

College and University Faculty Perceptions Towards Carrying Concealed Firearms on Campus

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Abstract: This study uses a survey of university and college faculty members at two schools in the eastern United States to investigate their attitudes towards qualified faculty members and students carrying concealed firearms on their campuses. We found that faculty members who own a gun and are politically conservative were in favor concealed carry for qualified students and faculty, while liberal faculty member who are not gun owners were not.

Keywords: Campus safety, college faculty, firearms, logistic regression.

INTRODUCTION

For the past few years there has been a national debate over gun control and, specifically, the right to carry a concealed weapon. With the increasing number of shootings on college campuses, this debate has reached academia. By October of 2015 there were 23 shootings on college campuses in the United States that year (Sanburn, 2015). Everytown for Gun Safety has been keeping track of school shootings since the 2012 incident at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and since that time there have been 89 shootings on college campuses, 57 of which were classified as "attack on other person(s) resulting in injury or death" (<http://everytownresearch.org/school-shootings/>).

These shootings have brought heightened scrutiny to the issue of violence on college campuses (Patten, Thomas & Wada, 2013). In 1986, the murder of college student Jeanne Cleary changed opinions about safety on college campuses (Patten, *et al.*, 2013) and by 1990 colleges and universities were required to release statistics about crime on campus if the school receives federal funding. According to The National Center for Educational Statistics there were 27,600 criminal incidents against persons or property on college campuses (both 2 and 4 year schools) in 2013. This number represents a decrease of 8 percent from 2012. The most reported crime was burglary which constituted 56 percent of all campus crimes

(<http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=804>).

These numbers demonstrate that far from being dangerous places, violent crime on college campuses is rare (Patten, *et al.*, 2013). Indeed, while other researchers agree that college campuses are safe places relative to the rest of society (see Fox & Savage, 2009; Price, Thompson, Khubchandani, Dake, Payton & Teeple, 2014; Thompson, Price, Dake, Teeple, Bassler & Khubchandani, *et al.*, 2013), nonetheless the consequences of these shootings "can be devastating and long lasting" (Fox & Savage, 2009, p. 1466).

According to the National Conference of State Legislators, all 50 states allow citizens to carry concealed firearms, given that they meet certain requirements which vary from state to state. There are 18 states that ban carrying a concealed firearm on a college campus. Twenty three states allow the decision to carry (or ban) concealed firearms on college campuses up to each college or university. Due to recent legislation eight states now allow the carrying of concealed firearms on college campuses², and one state (Utah) has a statute that specifically bans state colleges and universities from disallowing concealed firearms on college or university property (<http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/guns-on-campus-overview.aspx>). This statute resulted from a judicial decision, however, and not through the state legislature. Utah has a state law that prohibits localities and state agencies from banning the possession of firearms. In this light the Utah Supreme Court ruled that colleges and universities could not be exempt from the law (University of Utah v. Shurtleff, 2006). Though no

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¹The rest were classified as "gun fired but no one injured" (n=18), "gun fired unintentionally resulting in injury or death" (n=9), and "attempted or completed suicide with no intent to injure another person" (n=5).

²Two states only allow faculty members to carry concealed firearms on campus.

research has been done regarding this change in college policy, anecdotal evidence suggests that there have not been any negative repercussions (see Lipka, 2008).

Legislation to allow the carrying of concealed firearms on college campuses has been promoted primarily by the Students for Concealed Carry on Campus (SCCC), which was started the day after the Virginia Tech shootings of 2008 (Patten *et al.*, 2013). The SCCC claims over 42,000 members and has a chapter in every state (Students for Concealed Carry, 2016). According to the SCCC, anyone who denies that students should be allowed to carry concealed firearms on campus would suggest that "in an active shooter scenario like the one that occurred at Virginia Tech, a student or faculty member with a gun would only make things worse.

What is worse than allowing an execution-style massacre to continue uncontested? How could any action with the potential to stop or slow a deranged killer intent on slaughtering victim after victim be considered "worse" than allowing that killer to continue undeterred? (http://www.concealedcampus.org/common_arguments.php)

On the other side of the concealed carry on campus debate is the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence which is a nonprofit group whose mission is to "pass and enforce sensible state gun laws...through grass roots activism, electing public officials who support common sense gun laws, and increasing public awareness of gun violence" (Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, 2016). They believe having guns on a college or university campus is a bad idea because

College students engage in a great many high-risk behaviors, including binge drinking and drug abuse, and are also at elevated risks for suicide. Dorms and classrooms provide little room for the safe storage of weapons. Introducing guns into this environment will increase danger to students every hour of every day. (<http://www.bradycampaign.org/stategunlaws/publicplaces/gunsoncampus>)

Some college and university professors have stated that the university atmosphere is antithetical to having firearms on campus due to the debate and discussion

that takes place at an institution of higher learning (Thompson, *et al.*, 2013). In addition, firearms on college campuses are problematic due to the fact that binge drinking is highest among people 18-24 years of age (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2011), and people with mental illness typically develop mental health problems between the ages of 18 and 25 (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010). In addition, college professors over the past few decades have reported an increase in behavioral problems and incivility among college students (Clark & Springer, 2007), and there is a concern that this incivility could sometimes lead to violent actions (Patten, *et al.*, 2012). In the literature incivility has been defined as inattentive (e.g. using cell phones in class, sleeping in class) or hostile (e.g. arguing, complaining) forms of conflict (Meyers, Bender, Hill & Thomas, 2006).

The purpose of this study is to gauge how college and university professors feel about carrying concealed firearms on college campuses and to determine what, if any, predictors play a role in how faculty members feel about this. To do so we asked faculty members at two schools of higher education in the eastern United States if they felt qualified faculty and students should be allowed to carry concealed firearms on campus, whether they would feel safer if such a policy was enacted, and if they would feel safer if they themselves could carry a concealed weapon on campus. Our purpose is to add to the growing body of literature in this area.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Thompson, Price, Duke and Teeple surveyed almost 800 (n=791) faculty members at 15 randomly sampled state universities (2013). They found that the majority (94%) of faculty members were against any policy that would allow for concealed firearms on campus. Faculty members believed that "introducing firearms into a stressful environment may increase the risk for violent crimes and self-inflicted injuries" (Thompson, *et al.*, 2013, p. 371), and that such a policy would lead to increased deaths on campus, both homicides and suicides. These results are interesting given the fact that less than half of the faculty members surveyed (35%) were confident that police officers can prevent violent crime on campus, and more than half (51%) were concerned about being a victim of a crime on campus. The small percentage of faculty members who were in favor of such a policy (6%) tended to be white males who were politically conservative and owned at least one handgun (Thompson, *et al.*, 2013).

In 2010 the state of Georgia passed a law that allowed for the concealed carry of firearms on college campuses. In 2008, Bennett, Kraft and Grubb surveyed 145 faculty members at four colleges in Georgia about their attitude toward another Georgia law, HB 89, which expanded the number of locations in the state where concealed carry would be lawful (for example, in churches and synagogues). Over half (56%) of the faculty members strongly opposed HB 89 (Bennett, *et al.*, 2011). Faculty members were also asked their attitudes about the possibility of expanding HB 89 to allow concealed carry on college campuses. Almost three quarters (72%) of the faculty members opposed allowing the expansion of HB 89 to allow for concealed carry on college campuses (Bennett, *et al.*, 2011). The faculty members who did support the law were politically conservative and owned a gun, but Bennett and colleagues did not find any effect due to gender or race.

James Price and colleagues surveyed college and university presidents to see what they thought about concealed carry on campus. The vast majority (95%) of the 401 college and university presidents surveyed did not support students and faculty carrying concealed firearms on campus (Price, Thompson, Khubchandani, Dake, Payton & Teeple, 2014). Almost all (98%) of the presidents thought that students and faculty felt safe on their campuses, and additionally believed that students (89%) and faculty members (92%) would not feel safe if students, faculty and visitors carried concealed firearms on campus. The university presidents who supported allowing concealed carry on campus tended to be Republican males who were gun owners (Price *et al.*, 2014).

Other researchers have examined attitudes on campus towards concealed carry but their focus was on college and university students. Michael Cavanaugh and colleagues examined student support for a policy that would allow concealed firearms on two college campuses, one in Texas and one in Washington state, as well as individual characteristics associated with opinions about carrying concealed firearms on campus (Cavanaugh, Bouffard, Wells & Nobles, 2012). In 2009 both states considered legislation that would permit carrying concealed handguns on college campuses, and students at both campuses were asked about their support for this legislation. A sample of 1789 students "expressed very low levels of comfort" with concealed firearms being carried on campus (Cavanaugh, *et al.*, 2012, p. 2247), but they were less resistive to carrying firearms off campus. The individual characteristics that

Cavanaugh *et al.* found to be associated with support for allowing concealed carry on campus included region (students in Texas showed more support), gender (males were more supportive than females), political party (Republicans were more supportive than Democrats) gun ownership (gun owners were more likely to be in support), and concern about campus violence (more concern equated with support for the policy) (Cavanaugh, *et al.*, 2012).

In 2013 Thompson and colleagues asked 1,649 college students across 15 universities about their support for carrying concealed firearms on their university campus. The vast majority (79%) did not support such a policy, and over half (53%) did not support carrying a concealed weapon off campus (Thompson, Price, Dake, Teeple, Bassler, Khubchandani, J., *et al.*, 2013). Interestingly, half (50%) of the students surveyed did not know if their college or university had a policy regarding carrying concealed firearms on campus. Thompson and colleagues also investigated individual characteristics that influence attitude toward concealed carry and found that gender (males were in support), firearm ownership (gun owners were more likely to support such a policy), political party (Republicans and Independents were more likely to support than Democrats or Libertarians), and being a victim of a crime on or off campus (victims were more in support) all correlated (Thompson *et al.*, 2013).

Ryan Patten and colleagues examined the opinions of both college students and faculty members regarding carrying concealed guns on campus at two colleges, one in Nebraska and one in California (Patten, Thomas, & Wada, 2013). They found that the majority of students, staff and faculty members did not want qualified individuals to be able to carry a concealed weapon on campus (73%), did not think carrying concealed firearms on campus would promote a greater feeling of safety (72%), and would not feel safer with more firearms on campus (70%). Patten *et al.* discovered that males who owned a firearm and were politically conservative held favorable attitudes toward allowing faculty and students to carry concealed firearms on campus (2013).

Research has focused not just on attitudes toward allowing concealed carry of handguns on college campuses but on possible changes in behavior if colleges would allow students and faculty members to carry a concealed firearm on campus. Using a sample of almost 1,400 (n=1,396) undergraduate students at a

public university in Texas, Bouffard, Nobles, Wells and Cavanaugh assessed whether allowing concealed carry on campus would lead to an increase in the prevalence of concealed handguns being carried on campus (2012). They found that lifting a ban on concealed carry on campus might lead to an increase in the number of students who would legally carry a handgun at the college (Bouffard, *et al.*, 2012). They added, however, that “the extent to which these individuals would actually follow through and obtain a CHL [Concealed Handgun License] is unknown” (Bouffard, *et al.*, 2012, p. 332). However while Bouffard and colleagues examined the likelihood of concealed carry on campus if such a policy were allowed, they did not investigate any demographic variables that might have an effect on such behavior.

Personal background factors reflect broader contexts (e.g. cultural and historical) where attitudes toward certain policies (permitting carrying a concealed firearm on a college or university campus) can be examined. Since we are conducting our research at two institutions of higher education, we are interested to see if the individual characteristics (i.e. demographic variables) of faculty members have an effect on their feelings toward concealed carry for qualified faculty and students. We hope to add to the growing body of research in this area by examining individual characteristics that have appeared in the literature (e.g., race and gender) as well as exploring new areas of inquiry (trust in others).

DATA AND MEASURES

A survey was created by the authors and placed on SurveyMonkey in the fall of 2013. An email link was sent to the student body as well as all faculty members at the two institutions of higher learning where the authors are associate professors. The schools are located in the Mid-Atlantic Region of the United States. Between both schools 187 faculty members took part in the survey.

Independent Variables

Race

Research has found that someone’s race has an effect on their attitude towards carrying a concealed weapon, but the results are mixed. Some studies discovered that non-whites are less likely to support carrying concealed firearms on college campuses than whites (Bouffard, *et al.*, 2012; Bouffard, Nobles & Wells, 2012; Thompson, *et al.*, 2012; Thompson, *et al.*,

2013), while other researchers did not find any race effect (Bennett, Kraft, & Grubb; Cavanaugh, *et al.*, 2012; Patten, *et al.*, 2012; Price, *et al.*, 2014). The vast majority of our sample is made up of white faculty. We dichotomized race as non-white (coded 1) and white (coded 2), and whites accounted for 94.7 percent of the sample.

Gender

In the area of gender the research is much more consistent. Most of the studies we reviewed demonstrated that males are more in favor of allowing qualified faculty and students to carry a concealed weapon on campus than females (Bouffard, *et al.*, 2012; Cavanaugh, *et al.*, 2012; Patten, *et al.*, 2012; Price, *et al.*, 2014; Thompson, *et al.*, 2012; Thompson, *et al.*, 2013), while only one study did not find a gender effect (Bennett, *et al.*, 2012). None of the studies we reviewed showed that women are more in favor of concealed carry than men. Females (coded 2) made up 55.3 percent of our sample and males (coded 1) accounted for 44.1 percent of the sample (.6% of the sample did not indicate a gender).

Own a Firearm

All of the studies we reviewed found that people who own a firearm are more likely to support carrying a concealed weapon on campus than people who have never owned a firearm. One study (Thompson, *et al.*, 2012) found that people who owned multiple guns are also likely to support carrying a concealed firearm on campus, but there was no difference in the level of support based upon owning multiple guns or a single firearm. We asked our sample if they owned a firearm and coded responses as yes (1) and no (2). The majority of our sample (65.4%) do not own a firearm while just over a third (34.4%) do (.6% of the sample did not provide an answer).

Parents own a Firearm

Only one study we reviewed examined the effect of growing up around firearms on support for concealed carry (Thompson *et al.*, 2013). People who grew up in a household where a parent or guardian owned a firearm are more likely to support carrying a concealed weapon on campus than those who did not grow up with a gun in the house. We asked our sample if their parents or legal guardian owned a firearm when they were growing up and coded responses as yes (1) and no (2). Interestingly even though most of the faculty members in our sample do not own a firearm, the majority (62.8%) grew up in a household where their

parent or guardian did own one. Just over a third of our sample (36.2%) grew up in homes that did not have a firearm (1% did not provide an answer).

Political Views

Most of the studies we reviewed explored the relationship between political views and support for concealed carry. Studies that explored political party membership found that Republicans were more supportive of concealed carry than Democrats (Bennett, *et al.*, 2012; Cavanaugh, *et al.*, 2012; Price, *et al.*, 2014; Thompson, *et al.*, 2012) while other studies that focused not on party membership but political ideology found that conservatives were more in favor of concealed carry than liberals (Bouffard, *et al.*, 2012; Patten, *et al.*, 2012). Thompson and colleagues found that not only were Republicans more in favor of concealed carry on campus than Democrats, but so were Independents (2013). We asked faculty members to describe their political views on a Likert Scale from very liberal (1) to very conservative (5). We then combined the liberal and very liberal responses, as well as the conservative and very conservative responses so we had three categories, liberal (coded as 1), moderate (coded as 2), and conservative (coded as 3). The majority of our sample classify themselves as politically liberal (36.2%), just under 28 percent are conservative (27.1%) and over a third classify themselves as moderate (34.6%) (2.1% did not provide an answer).

Trust Others

None of the studies we reviewed explored the relationship between trust in other people and attitude toward concealed carry on campus. It is included in this study because it seems reasonable that a faculty member who does not trust others would not want faculty and students carrying a concealed weapon on campus. At the same time, it is also plausible that someone who does not trust others would want to carry a concealed weapon themselves (which is our third dependent variable) because they might not trust campus safety or the local police to keep them safe. We asked our sample to respond to the statement "I generally trust others" on a Likert Scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). We then combined the faculty who responded strongly disagree and disagree, as well as the faculty who responded strongly agree and agree so we had three categories, disagree (coded as 1), neutral (coded as 2), and agree (coded as 3). The majority of our sample agreed with the statement (56.9%), while about a fifth (18.1%)

disagreed and the rest were neutral (23.4%) (1.6% did not provide an answer).

Feel Safe on Campus

One of the studies we reviewed found that respondents who were concerned about safety on their campus were more likely to support policies that allowed for faculty and staff to carry a concealed weapon on campus (Bouffard, *et al.*, 2012). We asked faculty to respond to the statement "I am concerned for my safety on campus" on a Likert Scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). We then combined the faculty who responded strongly disagree and disagree, as well as the faculty who responded strongly agree and agree so we had three categories, disagree (coded as 1), neutral (coded as 2), and agree (coded as 3). The majority of our sample disagreed with the statement (53.7%), which indicates that they feel safe. Over a quarter (27.7%) were neutral, and the rest agreed (18.1%) (.5% did not provide an answer). The frequencies for the independent variables used in our analysis are displayed in Table 1.

Dependent Variables

In this study we are using three dependent variables. We asked faculty members to respond to the statement "Qualified faculty and students should be allowed to carry a concealed firearm on campus." We coded responses on a Likert Scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). We combined the faculty who responded strongly disagree and disagree, as well as the faculty who responded strongly agree and agree. We then eliminated the faculty members who responded neutral in order to dichotomize the variable so we had two categories, disagree (coded as 1) and agree (coded as 2). The majority of our sample disagreed with the statement (67.3%) while about a third (32.7%) agreed.

We then asked faculty to respond to the statement "I would feel safe on campus with qualified faculty and students carrying a concealed firearm." We coded responses on a Likert Scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). We combined the faculty members who responded strongly disagree and disagree, as well as the faculty who responded strongly agree and agree. We then eliminated the faculty who responded neutral in order to dichotomize the variable so we had two categories, disagree (coded as 1) and agree (coded as 2). The majority of our remaining sample disagreed with the statement (71.1%) while much fewer (28.9%) agreed.

Table 1: Independent Variables

		Female		Male			
		n	%	n	%		
Gender	187	104	55.3	83	44.1		
Race	187	Non-White		White			
		n	%	n	%		
Own a firearm	187	Yes		No			
		n	%	n	%		
Parents owned	186	Yes		No			
		n	%	n	%		
Political views	184	Liberal		Moderate		Conservative	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
		68	36.2	65	34.6	51	27.1
Trust others	185	Yes		Unsure		No	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Feel Safe on Campus	187	Yes		Unsure		No	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
		107	56.9	44	23.4	34	18.1
		101	18.1	52	27.7	34	53.7

Our third dependent variable was the statement “I would feel safe on campus if I could carry a concealed firearm.” We coded responses on a Likert Scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) and then combined the faculty who responded strongly disagree and disagree, as well as the faculty members who responded strongly agree and agree. We eliminated the faculty who responded neutral in order to dichotomize the variable so we had two categories, disagree (coded as 1) and agree (coded as 2). This variable showed the most disagreement (79.6%), while slightly more than one-fifth (20.4%) agreed.

Analytic Plan

We dichotomized our dependent variables in order to run logistic regression models because our goal is to predict the probability of membership in one of two groups (agree or disagree). Logistic regression does not require stringent assumptions about the distribution of the predictor variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), and we wanted to learn what combinations of our seven independent variables would accurately predict the probability of agreeing or disagreeing with the statements about concealed carry on campus.

Analysis

A logistic regression model was created to determine which independent variables were predictors of attitude towards allowing qualified students and faculty to carry concealed firearms on a college campus. Regression results for the first model indicate that the overall model was statistically reliable (Model $\chi^2(7)=55.378$, $p<.001$). The model for our first dependent variable correctly predicted over three quarters of the responses (78.7%).

This first model revealed that faculty members who own a firearm are more likely to be in favor of allowing qualified students and faculty to carry a concealed weapon on campus than faculty members who do not own a firearm ($\beta=-1.729$, $p<.001$). In addition, faculty members who classify their political views as conservative were also more likely to support concealed carry for qualified students and faculty ($\beta=1.218$, $p<.001$). In fact, conservatives were over three times more likely to agree with the statement than liberals ($\text{Exp}(B)=3.381$). None of the other independent variables in the model were statistically significant. The results of the first model can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Logistic Regression Results for Qualified Students and Faculty Should be Able to Carry a Concealed Weapon on Campus

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Gender	.659	.455	2.098	1	.147	1.933
Own a firearm***	-1.729	.440	15.405	1	.000	.177
Parents owned a firearm	-.150	.489	.094	1	.759	.861
Race	.1.569	.1.200	1.709	1	.191	4.800
Views***	1.218	.293	17.277	1	.000	3.281
Trust others	-.283	.276	1.052	1	.305	.754
Feel safe on campus	.388	.276	1.975	1	.160	1.473
Constant*	-4.353	2.852	2.330	1	.127	.013
Model Chi-Square	55.378					
Negelkerke R ²	.420					

Note: *** p<.001, ** p<.01 * p<.05.

A logistic regression model was next run to determine which independent variables were predictors of who would feel safe if qualified students and faculty carried concealed firearms on a college campus. Regression results for the second model indicate that the overall model was statistically reliable (Model $\chi^2(7)=56.223$, $p<.001$). The model for our second dependent variable correctly predicted just over 80 percent of the responses (80.9%). This second model revealed that faculty members who own a firearm are more likely to feel safe if qualified students and faculty carried concealed firearms on campus ($\beta=-1.539$, $p<.01$). In addition, faculty members who classify their political views as conservative were also more likely to feel safe if qualified students and faculty carried concealed firearms on campus ($\beta=1.337$, $p<.001$). In

fact, conservatives were almost four times more likely to feel safe with qualified students and faculty members carrying concealed firearms on campus than liberals (Exp(B)=3.809). None of the other independent variables in the model were statistically significant. The results of the second model can be found in Table 3.

Our third logistic regression model was run to determine which independent variables were predictors of who would feel safe if they themselves could carry a concealed weapon on campus. Regression results for the third model indicate that the overall model was statistically reliable (Model $\chi^2(7)=62.024$, $p<.001$). The model for our third dependent variable correctly predicted over 85 percent of the responses (86.5%). Our third model revealed that male faculty members

Table 3: Logistic Regression Results for Feelings of Safety with Qualified Students and Faculty Carrying a Concealed Weapon on Campus

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Gender	.314	.469	.449	1	.503	1.369
Own a firearm**	-1.539	.452	11.571	1	.001	.215
Parents owned a firearm	-.477	.527	.817	1	.366	.621
Race	1.247	1.207	1.067	1	.302	3.480
Views***	1.337	.316	17.930	1	.000	3.809
Trust others	-.250	.277	.815	1	.367	.779
Feel safe on campus	.366	.285	2.687	1	.101	1.594
Constant*	-3.741	2.940	1.619	1	.203	.024
Model Chi-Square	56.223					
Negelkerke R ²	.433					

Note: *** p<.001, ** p<.01 * p<.05.

Table 4: Logistic Regression Results for I Would Feel Safe if I Could Carry a Concealed Weapon on Campus

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Gender*	-1.279	.593	4.648	1	.031	.278
Own a firearm***	-2.405	.581	17.122	1	.000	.090
Parents owned a firearm	-1.109	.609	2.538	1	.111	.330
Race	.723	1.210	.357	1	.550	2.060
Views ^A	.681	.355	3.677	1	.055	1.975
Trust others	-.554	.351	2.491	1	.115	.575
Feel safe on campus*	.912	.374	5.952	1	.015	2.489
Constant	2.415	2.807	.740	1	.390	11.190
Model Chi-Square	62.024					
Nagelkerke R ²	.539					

Note: *** p<.001, ** p<.01 * p<.05 ^A p<.10.

would feel safer if they could carry a concealed weapon on campus than female faculty members ($\beta=-1.279$, $p<.05$). Faculty members who own a firearm ($\beta=-2.405$, $p<.001$) and are concerned about safety on their campus ($\beta=.912$, $p<.05$) were also more likely to feel safe if they could carry a concealed weapon on campus. Interestingly, political views did not have an effect on our third dependent variable. Faculty members who are concerned about safety on their campus were almost two and a half times more likely than those who did not have safety concerns to feel safe if they could carry a concealed weapon on campus ($\text{Exp}(B)=2.489$). The results of the third model can be found in Table 4.

DISCUSSION

Due to recent shootings on college campuses there is a "national initiative...to lift the near-universal bans of carrying concealed" firearms on college and university campuses (Thompson, *et al.*, 2013, p. 250). It appears that the people who would be most impacted by a change in policy are against doing so. The majority of faculty members in our study are against allowing qualified students and faculty carrying concealed firearms on campus which is consistent with the studies we reviewed. In fact, our numbers (67% of faculty against allowing the concealed carry of firearms on campus) were very close to the numbers found by Bennet *et al.* (70%) (2011). The results of our logistic regression models indicate that faculty members who own a gun and are politically conservative were in favor concealed carry for qualified students and faculty, which is in line with the literature in this area.

Even more (71.1%) of our sample would feel unsafe with qualified students and faculty carrying concealed firearms on campus than are against the idea in the first place. Once again our logistic regression model supports the literature in this area. In our sample faculty members who own a gun and have conservative political views were more likely to feel safe if qualified students and faculty were allowed to carry concealed firearms. Unlike previous research we did not find a gender effect for our first two dependent variables.

Finally we asked our sample if they would feel safer if they themselves could carry a concealed weapon on campus. Unfortunately we did not find other studies who explored this area. It was in this area that we found the lowest amount of ascent, with only 20.4% of our sample agreeing. The logistic regression models yielded the same results as the two previous models, with two notable exceptions. Unlike the other two models in this one we found that gender was a significant factor in how faculty members responded to this statement, namely, that males would feel safer than females if they could carry a concealed weapon on campus. Also unlike the other two models, in this one political views did not have a significant effect.

CONCLUSION

This is an exploratory study with methodological limitations. First we used a convenience sample at the two schools where we are employed, and had a small sample size ($n=187$) so our findings cannot be generalized. Second, our data was heavily skewed towards whites and was not representative of our

faculty populations. In addition since this is cross sectional research any insights we found cannot be used to forecast the future.

Another limitation was the use of an email survey. An issue with using email or web-based surveys is that of nonresponse bias (Sue & Ritter, 2007). William Wells and colleagues administered a survey regarding carrying concealed firearms on campus and in the community in college classrooms and on the web and found a much higher response rate for the classroom surveys (96.9%) than the web-based survey (13.8%) (2012). Even though their sample was college students and not faculty members, it would be interesting to explore if we would have a larger sample size if we use a pen and paper survey. According to Wells *et al*, leverage-saliency theory states that the decision to participate in a survey can be influenced by how important the topic is to respondents (2012). Perhaps the majority of our target population did not have much interest in the research topic, but Groves (2006) has noted that low response rates may not indicate substantial bias.

It would be interesting to explore why the findings are so consistent in regards to support for concealed carry on college campuses. Qualitative research might be utilized to determine what it is about conservatives who own a gun that makes them gravitate toward carrying a handgun on college campuses. There might be something cultural through socialization, or perhaps they do not realize all of the potential dangers of such a practice. Finally, while we measured how safe faculty members feel on campus future research should explore this further. We did not ask how many of our faculty were a victim of a crime, which would presumably influence their answers in this area. In addition, we did not ask them how they view the quality of the public safety officers on their campus, and whether those officers carry firearms. This is a growing area of scholarship, and more research is needed to provide a clearer picture of the debate.

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