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The Impact of a Ballot Education Program on Arkansas Voters

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The Impact of a Ballot Education Program on Arkansas Voters

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by

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ABSTRACT

The University of Arkansas Division Of Agriculture's Public Policy Center has educated Arkansas voters about statewide ballot issues for 10 years. The ballot issue education program, was evaluated during the 2014 election cycle to determine the program's impact on voters. This descriptive study sought to describe program participants, to determine knowledge transfer of county agents, to describe knowledge acquisition of program participants, and to measure whether people who attended Cooperative Extension Service presentations made informed choices on Election Day. Researchers found that program participants were mostly older, educated, White women. There were increases in knowledge among participants who read fact sheets or attended a presentation. Ninety percent of the people who attended a presentation were confident in their choices on Election Day. The ballot education program was effective in increasing knowledge and assisting the participants in making informed choices.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When I graduated from the University of Arkansas in 2003 with my bachelor's degree, I never thought I would step foot in school again. I had a career waiting for me, and that was that. Fast forward 10 years, and I changed careers. My new supervisor, Tom Riley, encouraged me to go back to school and learn as much as I could about what was a completely new world to me. I am grateful to him and to my advisor, Dr. Donna Graham, for guiding me through the past three years. I also would like to acknowledge the advice and assistance of Amanda Philyaw Perez, a colleague who helped me navigate the world of research, and my committee members Dr. Jill Rucker and Dr. Stacey McCullough

DEDICATION

For my daughter, who had no understanding of homework but showed extreme patience for a toddler and preschooler who only wanted her mama to play and keep her company as she fell asleep at night. I can come play now and keep you company. And for my grandmother, who said I could do anything because I was a Netterstrom.

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INTRODUCTION

Need for the Study

High profile candidate races, such as the campaign for the next governor or president, often overshadow state ballot issues on Election Day because of the absence of media attention, party cues, and because of low voter interest until late in a campaign (Magleby, 1984). Less aware voters may not develop firm opinions on ballot issues until the final days of a campaign, if they develop an opinion at all (Magleby, 1984). Arkansas has 1.6 million voters, many of whom routinely *undervote*, or do not respond, to state ballot questions that ask for voter approval of new state laws or changes to existing laws (Arkansas Secretary of State, n.d.). Uninformed voters are risk adverse and are more likely to vote *no* on a ballot issue when they do not possess enough information (Schumacher, 1932; Gerber and Lupia, 1995).

In lower-level elections, such as state ballot measures, voter opinions are more volatile than presidential elections (Bowler & Donovan, 1994). In comparing candidate contests to ballot issue elections, Magleby (1989) concluded that voters on propositions are "less sure of their voting intentions, less knowledgeable about proposition contests, and probably more susceptible to campaign appeals" (p. 110-111). Study after study of ballot measure elections in California have shown that citizens who possess higher levels of education are more likely to be aware of ballot measures than citizens who have completed fewer years of schooling (Smith & Tolbert, 2004). The potential impact of this finding is voters who are less educated may not develop firm opinions until the final days of a campaign. Bowler and Donovan (1994) concluded after their research into information and opinion change on ballot issues that "voters need information to be aware of propositions, and they need to be aware of propositions to have opinions. Put differently, information mobilizes awareness, which is a prerequisite for opinion" (Bowler &

Donovan, 1994, p.420). In a Spring 2006 Arkansas Omnibus Survey, participants were asked where they looked for information to help them decide how to vote on state ballot initiatives (Survey Research Center, 2006). Of the 630 survey participants, 90 people, or 14.2% reported receiving information on ballot issues from the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service, which provides researched-based information on Arkansas ballot issues.

Previous research also has established that older voters are more likely to vote than younger voters (Tolbert, McNeal & Smith, 2003), as are adults who are strongly aligned with a political party or have more education and income (Bowler and Donovan, 1998). In her 2003 study, Tolbert found that ballot initiatives attracted voters to the polls during midterms and non-competitive presidential elections. Data from the 1996 election reviewed by Tolbert and Smith suggested that people who lived in states with ballot initiatives had greater political knowledge than voters in states without initiatives because of increased campaign activity and the pairing of candidates and policies on the ballot, which led to being more politically involved (Smith and Tolbert, 2004; Tolbert, Bowen, and Donovan 2009). These studies taken together give the political science field knowledge about what attracts people to the polls, but the studies have not looked at whether those voters made informed choices or whether they were confident in their decisions. Much of the research has focused on a single issue, disregarding that the traditional ballot usually features several ballot questions.

Article 5, Section 1 of the Arkansas Constitution provides a process by which voters can propose statewide legislative measures or acts and statewide amendments to the Constitution. (Arkansas Secretary of State, 2013). For a measure to be put on the ballot, a petition for a new state law must contain the signatures of registered voters in the amount of eight percent of the

total number of votes cast for governor in the last general election. A petition for a constitutional amendment must contain the signatures of registered voters in the amount of 10% of the total number of votes cast for governor in the last general election. There are no limits to how many ballot measures can be placed on the ballot by the public, but Arkansas legislators can refer only up to three ballot measures every General Election.

Statement of Problem

Arkansas is one of 18 states in which citizens have the right to refer proposed constitutional amendments and one of 21 states where citizens can refer laws to the voters for approval or rejection (Initiative & Referendum in the U.S., n.d.). The legislature also has the authority to refer up to three constitutional amendments to the voters. Some states require voters be mailed information guides (National Conference of State Legislators, 2002). Arkansas law does not require any education on ballot measures by the state.

Realizing there was a need for education, the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture established the Public Policy Center in 2004 to provide research-based, nonpartisan analyses and evaluation of public policy issues such as proposed state ballot issues (University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, 2012). The Public Policy Center's ballot education program offered through the Cooperative Extension Service includes multiple methods to educate the public on ballot measures. Figure 1 illustrates the various educational components of the ballot education program.

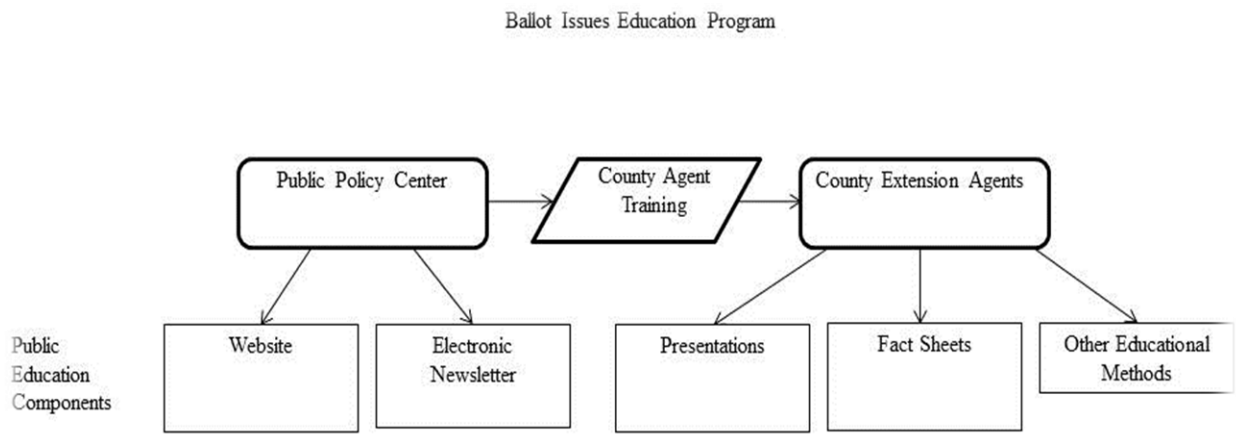

Figure 1. University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Ballot Issue Education Program Components

The Public Policy Center staff is located with the Division of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service state headquarters in Little Rock. The Cooperative Extension Service is a non-formal educational organization that has a presence in every state (Seevers & Graham, 2012). The Extension Service was established in 1914 through the federal Smith-Lever Act, and has been publicly funded and associated with land-grant universities in each state ever since. Extension's mission is to enable people to improve their lives and communities through the application of university-based research. Extension employees use a knowledge-transfer model in which knowledge from the land-grant university is disseminated from campus out to people in the state. The county agent takes information from the researcher and relays it to their clients in their communities (Seevers & Graham, 2012). The ballot issue education program follows this model. County agents are ultimately responsible for determining the level and mix of ballot education outreach for their respective counties, and for implementing the program at the local level (University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Public Policy Center, 2004).

The Public Policy Center publishes fact sheets on each statewide ballot issue, which are distributed to all 75 county offices of the Cooperative Extension Service (University of Arkansas

Division of Agriculture Public Policy Center, 2004). The Public Policy Center also creates a ballot issue education PowerPoint presentation for county agents to use to educate people about proposed ballot measures. In addition to those materials, county agents receive an electronic newsletter every month discussing the latest information available on ballot issues.

By supporting ballot initiative and referendum education, Public Policy Center staff members strive to increase citizen knowledge, awareness and understanding while enhancing public participation in decisions regarding public issues (University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, 2012). After the 2005 ballot issue education program, the Public Policy Center contracted with the University of Arkansas Survey Research Center to include questions about the program in its annual Arkansas Omnibus Survey. In the Spring 2006 Arkansas Omnibus Survey, 29% of respondents said they were aware the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Extension Service provided fact sheets and educational programs that explain statewide ballot issues (Survey Research Center, 2006). Although, the Omnibus Survey collected demographics about all respondents, it did not determine demographics of the people who used ballot issue education materials or attended county agent presentations.

The Public Policy Center planned to include questions about its ballot issues education program every five years as part of the Arkansas Omnibus Survey. However, the survey is no longer conducted and no formal statewide evaluation has been conducted since 2006. Public Policy Center staff knew anecdotally county clerks, journalists and the general public turn to the Center at election time for unbiased information on proposed state laws and constitutional amendments. But the program's claims of creating awareness and understanding of ballot measures had never been comprehensively evaluated with program participants.

There was limited research on Arkansas voters and the effects of ballot issue education, as much of the research in this field has been conducted in California. There was a need to investigate whether the ballot education program helped inform Arkansas voters and who was taking advantage of the Cooperative Extension Service's ballot education program. Additionally, as part of a partially tax-payer funded agency, it is important that Cooperative Extension Service programs be evaluated to demonstrate private and public value. Each fall, county agents are required to submit impact statements on their agriculture, family and consumer science, 4-H and community and economic development programs. Many of the 75 counties used the 2012 ballot issue program for their community and economic development impact statement. Few, however, reported using an evaluation. Because the program is voluntary for county agents to deliver, there was a need to investigate county agents' awareness and involvement in the ballot issue education program.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the ballot education program in Arkansas. In order to accomplish this purpose, the following objectives were created:

1. To describe ballot issue program participants.
2. To determine county agents' perceived level of understanding of ballot issues before and after training.
3. To describe county agents' awareness and involvement in the ballot issue education program.
4. To describe program participants' perceived level of understanding of ballot issues.

5. To measure whether ballot program participants trust the Cooperative Extension Service to provide accurate and unbiased ballot issue information.
6. To measure whether ballot issue presentation participants made informed choices on ballot questions.

Key Terms

Ballot issue education presentation: A PowerPoint presentation prepared by Public Policy Center staff for county agents to deliver to the public. Also referred to as "PowerPoint" and "ballot measure education presentation" in this study. (University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Public Policy Center, 2004).

Ballot issue education program: An educational program about Arkansas' ballot measures that was developed by Public Policy Center staff. The program includes the distribution of ballot measure fact sheets and a series of newsletters, a PowerPoint presentation by county agents, and the training of county agents to deliver the PowerPoint presentation to the public. Fact sheets are printed and distributed to every Cooperative Extension Service office in Arkansas and are made available on the Public Policy Center's website. Otherwise called, "the program." (University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Public Policy Center, 2004).

Ballot issue presentation participants: People who only attended a county agent presentation on the 2014 ballot issues. Attendees took part in a survey about the county agent's presentation.

Ballot issue program participants: People who received educational material from the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service about the 2014 ballot issues, regardless of delivery method. Participants received a hard copy of the

fact sheet, or read the fact sheet on the Public Policy Center's website, or received the Public Policy Center's ballot measure newsletter, or attended a county agent presentation.

Ballot measure: A proposed piece of legislation that people can vote on (Initiative & Referendum Institute, n.d. Retrieved from http://www.iandrinstitute.org/New%20IRI%20Website%20Info/Drop%20Down%20Boxes/Requirements/A%20Comparison%20of%20Statewide%20I&R%20Processes.pdf). In this study, the term referred to proposed constitutional amendments and acts initiated by the public and the legislature. Ballot measures are also referred to as a "ballot initiative," "ballot issue" or "ballot question" in this study as the terms are interchangeable.

Ballot title: The official short summary of a ballot measure that appears on the ballot (Ballotpedia, n.d. Retrieved from http://ballotpedia.org/Ballot_title).

Direct democracy: A form of government in which political decisions are made directly by the citizens. (Direct Democracy in Action, n.d. Oregon State Bar. Retrieved from https://www.osbar.org/public/vote/InitiativeProcess.htm).

Fact Sheets: A sheet of paper giving useful information about a particular issue, especially one distributed for publicity purposes. (Fact Sheet. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/fact-sheet).

Informed choice: A person's choice that is based on relevant knowledge, is consistent with the decision-maker's values and behaviorally implemented. (Marteau, Dormandy & Michie, 2001). Values are typically measured through questions related to attitude.

Newsletter: The Public Policy Center's digital newsletter about Arkansas' ballot measures. The newsletter includes current events, web links to news stories, and web links to ballot

measure supporters and opponents. (State Ballot Issues in Arkansas. (2015). Retrieved from http://uaex.edu/business-communities/voter-education/state-ballot-issues.aspx).

Undervote: A ballot that has been cast but shows no legally valid selection in a given race or referendum. (Undervote. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.thefreedictionary.com/undervotes)

University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture: The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture consists of the Cooperative Extension Service and the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station. In this study, the terms "University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture," "Cooperative Extension Service" and "Extension" are used interchangeably. The Public Policy Center is a unit of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, and is housed within the Cooperative Extension Service headquarters.

Website: The Public Policy Center's website, www.uaex.edu/ppc, which includes fact sheets about Arkansas' ballot measures.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made prior to and during the completion of this study:

1. County agents answered all survey questions honestly.
2. Ballot issue presentation participants willingly attended programs.
3. Ballot issue presentation participants were willing to be contacted after Election Day.
4. County agents presented the ballot issue education PowerPoint presentation as outlined by the researcher.

Limitations

Replication of this study is limited because of its dependence on Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service county agents to conduct ballot issue education presentations in their communities and to administer surveys to the people who attended the presentations.

Following University of Arkansas IRB Number 14-07-029 protocol as seen in Appendix K, program participants were informed they had the option to opt out of the survey while still attending the program. In an attempt to assuage program participant concerns, participants were provided with a written explanation of the study, how the data would be used, and a guarantee they would not be asked how they voted on an issue. This explanation doubled as our Human Subject Protection plan.

The study was conducted over one ballot issue election cycle during a midterm election in 2014. The PowerPoint presentation was not offered in every Arkansas county because the decision to do so resides with each individual county office.

Additionally, everyone who visited the Public Policy Center's website had the opportunity to participate in a survey about the ballot education program. Both surveys could have created a situation of self-selection bias, which occurs when survey respondents decide whether they participate in a survey (Olson, 2008). Survey respondents who choose to participate may not be a representative sample of the population because they were not randomly selected (Olson, 2008).

Generalizations should not be made beyond the participants assessed in this study. Results and conclusions of this study are specific to the population using Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service ballot issue education program.

Despite these limitations, this study provides the Public Policy Center with research needed for efforts to establish public and institutional value. Results will also help staff improve future

county agent trainings and program planning for the public. Findings also provide preliminary data for future studies that tackle Arkansas-based voter participation questions, such as why do certain Arkansas counties routinely have low turnout rates, and can the Cooperative Extension Service's program be used to increase voter participation in those counties? This study's data can also be used in future investigations of whether seminal ballot issue study findings from other states hold true for Arkansas voters.

Study Outline

This study includes five chapters. In Chapter 2, direct democracy's history will be explored and a literature review related to the project's theoretical framework will be conducted. Chapter 3 will review the researcher's methodology for the research project. Results will be discussed in-depth in Chapter 4, followed by the researcher's discussion and recommendations in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Adoption of Direct Democracy

Arkansas voters have had the right to propose new legislation through the ballot since 1910. The state's voters approved the adoption of the initiative process at a time when government reform was popular at the national level. Proponents of direct democracy, as the process of allowing the public to refer issues to the ballot is called, believed giving citizens the right to create state laws would generate more interest and involvement in governance. The idea of direct democracy was popular among normative theorists who believed the initiative process could "stimulate participation by energizing citizens with a sense of civic duty and political efficacy," (Smith & Tolbert, 2004, p. 33).

Progressives believed an interested public would limit the power of the legislature, political parties and agenda groups (Magleby, 1984). An eight-hour work day, child labor laws, direct election of United States senators and the end to poll taxes are all examples of early initiatives adopted across the country by states that adopted the direct democracy model (Smith & Tolbert, 2004). As the idea of direct democracy rose in popularity in the United States, presidential candidate Woodrow Wilson changed his stance on the issue and spoke in favor of the initiative process as it might help "drag things into the light, break down private understandings and force them to be public understandings" (Smith & Tolbert, 2004, p. 2).

Opponents of direct democracy in the country, and in Arkansas, thought the process would clutter up the ballot and confuse voters. The process in Arkansas would lead to radicalism and undercut legislators and the process of representative democracy (Thomas, 1933). While proponents saw direct democracy as a form of government by and for the people, critics saw it as a grassroots charade that would be influenced by special interests (Smith & Tolbert, 2004). The

two belief systems prevail today. In *Bowling Alone,* author Robert Putnam wrote on the collapse and revival of the American community that "political knowledge and interest in public affairs are critical preconditions for more active forms of involvement. If you don't know the rules of the game and the players and don't care about the outcome, you're unlikely to try playing yourself" (Smith & Tolbert, 2004, p. 54).

In their first time to vote on ballot measures, Arkansas voters in 1912 approved a law setting 60-day legislative sessions and a $6 a day salary for state legislators. Voters were upset that past legislative sessions had run long at 140 days and a cost of $200,000. Legislators had also passed unpopular laws and refused to pass other progressive laws the public thought necessary (Thomas, 1933).

Availability of Unbiased Information

In the United States, 15 states provide voters with pamphlets that list and explain proposed ballot measures, post information in public locations or publish analysis on ballot measures in newspapers (National Conference of State Legislators, 2002). Ark. Code § 7-9-113, Publication of Notice, requires the Secretary of State to publish the complete text of every measure, the measure's ballot title and popular name in a newspaper in each county two times before the election. The actual ballot contains only the ballot title and popular name. Voters have to interpret the ballot title and popular name for themselves.

Even in states with voter pamphlets, voters face a tough time deciding how they will vote on ballot measures because of the lack of party cues (Magleby, 1984). Political parties rarely take a stance on ballot measures as the issues may not have ties to a specific politician or party, so voters do not know if a ballot measure conforms to their political ideology without further investigation (Magleby, 1984).

Predictors of Voter Turnout

In addition to the lack of party cues and state-provided education on ballot measures, additional decision-making barriers include the personal characteristics of the individual voter. According to Magleby (1984), a person has several decisions to make before entering the voting booth. First, he or she must decide whether to go to the polls; second, whether to vote on a measure; and third, how to vote. Magleby and other researchers have determined the most important variables to whether a person votes are education, income, race and age (Magleby 1984, Smith & Tolbert 2004).

Most literature and research on the subject of ballot measure education has been conducted in California, a state with a more diverse population than Arkansas and has used the direct democracy process more frequently. The following information helps build a picture of potential Arkansas voters.

Education Levels

Education provides a voter with the skills to maneuver through procedural hurdles, the confidence to deal with complicated or abstract issues, the knowledge about politics, and instills a sense of civic duty (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). Bowler and Donovan (1994) and Magleby (1984) found education was a predictor of who was familiar with ballot measures.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 83.7% of Arkansas residents have a high school degree or equivalent, compared to 85% of the United States as a whole. Meanwhile, 20.1% of Arkansans have a college degree, compared to 28% of the country. Metropolitan areas of Arkansas have experienced more growth in number of people with college degrees, while rural areas fall behind. According to the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, Arkansas ranked 49th in the number of college degrees, just above West Virginia (Day, 2013). One in five Arkansans 25 or

older have at least a bachelor's degree, compared to one in eight in 1990, according to the newspaper article based on the U.S. Census changes over the years (Day, 2013).

Only Pulaski County, the county that is home to the state capital of Little Rock, reported more college degrees than the national average of 28%. Lee County in eastern Arkansas has the fewest number of college degrees in the state with 6.4% of residents 25 years and older holding a college degree. That percentage is equivalent to one in 16 adults having a four-year degree, which is lower than Census figures from 1990 when 7.4% of Lee County residents reported having a bachelor's degree.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, voting and registration rates tend to increase with education (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). In 2012, the voting rate for U.S. citizens with at least a bachelor's degree was 77.1% compared to 38.0% for those who did not have a high school diploma. In Arkansas, people with at least a bachelor's degree had a voting rate of 77.8%.

Income in Arkansas

According to Smith and Tolbert (2004), people with higher sources of income are more likely to receive political information from a variety of sources, thereby weakening the impact of any one source. Voters with higher incomes tend to seek out additional information or information sources that provide more in-depth information when compared to voters with less income. They found that the more affluent and educated were more likely to discuss politics, which they see as a precursor for interest in government and policy. Their studies built upon previous research that showed a person's income influenced whether that person decided to vote (Smith and Tolbert, 2004).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Arkansas' median household income between 2009 and 2013 was $40,531 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). The state ranked 48th in median

income in the nation, with only West Virginia and Mississippi households earning less per year. Of Arkansas' 2.9 million residents, 18.7% fell below the poverty line.

Race in Arkansas

Another social aspect impacting voter turnout is race. According to Hill and Leighley (1999), race is associated with voter mobilization or a higher barrier for participation. The researchers found that states with higher racial diversity had significantly lower turnout rates.

Arkansas is predominantly populated by Caucasian residents with 73.7% of the population reporting being White. African Americans represent 15.6% of the state's population. Hispanic residents accounted for 6.9% of the state's population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).

Voting rates typically vary by race and Hispanic origin (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). During the 2012 election, which is the last data available from the U.S. Census Bureau, the voting rate for Non-Hispanic Whites was 64.1%, while it was 66.2% for Blacks and 48.0% for Hispanics. Blacks and Hispanics living in Arkansas had voting rates lower than the national average for their group. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

According to the Current Population Survey, Voting and Registration Supplement (U.S. Census, 2012), 19.0% of the state's Hispanic population voted; 3.0% who were registered did not vote, while 61.0% were not registered. For Whites, 56.0% voted; 12.0% who were registered did not vote, and 21.0% were not registered. For Blacks, 49.0% voted; 12.0% who were registered did not vote, and 30.0% were not registered.

Age

In their research on the effect of direct democracy on political participation and knowledge, Tolbert, McNeal and Smith (2003) found that older people were more likely to vote

in elections than younger ones. Their finding was consistent with previous research done by Bowler and Donovan (1998).

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 2.2 million of Arkansas' 2.9 million residents, or 76.9 % of residents, were 18 and older. About 15.4% of the state's population was 65 years old or older, which is slightly higher than the rest of American communities.

Voting and registration rates tend to increase with age (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). In 2012, only 41.2% of 18-to-24-year-olds voted, compared with 72% of those 65 and older. In Arkansas during 2012, 24.8% of 18-to-24-year olds voted, a rate lower than the national average. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Every Public Policy Center fact sheet on ballot issues ends with the same statement: "We live in a democratic society where voting is a privilege of citizenship. Democracy works best when informed citizens exercise their voting privilege" (University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Public Policy Center, 2012).

The above statement reflects a normative democratic theory that has influenced the framework of this study. The Cooperative Extension Service's program and this related study are based on a belief of what voters *should do* for the good of society in response to access of information.

Based on these constructs of social responsibility and participatory democracy, the researcher was interested in knowing who was reached by the ballot issue education program and whether programming can be altered to reach a broader audience based on the idea that people would vote if they knew more about an issue.

The Cooperative Extension Service has embraced participatory democracy, or the promotion of inclusion, empowerment and political involvement of the state's citizens, with the creation of the ballot issue education program.

Normative Democratic Theory

Normative democratic theory is an offshoot of normative theory, which in ethical philosophy includes the "formulation of moral rules that have direct implications for what human actions, institutions and ways of life should be like" (Encyclopedia of Britannica, n.d.). Normative theory explores how people should make decisions, and is used in some realms as a predictive theory or descriptive theory (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2014). In its root word, "normative," means "formal establishing, relating to, or deriving from a standard norm, esp. of behavior," (Normative, 2002, p.796). Normative theory tells how things ought to be, not what is.

Normative democratic theory is a philosophical application of democracy as it is an attempt to describe when and why democracy is "morally desirable" and how a democratic institution should operate (Christiano, 2006). This theory assumes a model of voting behavior in which voters have certain attributes, such as an interest in and knowledge of politics (Berelson, 1952). Democracy itself can modestly be described as "a method of group decision making characterized by a kind of equality among the participants at an essential stage of the collective decision making" (Christiano, 2006, Democracy Defined section, para. 3).

Many people believe they should vote, even if they do not feel strongly about the outcome (Chapman, 2014). Many theorists believe that for democracy to work, people must follow a shared plan for collective self-rule. In her working paper, Chapman (2014) examines the idea of "folk theory of voting" and states "Citizens in contemporary democracies have a duty to

vote because of the particular role that voting plays in the plan for modern democracy" (Chapman, 2014, p. 3).

This was not always the case. The United States' founding fathers limited direct participation in politics. The House of Representatives was the only elected body early on in United States history. Two hundred years later, however, direct government became more popular in the form of direct primaries for senators and the first ballot measures proposals from the public. The Cooperative Extension Service, which recently celebrated its 100th anniversary, was also created during the height of the Progressive Era. Reformers at this time believed the rule of law would best be achieved through the educated public's involvement in government (Magleby, 1984).

The belief that the public should want to be informed about elections to be able to participate can be traced back to the Progressive Era when, according to Magleby (1984), reformers believed individual citizens desired to exercise greater control over government and were capable of determining the public good. Since the 1920s, citizen participation has increased through the creation of primaries, expanded the right to vote to women and minorities, and requiring public participation and comments in rulemaking at the federal and state levels.

When discussing the pros and cons of direct democracy and what progressives had intended, Magleby (1984) said ballot measures were a "means to restore citizens to interested, active, and involved roles, because when voters have a chance to really express an opinion, they will become educated on issues and participate in elections" (p. 28).

Voting is based on a philosophy of governing, and philosophers differ on the importance of voting. Jason Brennan, an assistant professor of ethics at Georgetown University, wrote in his 2012 book *The Ethics of Voting* that most people believe there is a civic duty to vote. He

disagreed with the notion, but offered a caveat. Voters have a duty, he wrote, to make an informed decision. Otherwise, he thought it dangerous for ill-informed citizens to vote.

> Citizens typically have no duty to vote. However, if citizens do vote, they must vote well, on the basis of sound evidence for what is likely to promote the common good. They must make sure their reasons for voting as they do are morally and epistemically justified (p. 4).

Similar to Brennan, Bowler and Donovan (1998) say the "ideal" voter would be fully informed, or would at least deliberate "prospectively" before making choices on the issue of the day. Ballot issues in themselves are seen to be a cure to voter apathy, that they would stimulate participation by "energizing citizens with a sense of civic duty and political efficacy (Smith and Tolbert, 2004, p. 33). Faced with ballot measures, constitutional scholar Bruce Ackerman has said apathy would "give way to concern, ignorance to information, selfishness to serious reflection on the country's future" (Ackerman, 1993, p. 287).

In their review of political knowledge and political interest, researchers Smith and Tolbert found political discussion was a precursor to an interest in government and policy in the 1996 election. They found exposure to ballot issues increased the frequency of political discussion and citizens were more likely to discuss politics when they were given more opportunities to vote directly on policy issues (Smith and Tolbert, 2004).

There are critics of the normative democratic theory who say not everyone has equal access or even interest in ballot issue information materials. The concept of "public opinion" itself became popular only in the eighteenth century when Europe experienced a growth in literacy, an increase in the merchant class, and circulation of printed information due to the printing press (Price, 2007). In *Bowling Alone*, Putnam agrees with critics who say most signers

of ballot petitions do not read what they're signing and that direct participation has not galvanized the masses to participate in voting (Putnam, 2000).

The Cooperative Extension Service, however, has a history of providing information to all socioeconomic classes and communities with the goal of helping people to help themselves. The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture has Cooperative Extension Service offices in every Arkansas county. It provides ballot issue information in print publications and online, and distributes information throughout communities at libraries, churches, post offices, senior centers and county courthouses. The National Public Policy Education Committee of Cooperative Extension Service has identified education, inclusion, civil dialogue, innovative solutions and improvement of communication and decision-making skills as the core values that should guide public policy education programming (University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, 2003).

Theory of Reasoned Action

The theory of reasoned action goes hand-in-hand with normative democracy because of the role intentions and environment play in decision making. The Theory of Reasoned Action is based on the concept that most behaviors are under direct control by the individual and, therefore, the best predictor of behavior is the person's intention or decision to perform it (Pettersen, 2008.). The developers of the theory, Ajzen and Fishbein, have suggested a person's intention to behave a certain way results from choosing among the available alternatives (Cervera, 1993). The theory looks at a person's behaviors, subjective norms and behavioral intentions to predict whether a person carries out the intended behavior (Lezin, n.d.) as shown in Figure 2. A person's beliefs, influence of environment and attitudes toward those two variables can shape a person's intentions and ultimately actions (Lezin, n.d.).

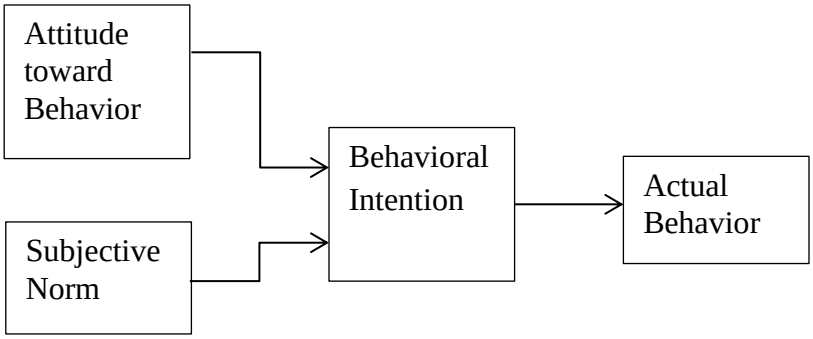

Figure 2. Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)

Magleby and other researchers have determined the most important variables to whether a person votes are education, income, race and age. Applying the Theory of Reasoned Action to decision making in the voting booth, a voter's behavior, environment and attitude can affect their choice on Election Day. In this study, the Theory of Reasoned Action serves as a basis to measure whether people who attended ballot issue education presentations made informed choices on Election Day.

The debate over direct democracy and its impact on policy making typically converges around whether voters can make informed decisions about the complex matters before them (Nicholson, 2003). In order to make an informed choice or decision about a ballot measure, a voter must have some basic awareness of the proposition (Nicholson, 2003; Bowler and Donovan, 1998). People often have incomplete information, but Lupia and McCubbins (1998) contend people can make a reasoned choice based on knowledge and the ability to predict consequences of actions. Competent voting, according to Gerber and Lupia (1999), is the ability to vote the way one would if a voter had all available information about the consequence of the proposition. A decisive voter chooses the alternative whose post-election policy provides the highest expected utility (Gerber and Lupia, 1995). Certain cues, such as who supports or opposes a ballot measure, can influence voter understanding about the consequences of their actions

(Gerber and Lupia, 1995). The two have created a model of voting in ballot issue elections that considers a voter's rationalization process between the status quo and the proposed alternative. If the voter has enough information about the proposed alternative, and determines the alternative is closer to his or her ideal than the status quo, then he or she will vote yes. If the alternative is not close to his or her ideal, the voter will vote no (Gerber and Lupia, 1995, Skovron, 2011).

Influenced by Normative Democratic Theory, the researcher wanted to gauge people's interests in following ballot issue news, and how much they already knew about the issue before receiving ballot issue information from the Cooperative Extension Service. This theory guided the study and the survey instruments. The Theory of Reasoned Action was an additional theory used by the researcher to help determine whether people made informed choices on Election Day, which is the desired outcome of the ballot issue education program.

CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY

Restatement of the Problem

Arkansas is one of 18 states in which citizens have the right to refer proposed constitutional amendments and one of 21 states where citizens can refer laws to the voters for approval or rejection (Initiative & Referendum in the U.S., n.d.). The legislature also has the authority to refer three issues to the voters. There is no public education requirement for ballot issues beyond the publication of ballot titles. Realizing there was a void in public understanding of proposed laws and constitutional amendments, the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture established the Public Policy Center in 2004 to provide research-based education on proposed ballot measures and their potential impact. By supporting ballot initiative and referendum education, Public Policy Center staff members strive to increase citizen knowledge, awareness and understanding while enhancing public participation in decisions regarding public issues (University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, 2012).

Public Policy Center staff knew anecdotally that county clerks, journalists and the general public turn to the Center at election time for unbiased information on proposed state laws and constitutional amendments. But the program's claims of creating awareness and understanding of ballot measures had never been formally evaluated. Nor did Public Policy Center staff know whether its ballot education program created informed voters.

Arkansas voters in 2014 had access to five fact sheets from the Cooperative Extension Service, ranging in length from four pages to six pages, for a total of 24 pages. The five ballot issues that appeared on the 2014 Arkansas ballot were:

Issue 1 – An Amendment Empowering The General Assembly To Provide For Legislative Committee Review And Approval Of State Agencies' Administrative Rules.

Issue 2 – An Amendment Allowing More Time To Gather Signatures On A State-Wide Initiative Or Referendum Petition Only If The Petition As Originally Filed Contained At Least 75% Of The Valid Signatures Required.

Issue 3 - An Amendment Regulating Contributions to Candidates for State or Local Office, Barring Gifts from Lobbyists to Certain State Officials, Providing for Setting Salaries of Certain State Officials, and Setting Term Limits for Members of the General Assembly.

Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment.

Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage.

Restatement of the Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the ballot education program in Arkansas.

Restatement of Objectives

This study was guided by the literature review and the following objectives:

1. To describe ballot issue program participants.
2. To determine county agents' perceived level of understanding of ballot issues before and after training.
3. To describe county agents' awareness and involvement in the ballot issue education program.
4. To describe program participants' perceived level of understanding of ballot issues.
5. To measure whether ballot issue program participants trust the Cooperative Extension Service as an accurate and unbiased information source on ballot issues.

6. To measure whether ballot issue presentation participants made informed choices on ballot questions.

Design of Study

To evaluate the Public Policy Center's ballot issue education program, the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative analysis, or a mixed method research design to collect and analyze data from the 2014 election cycle that began in August and ended in November 2014. The researcher used the concurrent embedded strategy to guide her through the study as multiple layers of evaluation were involved. Concurrent embedded strategy is a research design used, according to Creswell (2009), to "assess different research questions or different levels in an organization" (p. 214). The method, sometimes called Concurrent Nested Design, is characterized by the collection of qualitative and quantitative data being collected simultaneously with one method being primary and the second being secondary, although equally important. The data provides "two different pictures that provide an overall composite assessment of the problem" (Creswell, 2009, p. 214). The analysis phase mixes both data, though the qualitative data is usually used to help explain or better understand the quantitative data (Wurtz, n.d.). This design description best describes the evaluation process of the Cooperative Extension Service's ballot issue education program. In this study, the researcher used qualitative methods primarily and quantitative methods secondary.

This study required multiple evaluations and different sample sizes because the study's objectives focused on different audiences and Cooperative Extension Service employees delivered the information in various ways. Table 1 illustrates the different audiences and corresponding evaluations.

Table 1

Elements of the Ballot Issue Education Program Evaluation

Objective	Audience	Educational Method	Evaluation Source
Objectives 1, 4, 5	Public	Fact Sheets Newsletters Website Presentation	Fact Sheet survey Newsletter survey Website survey Presentation survey
Objective 2	County Agents	Online Training Session	Pre-Training Survey Post-Training Survey
Objective 3	County Agents	Presentation Fact Sheets Newsletters Website	Pre-Election Survey Post-Election Survey
Objective 6	Public	Presentation	Presentation survey Follow up survey

Program Process and Delivery

The ballot education program begins the summer before the election with the training of county agents. At the same time, the Public Policy Center staff finalize fact sheets on ballot issues. Fact sheets are printed on each statewide ballot measure one to two months ahead of the election, and only then does the ballot education program begin for the public, with presentations at the county level and distribution of printed fact sheets. The fact sheet, which ranges from four to eight pages, includes the ballot measure's title, who requested the issue be added to the ballot, and what would happen if the ballot measure passed. The fact sheet also addresses basic questions a voter may have about the issue. The same information is used to create a 45-minute PowerPoint presentation for county agents to use in educating the public at meetings they host or

attend. The fact sheets and the PowerPoint presentation are created using common words most people would understand.

Before the fact sheets and PowerPoint are released to the public, Public Policy Center staff host training sessions for county agents to learn about the measures and why they are on the ballot. In these training sessions, staff also talks about the importance of agents staying neutral on ballot measures. The trainings are a time for county agents to ask questions about the measures. The training sessions are voluntary because delivering the program itself is voluntary.

Every county receives at least 100 copies of each fact sheet with additional copies on demand, if available. The fact sheets are also posted on the Public Policy Center's website and shared through a monthly newsletter on Arkansas ballot issues. A survey regarding the fact sheets was created and a website link to survey online was included on all fact sheets, which were made available starting in October 2014.

County agents have the option to host their own educational meeting but typically present ballot information at an event they are invited to speak at, such as a Cattlemen's Association or Lion's Club meeting. Agents also share information in Facebook posts, county newsletters and by sending press releases to their local media.

Since December 2012, county agents and general public subscribers have received monthly updates on the state's ballot process in the form of an e-mail newsletter. The newsletter includes current events, internet links to news articles on ballot measures, and internet links to the full text of ballot measures referred by state legislators. This newsletter was created to provide a year-round connection to ballot information and to the Public Policy Center as a source of unbiased information.

To describe program participants and their level of understanding of the ballot issues, the researcher created a survey for four major program delivery methods – public presentations, fact sheets, newsletters and the Cooperative Extension Service's website. Each survey had a probing question about the trust of the educational information of the ballot issues provided by the Cooperative Extension Service. To measure whether people who attended presentations made informed choices based on the information received at that program, presentation attendees were surveyed by telephone after the election.

To determine county agents' level of understanding of ballot issues presented by Public Policy Center staff and the involvement of agents in the ballot education program, the researcher created surveys for agents to take before and after education attempts, and another survey to take after the election.

Each survey informed participants that the survey was voluntary, and their information would be kept secure and confidential and destroyed after the study was completed. Only the ballot presentation survey requested a name and phone number for the follow-up survey.

Subjects

This study involved multiple audiences: people who attended ballot presentations, people who read fact sheets, people who came across the Cooperative Extension Service's website, people who received the ballot issue newsletter and county agents who attended trainings. Sample sizes were different for each contact because of the variety of audiences.

Sample Size

County Agents

Two types of sampling were used with the county agents. A census population was used to administer the pre-election and post-election survey to determine county agents involvement

in the ballot education program. As of July 2014, the Cooperative Extension Service's website listed 188 county agents working in the 75 counties (Arkansas Extension Office List – By County, 2014). A second part of the study used convenience sampling of Arkansas Cooperative Extension agents who completed the training provided by the Public Policy Center staff.

Fact Sheet

The researcher used convenience sampling for this part of the study because fact sheets were distributed statewide and posted on the Cooperative Extension Service's website. County agents typically distribute copies at libraries and county administration buildings. The fact sheets were also shared with Arkansas media outlets to reprint or rebroadcast.

Web site

The researcher used convenience sampling for web site surveys because the website was available to anyone at all times of the day. Ballot issue information was posted on the Public Policy Center website at www.uaex.edu/ppc.

Newsletter

This part of the study also used convenience sampling because the newsletter was shared through social media in addition to being directly e-mailed to known subscribers. As of July 2014, the newsletter had 1,974 subscribers, which included every University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture employee as of June 2014 (the last time the Division of Agriculture's email address list was updated) and an unknown number of the general public. Public Policy Center staff frequently advertised the newsletter subscription through its Facebook page and in public meetings because the software vendor prohibits adding e-mail addresses without permission. The newsletter also included a link for nonsubscribers to click on to join the subscription list.

Ballot Issue Presentation Participants

A census survey was used for this portion of the study. The sample size was all adults 18 or older who attended a ballot education presentation program during the 2014 election cycle, beginning in October 2014 and ending in November 2014. Presentations were open to the public. County agents typically advertise presentations through press releases to their local media, through e-mails and letters to producers or other contact lists, and by passing out fliers.

Instrumentation Development & Data Collection Procedures

This study focused on multiple audiences and required different surveys for each potential audience. Instrument development and implementation for each survey used for the fact sheet, newsletter, and website included demographic questions, such as income, education and race of the participants, plus certain questions worded to match the delivery method and objectives of the study. Cooperative Extension Service staff and county agents reviewed the surveys for comprehension and for potential errors. Adjustments were made to surveys based on their feedback. (See Appendices A- C.)

This study used Qualtrics, an online survey program, to administer and analyze the survey questions. Paper surveys and results from a telephone survey were also entered by the researcher into Qualtrics.

Ballot Issue Presentation Participant Surveys

Presentation attendees received a retrospective post-then-pre design survey at the ballot measure education presentation they attended. Retrospective surveys serve several purposes. They ensure complete data sets are collected, and decrease "response-shift bias" that occurs in pre/post surveys where participants overestimate their behaviors on the pre-survey and

underestimate their behaviors on the post-survey because of a change in frame of reference (Raidl et al., 2004).

The retrospective design was chosen for this study because county agents have a limited amount of time with program participants, and it was not feasible to use that time with traditional pre and post surveys. This survey used structured open-ended questions to gather nominal data, such as education and income level, and open-ended questions, such as what information outlets participants turn to for information, whether they intended to vote, how much they knew about each ballot issue before and after the presentation, and whether they found the information to be neutral or biased. The survey included Likert scales to determine the level of trust participants had in Cooperative Extension Service providing accurate and unbiased information and how likely they would be to seek out its information in future years. Agents distributed the paper survey at the end of their presentation.

Sources for these questions included a 2006 statewide Omnibus survey and questions posed in past ballot measure education presentation evaluations made available for county agent use. Participants were instructed to create an identification number using their birth month, birth date and first two letters of their county. For example, a person born on July 4 who underwent the program in Faulkner County would use 0704FA as an identification number. This identification number helped the researcher coordinate and match pre-and-post election survey responses.

A circular gauge design, originally developed by Cooperation Extension Service specialists to assess where participants were in the issue cycle for ballots (Long & Mark, 1995), was reworked into post-then-pre design questions using Likert scales and used for the follow up survey of program participants. In addition to gauging participants' level of understanding before

and after a presentation, the researcher included questions that would help establish in the follow up survey whether participants made an informed choice.

An existing instrument for determining informed choice could not be found in social science research. The researcher instead adapted an instrument framework known as the multi-dimensional measure of informed choice (MMIC), which is used by the medical field in patient education and counseling to determine whether clinical trial participants made an informed choice to be involved in a study and undergo associated medical tests.

In creating the model's definition of informed choice, Marteau, Dormandy & Michie (2001) adapted O'Connor & O'Brien-Pallas' (1989) definition of effective decision-making, which was "a decision based on relevant knowledge, consistent with the decision-maker's values and behaviorally implemented"(p. 486). Marteau, Dormandy & Michie (2001) defined "value" as a "basic attitude towards broad modes of conduct (e.g. courage, honesty and friendship) or certain end-states of existence (e.g. equality, freedom, salvation, and self-fulfillment)" (p. 102). Marteau, the director of behavior and health research at the University of Cambridge, reasoned that attitudes reflect values and that measurement of attitude towards an activity, such as undergoing a screening test, would encompass values. To assess a person's value, Marteau, Dormandy & Michie assessed attitude. Responses to questions regarding attitude could be used to classify whether a person had a positive or negative attitude.

The measurement had not been used before for ballot issue presentation evaluations, but had been validated in other medical-related studies (Michie, Dormandy & Marteau, 2002, 2003; Jaques, Sheffield & Halliday, 2005). During a validation study, Michie, Dormandy & Marteau (2002) discussed the tool's reliability and found that the scales of knowledge and attitude were internally consistent (alpha values of 0.68 and 0.78, respectively). For construct validity, they

reported an r value of 0.04 when reviewing possible association between informed choice and levels of anxiety.

The multi-dimensional measure of informed choice uses knowledge, attitude and behavior, or action, as a three-pronged evaluation of decision making as shown in Figure 3. This measure was used to help determine whether people who attended ballot measure education presentations felt they made informed choices at the voting booth.

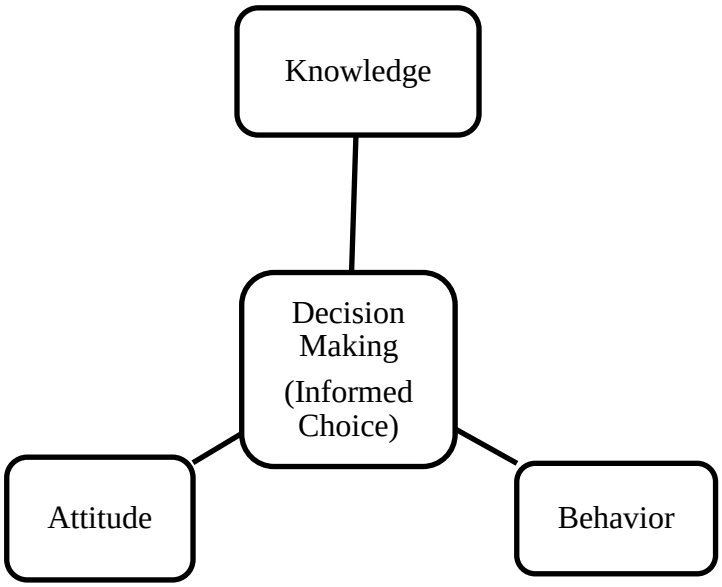

Figure 3. Components of the Multi-Measure Dimension of Informed Choice

The researcher followed up with participants with a survey that asked participants about action – whether they voted. Attendees were contacted via telephone to assess their Election Day confidence in their understanding of the ballot issues, and whether they had enough information to make an informed decision for each ballot measure. They were also asked again about how much trust they had in the Cooperative Extension Service to provide accurate and unbiased information and whether they would seek its ballot education materials in future years. The caller

reiterated that their participation was voluntary and that they were being contacted because they attended a ballot measure education presentation earlier in the year. They did not receive any compensation for their participation.

The number of telephone surveys was based on the number of people who provided their contact information on the survey administered after the ballot measure education presentation. Program attendees were asked if they voted. In addition to being asked whether they voted, program attendees were asked if they skipped any ballot questions and whether they sought any additional ballot information after the program. The researcher collected the data through Qualtrics. (See Appendix D-F).

County Agent Surveys

Surveys administered to county agents attempted to determine their level of understanding of ballot issues. Basic questions were also included to gauge agents' familiarity with the ballot issue education program prior to training sessions on the 2014 ballot issues. (See Appendices G-J).

Each survey template was reviewed beforehand by faculty of the Division of Agriculture's Community and Economic Development, which shares responsibility for the ballot issue program and staff with the Public Policy Center. Staff members have experience in developing evaluations for other programs, and reviewed the questions for bias and validity concerns. They were asked to ensure that questions were clear and direct; about a single issue; and free of jargon.

County agents and people without any connection to the Division of Agriculture or knowledge about the ballot issue education program were solicited to test the web-based surveys, as well as look for errors, confusing language or technology glitches that could only be revealed

by completing the surveys. Problems were then corrected and suggestions for changes were incorporated into the surveys.

Reflexivity Statement

The primary researcher, Kristin Netterstrom Higgins, understands she may have natural biases and assumptions related to her personal experience as a routine voter and as an author of fact sheets. Her routine voting stems from a personal belief in normative theory, or that people should be naturally interested in voting and being knowledgeable about government policies that affect their livelihoods.

Netterstrom Higgins is a 2003 graduate of the University of Arkansas' Walter J. Lemke Department of Journalism. She worked as a newspaper reporter for 10 years before joining the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture as a policy analyst and educator. Being a newspaper reporter often meant researching issues without forming any hypothesis until all the information was collected. This experience led her to using grounded theory in this study. At the time of this study, Netterstrom Higgins was employed by the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service and was assigned to carry out its ballot issue education program. She believes the future success of this program depends on knowing and understanding its audience, and on collecting evaluation data to improve the program.

Data Analysis Plan

Survey questions were determined ahead of time to satisfy Institutional Review Board approval and did not change during the process. The researcher used descriptive data analysis strategy to answer the objectives, such as demographic questions about who attended ballot issue programming or sought out ballot issue fact sheets. These variables, illustrated through

frequency distribution charts, would help to understand who is benefitting from the Cooperative Extension Service's ballot issue program.

Descriptive statistics help describe, show or summarize data in meaningful way so that patterns might emerge from the data (Laerd Statistics, n.d.). They describe what the data is or what it shows in a manageable form. This research project had multiple sets of data from different audiences Qualtrics, an online survey program was used to administer and analyze surveys.

Descriptive data lends itself to frequency tables and charts, description of means, averages and modes or measures of central tendency. This study also evaluated the level of understanding of Cooperative Extension Service agents who have various years of experience and interests. Several retrospective design questions asked about multiple ballot issues, resulting in different means for each ballot measure. For simplicity in illustrating data results, the researcher used mostly frequency tables and charts reported in percentages to illustrate the outcomes and best reflect means.

Open-ended answers to questions posed to county agents were coded based on themes or categories that emerge during data analysis. For example, county agents who indicate that they did not use PowerPoint presentations were asked a follow-up question about why. Time and interest are two potential issues that might emerge and both were coded differently so we can better represent why they chose not to present a program. This qualitative data helps better explain the quantitative data collected in the same survey.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results and Findings

This study was an evaluation of the Division of Agriculture's ballot issue education program conducted during the 2014 election and results should not be generalized outside of Arkansas voters. Data from pre and post-program surveys were analyzed as well as telephone surveys conducted with ballot issue presentation participants after the election.

Objective 1. To describe ballot issue program participants

The researcher was interested in knowing who was reached by ballot education program efforts during the 2014 election cycle. This inquiry included demographics (age, education, gender, income and race), and preferred sources for ballot issue information. The demographic data was obtained from fact sheets, newsletter, public presentation, and website responses.

Demographics

There were 173 people who answered demographic questions on the ballot education program surveys. The findings indicate the program reached older Arkansans than younger Arkansans of voting age with 34.7% of the participants ages 50-64. This is proportionally higher than the general population of Arkansas for this age group. The participants over age 65 (23.1%) and ages 35-49 (22.5%) were the next two most frequent age groups participating in the program. There were respondents representative of all voting age categories who participated in some aspect of the ballot education program.

Participants reported higher education levels than the typical Arkansan. For example, 35.8% of ballot issue program participants reported having post graduate education, compared to 6.8% of all Arkansans, while an additional 32.4% of participants had a bachelor's degree compared to 13.3% of Arkansans. Only 8.1% of participants reported a high school education.

The 2014 program reached more women than men. There were 71.7% of the participants that were women, a higher percentage of women than the state's population.

When asked about their household income, 18.4% of the participants did not want to disclose their household income range. Of those who did, 51.8% reported a higher household income than the state's median household income of $40,531. There were 30.6% with income of $50,000-$99,999 while 19.7% reported an income over $100,000, although the range of incomes represented was mixed. Nine percent reported incomes of $24,999 or less

Regarding the race of the participants, 88.4% of the program participants were White. This percentage is higher than the racial distribution found in the state's population. Participants that were Black (5.2%) and Hispanic/Latino (1.7%) were underrepresented when compared to the state's population. The demographics of the 2014 ballot education program participants are reported in Table 2.

Table 2

Demographics of 2014 Ballot Education Program Survey Respondents Compared to Arkansas Population

Demographic	Arkansas Number	Arkansas %	Study *N*= 173	Study %	Presentation *n* = 29	Presentation %
Age						
18-24	285,759	9.8	7	4.0	0	0.0
25-34	375,892	12.9	25	14.5	1	3.4
35-49	571,752	19.6	39	22.5	5	17.2
50-64	552,713	18.9	60	34.7	4	13.7
65+	419,981	14.5	40	23.1	19	65.5
Missing			2	1.2		
Education*						
High school	679,339	35.1	14	8.1	1	3.6
Some college	433,799	22.4	30	17.3	7	25.0
Associate	119,038	6.1	10	5.8	0	0.0
Bachelor	257,157	13.3	56	32.4	5	17.8
Post grad	132,160	6.8	62	35.8	15	53.6
Missing			1	0.5		
Gender						
Male	1,431,637	49.1	49	28.3	6	20.7
Female	1,484,281	50.9	124	71.7	23	79.3
Household Income						
$24k-less	351,627	31.2	15	8.7	2	7.1
$25k-$49k	314,355	27.9	35	20.2	5	18.0
$50-99k	311,426	27.5	53	30.6	9	32.1
$100k +	152,315	13.5	34	19.7	6	21.4
Missing	-	-	31	20.8	6	21.4
Race						
Other	221,609	7.6	7	4.0	2	6.8
Latino	186,050	6.4	3	1.7	1	3.5
Black	449,895	15.4	9	5.2	0	0.0
White	2,059,179	70.6	153	88.4	26	89.7
Missing			1	0.5		

Note *Educational attainment of population 25 and older. *Sources*: U.S. Census Bureau, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Demographic Profile Data; 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Selected Economic Characteristics; 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Social Characteristics in the United States.

The researcher segmented the demographics of the ballot issue presentation participants to determine whether the captive audience was any different from the larger group. For the 2014 election cycle, only two county agents submitted completed surveys from a total of three presentations. Repeated e-mail inquiries to all county agents failed to result in any additional survey data submissions.

One of the county agents conducted two programs in Washington County – one for League of Women Voters' members and the other for residents of a retirement community – while the other program in Fulton County was for Chamber of Commerce members.

A total of 29 attendees who completed surveys provided their contact information, which was required for the follow-up survey after the election (See Appendix F). The majority of program attendees were over the age of 50, had a graduate degree, were women, and were White. Income levels were mixed, though the majority reported household incomes higher than the state median household income.

Objective 2. To determine county agents' perceived level of understanding of ballot issues before and after training.

County agents' perceived level of understanding about the 2014 ballot measures were evaluated throughout the 2014 ballot issue education program, including before training, after training and after the November 2014 election. Some questions were included to establish baseline information about the agents themselves, while others sought to determine the agents' level of understanding of the ballot education program (See Appendices G-J).

Before their scheduled training session, county agents were sent e-mails with the web link to a survey that asked about their experience levels, comfort with presenting PowerPoints on

ballot issues and about their perceived levels of understanding of the 2014 ballot measures (See Appendix H).

Sixteen of the 26 agents who registered for ballot issue training completed the pre-training survey. The 16 agents reported a mix of experience levels, as seen in Table 3. There were 31.3% of the agents who had been county agents for 11 to 20 years but 25.0% with 0-2 years' experience. A similar distribution was found when comparing the number of years agents had been located in the county with 31.2% of the agents with 0-2 years' experience and 37.5% with 11-20 years in the same county.

Table 3

Experience of County Agents Participating in Ballot Issue Training

Years on Job	Agents *n=16*	Agents %	Years in Current County	Agents *n=16*	Agents %
0-2	4	25.0	0-2	5	31.2
3-5	0	0.0	3-5	2	12.5
6-10	3	18.7	6-10	1	6.25
11-20	5	31.3	11-20	6	37.5
>21	4	25.0	>21	2	12.5

To gauge knowledge ahead of the training sessions, county agents were asked how closely they had been paying attention to ballot issues. Every county agent received a monthly newsletter by email with the latest information on Arkansas ballot issues. None of the 16 respondents had been following the issues very closely while 38% reported following the issues fairly closely, 50% indicated not so closely and 13% not closely at all. All but one respondent indicated he or she anticipated using the PowerPoint presentation for the 2014 election.

Ballot Training Surveys

The Public Policy Center has traditionally offered multiple training sessions about statewide ballot issues to accommodate the hectic schedules of county agents. The training

sessions have been offered online and in person in the past. For the 2014 program, the Public Policy Center's director decided to offer online trainings through a web-based meeting program called Zoom. This video conferencing program allows the speaker to share PowerPoints and offer face-to-face video conferencing, and is accessible through a desk-top computer, tablet or telephone. Participants can see each other and can ask questions live or type them in a chat box to the whole group or to the instructor. Ten sessions were scheduled in the summer of 2014, with time slots occurring on different days and different start times. The trainings were advertised and open to all county agents, of which there were 188 employed in July 2014.

Twenty-six county agents signed up for a training session, but only 24 agents completed the training. The one-hour sessions included an explanation of how the information is gathered and vetted, a review of the five ballot issues, a review of what supporters and opponents said about each issue, and best practices for delivery. The ballot issue education program was voluntary to conduct, and so was attending the training.

The five ballot issues in 2014 were:

Issue 1 – An Amendment Empowering The General Assembly To Provide For Legislative Committee Review And Approval Of State Agencies' Administrative Rules.

Issue 2 – An Amendment Allowing More Time To Gather Signatures On A State-Wide Initiative Or Referendum Petition Only If The Petition As Originally Filed Contained At Least 75% Of The Valid Signatures Required.

Issue 3 - An Amendment Regulating Contributions to Candidates for State or Local Office, Barring Gifts from Lobbyists to Certain State Officials, Providing for Setting Salaries of Certain State Officials, and Setting Term Limits for Members of the General Assembly.

Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment.

Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage.

After the trainings had concluded, county agents who participated in the sessions received another e-mail containing a web link for a post-training survey (See Appendix I). Despite repeated requests to take the post-training survey, only nine of the 24 agents who participated in the training completed the second survey.

Because the surveys were set up to be anonymous, the post-training survey included a retrospective question regarding their level of understanding of the five ballot issues prior to training. Table 4 illustrates county agent responses. Before the training, the majority of the respondents reported they had low understandings of Issues 1-3, which were referred by the legislature. The lowest level of understanding was on Issue 3 (M=2.89, SD =0.33), followed by Issues 1 and 2 (M=2.78, SD=0.44). The agents had an average understanding of Issues 4 and 5, (M= 2.44, SD=0.53). Issues 4 and 5, which were referred by the public, had shorter ballot titles than the measures from the Legislature and were about issues that affected the general public. None of the agents reported low levels of understanding of the ballot issues.

Agents reported increased understanding of the ballot measures after participating in the training sessions on all ballot issues. The agents reported the highest level of understanding on Issue 4 (M=1.22, SD= 0.44) followed by high rating on Issues 2 and 5 (M=1.33, SD= 0.50). Agents also rated a high level of understanding on Issues 1 and 3 (M=1.56, SD =0.53). All but one agent said they had the information and materials they needed to conduct an effective ballot issue education program.

Table 4

County Agents Level of Understanding of Ballot Issues Before and After Training

				Likert-type Frequencies Before Training						Likert-type Frequencies After Training		
Issue	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3
Issue 1	9	2.78	0.44	0	2	7	9	1.56	0.53	4	5	0
Issue 2	9	2.78	0.44	0	2	7	9	1.33	0.50	6	3	0
Issue 3	9	2.89	0.33	0	1	8	9	1.56	0.53	4	5	0
Issue 4	9	2.44	0.53	0	5	4	9	1.22	0.44	7	2	0
Issue 5	9	2.44	0.53	0	5	4	9	1.33	0.50	6	3	0

Scale 1=High Understanding, 2=Average Understanding, 3=Low Understanding

Agents were asked about their comfort level in presenting the ballot materials. All nine respondents indicated that they could be neutral in presenting the ballot information, and the majority were very comfortable in presenting the PowerPoint to the public. Another four agents indicated that they were "slightly comfortable" presenting the PowerPoint to the public. There were no suggestions offered on how to improve the training sessions.

Objective 3: To describe county agents' awareness and involvement in the ballot education program.

In order to describe the awareness and involvement of county agents in the ballot education program, information was collected through a pre and post-election surveys

Pre-Election Agent Surveys

In August 2014, an e-mail invitation was sent to all county agents to participate in a 16-question survey about themselves and the ballot issue education program. All county agents were surveyed to get a better understanding of the use of ballot education program materials in each county. There were 188 county agents employed (Arkansas Extension Office List – By County, 2014). Of the 188 county agents, 20 (10.6%) responded to the survey prompts (See Appendix G).

Twelve agents who participated in this initial survey, or 63%, said they had been a county agent for more than 11 years. Only one of the agents had less than two years' experience, and one had three to five years of experience. Another five agents had six to 10 years' experience. One agent skipped this question.

All agents indicated that they were registered to vote, and 75% had worked in their county for more than 10 years. Of the 20 county agents who took the survey, 15 said they were responsible for delivery ballot measure education in their county. Those agents were asked further questions about what they anticipated doing for the 2014 educational program. All the agents anticipated distributing fact sheets in their counties. Only one agent anticipated delivering the ballot measure education presentation at an event he or she organized, and eight reported they would present the PowerPoint by request to an outside organization.

When all respondents were asked about their past involvement in the ballot issue education program, 18 reported distributing fact sheets, two reported presenting the PowerPoint slides at an event he or she organized and eight reported they presented a PowerPoint by request of an outside organization.

Of the agents who responded, 13 had somewhat closely followed news about the 2014 ballot measures. Another five indicated they had fairly closely followed the news and two said they had not followed news about ballot measures at all. The majority reported low understanding of Issue 1 and 3, and an average understanding of Issue 2, 4 and 5.

All 20 respondents said they were confident in their ability to be neutral when presenting ballot information, but only six felt very comfortable in delivering a PowerPoint presentation on the issues. Thirteen respondents were "slightly comfortable" and one agent was not comfortable at all.

When asked what changes to the program they would suggest to make it more valuable or beneficial to their county, three agents provided concrete examples. Those included making resources where they could be easily posted to social media, to create educational videos, and to provide more detailed information packets to county agents so they can better answer questions received at activities.

When asked what changes should be made to make the program more valuable to the county agent as a presenter, three agents provided concrete examples. Those suggestions included making the PowerPoint more concise, to hold satellite meetings with each of the three districts to discuss the issues and different ways of presenting materials, and providing a summary sheet that briefly explains each issue because fact sheets were too long.

Post-Election Agent Surveys

Arkansas' General Election took place Nov. 4, 2014. After the election, all county agents were invited to take a post-election survey to better understand the ballot issue education programs taking place at the county level and the agents who were involved in them (See Appendix J).

Sixty-one county agents participated in the post-election survey, with 88.5% of respondents indicating they distributed fact sheets about the 2014 ballot measures, the most common response as seen in Table 5. Whereas 18.0% of agents indicated that they presented the PowerPoint at an event, nearly half the participants said they shared ballot measure information through local media and through social media. Two of the respondents said they started employment after the November election and did not participate in any activities.

Table 5

County agent involvement in ballot issue education program

Method of Involvement	N=61	% of county agents
Distributed fact sheet	54	88.5
Shared ballot information with local media	28	45.9
Shared ballot information on social media	27	44.3
Presented PowerPoint	11	18.0
Not involved in program	2	3.3

County agents were asked whether they agreed that PowerPoint presentation was easy to deliver. The majority of agents, 79%, said they did not use the PowerPoint. Sixteen percent of agents agreed that the PowerPoint was easy to deliver while 5% answered that it was not.

Agents who did not use the PowerPoint were asked why they did not and were given the opportunity to provide an open ended response, which are seen in Table 6. The 41 responses varied, but 11 agents said they were not asked to present. Another six agents said they did not have "an opportunity" to present the information, while six others said they did not get the materials in time to make a presentation. Two agents said they did not agree with it or did not like it. Another nine agents had a variety of reasons for not using the PowerPoint presentation, such as they were new or it was not their job or they preferred to talk to people rather than using a script.

County agents were also asked whether the fact sheets were easy to understand. The majority, or 83%, of agents said the fact sheets were easy to understand while 12% said they were not. Another 5% did not read the fact sheets. Those who replied that the fact sheets were not easy to understand were asked what they found difficult to understand in the fact sheets. Only three answers were provided: "Almost everything," "the issues were complicated," and "I

don’t agree with extension in voting issues.” More agents identified fact sheets for Issues 1, 2 and 3 as being more difficult to understand than they did for Issue 4 and 5.

Table 6

County agent reasons for not using PowerPoint on ballot issues

I did not receive the information in a timely manner to be able to use the power point.
I was not the primary educator or distributor of the information.
Was not requested. If asked, I simply answered questions.
Didn't have it. Could have presented to 4-H leaders, Farm Bureau, Quorum Court, Cattlemen
Poor planning.
No chance to use it in time frame.
I only distributed the fact sheets.
Was not asked to deliver a presentation.
Ran out of time at the meeting.
Was not asked to.
I was not asked to make any presentations.
Did not receive with advance time.
Just didn't have it requested.
Meeting places were not set up for power point.
Due to scheduling, I was unable to host or be a part of a meeting in the time frame given in which the power point could be done effectively.
Was not able to conduct class.
No requests for the program.
Fact sheets were self-explanatory.
No opportunity to present the program.
Didn't have the opportunity.
I did not have a good opportunity.
Not asked.
Was not asked to present.
Time constraints.
I was not asked to present a formal program.
No time.
I prefer to talk with people when I can, rather than having a ppt as a "script".
I am not staff chair, I was new in county; I offered but was not asked to present information.
Did not agree with it.
Don't know.
Did not receive information in time to fit my schedule.
Did not like it.
Didn't have opportunity.
Didn't have opportunity to present it.
I was not invited to present.
By the time I got the presentation the groups had programs booked.
Nov 3 hire date.

Table 6, Cont.

Didn't have an opportunity to present it.
I usually don't feel confident enough in know enough to answer questions on the issues.
Time constraints.

Objective 4. To describe program participants' perceived level of understanding of ballot issues.

This study sought to describe the level of understanding of ballot education program participants who received information from the monthly newsletter, website, fact sheets and county agent presentations. Each delivery method, as seen in Table 7, will be discussed separately.

Table 7

Ballot Issue Education Program Respondents by Delivery Method

Delivery Method	Respondents *n*
Fact Sheets	4
Newsletters	46
Website	116
Presentation	29

N=195

Fact Sheets

The Public Policy Center has printed fact sheets for every statewide ballot issue since the Center's inception in 2004. For this study, the Public Policy Center included a survey link on the back page of each fact sheet in an attempt to reach people who picked up printed copies in their communities. The survey links were long and included numerous characters that people had to type in on a computer. The link took people to a survey hosted through Qualtrics (See Appendix A). They were told that the survey was part of a research project and were asked whether they consented to participate. The survey was closed the day after the election on November 5, 2014 to prevent people from taking the survey after the election ended.

The Public Policy Center printed 100,000 fact sheets that were distributed in all 75 counties. Despite the large number of fact sheets distributed, only 17 people typed in the link and started the survey, which asked about their ballot measure knowledge, their awareness of the Cooperative Extension Service's ballot measure education program and about their personal demographics. This survey experienced a high rate of drop off on the second question that asked people whether they were registered to vote. Only four people responded to this question.

Survey takers were asked about their familiarity with the ballot measures. Of the four people who answered this question, one person had following news about ballot measures very closely, two people reported fairly closely, and one person said somewhat closely. Their main source of information about ballot measures was the news media, followed by the bills passed by the Legislature and interest-focused nonprofit or civic groups.

They were asked additional questions to gauge their knowledge gain based on reading the fact sheets. All five ballot measures were included in the question because of time constraints. People were asked to indicate their level of understanding of each issue before and after reading the corresponding fact sheet. They were given the option to report that they had not read a fact sheet. Table 8 illustrates participant understanding before and after reading the fact sheets.

Table 8

Public's Level of Understanding of Ballot Issues Before and After Reading Fact Sheets

				Likert-type Frequencies							Likert-type Frequencies			
				Before Reading							After Reading			
Issue	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	Did Not Read	*N*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	Did not Read
Issue 1	4	2.75	0.96	0	2	1	1	4	2.00	1.41	2	1	0	1
Issue 2	4	3.00	1.15	0	2	0	2	4	2.25	1.50	2	0	1	1
Issue 3	4	2.00	0.82	1	2	1	0	4	1.25	0.50	3	1	0	0
Issue 4	4	1.75	0.50	1	3	0	0	4	1.50	1.00	3	0	1	0
Issue 5	4	1.50	0.58	2	2	0	0	4	1.75	1.50	3	0	0	1

Scale 1=High Understanding, 2=Average Understanding, 3=Low Understanding

When looking at all survey takers combined, the respondents had the highest understanding of Issues 4 and 5 prior to reading the fact sheets. Respondents had the highest level of understanding on issue 5 (*M*=1.50, *SD*=0.58) and lowest understanding on Issue 2 (*M*=3.00, *SD*=1.15). There was also a low average understanding on Issue 1 (*M*=2.75, *SD* =0.96) prior to reading the fact sheets. After reading the fact sheets, all respondents reported an increase in understanding. All levels were average to high in understanding. The respondents reported that their level of understanding was highest for issue 3 (*M*=1.25, *SD*=0.50), followed by Issue 4 *(M*=1.50, *SD*=1.00). The level of understanding for two issues were reported to be average understanding, Issue 2 (*M*=2.25, *SD*=1.50) and Issue 1 M=2.00, SD=1.41). The issues referred by state legislators were more complex than the two issues referred by voters.

Newsletters

Starting in 2012, the Public Policy Center has e-mailed newsletters about ballot measures to Cooperative Extension Service employees and members of the general public who have signed up for newsletters in the past or have some interest in ballot measures and were added to the mailing list. For the 2014 election cycle, the newsletters included information about each of the ballot measures, along with links to supporters/opponents, financial statements, attorney general opinions and to the measures themselves.

A web link to a survey designed specifically for newsletter recipients was included in four newsletters distributed between October 14 and November 4, 2014 (See Appendix B). The link was inside a separate box just under the main newsletter survey and encouraged recipients to participate in the research study. The newsletter's audience differed from e-mail to e-mail because people had the opportunity to sign up for the newsletter from the Cooperative Extension Service's website. The first e-mail was sent to 1,948 people and was opened by 590 recipients. The last e-mail with the survey link was sent to 1,969 people and was opened by 555 recipients.

The survey was closed the day after the election on November 5, 2014 to prevent people from taking the survey after the election ended. In the end, the survey was completed by 46 people, who were asked about their ballot measure knowledge, their awareness of the Cooperative Extension Service's ballot measure education program and about their personal demographics. Because the newsletter included links to the fact sheets, we wanted to know how many people receiving the newsletter had read the fact sheets. The newsletter program that the Public Policy Center uses records how many people clicked on links, but clicking on a link does not mean the person read the fact sheet. Survey participants were asked whether they had read the ballot measure fact sheets. Of the 45 people who responded to the question, 37 said they had

read the fact sheets. However, fewer people responded to later questions about reading the fact sheets.

Survey takers were asked about their familiarity with the ballot measures as well. Burnett and Kogan (2012) contend that familiarity with the initiative process will change how individuals go about making voting decisions. "Just as repeated decision-making leads to familiarity and expertise among consumers, we argue that frequent voting on policy proposals will result in similar cognitive effects among voters," (p.208).

Of the 46 respondents, 26% had been following news about ballot measures very closely, 35% fairly closely, and 26% somewhat closely. Another 13% responded they had not at all paid attention to news about ballot measures. Their main source of information about ballot measures was the news media, followed by the Cooperative Extension Service and friends and family.

The people who answered that they read the fact sheets were asked additional questions to gauge their knowledge gain based on reading the materials. All five ballot measures were included in the question because of time constraints. People were asked to indicate their level of understanding of each issue before and after reading the corresponding fact sheet. They were given the option to report that they had not read a fact sheet. Table 9 illustrates their responses.

Table 9

Public's Level of Understanding of Ballot Issues Before and After Reading Fact Sheets, Newsletter Readers

	Likert-type Frequencies Before Reading							*Likert-type Frequencies* After Reading						
Issue	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	Did not Read	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	Did not Read
Issue 1	28	2.66	0.90	5	5	18	4	30	1.37	0.49	19	11	0	0
Issue 2	28	2.75	0.80	3	6	19	4	30	1.40	0.50	18	12	0	0
Issue 3	27	2.94	0.67	1	5	21	5	29	1.34	0.48	19	10	0	0
Issue 4	27	2.50	0.95	5	11	11	5	29	1.37	0.67	21	8	0	1
Issue 5	27	2.47	0.98	6	10	11	5	29	1.27	0.64	24	5	0	1

Scale 1=High Understanding, 2=Average Understanding, 3=Low Understanding

Newsletter readers reported an increased level of understanding for all five issues after reading the fact sheets contained with the newsletters. When looking at the responses, the participants reported average to low average understanding on all issues prior to reading the fact sheets. The lowest level of understanding was on Issue 3 (*M*=2.94, *SD*=0.67) with 21 of the respondents reporting low understanding prior to reading the fact sheets. Similar understanding was reported on Issue 2 (*M*=2.75, *SD.* 0.80) and Issue 1 (*M*=2.66, *SD*=0.90). No one indicated that they had a low understanding of a ballot measure after reading the fact sheets. All of the participants reported high understanding of the ballot issues with the highest understanding reported on Issue 5 (*M*=1.27, *SD*=0.64).

Participants were also asked about whether they knew how they wanted to vote before they read the fact sheets. Their answers could indicate the level of knowledge people had before reading the Cooperative Extension Service's materials. The majority of respondents knew how they wanted to vote on Issue 4 and 5 but not on Issue 1-3 before reading the fact sheets. After reading the fact sheets, nearly all participants said they knew how they wanted to vote on the five measures.

Fact sheets are written for the layman, with authors trying their best to avoid jargon. Newsletter recipients were asked about the readability of the fact sheets. Nearly all respondents agreed with the statement that the fact sheets were presented in a way that they could understand what they were being asked to vote on. Two people "strongly disagreed" with the statement.

Website

The Cooperative Extension Service launched a new website in 2014 allowing individual departments to have more control over their subject areas on the website. Departments had the ability to update websites any time of the day, whereas in the past the job of updating websites fell to one person. This change allowed the Public Policy Center to have a separate section of the website specifically for ballot issue education. On this section of the website, readers could find links to newsletters and pdfs of the fact sheets on the five ballot issues. Because the Cooperative Extension Service was still discovering the capabilities of the new website software, tracking of how many times the pdfs were downloaded was not enabled.

When readers visited the website, there was an invitation for them to take a survey about the ballot education program. Readers who clicked on the link were taken to an online web survey hosted through Qualtrics (See Appendix C). They were told that the survey was part of a research project and were asked whether they consented to participate. The survey was closed

the day after the election on November 5, 2014 to prevent people from taking the survey after the election ended. A total of 116 people participated in the survey, which asked about their ballot measure knowledge, their awareness of the Cooperative Extension Service's ballot measure education program and about their personal demographics.

Survey takers were asked about their familiarity with the ballot measures as well. Of the 109 people who answered this question, 6% had been following news about ballot measures very closely, 36% fairly closely, and 49% somewhat closely. Another 12% responded they had not at all paid attention to news about ballot measures. Their main source of information about ballot measures was the news media, followed by the Cooperative Extension Service and friends and family.

The 89 people who answered that they read the fact sheets were asked additional questions to gauge their knowledge gain based on reading the materials. All five ballot measures were included in the question because of time constraints. People were asked to indicate their level of understanding of each issue before and after reading the corresponding fact sheet. They were given the option to report that they had not read a fact sheet. Not everybody who indicated they had read the fact sheets answered both the before and after question for which results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Public's Level of Understanding of Ballot Issues Before and After Reading Fact Sheets, Website Users

				Likert-type Frequencies							Likert-type Frequencies			
				Before Reading							After Reading			
Issue	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	Did not Read	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	Did not Read
Issue 1	80	2.90	0.61	1	16	53	10	76	1.41	0.57	47	28	0	1
Issue 2	79	2.86	0.71	4	14	50	11	75	1.40	0.70	51	21	0	3
Issue 3	79	2.75	0.65	3	20	50	6	77	1.42	0.73	53	19	2	3
Issue 4	78	2.32	0.99	17	31	18	12	74	1.45	0.88	54	13	1	6
Issue 5	78	2.24	0.97	19	31	18	10	75	1.43	0.90	57	11	0	7

Scale: 1=High Understanding, 2=Average Understanding, 3=Low Understanding

When looking at website participants, respondents had the lowest level of understanding of Issue 1 (*M*=2.90, *SD*=0.61) prior to reading the fact sheets. Issue 2 (*M*=2.86, *SD*=0.71) and Issue 3 (*M*=2.75, *SD*=0.65) were considered low average understanding. More than 50 respondents reported a low understanding of these three ballot issues prior to reading the fact sheets. The respondents reported an average understanding for Issues 4 and 5. Of the respondents who reported reading the fact sheets, all reported a high understanding after reading. All of the mean scores were very similar with the respondents reporting the highest understanding of Issue 2 (*M*=1.40, *SD*=0.73). Only three respondents reported a low understanding after reading the fact

sheets. The majority of website respondents reported high understanding of the issues after reading the fact sheets.

Participants were also asked about whether they knew how they wanted to vote before they read the fact sheets. Their answers could indicate the level of knowledge people had before reading Extension's materials. The majority of respondents knew how they wanted to vote on Issue 4 and 5 but not on Issue 1-3 before reading the fact sheets. After reading the fact sheets, nearly all participants said they knew how they wanted to vote on the five measures.

Fact sheets are written for the layman, with authors trying their best to avoid jargon. Website viewers were asked about the readability of the fact sheets. Fifty-one of 82 people strongly agreed with the statement, while 16 agreed. Another 11 people strongly disagreed with the statement while four people neither agreed nor disagreed. People who disagreed with the statement were asked which fact sheet was not clear enough. Only one person responded and said "Amendment 1." There was no "Amendment 1," so it's likely the reader confused it with Issue 1.

Objective 5. To measure whether ballot program participants trust the Cooperative Extension Service to provide accurate and unbiased ballot issue information

Steven Covey, a well-known writer on the topic of leadership, has said that trust among stakeholders is critical to establish oneself and grow (2009). When trust is low, it places a hidden tax on every transaction, communication, interaction and decision, bringing speed down and increasing costs (Covey, 2009). When organizations have earned and operate with high trust, the opposite is true. Instead of a "tax," there is more of a dividend that enables organizations to succeed in their communication, interactions and decisions.

Are the sources the public consults for ballot issue information trusted sources? A statewide Omnibus survey in 2006 (n=630) asked people what information sources they used, but this survey did not take into account whether people received Extension ballot education materials. The survey found that 69.4% looked for information in the newspaper to help decide how to vote while 51.3% looked to family and friends.

People who read the 2014 ballot issue fact sheets in print, on the Public Policy Center website, or through newsletters (n=159) also were asked what information sources they used to help them determine their vote (See Appendices A-C). Respondents were given a variety of potential answers and told to select all information sources that applied to them. Figure 4 shows popular information sources broken down by the survey instrument. Similar to the Omnibus survey, the majority of respondents said they turned to the news media in 2014 to help make their decision. More than 66% said they turned to the news media, followed by 38% of respondents who looked to friends or family.

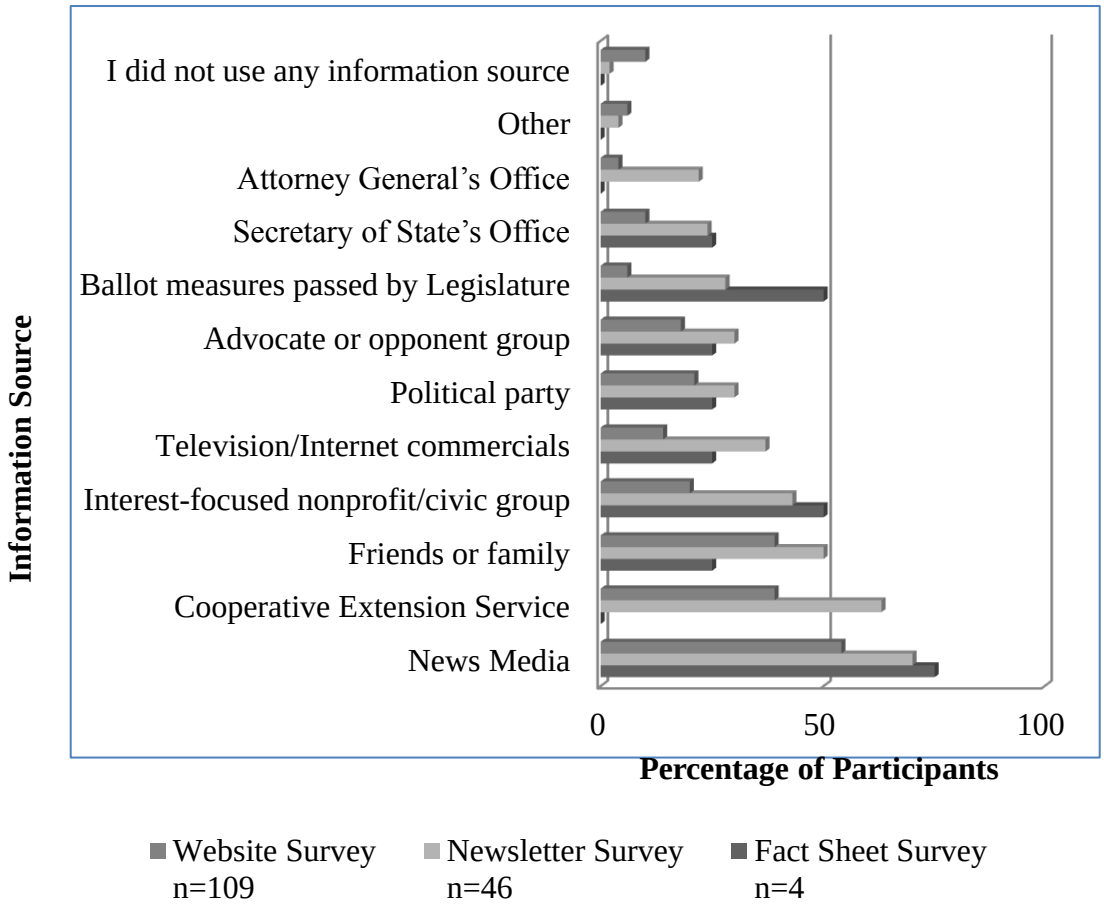

Figure 4. Information Sources to Assist Voting Decisions

Trust: People who attended ballot issue presentations or received educational materials on the ballot were surveyed about their level of trust in the Cooperative Extension Service to provide unbiased and accurate information about the state ballot issues. In this instance, unbiased refers to that the information is a neutral review of the information by a third party. By accuracy, we mean that participants believe the ballot issue information provided to be correct and free of errors. The majority of participants, as illustrated in Figure 5, indicated they had a "great deal" of trust in the accuracy of the ballot issue information published by the Cooperative Extension Service.

To determine attitudes toward receiving information from the Cooperative Extension Service about statewide ballot issues, participants were asked how much trust they had in the accuracy of Extension's ballot measure information and how much trust they had in Extension as a source of unbiased information about ballot measures. They were also asked how likely they would be to seek out Extension materials in the future.

Seventy-six percent of participants said they had "a great deal" of trust and 24% said "a fair amount" in the accuracy of information, and 69% said they had a "great deal" of trust in Extension to provide unbiased information about ballot measures. These responses are seen in Figure 5.

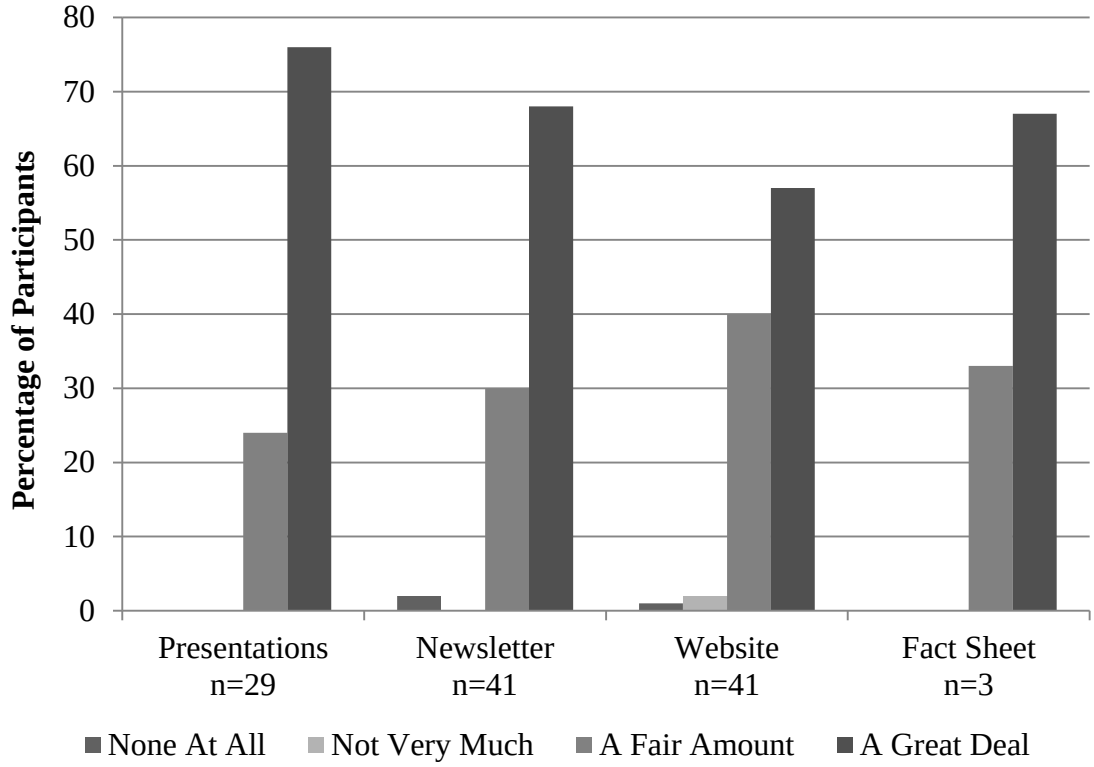

Figure 5. Trust in the accuracy of Cooperative Extension Service ballot information

Another 31% said they had a “fair amount” of trust in Extension to provide unbiased information about ballot measures. Zero participants reported having “not very much” or no trust in Extension to provide accurate and unbiased information. These responses are seen in Figure 6.

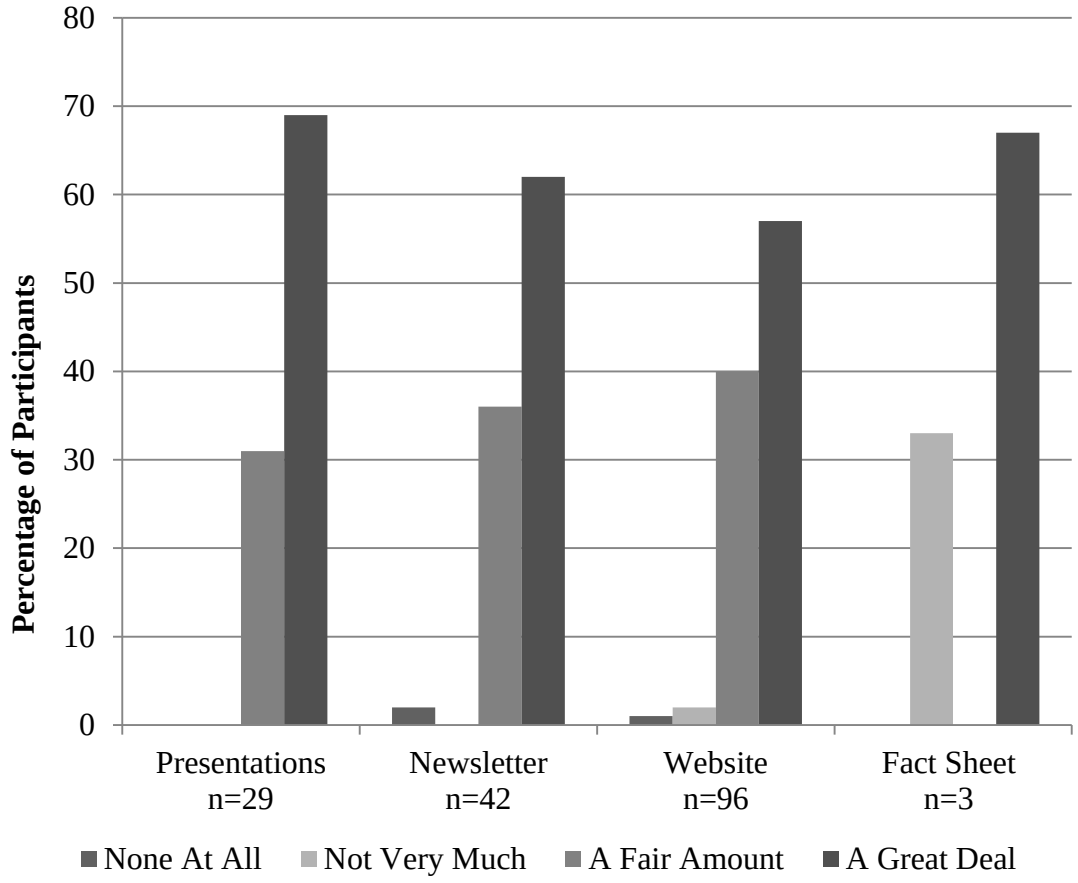

Figure 6. Trust in the Cooperative Extension Service as a source of unbiased information about ballot issues

After the election, the researcher followed up with the people who attended ballot issue presentations in Washington and Fulton counties with a final survey (See Appendix E-F). A total of 29 people had completed evaluation forms for those presentations, but contact could only be made with 21 participants. Three attempts were made to contact each participant by telephone at different times of the day, excluding one person whose phone number was no longer in service and one person whose spouse said he was unable to participate because of illness.

Fifty-seven percent of the follow-up respondents said they were extremely likely to use the Cooperative Extension Service's ballot education resources in future decisions on state ballot measures and 62% said they were extremely likely to attend a ballot issue education presentation in the future.

Participants were again asked about how much trust they had in Extension as a source of accurate and unbiased information for statewide ballot issues. Of the 21 follow-up survey participants, 81% said they had a "great deal" of trust in Extension for presenting accurate information on ballot issues. Sixty-seven percent said they had a "great deal" of trust in Extension as a source of unbiased election information and 29% said "a fair amount." Five percent said they had "not very much" trust in Extension as a source of unbiased election information.

Objective 6. To measure whether ballot issue presentation participants made informed choices on ballot questions

During the 2014 election cycle, two county agents made presentations on the statewide ballot issues, for a total of three programs. Two of those presentations took place in Washington County, and one took place in Fulton County. The presentations consisted of a 42-slide PowerPoint, where the process to put a measure on the ballot was briefly described and each issue was summarized. Agents also summarized what a "for" vote meant and what an "against" vote meant for each ballot issue.

Attendees were asked to fill out an evaluation of the presentation (See Appendix D). The paper evaluation asked for a name and phone number of the person filling out the evaluation so he or she could be contacted after the election. Participants were not told why they would be contacted, only that they would not be asked how they voted. After the November 2014 election,

participants were contacted to determine if they voted, and if so, how confident they were in their decisions at the time of casting their ballot.

The questions were an effort to measure whether participants who attended the presentation made informed choices as defined by the Multi-Dimensional Measure of Informed Choice. O'Connor and O'Brien (1989) and later Marteau (2001) defined informed choice as one that is based on relevant knowledge, consistent with the decision-maker's values and behaviorally implemented.

An effective decision incorporates knowledge, attitudes and behavior (O'Connor and O'Brien, 1989). For the ballot issue education program, knowledge, attitudes and behavior measurements were represented in the questions that sought to determine knowledge of ballot issues, trust in the Cooperative Extension Service to provide accurate and unbiased information on ballot issues, the action of voting, and finally, how confident people were in their understanding of the issue when voting.

Presentation Participant Knowledge

A total of 29 people who attended a county agent's ballot issue presentation completed evaluations with their name and phone number (See Appendix D). Seventeen percent of participants said they had been following the ballot issues "very closely" while 31% said "fairly closely." Thirty-eight percent of participants said they followed ballot issues "somewhat closely" while 14% said they had not followed ballot issues at all.

Participants were asked how strongly they agreed with the statement, "The county agent presented ballot measure information today in a way that I could understand what I am being asked to vote on." Forty-three percent of participants strongly agreed, another 39% agreed, while

7% disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed. Those who disagreed were asked to explain what was unclear. Only one person responded to the question and said "Issue 3, which is too complex."

The presentation evaluation asked participants to describe their level of understanding for each ballot issue before and after the presentation. Table 11 illustrates where attendees fell in the scale of understanding the five different ballot issues before the presentation compared to after the presentation ended.

Table 11

Public's Level of Understanding of Ballot Issues Before and After Presentation

				Likert-type Frequencies						Likert-type Frequencies		
				Before Presentation						After Presentation		
Issue	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3
Issue 1	29	1.48	0.69	18	8	3	28	2.36	0.69	3	12	13
Issue 2	29	1.45	0.63	18	9	2	29	2.45	0.57	1	14	14
Issue 3	29	1.55	0.63	15	12	2	29	2.38	0.68	3	12	14
Issue 4	29	2.10	0.72	6	14	9	29	2.62	0.49	0	11	18
Issue 5	29	2.24	0.64	3	16	10	29	2.59	0.50	0	12	17

Scale: 1=Low Understanding, 2=Average Understanding, 3=High Understanding

Respondents reported that before the presentation, they had a low understanding of Issues 1-3, with the lowest understanding of Issue 2 (*M=1.45, SD=0.63)* and an average understanding of Issues 4-5, with the highest understanding of Issue 5 (*M=2.24, SD=0.64).* After the presentation, most participants reported an average to high understanding of the five ballot issues. They reported the highest understanding of Issue 4 (*M=2.62, SD=0.49*). As Table 11 shows, zero people reported a low understanding after the presentation of Issues 4 and 5.

A further review of the results show how understanding changed. Figure 7 compares the percentage of people reporting "high understanding" of ballot issues before the presentation compared to after the presentation. The percentage of respondents with high levels of understanding doubled for all ballot issues after the presentation except for Issue 5, although there was an increase of understanding for this also. Before the presentation, 10 people reported a high level of understanding compared to 17 afterward. One possible reason that understanding did not change so much for this particular issue may be that the minimum wage issue was heavily publicized.

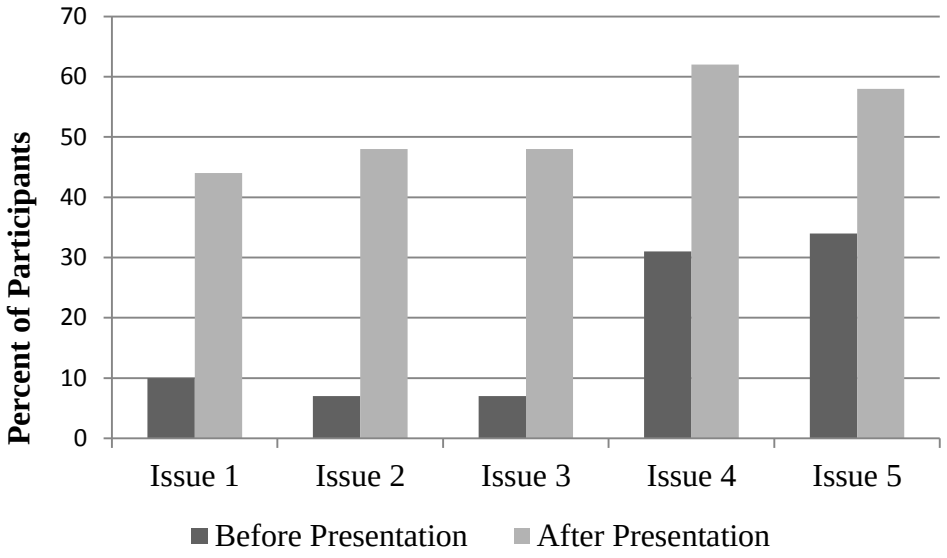

Figure 7. Percent of participants who had high understanding of ballot issues before the presentation versus after the presentation

Finally, participants were asked whether they knew how they wanted to vote on the issues based on their knowledge of the ballot measures before the presentation and after the presentation. As seen in Figure 8, more people knew how they wanted to vote after the presentations than they did before the presentations. Also, fewer people knew how they wanted

to vote on Issues 1, 2 and 3 before the presentation than they did for Issues 4 and 5. The number of people who were unsure of their voting intentions also decreased after the presentation.

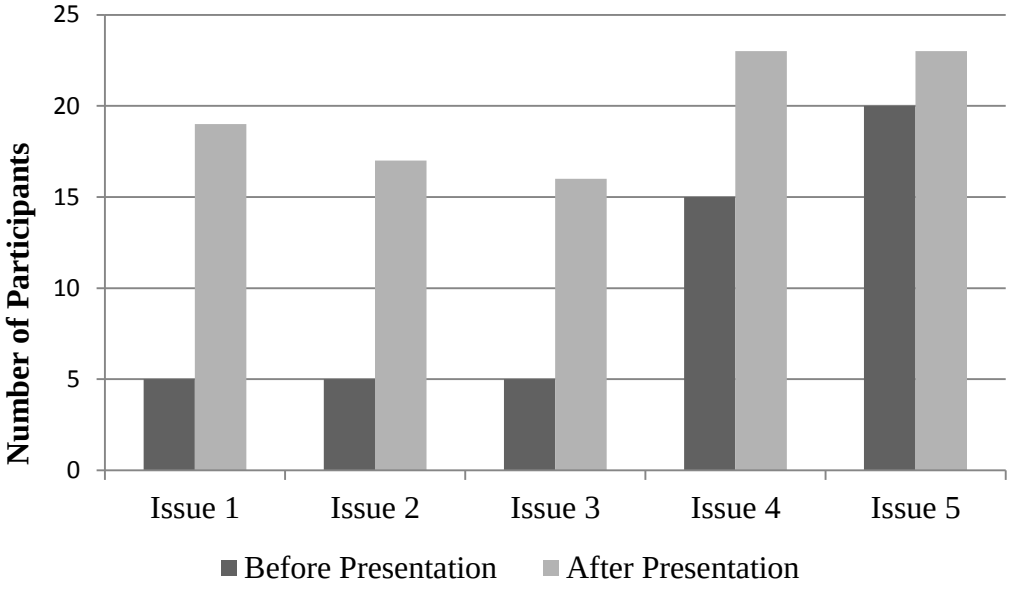

Figure 8. People who knew how they wanted to vote, before versus after presentation

Presentation Participant Attitude

The 29 people who attended a county agent's ballot issue presentation were registered to vote and all intended to vote in the November 2014 General Election. The presentations took place at meetings of a League of Women Voters group, a Chamber of Commerce board and retirees at a retirement community. Seventeen percent of participants said they had been following the ballot issues "very closely" while 31% said "fairly closely." Thirty-eight percent of participants said they followed ballot issues "somewhat closely" while 14% said they had not followed ballot issues at all. The majority of participants surveyed after the election, 57%, said they were already interested in following state policy.

As presented in the demographic section, program participants were older, had high education levels and have income levels higher than the state median, all of which are predictors of voter turnout. Because all 29 people were registered to vote and indicated an intention to vote on ballot measures, based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, it was likely they would vote on the ballot measures on Election Day.

Presentation Participant Behavior

All 21 people who participated in the follow up survey replied that they voted in the November 2014 General Election, and all said they voted on each of the five ballot issues. No one reported skipping over any of the ballot issues on Election Day. Participants were asked how confident they were in their understanding of ballot issues when casting their vote. At least 90% of participants reported being confident in their understanding of the issues on Election Day. Figure 9 illustrates the level of confidence reported in the follow up survey. One person was unable to select how confident he or she was in his or her understanding of Issues 1 and 3 (n=20) on Election Day.

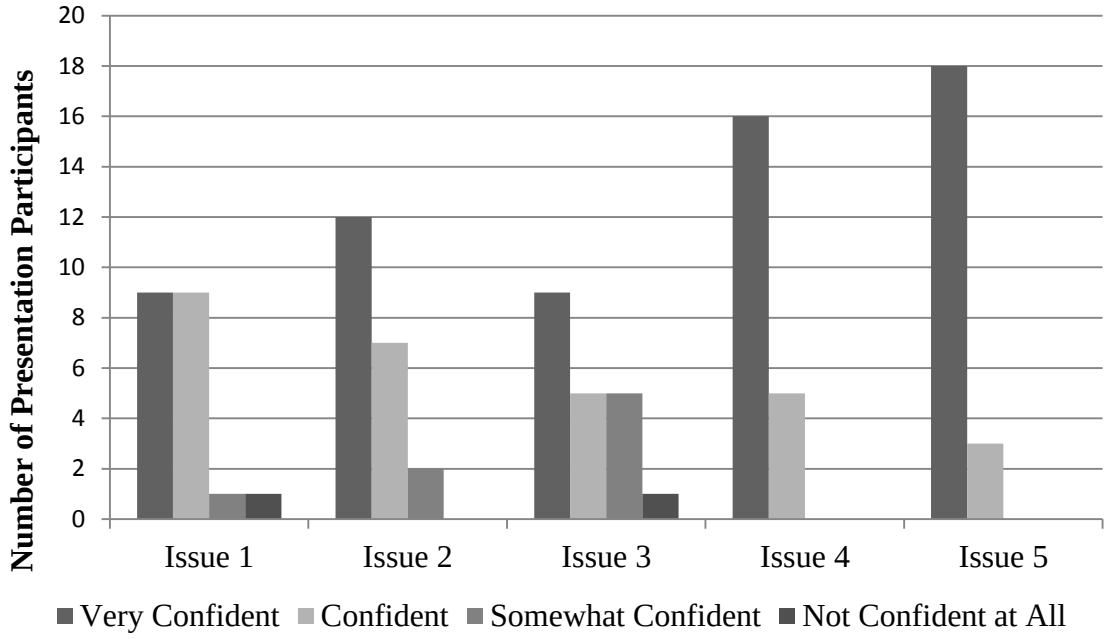

Figure 9. Presentation participants' confidence in understanding of ballot issues on Election Day

Participants were asked if they sought out additional information from other sources about state ballot measures. Of the 21 surveyed, 57% said they did seek out more information ahead of the election. The majority of those respondents said they sought additional information about Issue 3, which was an amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.

This chapter reviewed survey results of multiple audience members. In whole, the public and county agents reported an increased level of understanding of the five ballot issues. The public also reported trust in the Cooperative Extension Service to provide accurate and unbiased ballot issue materials.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

By the time the November 2014 General Election arrived, the Cooperative Extension Service had printed and distributed a combined 100,000 fact sheets across Arkansas' 75 counties. Between Oct. 4 and Nov. 4, 2014, the Public Policy Center's ballot issue education information website received 33,417 unique views. Arkansas voters ended up passing four of the five statewide ballot issues during the November 2014 General Election. The only ballot issue they rejected was Issue 4, a constitutional amendment that sought to end the state's hodgepodge of wet-dry laws and legalize alcohol sales in every county.

The 2014 election marked the sixth time the Public Policy Center had offered a statewide ballot issue education program, but the first time that its program audience was extensively evaluated. The objective of this study was to describe ballot issue education program participants, to determine knowledge transfer of the ballot issues to county agents, to describe the knowledge acquisition of ballot education program participants, to measure whether participants had trust in Extension to provide unbiased ballot information, and to measure whether people who attended county agent presentations on the ballot made informed choices on Election Day.

This comprehensive evaluation required the design and use of multiple surveys in a short time period of the 2014 election cycle. County agents were surveyed multiple times, and recipients of ballot issue education materials were surveyed according to their method of interacting with the program. This study involved the use of online surveys and paper surveys, depending on the audience, and also involved a telephone survey.

The public reached by the 2014 ballot issue education program and participated in surveys were older and more educated than the average Arkansas as identified in the 2010

Census. As discussed in Chapter 2, the predictors of voter turnout include age, education, income and race. Education provides a voter with the skills to maneuver through procedural hurdles, the confidence to deal with complicated or abstract issues, the knowledge about politics, and instills a sense of civic duty (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). In their research on the effect of direct democracy on political participation and knowledge, Tolbert, McNeal and Smith (2003) found that older people were more likely to vote in elections than younger ones**.** So although Extension's program reaches an older, educated population, is it reaching the average Arkansas voter? This is a good question for a future study (as is the answer to who is the average voter).

Although there was a low response rate to the surveys from the public, which is a limitation of this study, the demographic data has created a baseline for future program evaluations. Public Policy Center staff should continue to look at who is being reached by the program to reveal who is being missed. The 2014 demographic data could be used as a springboard for discussion on what marketing or programming efforts Extension should undertake to ensure populations not represented in survey results receive the same educational opportunities to learn about the statewide ballot issues. These discussions should occur in part because the demographic data shows that Extension is not reaching more diverse segments of Arkansan, who when putting into place normative democratic theory, should be interested in voting and the resulting impact of policy on their daily lives. Extension's ballot issue education program is built around the idea that democracy works best when informed citizens exercise their voting privilege, so efforts to provide this education to the typical resident should be pursued. These efforts could include foreign language translation of ballot issue education materials, working with organizations that serve minority populations, pilot projects focused on a specific demographic or even county where there is low voter participation.

The three surveys that asked participants to gauge their knowledge of ballot issues before and after reading fact sheets showed that most had better understanding of the issues referred by the public than the issues referred by the legislature. Based on the responses from the website, newsletter and fact sheet survey, peoples' perceived understanding of ballot measures did increase after reading the fact sheets. Participants who attended ballot issue education presentations by county agents also reported increased understanding on every ballot measure after sitting through the hour presentations. Future evaluations of Arkansas' ballot measure education program may want to look at whether one delivery method has a greater effect on knowledge gain. With more and more people turning to the Internet, the Public Policy Center would benefit from analyzing the best channels to use to share ballot issue education information. The Public Policy Center may want to look at alternative delivery of ballot issue facts, such as a more graphical interpretation of the issues for readers who aren't interested in reading eight pages of materials.

This study also revealed that the Public Policy Center needs to address the county agent model used to deliver the overall program to the public. The Public Policy Center currently creates materials that are sent to county agents, who have the option to participate and share the information with their communities. This model relies on county agent interest to become educated about the ballot issues and to take the initiative to share what they've learned with the public. However, fewer than 10% of Arkansas county agents participated in the training sessions and not everyone who participated responded to post-training survey prompts. It is understood that timing of the ballot program occurs during a busy part of the year for agents who are helping farmers harvest, or preparing for county fairs or attending to end-of-year data reporting. However, the timing of the election cannot be changed. Response rates to surveys could possibly

be improved by collecting information in person or through district directors, but that does not address the lack of participation in the overall program.

Training sessions in 2014 were only offered online, a change from previous years. The one-hour webinars were meant to save county agents time in their busy schedules so they do not have to travel or attend a longer program. The Public Policy Center should explore possibilities with Cooperative Extension Service administration in either making the program mandatory for county agents to deliver or look at a change in the program's delivery model that currently relies on county agents voluntary interest. The Public Policy Center has followed the Cooperative Extension Service's traditional model of the county agent being the deliverer of ballot issue research, but this does not appear to be working beyond the distribution of fact sheets. This study revealed that there is not a lot of county agent use of PowerPoint presentations, which require staff time to research and create in a way that is easily understandable and digestible by the public.

County agents reported a number of reasons why they did not present the PowerPoint presentation in their community, including that they did not receive materials early enough to they did not have anyone ask for a program. Ballot materials are delivered as soon as possible, which is often a month before elections due to state Supreme Court challenges and last minute decisions by the Secretary of State that affect the Election Day ballot. A future study could focus on the barriers Extension agents face in their communities to delivering the program because Extension's ballot issue education materials were publicized in statewide press releases and through social media. Another study could look at which agents do the program and which agents don't. Public Policy Center staff can assist county agents in delivering educational programs on ballot issues or in scheduling presentations with local organizations, but the small

staff cannot travel the entire state and deliver a program in each of the 75 counties. Agents need reinforcement from the Public Policy Center that they do not need to wait for someone to ask for a program to deliver a public presentation. Although this information is not associated with the objective of knowledge transfer of county agents, it does offer some insight into why a larger pool of data was not available for describing program participant demographics and knowledge acquisition.

Overall, the Public Policy Center and the ballot issue education program may benefit from a larger team to plan future education efforts, including Cooperative Extension Service staff from Information Technology, Communications, Professional Staff Development and possibly district directors or county agents. These team members could provide assistance in increasing buy-in from county agents and citizens.

As long as the ballot issue education program continues, the Public Policy Center should continue to evaluate its education efforts and the program's reach. The process of administering multiple surveys and then analyzing the data reinforced the literature and class lectures where the importance of creating evaluations alongside program development as well as tying survey questions to program objectives was taught.

Execution of the online surveys revealed weaknesses that occurred despite review by Cooperative Extension Service faculty and county agents. For example, people were able to mark that they did not read a fact sheet and then that they did when being asked to gauge their understanding of the issues before and after reading fact sheets. For future evaluations, the Public Policy Center may want to consider different placement of survey links and shortened links that are easier to follow. Staff should also consider including forced response code in survey design that will require participants to answer a question. Additionally, the placement of the survey link

at the end of the fact sheet and its length in characters may have contributed to so few people responding. Future surveys should include shorter links, such as a tiny url.

County agents who participated in training sessions reported knowledge gain on the five ballot issues, but after analyzing all the survey data, it became apparent that agents should have been asked tougher questions about the ballot issues to help establish knowledge transfer during the training sessions. County agents who participate in training for the 2016 ballot issue education program should be asked to identify a potential impact of each ballot issue. This would provide better data to determine knowledge transfer.

This study attempted for the first time to determine whether people who attended ballot measure education presentations made informed choices on Election Day. This is the type of question that should continue to be asked in future years to measure the program's impact. Forty-eight percent of the people who participated in the county agent presentation survey reported following the 2014 ballot measures. This shows a high interest in the ballot measures before they made a choice to show up at a presentation, which reflects a model of voting behavior assumed by normative democratic theory that assumes voters have certain attributes such as an interest in and knowledge of politics.

Regardless if ballot issue presentation participants held normative democratic beliefs, they reported knowledge gain and an increase in knowing how they wanted to vote after sitting through the presentation. The Theory of Reasoned Action goes hand-in-hand with normative democracy because of the role intentions and environment play in decision making. The theory looks at a person's behaviors, subjective norms and behavioral intentions to predict whether a person carries out the intended behavior (Lezin, n.d.). A person's beliefs, influence of environment and attitudes toward those two variables can shape a person's intentions and

ultimately actions (Lezin, n.d.). In order to make an informed choice or decision about a ballot measure, a voter must have some basic awareness of the proposition (Nicholson, 2003; Bowler and Donovan, 1998). After Election Day, at least 90% of participants reported that they were confident in their understanding of the ballot issues on Election Day. When combining this information with their knowledge of ballot issues, attitudes regarding the information they received form Extension, the case can be made for the Cooperative Extension Service's ballot program helping people make informed choices as described by the model known as multi-dimensional measure of informed choice.

The Public Policy Center should consider replicating the presentation survey and follow-up survey with future audiences to collect more data about whether participants made informed choices, especially if those presentations take place in a different county. The Public Policy Center should also consider using focus groups in future evaluations.

Ballot issue education is a niche program that Extension in other states can replicate. Some of the program would depend on the state's ballot issue laws, but overall, if another Cooperative Extension Service chose to replicate this program, the responsible parties should research who their state voters are and how they can reach a broader audience. They should also look at a different program delivery model than the county agent unless they make the program a mandatory one.

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Appendix A – Fact Sheet Survey

Dear survey participant,

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service is evaluating its state ballot issue education program. This evaluation is being conducted in part to fulfill the requirements of the researcher's master's degree at the University of Arkansas.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture being affected. This study is confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy, and all data will be reported as group data. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. Identifying information, such as your contact information, will be discarded after the completion and publication of the study.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Ro Windwalker, the University's Compliance Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208. If you have questions or comments regarding the survey form, you may contact Kristin Higgins at Thank you very much for helping with this important research.

Please indicate below your consent to participate in this study by checking a box below.

- ❍ Yes, I consent
- ❍ No, I do not consent

(If "no" is selected, then skip to end of survey)

Are you registered to vote?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Unsure

Do you anticipate voting in the 2014 General Election in November?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Unsure

How did you come across Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets this year?

- ❍ Cooperative Extension agent
- ❍ Cooperative Extension presentation
- ❍ Cooperative Extension office
- ❍ Cooperative Extension display table
- ❍ Organization display table
- ❍ Internet search engine
- ❍ Social media post
- ❍ Cooperative Extension website
- ❍ Cooperative Extension social media post
- ❍ Family/Friend
- ❍ Organization website
- ❍ Newspaper story
- ❍ Television story
- ❍ Other _____

Were you aware of Cooperative Extension Service's ballot measure fact sheets before today?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Are you aware that the Cooperative Extension Service delivers ballot measure education presentations?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Have you attended a Cooperative Extension Service ballot measure education presentation?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

How closely have you been following news about the 2014 Arkansas state ballot measures?

- ❍ Not at all
- ❍ Somewhat closely
- ❍ Fairly closely
- ❍ Very closely

What providers of ballot measure information have you used in the 2014 election cycle to help determine your vote? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Advocate or opponent group
- ❑ Political party
- ❑ Ballot measures passed by legislature
- ❑ Attorney General's office
- ❑ Secretary of State's office
- ❑ Interest-focused nonprofit/civic group
- ❑ News media
- ❑ Cooperative Extension Service
- ❑ Friends or family
- ❑ Television/Internet commercials
- ❑ Other _____

What 2014 ballot measures have you sought information for? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.
- ❑ Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.
- ❑ Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.
- ❑ Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment
- ❑ Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage

Describe your level of understanding of 2014 Arkansas State Ballot Measures before and after reading Cooperative Extension Service fact sheets.

	Before Reading				After Reading			
	High	Average	Low	Didn't Read	High	Average	Low	Didn't Read
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.								
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.								
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.								
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment								
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage								

Before reading Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets, did you know how you intended to vote?

	Yes	No
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍

After reading Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets, do you know how you intended to vote?

	Yes	No	Didn't read
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍	❍

(Answer the following question only if "no" is selected for the question "After reading Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets, do you know how you intend to vote")

What additional information do you need to make an informed decision?

The information in the fact sheet was presented in a way that I could understand what I am being asked to vote on.

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly agree

The information in the fact sheet was neutral and unbiased.

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly agree

How likely are you to seek out Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets next election year?

- ❍ Extremely likely
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Extremely unlikely

How much trust do you have in the Cooperative Extension Service as a source of unbiased information about ballot measures?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

How much trust do you have in the accuracy of Cooperative Extension's ballot measure information?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

How likely are you to attend a Cooperative Extension ballot measure presentation in the future?

- ❍ Extremely likely
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Extremely unlikely

Please identify your gender

- ❍ Female
- ❍ Male

Please identify your age group

- ❍ Under 18
- ❍ 18-24
- ❍ 25-34
- ❍ 35-49
- ❍ 50-64
- ❍ 65 and older

Please identify your race:

- ❍ White
- ❍ Black
- ❍ Hispanic/Latino
- ❍ American Indian
- ❍ Asian
- ❍ Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ❍ Other _____

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ❍ 8th grade or less
- ❍ Some high school
- ❍ High school
- ❍ Some college
- ❍ Associate degree
- ❍ College graduate
- ❍ Post graduate degree

What category best describes your annual household income?

- ❍ Less than $24,999
- ❍ $25,000 to $49,999
- ❍ $50,000 to $99,999
- ❍ $100,000 or more
- ❍ I prefer not to answer this question

Appendix B - Newsletter Survey

Dear survey participant,

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service is evaluating its state ballot issue education program. This evaluation is being conducted in part to fulfill the requirements of the researcher's master's degree at the University of Arkansas. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture being affected.

This study is confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy, and all data will be reported as group data. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. Identifying information, such as your contact information, will be discarded after the completion and publication of the study.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Ro Windwalker, the University's Compliance Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208. If you have questions or comments regarding the survey form, you may contact Kristin Higgins at . Thank you very much for helping with this important research.

Please indicate below your consent to participate in this study by checking a box below.

- ❍ Yes, I consent
- ❍ No, I do not consent

(If "no" is selected, then skip to end of survey)

Are you registered to vote?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Unsure

Do you anticipate voting in the 2014 General Election in November?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Unsure

How useful do you find the information in the Ballot Issue News & Notes newsletter?

- ❍ Not useful
- ❍ Somewhat useful
- ❍ Useful
- ❍ Very useful

My knowledge of Arkansas ballot measures has increased because of the Ballot Issue Notes & News newsletter.

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither disagree nor agree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly agree

Rate your satisfaction with the Ballot Issues News & Notes newsletter.

- ❍ Very dissatisfied
- ❍ Somewhat dissatisfied
- ❍ Neutral
- ❍ Somewhat satisfied
- ❍ Very satisfied

Please rank each part of the newsletter in order of importance to you, with 1 being most important and 5 being least important.

_____ Introduction article
_____ Did you know?
_____ Attorney General opinions
_____ In the news
_____ Legislative ballot measures on the 2014 ballot

How likely are you to share the Ballot Issue News & Notes newsletter with a colleague, friend or family member?

- ❍ Very Unlikely
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Very Likely

What other information would you like to see included in the Ballot Issue News & Notes newsletter?

Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service's fact sheets on the 2014 ballot measures?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Before today, were you aware that the Cooperative Extension Service produces fact sheets on Arkansas ballot measures?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Are you aware that Cooperative Extension Service county agents do presentations on ballot measures?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Have you attended a Cooperative Extension Service ballot measure education presentation?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

How closely have you been following news about the 2014 Arkansas state ballot measures?

- ❍ Not at all
- ❍ Somewhat closely
- ❍ Fairly closely
- ❍ Very closely

What information sources have you used to assist you in determining your vote on 2014 ballot measures? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Advocate or opponent group
- ❑ Political party
- ❑ Ballot measures passed by legislature
- ❑ Attorney General's office
- ❑ Secretary of State's office
- ❑ Interest-focused nonprofit/civic group
- ❑ News media
- ❑ Cooperative Extension Service
- ❑ Friends or family
- ❑ Television/Internet commercials
- ❑ I did not use any information source
- ❑ Other _____

What 2014 ballot measures have you sought information for? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.
- ❑ Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.
- ❑ Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.
- ❑ Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment
- ❑ Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage
- ❑ None

(Answer the following question only if "yes" is selected for the question "Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service's fact sheets on the 2014 ballot measures?")

Describe your level of understanding of 2014 Arkansas State Ballot Measures before and after reading Cooperative Extension Service's fact sheets.

	Before Reading				After Reading			
	High	Average	Low	Didn't Read	High	Average	Low	Didn't Read
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.								
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.								
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.								
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment								
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage								

(Answer only if "no" is selected for the question "Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service's 2014 ballot measure fact sheets?")

Do you know how you want to vote on the following ballot measures?

	Yes	No
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service's 2014 ballot measure fact sheets")

Before reading the Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets, did you know how you intended to vote?

	Yes	No
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service's 2014 ballot measure fact sheets?")

After reading Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets, do you know how you intended to vote?

	Yes	No
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍

(Answer only if “no” is selected for the question “After reading Cooperative Extension’s ballot measure fact sheets, do you know how you intend to vote?”)

What additional information do you need to make an informed decision?

(Answer only if “yes” is selected for the question “Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service’s 2014 ballot measure fact sheets?”)

The information in the fact sheet was presented in a way that I could understand what I am being asked to vote on.

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly agree

(Answer only if “disagree” or “strongly disagree” is selected for the statement “The information in the fact sheet was presented in a way that I could understand what I am being asked to vote on.”)

Which fact sheet was not clear enough?

(Answer only if “yes” is selected for the question “Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service’s 2014 ballot measure fact sheets?”)

The Cooperative Extension Service's ballot measure fact sheets were neutral and unbiased.

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly agree

(Answer only if “disagree” or “strongly disagree” is selected for the statements “Fact sheets were neutral and unbiased.”)

What did you find that was not neutral or unbiased?

How likely are you to seek out Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets in the future?

- ❍ Very unlikely
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Very Likely

How likely are you to attend a Cooperative Extension ballot measure presentation in the future?

- ❍ Very unlikely
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Very likely

How much trust do you have in the Cooperative Extension as a source of unbiased information on state ballot measures?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

How much trust do you have in the accuracy of Cooperative Extension's ballot measure information?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

Please identify your age group

- ❍ Under 18
- ❍ 18-24
- ❍ 25-34
- ❍ 35-49
- ❍ 50-64
- ❍ 65 and older

Please identify your race:

- ❍ White
- ❍ Black
- ❍ Hispanic/Latino
- ❍ American Indian
- ❍ Asian
- ❍ Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ❍ Other _____

Please identify your gender

- ❍ Female
- ❍ Male

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ❍ 8th grade or less
- ❍ Some high school
- ❍ High school
- ❍ Some college
- ❍ Associate degree
- ❍ College graduate
- ❍ Post graduate

35 What category best describes your annual household income?

- ❍ Less than $24,999
- ❍ $25,000 to $49,999
- ❍ $50,000 to $99,999
- ❍ $100,000 or more
- ❍ I prefer not to answer this question

Appendix C - Website Survey

Dear survey participant,

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service is evaluating its state ballot issue education program. This evaluation is being conducted in part to fulfill the requirements of the researcher's master's degree at the University of Arkansas. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture being affected.

This study is confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy, and all data will be reported as group data. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. Identifying information, such as your contact information, will be discarded after the completion and publication of the study.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Ro Windwalker, the University's Compliance Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208. If you have questions or comments regarding the survey form, you may contact Kristin Higgins at Thank you very much for helping with this important research.

Please indicate below your consent to participate in this study by checking a box below.

❍ Yes, I consent
❍ No, I do not consent
(If "no" is selected, then skip to end of survey)

Are you registered to vote?

❍ Yes
❍ No
❍ Unsure

Do you anticipate voting in the 2014 General Election in November?

❍ Yes
❍ No
❍ Unsure

How did you hear about the Cooperative Extension Service's voter education website? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Cooperative Extension agent
- ❑ Cooperative Extension presentation
- ❑ Cooperative Extension office
- ❑ Cooperative Extension display table
- ❑ Organization display table
- ❑ Internet search engine
- ❑ Social media post
- ❑ Cooperative Extension website
- ❑ Cooperative Extension social media post
- ❑ Family/Friend
- ❑ Organization website
- ❑ Newspaper story
- ❑ Television story
- ❑ I was already aware of the website
- ❑ Other _____

What was the primary reason for your visit today to the Cooperative Extension Service's voter education website?

- ❍ Seeking information about the Public Policy Center
- ❍ Seeking 2014 ballot measure fact sheets
- ❍ Seeking voter information
- ❍ Seeking Public Policy Center contact information
- ❍ To find ballot measure presentation dates/schedule
- ❍ Other _____

How closely have you been following news about the 2014 Arkansas state ballot measures?

- ❍ Not at all
- ❍ Somewhat closely
- ❍ Fairly closely
- ❍ Very closely

What 2014 ballot measures have you sought information for? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.
- ❑ Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.
- ❑ Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.
- ❑ Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment
- ❑ Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage
- ❑ None

What information sources have you used to assist you in determining your vote on 2014 ballot measures? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Advocate or opponent group
- ❑ Political party
- ❑ Ballot measures passed by legislature
- ❑ Attorney General's office
- ❑ Secretary of State's office
- ❑ Interest-focused nonprofit/civic group
- ❑ News media
- ❑ Cooperative Extension Service
- ❑ Friends or family
- ❑ Television/Internet commercials
- ❑ I did not use any information source
- ❑ Other _____

Before today, were you aware that the Cooperative Extension Service produces fact sheets on Arkansas ballot measures?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service's fact sheets on the 2014 ballot measures?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service's fact sheets on the 2014 ballot measures?")

Describe your level of understanding of 2014 Arkansas State Ballot Measures before and after reading Cooperative Extension Service's fact sheets.

	Before Reading				After Reading			
	High	Average	Low	Didn't Read	High	Average	Low	Didn't Read
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.								
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.								
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.								
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment								
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage								

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service's 2014 ballot measure fact sheets?"

Before reading the Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets, did you know how you intended to vote?

	Yes	No
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service's 2014 ballot measure fact sheets?")

After reading Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets, do you know how you intended to vote?

	Yes	No
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍

(Answer only if "no" is selected for the question "After reading Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets, do you know how you intend to vote?")

What additional information do you need to make an informed decision?

(Answer only if “yes” is selected for the question “Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service’s 2014 ballot measure fact sheets?”)

The information in the fact sheet was presented in a way that I could understand what I am being asked to vote on.

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly agree

(Answer only if “strongly disagree” or “disagree” is selected for the statement “The information in the fact sheet was presented in a way that I could understand what I am being asked to vote on.”)

Which fact sheet was not clear enough?

(Answer only if “yes” is selected for the question “Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service’s 2014 ballot measure fact sheets?”)

The Cooperative Extension Service's ballot measure fact sheets were neutral and unbiased.

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly agree

(Answer only if “disagree” or “strongly disagree” are selected for the statement “Fact sheets were neutral and unbiased.”)

What did you find that was not neutral or unbiased?

(Answer only if “no” is selected for thee question “Have you read the Cooperative Extension Service’s 2014 ballot measure fact sheets?”)

Do you know how you want to vote on the following ballot measures?

	Yes	No
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍

How likely are you to seek out Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets in the future?

- ❍ Extremely unlikely
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Extremely Likely

Are you aware that Cooperative Extension Service county agents offer presentations on ballot measures?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Have you attended a Cooperative Extension Service ballot measure education presentation?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

How likely are you to attend a Cooperative Extension ballot measure presentation in the future?

- ❍ Extremely unlikely
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Extremely likely

How much trust do you have in the Cooperative Extension as a source of unbiased information on state ballot measures?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

How much trust do you have in the accuracy of Cooperative Extension's ballot measure information?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

Please identify your age group

- ❍ Under 18
- ❍ 18-24
- ❍ 25-34
- ❍ 35-49
- ❍ 50-64
- ❍ 65 and older

Please identify your race:

- ❍ White
- ❍ Black
- ❍ Hispanic/Latino
- ❍ American Indian
- ❍ Asian
- ❍ Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ❍ Other _____

Please identify your gender

- ❍ Female
- ❍ Male

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ❍ 8th grade or less
- ❍ Some high school
- ❍ High school
- ❍ Some college
- ❍ Associate degree
- ❍ College graduate
- ❍ Post graduate

What category best describes your annual household income?

- ❍ Less than $24,999
- ❍ $25,000 to $49,999
- ❍ $50,000 to $99,999
- ❍ $100,000 or more
- ❍ I prefer not to answer this question

Appendix D - Ballot Education Presentation Survey

Dear program participant,

At the end of every Cooperative Extension Service program, we ask participants to evaluate their learning experience and the usefulness of the offered program. The collected information is used for program reporting and evaluation. In some instances, the information is used in faculty presentations and publications.

Today, you are being asked to fill out a survey intended for a research project studying who the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service's state ballot issue education program reaches and the program's usefulness to participants. This evaluation is being conducted in part to fulfill the requirements of the researcher's master's degree at the University of Arkansas. You are being asked to participate in the study because you are attending a state ballot issue education program. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be: Asked to complete a survey after today's presentation.

You may also be contacted after the Nov. 4, 2014 election by telephone by our researchers who will ask you about what other ballot information you may have sought out before voting, whether you voted on ballot issues and your level of confidence in your choice. You will not be asked how you voted. The telephone survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Your participation in these surveys is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture being affected. This study is confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy, and all data will be reported as group data. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any report that is published. Research records will be stored securely and only Dr. Donna Graham, Dr. Stacey McCullough or Kristin Higgins will have access to the records. Identifying information, such as your contact information, will be discarded after the completion and publication of the study. This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Ro Windwalker, the University's Compliance Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208. If you have questions or comments regarding the survey form, you may contact Kristin Higgins at

Thank you very much for helping with this important research.

Please indicate below your consent to participate in this study by checking a box below.

- ❍ Yes, I consent
- ❍ No, I do not consent

For the purposes of this study, survey identification numbers will be used to track response data. Please use the two digits of your birth month and two digits of your birth date, followed by the first two letters of your county to create your survey identification number. For example, July 4 and Faulkner County would be 0704FA.

Survey Identification Number
Name
County
Telephone

Are you registered to vote?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Unsure

Do you intend to vote in the 2014 General Election in November?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Unsure

How closely have you been following Arkansas' 2014 ballot measures?

- ❍ Not at all
- ❍ Somewhat closely
- ❍ Fairly closely
- ❍ Very closely

How did you find out about today's presentation? Circle all that apply

- ❑ Extension agent
- ❑ Extension office
- ❑ Extension display table
- ❑ Organization display table
- ❑ Social media post
- ❑ Extension website
- ❑ Extension social media
- ❑ Family/Friend
- ❑ Organization website
- ❑ Newspaper story
- ❑ Television story
- ❑ Other _____

The county agent presented ballot measure information today in a way that I could understand what I am being asked to vote on.

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly Agree

If you answered "disagree" for Question 4, which ballot measure was unclear?

- ❍ _____

The information presented today was neutral and unbiased.

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly Agree

If you answered "disagree" for Question 7, what information was not neutral and unbiased?

❍ _____

Before today, were you aware that Cooperative Extension Service agents delivered ballot education presentations?

❍ Yes
❍ No

Before today, were you aware of Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets?

❍ Yes
❍ No

How likely are you to attend a Cooperative Extension ballot measure presentation in the future?

❍ Extremely unlikely
❍ Unlikely
❍ Undecided
❍ Likely
❍ Extremely likely

How likely are you to seek out Cooperative Extension's ballot measure fact sheets next election year?

❍ Extremely unlikely
❍ Unlikely
❍ Undecided
❍ Likely
❍ Extremely likely

How much trust do you have in the accuracy of Cooperative Extensions ballot measure information?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

How much trust do you have in the Cooperative Extension as a source of unbiased information about ballot measures?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

Issue 1 - An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules

Describe your level of understanding of Issue 1 before and after today's presentation

	Low	Average	High
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Do you know how you want to vote on Issue 1?

	Yes	No	Unsure
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Issue 2 - An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.

Describe your level of understanding of Issue 2 before and after today's presentation

	Low	Average	High
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Do you know how you want to vote on Issue 2?

	Yes	No	Unsure
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Issue 3 - An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.

Describe your level of understanding of Issue 3 before and after today's presentation

	Low	Average	High
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Do you know how you want to vote on Issue 3?

	Yes	No	Unsure
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment

Describe your level of understanding of Issue 4 before and after today's presentation

	Low	Average	High
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Do you know how you want to vote on Issue 4?

	Yes	No	Unsure
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Issue 5 - An Initiated Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage

Describe your level of understanding of Issue 5 before and after today's presentation

	Low	Average	High
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Do you know how you want to vote on Issue 5?

	Yes	No	Unsure
After presentation	❍	❍	❍
Before presentation	❍	❍	❍

Please identify your gender

❍ Female
❍ Male

Please identify your age group

- ❍ Under 18
- ❍ 18-24
- ❍ 25-34
- ❍ 35-49
- ❍ 50-64
- ❍ 65 and older

Please identify your race

- ❍ White
- ❍ Black
- ❍ Hispanic/Latino
- ❍ American Indian
- ❍ Asian Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ❍ Other _____

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ❍ 8th grade or less
- ❍ Some high school
- ❍ High School
- ❍ Some college
- ❍ trade/technical/vocational training
- ❍ College graduate
- ❍ Post graduate degree

What category best describes your annual household income?

- ❍ Less than $24,999
- ❍ $25,000 to $49,999
- ❍ $50,000 to $99,999
- ❍ $100,000 or more
- ❍ I prefer not to answer this question

Appendix E - Ballot Presentation Follow-Up Script

Good morning, May I speak with _____.

Hello, my name is Kristin Higgins and I am with the UA Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service. Several months ago, you attended an Extension Service ballot issue education presentation where you learned about the state's 2014 ballot issues.

At that time, you filled out a survey about the presentation and were told you might be contacted after the election to answer a few additional survey questions that will help us better understand who attends our programs and its effectiveness in educating the public.

I wanted to follow up with you today with a series of questions that shouldn't take more than 5 minutes of your time. Is this a convenient time to continue?

Now

Yes – Ok. Thank you for your time today.

Before I begin, I need to tell you that your information will remain confidential and you will not be identified in any report resulting from this research study. You don't have to answer any question you don't want to, and you can end the interview at any time. If you are interested, I can give you my phone number in case you have any questions later about the research.

I am conducting this research as part of my master's thesis work at the University of Arkansas. Survey responses will be reflected in my thesis and in university reports about the ballot issue education program.

Are you ready to continue?

Ok, I will start the survey now.

Ask Question 9 first.

Better Time

No – Is there another time I could contact you? The interview should last about five minutes and I can arrange a time convenient to your schedule.

No – Ok, thank you for your time. Good bye.

Yes – Schedule appointment.

Appendix F - Ballot Presentation Follow-Up Survey

Post Election Telephone Survey for Presentation Participants

Did you vote in the November 2014 general election?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Unsure

(Answer only if "no" is selected for the question "Did you vote in the November 2014 general election?)

What reason best describes your choice not to vote in the November 2014 general election:

- ❍ Didn't have time
- ❍ Had no interest in voting
- ❍ Couldn't make up my mind
- ❍ Not eligible to vote
- ❍ Wasn't registered to vote
- ❍ Didn't have photo ID
- ❍ Other _____

How confident were you in your understanding of the ballot issues when casting your vote?

	Very Confident	Confident	Somewhat confident	Not confident at all
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍	❍	❍

Did you skip over any of the ballot issues when casting your vote?

- ❍ No
- ❍ Yes

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Did you skip over any of the ballot issues when casting your vote?")

Which ballot measure did you skip? (Select all measures skipped)

- ❑ Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.
- ❑ Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.
- ❑ Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.
- ❑ Prefer not to say
- ❑ Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment
- ❑ Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Did you skip over any of the ballot issues when casting your vote?")

What reason best describes why you did not vote on the ballot measure? (select all reasons that apply)

- ❑ Didn't understand the issue
- ❑ Couldn't make up my mind
- ❑ Didn't support the issue
- ❑ Didn't want to vote on issue
- ❑ Prefer not to say
- ❑ Other. Please specify: _____

Did you attend a 2014 Arkansas state ballot measure presentation offered by a Cooperative Extension county agent?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Was the information provided at the county agent's presentation adequate to help you make an informed decision on the following ballot issues?

	Yes	No
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍

After attending the county agent's presentation, did you seek additional information from other sources about state ballot measures?

❍ Yes
❍ No

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Did you seek additional information about the 2014 ballot issues after attending the county agent's presentation?")

Which ballot measure did you seek additional information for? Select all that apply.

- ❑ Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.
- ❑ Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.
- ❑ Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.
- ❑ Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment
- ❑ Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Did you seek additional information about the 2014 ballot issues after attending the county agent's presentation?")

What additional information source did you use? Select all that apply.

- ❑ Advocate or opponent group
- ❑ Political party
- ❑ Newspapers
- ❑ Friends or family
- ❑ Internet
- ❑ Other _____

How likely are you to use the Cooperative Extension's ballot education resources in future decisions on state ballot measures?

- ❍ Extremely unlikely
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Extremely likely

How likely are you to attend a ballot issue education presentation in the future?

- ❍ Extremely unlikely
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Extremely likely

How much trust do you have in the Cooperative Extension as a source of unbiased election information?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

How much trust do you have in the Cooperative Extension when it comes to presenting ballot issues accurately?

- ❍ None at all
- ❍ Not very much
- ❍ A fair amount
- ❍ A great deal

Did you use the Cooperative Extension fact sheets on the 2014 state ballot measures in determining your vote choice?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Unsure

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Did you use the Cooperative Extension fact sheets on the 2014 state ballot measures in determining your vote choice?")

Did you find the Cooperative Extension fact sheets on state ballot measures readable and easy to understand?

- ❍ Yes, all
- ❍ Yes, some
- ❍ No

(Answer only if "no" is selected for the question "Did you find the Cooperative Extension fact sheets on state ballot measures readable and easy to understand?")

Now that you have voted, is there anything Extension should do to improve the fact sheets for voters?

Has the Cooperative Extension's ballot presentation made you interested in following state policy after the election?

- ❍ No, I was already interested
- ❍ No, not at all
- ❍ Yes, very much
- ❍ Yes, Somewhat

What other educational resources or information would you want included in future Cooperative Extension ballot measure presentations to help you make an informed choice?

Appendix G – Pre-Election Agent Survey

Dear county agent,

Every election cycle, the UA Division of Agriculture's Public Policy Center creates a series of educational fact sheets on state ballot measures. This election cycle, we are evaluating how we deliver ballot measure education to you and to the public. Additional disclosure: this evaluation is being conducted in part to fulfill requirements of Kristin Higgins' master's degree program at the University of Arkansas. Your participation in this study is voluntary and will not effect your relationship with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

Today's survey will take less than 5 minutes to complete. This study is confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy, and all data will be reported as group data. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the survey responses.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact Ro Windwalker, the University's Compliance Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208 or email irb@uark.edu.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the survey form, please contact Kristin Higgins at Thank you very much for helping with this important research. Please indicate below your consent to participate in this study by checking a box below.

- ❍ Yes, I consent
- ❍ No, I do not consent

(If "no" is selected, then skip to end of survey)

How familiar are you with Extension's ballot education resources?

- ❍ Not at all familiar
- ❍ Slightly familiar
- ❍ Moderately familiar
- ❍ Very familiar
- ❍ Extremely familiar

How closely have you been following news about the 2014 state ballot measures?

- ❍ Not at all
- ❍ Somewhat closely
- ❍ Fairly closely
- ❍ Very closely

Describe your level of understanding of the following 2014 ballot measures

	High	Average	Low
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍	❍

Are you responsible for delivering ballot measure education in your county this year?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Are you responsible for delivering ballot measure education in your county this year?")

What methods will you use to deliver ballot measure education this year? Check all that apply

- ❑ Distribute fact sheets
- ❑ Set up a display
- ❑ Share the UAEX video on election issues
- ❑ Present the Power Point at an event I organize
- ❑ Present the Power Point by request to an outside organization
- ❑ Social media
- ❑ Traditional media (newspaper, radio)
- ❑ I do not have a role in ballot issue education
- ❑ Other _____

What methods have you used to deliver ballot measure education in the past? Check all that apply

- ❑ Distributed fact sheets
- ❑ Set up a display
- ❑ Shared the UAEX video on election issues
- ❑ Presented Power Point at an event I organized
- ❑ Presented Power Point by request of an outside organization
- ❑ I did not have a role in past ballot issue education programs
- ❑ Other _____

What format do you think works best for educating residents in your county about ballot measures?

- ❍ County program with full presentation
- ❍ Civic group presentation, typically less than 25 minutes
- ❍ Fact sheet distribution
- ❍ Distribution of video presentation
- ❍ Other _____

How much time do you typically have to educate a group on ballot measures?

- ❍ No time
- ❍ Less than 10 minutes
- ❍ Between 10 and 20 minutes
- ❍ Between 20 and 30 minutes
- ❍ More than 30 minutes
- ❍ I don't educate on ballot measures

Describe your comfort level in delivering a Power Point presentation on ballot measures to the public.

- ❍ Extremely comfortable
- ❍ Very comfortable
- ❍ Slightly comfortable
- ❍ Not at all comfortable

(Answer only if "not comfortable at all" and "slightly comfortable" is selected for the statement "Describe your comfort level in delivering a Power Point presentation on ballot measures to the public.")

Would you attend training on how to present controversial issues?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

I am confident in my ability to be neutral when presenting ballot information.

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Are you registered to vote?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Unsure
- ❍ Prefer not to say

I have been a county agent for a total of:

- ❍ 0-2 years
- ❍ 3-5 years
- ❍ 6-10 years
- ❍ 11-20 years
- ❍ More than 21 years

I have worked in my current county for:

- ❍ 0-2 years
- ❍ 3-5 years
- ❍ 6-10 years
- ❍ 11-20 years
- ❍ More than 21 years

What changes to the ballot issue education program would you suggest to make it more valuable or beneficial to your county?

What changes to the ballot issue education program would you suggest to make the program more valuable or beneficial to you as a presenter?

Appendix H – Pre-Training Survey for Agents

Dear county agent, At the beginning of every election cycle, the UA Division of Agriculture's Public Policy Center creates a statewide ballot issue education program to be delivered by county agents. This election cycle, we will be evaluating the program and looking at how we deliver education to you and to the public. This evaluation is being conducted in part to fulfill requirements of Kristin Higgins' master's degree program at the University of Arkansas.

Participating in the study entails:

Completing today's pre and post training surveys. The surveys will take 5 minutes to complete.

Your participation is voluntary and will not effect your relationship with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. This study is confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy, and all data will be reported as group data. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that is published. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact Ro Windwalker, the University's Compliance Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208 or email irb@uark.edu. If you have any questions or comments regarding the survey form, please contact Kristin Higgins at Ґhank you very much for helping with this important research. Please indicate below your consent to participate in this study by checking a box below.

- ❍ Yes, I consent
- ❍ No, I do not consent

(If "no" is selected, then skip to end of survey)

I have been a county agent for a total of:

- ❍ 0-2 years
- ❍ 3-5 years
- ❍ 6-10 years
- ❍ 11-20 years
- ❍ More than 21 years

I have worked in my current location for:

- ❍ 0-2 years
- ❍ 3-5 years
- ❍ 6-10 years
- ❍ 11-20 years
- ❍ More than 21 years

Describe your level of understanding of Extension's ballot issue program.

- ❍ Overall, my level of understanding is high
- ❍ Overall, my level of understanding is average
- ❍ Overall, my level of understanding is low

Describe your level of involvement in past ballot issue education programs. Check all that apply

- ❑ Distributed fact sheets
- ❑ Set up a display
- ❑ Shared the UAEX video on election issues
- ❑ Presented Power Point at an event I organized
- ❑ Presented Power Point by request of an outside organization
- ❑ I did not have a role in past ballot issue education programs
- ❑ Other _____

How many ballot issue education presentations do you anticipate conducting this year?

Describe your comfort level of presenting a Power Point on ballot issues to the public.

- ❍ Not at all comfortable
- ❍ Slightly comfortable
- ❍ Very comfortable
- ❍ Extremely comfortable

I am confident in my ability to be neutral when presenting ballot information.

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

How closely have you been following news about the 2014 state ballot measures?

- ❍ Not at all closely
- ❍ Not too closely
- ❍ Fairly closely
- ❍ Very closely
- ❍ Don't know

Describe your level of understanding of the following ballot measures

	High	Average	Low
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍	❍

Appendix I – Post Training Survey for Agents

Dear county agent,

At the beginning of every election cycle, the UA Division of Agriculture's Public Policy Center creates a statewide ballot issue education program to be delivered by county agents. This election cycle, we will be evaluating the program and looking at how we deliver education to you and to the public. This evaluation is being conducted in part to fulfill requirements of Kristin Higgins' master's degree program at the University of Arkansas.

Participating in the study entails:

Completing today's pre and post training surveys.

The surveys will take 5 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary and will not effect your relationship with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. This study is confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy, and all data will be reported as group data. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that is published. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact Ro Windwalker, the University's Compliance Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208 or email irb@uark.edu. If you have any questions or comments regarding the survey form, please contact Kristin Higgins at Ґhank you very much for helping with this important research. Please indicate below your consent to participate in this study by checking a box below.

- ❍ Yes, I consent
- ❍ No, I do not consent

(If "no" is selected, then skip to end of survey)

Describe your level of understanding of Extension's ballot issue program after today's training.

- ❍ Overall, my level of understanding is high
- ❍ Overall, my level of understanding is average
- ❍ Overall, my level of understanding is low

(Answer only if “Overall, my level of understanding is low” is selected and “Overall, my level of understanding is average” is selected for the statement “Describe your level of understanding of Extension’s ballot issue program after today’s training.”)

Please tell us what we could do to help improve your understanding of the ballot issue program.

Describe your level of understanding of 2014 Arkansas State Ballot Measures before and after today's presentation.

	Before Presentation			After Presentation		
	High	Average	Low	High	Average	Low
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

I have the information and materials that I need to conduct an effective ballot issue education program.

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

What additional information or materials did you need to conduct an effective ballot issue education program?

The Power Point presentation was easy to understand.

- ❍ True
- ❍ False

(Answer only if "false" is selected for the statement "The Power Point presentation was easy to understand.") What about the Power Point presentation was confusing?

The Power Point presentation was neutral and unbiased

- ❍ Strongly Agree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Strongly Disagree

(Answer only if "disagree" is selected and "strongly disagree" is selected for the statement "The Power Point presentation was neutral and unbiased.")

What about the Power Point presentation appeared biased?

What changes to the ballot issue education program would you suggest to make the program more valuable or beneficial to you as a presenter?

What changes would you recommend for making the program better for the public?

How many ballot issue education presentations do you anticipate conducting this year?

I am confident in my ability to be neutral when presenting ballot information.

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Describe your comfort level of presenting the Power Point on ballot measures to the public

- ❍ Extremely comfortable
- ❍ Very comfortable
- ❍ Slightly comfortable
- ❍ Not at all comfortable

(Answer only if "slightly comfortable" and "not at all comfortable" is selected for the statement "Describe your comfort level of presenting the Power Point on ballot measures to the public.")

What causes your uncomfort?

How can this training session be improved?

Appendix J – Post-Election Agent Survey

Dear county agent,

Every election cycle, the UA Division of Agriculture's Public Policy Center creates a statewide ballot issue education program to be delivered by county agents. This election cycle, we are evaluating the program and looking at how we deliver education to you and the public. This evaluation is being conducted in part to fulfill requirements of Kristin Higgins' master's degree program at the University of Arkansas. This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

Your participation is voluntary and will not affect your relationship with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. This study is confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy, and all data will be reported as group data. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact Ro Windwalker, the University's Compliance Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208 or email irb@uark.edu.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the survey form, please contact Kristin Higgins at Thank you very much for helping with this important research.

Please indicate your consent to participate in this survey:

- ❍ Yes, I consent
- ❍ No, I do not consent

(If "no" is selected, then skip to end of survey.)

I have been a county agent for a total of:

- ❍ 0-2 years
- ❍ 3-5 years
- ❍ 6-10 years
- ❍ 11-20 years
- ❍ More than 21 years

I have worked in my current location for:

- ❍ 0-2 years
- ❍ 3-5 years
- ❍ 6-10 years
- ❍ 11-20 years
- ❍ More than 21 years

Describe your level of involvement in the 2014 ballot issue education program. Check all that apply

- ❑ Distributed ballot issue fact sheets
- ❑ Set up ballot issue program display
- ❑ Shared the UAEX video on election issues
- ❑ Presented Power Point at an event I organized
- ❑ Presented Power Point by request of an outside organization
- ❑ Shared ballot information on social media
- ❑ Included ballot issue information in county newsletter
- ❑ Shared ballot information with local media
- ❑ I was not involved in the 2014 ballot issue education program
- ❑ Other _____

(Answer only if "I was not involved in the 2014 ballot issue education program" is selected for the statement "Describe your level of involvement in the 2014 ballot education program.")

Why were you not involved in the 2014 ballot issue education program?

Where did your county distribute ballot issue fact sheets? (For example: county library, post office, grocery store, etc.)

Where did your county put up ballot issue displays?

About how many fact sheets did you have left over after the election?

Did your local newspaper, television or radio station use ballot issue information in their election coverage?

- ❍ No
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ Unsure
- ❍ Didn't provide them any ballot issue information

(Answer only if "yes" is selected for the question "Did your local newspaper, television or radio station use ballot issue information in their election coverage?")

Which media outlet used ballot issue materials?

- ❑ Newspaper
- ❑ TV
- ❑ Radio
- ❑ Other _____

Describe your level of understanding of the following ballot measures

	High	Average	Low
Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.	❍	❍	❍
Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment	❍	❍	❍
Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage	❍	❍	❍

I had the information and materials that I needed to conduct an effective ballot issue education program.

- ❍ No
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ I was not involved in the 2014 ballot issue education program

What additional information or materials did you need to conduct an effective ballot issue education program?

I was able to be neutral when presenting ballot information.

- ❍ No
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ I did not present ballot issue information

(Answer only if "no" is selected for the statement "I was able to be neutral when presenting ballot information.)

What factors caused you to be unable to be neutral when presenting ballot information?

The Power Point presentation was easy to deliver.

- ❍ False
- ❍ True
- ❍ I did not use the Power Points

(Answer only if "false" is selected for the statement "The Power Point presentation was easy to deliver.")

What made the Power Point difficult to deliver?

(Answer only if "I did not use the Power Point" is selected for the statement "The Power Point presentation was easy to deliver.")

Why did you not use the Power Point presentation?

The Power Point presentation was neutral and unbiased

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly agree
- ❍ I did not present the Power Point

(Answer only if "strongly disagree" or "disagree" is selected for the statement "The Power Point presentation as neutral and unbiased.")

What made the Power Point presentation appear to be biased?

UAEX ballot issue fact sheets were easy to understand.

- ❍ False
- ❍ True
- ❍ I did not read the fact sheets

(Answer only if "false" is selected for the statement "UAEX ballot issue fact sheets were easy to understand.")

What did you find difficult to understand in the fact sheets?

(Answer only if "false" is selected for the statement "UAEX ballot issue fact sheets were easy to understand.")

Which fact sheet was difficult to understand? Check all that apply.

- ❑ Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.
- ❑ Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.
- ❑ Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.
- ❑ Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment
- ❑ Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage

The fact sheets were neutral in the presentation of facts

- ❍ Strongly disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly agree
- ❍ I did not read the fact sheets

(Answer only if "strongly disagree" or "disagree" is selected for the statement "The fact sheets were neutral in the presentation of facts.")

Which fact sheet appeared biased? Check all that apply.

- ❑ Issue 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.
- ❑ Issue 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 % of the valid signatures required.
- ❑ Issue 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials and setting term limits for members of the General Assembly.
- ❑ Issue 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment
- ❑ Issue 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage

What changes to the ballot issue education program would you suggest to make the program more valuable or beneficial to you as a presenter?

What changes would you recommend for making the program better for the public?

What do you want Public Policy Center staff to know about this year's program or your experiences?

Appendix K – IRB Approval

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board

August 4, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO:	Kristin Higgins Stacey McCullough Amanda Philyaw Perez Donna Graham
FROM:	Ro Windwalker IRB Coordinator
RE:	New Protocol Approval
IRB Protocol #:	14-07-029
Protocol Title:	*UAEX Ballot Issue Education Program Evaluation*
Review Type:	☒ EXEMPT ☐ EXPEDITED ☐ FULL IRB
Approved Project Period:	Start Date: 08/04/2014 Expiration Date: 08/03/2015

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (http://vpred.uark.edu/210.php). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 1,000 participants. If you wish to make *any* modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 210 Administration Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

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