

SAPOR NEWSLETTER

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SUMMER ISSUE

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Southern Association for Public Opinion Research

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT MANSOUR FAHIMI, PRESIDENT

Hoping that your summer is off to a great start, I'd like to start this newsletter by recognizing the excellent job of the AAPOR organizing committee for planning and delivering an outstanding 37th annual conference in Orlando, Florida this past May. The survey research community is fortunate to have access to this unique venue, whereby in a few short days we can catch up with the latest techniques and methods directly relevant to our professional careers. In addition to a long list of interesting sessions dealing with current challenges in public opinion research, the plenary session provided a timely examination of the value of non-probability sampling methods in social research. Indeed, time has come for our survey research scientists and practitioners to take a fresh look at alternative methods that can deal more effectively with the three growing problems of undercoverage, nonresponse, and cost.

In light of the above, I am pleased to remind you that our upcoming annual SAPOR conference this year will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina, on Thursday, October 4 and Friday, October 5. This conference, which will focus on *Thinking Outside of the Traditional Survey Research Toolbox*, is one of the very few local venues where social science researchers from our community will present their latest works and receive invaluable feedback from seasoned practitioners and methodologists. Without such external interactions, we are susceptible to academic abstraction and focus on topics that may have little or no practical utility.

Information about abstract submission and additional details about our conference are available at the SAPOR website:

<http://www.southernassociationforpublicopinionresearch.org>. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me or our Conference Chair, Amber Rumsey, via phone 919-541-6563 or email arumsey@rti.org.

Best Wishes,
Mansour Fahimi
2011-2012 SAPOR President

SAPOR AT AAPOR
MANSOUR FAHIMI, PRESIDENT
GRETCHEN MCHENRY, CONFERENCE VICE-CHAIR
ADAM SAGE, TREASURER

One of the highlights of the AAPOR annual conference is New Member & All-Chapter Reception that is held each year, where various chapters are given an opportunity to meet and greet their current and future members. As such, it was a pleasure for the SAPOR Officers to represent our chapter and invite folks to our upcoming annual conference. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who visited our booth and encourage others to pay us a visit next year.

This year's annual conference displayed a wide variety of paper presentations, posters, and demonstrations that provided insights to the work of those "thinking outside of the traditional survey research toolbox." Many of these new approaches included innovative uses of mobile technologies and social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as creative approaches to address issues in public opinion and survey research, such as declining response rates. While there were plenty of lively discussions and debates regarding the role of such developments and innovations, it was reassuring to see an engaged audience becoming involved in the type of research we hope to see at our upcoming 2012 SAPOR annual conference in Raleigh, NC.

Additionally, representatives from all chapters had an opportunity to meet and discuss issues and challenges, as well as share ideas for improving the functioning and expansion of local chapter activities. This meeting was led by the Membership and Chapter Relations Chair, Joseph Murphy of RTI International, and Liz Hamel of the Kaiser Family Foundation. While the experience of gleaning innovative ideas from other chapters is fully appreciated, we look forward to your participation and suggestions to make our chapter stronger and more active.

UPDATE FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR

AMBER RUMSEY, CONFERENCE CHAIR



In recent years, emerging technology has made an impact on how social scientists collect and analyze data. SAPOR's theme for this year will be *Thinking Outside of the Traditional Survey Research Toolbox*. This year's theme is intended to encourage development of transformative tools and techniques that can accommodate our changing survey research landscape. We are looking forward to the exchange of ideas, best practices, and lessons learned amongst our colleagues.

We are excited to welcome Dr. Charles DiSogra of GfK as the keynote speaker for the Thursday night banquet. Dr. DiSogra will be speaking about the emerging alternatives for sample surveys in light of the growing challenges that traditional methods are facing these days.

We are also pleased to announce that this year we will be offering two distinct short courses as part of our program on Thursday and Friday from 8:00 to 10:00am. The title of our first course, which will be taught by Dr. Mansour Fahimi of Marketing Systems Group, is *Demystifying Weighing of Survey Data: The Path from Sample to Respondents to Target Population*. Our second course – *Mobile, Social, Global: Applications of Emerging Technologies in Survey Research* – will be taught by Dr. Robert Furberg and Adam Sage of RTI International. Each of these courses have been approved for 2.0 PRC credits through MRA and 2.0 short course credit hours through the CPSM program at UNC Chapel-Hill.

We are currently reviewing the abstract submissions and are working to compile a dynamic conference program. We expect that a preliminary program will be made available on the website by mid-August.

Registration for the 2012 SAPOR Conference is expected to open online on August 1st. Be sure to register early to take advantage of reduced fees.

We hope to see you in Raleigh in October!

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

AMBER RUMSEY, CONFERENCE CHAIR

We are asking that all participants and members of SAPOR encourage their company, university, or organization to support the SAPOR organization that means so much to all of us.

As you know, our annual conference is an event that brings people together for mutual support, education, and inspiration. The SAPOR conference offers an opportunity to collaborate with research and public opinion professionals from academia, government, and private sectors.

In order to continue to make our conference a rewarding experience for researchers and students in the region, we are reaching out to all of our participants, members, and colleagues to seek sponsorships for the 2012 SAPOR conference. In appreciation for your contribution, we will be delighted to feature your name and logo in our promotional materials, and will acknowledge your assistance at all appropriate opportunities.

If you are interested in sponsoring, please review our Marketing Prospectus on the website for sponsorship options. If you are unable to contribute at the Platinum, Gold, Silver, or Bronze level, donations of any amount will still be greatly appreciated. Sponsorships of specific activities/items are delegated upon first request, so please respond quickly if you have a preference for your sponsorship designation.

Below is a link to Marketing Prospectus on our website:

<http://southernassociationforpublicopinionresearch.org/docs/marketingprospectus2012.pdf>

You can also contact Amber Rumsey (arumsey@rti.org), the 2012 SAPOR Conference Chair, for more information about sponsorship opportunities for the conference.

CALL FOR SAPOR OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS

GRETCHEN MCHENRY, VICE-CONFERENCE CHAIR



Do you know of someone who would be a valuable addition to the SAPOR 2012-2013 Executive Council or one of the SAPOR volunteer committees? If so, nominate them! Or, if you would like to be more involved and contribute to SAPOR, nominate yourself! The elections for the 2012-2013 officers will be held in October. SAPOR is currently seeking nominations for the following offices:

- **Vice-President (President-Elect).** The Vice-President serves a one year term, then serves one year as President, and one year as Past President. This elected officer will sit on the SAPOR Executive Council in each of these roles. As President, the elected officer is responsible for fulfilling the purpose of SAPOR, serving as Chairperson of the Executive Council, and serving as the official representative of SAPOR in its relations with other organizations and the public.
- **Conference Vice-Chair.** The Conference Vice-Chair serves a one year term, then serves one year as Conference Chair. The officer elected to this role will sit on the SAPOR Executive Council in each of these positions. The Conference Chair will be responsible for arranging the annual conference in form and content. He/she shall seek approval of the Executive Council on conference plans.
- **Secretary.** The Secretary serves a two year term and sits on the SAPOR Executive Council. This elected officer will keep the minutes of all the proceedings and meetings of the Executive Council, will be responsible for submitting to the Executive Council an annual report of SAPOR activities, and will submit the Treasurer's annual financial report to AAPOR in compliance with the recognition agreement. The Secretary will also be responsible for communicating with the Membership, and will serve as Chief Editor of the biannual newsletter.

SAPOR is also seeking volunteers for the following committees:

- **Graphic design.** SAPOR is seeking assistance from individuals who have the skills and software to design printed materials (theme-related program book cover, signage, and nametags) for the annual conference.
- **Website Administration.** Website administrators are responsible for updating content on the SAPOR website throughout the year and ensuring that the website is portraying the correct message. They will be responsible for managing and

reviewing website updates and suggesting new tools for use on the website by SAPOR users.

- **Event Operations.** Volunteers are needed to assist with event promotion and operations for the annual conference.

If you are interested on serving on the SAPOR Volunteer committee please contact Amber Rumsey (arumsey@rti.org).

Please send nominations for the Executive Council to Mansour Fahimi (mfahimi@m-s-g.com), by September 1, 2012.

CONTACT SAPOR

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