PREDICTABLE POLITICS:
Whether Undergraduate Students’ College Majors Relate to their Sociopolitical Views at Olivet Nazarene University

By Joshua Dille
Statistics at Olivet Nazarene University:

- The average Engineering major is *more politically conservative* than the average Art major.
Statistics at Olivet Nazarene University:

- The average Nursing major is more politically liberal on economic issues than the average Business Administration major.
Statistics at Olivet Nazarene University:

- The average Psychology major is more pro-choice than the average Elementary Education major.
Statistics at Olivet Nazarene University:

- The average Social Work major is *more supportive of government-provided healthcare* than the average Accounting major.
Introduction

- What can one learn about a student based on their college major?
- Compared to their peers in the same discipline, how alike are they?
- Relationship between students’ college major and political stance
Hypothesis & Predictions

- Patterns of sociopolitical orientation among students sharing the same college major
  - Statistically significant differences between major groups
  - Accounting, Business Administration, and Engineering the most conservative majors studied
  - Art, Nursing, Psychology, and Social Work the most liberal majors studied

- Greater levels of conservatism overall present at ONU, compared to secular institutions previously studied
Survey Contents

- Demographic Information
  - age, gender, major, year in school, ethnicity, & voter status

- Self-Assessment Questions
  - Social, Economic, & General views

- Issue-Based Questions
  - Abortion, Same-Sex Marriage, Marijuana, Racial Discrimination, Income Inequality, Government Medical Insurance, Business Regulation, & Government Services
Methods

Participants

- 1267 total responses, 702 analyzed
- 12 majors with largest sample sizes selected for analysis
- 61% female, 39% male
- 85% White, 5% Black, 6% Hispanic, 2% Asian
- 77% registered to vote in their home state
Methods

- Procedure
  - *Survey distributed in September 2016 to all ONU undergrads*
  - *Survey incentive*
  - 42% response rate

- One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in SPSS
  - *Independent Variable: College Major*
  - *Dependent Variable(s): Self-Assessment and Issue-Based Questions*
Results

- Statistically Significant Differences (p < 0.05)
- Significant Differences between the 12 major groups in 7/11 questions
“Which point on this scale best describes your political views when it comes to economic issues—things like taxes and the economy?”

1=liberal, 5=conservative
General Views Self Assessment (p=0.014)

"Which point on this scale best describes your political views generally?"
1=liberal, 5=conservative

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<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
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<td>Social Work</td>
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Abortion Issue
(p=0.019)

“A woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.”
1=disagree, 5=agree
“Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America.”
1=disagree, 5=agree
Income Inequality (p=0.001)

“Government should lessen the gap between rich and poor.”
1=disagree, 5=agree
“There should be a government insurance plan that would cover all medical and hospital expenses for everyone.”
1=disagree, 5=agree
Government Services
(p=0.001)

“The government should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living.”
1=disagree, 5=agree
Questions with No Statistical Significance

- Self-Assessment on Social Views
- Issue-Based Questions
  - Same-Sex Marriage
  - Marijuana
  - Business Regulation
Discussion

- Confirmed: Significant Relationship between Major and Sociopolitical Views
  - *Holland’s Theory of Person-Environment Fit*
    - Self-Selection
    - Socialization
    - Accentuation

- Confirmed: “Predictable” Major Groups
  - Accounting, Business Administration, Engineering
  - Art, Nursing, Psychology, & Social Work
Discussion

- Comparison between University of Minnesota study and *Predictable Politics*

![Comparison between University of Minnesota study and Predictable Politics](image)
Conclusion

- Predictable Politics! Identifiable patterns between major groups and sociopolitical views.
- Filling a gap in the research on Person-Environment Fit
Q & A