Capstone Workshop Program

School of International and Public Affairs / Columbia University

Terms of Reference

Between

*[IPSOS] [Project Director – Clifford Young]*

*and*

*[SIPA Capstone Workshop Faculty Advisor –Sharyn O’Halloran ]*

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| **Project Title:** | Election data: Analyzing the effectiveness and accuracy of Ipsos forecasting models |
| **Client Organization:** | IPSOS |
| **Client Project Director Contact Information:** | Clifford Young: President of Public Affairs in the US |

**Background:**

Ipsos ranks third in the global research industry. With a strong presence in 87 countries, Ipsos employs more than 16,000 people and has the ability to conduct research programs in more than 100 countries. Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is controlled and managed by research professionals. They have built a solid Group around a multi-specialist positioning – Media and advertising research; Marketing research; Client and employee relationship management; Opinion & social research; Mobile, Online, Offline data collection and delivery -. Ipsos has been listed on the Paris Stock Exchange since 1999.

**Objective:**

Proposed project would use collected Election data – both US and foreign – to test and analyze the effectiveness and accuracy of Ipsos forecasting models. Analysis of different models may be done through case study and best practice analysis. 

In places where no polling data exists or weak polling is available Ipsos uses a ‘fundamental model’ (or salad bowl model) that aggregates data from across multiple levels and puts this together to determine vote share and probability of victory of the incumbent. The benefit of this capstone project would be that it would take the ad hoc datasets that have already been developed and build out a complete dataset. Project can include multiple elections in various contexts with a focus on the United States election.

The goal of the project will be to create an improved database with a properly trained model accompanied with a supporting white paper.

**Tasks:**

Students will build off the basic R & D Ipsos has already developed but hasn’t been able to systematize. Ipsos will provide their model and the team will analyze the model and build out a more complete database.

**Deliverables and timetable:**

The goal of the project will be to create an improved database with a properly trained model accompanied with a supporting white paper.

General Timeline:

• Detailed work plan: first week of February, 2016

• Draft report outline: First week of March, 2016

• Draft report: Mid-April, 2016

• Final report: End of April, 2016

• Presentation of key findings: First week of May, 2016

**Preferred Qualifications:**

The students for this project must have excellent skills in statistics and big data analysis.

**Logistics:**

Ipsos will provide the following:

1. Initial articles written about the model
2. Initial data collected
3. Supporting literature
4. Internal documents