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# NEWS

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## **Dakota Wesleyan University Poll: South Dakotans prefer traditional news sources**

MITCHELL — South Dakotans prefer to get their news from television, newspapers and radio instead of the Internet, according to researchers at Dakota Wesleyan University.

The statewide poll conducted by DWU indicated that only 11 percent of South Dakotans said the Internet was their primary source for news during the past 24 hours. The results of the DWU poll show a large disparity between the habits of South Dakotans and Americans in general, as indicated in recent nationwide polls showing that as many as 30 percent of Americans regularly look to the Internet for their news.

The poll of 410 South Dakotans, conducted between March 18 and 29, asked respondents to identify their primary source for general news information during the past 24 hours. The majority of respondents, 49 percent, said television was their primary source for news, followed by 22 percent identifying newspapers and 15 percent for radio, with the Internet at 11 percent. The remaining 3 percent did not follow the news or gave no response.

Age, gender, race and political party affiliation seemed to be a factor for those surveyed. Fifty-six percent of Democrats identified television as their primary source for general news, while only slightly less than 45 percent of Republicans identified television as their primary news source.

“Far more South Dakota Republicans look to newspapers, radio and the Internet for their news than do their Democratic counterparts,” said Don Simmons, director of the McGovern Center for Leadership and Public Service at DWU. “Another interesting finding was that while 55 percent of women said television was their primary source for news, 57 percent of men said they look to newspapers, radio or the Internet for their news, clearly a gender difference.”

Student coordinators of the poll were Katrina Jarding, junior public service and leadership major from Alexandria, and Brock Seim, senior math major from Le Grand, Iowa.

“We thought there might be a difference between South Dakotans depending on where they lived,” said Jarding. “What we found was that where respondents lived had virtually no impact on where they sought their general news and information.”

The poll found that respondents aged 51 and over looked to television as their primary news source more than those 50 and under, by a margin of 59 to 37 percent. Respondents aged 50 and under were more than twice as likely not to have followed the news during the past 24 hours as those aged 51 and older. Native Americans are far more likely to seek television as their primary news source than Caucasians, by a margin of 65 to 49 percent.

The poll was a joint project of the McGovern Center and the DWU Mathematics Department. The poll’s margin of error was plus or minus 5 percent.

More detailed information about the poll results is available online at [www.mcgoverncenter.com/poll.htm](http://www.mcgoverncenter.com/poll.htm)