

# Wave 3 Bright Line Watch Political Science Survey

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## Start of Block: Introduction & Consent



Q1

Thank you for participating in the Bright Line Watch survey of political scientists. The purpose of this survey is to measure expert opinions about the state of American democracy.

Your responses will be anonymous. No identifying information will be collected with your survey responses. Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you are free to skip any questions or withdraw from the study at any time.

If you have any questions or comments about this survey, or if you would like to be removed from the mailing list for future surveys, please email [survey@brightlinewatch.org](mailto:survey@brightlinewatch.org).

- I agree to continue (2)
- I do not agree to continue (3)

*Skip To: End of Survey If Q1 != I agree to continue (2)*

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## End of Block: Introduction & Consent

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### Start of Block: Importance and Performance

Q2

On the next several screens you will see a series of statements related to democratic government.

The questions will ask you to evaluate the importance of certain principles or values to democracy in general, and how well those principles or values are being upheld in practice in the United States.

Twelve statements have been randomly selected from a set of twenty-seven statements (the full list can be seen at <http://brightlinewatch.org>).

Please click "Next >>" to continue to the next screen.

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Q3 How important are these characteristics for democratic government?

	<b>Not relevant</b> This has no impact on democracy (1)	<b>Beneficial</b> This enhances democracy, but is not required for democracy (2)	<b>Important</b> If this is absent, democracy is compromised (3)	<b>Essential</b> A country cannot be considered democratic without this (4)
Government officials are legally sanctioned for misconduct (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government officials do not use public office for private gain (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government agencies are not used to monitor, attack, or punish political opponents (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All adult citizens enjoy the same legal and political rights (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government does not interfere with journalists or news organizations (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government effectively prevents private actors from engaging in politically-motivated violence or intimidation (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government protects individuals' right to engage in	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

unpopular  
speech or  
expression (7)

Political  
competition  
occurs without  
criticism of  
opponents'  
loyalty or  
patriotism (8)

Elections are  
free from foreign  
influence (9)

Parties and  
candidates are  
not barred due to  
their political  
beliefs and  
ideologies (10)

All adult citizens  
have equal  
opportunity to  
vote (11)

All votes have  
equal impact on  
election  
outcomes (12)

Elections are  
conducted,  
ballots counted,  
and winners  
determined  
without  
pervasive fraud  
or manipulation  
(13)

Executive  
authority cannot  
be expanded  
beyond  
constitutional  
limits (14)

The legislature is  
able to  
effectively limit



executive power  
(15)

The judiciary is  
able to  
effectively limit  
executive power  
(16)

The elected  
branches  
respect judicial  
independence  
(17)

Voter  
participation in  
elections is  
generally high  
(18)

Information  
about the  
sources of  
campaign  
funding is  
available to the  
public (19)

Public policy is  
not determined  
by large  
campaign  
contributions  
(20)

Citizens can  
make their  
opinions heard in  
open debate  
about policies  
that are under  
consideration  
(21)

The geographic  
boundaries of  
electoral districts  
do not  
systematically  
advantage any  
particular  
political party



(22)

Even when there are disagreements about ideology or policy, political leaders generally share a common understanding of relevant facts

(23)

Elected officials seek compromise with political opponents

Citizens have access to information about candidates that is relevant to how they would govern

Government protects individuals' right to engage in peaceful protest

Law enforcement investigations of public officials or their associates are free from political influence or interference

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*Carry Forward Selected Choices from "How important are these characteristics for democratic government?"*



Q4 How well do the following statements describe the United States as of today?

	The U.S. does not meet this standard (1)	The U.S. partly meets this standard (2)	The U.S. mostly meets this standard (3)	The U.S. fully meets this standard (4)	Not sure (5)
Government officials are legally sanctioned for misconduct (x1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government officials do not use public office for private gain (x2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government agencies are not used to monitor, attack, or punish political opponents (x3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All adult citizens enjoy the same legal and political rights (x4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government does not interfere with journalists or news organizations (x5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government effectively prevents private actors from engaging in politically-motivated violence or	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

intimidation  
(x6)

Government  
protects  
individuals'  
right to  
engage in  
unpopular  
speech or  
expression  
(x7)

Political  
competition  
occurs without  
criticism of  
opponents'  
loyalty or  
patriotism (x8)

Elections are  
free from  
foreign  
influence (x9)

Parties and  
candidates are  
not barred due  
to their  
political beliefs  
and ideologies  
(x10)

All adult  
citizens have  
equal  
opportunity to  
vote (x11)

All votes have  
equal impact  
on election  
outcomes  
(x12)

Elections are  
conducted,  
ballots  
counted, and  
winners  
determined  
without

pervasive  
fraud or  
manipulation  
(x13)

Executive  
authority  
cannot be  
expanded  
beyond  
constitutional  
limits (x14)

The legislature  
is able to  
effectively limit  
executive  
power (x15)

The judiciary  
is able to  
effectively limit  
executive  
power (x16)

The elected  
branches  
respect  
judicial  
independence  
(x17)

Voter  
participation in  
elections is  
generally high  
(x18)

Information  
about the  
sources of  
campaign  
funding is  
available to  
the public  
(x19)

Public policy is  
not  
determined by  
large  
campaign  
contributions

(x20)

Citizens can make their opinions heard in open debate about policies that are under consideration (x21)

The geographic boundaries of electoral districts do not systematically advantage any particular political party (x22)

Even when there are disagreements about ideology or policy, political leaders generally share a common understanding of relevant facts (x23)

Elected officials seek compromise with political opponents (x24)

Citizens have access to information about candidates that is relevant to how they would govern

(x25)

Government protects individuals' right to engage in peaceful protest (x26)

Law enforcement investigations of public officials or their associates are free from political influence or interference (x27)

End of Block: Importance and Performance

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Start of Block: Overall evaluation

Q5

On a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 is least democratic and 100 is most democratic, how would you rate the political system of the United States as of today?

United States today (1)	
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Q10

How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? On this scale where 1 means it is “not at all important” and 10 means “absolutely important,” what position would you choose?

- Not at all important1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)

- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- 9 (9)
- Absolutely important10 (10)

End of Block: Overall evaluation

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Start of Block: Other questions

Q6 Finally, we have just a few questions about you.

Which of the following best describes your occupation?

- Graduate student (1)
- Post-doctoral fellow (2)
- Adjunct faculty (3)
- Full-time faculty (4)
- Emeritus faculty (5)
- Other (6)

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*Display This Question:*

*If Finally, we have just a few questions about you. Which of the following best describes your occ...  
= Graduate student*

*Or Finally, we have just a few questions about you. Which of the following best describes your occ...  
= Post-doctoral fellow*

*Or Finally, we have just a few questions about you. Which of the following best describes your occ...  
= Adjunct faculty*

*Or Finally, we have just a few questions about you. Which of the following best describes your occ...  
= Full-time faculty*

*Or Finally, we have just a few questions about you. Which of the following best describes your occ...  
= Emeritus faculty*

Q7 What is your primary field of study?

- American politics (1)
- Comparative politics (2)
- International relations (3)
- Political theory (4)
- Another field of political science (5)
- Something other than political science (6)

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*Display This Question:*

*If What is your primary field of study? = American politics*

*Or What is your primary field of study? = Comparative politics*

*Or What is your primary field of study? = International relations*

*Or What is your primary field of study? = Political theory*

*Or What is your primary field of study? = Another field of political science*

Q8 What is your specific area of study?

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Q9 Do you have any comments about this survey?

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End of Block: Other questions

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