

**UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS**  
**Government Department**  
**Texas Statewide Survey**

**Winter 2009 Instrument**  
**N=800 Adults**  
**Feb. 24 – March 6, 2009**

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**Interest and Engagement**

Q1. Are you registered to vote in the state of Texas?

1. Yes	<b>90%</b>
2. No	<b>10%</b>
3. Don't know	<b>0%</b>

Q2. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is extremely *uninterested*, 10 is extremely interested, and 5 is exactly in the middle, how interested, generally speaking, would you say you are politics and public affairs?

Enter a number between 0 and 10 **7.3 mean**

Q3. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all, 10 is extremely closely, and 5 is exactly in the middle, how closely would you say you will be following the Texas legislative session this year?

Enter a number between 0 and 10 **5.2 mean**

**Most Important Problem**

Q4. What would you say is the *most important problem* facing this country today? **(Open ended)**

1. The economy	<b>63%</b>
2. Growth of government (expanding scope of federal government, "socialism," etc.)	<b>6%</b>
3. Fiscal issues (federal spending, taxes, federal deficit)	<b>5%</b>
4. Social and moral issues	<b>4%</b>
5. Problems with the political system (partisanship, corruption, etc.)	<b>4%</b>
6. Immigration	<b>4%</b>
7. Health care	<b>3%</b>
8. New presidential administration	<b>3%</b>
9. National security/Terrorism	<b>1%</b>
10. Wars (Iraq and Afghanistan)	<b>0.5%</b>
11. Energy issues	<b>0.5%</b>
12. Miscellaneous	<b>3%</b>
13. Don't know/No response	<b>3%</b>

Q5. Thinking about the economy, what is the *most important economic challenge* facing the country today? (Split-sample: Half of respondents receive open-ended Q4; half receive multiple choices Q5.) **N=417**

1. Unemployment/Jobs	<b>37%</b>
2. Inflation/Prices	<b>5%</b>
3. Mortgages/Home ownership/foreclosures	<b>5%</b>
4. The federal budget deficit	<b>10%</b>
5. The national debt	<b>11%</b>
6. Banking crisis/Credit crunch	<b>13%</b>
7. Taxes	<b>5%</b>
8. Other (specify)	<b>12%</b>
9. Don't know	<b>2%</b>

Q6. What would you say is the *most important problem* facing the state of Texas today? (**Open ended**)

1. The economy and jobs	<b>32%</b>
2. Immigration and Border security	<b>25%</b>
3. Problems with the political system (partisanship, corruption, etc.)	<b>7%</b>
4. Education	<b>6%</b>
5. Housing problems	<b>3%</b>
6. Health care	<b>3%</b>
7. Energy issues	<b>3%</b>
8. Fiscal issues (taxes, spending, state budget)	<b>2%</b>
9. National issues	<b>2%</b>
10. Water/drought	<b>1%</b>
11. Social issues	<b>1%</b>
12. Infrastructure issues	<b>1%</b>
13. Crime	<b>1%</b>
14. The environment	<b>1%</b>
15. Miscellaneous	<b>2%</b>
16. Don't know/No response	<b>10%</b>

Q7: Thinking about the economy in Texas, what is the *most important economic challenge* facing the state today? (Split-sample: Half of respondents receive open-ended Q6; half receive multiple choices Q7.) **N=383**

1. Unemployment/Jobs	<b>34%</b>
2. Inflation/Prices	<b>10%</b>
3. Mortgages/Home ownership/foreclosures	<b>13%</b>
4. The federal budget deficit	<b>6%</b>
5. The national debt	<b>6%</b>
6. Banking crisis/Credit crunch	<b>13%</b>
7. Taxes	<b>5%</b>
8. Other (specify)	<b>8%</b>
9. Don't know	<b>5%</b>

**Feeling Thermometer Scores:** We'd like to get your feelings toward some political figures and groups using something we call a "feeling thermometer." A rating of 100 degrees means that you feel extremely favorable and warm toward the person or group. A rating of 0 degrees means that you feel extremely unfavorable and cold toward that same person/group. A rating of 50 degrees means that you feel neither particularly warm nor particularly cold. Or if you haven't heard enough about the person or group to provide a rating, just say so. On this 0 to 100 scale, how do you feel about... (Randomize, select 3 from Q8-Q14, all of Q15-Q18)

Q8. Barack Obama?	<b>53.2 mean; 39.64 stdv; N=331</b>
Q9. Sarah Palin?	<b>50.1 mean; 36.26 stdv; N=310</b>
Q10. Kay Bailey Hutchison?	<b>56.9 mean; 28.00 stdv; N=310</b>
Q11. John Cornyn?	<b>54.5 mean; 31.68 stdv; N=281</b>
Q12. Rick Perry?	<b>51.3 mean; 30.38 stdv; N=310</b>
Q13. Joe Straus	<b>44.4 mean; 23.68 stdv; N=166</b>
Q14. David Dewhurst	<b>50.8 mean; 24.68 stdv; N=193</b>

### **Vote Intention**

I'm going to give you some information about a few people who might be running for U.S. Senate from Texas if Kay Bailey Hutchison resigns her seat this year. For each, please tell me how likely you would be to vote for them using a 0-100 scale in which 100 means you would definitely vote for them, 0 means you would definitely not vote for them, and 50 means you are equally divided on whether to vote for them or not. (Randomize Q15-Q22)

Q15. Roger Williams (Republican) is a former Texas Secretary of State and served as chair of the Texas Republican Party's 2008 campaign committee. He is a former college baseball star from Texas Christian University who embarked on a career in business and public affairs after playing and coaching baseball.

**44.1 mean**

Q16. David Dewhurst (Republican) is the current Lieutenant Governor of Texas and former Texas Land Commissioner. He is a rancher from Houston, a former officer in the U.S. Air Force, and also worked for the CIA.

**48.5 mean**

Q17. Greg Abbott (Republican) is the first Republican Attorney General of Texas since reconstruction. Abbott is from Duncanville and previously served as a state trial judge and Texas Supreme Court justice. He was disabled in a jogging accident shortly after earning his law degree and is bound to a wheelchair.

**51.4 mean**

Q18. Michael Williams (Republican) is currently Chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission. He is the first African American to hold statewide elective office in Texas. Williams began his career as an assistant district attorney in Midland. He later served as a federal prosecutor and was Assistant Secretary of Education for Civil rights under President George H. W. Bush.

**47.7 mean**

Q19. Florence Shapiro (Republican) is a member of the Texas Senate. Before her election to the state senate, Shapiro was a mayor and city council member in Plano, and a public school teacher.

**44.3 mean**

Q20. John Sharp (Democrat) is a former Texas State Comptroller for two terms and also served in the Texas House of Representatives, Texas Senate, and Texas Railroad Commission. He was born in Placedo, graduated from Texas A&M, and served in the U.S. Army Reserves. He currently heads a tax consulting firm and was chair of the 2005 Texas Tax Reform Commission.

**47.2 mean**

Q21. Bill White (Democrat) was twice elected Mayor of Houston. White is a plaintiff attorney who graduated from the University of Texas Law School after earning a B.A. from Harvard. He served as U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy under President Clinton and has organized several oil and gas development companies.

**45.4 mean**

Q22. Elizabeth Ames Jones (Republican) is a member of the Texas Railroad Commission. She is the second woman to win election to the railroad commission. Prior to serving on the commission, Jones represented northern San Antonio as a member of the Texas House of Representatives.

**44.8 mean**

### Hypothetical Senate Match-ups

Hypothetical senate election match-ups are calculated by comparing the percentage of respondents who rated their likelihood of voting for one candidate higher than the other. Respondents who did not rate the candidates or rated the candidates equally are considered "undecided." **N=715, MOE +/- 3.66**

#### Republicans v. John Sharp (D)

Greg Abbott	36%	<b>(Abbot +8)</b>
John Sharp	28%	
Undecided	36%	
Michael Williams	33%	<b>(M. Williams +3)</b>
John Sharp	30%	
Undecided	37%	
Elizabeth Ames Jones	33%	<b>(Jones +2)</b>
John Sharp	31%	
Undecided	37%	
David Dewhurst	34%	<b>(Dewhurst +1)</b>
John Sharp	33%	
Undecided	33%	
Florence Shapiro	31%	<b>(Shapiro -1)</b>
John Sharp	32%	
Undecided	37%	

Roger Williams	29%	<b>(R. Williams -4)</b>
John Sharp	33%	
Undecided	38%	

**Republicans v. Bill White (D)**

Greg Abbott	37%	<b>(Abbot +9)</b>
Bill White	28%	
Undecided	36%	

Michael Williams	35%	<b>(M. Williams +4)</b>
Bill White	31%	
Undecided	34%	

Elizabeth Ames Jones	33%	<b>(Jones +3)</b>
Bill White	30%	
Undecided	37%	

David Dewhurst	38%	<b>(Dewhurst +2)</b>
Bill White	36%	
Undecided	26%	

Florence Shapiro	32%	<b>(Shapiro +1)</b>
Bill White	31%	
Undecided	37%	

Roger Williams	31%	<b>(R. Williams -2)</b>
Bill White	33%	
Undecided	38%	

**State Retrospective Assessments**

Q23. Overall, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of the way Rick Perry has been handling his job as governor?

1. Approve strongly	<b>11%</b>
2. Approve somewhat	<b>28%</b>
3. Neither approve nor disapprove	<b>27%</b>
4. Disapprove somewhat	<b>17%</b>
5. Disapprove strongly	<b>17%</b>

Q24. Overall, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of the job the Texas state legislature is doing?

1. Approve strongly	<b>4%</b>
2. Approve somewhat	<b>26%</b>
3. Neither approve nor disapprove	<b>40%</b>
4. Disapprove somewhat	<b>24%</b>
5. Disapprove strongly	<b>6%</b>

## Broader Retrospective Assessments

Q25. Overall, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

- |                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Approve strongly               | 29% |
| 2. Approve somewhat               | 16% |
| 3. Neither approve nor disapprove | 13% |
| 4. Disapprove somewhat            | 12% |
| 5. Disapprove strongly            | 30% |

Q26. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?

- |                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Approve strongly               | 4%  |
| 2. Approve somewhat               | 22% |
| 3. Neither approve nor disapprove | 22% |
| 4. Disapprove somewhat            | 15% |
| 5. Disapprove strongly            | 37% |

Q27. Thinking about the 2010 primary elections in Texas, do you think that you will:

- |                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Vote in the Republican Primary | 38% |
| 2. Vote in the Democratic Primary | 33% |
| 3. Not Vote                       | 9%  |
| 4. Don't Know                     | 20% |

Q28. If the 2010 Republican Primary election for governor were held today, would you vote for [rotate names] Rick Perry, Kay Bailey Hutchison, someone else, or haven't you thought about it enough to have an opinion?" (Only registered GOP primary voters from Q31 and Q1) **N=277, MOE +/- 5.89**

- |                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| 1. Perry        | 29% |
| 2. Hutchison    | 37% |
| 3. Someone else | 10% |
| 4. Undecided    | 24% |

Q29. Compared to a year ago, would you say that the country is economically

- |                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. A lot better off       | 2%  |
| 2. Somewhat better off    | 4%  |
| 3. About the same         | 13% |
| 4. Somewhat worse off, or | 33% |
| 5. A lot worse off?       | 48% |

Q30. What about you? Compared to a year ago, would you say that you and your family are economically

- |                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. A lot better off       | 3%  |
| 2. Somewhat better off    | 14% |
| 3. About the same         | 42% |
| 4. Somewhat worse off, or | 27% |
| 5. A lot worse off?       | 14% |

## Policy Views

Next we are going to ask some questions about your opinions on policy issues:

Q31. Overall, do you support or oppose reinstating legislative control over tuition rates at Texas public colleges and universities?

- |                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| 1. Strongly support | <b>19%</b> |
| 2. Somewhat support | <b>28%</b> |
| 3. Somewhat oppose  | <b>16%</b> |
| 4. Strongly opposed | <b>10%</b> |
| 5. Don't know       | <b>27%</b> |

Q32. The State Board of Education has been discussing whether or how to include the teaching of creationism or intelligent design as alternative theories to evolution in public schools. Which of the following is closest to your view of how such theories should be taught in schools?

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. They should not be included at all                                    | <b>23%</b> |
| 2. They should be included as competing theories                         | <b>45%</b> |
| 3. They should replace evolution as the main theories taught to students | <b>13%</b> |
| 4. Don't know  | <b>19%</b> |

Q33. Which of the following education proposals would you *most* like to see enacted?

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Increasing the number of charter schools in Texas  | <b>7%</b>  |
| 2. Creating a government financial aid or public school "voucher" program to help parents send their child to a private or religious school | <b>19%</b> |
| 3. Increasing funding and access to pre-K programs at Texas public schools  | <b>9%</b>  |
| 4. Increasing teacher salaries  | <b>27%</b> |
| 5. Allocating new funding to the poorest school districts in Texas  | <b>16%</b> |
| 6. There should be no new education spending in this legislative session  | <b>11%</b> |
| 7. Don't know   | <b>11%</b> |

Q34. In your opinion, who should be primarily responsible for setting academic standards for public schools?

- |                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| 1. National government | <b>16%</b> |
| 2. State government    | <b>41%</b> |
| 3. Local school boards | <b>31%</b> |
| 4. Don't know          | <b>12%</b> |

Q35. Generally speaking, do you think standardized tests are an unbiased measure of a student’s academic abilities, or do you think they are biased against black and Hispanic students, and students from low-income households?

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Standardized tests are unbiased measures               | <b>50.5%</b> |
| 2. Standardized tests are biased against certain students | <b>32.5%</b> |
| 3. Don’t know   | <b>17%</b>   |

Q36. Under current Texas law, students graduating in the top 10% of their high school class are guaranteed admittance to the Texas public university of their choice. Opponents of this “top 10% rule” argue that too many students qualify for automatic admission, giving universities almost no discretion over their own admissions and leaving very few openings for other students to gain admission to Texas public universities. Supporters of the “top 10% rule” argue that it has helped to increase the number of minorities and students from low-income households admitted to Texas public universities. If the Texas legislature were to reconsider the “top 10% rule,” what is your opinion on what the legislature should do?

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Leave the “top 10% rule” as it currently is  | <b>33%</b> |
| 2. Raise the bar to the top 5% of a high school graduating class                      | <b>17%</b> |
| 3. Cap the number of students eligible for college admission under the “top 10% rule” | <b>8%</b>  |
| 4. Eliminate the “top 10% rule” altogether  | <b>22%</b> |
| 5. Don’t know   | <b>20%</b> |

Q37. What is your opinion concerning the amount of state revenue that should be used to make education at state colleges and universities more affordable for Texans?

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. State revenues should be increased to make college education more affordable <i>for all Texans</i>                 | <b>46%</b> |
| 2. State revenues should be increased to make college education more affordable <i>for only the most needy Texans</i> | <b>15%</b> |
| 3. State revenues should stay the same with no changes in the affordability of college education for Texans           | <b>14%</b> |
| 4. State revenues should be decreased even if it means making college education more expensive for Texans             | <b>6%</b>  |
| 5. Don’t know   | <b>19%</b> |

Q38. Gambling policy is expected to be a hot topic in the state legislature this year. Which of the following gambling policy proposals would you most support?

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Banning all gambling and gaming in Texas                               | <b>12%</b> |
| 2. Leaving current gambling laws unchanged                                | <b>17%</b> |
| 3. Allowing limited expansion of gambling, but only in existing locations | <b>13%</b> |
| 4. Expanding gambling but only to Indian reservations                     | <b>6%</b>  |
| 5. Allowing full casino gambling in Texas                                 | <b>40%</b> |
| 6. Don’t know   | <b>12%</b> |



Immigration reform is also on the 2009 legislative agenda. Please tell us whether you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the following proposals. If you neither support nor oppose, please feel free to say so:

IMMIGRATION	STRONG SUPPORT	SW SUPPORT	SW OPPOSE	STRONG OPPOSE	DK/REF/N A
Q39. Ending in-state tuition at Texas public colleges and universities for undocumented or illegal immigrants.	59%	10%	7%	13%	11%
Q40. Passing an English-only amendment to the Texas constitution.	43%	16%	10%	23%	8%
Q41. Requiring businesses to verify the immigration status of every worker and fine businesses if they are caught intentionally employing undocumented or illegal immigrants.	63%	15%	8%	7%	7%
Q42. Ending bilingual education in Texas public schools.	34%	14%	16%	30%	6%

Q43. Every ten years states redraw the boundaries of congressional and legislative districts based on new Census figures in a process called redistricting. Currently the state legislature and governor are primarily responsible for redistricting. Would you favor or oppose a change in state law that removed redistricting authority from the legislature and governor, giving it instead to an independent, appointed commission?

- |               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| 1. Favor      | 40% |
| 2. Oppose     | 22% |
| 3. Don't know | 38% |

Q44. Some people argue that requiring registered voters to present government-issued photo identification at the polls reduces voter fraud and does not place major obstacles on anyone who is legally entitled to vote. Other people argue that such a requirement has a negligible effect on voter fraud but places significant obstacles on elderly, low-income, disabled, and minority voters. Do you agree or disagree with the idea that registered voters should be required to present a government-issued photo id at the polls before they can be allowed to vote?

- |               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| 1. Agree      | 69% |
| 2. Disagree   | 18% |
| 3. Don't know | 13% |

PID. Generally speaking, would you say that you usually think of yourself as a...

1. Strong Democrat	<b>21%</b>
2. Not very strong Democrat	<b>11%</b>
3. Independent, leaning Democrat	<b>8%</b>
4. Independent	<b>13%</b>
5. Independent, leaning Republican	<b>11%</b>
6. Not very strong Republican	<b>10%</b>
7. Strong Republican	<b>22%</b>
8. Not Sure	<b>4%</b>

We're nearly done now. Here are some questions to which not everyone may know the right answer. If you come to one to which you don't know the right answer, don't worry about it. Just mark "couldn't say" and move on to the next one.

INFO1. Which party is the majority party in the Texas State House of Representatives?

1. The Democrats	<b>18%</b>
2. The Republicans	<b>57%</b>
3. Neither	<b>2%</b>
4. Don't know	<b>23%</b>

INFO2. The Texas Lieutenant Governor is an appointed position.

1. True	<b>30%</b>
2. False	<b>41%</b>
3. Don't know	<b>29%</b>

INFO3. Voters are currently legally required to present a government-issued photo ID in order to legally vote:

1. True	<b>42%</b>
2. False	<b>49%</b>
3. Don't know	<b>9%</b>

CONTACT. Political parties, interest groups, and candidates are increasingly using new electronic techniques to communicate with people. Please think back over the past year and indicate if you have received emails, text messages, online social network or other electronic communications, not including telephone calls, from any of the following. *Please indicate ALL that apply, you can select more than one.* (Examples of each category are offered to respondents)

1. National politician or candidate	<b>49%</b>
2. State politician or candidate	<b>40%</b>
3. Local politician or candidate	<b>22%</b>
4. National political party	<b>36%</b>
5. State political party	<b>24%</b>
6. Local-level political party or club	<b>14%</b>
7. National political interest group	<b>28%</b>
8. State-level political interest group	<b>17%</b>
9. Local-level political interest group	<b>12%</b>

INVOLVE1. People participate in the political system in many different ways. Please think back over the past year and indicate if you have done any of the following. *Please mark ALL that apply.*

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| 1. Voted in an election  | <b>80.0%</b> |
| 2. Publicly supported a political candidate (example: display a bumper sticker)      | <b>35%</b>   |
| 3. Joined an online social network group supporting a political candidate            | <b>20%</b>   |
| 4. Forwarded an email from a political party, candidate, or interest group to others | <b>35%</b>   |
| 5. Encouraged others to vote for a particular candidate                              | <b>51%</b>   |
| 6. Volunteered for a political campaign  | <b>9%</b>    |
| 7. Attended a political rally, protest, or event                                     | <b>13%</b>   |
| 8. Contacted an elected official to express an opinion                               | <b>30%</b>   |
| 9. Donated money to a political candidate  | <b>22%</b>   |
| 10. Donated money to a political party organization                                  | <b>14%</b>   |
| 11. Donated money to a political interest group                                      | <b>8%</b>    |

INVOLVE2. People often discuss politics informally in many different settings. Please think back over the past year and indicate whether you heard or took part in a conversation involving politics in any of the following settings. *Please mark ALL that apply.*

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Office or workplace                                | <b>51%</b> |
| 2. Informally with friends or family                  | <b>81%</b> |
| 3. Civic or charitable club or organization           | <b>9%</b>  |
| 4. Social club or organization                        | <b>14%</b> |
| 5. Recreational or sporting event or club             | <b>17%</b> |
| 6. Business or labor association                      | <b>8%</b>  |
| 7. A child's school or related activity               | <b>10%</b> |
| 8. Church or religious organization                   | <b>20%</b> |
| 9. Political club or organization                     | <b>7%</b>  |
| 10. Online social network such as MySpace or Facebook | <b>22%</b> |
| 11. Online blog                                       | <b>17%</b> |

## Demographics

Finally, a few questions for statistical purposes...

CHILD. How many children do you have currently living with you? (If you don't have any just enter 0.)

- |    |            |
|----|------------|
| 0. | <b>64%</b> |
| 1. | <b>15%</b> |
| 2. | <b>13%</b> |
| 3. | <b>7%</b>  |
| 4. | <b>1%</b>  |

ATTEND. Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services?

More than once a week.	<b>12%</b>
Once a week.	<b>19%</b>
A few times a month.	<b>13%</b>
Once or twice a year.	<b>23%</b>
Never.	<b>24%</b>
Prefer not to say.	<b>9%</b>

RACE. What race do you consider yourself to be?

White	<b>53%</b>
African American	<b>10%</b>
Hispanic or Latino	<b>31%</b>
Asian/Pacific Islander	<b>1%</b>
Native American	<b>1%</b>
Multi-racial	<b>2%</b>
Don't know/Refused/NA	<b>2%</b>

ETHNIC. [Ask if RACE = "Hispanic or Latino"] People of Hispanic or Latino origin come to the United States from many different countries. From which country do you trace your Hispanic or Latino heritage? (If you trace your heritage from more than one country, please select your primary country of origin.)

Mexican	<b>73%</b>
Puerto Rican	<b>3%</b>
Cuban	<b>1%</b>
Dominican	<b>0%</b>
Salvadoran	<b>2%</b>
Other Central American	<b>3%</b>
Other South American	<b>1%</b>
Spain	<b>10%</b>
Other	<b>3%</b>
Don't know/Refused/NA	<b>4%</b>

PREFER. [Ask if RACE = "Hispanic or Latino"] Thinking about yourself, which term do you prefer to describe your racial or ethnic heritage?

Hispanic	<b>68%</b>
Latino	<b>9%</b>
Chicano	<b>9%</b>
A national identifier (such as Mexican American, Cuban American, Mexicano, Salvadoran, or something similar)	<b>14%</b>