Appendix for Why Does the American National Election Study Overestimate Voter Turnout?

Simon Jackman and Bradley Spahn[*]

June 22, 2018

Appendix for *Political Analysis*

1 The ANES 2012 in-person survey

Face-to-face respondents to the 2012 ANES were sampled by a multi-stage cluster design. The design sought a minimum of 2,000 completed cases in 125 primary sampling units. A sampled tract in Native American-governed territory was dropped when it became apparent that a request to that territory's IRB for permission to conduct interviews there would not be considered ahead of the field period. Census tracts served as primary sampling units and were selected with probability proportional to population (as estimated by the 2012 Census), within nine strata (Census divisions). Over-samples of Latino and African-American respondents — 300 completed cases each — were also part of the design; census tracts known to have relatively high proportions of Latinos and/or African-Americans were selected for over-sampling. Within census tracts, households were randomly selected from the USPS computerized delivery sequence (CDS) file. In a small number of rural tracts, field enumeration was used to check for CDS under-coverage, resulting in 81 households being added to the sample. Given expectations about the target number of completed interviews and contact, eligibility and response rates, a total of 7,298 addresses were sampled. Field interviewers were trained in two batches, each batch spanning two days, in-person, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, conducted in the 2nd half of August 2012.

Sampled households were mailed an advance letter with a cover letter introducing the study (using the "cover name" discussed above) with a \$2 cash goodwill payment. 71% of the sample households were mailed an advance letter on August 29, 2012, with interviews commencing on September 9. Small releases of additional sample occurred throughout October 2012, with a relatively large release in late October comprising 14% of the sample.

If contact could be made with a sampled household, the interviewer first administered a short "screener" interview, obtaining a listing eligible potential respondents residing at the sampled household. The ANES target frame is adult, U.S. citizens residing in households. Seventeen year-olds who will turn eighteen before the election are part of the ANES frame. The minority over-samples involved screening for at least one adult citizen with the race/ethnicity appropriate to the particular over-sample. If there was more than one eligible potential respondent residing at the dwelling then one was selected randomly. A small number of selected individuals were not interviewed because they were mentally or physically incapable ($n = 32$) or spoke a language other than English or Spanish ($n = 17$).

In a large number of cases the sampled household is never contacted. Field interviewers reported that 6.1% of sampled addresses are unoccupied or vacation houses ($n = 448$). Some addresses are reported to be empty lots, vacant dwellings or new construction, or simply can't be located by the interviewer. Some rural addresses or densely urban addresses are ambiguous or unreliable. Apartment buildings are sometimes well-protected by doormen, or the address is in a gated community. 336 sampled addresses (4.6%) were located but unable to be accessed by the interviewer. Another 84 (1.2%) sampled dwellings were coded as "address does not exist". Other forms of non-contact account for another 1,125 sampled households (16.8% of the sample). All forms of non-contact amount to 32.6% of sampled households.

In some cases a screening interview was successfully conducted, only to discover that there are no eligible potential respondents in residence. No adult citizens were found at 259 (3.5%) of the sampled households. The more stringent eligibility criteria used for the minority oversamples resulted in 1,083 or 14.8% of our sampled households being deemed ineligible (accounting for 35.4% of the households in the minority

oversamples). Refusals before screening (12.9%), after screening and within-household random selection (3.3%) was also another common occurrence. In another 3.6% of cases the eligible person selected was never available to be interviewed.