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ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY SURVEY 2002

STATEWIDE SURVEY OF MINNESOTA ADULTS

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[10/31/02]**

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**PREPARED
BY**

DR. STEPHEN FRANK

DR. STEVEN WAGNER

DR. MICHELLE KUKOLECA HAMMES

**Principal Investigators
SCSU Survey**

***Social Science Research Institute
College of Social Sciences
St. Cloud State University***

St. Cloud, Minnesota

Drs. Frank, Wagner and Kukoleca are members of the Midwest Association of Public Opinion Research (MAPOR) and the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) and subscribe to the code of ethics of the AAPOR.

METHODOLOGY, MISSION, BACKGROUND

I. History and Mission of the Survey

The SCSU Survey is an ongoing survey research extension of the Social Science Research Institute in the College of Social Science at St. Cloud State University. The SCSU Survey performs its research in the form of telephone interviews. Telephone surveys are but one of the many types of research employed by researchers to collect data randomly. The telephone survey is now the instrument of choice for a growing number of researchers.

Dr. Steve Frank began the SCSU Survey in 1980 conducting several omnibus surveys a year of central Minnesota adults in conjunction with his Political Science classes. The omnibus surveys are now done once a year. In addition to questions focusing on the research of the faculty directors, clients can buy into the survey or contract for specialized surveys.

Presently, the omnibus surveys have continued, but have shifted to a primary statewide focus. These statewide surveys are conducted once a year in the fall and focus on statewide issues such as election races, current events, and other important issues that are present in the state of Minnesota. Besides the annual fall survey, the SCSU Survey conducts an annual spring survey of SCSU students on various issues such as campus safety, alcohol and drug use, race, etc. Lastly, the SCSU Survey conducts contract surveys for various public and private sector clients. The Survey provides a useful service for the people and institutions of the State of Minnesota by furnishing valid data of the opinions, behaviors, and characteristics of adult Minnesotans.

The primary mission of the SCSU Survey is to serve the academic community and various clients through its commitment to high quality survey research and to provide education and experiential opportunities to researchers and students. We strive to assure that all SCSU students and faculty directors contribute to the research process, as all are essential in making a research project successful. This success is measured by our ability to obtain high quality survey data that is timely, accurate, and reliable while maintaining an environment that promotes the professional and personal growth of each staff member. The survey procedures used by the SCSU Survey adhere to the highest quality academic standards. The SCSU Survey maintains the highest ethical standards in its procedures and methods. Both faculty and student directors demonstrate integrity and respect for dignity in all interactions with colleagues, clients, researchers, and survey participants.

II. Survey Staff

The Survey's faculty directors are Dr. Steve Frank (SCSU Professor of Political Science), Dr. Steven Wagner (SCSU Associate Professor of Public and Non-Profit Administration) and Dr. Michelle Kukoleca Hammes (SCSU Assistant Professor of Political Science). The faculty directors are members of the Midwest Association Of Public Opinion Research (M.A.P.O.R.) and the American Association Of Public Opinion Research (A.A.P.O.R.). The directors subscribe to the code of ethics of A.A.P.O.R.

STEPHEN I. FRANK

Dr. Frank holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science from Washington State University. Dr. Frank teaches courses in American Politics, Public Opinion and Research Methods at St. Cloud State University. Dr. Frank started the SCSU Survey in 1980 and has played a major role in the development, administration and analysis of over 150 telephone surveys for local and state governments, school districts and a variety of nonprofit agencies. Dr. Frank has completed extensive postgraduate work in survey research at the University of Michigan. Dr. Frank recently coauthored with Dr. Wagner and published by Harcourt College Press, *"We Shocked the World!" A Case Study of Jesse Ventura's Election as Governor of Minnesota, Revised Edition*. Dr. Frank serves the SCSU Department of Political Science as its chairperson.

STEVEN C. WAGNER

Dr. Wagner holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and a Master of Public Administration from Northern Illinois University. Dr. Wagner earned his Bachelor of Science in Political Science from Illinois State University. Dr. Wagner teaches courses in American Politics and Public and Nonprofit Management at St. Cloud State University. Dr. Wagner joined the SCSU Survey in 1997. Before coming to SCSU, Dr. Wagner taught in Kansas where he engaged in community-based survey research and before that was staff researcher for the U.S. General Accounting Office. Dr. Wagner has written many papers on taxation, health care delivery and state politics and has published articles on voting behavior, federal funding of local services and organizational decision making. Dr. Wagner, with Dr. Frank, recently completed a second text on Minnesota's Governor, Jesse Ventura.

MICHELLE K. HAMMES

Dr. Kukoleca Hammes holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and a Masters in Political Science from the State University of New York at Binghamton. Dr. Kukoleca Hammes earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Niagara University. Dr. Kukoleca Hammes' is a comparativist with an area focus on North America and Western Europe. Her substantive focus is representative governmental institutions. She teaches courses in American Government, Introduction to Ideas and Institutions, Western European Politics, and a Capstone in Political Science at St. Cloud State University. Dr. Kukoleca Hammes has recently joined the survey team and will be using her extensive graduate school training in political methodology to aid in questionnaire construction and results analysis.

Ms. Laurie Hoogeveen and Ms. Angela Jabs serve as senior supervising student director. Other student directors are Ms. Tesha Peterson, Ms. Marisol Rodriguez, Mr. Dave Lundy, Ms. Renate Schultz, Ms. Julie Herbst and Mr. Paul Ben-Yehuda. Mr. Tim Claason provides network and software technical support to the survey laboratory.

After five or more hours of training and screening approximately 50 students from Political Science 201 (Research Methods) taught by Dr. Frank and Political Science 195 (Democratic Citizenship) taught by Dr. Kukoleca Hammes completed the calling. Faculty directors monitored the calling shifts. Student directors conducted both general training sessions and one-on-one training sessions as well as monitoring all calling shifts.

III. Methodology

The SCSU Survey is operated out of Stewart Hall 324. It is also known as the CATI Lab, which stands for Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing Lab. It is equipped with 13 interviewer stations that each includes a computer, a phone, and a headset. In addition to the interviewer stations, there is the Supervisor Station, which is used to monitor the survey while it is in progress. The SCSU Survey has its own server designated solely for the use of the survey.

The SCSU Survey is licensed to use Sawtooth Software's Ci3 Questionnaire Authoring Version 4.1, a state-of-the-art windows-based computer-assisted interviewing package. This program allow us to develop virtually any type of questionnaire while at the same time programming edit and consistency checks and other quality control measures to insure the most valid data. Interviewing with Ci3 offers many advantages:

1. Complete control of what the interviewer sees;
2. Automatic skip or branch patterns based on previous answers, combinations of answers, or even mathematical computations performed on answers;
3. Randomization of response categories or question order;
4. Customized questionnaires using respondents' previous responses, and,
5. Incorporation of data from the sample directly into the sample database.
6. All interview stations are networked for complete, ongoing sample management.
7. Data is updated immediately, ensuring maximum data integrity and allowing clients to get progress reports anytime. Data is reviewed for quality and consistency.
8. Answers are entered directly into the computer. Key punching is eliminated, thus decreasing human error. Data analysis can start immediately.
9. The computer handles call record keeping automatically, allowing interviewers and supervisors to focus on the interviewing task.
10. Callbacks are handled by the computer and made on a schedule. We call each number ten times. Interrupted surveys are easily completed. Persons who are willing to be interviewed can do so when it is convenient to them, improving the quality of their responses.
11. Calls are made at various times during the week (Monday through Thursday, 4:30 to 9:30) and on weekends (Sunday, 2:30 to 9:30) to maximize contacts and ensure equal opportunities to respond among various demographic groups.
12. CATI maintains full and detailed records, including the number of attempts made to each number and the disposition of each attempt.

The survey was administered Monday through Sunday, not Friday or Saturday between October 14 and October 27, 2002. Most calls were made after 4:30 PM weekdays and during the afternoon on Sunday, October 20 and 27.

Several steps were taken to ensure that the telephone sample of Minnesota adults who were eighteen years of age or older was representative of the larger population. Survey Sampling Inc. of Fairfield, Connecticut prepared the random digit sample of telephone numbers. Random digit dialing makes available changed, new, and unlisted numbers.

Drawing numbers from a telephone book may skip as many as 20 percent of Minnesota households. Within each household the particular respondent was determined in a statistically unbiased fashion. This means that the selection process alternated between men and women and older and younger respondents. Few substitutions were allowed. In order to reach hard-to-get respondents each number was called up to ten times over different days and times and appointments made as necessary to interview the designated respondent at her/his convenience.

We have found Survey Sampling a particularly efficient sample production company. They generate samples of very high quality because they:

- construct a comprehensive database of all telephone working blocks which actually represent residential telephones;
- obtain, update and cross check working block information from the local (U.S. West) telephone company;
- confirm the estimated number of residential telephones with each working block, excluding sparsely populated working blocks (industry standard is to exclude those blocks with less than three known working residential telephones out of the 100 possible numbers);
- assign working blocks known to contain residential telephones to geographic areas bases on zip code and most recent updates of census data;
- mark each working block for demographic targeting;
- check each RDD number against a list of known business telephone numbers and generate new numbers as necessary; and,
- arrange the ending sample in a random order to eliminate potential calling order bias.

In samples of 613 interviews the overall sample error due to sampling and other random effects is approximately plus/minus 3.9 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that if one were to have drawn 20 samples of the state and administered the same instrument it would be expected that the overall findings would be greater/lesser than 3.9 percent only one time in twenty. However, in all sample surveys there are other possible sources of error for which precise estimates cannot be calculated. These include interviewer and coder error, respondent misinterpretation, and analysis errors. When analysis is made of sub-samples such as respondents who are Republicans or when the sample is broken down by variables such as gender the sample error may be larger.

The demographics of the sample match census and other known characteristics of the larger state population very well. Usually surveys have to employ a statistical technique called weighting on demographics such as sex. Most surveys usually over-sample females. However, the ratio of male to female adults in the sample is 49 percent to 51 percent, which almost perfectly matches the adult population. Other variables such as household income, political party affiliation and employment all closely match what is known of the Minnesota adult population. Therefore, weighting was not necessary.

On Friday, October 25, 2002, around noon, national and local media announced a small plane thought to be carrying U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone had crashed. Soon afterwards it became apparent and was announced that Senator Paul Wellstone, his wife, daughter, three campaign aids and the two pilots of the plane were killed. Because of this, we removed Paul Wellstone from the "Feeling Thermometer" (table 6) and did not ask the U.S. Senate "Horse Race" question (table 15) and the follow up question regarding "why vote" (table 16) for the final day of interviewing, Sunday, October 27, 2002. Fifty respondents were interviewed on October 27. An examination of the data shows no difference between interviews conducted before and after the death of Senator Wellstone.

The cooperation rate of the survey was 65 percent. This is above the average for professional marketing firms. When the SCSU Survey conducts specialized contract

surveys, we use a smaller, more skilled group of student interviewers and the completion rate ranges often approach 80+ percent. Cooperation rate means that once an eligible household was reached, almost six of ten respondents agreed to participate in the survey.

The total survey consisted of 53 variables. Additional material on the survey's methodology and findings are available by contacting Steve Frank, Steven Wagner, or Michelle Kukoleca Hammes. Contact information can be found on the back page of this report.

Table 1: Calling Record	
DISPOSITION RECORD	FREQUENCY
Completed Calls	613
Not Working Numbers	1037
Not Eligible - Respondent not available during the period of the study, language problems, hearing problems, not a Minnesota resident, cabin phone, illness, etc.	124
Callbacks - Appointments made but contact could not be made with designated respondent.	603
Refusals - Attempt to re-contact and convert refusals to a completion was made for most refusals.	337
Answering Machine - Live contact could not be made even after nine calls.	202
Business Phone	314
No Answers - Probable non-working numbers but some may be households on vacation, etc.	282
Fax/Modem	3
Busy	49
Call Blocking	215
Partial - Complete except for demographics	1
Partial - Incomplete, more than demographics left.	3
Total Calls Placed	3923