

## Online Appendices

### Extracting Wisdom from Experts and Small Crowds: Strategies for Improving Informant-based Measures of Political Concepts

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**ABSTRACT:** Social scientists have increasingly turned to expert judgments to generate data for difficult to measure concepts, but getting access to and response from highly expert informants can be costly and challenging. We examine how informant selection and post-survey response aggregation influences the validity and reliability of measures built from informant observations. First, drawing upon three surveys with parallel survey questions of US House candidate characteristics, we examine the tradeoff between expanding the size of local informant pool and the pool's level of expertise. We find that a "wisdom-of-crowds" effect trumps the benefits associated with the expertise of individual informants when the size of the rater pool is modestly increased. Second, we demonstrate that the benefits of expertise are best realized by pre-screening potential informants for expertise rather than post-survey weighting by expertise.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew Buttice began work on this project while at UC Davis and finished while at the California Research Bureau. The research results and conclusions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of the California Research Bureau or California State Library.

## Appendix 1: Items Used to Construct CCES Expertise Measure

Table A1: Items Used to Construct Expertise Measure

Item ID	Description
cc309a	Party of Government Knowledge - House of Representatives
cc309b	Party of Government Knowledge - Senate
cc309c	Party of Government Knowledge - State Senate
cc309d	Party of Government Knowledge - State Lower Chamber
cc310a	Party Recall and Name Recognition - Governor
cc310b	Party Recall and Name Recognition - Senator 1
cc310c	Party Recall and Name Recognition - Senator 2
cc310d	Party Recall and Name Recognition - House Incumbent
cc301_1	Media Use - Blog
cc301_2	Media Use - TV
cc301_3	Media Use - Newspaper
cc301_4	Media Use - Radio
cc417a_1	Political Activity - Attend Meetings
cc417a_2	Political Activity - Political Sign
cc417a_3	Political Activity - Work for Campaigns
cc417a_4	Political Activity - Donate Money
v244	Interest in News and Public Affairs

Variables from 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Studies, Ansolabehere, Stephen 2010. "CCES Common Content, 2010" <http://hdl.handle.net/1902.1/17705> V2

## Appendix 2: Screening Procedures for YouGov Panlists

Following is the list of questions used to screen respondents. Approximately 5% of the YouGov sample was allowed to fail one or more of these conditions to make up for a low N in 13 districts.

*Informed - dropped if > 1*

How well informed would you say that you are about government and politics in your state?

- <1> Extremely well informed
- <2> Well informed
- <3> About average
- <4> Not so well informed
- <5> Not well informed

*Incumbent Name Recognition- dropped if !=3*

What is the name of the current U.S. House incumbent in your district?

- <1> \$Senator1
- <2> \$Senator2
- <3> \$House Incumbent
- <4> \$Governor
- <5> \$Neighbor
- <6 > Not sure

*Confidence - dropped if >3*

How would you rate your confidence in your ability to answer questions about your congressional district?

- <1> Extremely high confidence
- <2> High confidence
- <3> So-so confidence
- <4> Low confidence
- <5> Extremely low confidence

*News Consumption - dropped if all three were < 4*

How often do you watch TV news about politics and public affairs?

- <1> Less than once a week
- <2> About once a week
- <3> Several times a week
- <4> Every day

How often do you read a newspaper about politics and public affairs?

- <1> Less than once a week

- <2> About once a week
- <3> Several times a week
- <4> Every day

How often do you consult Internet sources about politics and public affairs?

- <1> Less than once a week
- <2> About once a week
- <3> Several times a week
- <4> Every day