I promise there will be no singing of "Over the Rainbow"

Scene List

- Background of the Survey
- Locating Modes
- Survey Modes in 2008
- ATAC System
- Impact of Modes on Response Rates

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U

Background

- The National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG) is one of three demographic surveys that make up the National Science Foundation's Scientists and Engineers Statistical Data System (SESTAT)
  - Other two SESTAT surveys are Survey of Doctorate Recipients (SDR) and National Survey of Recent College Graduates (NSRCG)
- For more information, visit… http://sestat.nsf.gov

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This is a database of information about the employment, educational, and demographic characteristics of scientists and engineers in the US

Information used to support a variety of policies and research on workforce issues in Science and Engineering fields

National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG)

- Longitudinal workforce study conducted for the National Science Foundation (NSF)
- Sample of individuals with a baccalaureate or higher degree in science and engineering (S&E) or S&E related field
- Provides data on the number and characteristics of experienced individuals with education and/or employment in S&E or S&E related fields in the United States

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Longitudinal study

All respondents have a bachelors degree or higher in a science or engineering field

This year is that 35,000 from the sample taken from the old cohort.

65,000 have been added from the American Community Survey (ACS).

This survey is collected under the authority of the **Nat'l Science Foundation Act of 1950**, requiring a "source of information to be kept for policy formulation by other agencies of the Federal Government…"

Information collected includes
• working status,
• past employment,
• work-related training,
• further education, and
• general demographic information.

The information we provide is used by
- university administrators,
- government policy makers,
- recruiters, and
- students.

What Is Best for *You*?

- Mail Survey
- Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI)
- Web Survey (will be offered for the first time in the 2010 NSCG)

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How is this applicable to this session?

As you can see, NSCG uses 3 methods of interviewing.

•Began asking mode preference in 2003 NSCG in order to provide the respondents with response options

•Mode preference question added to increase response rate as well as to maintain it by honoring their preference and make it easier for them to do the survey.

As well, the NSCG uses several tactics in its locating efforts.

Dorothy? Who's Dorothy?
Locating Modes

- Locating in three stages
  - NCOALink/Telematch
  - Upfront (Non-Intrusive)
    - Focus: find a good mailable address
    - Update bad addresses
  - Interactive (Intrusive)
    - Focus: find a good phone number
    - Locating system connected to CATI, so it is possible to take an interview during this stage of locating

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Because the NSCG is a longitudinal survey, we use respondents whom have participated in previous rounds. The exceptions are those introduced to the sample during the decennial-year round.

Research is critical to a high response rate. Without good locating, the survey will not succeed.

NCOALink is a service of the USPS and is used to standardize addresses to USPS standards, identify movers, and flag potential movers and invalid addresses. This system only tracks moves that have occurred over the past 18 months.

Non-Intrusive

Because mailing is the cheaper survey mode, this locating stage is very important in collecting valid addresses

Locators use the internet, with sites such as FastData, google, whitepages, etc to update the address. Telephone numbers CAN be collected in this effort, but are not the focus.

Intrusive

Make calls to assist in locating

Can contact the contact persons

Can collect the interview over the phone if sample person is reached

Note: Locating efforts are especially important in the upcoming 2010 round because the information we are receiving from ACS (American Community Survey) is LESS than complete. The only guarantee is a name.

<u>Employer</u> was most useful piece of historical data when locating individuals

Follow the Yellow Brick Road
Survey Modes in 2008

- Mail Questionnaire
- CATI

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Mail – preferred mode because of cost.

CATI – programmed through a spec tracker called SPIDER and the final survey produced from Blaise software

2008 Survey Methodology

|	
September 26	Advance letter sent
October 3	Questionnaire package mailed
October 6	CATI began
October 10	Postcard reminder
November 14	Second mailing of questionnaire package
November 21	Email reminder
December 8	CATI nonresponses sent a mail package
December 10	CATI follow-up of mail nonresponses
March 1	Shortened interview activated
April 30	Survey closeout

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2008 NSCG was designed by NSF as a self-administered mail survey with telephone follow up of mail non-respondents.

> •A small number of people who responded in 2006 as preferring telephone started as a CATI case.

Data collection began with an advance letter mailing to over 67,000 individuals. On October 3rd, a questionnaire package was sent to all individuals whom were not sent directly to CATI.

When CATI sample expanded, respondents were called less frequently, on average once every 4 weeks.
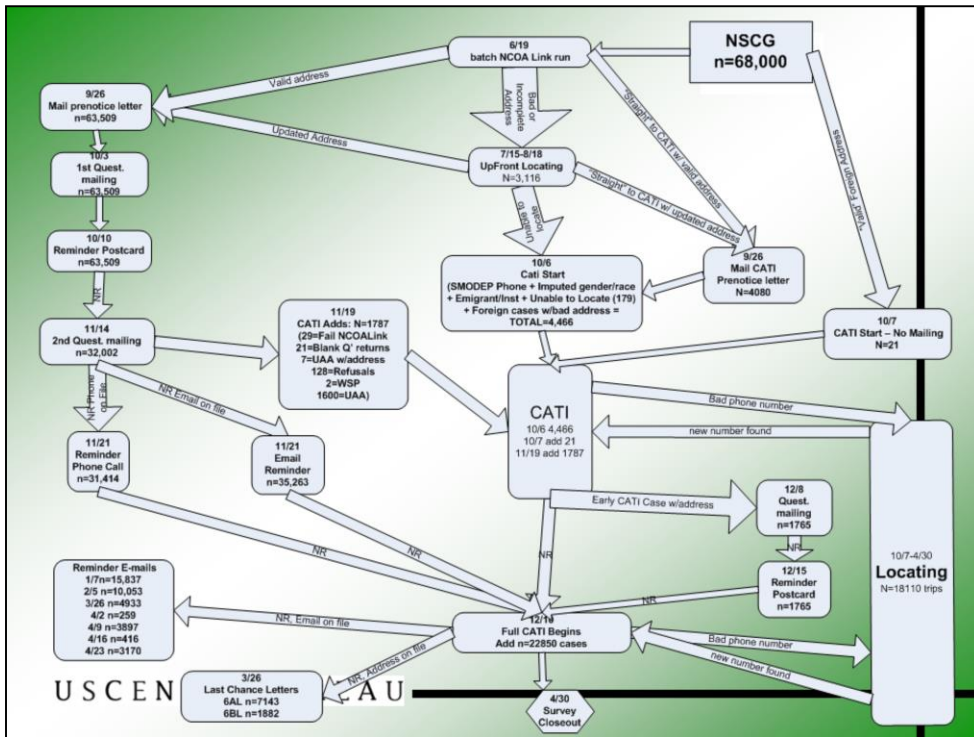
Start in top right corner.

Why, Oh Why, Can't I?
Answering Respondents' Questions

- Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA)
- Automated Tracking and Control (ATAC) System

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TQA – all mailings and email offered a toll-free phone number and email address to all respondents, for them to contact with answers to their questions.

Top reason for calling TQA was **"Reported telephone number change"**

Top reason for emailing TQA was **"Reported email change"**

ATAC –

•Check in and classify incoming paper materials (UAAs, correspondences, returned questionnaires)

•Track the location of each completed paper questionnaire

•Enter information on incoming calls

　　•Purpose of call, data collection mode, etc

•Update name, address, telephone number, and/or email addresses from info received

•Enter and process NSCG re-mail requests (because people are just THAT excited to fill out this questionnaire)

Preferred Response Modes: 2008 NSCG Sample

Mode Preference*	Frequency	%
Mail Questionnaire	20,882	30.7%
Web questionnaire	23,470	34.5%
Telephone interview	3,110	4.6%
No preference	6,864	10.1%
No response	13,674	20.1%
Total	**68,000**	**100%**

* Question was asked in 2006 about how the respondents would like to respond to survey in the future.

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These are the answers to the mode preference question for all 68,000 cases selected into the 2008 NSCG.

Why so many unknown? This is because they either

1) completed a 2006 RCG mail questionnaire and were never asked mode preference, or

2) left the question blank or refused to answer.

Results: 2008 NSCG Mode Preference Response Rates by Treatment

Group – Initially Assigned Contact Mode	Response Rate at 8 weeks (in assigned mode)	Final Response Rate (in assigned mode)	Final Response Rate (in either mode)
1 – CATI	62.59%***	74.32%***	85.85%
2 – Mail	32.04%***	46.93%***	84.28%
Overall	**47.23%**	**60.57%**	**85.06%**

*** Comparison of CATI and Mail response rates for mode preference study group cases is significant at the .01 level of significance.

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Significant at the .01 level of significance.

Assigned Mode - does NOT include ineligible cases along with cases that completed a questionnaire in a different mode than assigned. However, cases that completed a questionnaire in a mode other than that assigned are included in the denominator, since they are still technically a complete case.

Final response rates (in either mode) - do NOT include ineligible cases, but DO INCLUDE cases that complete a questionnaire in a different mode than assigned.

***It should be noted that final response rates increased more for group 2, the mail mode group, than for group 1, the CATI mode group, when both response modes were considered rather than just the assigned mode. This could be an indication of the effect that the more direct and repetitive nature of CATI contacts has on response rates compared to the indirect nature of mail contacts.

Less change for CATI cases final response rate between "assigned mode" and "either mode" partly because there were limited mailings sent to early CATI

cases. One was sent directly after the 8 week study period, and then mailings were only sent if a new address was found in locating or if the sample person requested a re-mail.

Mode Preference Conclusions

- Offering respondent's preferred mode had an positive initial impact on response rates, reducing follow-up costs.
- Once both mail and CATI response options were made available, there was no significance in the final response rate due to extensive non-response follow-up efforts.

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Through this experiment, we can conclude that offering the preferred mode seemed to have an **initial impact on response rates**, but did **NOT have an impact in the overall response rates** once all response mode options were taken into account. This trend could be explained by the common follow-up contacts made in both modes after eight weeks.

This difference could also be attributed to **differing levels of non-response and non-contact follow-up efforts** between modes within the first 8 weeks of data collection.

***A **higher number of phone calls** = **higher initial response rates**.

CATI assigned respondents' data collected faster means better quality data by reducing the recall time between survey reference and interview dates.

Click your Heels Three Times and…
Future Developments

- **Web survey option**

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