How Political Science Shaped Federal Policy in the Biden-Harris Administration: Learning from Efforts to Democratize the Administrative State

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Appendix 1: 2024 SNAP Survey Campaign Design

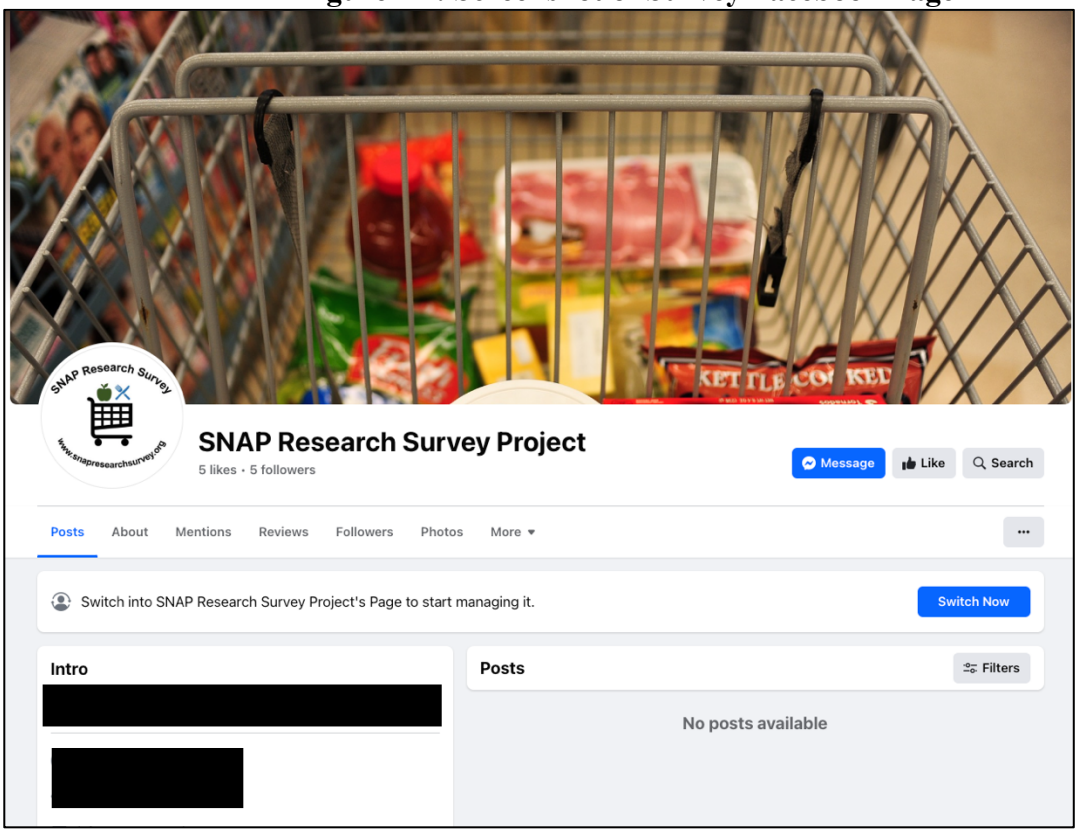
From January 1st to 4th, 2024 I launched a Meta advertising campaign to direct individuals to an online Qualtrics link to the SNAP survey, housed at www.snapsurveyresearch.org. Meta advertising campaigns placed ads on Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, Reels, and partner websites. According to Facebook data, the campaign reached 4,139 individuals.

This survey was approved by the author's Institutional Review Board and is consistent with APSA's Principles and Guidance for Human Subjects Research. Because the survey was low-risk, low-burden and intended to facilitate individuals' ability to share their opinions with the federal government I do not believe that the survey raised any ethical issues. The survey did not employ deception and was transparent in its aims to study individuals' experience with SNAP benefits and was readily identifiable with the researcher. I assured respondents that their responses would not be associated with their personally-identifiable information, and only used their email address for the purposes of compensation. Last, because I was taking the time of low-income respondents, I felt it was important to compensate all respondents at least at the minimum wage of the state in which I work (currently $16/hour). The survey took an average of 10 minutes to complete, which is equivalent to about a $30/hour wage.

The campaign was designed to target "conversions" using a Facebook Pixel, embedded on the final page of the survey. This means that the Meta algorithm was optimizing ad targeting and placement to individuals who were likely to be eligible for the survey and to have completed the survey. My campaign was tied to a Facebook page I created for the SNAP survey. I include snapshots of the advertisement I created, as well as the Facebook page in Figures A1 and A2.

Figure A1: Screenshot of Survey Facebook Ad

Figure A2: Screenshot of Survey Facebook Page



Appendix 2: 2024 SNAP Survey Quotas, Balance, and Survey Weights

In Table A1, I summarize the quotas applied to the survey using Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement data from 2010-2023.

Table A1. Survey Quotas from Current Population Survey (CPS), 2010-2023

Quota	Targets from CPS (%)
Gender	
Female	55
Male or other	45
Age	
18-34	38
35-54	34
55+	28
Education	
Less than HS	27
HS	39
Some college	26
BA+	9
Race	
White	65
Black	26
Asian/Pacific Islander	4
Other	5
Hispanic Ethnicity	
No	7
Yes	25
Employment Status	
At work	39
Retired	12
Other	49

Current Population Survey estimates of SNAP beneficiaries from 2010-2023.

I generated survey weights using the ipfweight command in Stata to match CPS targets, and I present in Table A2 survey demographics compared to the CPS, with and without survey weights. The survey weights ranged from 0.25 to 6.70, with a mean of one, a median of 0.81, and a standard deviation of 0.63.

Table A2: Survey Balance Compared to Current Population Survey (CPS), With and Without Survey Weights

Demographic Characteristic	CPS Targets	Survey (unweighted)	Survey (weighted)
Age			

18-44	56	71	56
45-64	30	22	30
65+	14	7	14
Education			
Less than HS	27	29	27
HS	39	33	39
Some college or vocational	26	29	26
BA or more	9	9	9
Race			
White	65	63	65
Black	26	27	26
Other	9	10	9
Ethnicity			
Not Hispanic	75	73	75
Hispanic	25	27	25
Employment Status			
At work	39	41	39
Unemployed	9	13	9
Not in labor force	40	39	40
Retired	12	7	12
Census Division			
East North Central	15	10	15
East South Central	7	4	7
Middle Atlantic	13	18	13
Mountain	7	11	7
New England	4	4	4
Pacific	15	19	15
South Atlantic	20	20	20
West North Central	5	4	5
West South Central	14	9	14

Current Population Survey estimates of SNAP beneficiaries from 2010-2023. The 2024 SNAP Survey included individuals who reported applying for or receiving SNAP benefits (n=1,492). Beyond these targets, I also explored the similarities between my sample and other CPS estimates of the SNAP beneficiary population, including along family income, family size, and disability status.

Table A3 indicates that the survey sample tended to have fewer respondents with very low total family incomes (below $15,000) and more respondents just above that threshold ($15,000-$24,999). I use the total family income variable from the CPS.

Table A3: Survey Balance for Income from Current Population Survey (CPS)

Income Category	CPS Targets	Survey (unweighted)	Survey (weighted)
Less than $15,000	38.00	25.07	28.48
$15,000-$24,999	21.50	28.95	29.29
$25,000-$44,999	22.7	23.06	22.24
$45,000 or more	17.8	22.92	19.99

Current Population Survey estimates of SNAP beneficiaries from 2010-2023. The 2024 SNAP Survey included individuals who reported applying for or receiving SNAP benefits (*n*=1,492). Income refers to family income from all sources, defined in the following way for respondents: "Just for statistical purposes, in which of these groups does your TOTAL FAMILY INCOME, from all sources, fall, before taxes? Total income includes interest or dividends, rent, tips, Social Security, other pensions, alimony or child support, unemployment compensation, public aid (welfare), armed forces or veteran's allotment."

Looking at family size in Table A4, I find that my sample had more four-person families compared to the SNAP population as a whole and fewer very large families (five or more members; I use the family size variable from the CPS).

Table A4: Survey Balance for Family Size from Current Population Survey (CPS)

Family Size	CPS Targets	Survey (unweighted)	Survey (weighted)
1	11.9	9.12	10.26
2-3	33.7	36.53	36.84
4	20	34.38	32.02
5+	34.4	19.97	20.88

Current Population Survey estimates of SNAP beneficiaries from 2010-2023. The 2024 SNAP Survey included individuals who reported applying for or receiving SNAP benefits (*n*=1,492).

Last, I examine differences in disability status. The CPS uses a different methodology for asking about disabilities than my survey, using a battery of items asking about difficulties hearing, seeing, remembering, engaging in physical activity, moving, or engaging in personal care and then codes a positive response to at least one of those items. 22.5% of the SNAP beneficiary population indicated that they had at least one of these limitations. I ask a different item in the 2024 SNAP survey, adapted from the General Social Survey 2022 module, asking the following "Do you have a long-standing illness, a chronic condition, or a disability that affects your daily life?" 44% of the unweighted survey sample responded affirmatively to this question (47% weighted). Given the differences in question design, it is difficult to directly compare these items with one another, but given the magnitude of the difference, I assume that on the whole, my sample is more likely to report a disability than the SNAP beneficiary population overall.

Appendix 3: 2024 SNAP Survey Instrument

A link to a blinded survey instrument is available here:
https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/qnivi7syx71t318k8qydw/FINAL-SNAP_Opinion_Study_Blinded.pdf

Appendix 4: Evidence for SNAP Applicants' Opinions and Attitudes

As reported in the manuscript, I find that respondents offered a variety of relevant opinions and attitudes about their experiences with SNAP applications. I detail several examples below.

Respondents provided detailed responses about the challenges or barriers they faced to applications, with only 22% reporting that they faced no challenges. See Table A5 for a summary of these reported challenges. These are responses to the following item: "When you were applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or food stamps, which challenges or difficulties did you encounter? Please check all that apply."

Table A5: Challenges Experienced in SNAP Application Process

Challenge Reported	% Respondents (weighted)
Finding materials for application	11.4
Submitting application	16.3
Understanding program rules	14.4
Compiling materials and records	15.3
Contacting staff in person	14.5
Contacting staff by phone	18.5
Visiting program offices	13.1
Completing forms	16.7
Proving eligibility	14.9
Getting timely benefits	17.8
Documenting income	12.8
Documenting assets	13.8
Documenting medical expenses	13.7
Documenting disability	12.2
Documenting work hours	13.2
Documenting utility expenses	14.7
Other	0.6
None of the above	22.4

The 2024 SNAP Survey included individuals who reported applying for or receiving SNAP benefits (n=1,492). Question text: "When you were applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or food stamps, which challenges or difficulties did you encounter? Please check all that apply."

In addition, I find that the vast majority of respondents reported having an opinion about how stressful the application experience was for them, with fewer than 1% of respondents reporting "don't remember or not sure" to the following item: "How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or food stamps, was stressful."

Similarly, fewer than 1% of respondents reported “don’t remember or not sure” to the following item asking about the respect they received in the application process from program staff: “How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or food stamps, staff treated me with respect when I was applying for benefits.”

Together, these three items help document that the vast majority of respondents did in fact have opinions and views about their application experience that could be relevant for SNAP program administration.

Appendix 5: Community Organization Regression Results

I summarize in Table A6 regression results for the community organization finding reported in the manuscript, examining the correlation between an individual reporting an interaction with a community, faith, or other non-government organization and whether the respondent had *previously* contacted the federal government about SNAP issues (17% reported that they had), with and without demographic and political controls.

Table A6: Community Organization Contacts and SNAP Commenting

	Contacted Federal Government on SNAP (0/1)	Contacted Federal Government on SNAP (0/1)
Reported interaction with community, faith, or other non-government organization	0.205***	0.103***
	(0.025)	(0.028)
Male		Excluded
Female		0.004
		(0.023)
Gender - Other		-0.102*
		(0.052)
Less than HS		Excluded
HS		-0.103**
		(0.032)
Some college		-0.066*
		(0.033)
BA		-0.082+
		(0.045)
Graduate		0.033
		(0.063)
At work		Excluded
Unemployed		0.048
		(0.036)
Not in LF		0.063*
		(0.028)
Retired		-0.011

	(0.047)
White	Excluded
Black	-0.018
	(0.023)
Other	0.044
	(0.040)
Not Hispanic	Excluded
Hispanic	0.024
	(0.028)
18-44	Excluded
45-64	0.082*
	(0.033)
65+	0.135**
	(0.049)
No disability	Excluded
Disability	-0.046+
	(0.027)
No children	Excluded
Child in family	0.149***
	(0.023)
Strong Republican	Excluded
Not strong Republican	-0.020
	(0.043)
Lean Republican	0.028
	(0.056)
Independent	0.066+
	(0.037)
Lean Democrat	0.074
	(0.050)
Not strong Democrat	0.046
	(0.047)
Strong Democrat	0.031
	(0.030)
Very liberal	Excluded

Liberal		-0.029
		(0.038)
Somewhat liberal		-0.032
		(0.040)
Neither liberal nor conservative		-0.083*
		(0.041)
Somewhat conservative		-0.014
		(0.049)
Conservative		-0.062
		(0.040)
Very conservative		0.012
		(0.038)
Never follow politics		Excluded
Follow politics some of the time		-0.013
		(0.079)
Follow politics about half of time		-0.009
		(0.081)
Follow politics most of the time		0.052
		(0.080)
Follow politics always		0.011
		(0.081)
<$15k		Excluded
$15k-$25k		-0.002
		(0.033)
$25k-$45k		-0.039
		(0.037)
$45k or more		-0.067+
		(0.037)
N	1492	1431
Weights	Y	Y

OLS regression results; coefficients and robust standard errors in parentheses. + $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p<0.001$.