

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL SPRING SCSU STUDENT CONTRACT SURVEY-2008

**A SCIENTIFIC TELEPHONE SURVEY
CONDUCTED
FOR THE
SCSU ADMISSION DEPARTMENT
BY
ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY SURVEY**

February 2008

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY SURVEY

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

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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. Renee Helm, 3rd year student, Public Administration Major, Mathematics
Minor
St. Joseph, Minnesota

Mr. Mike Loehlein, 5th year student, Economics and International Relations Majors
St Joseph, Minnesota

STUDENT LAB DIRECTORS/SUPERVISORS

Ms. Heidi Nelson, 4th year student, Political Science and History Majors, New
Hope, Minnesota

Ms. Hadiza Galadima, 4th Year Student, Statistics with emphasis in Actuarial
Science, Mathematics Minor, St Cloud, Minnesota.

Mr. Trevor Lynch, 3rd year Student, Political Science Major, History and
International Relations Minors, Maplewood, Minnesota.

Mr. Luke Hofstad, 4th Year Student, Political Science Major, International Relations
Minor, Andover, Minnesota.

Ms. Rhonda Otteson, 5th year Political Science Major, Wilmar, Minnesota

Mr. Tyler Rittmaster, 3rd year Marketing Major, Bloomington, Minnesota.
(studying abroad spring semester 2008)

Mr. Craig Barthel, 3rd year student, Political Science Major, Public Administration
Minor,
Albertville, Minnesota.

Mr. Birat Krishna Thapa, 1st Year Student, Political Science Major, International
Relations Minor, Saint Cloud, Minnesota.

STUDENT TECHNICAL CONSULTANT

Mr. Justin Rassier, 3rd year student, 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 is the immediate past chairperson the SCSU Department of Statistics and Computer Networking.

SCSU students, Ms. Renee Helm and Mr. Mike Loehlein 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 20 SCSU students completed the calling. Under the direction of Drs. Frank, Wagner and Robinson, Mr. Mike Loehlein and Ms. Renee Helm 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 for this spring, perform similar functions for the fall omnibus survey and other client-centered surveys.

III. Methodology

The SCSU Survey operates the CATI Lab in Stewart Hall 101. The CATI Lab, which stands for Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing Lab, is equipped with 19 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 allows 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 to 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 up to ten times if needed. 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 Monday, January 28 through Monday, February 4 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 sample was comprised of 1,800 currently enrolled students who had a telephone anywhere in the state of Minnesota and were enrolled in the fall 2007 and spring 2008 semesters. 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 508 (weighted) respondents. In samples of 508 interviews, the sample error due to sampling and other random effects is approximately plus/minus five 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 no more than five 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.

In order that the demographics of the sample match known characteristics of the student population, weighting was applied to student class and place of residence. The percentage of dorm residents obtained during interviewing was higher than exists, so the sample was weighted to reflect a sample of 19 percent of residing in campus residency halls. Among non-dorm residents, seniors and graduate students were also over-represented, while freshmen, sophomores, and juniors were under-represented in the sample and were weighted appropriately. 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 19 percent living in residence halls. The weights applied to the sample in order to achieve these targets were the following:

Freshmen and Special students, not living in dorms, weight = 2.66

Freshmen and Special students, living in dorms, weight = 0.85

Sophomores, not living in dorms, weight = 1.65

Sophomores, living in dorms, weight = 0.62

Juniors, not living in dorms, weight = 1.26

Juniors, living in dorms, weight = 0.51

Seniors, not living in dorms, weight = 0.84

Seniors, living in dorms, weight = 0.37

Graduates and Previous degree students, not living in dorms, weight = 0.93

Graduates and Previous degree students, living in dorms, weight = 0.15

The cooperation rate of the survey was 76 percent. A cooperation rate of 76 percent is about 25 percentage points above the average for professional marketing firms. Cooperation rate means that once we reached an eligible respondent, more than three of four respondents agreed to participate in the survey. The cooperation rate is determined by adding the number of completed interviews (508) to the total

number of refusals (158) and dividing the number of completed interview (508) by the sum of the completions and refusals (666).

The total survey consisted of 44 variables. Respondent gender, place of residence, ethnic status, citizenship and class standing were imported from the database. Of the 44 questions, the three asked for the Admission Department are reported herein and the remainder is reported to the applicable clients; Miller Center and the Computer Fee Committee. The complete questionnaire is viewable by going to the SCSU Survey web site and following the links to the spring SCSU student 2009 contract survey.

Table 1: Calling Record	
Disposition Record	Frequency
Completed Calls (weighted shown)	508
Not Working Numbers	79
Not Eligible – Respondent not available during the period of the study, language problems, hearing problems, illness, out of state.	10
Callbacks – Appointments made but contact could not be made with designated respondent.	33
Refusals – Attempt to re-contact and convert refusals to a completion was made for all refusals.	158
Answering Machine – Live contact could not be made even after 10 calls.	821
Business Phones	13
No Answers – Probable non-working numbers.	22
Fax/Modem	3
Busy	10
Cell Phone	14
Call Blocking	12
No longer at student	5
No longer resident at phone number, new number not available, wrong number	104
.Other-partially completed but not finished, miscellaneous	8
Total Calls Placed	1800

VI. Substantive Questions

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**Table 2:
When Decided to Attend College**

“If you decided where to attend college while in high school, did you decide during your senior year, junior year, sophomore year, freshman year or even earlier?”

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Didn't Decide Where to go in High School	58	11%
Senior Year	250	49%
Junior Year	91	18%
Sophomore Year	30	6%
Freshman Year	29	6%
Before Freshman Year	16	3%
Don't Know	32	6%
Total	507	100%

**Table 3:
Factors Influenced you to Attend St. Cloud State University?**

**“What factors influenced your decision to attend St. Cloud State University?”
(Multiple Responses allowed)**

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT OF RESPONSES	PERCENT OF CASES
Parents	80	7%	16%
Friends	118	11%	23%
High school counselor	27	3%	5%

High school teacher	18	2%	4%
Was offered a scholarship	55	5%	11%
Plenty of places to party	23	2%	4%
Had the major I wanted	165	15%	33%
Impressed by the SCSU faculty	48	4%	9%
Impressed by the SCSU classrooms, labs, and residence halls	48	4%	9%
Diversity	46	4%	9%
NCAA athletic programs	33	3%	6%
Good academic programs	102	9%	20%
Low cost	153	14%	30%
Close to home	151	14%	30%
Other	21	2%	4%
Don't Know	14	1%	2%
Total	1103	100%	na

**Table 4:
Events Influenced you to Attend St. Cloud State University?**

**“What events or items convinced you to attend SCSU?”
(Multiple Responses allowed)**

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT OF RESPONSES	PERCENT OF CASES
None - I had decided to attend before I talked to anyone there	58	9%	12%
Printed brochure	47	7%	9%
Campus visit	193	29%	39%
College/career fair	51	8%	10%
Talked to a faculty member (instructor) at SCSU	56	8%	11%
Talked to an Admissions counselor at SCSU	45	7%	9%
Another school made me mad	12	2%	2%
I didn't get accepted to my first choice school	15	2%	3%
Scholarship	66	10%	13%
Hockey game or other athletic event	37	6%	7%
Refused	98	14%	19%
Total	678	100%	na

V. Demographic Indicators

This section of the survey began with the following introduction: The next question is for statistical analysis. You don't have to answer the question but it will help us if you would.

Table 5: Gender		
<i>"Gender was imported from the data base"</i>		
RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Male	249	49%
Female	259	51%
Total	508	100%

Table 6: Residence		
<i>"Place of residence was imported from the data base"</i>		
RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Off Campus	413	81%
University Residence Hall	95	19%
Total	508	100%

**Table 7:
Ethnic Background**

“Ethnic background was imported from the data base”

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Caucasian	380	80%
African/African American	30	6%
Latino/Hispanic	5	1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	61	13%
Native American/Alaskan	1	0
Total	476	100%

**Table 8
Class Standing**

“Class standing was imported from the data base”

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Freshman	92	18%
Sophomore	103	20%
Junior	107	21%
Senior	143	28%
Graduate	48	10%
Post Degree	9	2%
Special	6	1%
Total	508	100%

**Table 9:
Citizenship**

“Citizen was imported from the data base”

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
U.S.	435	86%
Not Resident Alien/ Resident Alien	73	14%
Total	508	100%