

PLSC 083, First-Year Seminar

Results from the class survey about the death penalty:

First, you did TERRIBLY!!!! Overall the percentage of correct responses was: **22**.

Below is the breakdown by question. It shows the range of responses, with acceptable responses in bold, and the true response below. It's pretty amazing. Then again, why would you necessarily know all these things before studying it? Keep this general level of information in mind, though, as we think about the topic and American's public attitudes toward capital punishment.

How many homicides are there in the US each year, roughly?

Student responses:

1000  
2000  
2500  
3000  
3000  
5000  
5000  
5000  
5000  
5000  
5020  
10000  
10000  
10000  
11000  
**18000**  
30000  
100000

Actual range: 15-25,000

Number correct: 1

How many death sentences are there in the US each year, roughly?

Student responses:

- 3
- 5
- 30
- 50
- 100**
- 100**
- 150**
- 200**
- 300**
- 500
- 500
- 600
- 750
- 1000
- 1000
- 1000
- 1000
- 1000

Actual range: 100-325

Number correct: 5

What percent of all death sentences are overturned on appeal because of flaws in the trial?

Student responses:

- 1
- 5
- 5
- 7
- 10
- 10
- 15
- 20
- 20
- 25
- 25
- 45
- 50
- 50
- 60**
- 70**
- 75
- 75

Actual answer: 68

Number correct: 2

How many executions are there in the US each year, roughly?

Student responses:

2.5

5

10

**20**

**25**

**30**

**35**

**45**

**50**

**50**

**50**

**50**

100

100

200

200

250

500

Actual answer: Ranges from zero to 98, usually in range of 20-80

Number correct: 9

Can you serve on a death penalty jury if you disagree philosophically with the death penalty?

Student responses:

10 No

8 Yes

Actual answer: No.

Number correct: 10, but this could have been by chance!

Name 3 states that are among the most active in the use of the death penalty:

Student responses:

<b>TX</b>	CA	NY
<b>TX</b>	CA	NY
<b>TX</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>FL</b>
<b>TX</b>	<b>FL</b>	PA
<b>TX</b>	<b>OK</b>	KS
<b>TX</b>	<b>FL</b>	CA
<b>TX</b>	<b>OK</b>	AZ
<b>TX</b>	NM	SC
<b>TX</b>	AL	GA
<b>TX</b>	<b>OK</b>	
<b>TX</b>	CA	WY
<b>TX</b>	MS	CA
<b>TX</b>	CA	GA
<b>TX</b>	PA	<b>VA</b>
<b>TX</b>	CA	PA
<b>TX</b>	NC	<b>FL</b>
<b>TX</b>	CA	NY
<b>TX</b>	<b>FL</b>	AL

Actual answer: Top five states are: TX, FL, OK, VA, MO

Number correct: 52 percent (lower if we get past Texas!)

What percentage of all executed people since 1976 have been black?

Student responses:

25

35

38

**50**

**50**

57

60

60

60

60

65

70

70

70

70

75

75

75

Actual answer: 49

Number correct: 2



What percentage of all executions since 1976 have been in the North East?

Student responses:

0

0

0

5

5

10

10

10

15

15

20

20

27

30

30

35

50

55

Actual answer: 2

Number correct: 2

How many people have been exonerated (e.g., let go because they were innocent) after serving on death row since 1972?

Student responses:

2  
15  
15  
27  
40  
50  
50  
**100**  
150  
250  
500  
800  
1000  
1000  
1200  
5000  
5000

Actual answer: 124

Number correct: 1