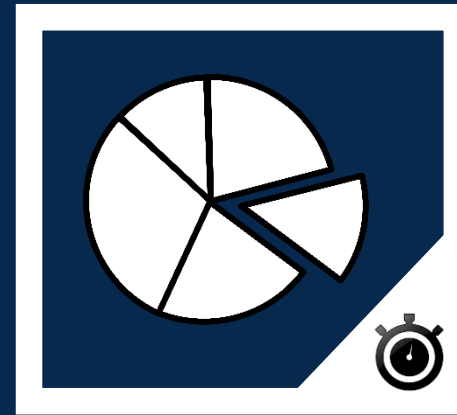## Our Mission

To provide an objective voice and immediate feedback when companies become politically active.

What is Corporate Political Activism?

"A public position taken by an organization, or its executives, on a divisive political issue, election, or legislation."

How it Works

Company Takes Stand

Company announcement will be chosen about 6 times per year based on newsworthiness and interest level of the panel.

Expert Panel Surveyed

Panelists grade the company's management of the stand and give brief open-ended reactions.

Results Sent to Media

Responses are aggregated and reported to the media within 4-6 hours.

Follow-up Interviews

Reporters follow-up with individual panelists.

The Panel

Expert panelists are from 39 universities in 8 countries. They represent both liberal and conservative political leanings, and specialize in diverse topics such as corporate reputation, social impact, communications, politics, and economics.

Tamar Avnet *Yeshiva University*	**Archie Carroll** *Univ. of Georgia*	**Sherryl Kuhlman** *Univ. of Pennsylvania*	**Stefanie Robinson** *North Carolina State Univ.*
Mike Barnett *Rutgers Univ.*	**Rick Clancy** *Univ. of North Carolina- Chapel Hill*	**Alex Kull** *Univ. of San Diego*	**Simona Romani** *LUISS Guido Carli (Italy)*
Jos Bartels *Tilburg Univ. (Netherlands)*	**Alin Coman** *Princeton Univ.*	**Dan Laufer** *Victoria Business School (New Zealand)*	**Laura Schons** *Mannheim Univ. (Germany)*
Sharon Beatty *Univ. of Alabama*	**Timothy Coombs** *Texas A & M*	**Tom Lyon** *Univ. of Michigan*	**Sankar Sen** *Baruch College*
Aronte Bennett *Villanova Univ.*	**Chiara Cordelli** *Univ. of Chicago*	**Jeanette Mena** *Univ. of South Florida*	**Nancy Sirianni** *Univ. of Alabama*
Marya Besharov *Cornell Univ.*	**Peter Dacin** *Queen's Univ. (Canada)*	**Kevin Money** *Univ. Of Reading (U.K)*	**Craig Smith** *INSEAD (France)*
CB Bhattacharya *ESMT (Germany)*	**Jeff Dotson** *Brigham Young Univ.*	**Rowena Olegario** *Univ. of Oxford (U.K.)*	**Scott Swain** *Clemson Univ.*
Dora Bock *Auburn Univ.*	**Shuili Du** *Univ. of New Hampshire*	**Neeru Paharia** *Georgetown Univ.*	**Tillman Wagner** *WHU (Germany)*
Tom Brown *Oklahoma State Univ.*	**Pam Ellen** *Georgia State Univ.*	**Vontresse Pamphile** *Northwestern Univ.*	**Rupert Younger** *Univ. of Oxford (U.K.)*
Vanessa Burbano *Columbia Univ.*	**Jenn Griffin** *George Washington Univ.*	**Davide Ravasi** *City University (U.K.)*	**Alex Zablah** *Univ. of Tennessee - Knoxville*

Latest Study - Uber (November 1, 2016)

Uber made its first ever endorsement of a political candidate this week. Uber began a campaign of mailers and emails to help re-elect a state official, Republican Derek Armstrong, to the State Assembly of Nevada (USA).
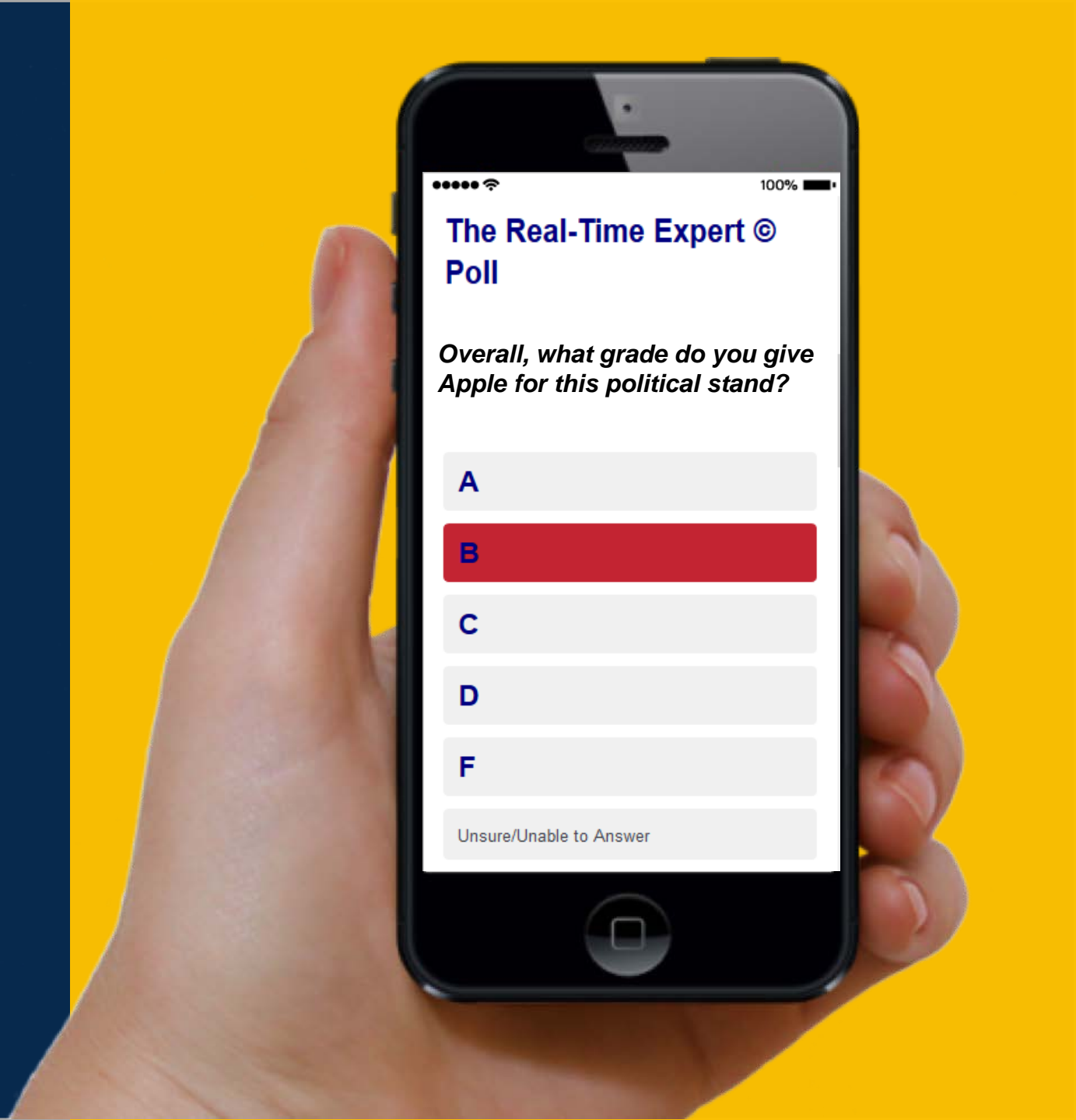
Uber's mailer reads in part, "Assemblyman Armstrong knows that Uber partners actually help make our streets safer. He supports you, which is why we are proud to support him. Let's keep hard-working, honest, and innovative legislators in office by Ubering to the polls and casting your vote to re-elect Assemblyman Derek Armstrong."

Armstrong has been attacked by the Nevada State Democratic Party for his position on Uber related legislation. The ads claim that Armstrong did not support criminal background checks for Uber drivers, which "put[s] women and children in danger."

Uber and Lyft use commercial background checks, which rely on criminal database searches, but oppose FBI background checks, which rely on fingerprints and take longer to process. Taxis must use the FBI check, but the Nevada legislation exempted Uber and Lyft.

Uber entered the Nevada market last year.

Additional background: http://bit.ly/2fAsyR4

The Real-Time Expert © Poll

Overall, what grade do you give Apple for this political stand?

A

B

C

D

F

Unsure/Unable to Answer

Poll Items

1. **Overall, what grade do you give [company] for this political stand?** (Scale: A, B, C, D, F)

2. **Evaluate the political stand on each dimension:**

   a) **Leadership**   *the political stand is proactive, setting a standard for peer companies to follow*

   b) **Consistency**   *the political stand is consistent with the central and enduring values of the company*

   c) **Transparency** *the company is forthcoming in describing the motivations behind the political stand*

   d) **Materiality**   *the political issue is substantively relevant when key stakeholders are deciding whether or how to interact with the company*

   (Each dimension rated on 1-5 scale, Extremely Inaccurate-Extremely Accurate)

3. **If you have additional comments, write them here.** (Responses are anonymous unless you choose to sign your name)
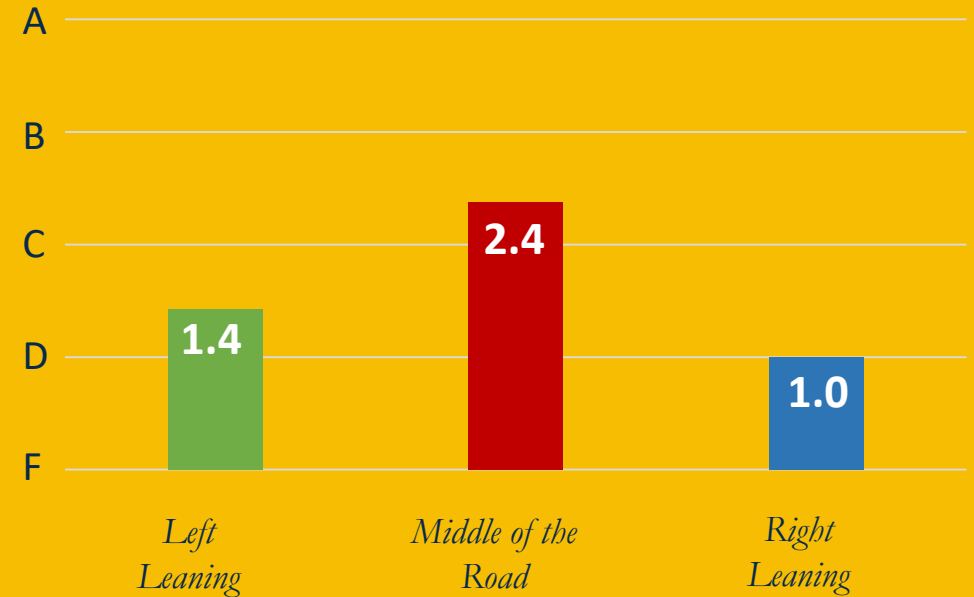
   _____

   _____

Topline Results

C

The panel gives the company an overall grade of C for the way they are handling the political issue.

Grades varied somewhat by the political leaning of the panelist. Grades were highest (C+) for professors who self-reported as middle of the road, while they fell in the "D" range for those who reported being either left or right leaning.

Grade by Political Leaning

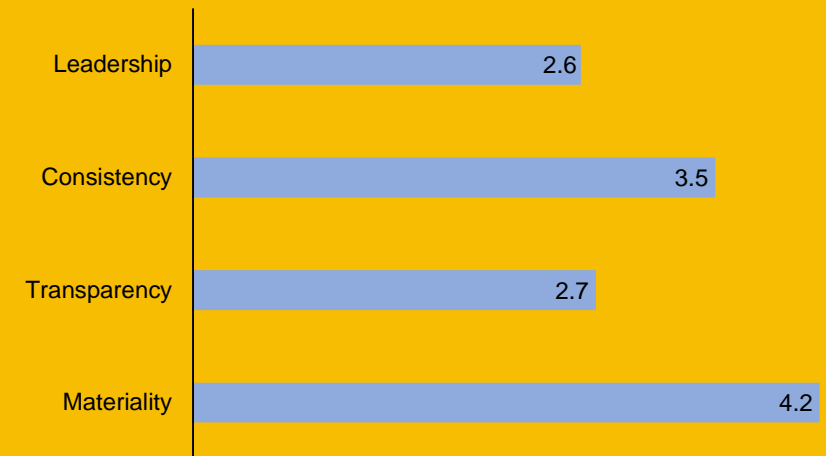|			
A			
B			
C		**2.4**	
D	**1.4**		**1.0**
F	Left Leaning	Middle of the Road	Right Leaning

n = 17; grades based on mean response using standard GPA scale (A=4.0, B=3.0, etc.).

Topline Results

The panel rates this as materially relevant for stakeholders. It also awards elevated marks for the consistency of the policy with its core values.

However, the panel finds fault with Uber's transparency and gives low scores for leadership on the issue.

Performance on Key Indicators

Indicator	Score
Leadership	2.6
Consistency	3.5
Transparency	2.7
Materiality	4.2

Topline Results

A dominant theme from this poll is that Uber has probably overstepped a boundary.

The professors on the panel found Uber's actions to be somewhat self-serving. Stakeholders often support companies that join the political discourse to affirm their values, but this political activity appears to be purely self-serving and arouses suspicion.

Some panelists were also concerned about the precedent that this might set.

"Uber's political activism in this case is clearly self-serving. Thus, consumer responses will likely depend on what they think Uber's "self" is … Those who see Uber as an underdog may view the political activism as a necessary part of "fighting the establishment." Others may see Uber as another "tech" company that is getting huge and thus may view the political activism as growth-focused opportunism."

"It's cynical. Self interest dressed up as positive politics."

"Firms hire lobbyists to fight for their interests, but outright support for a candidate who supports them in return so publicly seems unsavory. Is this the face of modern politics?"

"Uber is hiding its self-interests in supporting this candidate. The safety issue is actually the opposite and could come back to haunt the company if it becomes widely known. "

"It's odd that Uber is making a stance so late in the election cycle in only one state and for just one race. Doesn't pass the smell test!"

About Our Sponsor

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Real Time Expert © *Poll on* *Corporate Political Activism*

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