

## Political Orientation and Climate Change at the University: A Look at Professors' Political Views and Beliefs Concerning Climate Change

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There is overwhelming evidence that political orientation has an effect on a person's climate change beliefs (McCright, 2011). This idea is particularly interesting when it is investigated within higher education. This research follows up on the results of a climate change survey that was administered to professors at UNLV and UNR. The goal was to determine what beliefs professors have concerning climate change, their level of acceptance of climate change, and their beliefs concerning what their students know about climate change. In addition to determining this goal, the following research questions were asked: In what way does political orientation frame the climate change beliefs of professors? Does political orientation also have a moderating effect on professors' beliefs concerning educating their students about climate change? Results of the survey determined the following: 63% of professors consider themselves somewhat to very liberal; 81% of professors believe that they personally do things that might contribute to climate change; but surprisingly enough, since the majority of professors consider themselves liberal, 34% of professors somewhat to strongly agree with the statement that they do not believe in climate change. Not so surprisingly, the moderating effect of political orientation was present in that the more liberal professors believed that we are in a period of climate change and human activity is playing a role. There was no correlation between political orientation and whether professors felt it was their responsibility to educate students on the topic of climate change.