



2025 Survey of APSA Member Insights on the Current Policy Environment

Full Report

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Executive Summary

Early in the current presidential administration, executive actions and federal policy changes targeted higher education institutions, federal funding for basic research, and the availability of federal data sets. These actions, **including cuts and threats to federal funding, attacks to diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, and threats to international students and scholars**, represent significant challenges to the discipline of political science and higher education in general.

As part of APSA's efforts to identify and better respond to the needs of its members during this time, APSA disseminated a survey to current and former members in the spring of 2025. This survey was part of a larger effort that included mission-relevant **advocacy** efforts, the creation of **resources to support members of the profession**, and **highlighting research and teaching resources on democracy and democratic backsliding**.

We wanted to understand the ways the current policy climate – including executive actions, federal policy, and state policy – have affected political scientists, political science departments, and institutions of higher education. Beyond specific impacts, the survey also asked respondents about their perceptions of the profession in the current policy environment. This post will share high-level summaries of the results along three different themes: impact of executive actions and federal policies, impact of state policies, and personal impacts upon individual scholars.

The main findings for the report can be summarized as follows:

- Nearly three-quarters of respondents (73.7%) indicate **that executive actions and federal policies have impacted their institutions.**
- 83.5% of respondents who said their work depends on federal funding reported being **concerned about losing their federal grant support.**
- 50.6% of respondents reported being **personally impacted by the executive orders or policies.**
- Over 40% of respondents indicated that their **attitudes towards research and teaching have become somewhat or much more negative during this time**, and 30% of respondents indicated that their attitudes towards service have become somewhat or much more negative.

About the Data

The 2025 APSA *Member Insight on the Current Political Climate* survey had a total of 1,111 complete respondents. Among the respondents, 53% identified as men and 44.2% as women, with another 1.6% identifying as genderqueer.

In terms of racial and ethnic identity, the largest group identified as Non-Hispanic White or Euro-American (67.7%), followed by Latino/a or Hispanic (6.1%); East Asian or Asian American (5.6%); Black, Afro-Caribbean, or African American (4.1%); and Middle Eastern or Arab American (2.4%).

Geographically, the majority of respondents were based in the Northeast (24.5%), followed by the Midwest (19.3%), West (13.3%), Southeast (13.2%), Mid-Atlantic (8.3%), and Southwest (8.2%). Additionally, 9.7% of respondents reported being affiliated with institutions outside of the United States.

The majority of respondents (962, 85.7%) held an academic position, while 7.4% were retired and 5.8% held a non-academic position. A small proportion were unemployed or chose not to disclose their current position.

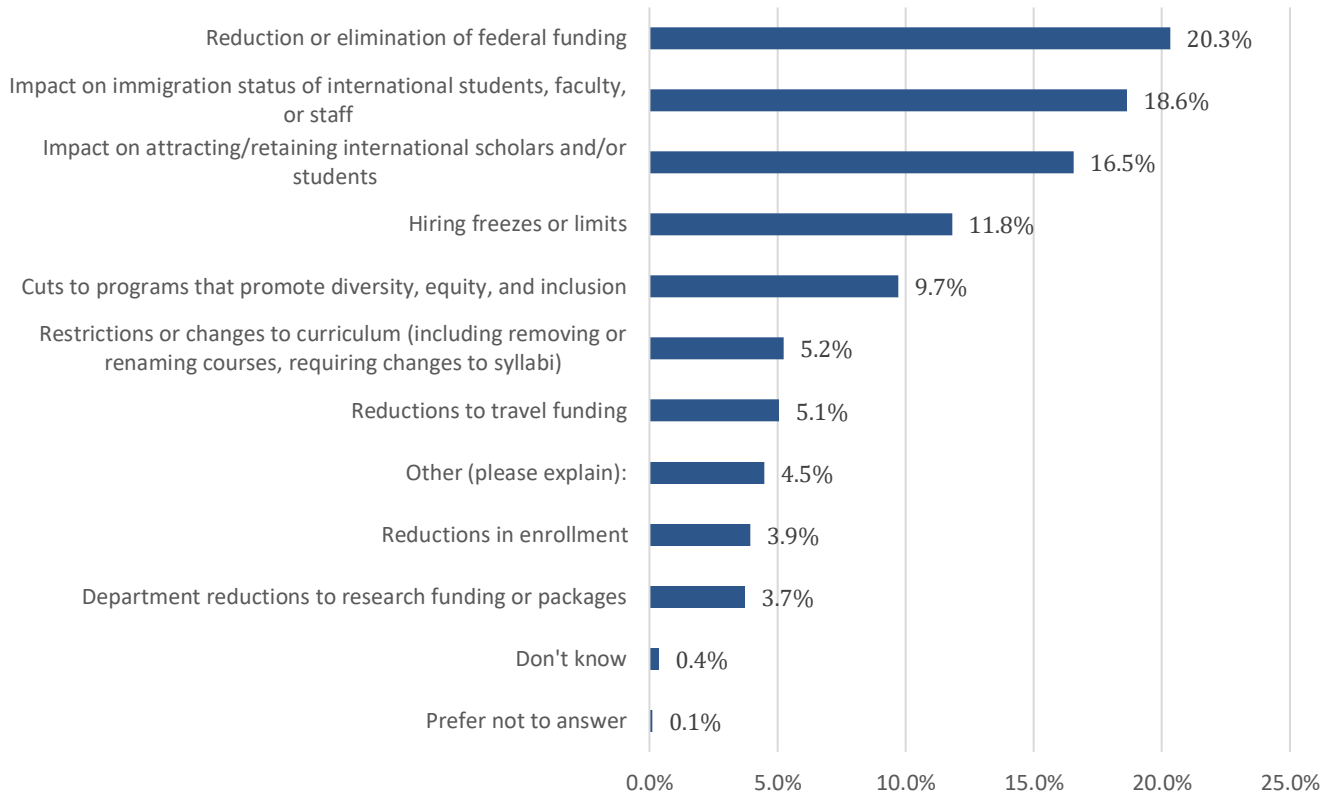
Current Position

Position	Count	Percent
Tenured or Tenure-Track Faculty Position	705	63.5%
Graduate Student	107	9.6%
Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Position	87	7.8%
Retired	82	7.4%
Post-Doctoral Fellow	32	2.9%
Academic Administration	19	1.7%
My position is not listed	19	1.7%
Research Organization or Think Tank	18	1.6%
Government	10	0.9%
Other Nonacademic Position	9	0.8%
Consulting	7	0.6%
Unemployed	7	0.6%
Prefer not to disclose	6	0.5%
Undergraduate Student	2	0.2%
K-12 Teacher	1	0.1%

Institutional Impact of Executive Actions and Policies

Out of 953 respondents, 702 (73.7%) indicated that their institution had been affected by recent policies and executive orders issued by the current administration. One hundred and thirty-eight respondents (14.5%) reported no impact, while 113 (11.8%) selected "Don't know/Prefer not to answer."

Institutional Impact of Recent Executive Orders and Policies

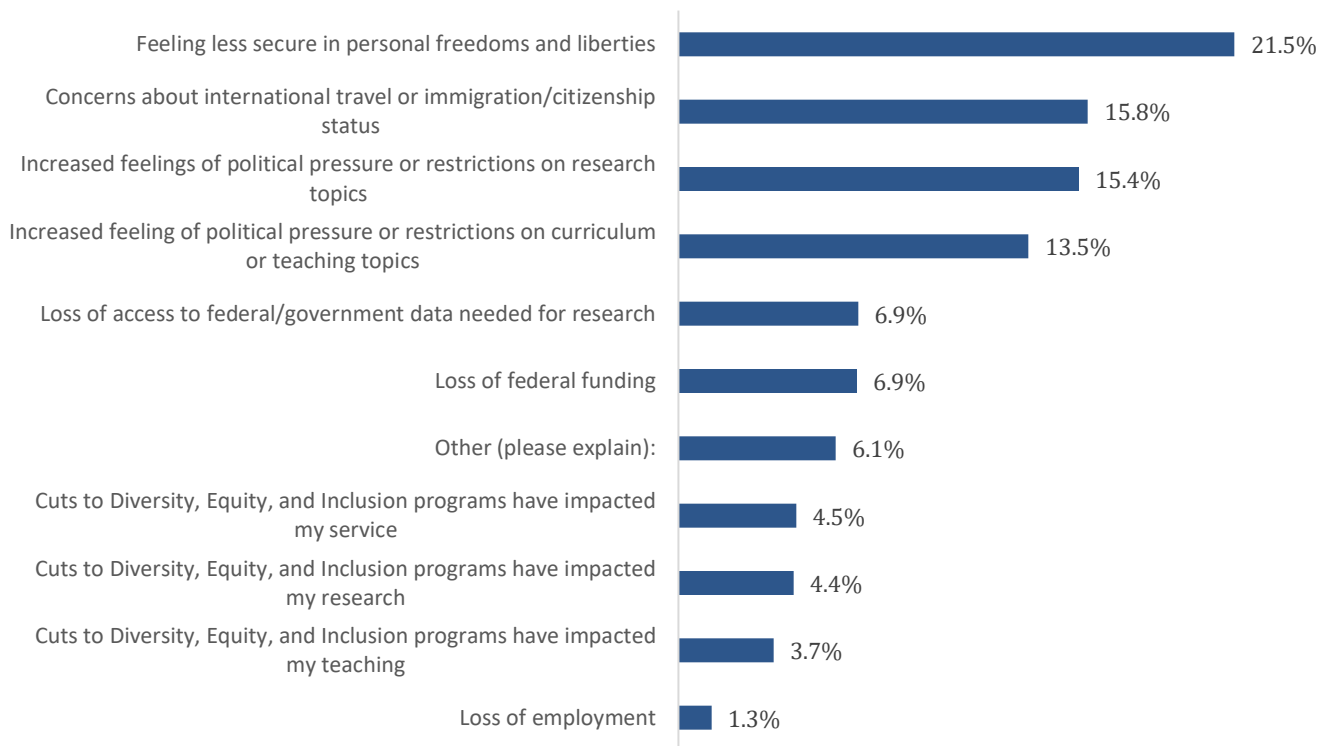


Among those who reported institutional impacts, the most commonly cited areas of concern included reductions in federal funding (485 respondents, 20.3%), effects on immigration status (445 respondents, 18.6%) and challenges in attracting and retaining international scholars (395 respondents, 16.5%). A significant number of respondents also noted the implementation of hiring freezes and cuts to diversity, equity, and inclusion programs as a major area of impact.

Personal Impact of Executive Actions

Out of 1,099 respondents, 562 (50.6%) reported being personally affected by executive actions or policies implemented by the current administration. The most commonly reported impact was a decreased sense of security regarding personal freedoms and liberties. This was followed by concerns related to international travel and heightened perceptions of political pressure or restrictions affecting both research and teaching activities.

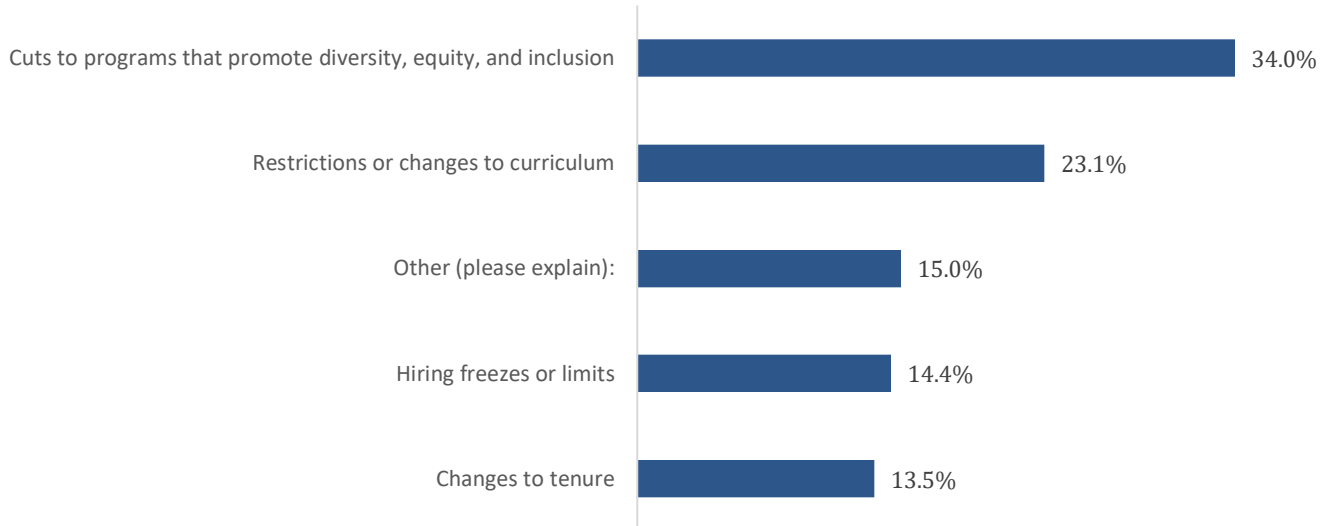
Personal Impact of Recent Executive Orders and Policies



Institutional Impact of State Legislation

When asked about the impact of state legislative actions, 298 out of 951 respondents (31.3%) indicated that their institution or department had been affected within the past two years. The most commonly reported institutional impacts were cuts to programs that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and restrictions or changes to curricula.

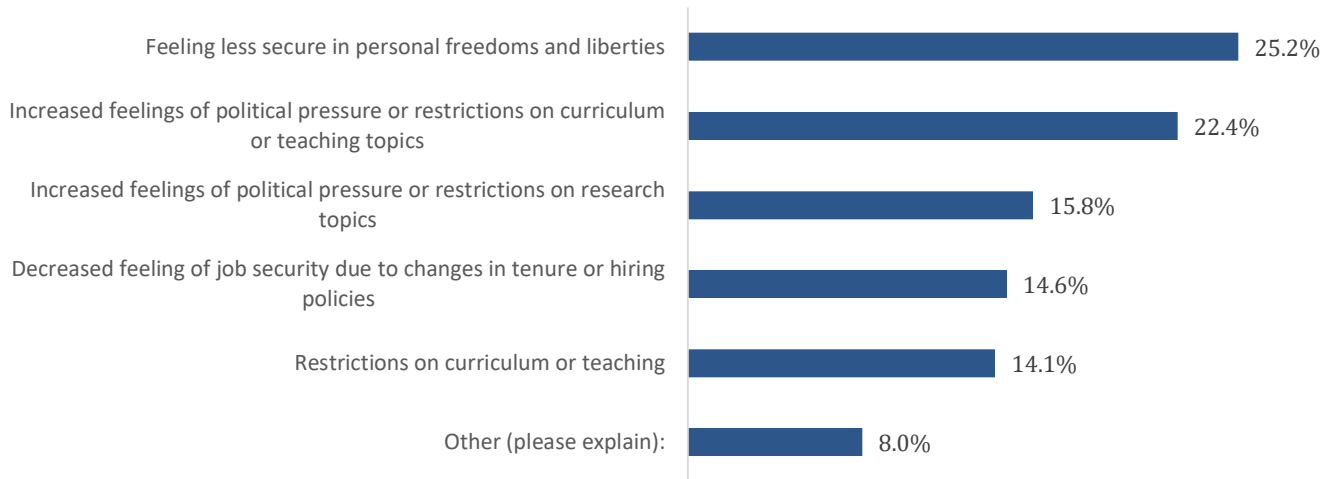
Institutional Impact of State Legislative Actions Within the Past Two Years



Personal Impact of State Legislation

Two-hundred and thirteen of 1,105 respondents (19.3%) reported experiencing a personal impact from state legislative actions during the same period. Increased feelings of insecurity regarding personal freedoms and increased feelings of political pressure regarding teaching and curricula were the most commonly cited personal impacts.

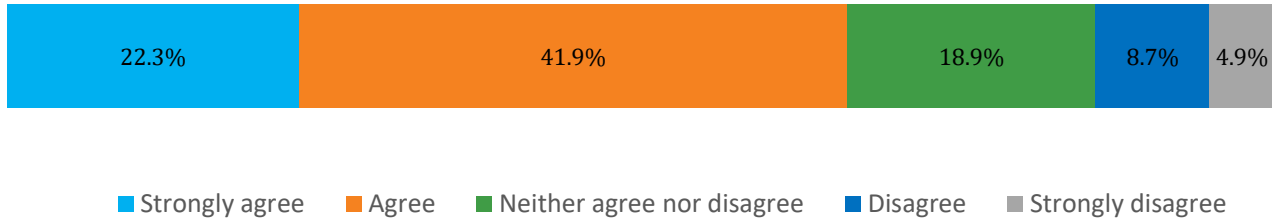
Personal Impact of State Legislative Actions Within the Past Two Years



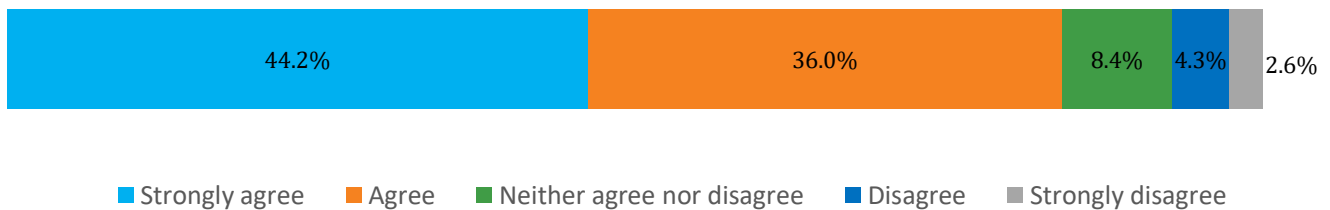
Institutional and Departmental Support

Across all measures surveyed (research/work, teaching, and service), respondents were more likely to “agree” or “strongly agree” that they felt supported by their department than by their institution. However, for both institutional and departmental support, more than 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt supported.

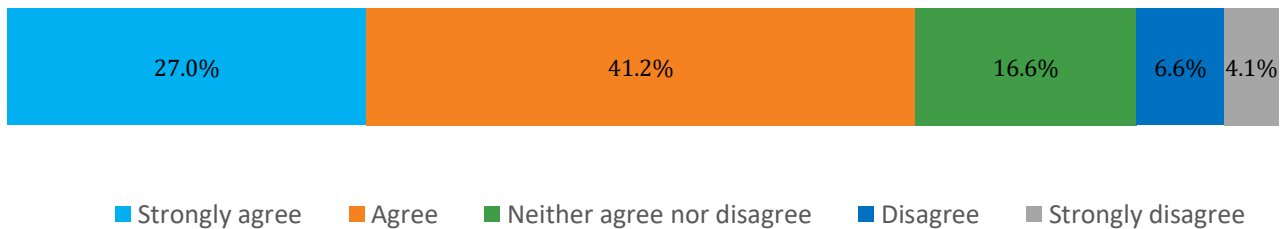
I feel that my research and work are supported by my institution.



I feel that my research and work are supported by my department.



I feel that my teaching is supported by my institution.

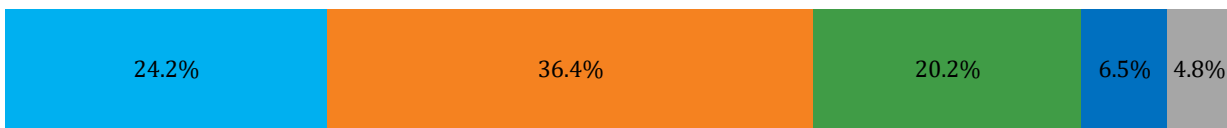


I feel that my teaching is supported by my department.



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

I feel that my service is supported by my institution.



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

I feel that my service is supported by my department.



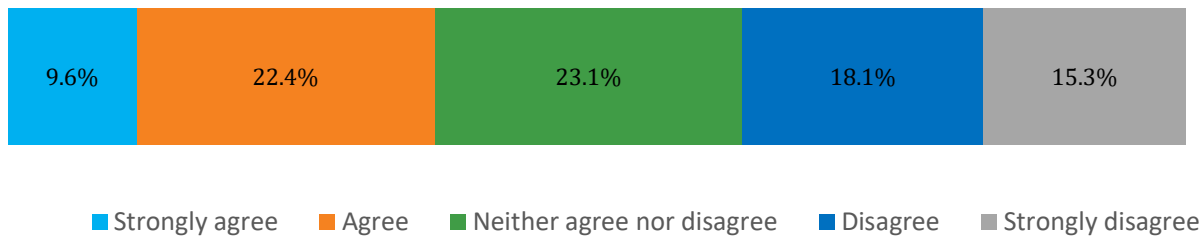
■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

*Responses of "N/A" and "Prefer not to answer" are not included in the above charts. Percentages may not add to 100.

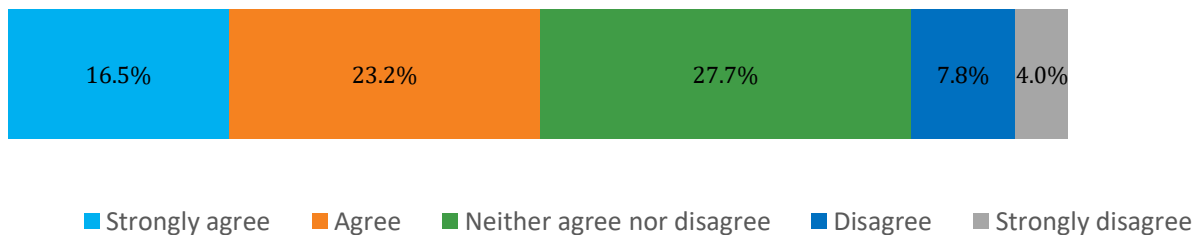
Institutional and Departmental Response

Nearly a third (32%) of respondents agreed with the way their institution had responded to the policies implemented by the current administration, while slightly fewer than 40% agreed with the way their department had responded. Respondents were much more likely to “disagree” or “strongly disagree” with their institution’s response than their department’s response.

I agree with the way my institution has responded to the policies implemented by the current administration.



I agree with the way my department has responded to the policies implemented by the current administration.

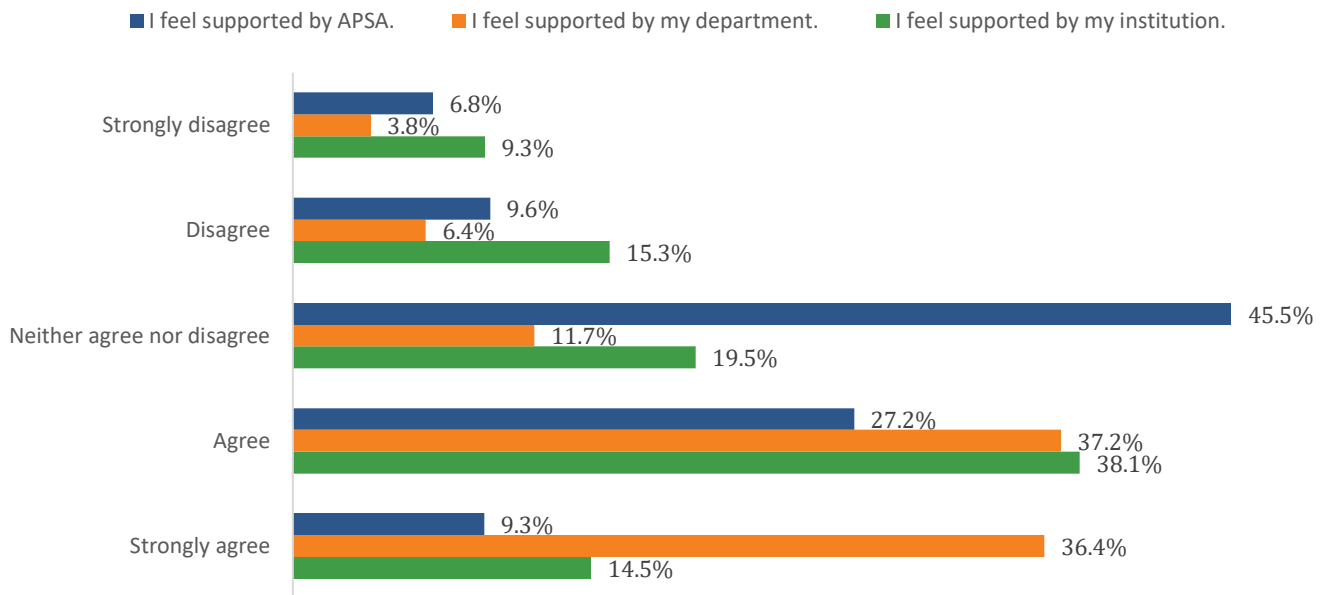


*Responses of “N/A” and “Prefer not to answer” are not included in the above charts. Percentages may not add to 100.

Overall Support

Respondents were asked if they feel supported in their research, teaching, and service. Respondents were more likely to strongly agree that they felt supported by their department than their institution. Additionally, they were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree that they felt supported by their institution compared to their department or APSA. Respondents were more than twice as likely to take a neutral stance (“neither agree nor disagree”) towards APSA than towards their institution and department. This may be a result of a lack of awareness of some of APSA’s advocacy efforts, and a greater familiarity with the resources and efforts of their departments and institutions.

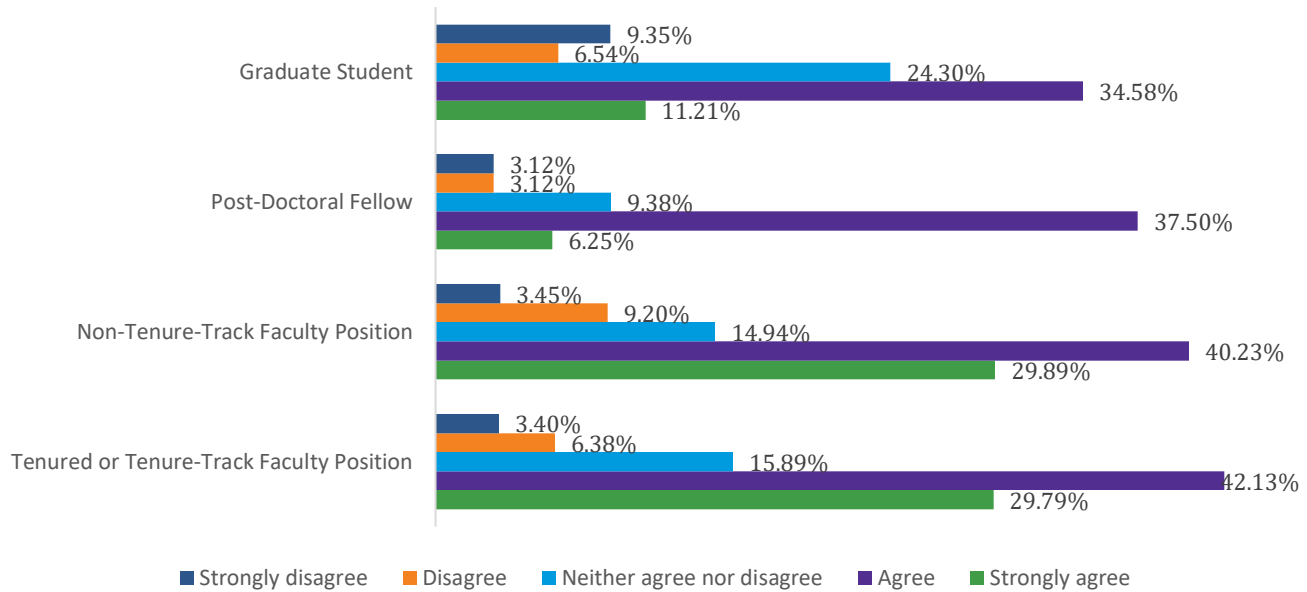
Institution, Department, and APSA Support



Responses by Position

Faculty, regardless of whether they are tenured or tenure-track, were much more likely to “strongly agree” that their institution supported their teaching than postdoctoral fellows or graduate students. This pattern persisted for departmental teaching support as well.

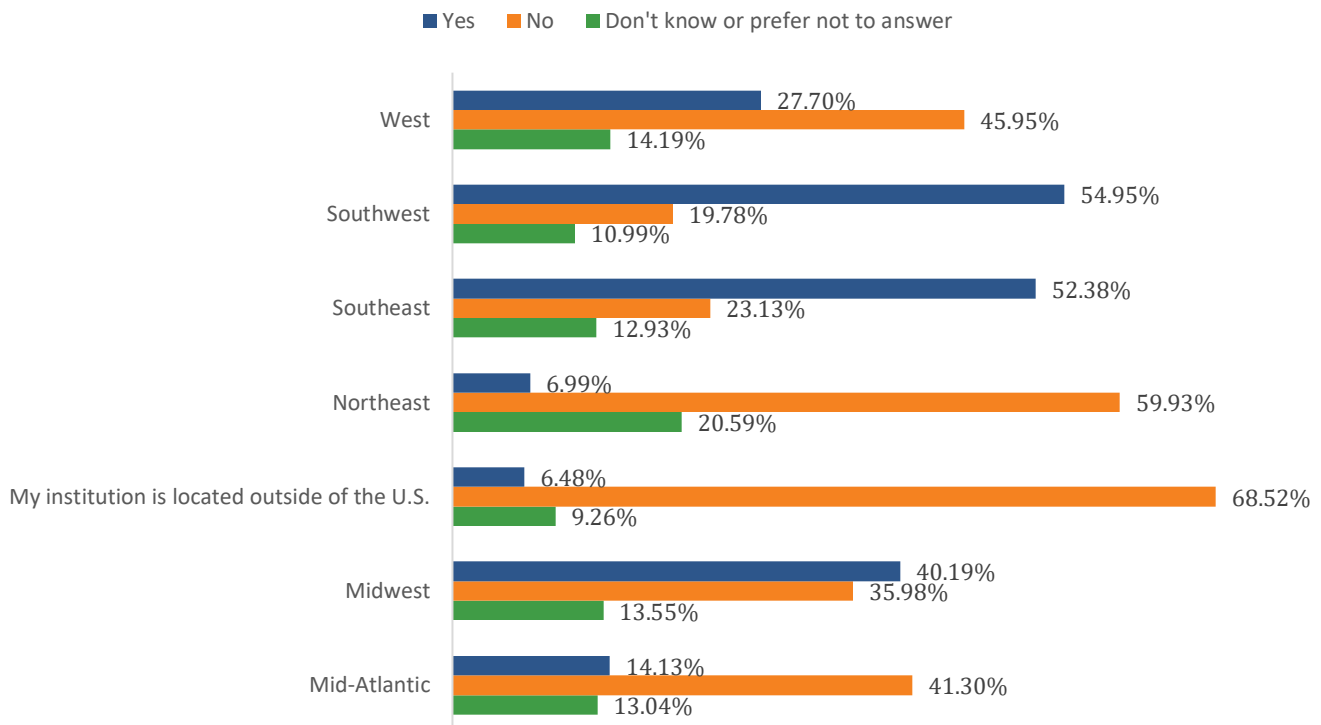
I feel that my teaching is supported by my institution.



Responses by Region

Respondents located at institutions in the Southwest or Southeast were notably more likely than other regions to report that their institution had been impacted by state legislative actions within the past two years, whereas those at institutions in the West, Northeast, and Mid-Atlantic were more likely to say that they had not been affected. As might be expected, responses did not differ greatly by region when it came to the impact of federal executive actions, with 60% to 72% of respondents in all U.S. regions reporting an impact on their institution.

Has your institution or department been impacted by state legislative actions within the past two years?

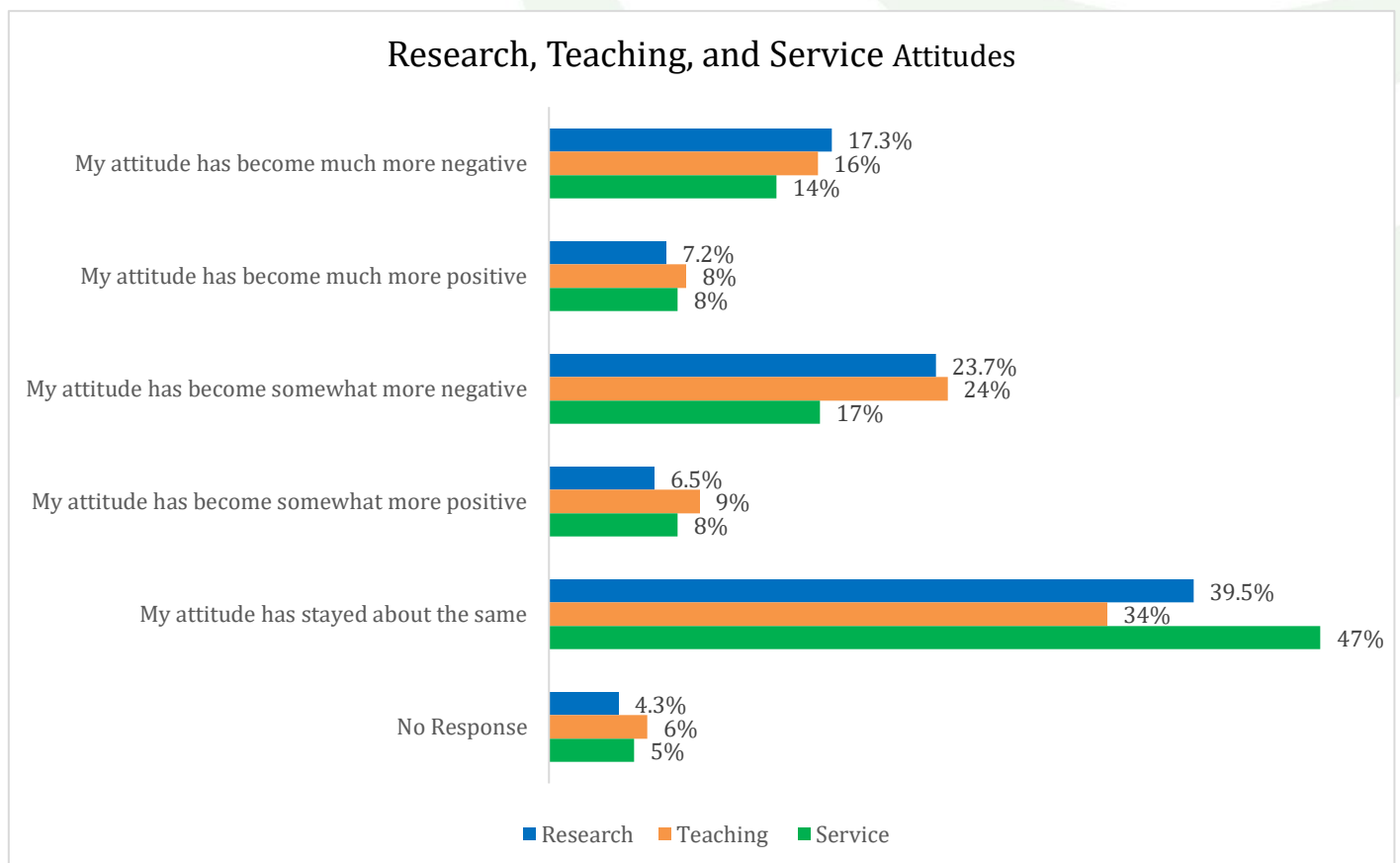


*Responses of "N/A" and "Prefer not to answer" are not included in the above charts. Percentages may not add to 100.

Attitudes towards Research, Teaching and Service

The survey also examined how changes in the policy environment have affected attitudes towards three key components of scholars' work: research, teaching, and service. Slightly over 40% of respondents indicated that their attitudes towards research and teaching have become somewhat or much more negative as a result of recent policy changes, while about 30% responded that their attitude toward service has become somewhat or much more negative. In all three areas, less than 17% stated that their attitudes had become more positive as a result of the current policy environment.

As a result of the current administration's recent executive actions, how has your attitude towards the following changed?



APSA Resources

The most widely used *existing* APSA resources reported by respondents were: APSA journals and publications (860 respondents, 25.2%), APSA conferences (777 respondents, 22.7%), and APSA organized sections (510 respondents, 14.9%). The most widely asked-for *new* resources were: increased advocacy (739 respondents, 17.2%), more research grants (615 respondents, 14.3%), and publishing lists of grant opportunities (579 respondents, 13.5%). A significant proportion of respondents also indicated that advocacy training and hybrid or virtual conferences would be helpful in the current political climate.

Which of the following APSA resources do you utilize?

APSA Resources	n	percent
APSA journals and publications	860	25.2%
APSA conferences	777	22.7%
APSA organized sections	510	14.9%
APSA eJobs	436	12.8%
APSA data on the profession	266	7.8%
APSA Teaching and Learning webinars	145	4.2%
APSA Preprints	142	4.2%
APSA travel grants	127	3.7%
APSA grants (including DDRIG, Diversity and Inclusion, APSA Award Recipient, and/or Centennial Center, etc.)	126	3.7%
Other (please list)	29	0.8%

*multiple-select; total may exceed number of survey respondents

In what ways could professional associations such as APSA support scholars in this evolving political climate?

Resources	n	percent
Advocacy (public statements, alerts, etc.)	739	17.2%
Research grants	615	14.3%
Publishing lists of grants opportunities	579	13.5%
Advocacy training or media training	507	11.8%
Hybrid or virtual conferences	471	11.0%
Travel grants	449	10.5%
Public webinars or teach-ins	410	9.6%
Teaching resources	410	9.6%
Other resources (please explain)	111	2.6%

*multiple-select; total may exceed number of survey respondents