

Wisconsin Public Radio & St. Norbert College Survey Center

THE WISCONSIN SURVEY
Presidential Approval and Direction of the Country
Spring 2005

Survey Information:

Number of Adult Wisconsin Resident Respondents: 400
Interview Period: April 25 – May 4, 2005
Margin of Error: +/- 5% at the 95% confidence level.

Contact:

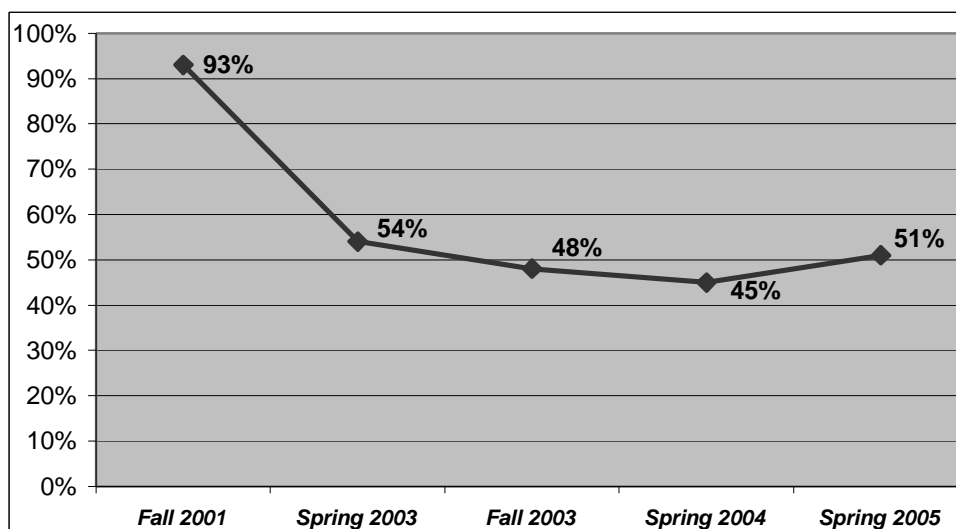
Wendy Scattergood
Assistant Professor of Political Science, St. Norbert College Survey Center
DePere, WI 54115
(920) 403-3491
wendy.scattergood@snc.edu

Presidential Approval is 51%

“How satisfied are you with the way President Bush is doing his job overall. Would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?”

Very Satisfied	17%
Somewhat Satisfied.....	34%
Somewhat Dissatisfied.....	18%
Very Dissatisfied.....	31%
Not Sure	<1%
Refused	0%

Presidential Approval Ratings (“Very” + “Somewhat” Satisfied)



As President Bush ends his first 100 days of his second term, we see that his approval ratings are slightly higher for Wisconsinites than last year, though the difference is within error margins. Note, the 93% from the Fall of 2001 was from a poll done a few weeks after 9/11.

Feelings about the direction of the country were highly related to appraisal of the job the president is doing. For those who think the country is going in the right direction, 89% approved of the job the president is doing, whereas only 21% of those who think the country is going in the wrong direction approved of the job the president is doing.

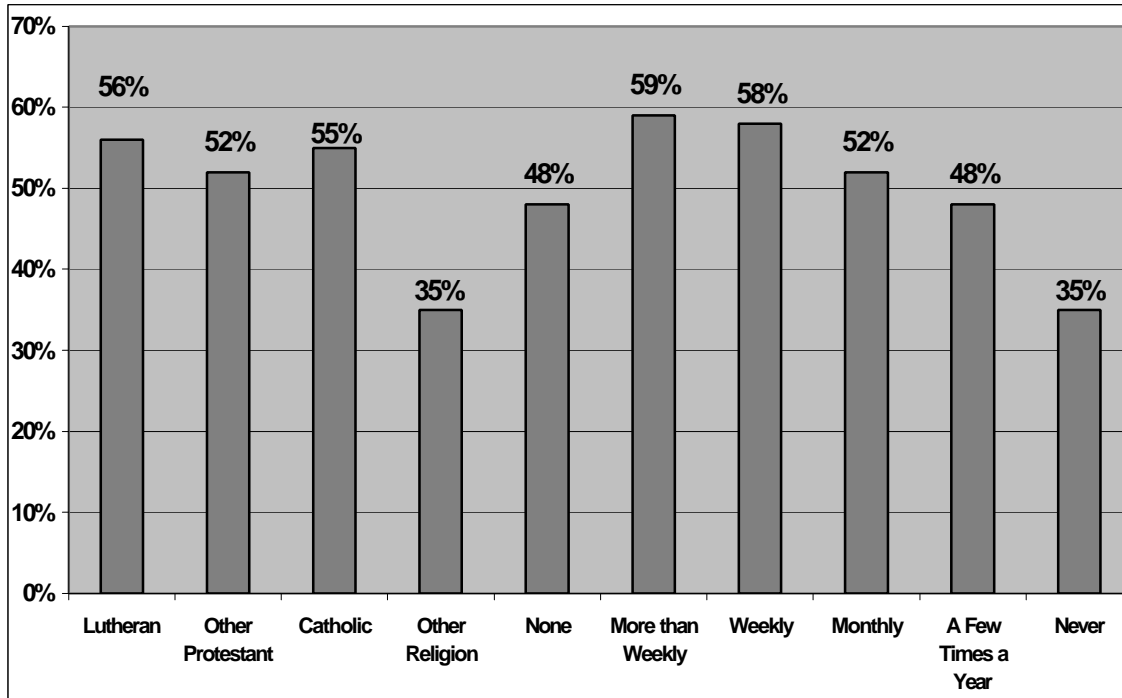
Party identification was also highly related. See table below, the table reads down the columns.

	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other Party
Very Satisfied	2%	42%	6%	11%
Somewhat Satisfied	18%	53%	36%	39%
Sum Approval Rating	20%	95%	42%	50%

Democrats comprised 40% of the sample, 35% were Republicans, 18% Independents, 5% Other, and 3% not sure what their party identification is.

Assessment of future financial situation was significantly related to assessment of the president. Those who felt they would be better off next year financially were more supportive of the president than those who felt they would be worse off. Incidentally, Republicans tended to feel they would be better off (63% of Republicans said this) compared to 27% of Democrats feeling that they would be better off financially in the coming year. Age may also play a factor here. Generally seniors are much less likely to feel they will be better off than younger respondents and seniors are also more likely to consider themselves Democrats. In our sample, 42% of those over 65 said they were Democrats compared to a range of 33% to 37% saying they were Democrats in the 18 to 44 year old age range.

Lutherans and Catholics were the most supportive of the president and those of other or no religious identification were the least supportive. Church attendance was also related. The president received more support (as he did in the election) from those who attend church services more regularly than those who do not. See graph below.



Age and education were also related. Younger people tended to be more supportive of the president than older respondents. For example, 33% of 18 to 24 year olds said they were *very satisfied* with the job the president is doing compared to 7% of 45 to 54 year olds and 13% of those over 65.

Presidential approval was highest among those with some college or a technical degree. Those with graduate or professional degrees were the least supportive. See table below, the table reads down the columns.

	Less than High School	High School	Some College or Technical Degree	College Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
Very Satisfied	17%	15%	18%	24%	10%
Somewhat Satisfied	28%	36%	40%	32%	27%
Sum Approval Rating	45%	51%	58%	56%	37%

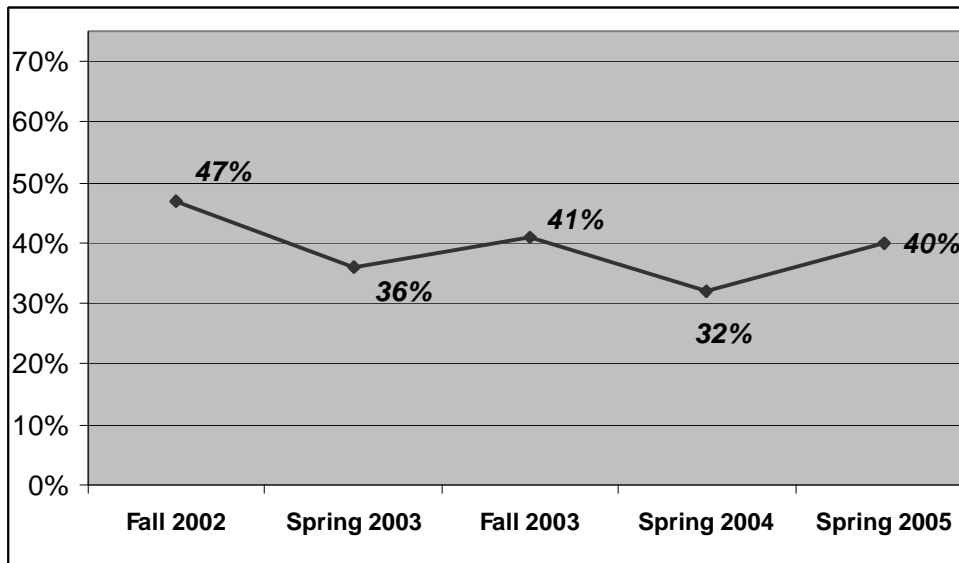
Direction of the Country 54% Say We're Going in the "Wrong" Direction

"Generally speaking, would you say that things in the country are going in the right direction, or are they going in the wrong direction?"

Right Direction	40%
Wrong Direction	54%
Not Sure.....	6%
Refused.....	0%

This year, 40% of respondents feel the country is going in the right direction. This is an 8% increase over last year, though the change is still within error margins for the survey. Not surprisingly, assessment of the direction of the country was highly related to political party identification. Only 13% of Democrats felt the country is going in the right direction compared to 73% of Republicans, and 36% of Independents.

Percentage of Respondents Who Feel the Country is Going in the "Right" Direction



When controlling for party identification, most other demographics and issues are not significant. However, a respondent's assessment of their financial situation in the next year was still significant after controlling for party identification. Those who felt they would be better off next year financially were much more likely to say the country is going in the right direction than those who felt they will be worse off financially in the next year. Sixty percent (60%) of those who felt they would be better off financially next year said the country is going in the right direction compared to 34% of those who feel they will be the same financially next year as this and 16% of those who feel they will be worse off financially.

Education was also significant. Those in the mid-level of education achievement were more likely to feel the country is going in the right direction than those with graduate degrees and those with less than a high school education. Those in the less than high school category generally tend to be older and those over 65 are not as likely to think the country is going in the right direction as those under 65. Those with graduate degrees tend to be more liberal than other education categories.