Lost in Issue Space?

Michael Barber
Brigham Young University
barber@byu.edu

Jeremy C. Pope
Brigham Young University
j pope@byu.edu

Abstract
This appendix to “Lost in Issue Space?” includes a number of results noted in the paper, robustness checks and additional models noted in the paper, and additional results not directly mentioned in the paper. Below is a table of contents for this document.

1. We describe the specific question wording used in the CCES and Pew Surveys. These questions are used in the main paper to develop ideal points of respondents.

2. We present issue correlation matrices for subsets of respondents in the CCES survey. We show the issue correlations among non-voters, voters, and campaign donors. We find higher issue correlations (although still modest compared to the Senate) among voters and campaign donors.

3. We present the same issue correlation matrices for subsets of respondents in the Pew survey. The results mirror those presented for the CCES survey.

4. We show the results of models that predict respondents opinions of issues using their estimated ideal point as the predictor. In this case we show the logistic model coefficients rather than the percentage of observations correctly classified (which we use in the main text).

5. We show the results of models that predict respondents opinions of issues using their self-reported ideology on a 7-point Likert scale as the predictor.

6. We demonstrate the high predictive power of ideology on issue positions among subsets of respondents. We first show that the model performs well among Democrats, Republicans and Independents. We show this for all 10 roll-call questions used in the CCES data.

7. We also demonstrate the high predictive power of ideology on issue positions among subsets of respondents in the Pew survey. We first show that the model performs well among Democrats, Republicans and Independents. We show this for all 10 roll-call questions used in the Pew data.

8. We then demonstrate the high predictive power of ideology on issue positions among a different subset of respondents. We now show that the model performs well among liberals, moderates and conservatives. In the main paper we divide the population by their self-classified ideology.
Here we subset the population according to their modeled ideal point. We use the most liberal 1/3, the most moderate 1/3 and the most conservative 1/3 of survey respondents.

9. We repeat this process but for the Pew data as well.

10. We replicate the results of the predictive models again, but this time we show the coefficient on the modeled ideal point after controlling for the respondent’s partisanship and self-reported ideology. Even after including these additional controls, the modeled ideal point is an excellent predictor of the respondents issue positions on most votes. This is true in both the CCES and Pew survey data.

11. We demonstrate the correlation between the modeled ideal point of respondents and their self-reported ideology on a 7-point Likert scale question. The correlation increases when considering voters and decreases when subset to include only non-voters.
1 Specific Question Wording

1.1 CCES Survey

Congress considered many important bills over the past four years. For each of the following tell us whether you support or oppose the legislation in principle.

- Ryan Budget Bill
- Simpson-Bowles Budget Plan
- Middle Class Tax Cut Act
- Tax Hike Prevention Act
- Birth Control Exemption
- U.S. - Korea Free Trade Agreement
- Repeal Affordable Care Act
- Keystone Pipeline
- Affordable Care Act of 2010
- End Don’t Ask Don’t Tell

1.2 Pew Survey

I’m going to read you some pairs of statements that will help us understand how you feel about a number of things. As I read each pair, tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views — even if neither is exactly right.

- Government is almost always wasteful and inefficient. Government often does a better job than people give it credit for.
- Government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest. Government regulation of business usually does more harm than good.
• Poor people today have it easy because they can get government benefits without doing anything in return. Poor people have hard lives because government benefits don’t go far enough to help them live decently.

• The government should do more to help needy Americans, even if it means going deeper into debt. The government today can’t afford to do much more to help the needy.

• Racial discrimination is the main reason why many black people can’t get ahead these days. Blacks who can’t get ahead in this country are mostly responsible for their own condition.

• Immigrants today strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents. Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs, housing and health care.

• Society is better off if people make marriage and having children a priority. Society is just as well off if people have priorities other than marriage and children.

• The best way to ensure peace is through military strength. Good diplomacy is the best way to ensure peace.

• U.S. efforts to solve problems around the world usually end up making things worse. Problems in the world would be even worse without U.S. involvement.

• Most people who want to get ahead can make it if they’re willing to work hard. Hard work and determination are no guarantee of success for most people.
2 Issue Correlation in CCES among Subsets of Respondents

Figure 1: **Correlation of Issue Positions** - The left panel shows the issue correlation matrix among CCES validated non-voters. The middle panel shows issue correlations for validated voters in the CCES. The right panel shows issue correlations for self-reported donors in the CCES.
3 Issue Correlation in Pew among Subsets of Respondents

Figure 2: Correlation of Issue Positions - The left panel shows the issue correlation matrix among the Pew survey self-reported non-voters. The middle panel shows issue correlations for self-reported voters in the Pew survey. The right panel shows issue correlations for self-reported donors in the Pew survey.
4 Predicting Votes using Ideology: Coefficient of Model

Figure 3: Predicting Votes using Ideology - In this figure we show the absolute value of the coefficient in which the voters’ ideal point is used to predict their vote on an excluded issue that was not used to create the ideal point. We see that in most cases, the coefficient on ideology is quite large and statistically significant.
5 Predicting Votes using Ideology: Self-Described Ideology as Predictor

Figure 4: Predicting Votes using Ideology - In this figure we show the percent of observations predicted correctly in a model in which the voters’ self-described ideology is used to predict their vote on each issue listed on the y-axis.
Predicting Votes using Ideology: Subsets of Voters by Modeled Ideology
Figure 5: Predicting Votes Using Ideology - The points show the percent of observations correctly classified from a logit model with the issue position (y-axis label) as the dependent variable and the ideal point (circles) of the respondent as the independent variable. We subset the data to include those with the most liberal (left point), moderate (middle point) and conservative (right point) ideology. In this case we subset by the modeled ideal point of the respondent.
7 Predicting Votes using Ideology: Subsets of Voters by Self-Described Ideology

Repeal ACA - CCES

Ryan Budget - CCES

Simpson Bowles - CCES

Tax Cut - CCES

Tax Hike Prevent - CCES
Figure 6: Predicting Votes Using Ideology - The points show the percent of observations correctly classified from a logit model with the issue position (y-axis label) as the dependent variable and the ideal point (circles) of the respondent as the independent variable. We subset the data to include those with the most liberal (left point), moderate (middle point) and conservative (right point) ideology. In this case we subset by self-described ideology.
Predicting Votes using Ideology: Ideology with Partisanship and Self-Classified Ideology as Controls

Figure 7: Predicting Votes using Ideology - In this figure we show the absolute value of the coefficient in which the voters’ ideal point is used to predict their vote on an excluded issue that was not used to create the ideal point. We see that in most cases, the coefficient on ideology is quite large and statistically significant. In these models we include a control for the partisanship of the respondent as well as the respondent’s self-identified ideology.
Correlation between Self-Classified Ideology and Modeled Ideology

Correlation Between Estimated Ideal Point and Self-Expressed Ideology

Non-Voters

Correlation Between Estimated Ideal Point and Self-Expressed Ideology

Voters

Cor = 0.68

Cor = 0.55

Cor = 0.73