**Supplemental Information**

**A. Details on SFGS**

In 2020, David Lewis, Nolan McCarty, Mark Richardson, and the Partnership for Public Service collaborated to conduct the *Survey on the Future of Government Service*. They targeted all appointed and career federal executives working in non-advisory agencies headed by Senate-confirmed appointees.[[1]](#footnote-1) This includes all political appointees[[2]](#footnote-2), career members of the Senior Executive Service, all senior Foreign Service officers serving domestically, and comparable managers in agencies without these appointment authorities. It also includes other high level career managers that administered programs or agencies (i.e., GS 14-15 with specific titles). They relied on Leadership Directories’ Federal Government database[[3]](#footnote-3) to provide names and contact information for the target population.

In total, this procedure yielded a sample of 16,232 individuals. During 2020, most federal executives were working from home because of the global pandemic. This made letters and postcards infeasible since most respondents would not receive their work mail at home. The pandemic also made telephone calls difficult since most executives were working from home rather than the office. Researchers still tried to reach executives through calls to work numbers. Most of the 2020 survey involved electronic communications. The participation rate of the survey, fielded during the pandemic, was 11% (1,779 full or partial completes out of 16,232).[[4]](#footnote-4) Out of 1,779 respondents, there were 125 appointees (7%; 125/1,605) and 1,654 career professionals (11%; 1,654/14,627). These rates are comparable to most public opinion surveys (response rates for Gallup telephone surveys average around 7 percent; Marken 2018).

*Question Wordings*

The two questions included on the survey central to our study are:

* Of all the Senate committees, what committee’s jurisdiction overlaps most with the work of [your agency]?
  + **[RESPONDENTS PROVIDED WITH A DROP DOWN MENU OF ALL STANDING SENATE COMMITTEES]**
* Thinking of the following senators, how much priority have they given to making sure [your agency] is an effectively managed, well-run organization?
  + **[RESPONDENTS PROVIDED WITH 5 RANDOMLY SELECTED SENATORS FROM THE COMMITTEE THEY CHOSE AND PROMPTED TO EVALUATE EACH SENATOR ON A 1 (No priority) TO 5 (High priority) SLIDER SCALE; DON’T KNOW OPTION WAS ALSO PROVIDED]**

**B. Empirical Analysis**

To get a descriptive sense of how our respondents evaluated each senators’ degree of supportive oversight, we used the responses to estimate a two-parameter Bayesian item response theory (IRT) model.[[5]](#footnote-5) To account for how senators’ service on different committees might induce variance in respondents’ ratings, we included a multilevel structure whereby the “difficulty” parameter was estimated for each unique senator-committee dyad, and those dyads were further nested in senators and committees. The estimates we present in Figure 1 are those associated with the senator-level parameters; estimates and senator names on y-axis are color-coded according to the party with which each senator caucuses. Our model utilized 4 chains with 10000 iterations per chain (5000 for warm-up, 5000 for sampling). Diagnostics indicated convergence (i.e. all <1.10) and no divergent transitions.

**Table SI.1. Bayesian Multilevel Models of Senators’ Supportive Oversight of Agencies, 2020**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** | **(5)** | **(6)** |
| *Key Explanatory Factors* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| GOP Senator (0,1) | -0.42\*  (0.10) | -0.38\*  (0.10) | -0.33\* (0.11) | -0.30\*  (0.11) | -0.22 (0.13) | -0.28\* (0.13) |
| Agency Ideology (L, C) | 0.09  (0.06) | -0.04  (0.07) | 0.12  (0.07) | -0.03  (0.07) | 0.11  (0.07) | -0.03 (0.07) |
| GOP Sen\*Agency Ideology | - | 0.28\*  (0.05) | - | 0.32\* (0.06) | - | 0.32\* (0.06) |
| Ln(# of Project Grants) | - | - | 0.01  (0.02) | 0.01  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.01  (0.02) |
| GOP Sen\*  Ln(# of Project Grants) | - | - | - | - | -0.02 (0.01) | -0.00 (0.01) |
| *Senator Controls* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Election Year (0,1) | 0.41  (0.67) | 0.37  (0.67) | 0.79  (0.76) | 0.70  (0.73) | 0.89  (0.78) | 0.71  (0.73) |
| Vote Share Last Election | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) |
| Election\*Vote Share | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.00  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) |
| Seniority | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.02  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.02  (0.01) |
| Committee Chair (0,1) | 0.25\* (0.11) | 0.28\*  (0.11) | 0.27\*  (0.13) | 0.30\*  (0.12) | 0.28\*  (0.13) | 0.30\*  (0.12) |
| *Respondent Controls* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political Appointee (0,1) | 0.07  (0.14) | 0.07  (0.14) | 0.13  (0.19) | 0.14  (0.19) | 0.13  (0.19) | 0.13  (0.19) |
| Democrat (0,1) | 0.22\*  (0.10) | 0.18  (0.10) | 0.21  (0.12) | 0.16  (0.12) | 0.20  (0.11) | 0.16  (0.12) |
| Republican (0,1) | -0.44\* (0.14) | -0.40\*  (0.14) | -0.51\*  (0.17) | -0.47\*  (0.17) | -0.52\*  (0.17) | -0.47\*  (0.18) |
| Democrat Resp\*  GOP Senator | -0.59\* (0.09) | -0.50\*  (0.09) | -0.61\*  (0.11) | -0.50\*  (0.11) | -0.60\*  (0.11) | -0.50\*  (0.11) |
| Republican Resp\*  GOP Senator | 0.84\* (0.13) | 0.80\*  (0.13) | 0.85\*  (0.16) | 0.82\*  (0.15) | 0.87\*  (0.16) | 0.82\*  (0.15) |
| Respondents (N,) | (599, 0.79) | (599, 0.79) | (438, 0.79) | (438, 0.78) | (438, 0.79) | (438, 0.79) |
| Agencies (N,) | (130, 0.30) | (130, 0.31) | (105, 0.29) | (105, 0.31) | (105, 0.28) | (105, 0.30) |
| Senator/Committee Dyads (N,) | (299, 0.18) | (299, 0.17) | (277, 0.22) | (277, 0.18) | (277, 0.21) | (277, 0.18) |
| Senators (N,) | (96, 0.22) | (96, 0.22) | (96, 0.23) | (96, 0.23) | (96, 0.23) | (96, 0.23) |
| Committees (N,) | (16, 0.06) | (16, 0.07) | (15, 0.08) | (15, 0.08) | (15, 0.07) | (15, 0.07) |
| Total N | 1771 | 1771 | 1283 | 1283 | 1283 | 1283 |
| Residual | 0.76 | 0.76 | 0.77 | 0.76 | 0.77 | 0.76 |

Note: Cells contain coefficient estimates and standard errors. Asterisks indicate that the coefficients’ 95% credible intervals do not include zero. Model estimates from multilevel linear regression with observations at the respondent-senator-committee level. All models varying intercepts for respondents, the agencies in which respondents’ agencies are nested, each unique senator-committee dyad, committees, and senators. Models estimated using the **brms** package in **R** with 4 chains per model with 2000 iterations per chain (1000 iterations for warm-up, 1000 iterations for sampling). All models report no divergent transitions and <1.10 for all parameters.

**Table SI.2. Bayesian Multilevel Models of Senators’ Supportive Oversight of Agencies, 2020 (measuring preferences using DW-NOMINATE)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** | **(5)** | **(6)** |
| *Key Explanatory Factors* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| DW-NOMINATE (1st Dim) | -0.48\*  (0.10) | -0.41\*  (0.10) | -0.38\*  (0.12) | -0.33\*  (0.12) | -0.26  (0.14) | -0.29\*  (0.14) |
| Agency Ideology (L, C) | 0.09  (0.06) | 0.08  (0.06) | 0.12  (0.07) | 0.11  (0.07) | 0.12  (0.07) | 0.11  (0.07) |
| DW-NOMINATE \*  Agency Ideology | - | 0.33\*  (0.06) | - | 0.38\*  (0.07) | - | 0.37\*  (0.07) |
| Ln(# of Project Grants) | - | - | 0.01  (0.02) | 0.01  (0.02) | 0.01  (0.02) | 0.01  (0.02) |
| DW-NOMINATE \*  Ln(# of Project Grants) | - | - | - | - | -0.03  (0.02) | -0.01  (0.02) |
| *Senator Controls* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Election Year (0,1) | 0.21  (0.64) | 0.22  (0.62) | 0.67  (0.75) | 0.66  (0.70) | 0.72  (0.73) | 0.65  (0.69) |
| Vote Share Last Election | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) | 0.00  (0.01) |
| Election\*Vote Share | -0.00  (0.01) | -0.00  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) |
| Seniority | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.02  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.02  (0.01) |
| Committee Chair (0,1) | 0.23\*  (0.10) | 0.23\*  (0.10) | 0.24\*  (0.12) | 0.25\*  (0.11) | 0.25\*  (0.12) | 0.25\*  (0.11) |
| *Respondent Controls* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political Appointee (0,1) | 0.06  (0.14) | 0.08  (0.14) | 0.12  (0.19) | 0.12  (0.19) | 0.12  (0.19) | 0.12  (0.19) |
| Democrat (0,1) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.06  (0.11) | -0.07  (0.11) | -0.07  (0.10) | -0.07  (0.11) |
| Republican (0,1) | -0.08  (0.13) | -0.07  (0.13) | -0.15  (0.16) | -0.11  (0.15) | -0.15  (0.15) | -0.12  (0.15) |
| Democrat Resp\*  DW-NOMINATE | -0.65\*  (0.10) | -0.55\*  (0.11) | -0.66\*  (0.13) | -0.54\*  (0.13) | -0.65\*  (0.13) | -0.54\*  (0.13) |
| Republican Resp\*  DW-NOMINATE | 0.92\*  (0.14) | 0.87\*  (0.14) | 0.90\*  (0.18) | 0.86\*  (0.17) | 0.93\*  (0.18) | 0.86\*  (0.18) |
| Respondents (N,) | (599, 0.79) | (599, 0.79) | (438, 0.79) | (438, 0.79) | (438, 0.79) | (438, 0.79) |
| Agencies (N,) | (130, 0.30) | (130, 0.31) | (105, 0.29) | (105, 0.31) | (105, 0.30) | (105, 0.30) |
| Senator/Committee Dyads (N,) | (299, 0.18) | (299, 0.15) | (277, 0.23) | (277, 0.19) | (277, 0.22) | (277, 0.19) |
| Senators (N,) | (96, 0.20) | (96, 0.20) | (96, 0.21) | (96, 0.19) | (96, 0.21) | (96, 0.19) |
| Committees (N,) | (16, 0.07) | (16, 0.07) | (15, 0.08) | (15, 0.08) | (15, 0.08) | (15, 0.07) |
| Total N | 1771 | 1771 | 1283 | 1283 | 1283 | 1283 |
| Residual | 0.76 | 0.76 | 0.77 | 0.76 | 0.77 | 0.76 |

Note: Cells contain coefficient estimates and standard errors. Asterisks indicate that the coefficients’ 95% credible intervals do not include zero. Model estimates from multilevel linear regression with observations at the respondent-senator-committee level. All models varying intercepts for respondents, the agencies in which respondents’ agencies are nested, each unique senator-committee dyad, committees, and senators. Models estimated using the **brms** package in **R** with 4 chains per model with 2000 iterations per chain (1000 iterations for warm-up, 1000 iterations for sampling). All models report no divergent transitions and <1.10 for all parameters.

**References**

Bürkner Paul C. 2021. “Bayesian Item Response Modelling in R with brms and Stan”. *Journal of Statistical Software*. 100(5), 1–54.

Lewis, David E., and Jennifer L. Selin. 2012. *Sourcebook of United States Executive Agencies*. Report for the Administrative Conference of the United States.

Marken, Stephanie. 2018. *Still Listening: The State of Telephone Surveys*, Gallup Methodology Blog, January 11, 2018 (https://news.gallup.com/opinion/methodology/225143/listening-state-telephone-surveys.aspx.)

1. This includes bureaus and offices within the fifteen executive departments, agencies within the Executive Office of the President, and 66 federal agencies outside the executive departments. They used Lewis and Selin (2012) to create the list of workplaces. Agencies in the Executive Office of the President were identified using Table 1 of Lewis and Selin (2012). They excluded the Executive Residence, Office of Administration, and White House Office. Prominent bureaus and agencies within executive departments were identified using Table 2 of Lewis and Selin (2012). The research team made limited adjustments to this list based on which agencies and bureaus the team wanted to be able to analyze separately from the executive department as a whole. Agencies outside the executive departments were identified using Table 5 of Lewis and Selin (2012). Scholarship agencies, regional agencies, and non-profits and cooperatives were excluded. Other limited adjustments were made by the research team. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This includes all Senate-confirmed appointees (PAS), other presidential appointees not requiring Senate confirmation (PA), non-career SES (NA), and Schedule C (SC) appointees. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See: https://www.leadershipconnect.io/. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. We refer to the participation rate since many respondents started but did not complete the whole survey. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. We estimated this IRT model using the **R** package **brms**, which interfaces with the Stan programming language (Bürkner 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)