

University of Iowa Hawkeye Poll – Methodology
December 12, 2011
December 2011 poll of Iowa respondents

Sample: 982 registered voters, margin of error +/- 3.5 percent
277 likely Republican caucus-goers, margin of error +/- 6.0 percent

The Hawkeye Poll was conducted by telephone with live callers from Nov. 30 to Dec. 7, 2011. The poll is conducted by the Hawkeye Poll Cooperative, comprised of UI faculty and students in the University of Iowa Department of Political Science. The faculty adviser for the poll is UI Associate Professor of Political Science Frederick Boehmke. UI Professor of Political Science Caroline Tolbert is a member of the Hawkeye Poll Cooperative and author of *Why Iowa?* The poll is a teaching, research, and service project of the UI Department of Political Science in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. CLAS and the Office of the Provost fund the poll.

The research team utilized the facilities of the Iowa Social Science Research Center, directed by UI Sociology Professor Kevin Leicht, in Iowa City to design the survey and conduct call sessions. The team programmed the survey for use with WinCATI, a questionnaire interface created by Sawtooth Technologies, and calls were made with the automatic dialing feature.

Respondent identification: A registered voter sample was acquired for each of Iowa's five Congressional districts. An initial attempt was made on answering the phone to reach the "youngest male who is 18 years or older." Alternatively, a female age 18 or older was interviewed. All who stated they were over age 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included.

Sample: Respondents were drawn at random from a random sample of 25,000 residential phone numbers of registered voters across the state of Iowa. This list was purchased from an independent company.

To compensate for the prevalence of female respondents in past surveys, the interviewers screened potential respondents by gender, following procedures used by other major survey operations. They first asked to speak to the youngest male at home who was 18 years of age or older and a registered voter. If no male was present, the interviewer asked to speak with the oldest female at home who was 18 years of age or older and a registered voter.

The research team assigned disposition codes in accordance with the American Association of Public Opinion Research's definitions and coding scheme. Surveys were automatically marked complete; interviewers could not assign this disposition. For surveys that were broken off in the middle of call, interviewers immediately rescheduled a callback for later in the calling period. If an interviewer could not reach a potential respondent (no answer/answering machine/busy signal), callbacks were made up to five more times.

Interviewers: Students from four undergraduate courses in political science and journalism were trained to interview respondents in two-hour sessions over the course of five days. These individuals participated in a training regimen where each was led screen by screen through the survey instrument and made practice calls. Additionally, the interviewers were educated in techniques to maximize respondent cooperation. Many of these interviewers had previous experience conducting phone surveys for the University of Iowa Political Science department. These callers were supplemented with an additional 140 hours of calling by students who had called in previous Hawkeye Polls. These interviewers completed 982 interviews over the course of the study. The average completed interview lasted 10 minutes. Interviewers completed surveys at the rate of 1.55 an hour on average.

Likely caucus attendees: Caucus-goers are self-identified. Participants were asked how likely they were to caucus, and for which party. A total of 277 respondents indicated they were "somewhat likely" or "very likely" to attend the 2012 Republican caucus. The margin of error for that subsample is +/-6.0 percent.

Respondents were asked whether they were "very likely," "somewhat likely," "not very likely," or "not at all likely" to attend the 2012 caucus. Among all registered voters contacted, 42.1 percent said they were "not at all likely" to

caucus, while another 19.7 percent said they were "not very likely" to caucus. These two groups were not considered likely caucus-goers. The remaining 37.8 percent said they were "very likely" (22.9 percent) or "somewhat likely" (14.9 percent) to caucus. A second screen then asked which party's caucus the voter planned to attend. Of the initial screen of likely caucus-goers, 1 percent could not name a party and were dropped. Approximately 36.6 percent of the original registered voter sample is thus classified as "likely caucus-goers." Of the total original registered voter sample, about 23.4 percent are considered likely Republican caucus-goers.

Of the registered voter contacts, 33.0 percent were Democrats, 31.2 percent were Republicans, and 35.8 percent were neither party, broadly representative of Iowa party registration. Of the caucus-going sample, 62.0 percent said they will attend the Democratic caucus.

Weighting: The General Election survey results are weighted according to partisanship, gender, and age by Congressional district. The caucus survey results are weighted according to partisanship and gender by Congressional district.

Response rate: We calculate response rate as the number of completed interviews divided by the total number of households contacted containing an eligible respondent. Interviewers reached 4462 individuals. Of these contacts, 982 individuals participated in the survey giving a response rate of 22.0 percent of those qualified. There were 3402 refusals.

Media contacts: Frederick Boehmke, Hawkeye Poll, 319-335-2342 (office), 716-866-9277 (cell), frederick-boehmke@uiowa.edu; Caroline Tolbert, Hawkeye Poll, 319-335-2358 (office), 319-621-8452 (cell), caroline-tolbert@uiowa.edu; Tom Snee, University News Services, 319-541-8434 (cell), tom-snee@uiowa.edu; Kelli Andresen, University News Services, 319-384-0070 (office), 319-330-9951 (cell), kelli-andresen@uiowa.edu; Natasha Altema, Hawkeye Poll, 404-625-3372 (cell), 319-335-3844 (office), natasha-altema@uiowa.edu