

## Politics of Defense Spending

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### Contents

1. Survey administration
2. Hypotheses
3. Preanalysis plan for analyzing survey module 4
4. Preanalysis plan for robustness checks
5. Survey instrument

### 1. Survey administration

- The survey will be administered to a nationally-representative sample of 1,000 American adults (18+), via the Qualtrics panel, between November 19 and December 19 (estimated). Respondents must pass an attention check to complete the survey. Survey quotas are based on gender, age, and race.
- The sample size was estimated on a power calculation that would detect a treatment effect of 5% for each attribute level in survey module 4, with 90% power and an alpha of 0.05.
- The survey was approved by Dartmouth College's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects, Study #00031347.
- The survey has four modules. Modules 2 and 3 appear in random order, followed by Module 4. The full survey instrument is enclosed at the end of this document.

Module 1: Demographics

Module 2: Spending preferences (questions in random order)

Module 3: Attribute preferences (questions in random order)

Module 4: Candidate experiment (10 conjoint profiles)

### 2. Hypotheses

- This survey is designed to test the hypothesis that *the benefit leaders receive from appearing competent on national security issues outweighs the cost leaders suffer from promising to raise defense spending.*

If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would do a good job of handling national security issues	Would do a fair job of handling national security issues
Would moderately increase spending on national security issues	Would greatly decrease spending on national security issues

Candidate A

Candidate B

**Figure 1.** *Sample candidate profiles.*

- The survey tests this hypothesis through a simple conjoint experiment in module 4. The experiment asks voters to say which of two presidential candidates they would prefer to vote for. The candidates are described with respect to their positions on defense spending and their competence for handling national security issues. Figure 1 presents an example of what these conjoint comparisons look like.
  - There are five possible levels for the “defense spending” attribute: greatly reduce, moderately reduce, keep about the same, moderately increase, greatly increase.
  - There are four possible levels for the “competence” attribute: poor, fair, good, excellent.
  - Attribute order is randomized (between-respondents).
  - Attribute levels are randomized across candidate profiles, the only restriction being that pairs of candidates never possess the same level of a single attribute.

- Survey module 1 is designed to show that voters are less likely to support raising defense expenditures than they are to support raising government funding in other policy areas. Survey module 2 is designed to show that voters nevertheless believe that it is relatively important for leaders to demonstrate competence for handling national security issues.
  - To substantiate these claims, survey modules 1 and 2 elicit voters' preferences across 10 policy areas: national defense and the other 9 policy issues covered by the federal spending module of the 2016 ANES.3. Pre-Analysis Plan for Survey Modules 2 and 3
- The paper will present simple results from survey modules 2 and 3, showing the proportion of respondents who (a) preferred to raise government spending on each issue, and (b) thought that it was either “very important” or “extremely important” for presidential candidates to demonstrate competence in each issue area.

### 3. Pre-Analysis Plan for Survey Module 4

- The paper will present figures showing the proportion of candidates who were selected in the conjoint experiment, conditional on possessing specific attributes. The treatment effect associated with each attribute level is simply the difference between the mean proportion of selection and 50 percent. The most straightforward way to estimate these proportions is to use Stata's “svy: prop” command. The statistical significance of these treatment effects can be tested using Stata's “lincom” command.
- I expect to see that the difference between the most/least popular levels of each attribute is (much) larger for competence than for proposed spending. The statistical significance of this difference can be tested using Stata's “lincom” command.
- I plan to present results for the full sample, compared with results for the subset of respondents who said that they preferred to reduce defense spending. Even for these respondents, I expect to see the treatment effects for the competence attributes as large or larger as the treatment effects for proposed spending.

### 5. Pre-analysis plan for robustness checks

- I plan to show that treatment effects associated with candidates' competence outweigh the treatment effects associated with candidates' spending proposals regardless of party (R/D/I), education (college/noncollege), gender (female/male), and race (white/nonwhite).
  - To show this, I will present treatment effects estimated for each subsample of respondents.
- I also plan to show that treatment effects are not conditional on specific survey wording. To show this, I will randomize how each attribute is labeled. One-quarter of respondents

will receive the alternatively-worded option for each attribute. These randomizations will be independent and between-subjects.

- The alternative wording for proposed spending levels will specify that “greatly” changing spending levels means raising or cutting spending by 25% and that “moderately” changing spending levels means raising or cutting spending by 10%.
- The second alternative wording will replace the words “national security issues” with “the military and national defense.”
- I can test the statistical significance of any differences in these treatment effects using a linear regression with a dummy for survey wording as the independent variable. But the primary way I plan to use these data is simply to show that survey wording does not influence the outcome of the hypothesis test described above.
- All results described above will be tested using survey weights. I will calculate the survey weights through a raking procedure based on education (college dummy) party (R, D, I/O), race (white, Hispanic, black, Asian, other) and gender (female, male, other). I also plan to weight the survey by age and census division, but the feasibility of doing this (and the granularity of the measures that I use) will depend on respondent proportions.

## 6. Survey instrument

The full survey instrument is enclosed. All replication materials, including data and code, will be made available on the author’s website upon publication.

## Consent

**The purpose of this academic research survey is to understand what American voters value in U.S. presidential candidates.**

The survey should last roughly 10 minutes. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. All of your answers will remain anonymous. There are no reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study.

This research is not intended to support or oppose any political candidate or office. The research has no affiliation with any political candidate or campaign, and has received no financial support from any political candidate or campaign.

If you have any questions, concerns, complaints, or suggestions about this research, please contact Prof. Jeffrey A. Friedman ([jeffrey.a.friedman@dartmouth.edu](mailto:jeffrey.a.friedman@dartmouth.edu); Dartmouth College, HB 6108, Hanover NH 03766). This research has been reviewed by the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at Dartmouth College. They can be reached at 603-646-6842 or by email: [cphs.tasks@dartmouth.edu](mailto:cphs.tasks@dartmouth.edu).

## Demographics

What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other

Please select Green from the following list:

- Blue
- Green
- Red
- Yellow

What is your 5-digit US ZIP code?

Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or some other political party?

- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent
- Other

Would you say that you are a...

- Strong Republican
- Weak Republican

Would you say that you are a...

- Strong Democrat
- Weak Democrat

Do you consider yourself to be closer to the Democratic Party or to the Republican Party?

- Democratic Party
- Republican Party
- Neither

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Less than High School
- High School / GED
- 2-year College Degree
- 4-year College Degree
- Graduate Degree

Do you consider yourself to be Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish?

- Yes
- No

Which one or more of the following would you say is your race?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other

What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75 - 84
- 85 or older

What is your total annual household income?

- Less than 30,000
- 30,000-39,000
- 40,000-49,999
- 50,000-59,999
- 60,000-69,999
- 70,000-79,999
- 80,000-89,999
- 90,000-99,999
- Over 100,000
- Prefer not to say

## Attribute instructions

### Section $\{e://Field/attnum\}$ of 3

This part of the survey asks **what kinds of issues typically influence your support for U.S. presidential candidates**. There are 10 questions in this portion of the survey.

## Attribute preferences

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to  $\{e://Field/ns\}$ ?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to **Aid to the Poor?**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to **Child Care?**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to **Law Enforcement?**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to **Education?**

- Extremely important
- Very important

- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to **Welfare Programs?**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to **Health Care?**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to **Environmental Protection?**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to **Science and Technology**?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

When you consider voting for presidential candidates, how important is it for you to know how well each candidate would handle issues related to **Social Security**?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

## Spending instructions

### Section $\{e://Field/budgetnum\}$ of 3

This part of the survey asks **whether you think U.S. government spending should be increased, decreased, or kept about the same in different policy areas.**

We are specifically asking for your opinions about spending by the federal government, not by the governments of individual cities or states. There are 10 questions in this portion of the survey.

## Spending preferences

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **#{e://Field/ns}** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased
- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **Aid to the Poor** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased
- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **Child Care** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased
- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **Law Enforcement** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased

- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **Education** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased
- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **Welfare Programs** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased
- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **Health Care** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased
- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **Environmental Protection** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased
- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **Science and Technology** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased
- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, would you like to see spending related to **Social Security** increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

- Greatly increased
- Moderately increased
- Kept about the same
- Moderately decreased
- Greatly decreased

## Comparison instructions

### Section 3 of 3

This part of this survey examines **how national security issues influence your support for U.S. presidential candidates.**

Each page of the survey will present two candidates. These candidates are hypothetical, and do not reflect specific people who are currently running for office. We will ask you to compare these candidates along two dimensions:

1. *How the candidate would change government spending on national security*  
 \${e://Field/binstruct}.

2. *How well the candidate would handle* \${e://Field/nsi} *more generally*  
 (Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor).

We will present 10 pairs of candidates, and ask you to say which candidate would be more likely to receive your vote for President of the United States.

\${e://Field/screen}

This is the last section of the survey. Thank you again for your time and input.

## Comparison 1

**[1 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would \${e://Field/row1.1a} \${e://Field/nsi}	Would \${e://Field/row1.1b} \${e://Field/nsi}
Would \${e://Field/row2.1a} \${e://Field/nsi}	Would \${e://Field/row2.1b} \${e://Field/nsi}

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

### Comparison 2

**[2 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would $\{e://Field/row1.2a\}$ $\{e://Field/nsi\}$	Would $\{e://Field/row1.2b\}$ $\{e://Field/nsi\}$
Would $\{e://Field/row2.2a\}$ $\{e://Field/nsi\}$	Would $\{e://Field/row2.2b\}$ $\{e://Field/nsi\}$

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

### Comparison 3

**[3 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would $\{e://Field/row1.3a\}$ $\{e://Field/ansi\}$	Would $\{e://Field/row1.3b\}$ $\{e://Field/ansi\}$
Would $\{e://Field/row2.3a\}$ $\{e://Field/ansi\}$	Would $\{e://Field/row2.3b\}$ $\{e://Field/ansi\}$

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

#### Comparison 4

**[4 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would $\{e://Field/row1.4a\}$ $\{e://Field/ansi\}$	Would $\{e://Field/row1.4b\}$ $\{e://Field/ansi\}$
Would $\{e://Field/row2.4a\}$ $\{e://Field/ansi\}$	Would $\{e://Field/row2.4b\}$ $\{e://Field/ansi\}$

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

## Comparison 5

**[5 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

## Comparison 6

**[6 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B

Would \${e://Field/row1.6a} \${e://Field/nsi}	Would \${e://Field/row1.6b} \${e://Field/nsi}
Would \${e://Field/row2.6a} \${e://Field/nsi}	Would \${e://Field/row2.6b} \${e://Field/nsi}

Candidate A

Candidate B

### Comparison 7

**[7 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would \${e://Field/row1.7a} \${e://Field/nsi}	Would \${e://Field/row1.7b} \${e://Field/nsi}
Would \${e://Field/row2.7a} \${e://Field/nsi}	Would \${e://Field/row2.7b} \${e://Field/nsi}

Candidate A

Candidate B

## Comparison 8

**[8 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

## Comparison 9

**[9 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Would <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

Would <input type="text"/>	Would <input type="text"/>
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- Candidate A
- Candidate B

**Comparison 10**

**[10 of 10] If you had to make a choice without knowing more, which of these two candidates do you think you would be more likely to vote for in a presidential election?**

Candidate A	Candidate B
Would <input type="text"/>	Would <input type="text"/>
Would <input type="text"/>	Would <input type="text"/>

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

