Charles Prysby • Carmine Scavo

Voting Behavior
The 2016 Election

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ **www.icpsr.umich.edu/instructors/setups2016**

How SETUPS Helps Students

- Students can analyze the American National Election Studies (ANES) surveys, the same data that are used by political scientists who study voting behavior. However, the SETUPS data have been prepared so that they are much more easily analyzed than is the case for the full ANES data.

- Students engage in hands-on, active learning. They can test their own hypotheses and explore relationships between variables rather than simply reading about the research of others. This improves students' data analysis skills and gives them an opportunity to think more deeply about the course material.

Benefits of the 2016 Version

The 2016 SETUPS module is completely online, including the data analysis components.

- Access to the data files and documentation is provided for instructors and students without access restrictions.

- No book fees for students — all documentation is online.

- Online analysis capabilities enable easy and flexible in-class demonstration as well as hands-on data analysis for students learning fundamentals.

- Prepared exercises and online access enable quick integration of SETUPS into the curriculum.

- The website's background information on the election, survey methods, and analytic concepts provide a comprehensive learning experience for students.

About the Project

Voting Behavior: The 2016 Election is a new Supplementary Empirical Teaching Units in Political Science (SETUPS) module that offers students the ability to analyze an accessible dataset drawn from the **2016 American National Election Studies (ANES)** of the American electorate. Charles Prysby and Carmine Scavo, coauthors of the Voting Behavior SETUPS modules since 1984, again provide background information and thoughtful questions to guide students through data analysis about the most recent election. The 2016 edition is part of a long line of Voting Behavior SETUPS that began with the 1972 election. For 44 years, the American Political Science Association (APSA) and the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) have collaborated to develop and distribute SETUPS.

About the SETUPS Sponsors

APSA (www.apsanet.org) — Founded in 1903, APSA is the leading professional organization for the study of political science and serves more than 15,000 members in over 80 countries. APSA brings together political scientists from all fields of inquiry, regions, and occupational endeavors within and outside academia in order to expand awareness and understanding of politics.

ICPSR (www.icpsr.umich.edu) — Established in 1962, ICPSR is the world's largest social science data archive, maintaining 250,000+ data and documentation files comprising more than 10,000 studies from a broad range of disciplines. ICPSR membership includes about 760 educational and research institutions around the globe.

The Background Section

Analyzing data from the 2016 ANES is best done with some knowledge of the 2016 election and voting behavior in national elections. Brief discussions of both topics are provided within this section of the website. Additional readings are suggested at the end of each subsection.

Key background information for the 2016 election described within this section includes:

- The GOP and Democratic nominating contests
- Campaign issues and candidate positions
- Campaign themes, strategies, and developments

Basic factors that provide reasons why voters choose a candidate in a presidential election also are described:

- Orientations on issues of public policy
- Assessments of the performance of government
- Evaluations of character traits of the candidates
- Electoral dynamics between elections

The Dataset Section

Before analyzing any data, it is useful to know how the data were collected and what sorts of error might be present. The section about the ANES attempts to answer those questions by discussing survey research methods in general and the methodology behind the 2016 ANES survey in particular. The codebook subsection describes the information contained in the codebook entries for each variable and provides additional information for some variables.

The Exercises Section

The core of this module is a set of analytic exercises designed to develop students' abilities to conduct and understand analyses of survey data. Students are first introduced to the principles of creating and reading a simple contingency table. Next, they are exposed to more sophisticated analyses, in which a simple two-variable relationship is expanded by introducing a control variable into the analysis. At the same time, substantive aspects of voting behavior are explored.

Exercises help students investigate a variety of relationships between the presidential vote and:

- Party identification
- Sex
- Personal financial situation
- Attitudes on abortion
- Attitudes on environmental protection
- Attitudes on gun control
- Attitudes on Social Security spending
- Attitutdes on trade and immigration
- Candidate character traits

An overview of data analysis is provided to help students understand key concepts such as:

- Variables
- Contingency tables
- Measures of association
- Recoding variables

After completing these exercises, students should be prepared to conduct their own research on a suitable topic with these data.

Accessing SETUPS 2016

The website and online analysis utilities are available, without access restrictions at www.icpsr.umich.edu/instructors/setups2016

About the Authors

Charles Prysby is Professor of Political Science at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University in 1973. He has coauthored each of the Voting Behavior SETUPS packages, beginning with the first one which covered the 1972 election. He has also authored a number of other publications on elections, voting behavior, and political parties.

Carmine Scavo is Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in Political Science and Director of the MPA program at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in 1986. He has authored each of the Voting Behavior SETUPS since 1984. He has also published on voting behavior more broadly, e-government, federalism, and local governance.

Questions about SETUPS?

To reach the authors: Charles Prysby at prysby@uncg.edu or Carmine Scavo at scavoc@ecu.edu.

For questions about SETUPS or ICPSR's other teaching resources: Lynette Hoelter at lhoelter@umich.edu.