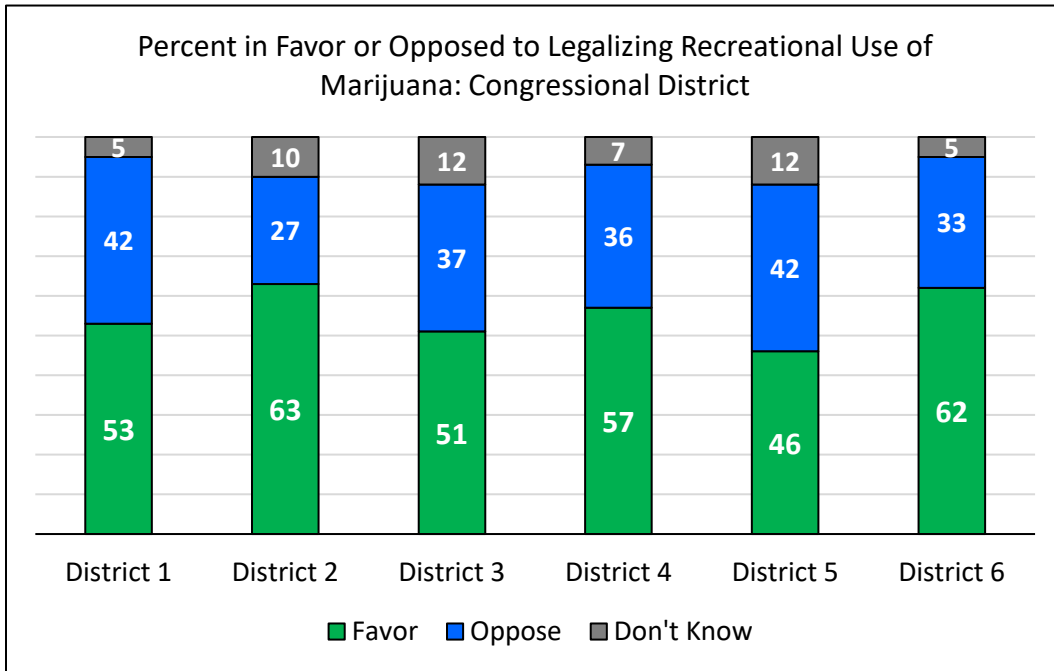
Attitudes toward the legalization of marijuana for recreational use are strongly influenced by age. The graph indicates there is a strong negative relationship between support for legalization and age. As age increases, support for legalization drops significantly. The youngest age cohort is by far more sympathetic towards the idea of legalizing marijuana while senior citizens are firmly against it. Seniors are twice more likely than the youngest respondents to oppose legalization. Middle age respondents are more in favor than opposed to legalization by a nearly 20-point margin.

Educational attainment has no real effect on attitudes about legalization. College graduates and non-college graduates are alike in their opinions concerning legalization.



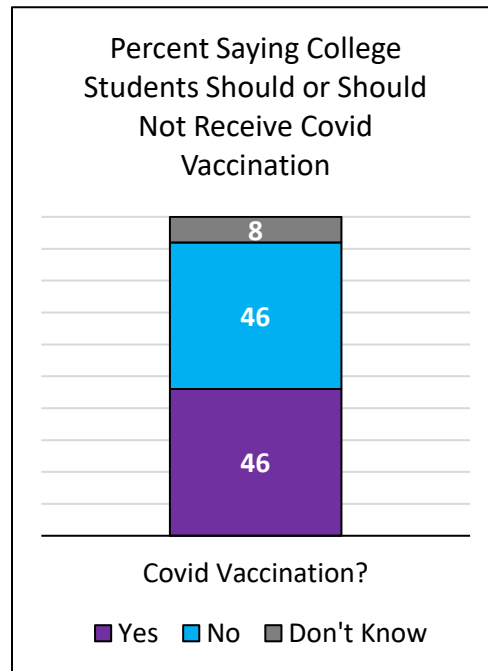
Household income levels had no discernible influence on how one thought about the legalization of marijuana for recreational use. Both income groups were similar in their views about the notion.

Not surprisingly, opinions are polarized along party lines. Two-thirds of Democrats are in favor of legalization while less than a majority of Republicans support that position. Republicans are twice more likely than Democrats to oppose the idea of legalization. Third party adherents are more in line with Democrats than with Republicans although one-third of them, compared to one-quarter of Democrats, are not in favor of legalization.

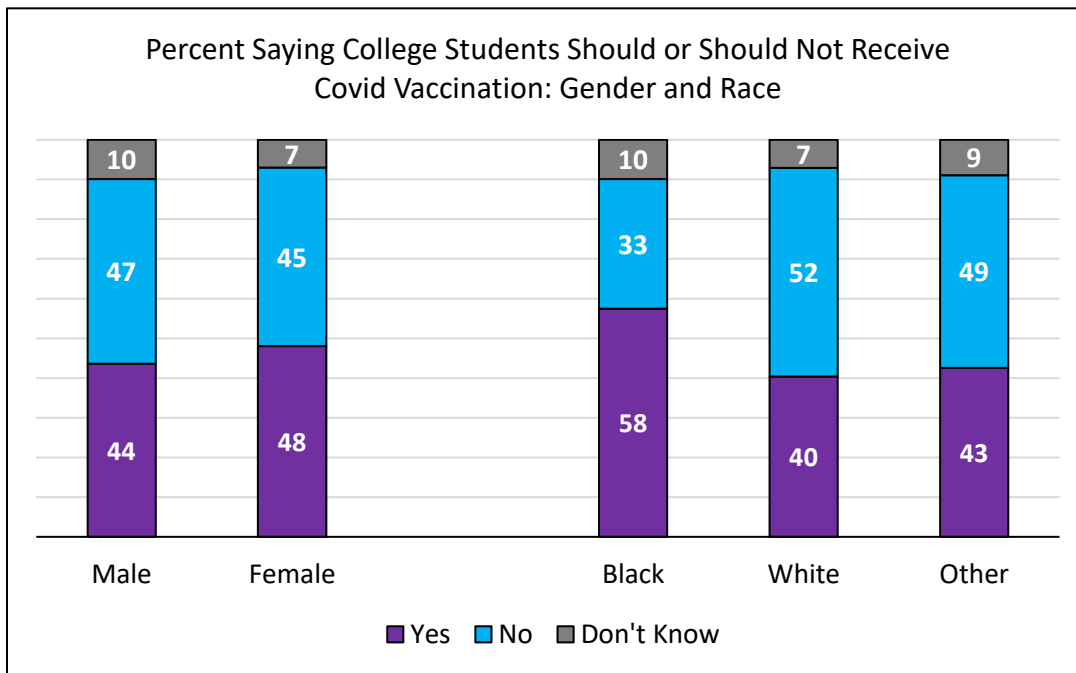


There was a degree of variation in opinion across the six congressional districts. That being said, even in District 5 where they expressed the least support for legalization, more people favored than opposed legalizing the recreational use of marijuana. Respondents in District 2 and District 6 were the most in favor followed closely by District 4. Majorities in District 1 and District 3 were also amenable to having marijuana legalized for personal use.

COVID VACCINATIONS FOR RETURNING COLLEGE STUDENTS

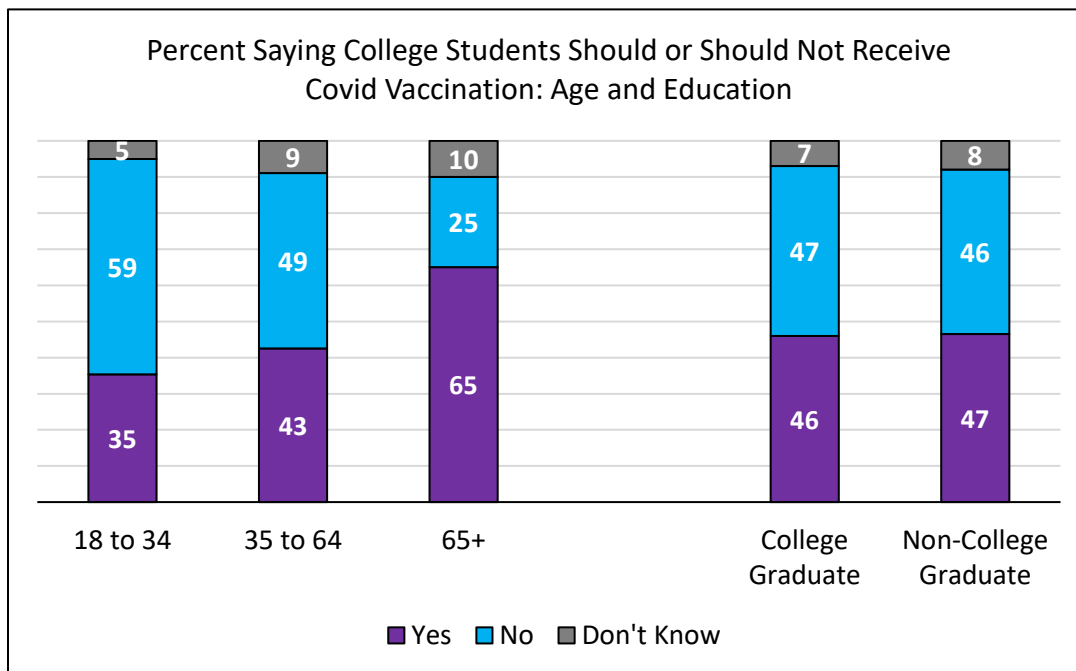


Respondents were asked whether they thought that college students should be required to get covid vaccinations before they returned to classes in person. The results indicate that citizens are evenly split on this question. They are just as likely to say yes as to say no to the vaccinations.



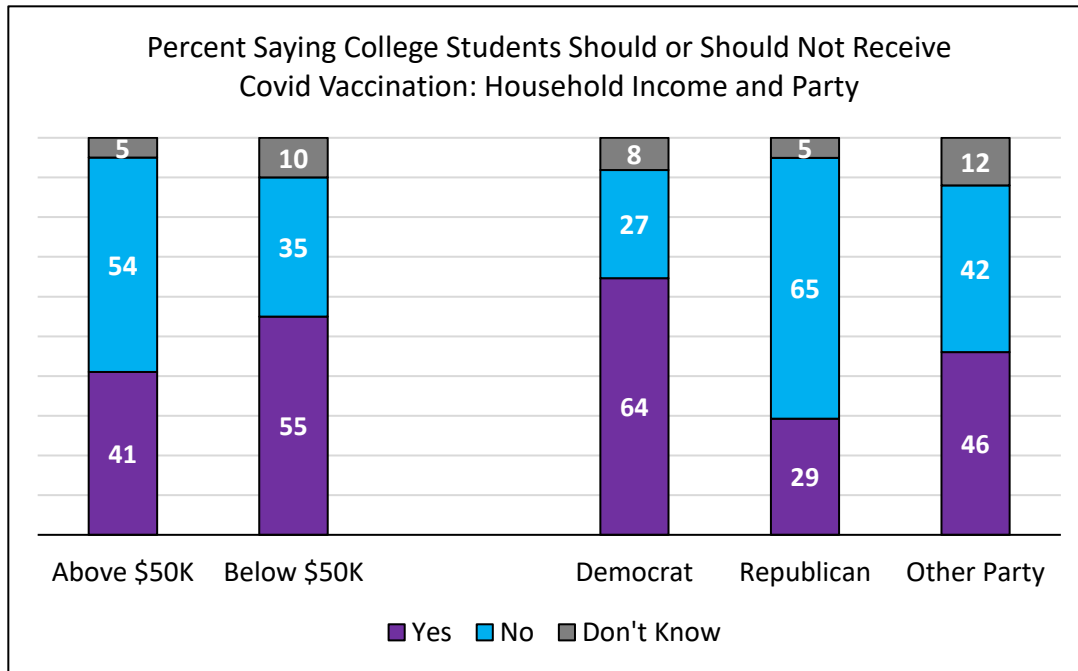
Men are slightly more likely to say no to the vaccinations while women are more likely to say yes. However, the differences between males and females are small and not significant.

We do find statistically significant distinctions between blacks and the two other racial groups. Nearly 60% of blacks compared to 40% of whites and 43% of non-black minorities believe college students should be required to get the vaccinations. One-third of blacks say no to the vaccinations compared to a majority of whites and a near majority of non-black minorities.



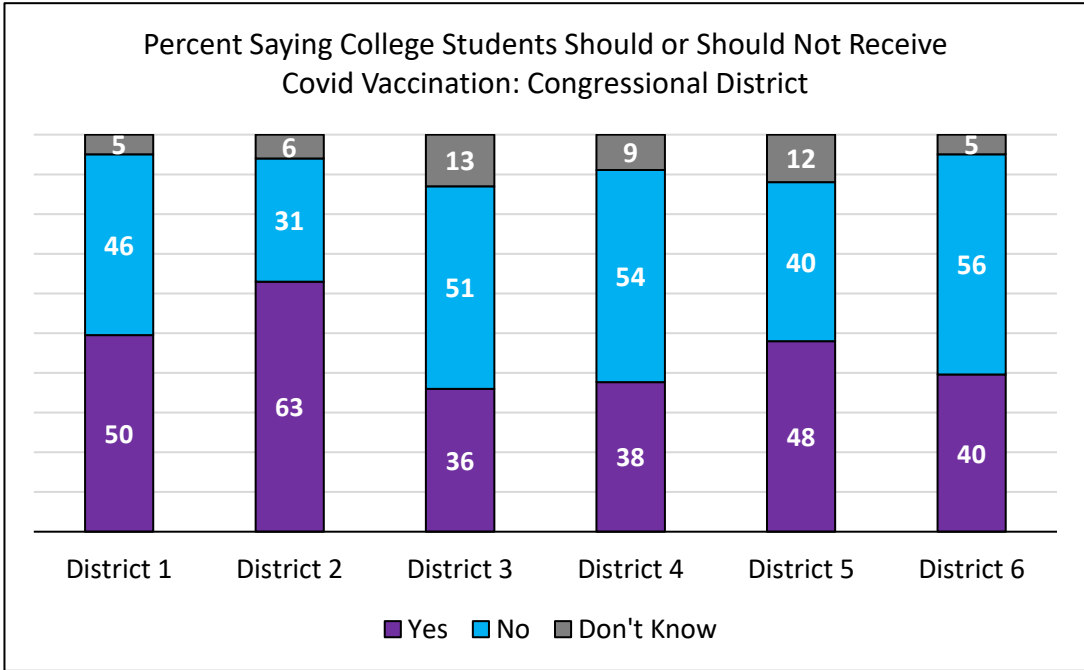
There is a positive and curvilinear relationship between age and the opinion that college students should be vaccinated. Thirty-five percent of the youngest age cohort said yes to vaccinations. That increases slightly to 43% for middle age respondents, but then jumps up to 65% for senior citizens. Middle age respondents are twice more likely than the oldest age group to oppose vaccinations, while 6 in 10 of the youngest respondents are against the idea.

Educational attainment had no influence on how respondents answered this question. Both college graduates and non-college graduates are evenly split on the question. Both groups are of similar opinions when it comes to vaccinations for college students.



Household income levels appear to inspire differences in opinion on the vaccination question. A solid majority of respondents with total household incomes above \$50K are not in favor of vaccinating college students, while a majority of respondents in households earning less than \$50K believe they should be vaccinated.

We should not be shocked to see how polarized those who are affiliated with the two major political parties are on this question. In fact, Democrats and Republicans are diametrically opposed to each other on whether or not college students should be vaccinated for covid before returning to classes. The partisan divide we see nationally on the covid issue is playing out in Louisiana as well. As for third party adherents or independents, they are basically split on this question.



A majority of respondents in three congressional districts disapprove of the idea of vaccinating college students before they return to classes in person. One-half of respondents in District 1 and 63% of respondents in District 2 support the vaccination idea. Not quite a majority in District 5 are also in favor of the vaccinations.

Appendix

Live call survey script:

“Hi, this is _____. May I speak to _____. This is a short confidential University of New Orleans poll. Do you favor or oppose the legalization of the recreational use of marijuana?”

Should all college students be required to have a covid vaccination before attending class in-person?

Are you a 4-year college graduate?

Is your house hold income above \$50,000?

(Because a voter’s sex, age, race, and party registration are imbedded into their voter record, once they are confirmed to be the respondent, there is no need to ask for these demographic data.)

Thank you for taking the survey.”

Survey script for landline IVR call:

“This is a short confidential University of New Orleans poll. Do you favor or oppose the legalization of the recreational use of marijuana? Press 1 for favor. Press 2 for oppose. Press 3 if you do not know.

Should all college students be required to have a covid vaccination before attending class in-person? Press 1 for yes. Press 2 for no. Press 3 if you do not know.

Are you a 4-year college graduate? Press 1 for yes. Press 2 for no.

Is your house hold income above \$50,000? Press 1 for yes. Press 2 for no. Press 3 if you do not know.

If you are male, press 1. If you are female press 2.

If you are younger than 35 press 1. If you are 35 to 64, press 2. If you are older than 64, press 3.

If you are black, press 1. If you are white, press 2. If you are something else, press 3.

If you are a Democrat, press 1. If you a Republican, press 2. If you are something else, press 3.

Thank you for taking the survey.”

IVR surveys, also known as “robo-polls” employ an automated, recorded voice to call respondents who are asked to answer questions by punching telephone keys. Advantages of IVR surveys include their low cost, the almost immediate collection of data, and the simple and convenient processing of data. They also reduce interviewer bias to zero by eliminating the live human interviewer. Every survey respondent hears the same question read the same way. When conducting IVR surveys, pollsters must not rely on all details of a call list. They cannot assume that the details of the person in the file will match the individual who picks up the call. Demographic categories of race, age, gender, and political party identification must be self-reported by the respondent to ensure a valid and accurate analysis. Ideally, the sample of respondents should reflect the population of interest. Unfortunately, this is usually not the case. One of the problems with telephone surveys is non-response since some people may screen their calls or hang-up when called. This may cause some groups to be over- or under-represented.

Because IVR surveying is prohibited by FCC rules from calling cell phone numbers, only VOIP and home phone numbers can be called. Residents who are cell phone only who would be eligible to participate are excluded from IVR polls. The growing trend of minority and younger households without land lines can result in a coverage error. As a result, we employed live interviewers to contact cell phone numbers to better capture that population.

Finally, no reliable conclusions can be drawn from the observed survey data unless the sample has been post-weighted to correct for the lack of representativeness. It is imperative that survey analysts accurately post weight the cases to reflect the demographics of the population of interest. In this instance this sample was post-weighted to reflect gender, age, race, and parish parameters of the population of registered voters in Louisiana.

Sample Demographics

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	314	45.3	45.3	45.3
	Female	378	54.7	54.7	100.0
	Total	692	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 to 34	185	26.7	26.7	26.7
	35 to 64	348	50.3	50.3	76.9
	65+	160	23.1	23.1	100.0
	Total	692	100.0	100.0	

Race

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Black	215	31.0	31.0	31.0
	White	442	63.9	63.9	94.9
	Other	35	5.1	5.1	100.0
	Total	692	100.0	100.0	

Party

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Democrat	250	36.1	36.1	36.1
	Republican	277	40.1	40.1	76.1
	Other Party	165	23.9	23.9	100.0
	Total	692	100.0	100.0	

Congressional District

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	District 1	123	17.8	17.8	17.8
	District 2	119	17.2	17.2	35.0
	District 3	112	16.2	16.2	51.2
	District 4	105	15.2	15.2	66.4
	District 5	113	16.3	16.3	82.7
	District 6	120	17.3	17.3	100.0
	Total		692	100.0	100.0