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**Abstract**

The effect of attending college on students' political ideology has been a controversial topic for many decades. In this study, we explored the relationship between attending a liberal arts college and students' political views. Compared to their counterparts at other 4-year institutions, liberal arts college students began postsecondary education with more liberal political views, but also made great changes toward liberal political views over 4 years of college. These greater gains persisted even in the presence of important confounding influences such as pre-college political views. In addition, our analyses suggested a global effect of attendance at a liberal arts college on the development of liberal political views. Attempts to explain the causal mechanisms underlying this apparent institutional influence were only partially successful.(HRK / Abstract übernommen) Hanson, Jana M., E-Mail: jana-hanson@uiowa.edu