

## ABOUT THE SEPTEMBER 2016 VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY POLL

This survey was sponsored and funded by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Vanderbilt University. It was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI; [www.psrai.com](http://www.psrai.com)), who also calculated the appropriate sampling error (taking into account design effects) and associated weights to be used in analysis (described in greater detail below). Telephone interviews were conducted in English by Princeton Data Source from September 19 to October 2, 2016.

This survey was the 14<sup>th</sup> iteration of the Vanderbilt Poll. The Poll routinely contracts with PSRAI in the manner mentioned above, and PSRAI uses probability methods to randomly select individuals to be interviewed.

To reach respondents, PSRAI used a sample constructed by Marketing Systems Group. The sample was pulled from the Tennessee state voter file.<sup>1</sup> The sample frame was split into four strata: (1) those individuals aged 18-44 with a landline phone, (2) those individuals aged 18-44 with only a cell phone, (3) those individuals aged 45 or over with a landline phone, and (4) those individuals aged 45 or over with only a cell phone. Ultimately, this survey's sample was of 1,000 adult registered voters living in Tennessee. Eight hundred (812) interviews were conducted by landline and 200 were conducted via cell phone.

As many as five attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. The sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential respondents. Each phone number received at least one daytime call when necessary.

On September 26, interviewing was suspended prior to the presidential debate. Interviewing resumed the next day using fresh sample. In effect, independent samples were used for pre- and post-debate data collection (501 interviews pre-debate and 499 interviews post-debate).

For the landline sample, interviewers asked to speak with the person named in the sample file. If there were two or more respondents with the same name at that number, interviewers asked for the respondent who is registered to vote at that address. For the cellular sample, interviews were conducted with the person named in the sample file. Interviewers verified that the person was in a safe place before administering the survey. Once the target respondent was on the phone, interviewers confirmed that they lived in Tennessee and are registered to vote before conducting the full interview.

All statistical estimates are adjusted to account for systematic non-response as well as a disproportionate sample design in order to ameliorate any loss in statistical efficiency. The weighting ensures that the demographic profile of Tennessee registered voters. The pre- and post-debate samples were balanced to match Tennessee registered voter parameters with respect to age, race,

---

<sup>1</sup> This database includes approximately 3.6 million records, approximately 917,000 of which include a phone number.

and region of the state (eastern Tennessee, Nashville area, central Tennessee [excluding Nashville], and western Tennessee [including Memphis]).<sup>2</sup>

Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the population. Table 1 compares weighted and unweighted sample distributions to population parameters.

**Table 1: Sample Demographics**

<u>Parameter</u>	<u>Pre-debate</u>		<u>Post-debate</u>		
	<u>Unweighted</u>	<u>Weighted</u>	<u>Unweighted</u>	<u>Weighted</u>	
<u>Gender</u>					
Male	44.6	39.3	44.0	46.1	45.0
Female	55.4	60.7	56.0	53.9	55.0
<u>Age</u>					
18-29	17.0	7.0	16.0	6.8	16.1
30-34	8.6	4.2	8.6	4.6	8.7
35-44	16.8	15.0	17.0	11.8	17.0
45-54	18.2	10.4	18.5	9.2	18.4
55-64	17.8	17.6	18.0	21.2	18.0
65+	21.6	45.9	21.8	46.3	21.7
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>					
White/not					
Hispanic	81.7	82.0	81.5	83.2	82.0
Other	18.3	18.0	18.5	16.8	18.0
<u>Region</u>					
East	37.1	37.9	36.9	38.3	37.5
Nashville	23.3	23.0	23.5	23.0	23.6
Central	20.6	22.0	20.9	20.2	20.7
Memphis/West	19.0	17.2	18.7	18.4	18.3

Table 2 reports the disposition of all sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from the original telephone number samples. This study's response rate for the landline samples was 15 percent; the response rate for the cellular samples was 24 percent. Response rates are computed according to AAPOR standards using the formula below.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Basic weighting parameters were drawn from Catalist's Demographic Profile of Registered Voters in Tennessee.

<sup>3</sup> The American Association for Public Opinion Research. 2011. Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys. 7th edition. AAPOR.

**Table 2. Sample Disposition**

<u>Pre-debate</u>		<u>Post-debate</u>		
<u>Landline</u>	<u>Cell</u>	<u>Landline</u>	<u>Cell</u>	
64	17	63	22	Non-residential/Business
28	0	11	20	Over quota
0	0	0	0	Cell in landline frame
92	17	74	42	OF = Out of Frame
828	296	792	268	Not working
98	0	93	0	Computer/fax/modem
926	296	885	268	NWC = Not working/computer
399	60	429	31	NA/Busy all attempts
0	320	0	359	VM not set up/caller out of range
399	380	429	390	UHUONC = Non-contact, unknown if household/unknown other
2378	1063	2275	832	Voice mail
47	8	30	1	Other non-contact (deaf/disabled/deceased)
2425	1071	2305	833	UONC = Non-contact, unknown eligibility
683	165	641	168	Refusals
616	120	497	112	Callbacks
1299	285	1138	280	UOR = Refusal, unknown if eligible
3	15	5	14	O = Other (language)
260	317	272	348	Listed person does not exist
33	9	21	15	Out of state
8	5	11	1	County out of range
301	331	304	364	SO = Screen out
27	7	20	3	R = Refusal, known eligible (breakoffs and qualified CBs)
401	100	399	100	I = Completed interviews
5873	2502	5559	2294	T = Total numbers sampled

*Continued on next page*

Table 2. Sample Disposition (*continued from previous page*)

Pre-debate		Post-debate		
Landline	Cell	Landline	Cell	
81.4%	85.2%	81.3%	83.7%	$e1 = (I+R+SO+O+UOR+UONC) / (I+R+SO+O+UOR+UONC+OF+NWC)$ - Est. frame eligibility of non-contacts
58.7%	24.4%	58.0%	22.1%	$e2 = (I+R)/(I+R+SO)$ - Est. screening eligibility of unscreened contacts
42.5%	34.6%	41.3%	39.6%	$CON = [I + R + (e2*[O + UOR])]/[I + R + (e2*[O + UOR + UONC]) + (e1*e2*UHUONC)]$
33.6%	55.5%	36.9%	59.6%	$COOP = I/[I + R + (e2*[O + UOR])]$
14.3%	19.2%	15.2%	23.6%	AAPOR $RR3 = I/[I+R+(e2*(UOR+UONC+O))+[e1*e2*UHUONC]] = CON*COOP$

Including adjustments for design effects, the resulting margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data in this survey is  $\pm 3.7$  percentage points at a confidence level of 95%. Appropriately weighted data were used for all analyses. All data analysis was conducted using STATA SE Version 14, which allows for adjustment of standard errors for complex sample designs.

The questionnaire used in this survey, along with topline results, is available at [www.vu.edu/poll](http://www.vu.edu/poll).

For more information, please contact Shannon Meldon-Corney, Program Coordinator, at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at (615)-875-6954 or at [csdi@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:csdi@vanderbilt.edu).

