APPLYING AAPOR'S FINAL DISPOSITION CODES AND OUTCOME RATES
TO THE 2000 UTAH COLLEGES' EXIT POLL

Melaney Slater and Howard Christensen
Department of Statistics, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah

KEY WORDS: Exit Poll, Nonresponse, Disclosure Standards, Response Rates, AAPOR's Standard Definitions

Introduction

A major concern in exit polling, as well as other types of polling, is properly informing the public about the accuracy of survey results. At least three organizations-the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), the National Council on Public Polls (NCPP), and the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO)-have published disclosure standards. AAPOR (2001) declared that disclosure standards provide "essential information about how the research was conducted to ensure that consumers of survey results have an adequate basis for judging the reliability and validity of the results reported."

AAPOR's, NCPP's, and CASRO's disclosure standards expect the inclusion of response and nonresponse rates. Under article five in AAPOR's Standards for Minimal Disclosure, AAPOR declares that researchers should include "completion rates" in their surveys (AAPOR, 1986). Moreover, the NCPP discusses in the last point of their Principles of Disclosure that survey findings should contain the "percentages upon which conclusions are based" (NCPP, 1979). Finally, CASRO states under section 6 of article B in their Responsibilities in Reporting to Clients and the Public that "the number not reached" and "the number of refusals" should be presented in the research organization's report to the public (CASRO, 2001). A complete statement of the disclosure standards for AAPOR, NCPP, and CASRO are available on their websites. Unfortunately, election pollsters have been slow to adopt the nonresponse disclosure standards. Miller, Merkle and Wang (1991, p.207) say that nonresponse is "rarely or never treated" in election poll reports.

Even when response and nonresponse rates have been reported, many researchers have been using their own definitions to report these figures. For example, in Lohr's research (1999, p.281), she has found survey researchers using five different formulas that have all been defined as response rate. The disclosure of nonresponse should be consistent across surveys, and therefore comparable.

Filling the Need For Standards

To address the confusion of the various nonresponse methods, AAPOR has recently published "Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys" (2000). We will refer to this recent publication as Standard Definitions throughout the remainder of this paper. Standard Definitions has been built on prior research and recent technology to establish a range of general cases. AAPOR found many discrepancies regarding the final disposition codes between surveys. AAPOR discovered that researchers are using more than 24 classifications of final disposition codes and none were exactly alike. They also learned that many of the codes were "unique to a particular study and categories often were neither clearly defined nor comparable across surveys" (AAPOR, 2000).

Standard Definitions discusses the inconsistency of calculating outcome rates across different studies. AAPOR refers to outcome rates as including response, cooperation, refusal, and contact rates. They state that in some cases the outcome rates "commonly cited in survey reports have the same names, but are used to describe fundamentally different rates" (AAPOR, 2000). In other cases, "different names are sometimes applied to the same rates" (AAPOR, 2000). As a result, a confusion is created because survey researchers are "rarely doing things in a comparable manner and frequently are not even speaking the same technical language" (AAPOR, 2000).

AAPOR hopes to establish a "common language and definitions that the research industry can share" (2000). This will allow researchers to "more precisely calculate response rates and use those calculations to directly compare the response rates of different surveys" (AAPOR, 2000). Standard Definitions brings a universal interpretation of survey nonresponse methodology that can be compared over a variety of sampling modes.

Extension of AAPOR Standards to Exit Polls

The most common methods for gathering survey data are in-person interviews, telephone interviews, and mail-administered surveys (Glynn, Herbst, O'Keefe, and Sharpiro 1999, p.72). AAPOR's standard definitions account for all three methods, but no combination thereof. Glynn et al. (1999, p.74) discuss an increase in blended data collection methods by mentioning, "multiple data collection techniques are now more in use." An extension of AAPOR's codes to account for a broader spectrum of data collection methods would be very useful to survey researchers. In this study, we adapted AAPOR's Standard Definitions to general exit polls, and specifically to the Utah Colleges' Exit Poll (UCEP 2000).

Review of Exit Poll Methodology

Exit polls are "conducted on election days at polling places while voting is in progress" (Mitofsky 1991, p.93). A typical exit poll begins with a probability sample of polling places or precincts inside a designated area. The probability sample insures that every precinct or polling place has a known probability of being chosen that is greater than zero (Forman 1991, p.19). Exit pollsters typically use a stratified sample of precincts within some geographical area, which are selected proportionally to the votes cast in the previous election (Mitofsky and Edelman 1995, p.82; Merkle and Edelman 2000, p.69). Within each precinct or polling place, an interviewer intercepts a systematic sample of every nth voter as they leave their polling place and invites them to fill out a survey (Mitofsky 1991, p.93; Mitofsky and Edelman 1995, p.82; Traugott and Lavrakas 2000, p.21; Corbett 1991, p.58, 60). Mitofsky (1991, p.93) affirms that when conducted correctly, an "exit poll is very much like any other scientific sample survey."

In exit polls, nonrespondents can be separated into refusals and misses (Merkle and Edelman 2000, p.73). Merkle and Edelman state that a refusal "occurs when a sampled voter is asked to fill out a questionnaire and declines," and a miss takes place when the "interviewer is too busy to approach the voter or when the voter does not pass the interviewer" (Merkle and Edelman 2000, p.73).

Nonresponse is usually very high in exit polls. As stated by Mitofsky and Edelman (1995, p.95), Voter Research & Surveys (VRS) reported an average of 42 percent nonresponse in the 1992 presidential exit poll, which compares to 40 percent that CBS reported in 1988. According to Mitofsky and Edelman (1995, p. 95), one-fourth of the nonresponse was due to interviewers missing

voters who should have been included in the sample, and the rest of the nonresponse was due to respondents refusing to participate in the survey. Merkle and Edelman (2000, p.73) report that in the 1996 presidential exit poll, Voter News Service (VNS) averaged a statewide refusal rate of 33 percent and miss rate of 10 percent.

Modification of Standard Definitions

This paper provides a general case scenario of final disposition codes and outcome rates from which any individual exit poll may commence. Some disposition codes and outcome rates can be modified due to a particular methodology of an exit poll.

By examining the household, mail, and telephone options of Standard Definitions, we determined that a combination of the household and mail final disposition codes would best represent the final disposition codes for an exit poll. However, many of the household interview and mail codes do not apply to an exit poll. For instance, such mail and household codes as: refused to pay postage, no mail receptacle, not a housing unit, and vacant housing unit are obviously not appropriate for an exit poll.

In addition, there are unique elements that pertain to an exit poll. In contrast to other data collection methods, an exit poll consists of an interviewer contact outside of a polling place, and a self-administered survey (Mitofsky 1991, p.93; Traugott and Lavrakas 2000, p.21). Instead of an actual list of names of selected respondents, an exit poll has a sampling interval that systematically selects respondents. The field period for an exit poll is extremely short, consisting of only one day. Consequently, there is no possibility of performing callbacks, a technique that typically lowers the non-response rate.

Beyond data collection differences, exit polls have to take into account unique classifications of respondents. These include absentee voters and missed voters. Traugott and Lavrakas (2000, p.14) report that one-fourth of all of the votes in the 1996 presidential election were cast using absentee ballots. However, absentee ballots are not included in the sampling frame of exit polls because they do not vote at their precincts on Election Day. Currently, absentee voters are assumed to have a negligible effect on the voting results.

On the other hand, missed voters are included in most exit polls. VRS and VNS reported from the 1992 and 1996 presidential exit poll data respectively, that an average of about 10 percent of the nonresponse was categorized as missed voters (Mitofsky and Edelman 1995, p. 95; Merkle and Edelman 2000, p.73).

Final Disposition Codes

In this section, the definitions of the final disposition codes for household interview and mail surveys of AAPOR are adapted to apply to general exit polls. An entire list of the final disposition codes is provided in Table 1.

The following terms are typical of exit polls. An interviewer is a pollster that contacts selected voters and invites them to fill-out a questionnaire. A contact is when an interviewer approaches a respondent and asks them to fill-out a questionnaire. A returned questionnaire (1.0) refers to a respondent accepting a questionnaire from an interviewer, at least partially completing the questionnaire, and returning it to the interviewer. An eligible case (2.0) is when there is a possible contact, but the respondent does not fill-out the questionnaire enough to be considered a partial questionnaire. Cases of unknown eligibility (3.0) occur where there is no contact and no returned questionnaire. Not eligible cases (4.0) differ from unknown eligible cases in that some contact has been made with the respondent to determine that they are not eligible, or it is completely obvious that they are not eligible (e.g. children 0-10 years old).

Table 1. Final Disposition Codes for a General Exit Poll

1. Returned questionnaire. ………………………………………… (1.0)
  Complete…………………………………………………………(1.1)
  Partial……………………………………………………………… (1.2)

2. Eligible, Contact or Non-contact. ……………………………… (2.0)
  Refusal and Break off……………………………………………… (2.10)
    Refusal………………………………………………………………(2.11)
      Other person refusal…………………………………(2.111)
      Known respondent-level refusal…………………… (2.112)
    Break-off……………………………………………………… (2.12)
  Non-contact/Missed voter………………………………………… (2.20)
    Did not pass by interviewer……………………………………… (2.21)
    Interviewer too busy……………………………………………… (2.22)
  Other……………………………………………………………… (2.30)
    Precinct not attempted or worked ………………………… (2.31)
      Unable to reach/unsafe area……….………………… (2.311)
      Unable to locate an address…….…………………… (2.312)
    Physically or mentally unable/incompetent……………....... (2.32)
    Language…………………………………………………………… (2.33)
      Respondent language problem……………………… (2.332)
      Wrong language questionnaire……………………… (2.333)
      No interviewer available for needed language…….... (2.334)
    Literacy…………………………………………………………… (2.34)
    Miscellaneous…………………………………………………… (2.35)

3. Unknown Eligibility, Non-contact……………………………… (3.0)
  Unknown if eligible respondent…………………………………… (3.20)
    No screener completed………………………………………… (3.21)
    Missed voter……………………………………………………… (3.22)
      Did not pass by interviewer……………………… (3.221)
      Interviewer too busy…….………………………… (3.222)
  Miscellaneous…………………………………………………… (3.90)

4. Not Eligible……………………………………………………… (4.0)
  Out of sample…………………………………………………… (4.10)
  Not an eligible respondent……………………………………… (4.70)
  Unregistered voter……………………………………………… (4.71)
  Registered to vote, but did not vote…………………………… (4.72)
  Quota filled……………………………………………………… (4.80)

The following sections are explanations of the final disposition codes. These sections are parallel to the "RDD Telephone Surveys of Households" and "In-Person Household Surveys" sections of Standard Definitions. Therefore, in many situations we use the same language, however we do not constrain our paper to put these similarities into quotes.

Returned Questionnaires

Returned questionnaires are separated into two categories: a) complete (1.1) and b) partial (1.2) questionnaires. Each study is

asked to clearly define cut-off rates for complete and partial

questionnaires, in advance. AAPOR (2000) gives a few of the most common examples of cut-off rates in Standard Definitions.

Eligible, Contact or Non-contact

Voters that are eligible and did not at least partially complete a questionnaire can be classified as nonrespondents. This category consists of three types of non-response: a) refusals and break-offs (2.10), b) non-contacts (2.20), and c) others (2.30). AAPOR (2000) also asks that a survey provide their definition of a break-off questionnaire.

Refusals and break-offs consist of cases in which some contact has been made with a voter. The voter or another responsible person accompanying them may reject the opportunity to fill-out the questionnaire (2.11). Or, a questionnaire is returned with only a few questions completed, less than needed to qualify as a partial questionnaire, and the respondent refuses to complete it further (2.12).

Eligible respondents that were supposed to be contacted, and for some reason were not are called non-contacts (2.20), which are also referred to as missed voters. A voter is missed when he or she does not pass the interviewer, or when an interviewer is too busy to approach the voter (Merkle and Edelman 2000, p.73). Therefore, missed voters can be broken down into: did not pass interviewer (2.21), or interviewer too busy (2.22). However, not all missed voters are eligible respondents. If there is any question regarding a missed voter's eligibility, he or she should be categorized as a missed voter with unknown eligibility (3.22).

Other cases (the 2.30 subset) represent instances in which the respondent was eligible and did not refuse the questionnaire, but no interview is obtainable because: a) a precinct is not attempted or worked (2.31) b) the respondent is physically and/or mentally unable to complete a questionnaire (2.32), c) language problems (2.33) d) literacy (2.34), and e) miscellaneous other reasons (2.35). These cases are explained below.

In AAPOR's final disposition codes for other typical data collection methods, the case of not-attempted-or-worked is included in the category of unknown eligibility. In telephone, household interviews, and mail surveys, the code not-attempted-or-worked refers to a household unit, while in this exit poll study we will refer to this code as a precinct unit. In an exit poll, there is never a case where a county has an unknown precinct. Hence, this case code is considered eligible. The code precinct-not-attempted-or-worked (2.31) includes addresses drawn in the sample, but for which no interviewer was available. Therefore, cases were simply not assigned or attempted before the end of the field period.

Cases of precinct-not-attempted-or-worked (2.31) are further separated into a) unable to reach/unsafe area (2.311), and b) unable to locate an address (2.312). Unable-to-reach cases (2.311) include remote areas inaccessible due to weather or other causes or areas in which interviewers are not assigned because of safety concerns (e.g., bad weather, high crime, rioting, or evacuations). Location problems (2.312) typically involve rural residences in which the description of the precinct unit is errant (e.g. wrong street name) or inadequate to allow an interviewer to find the precinct building (e.g. the house that had been painted red to the left of where the general store used to be).

Regarding all such cases in exit polls, there is a possibility that pollsters may decide to change the selected precinct to an alternative one. If an alternative precinct is selected, the code precinct-not-attempted-or-worked is no longer applicable.

Respondents who are physically or mentally unable to complete a questionnaire include both permanent conditions (e.g. senility, blindness or literacy) and temporary conditions (e.g. drunkenness) that prevail whenever attempts are made to contact the voter. Unlike other data collection methods, in an exit poll a voter with a temporary condition cannot be interviewed again, unless they are recontacted later on that same Election Day. However, there is no practical way for polling organizations to implement such an action.

Language problems (2.33) include cases of a foreign language barrier and literacy. Foreign language barriers can be subdivided in to three cases. The first case is when the respondent does not read a language in which the questionnaire is printed (2.332). A second case is when the respondent never receives a questionnaire printed in a language he or she can read (2.333). Finally, a case exists when an interviewer with appropriate language skills cannot be assigned to the polling place at the time of contact of the voter with a language barrier (2.334).

In 1975, Congress implemented the language minority provisions of the Voting Rights Act (U.S. Department of Justice 2002). The Voting Rights Act protects voters that speak minority languages by "requiring particular jurisdictions to print ballots and other election materials in the minority language as well as in English, and to have oral translation help available at the polls where the need exists" (U.S. Department of Justice 2002).

Literacy problems (2.34) would apply to cases in which the selected voter could speak the language in which the questionnaire was printed, but could not read it well enough to comprehend the meaning of the questions.

All registered voters are entitled to vote, regardless of the impairment. "Any voter who is blind, disabled, unable to read or write, unable to read or write the English language, or is physically unable to enter a polling place" is able to receive assistance from a person of their choice that meets specific criteria (State of Utah, 2001).

The miscellaneous designation (2.35) includes cases involving some combination of other reasons (2.30) or special circumstances (e.g. vows of silence, lost records, faked cases invalidated later on).

Unknown Eligibility, No Contact

In exit polls, unknown eligibility cases include situations in which it is unknown whether a specific individual observed at the precinct is an eligible voter (3.20). For instance, there could be a precinct at a library where some people are at the library to check out books and others are there to vote. In such precincts, the assumption cannot be made that all people exiting the building are eligible to be in the sample. Therefore, it is unknown whether a specific individual observed at that precinct is an eligible voter without some verification of eligibility.

Cases for which it is unknown whether a specific individual observed at the precinct is an eligible voter (3.20) usually crop up because of a failure to complete a needed screener (3.21). Depending on the sampling design of an exit poll, a screener may or may not be needed. A screener may be needed at multi-precinct polling places where not every precinct is a part of the sample. In exit polls without an official screener, interviewers are often expected to make some kind of voter assessment. For instance, interviewers have to assess the ages of the people at the polling place. It may be difficult to distinguish if some people are over eighteen and eligible to vote. Other cases include people that are at a polling place, but not for the purpose to vote (e.g. people that work in the building). Another type of an unknown eligible respondent is a missed voter (3.22), which can be further separated into did not pass interviewer (3.221) and interviewer too busy (3.222). If it is certain that the missed voter is eligible, he or she should be coded as a non-contact, missed voter (2.20).

Finally, a miscellaneous other category (3.90) should be used for highly unusual cases in which the eligibility of the precinct or potential respondent is undetermined and which do not clearly fit into one of the above designations.

Not Eligible

Not eligible cases for an exit poll with an interviewer contact and self-administered survey include: a) out-of-sample voters (4.10); b) not an eligible respondent (4.70); and c) situations in which quotas have been filled (4.80). Not eligible cases differ from unknown eligible cases in that some contact has been made with the respondent to determine that they are not eligible, or it is completely obvious that they are not eligible (e.g. children under 10 years old).

Out-of-sample cases (4.10) would include voters that were at a polling place, but for a purpose other than to vote. This would differ from (3.20) in that some contact and verification has been made to determine that the respondent is not eligible.

Ineligible respondents (4.70) are rare in exit polls. They mostly consist of unregistered voters (4.71) or voters that are registered, but did not vote (4.72). This category (4.70) differs from (4.10) in that the respondents are inside-of-sample but for a different reason are ineligible; while in the former case the respondents are not properly part of the sample. These individuals might be at a precinct if they are accompanying another person, or if they are at the precinct for a reason other than to vote.

Finally, in surveys that employ a quota, there may be cases in which returned questionnaires are not treated as part of the final data set because the quota for their subgroup of respondents had already been filled (4.80). The nature of the quotas and how they are filled must be clearly defined. While quota sampling is not specifically mentioned in current exit polling literature, there may be reasons for some pollsters to consider using quotas.

In all cases concerning final disposition codes involving ineligibility, definite evidence of the status is needed. When in doubt a case should be presumed to be eligible or possibly eligible rather than ineligible, unless there is clear evidence leading to the latter classification.

Outcome Rates

As with the final disposition codes, the outcome rates must be modified to apply to general exit polls. The outcome rates generally referred to are response, cooperation, refusal and contact rates. Many of the definitions and formulas of the outcome rates as documented in Standard Definitions apply straightforwardly to exit polls; and therefore, will not be reproduced here but are available on AAPOR's website. The modifications required to apply AAPOR's outcome rates to general exit polls are discussed below.

For purposes of calculating outcome rates, precinct-not-attempted-or-worked (2.31) is included in the category of other (2.30). This differs from typical data collection methods where not-attempted-or-worked is a sub-category of unknown-if-housing-unit, abbreviated UH (3.10). In addition, precinct-not-attempted-or-worked is identified a precinct-level concept instead of a respondent-level concept. A study has the option of estimating the number of respondents in each precinct-not-attempted-or-worked, or removing this code from their outcome rates with an explanation behind the removal. In some cases, an alternative precinct is chosen, which is a valid reason to exclude precinct-not-attempted-or-worked in the calculations of the outcome rates.

This study excludes UH (3.10) from the outcome rate formulas because there is no equivalent in an exit poll. Note that the exclusion of UH applies to all outcome rates.

In Standard Definitions, there is no provision for a miss rate, which is typical for an exit poll. This study considers one approach of applying miss rates to an exit poll and supplies the outcome rates below. Again, much of this section is parallel to Standard Definitions, and the similarities are not put into quotes.

MIS = Miss rate
I = Complete Interview (1.1)
P = Partial interview (1.2)
NC = Non-contact/Missed voter (2.20)
O = Other (2.30)
UO = Unknown if eligible respondent exists (3.20)
e = Estimated proportion of cases of unknown eligibility that are eligible

$$MIS1 = \frac{NC}{(I + P) + (R + NC + O) + (UO)}$$

Miss Rate 1 (*MIS1*) is the number of missed voters divided by the interviews (complete and partial) plus the non-respondents (refusals, non-contacts, and others) plus the cases of unknown eligibility.

$$MIS2 = \frac{NC}{(I + P) + (R + NC + O) + e(UO)}$$

Miss Rate 2 (*MIS2*) includes estimated eligible cases among the unknown cases.

$$MIS3 = \frac{NC}{(I + P) + (R + NC + O)}$$

Miss Rate 3 (*MIS3*) is the number of missed voters divided by the interviews (complete and partial) plus the non-respondents (refusals, non-contacts, and others). This case excludes the cases of unknown eligibility and estimated eligible cases among the unknown cases.

Standard Definitions of AAPOR Applied to 2000 Utah Colleges' Exit Poll

The adapted final disposition codes and outcome rates for general exit polls mentioned above will be used to evaluate the data of the 2000 Utah Colleges' exit poll (UCEP 2000). Some final disposition codes and outcome rates have been reduced and others have been excluded due to the uniqueness of UCEP 2000.

Background to the 2000 Utah Colleges' Exit Poll

In many ways, UCEP 2000 is comparable to a typical exit poll. It was designed by using a stratified, multi-stage sampling design. Initially counties within the state were appropriately stratified, and then were selected by probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling, where the measure of size was proportional to the estimated voter turnout for that county. In the second stage, ninety-two polling places were selected by PPS sampling within each county to be sampled. In the third stage, interviewers selected voters according to a previously determined systematic sampling interval, within each polling place, intended to give polling places a constant workload. There were on average three interviewers per polling place. At the designated time every hour, one interviewer per polling place would call in the results they had collected within that hour.

UCEP 2000 used three survey forms to call the elections. The survey forms were distinguished by color, namely: white, blue, and pink. Each color contained a few questions that were common to all colors, as well as questions specific to that color. This conceptually produced three independent surveys with the same survey design.

Final Disposition Codes in UCEP 2000

For several reasons not all final disposition codes for general exit polls were used in UCEP 2000. On the questionnaire, there was only a certain amount of space allotted for the nonresponse final disposition codes, so they were constrained to a minimum. In

Table 2. Final Disposition Codes and Frequencies of Occurrence for UCEP 2000

Question Status	Disp. Code	White	Blue	Pink
1. Returned questionnaire	(1.0)	2367	1070	1088
Complete	(1.1)	2335	1052	1071
Partial	(1.2)	32	18	17
2. Eligible, Contact or Non-contact	(2.0)	1340	612	738
Refusal and Break off	(2.10)	1340	612	738
Refusal	(2.11)	1239	594	680
Break-off	(2.12)	101	86	58
Total		3707	1682	1826

addition, the final disposition codes were also reduced to minimize the complexity for the interviewers.

For example, we did not use such general exit polling options as: literacy (2.34), language (2.33), physically/mentally disabled (2.32), or missed voter (2.21). We eliminated these codes because they covered such a small part of our sampling frame. For instance, a very low percentage of registered voters in Utah are unable to speak English. In order to be a registered voter in Utah you must be a United States citizen. One requirement to gain citizenship in the United States is that an immigrant must "be able to speak, read, write and understand ordinary English words and phrases" (Immigration and Naturalization Service, 2001). Also, any voter with a foreign language barrier is able to bring an interpreter when he or she votes (U.S. Department of Justice, 2002).

We did not experience a missing rate because in UCEP 2000 there were on average three pollsters per polling place compared to the one pollster per precinct used in most exit polls (Mitofsky 1991, p. 96; Mitofsky and Edelman 1995, p.82). Therefore, we did not feel like we missed any contacts.

A list of the final disposition codes used in UCEP 2000 and their frequencies are provided in Table 2.

Returned Questionnaires
In UCEP 2000, the returned questionnaires section of the final disposition codes is uniquely defined to fit our study. The definitions for complete and partial surveys are listed below.
a) Complete = 100% of crucial questions and 100% of semi-crucial questions
b) Partial = 100% of crucial questions and 50% of semi-crucial questions
The crucial questions consisted of the five election races that we called on Election Night. Semi-crucial questions were the two initiatives that we also reported the night of the election.

Eligible, Contact
In UCEP 2000, a break-off (2.12) occurred when a respondent filled-out at least one question of the crucial or semi-crucial questions, but failed to respond to 100% of crucial questions and/or less than 50% of semi-crucial questions. A refusal (2.11) occurred when an interviewer approached a voter, and the voter declined to fill-out the questionnaire.

Unknown Eligibility, Non-Contact
For several reasons it was assumed that there were no voters with unknown eligibility in UCEP 2000. Interviewers were positioned at the building exits with the largest flow of voters. In addition, the voters were sampled at the polling place level, which took care of the problem of multi-precincts. As for other cases, such as a person

at a polling place but for a reason other to vote, the interviewers were asked to assess a voter's eligibility.

Not Eligible
There was no data collected for ineligible respondents. The interviewers rarely, if at all, encountered a respondent that was not eligible. For example, such respondents as unregistered voters are not likely to appear at their polling place on Election Day. If an ineligible respondent was identified the interviewers were instructed to exclude him or her from their sample, and select an alternative respondent.

Outcome Rates
Because we did not allow for many of the final disposition codes of the general exit poll in UCEP 2000, many of the elements in the outcome rates could be reduced. This produced simplified versions of the response, refusal, and contact rates. The outcome rates that applied to UCEP 2000 are reported below.

$$RR5_S = \frac{I}{(I+P)+R} \qquad RR6_S = \frac{(I+P)}{(I+P)+R}$$

Simplified Response Rate 5 ($RR5_S$) assumes there are no non-contact, unknown eligible, or not eligible cases. Simplified Response Rate 6 ($RR6_S$) does the same as Response Rate 5, but includes partials as interviews.

$$COOP3 = \frac{I}{(I+P)+R} \qquad COOP4 = \frac{(I+P)}{(I+P)+R}$$

Cooperation Rate 3 (COOP3) assumes there are no non-contact, unknown eligible, or not eligible cases. Cooperation Rate 4 (COOP4) does the same as Cooperation Rate 3, but includes partials as interviews. COOP3 is equivalent to $RR5_S$, and COOP4 is equivalent to $RR6_S$.

$$REF_S = \frac{R}{(I+P)+R} \qquad CON3_S = \frac{(I+P)+R}{(I+P)+R}$$

Simplified Refusal Rate 3 ($REF3_S$) assumes there are no non-contact, unknown eligible, or not eligible cases. $REF3_S$ is equivalent to 1- $RR6_S$. Simplified Contact Rate 3 ($CON3_S$) assumes there are no non-contact, unknown eligible, or not eligible cases.

Results
This study does not report all of the types of outcome rates that could have been used in UCEP 2000. Note that COOP3 = $RR5_S$, COOP4 = $RR6_S$, $REF3_S$ = 1 - $RR6_S$, and $CON3_S$ = 1. Therefore, COOP3, COOP4, $REF3_S$, and $CON3_S$ were excluded in the results because they did not add any new information.

Outcome rates collected for UCEP 2000 reveal that $RR5_S$ and $RR6_S$ follow a similar pattern within colors (See Figure 1). The white form tends to have the highest response rate, closely followed by the blue form, and the pink form is quite a bit below the other two.

Summary
AAPOR's Standard Definitions provide useful final disposition codes and outcome rates for the current data collection methods employed, and unique data collection methods such as used in an exit poll. In this paper, we modified Standard Definitions to apply to general exit polls, and directly applied these standards to the 2000 Utah Colleges' Exit Poll (UCEP 2000). Results from this analysis reveal an average simplified Response Rate 5 ($RR5_S$) of 61.4%, and an average simplified Response Rate 6 ($RR6_S$) of 62.4%, where the response rates were averaged across survey forms
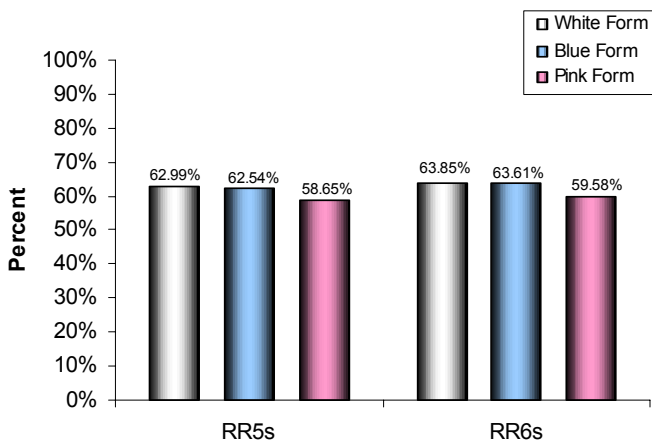
Figure 1 Response Rates of UCEP 2000

denoted by color. Compared to national exit polls response rates of 57-60%, UCEP 2000's response rates were slightly higher. However, in national exit polls response rates exclude missed voters, which were not excluded in the response rates of UCEP 2000. This is due to the fact that we had on average three interviewers per polling place, and for this reason we assumed that all selected voters were contacted.

References

The American Association for Public Opinion Research, "Best Practices for Survey and Public Opinion Research," <http://www.aapor.org/ethics/ best.html>, [Accessed 8-20-01].

The American Association for Public Opinion Research (2000), "Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys," Ann Arbor, Michigan: Author, <http://www.aapor.org/ethics/stddef.html>, [Accessed 8-20-01].

The American Association for Public Opinion Research (1986), "Certificate of Incorporation and By-Laws," Princeton, NJ: Author.

Cochran, W.G. (1977), Sampling Techniques (3rd ed.), New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Council of American Survey Research Organizations (2001), "Responsibilities in Reporting to Clients and the Public,"

<http://www.casro.org/codeofstandards.cfm> [Accessed 8-20-01].

Forman, E.K. (1991), Survey Sampling Principals, New York: Marcel Dekker.

Glynn, C.J., Herbst, S., O'Keefe, G.J. and Sharpiro, R.Y. (1999), Public Opinion, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Immigration and Naturalization Service, (Last modified 11-28-2000), "How to Become a United States Citizen," <http://www.aoa.gov/aoa/pages/citizen.html>.

Kviz, F. J. (1977), "Toward a Standard Definition of Response Rate," Public Opinion Quarterly, 41, 265-267.

Lohr, S. (1999), Sampling: Design and Analysis, Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Merkle, D.M. and Edelman, M.E. (2001), "Nonresponse in Exit Polls: A Comprehensive Analysis." Survey Nonresponse, Robert M. Groves, Don A.Dillman, John L. Eltinge, and Roderick J.A. Little (Eds.), John Wiley and Sons.

Merkle, D.M. and Edelman, M.E. (2000), "The review of 1996 Voter News Service Exit Polls from a Total Survey Error Prospective," in Election Polls, the News Media, and Democracy, eds. P.J. Lavrakas and M.W. Traugott, New York: Chatham House, pp.68-92.

Miller, P. J., Merkle, D.M., and Wang, P. (1991), "Journalism and Footnotes: Reporting the 'Technical Details' of Polls," in Polling and Presidential Election Coverage, eds. P.J. Lavrakas, and J.K. Holley, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 200-214.

Mitofsky, W. J. (1991), "A Short History of Exit Polls", in Polling and Presidential Election Coverage, eds. P.J. Lavrakas P.J., and J.K. Holley, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 83-99.

Lavrakas P.J., and Edelman, M. (1995), "A Review of the 1992 VRS Exit Polls", in Presidential Polls and the News Media, eds. P.J. Lavrakas, M.W. Traugott and P.V. Miller, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp. 81-99.

National Council for Public Polls (NCPP) (1979), "Principles of Disclosure," Princeton, NJ: Author, <http://www.ncpp.org/disclosure.htm>, [Accessed 8-20-01].

Traugott, M. and Lavrakas, P.J. (2000), The Voter's Guide to Election Polls (2nd ed.), New York: Chatham House.

State of Utah (Last modified 10-22-2001), Utah Election Codes, Title 20A Chapter 03, "20A-3-108 Assisting disabled, illiterate, or blind voters" <http://www.le.state.ut.us/~code/TITLE20A/ htm/20A03010.htm>