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ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

STUDENT SURVEY-2007

**A SCIENTIFIC TELEPHONE SURVEY
CONDUCTED**

BY AND FOR THE

SCSU SURVEY STUDENT DIRECTORS

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

BY

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY SURVEY

April 2007

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY SURVEY SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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SCSU SURVEY HOMEPAGE
[HTTP://web.stcloudstate.edu/scsusurvey](http://web.stcloudstate.edu/scsusurvey)

Drs. Frank, Wagner and Robinson 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.) and subscribe to the code of ethics of the A.A.P.O.R.

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STUDENT DIRECTORS/CONSULTANTS

SENIOR STUDENT LAB DIRECTORS/SUPERVISORS

Ms. Sara Lohrman, Senior, Elementary Education Major
Willmar, Minnesota

Mr. William Floersheim, Junior, Political Science and Social Studies Education Major
Little Falls, Minnesota

STUDENT LAB DIRECTORS/SUPERVISORS

Mr. Matthew Bromelkamp, 4th Year student, Political Science Major
Maple Grove, Minnesota

Mr. Tim Ehlinger, 4th Year Student, Social Studies Education with Emphasis in Sociology
Avon, Minnesota

Ms. Jackie Swanson, 4th Year Student, Political Science Major, International Relations minor
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Ms. Brittany Speich, 4th Year Student, Political Science and Public Relations Majors
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Ms. Sarah Amundson, 3rd year Student, Political Science Major
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Mr. Mike Loehlein, 4th year, Economics and International Relations Majors
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Ms. Renee Helm, 2nd year student, Mathematics and Secondary Education Major
St. Joseph, Minnesota

Ms. Gayle Perish, 4th Year Student Political Science Major, International Relations and East Asian
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STUDENT TECHNICAL CONSULTANT

Mr. Justin Rassier, Sophomore, Computer Science Major

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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 Sciences 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 SCSU Survey conducts its statewide omnibus survey 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. The directors of the SCSU Survey 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 Professor of Political Science) and Dr. David H. Robinson (SCSU Professor of Statistics). 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.

A 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 since 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 coauthored with Dr. Wagner and published by Harcourt College, *"We Shocked the World!" A Case*

Study of Jesse Ventura's Election as Governor of Minnesota. Revised Edition. Dr. Frank, with Dr. Steven Wagner, recently published "The Maverick Campaign and Election of Jesse Ventura" in *Campaigns and Elections*, edited by Robert Watson and Colton Campbell, Lynn Rienner Publishers. Dr. Frank's most recent publication is "New Directions in Public Opinion" in *Perspectives on Minnesota Government and Politics*, Fifth Edition. Dr. Frank is immediate past chairperson of the SCSU Department of Political Science and immediate past president of the Minnesota Political Science Association.

B. 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 published two texts on Jesse Ventura's election as Minnesota's Governor and a book chapter on the campaign. Dr. Wagner currently serves as chairperson of the SCSU Department of Political Science.

C. David H. Robinson

Dr. Robinson holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Statistics and a Masters in Statistics from the University of Iowa. Dr. Robinson earned his Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from Henderson State University. At St. Cloud State University, Dr. Robinson teaches courses in survey planning and contingency tables, statistical methods for the social sciences, probability and computer simulation, and other statistical applications. Since coming to SCSU in 1985 and before that time, Dr. Robinson has served as statistical consultant for numerous statistical analyses of survey results. He has coauthored a book on computer simulation and analysis, and has published articles in the areas of nonparametric statistics, multivariate statistics, analysis of baseball statistics, and statistical analysis of computer network performance. Dr. Robinson currently serves the SCSU Department of Statistics and Computer Networking as its chairperson.

SCSU students, Ms. Sara Lohrman and Mr. William Floersheim serve as senior student lab supervisors. Mr. Justin Rassier, also a SCSU student, provided technical support to ensure the interviewing software and all related hardware functioned.

After training and screening, approximately 40 SCSU students completed the calling. Most students were enrolled in two of Professor Steve Frank's undergraduate political science research course and a few from his course on democracy and citizenship. Additionally, a few callers were hired and they handled more complex interviews, such as refusal conversions. Under the director of Drs. Frank, Wagner and Robinson, Ms. Lohrman and Mr. Floersheim, Mr. Matthew Bromelkamp, Mr. Tim Ehlinger, Ms. Jackie Swanson, Ms. Brittany Speich, Ms. Sarah Amundson, Mr. Mike Loehlein, Ms. Renee Helm, and Ms. Gayle Perish trained all callers and supervised all calling. These students serve the SCSU Survey as student directors and, in addition to supervising the lab for the SCSU Survey spring survey of SCSU students, perform similar functions for the fall omnibus survey and client-centered surveys.

III. Methodology

The SCSU Survey operates the CATI Lab in Stewart Hall 324. The CATI Lab, which stands for Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing Lab, 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 SCSU 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.

In addition, all interview stations are networked for complete, ongoing sample management. Sawtooth Software's Ci3 allows immediate data updating, ensuring maximum data integrity and allowing clients to get progress reports anytime. The Survey directors are able the review data for quality and consistency. Question answers are entered directly into the computer, thus keypunching is eliminated, which decreases human error and facilitates immediate data analysis. The calling system is programmed to store call record keeping automatically, allowing interviewers and supervisors to focus on the interviewing task. Callbacks are programmed through the computer network and made on a schedule. Each number is called 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.

Calls were made at various times during the week (Monday through Thursday, 4:30 to 9:30) and on Sunday to maximize contacts and ensure equal opportunities to respond among various demographic groups. The calling system maintains full and detailed records, including the number of attempts made to each number and the disposition of each attempt. Initial refusals were contacted and many were converted to completions.

The survey was administered on Sunday, March 25 through Thursday, March 29 from 4:30 to 9:30. Conversion of callbacks and refusals occurred almost immediately and continued until completion of the survey.

Several steps were taken to ensure that the telephone sample of SCSU students was representative of the larger student population. The sample was drawn proportional to the currently enrolled student population by the Minnesota State College and University (MnSCU) Regional Center. The drawn sample was 1,700 currently enrolled students who had a telephone anywhere in the state of Minnesota. 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.

The sample consists of 530 (weighted) respondents. In samples of 530 interviews, the sample error due to sampling and other random effects is approximately plus/minus four percent at the 95

percent confidence level. This means that if one were to have drawn 20 samples of the student population and administered the same instrument it would be expected that the overall findings would be in error by more than four percent only one time in twenty. In all surveys there are other possible sources of error for which precise estimates are not calculated. These include interviewer and coder error, respondent misinterpretation, and analysis errors. When analysis is made of sub-samples such as respondents who are live in university residence halls, or when the sample is broken down by variables such as gender, the sample error may be larger.

The demographics of the sample match known characteristics of the student population very well and weighting was gender and to place of residence. The ratio of dorm resident obtained during interviewing was slightly higher than exists (+3%), so the sample was weighted to reflect a sample of 22 percent of residing in campus residency halls. The female respondent population also was slightly higher (+2%) and was weighted to achieve 55 percent female student population. In terms of other demographic factors, interviewing resulted in a sample within the margin of error of the population and they were therefore not weighted.

Weighting is a standard statistical technique to adjust the sample demographics to match known characteristics of the population. The target demographics are known to be 55 percent female and 22 percent living in residence halls. The weights applied to the sample in order to achieve these targets were the following:

Males, not living in dorms, weight = 1.096
Males, living in dorms, weight = .0908
Females, not living in dorms, weight = 1.002
Females, living in dorms, weight = .848

The cooperation rate of the survey was 86 percent. A cooperation rate of 86 percent is about 35 percentage points above the average for professional marketing firms. Cooperation rate means that once we reached an eligible respondent, more than eight of ten respondents agreed to participate in the survey. The cooperation rate is determined by adding the number of completed interviews (530) to the total number of refusals (89) and dividing the number of completed interview (530) by the sum of the completions and refusals (619).

The total survey consisted of 39 variables. Respondent gender, place of residence, year of birth, ethnic status, citizenship and class standing were imported from the database. Of the 39 questions, most are reported herein and the remainder are asked for various departments and operating units of SCSU and are reported to those units. The complete questionnaire is viewable by going to the SCSU Survey web site and following the links to the spring SCSU student 2007survey.

Table 1: Calling Record	
Disposition Record	Frequency
Completed Calls (weighted shown)	530
Not Working Numbers	62
Not Eligible – Respondent not available during the period of the study, language problems, hearing problems, illness, out of state.	15
Callbacks – Appointments made but contact could not be made with designated respondent.	285
Refusals – Attempt to re-contact and convert refusals to a completion was made for all refusals.	89
Answering Machine – Live contact could not be made even after 10 calls.	484
Business Phones	7
No Answers – Probable non-working numbers.	93
Fax/Modem	9
Busy	12
Call Blocking	10
No longer at student	6
No longer resident at phone number, new number not available, wrong number	89
.Other-partially completed but not finished, miscellaneous	4
Total Calls Placed	1695

