

At Davidson, faith and reason work together in mutual respect and benefit. Students reside on campus surrounded by an ethos in which the dignity and worth of each person is clearly affirmed.

Survey Response Summary

In an effort to gather opinions regarding the bylaws, the college surveyed by email all alumni who are contactable, the student body, faculty, staff and former faculty. The recipients also received multiple follow-up communications before the survey closed.

At the close of the survey period (Nov. 5 through Jan. 22), the college had received more than 4,000 completed responses. The trustees considered the college community's responses among other feedback before making a decision about the bylaws at their January meeting.

Of the more than 17,000 contactable alumni, 3,625 alumni and current students

responded; the remaining responses came from faculty, staff and faculty emeriti.

The survey consisted of five sections, including an introductory video, demographic information, questions related to values and traditions important to Davidson, questions about the bylaws under consideration, and open-ended questions that invited respondents to share additional opinions.

Thank you to all who took time to complete the survey. The Board of Trustees reviewed all survey data and appreciates the thoughtful responses from the Davidson community.

QUESTION:

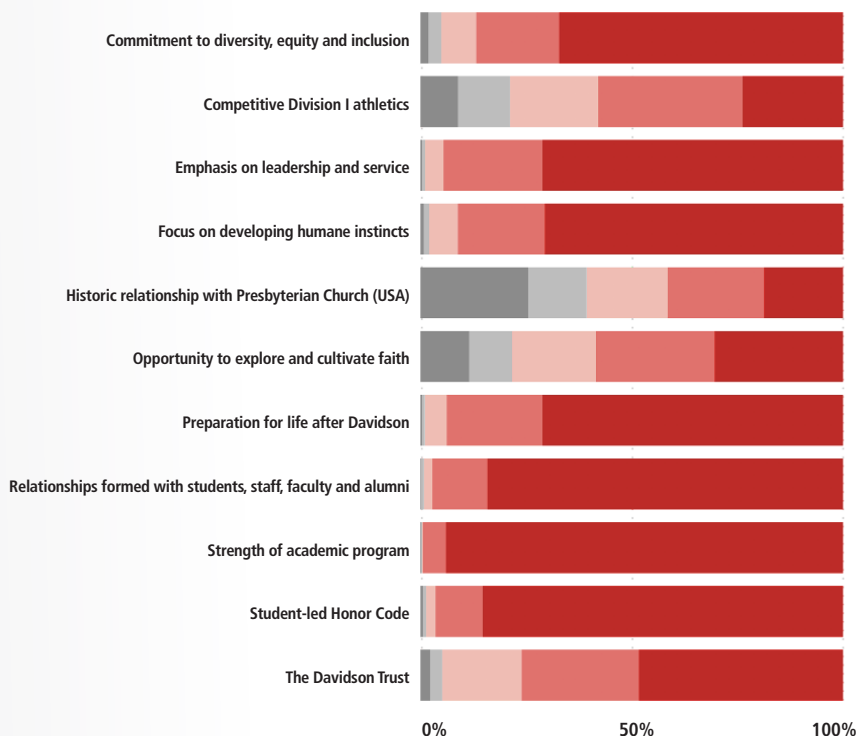
What do you value about Davidson College?

The first opinion question in the survey provides a selection of Davidson values and traditions. While there are differences of opinion in some parts of the survey, it is also remarkable how aligned the responses to this question are. There is much the Davidson community agrees is important for the future success of the college.

- 97.5% of all respondents value the relationships formed with students, faculty, staff and alumni
- 99.5% of all respondents somewhat or highly value the strength of the academic program
- 96.5% of all respondents somewhat or highly value the student-run Honor Code

The graph below illustrates all responses to the question:

● Not Valued ● Less Valued ● Neutral ● Somewhat Valued ● Highly Valued



Tradition can be improved upon proper examination. Throughout history, it has been this way and will continue to be. To disavow it without consideration or out of a loathing of its very existence is anathema to the values we hold dear. Davidson stands upon the shoulders of its rich tradition. May its past guide its future, without the wholesale abandonment of its history as seen in far too many institutions today.

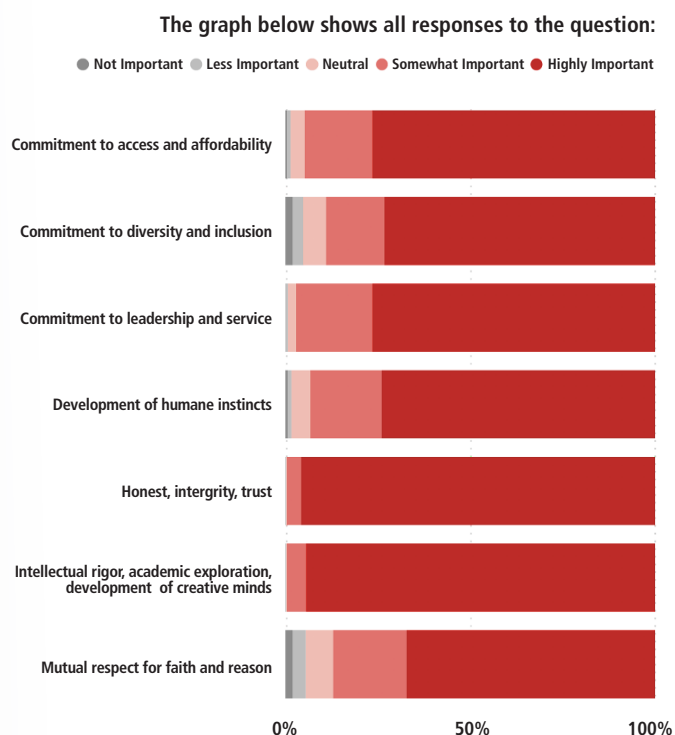
—Member of the Class of 2011

QUESTION:

How important to the future success of the college are the following commitments?

There is considerable agreement from all respondents on the seven commitments included. Of note are the following observations:

- 94.8% value a commitment to access and affordability
- 97.1% value a commitment to leadership and service
- 93.2% value a commitment to the development of humane instincts
- 99.7% value honesty, integrity and trust
- 99.6% value intellectual rigor, academic exploration, and the development of creative minds



One of the things, perhaps *the* thing, that has made Davidson unique has been its ability to change and adapt over the years while protecting, maintaining and living its core values—a balancing act in today’s world of no small significance. While so much has changed since I walked the campus some 55 yrs. ago, that “Davidson intangible” when I set foot on campus today is still the same, and I know I’m home.

—Member of the Class of 1965

At their Jan. 28, 2021 board meeting, the Davidson College Board of Trustees unanimously affirmed the college’s Statement of Purpose and the college’s relationship with the Presbyterian Church (USA). They voted to affirm their commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive governing body while also honoring the college’s religious heritage.

While I value other things about Davidson and the education we received there, and while I would barely qualify as an active Christian, I feel strongly that Davidson would not be the same place, would be less unique, and would be less effective in turning students into servant leaders without a formal acknowledgement of its Christian roots and affiliation.

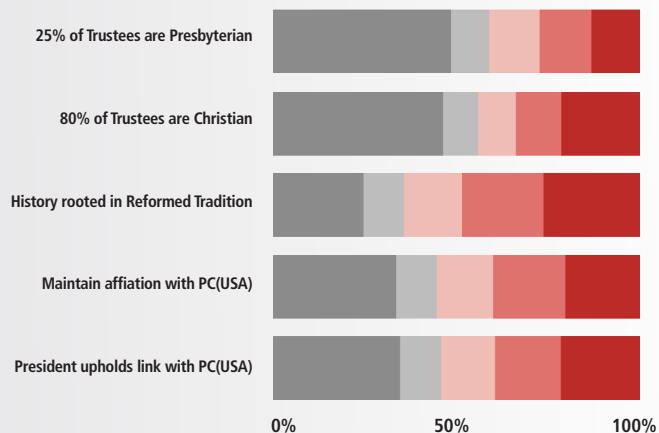
—Member of the Class of 1979

QUESTION:

"How important is it to you that ..."

The graph below illustrates all responses to the question:

● Not Important ● Less Important ● Neutral ● Somewhat Important ● Highly Important



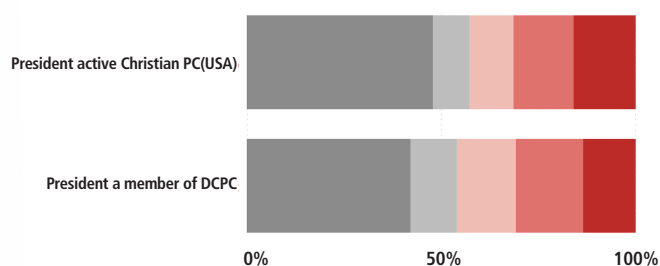
While survey responses varied based on different generations, this view shows the data in aggregate.

QUESTION:

How important is it that the college president be an active Christian affiliated with a PC(USA) congregation, and specifically an active member of Davidson College Presbyterian Church?

The graph below illustrates all responses to the question:

● Not Important ● Less Important ● Neutral ● Somewhat Important ● Highly Important



The founding values of Davidson College are beautiful and aspirational principles.

But Presbyterians—or even Christians—do not hold a monopoly on honor, service, humane instincts, respect, or the rigorous pursuit of truth. In fact, limiting a significant number of the College's most important leaders to a particular denomination deprives the College of the talents and strengths of so many potential leaders who share the College's values but do not happen to share its historical religious affiliation. More candidly, I'm not sure the College can profess to aspire to diversity, equity, and inclusion while also maintaining that only one narrow profile of person is fit to lead it. So which'll it be? I believe it's possible to honor where we came from without closing off the world we find ourselves in now.

—Member of the Class of 2003