

# DELTA RURAL POLL

## A Service to Delta Communities

The Delta Rural Poll is a project of the Center for Community and Economic Development in collaboration with faculty and students from Delta State's Division of Social Sciences



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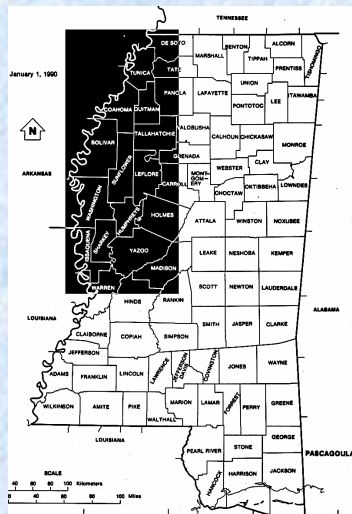
Through the Delta Rural Poll, community development faculty and students collect quantitative and qualitative data on social and demographic characteristics of Mississippi Delta residents.

The poll provides DSU students and Delta residents with valuable opportunities to learn about research techniques through hands-on experience.

The poll is one way that community development researchers develop and strengthen ties between Delta State University and communities in the Mississippi Delta.

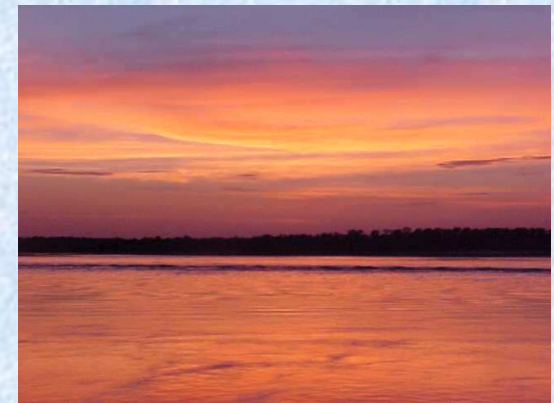
Delta Rural Poll researchers also collaborate with other universities and researchers carrying out similar projects in other states.

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The Delta Rural Poll is conducted in Bolivar, Coahoma, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tunica, Tallahatchie, and Washington counties. These counties best represent the Delta's unique characteristics.

Delta Rural Poll researchers conduct a telephone survey every two years, to collect quantitative data on topics of current interest, and to track changes in the Delta's population. Researchers supplement these results with qualitative data collection on topical issues.





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The first Delta Rural Poll survey was conducted in the Fall of 2003. A random sample of 809 Delta residents shared their opinions about technology use, health care, and the state of Delta schools.



During the summer and fall of 2004, Community Development faculty and students followed up with interviews in Delta schools and communities to better understand how residents perceive the region's educational system.



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The second survey was conducted in February, 2005. A total of 1,009 respondents answered questions about their own work and job opportunities in the region, as well as heritage tourism.



Currently, DSU researchers are carrying out qualitative interviews on various heritage tourism topics with residents and key informants in several Delta communities. These will contribute to the development of a heritage are in the Mississippi Delta.



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Results from the Delta Rural Poll have been used to prepare policy reports and M.S. theses:

## Theses:

Rice, Catherine. 2005. *Perceptions of Education in the Mississippi Delta*. M.S. Thesis in Community Development, Delta State University.

Roshun N. Williams. 2004. *Access to Communication Technology Among Residents of the Mississippi Delta*. M.S. Thesis in Community Development, Delta State Univ.

## Policy Reports:

John J. Green. *Access to Health Care in the Mississippi Delta: A Summary Report from the 2003 Delta Rural Poll*. Policy Paper No. 04-01, CCED, August, 2004.

Alan W. Barton. *Employment and Quality of Life in the Mississippi Delta: A Summary Report from the 2003 Delta Rural Poll*. Policy Paper No. 04-02, CCED, September, 2004.

Alan W. Barton and Roshun N. Williams. *Technology Use in the Mississippi Delta: A Summary Report from the 2003 Delta Rural Poll*. Policy Paper No. 05-01, CCED, July, 2005.

Alan W. Barton. *Attitudes About Heritage Tourism in the Mississippi Delta: A Policy Report from the 2005 Delta Rural Poll*. Policy Paper No. 05-02, CCED, December, 2005.



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Results from the Delta Rural Poll have been used in papers given at academic and professional conferences:

Brent D. Hales and Alan Barton, "Assessing the Digital Divide in the Mississippi Delta," 37th Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association, Oxford, MS, Feb. 23-24, 2006.

Catherine Cannatella, "Brain Drain Distressing the Delta Dollar," 36th Annual Meeting of the Southern Demographic Association, Oxford, MS, Nov. 3-5, 2005.

Alan Barton and Jolana Gibbs, "Local Attitudes and Perceptions of Heritage Tourism in the Mississippi Delta," 31st Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Sociological Association, Atlanta, GA, Oct. 26-29, 2005.

John J. Green and Albert B. Nylander III, "Access to Care and Perceived Health Status: A Multi-Method Study from the Mississippi Delta," 31st Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Sociological Association, Atlanta, GA, Oct. 26-29, 2005.

Alan Barton, "Class, Race and Technology Use in the Mississippi Delta: Characteristics and Policy Implications," 68th Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, Tampa, FL, Aug. 8-12, 2005.

Alan Barton, "Race and Expectations for Public Schools in the Mississippi Delta: Evidence from the Delta Rural Poll," 30th Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Sociological Association, Biloxi, MS, Oct. 20-23, 2004.

John J. Green, "Underemployment, Poverty and Access to Health Care in the Mississippi Delta: A Community-Based Approach to Understanding Problems and Exploring Alternatives," *In the Shadows of Poverty: Strengthening the Rural Poverty Research Capacity of the South Conference*, Memphis, TN, Jul. 21-23, 2004.

Roshun N. Williams, "Access to Communication Technology in the Mississippi Delta," Sustainable International Development Program Capstone Week, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, May 3-7, 2004.



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The Mid-South Delta Consortium provided funding for the 2003 and 2005 Delta Rural Poll. The Survey Research Unit, Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University assisted in conducting these surveys.

Visit us on the Web:

<http://www.deltastate.edu/pages/536.asp>