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March 5, 1992 press release from Wichita State University

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For Immediate Release

March 5, 1992

NATIONAL AIRLINE QUALITY RESULTS ANNOUNCED IN WASHINGTON, D.C. TODAY

An Airline Quality Report released today by The Wichita State University National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) ranks American, Southwest and Delta as the top three airlines for 1991 based on an Airline Quality Rating (AQR) scale.

In the AQR, the researchers rank the airlines according to 19 separate criteria, including on-time arrivals and departures, safety of aircraft fleets, customer complaints, age of aircraft and financial viability of airline companies. The AQR is the only national ranking to include all the various criteria by which airline performance may be judged from a monthly, quantitative perspective.

The ranking compares the nine major U.S. airlines, according to Brent Bowen, organizer of the study and director of Aviation Management Research at Wichita State's NIAR.

The NIAR report, announced Thursday in Washington, D.C., ranks the major domestic airlines in the United States and gives a perspective of the U.S. airline industry for 1991. A major airline, as defined by the U.S. Department of Transportation, is an airline whose operation revenues for a 12-month period are \$1 billion or more. The AQR ranking of the nine major airlines were as follows: (1) American, (2) Southwest, (3) Delta, (4) United, (5) USAir, (6) Northwest, (7) Continental, (8) America West and (9) TWA.

Bowen said the AQR scale is significant because it offers a way to compare the quality of airlines by using strictly quantitative, comparable, regularly published data. "Our basic intent is the development of a rating system that can be used as a point of comparison by consumers and industry watchers alike in evaluating the comparative quality of the major domestic airlines in the United States," Bowen said.

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Working with Bowen to develop the AQR were Dean Headley, assistant professor of marketing in the W. Frank Barton School of Business, and Jacqueline Luedtke, business manager for the NIAR.

"Our objective in developing the AQR is to better organize the readily available data for the consumer and offer it in a more useful and understandable form," said Luedtke.

Headley said the rating is unique because it offers a way to compare the quality of airlines by using a wide variety of regularly published data.

Important factors in judging the quality of airline services from a consumer perspective and considered in the AQR were the airlines' on-time performance, number of accidents, oversales, mishandled baggage, customer service and financial viability.

Bowen said the AQR is significant because it ranks the airlines over a significant period of time and other methods do not.

Taped comments by the AQR research team will be available via the WSU Radio Newslines at (316) 689-3682, beginning at 10 a.m. CST Thursday, March 5.

Contact: Joseph Kleinsasser, news and media relations director, at (316) 689-3013, or the NIAR at (316) 689-3678.

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Media Advisory From The Wichita State University
March 5, 1992

AIRLINE QUALITY DISCUSSED AT INTERNATIONAL FORUM

Researchers from across the United States are participating in an International Forum on Airline Quality March 6 and 7, in Washington, D.C. The conference is hosted by The Wichita State University National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR).

The forum is bringing together experts from around the world to discuss issues related to airline quality. Dean Headley, conference program chair, said, "This unique opportunity arose at exactly the perfect time in the tumultuous airline industry. Quality enhancement will be a primary factor in determining which airlines will survive the next few years."

Conference co-chair Brent Bowen said, "The forum is providing a valuable follow-up to the release of the Airline Quality Rating (AQR). This conference was developed in response to the overwhelming public and media interest exhibited in the AQR during 1991 and was consequently scheduled to coincide with the 1992 release of the Airline Quality Rating."

Topics considered at the two-day conference include the Airline Quality Rating: A One Year Perspective, Effects of Deregulation and Re-regulation, Globalization and International Issues, Customer Satisfaction, Safety Aspects of Quality, and many other diverse topics all related to the theme of airline quality.

Conference participants include representatives from many of the world's largest and most service-oriented airlines, including Aer Lingus, Air Aruba, Air Canada, America West, Binter Airlines, Britannia Airways, British Airways, Canadian Airlines, Comair, Continental, Lufthansa, Midwest Express, Northwest, Southwest and United. Researchers of airline quality representing the nation's leading universities shared their research results.

For information on the topics and conference speakers listed on the following pages please contact Joseph Kleinsasser, news and media relations director, at (316) 689-3013, Fax (316) 689-3776.

Taped comments regarding the International Forum on Airline Quality will be available via the WSU Radio Newsline at (316) 689-3682 after 10 a.m. CST Monday, March 9.

Contact: Joseph Kleinsasser at (316) 689-3013.

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INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON AIRLINE QUALITY
March 6 & 7, 1992
Hotel Washington, Washington, D.C.

Papers presented at the Conference:

Friday, March 6, 1992:

Airline Quality Rating: A One Year Perspective

Brent D. Bowen, National Institute for Aviation Research, Wichita, Kansas

Dean E. Headley, Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas

Traveling the Road to Airline Quality

Donald McLean, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota

The Role of Service Quality in International Aviation: Meeting the Challenge

Kent Gourdin, University of North Carolina Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina

A Cross Cultural Comparison of Service Quality: Dimensions in the Airline Industry

Lawrence F. Cunningham, University of Colorado at Denver, Denver, Colorado

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Air Travel Report

Clifford E. Young, University of Colorado at Denver, Denver, Colorado

Are Airlines Promoting Quality Again? A Content Analysis of Newspaper Advertising

James A. Kling, Niagara University, Niagara, New York

Complaint Behavior, Service Performance and Costs within the Airline Industry

Kenneth E. Clow, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas

Luncheon presentation: *Airline Deregulation: The Consumer Wins*

James F. Parker, Southwest Airlines Company, Dallas, Texas

Susan Yancey, Southwest Airlines Company, Dallas, Texas

International Airline Oligopoly. Hubs, Spokes, and Traffic Congestion

Richard Janda, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Steven C. Bury, Katten, Muchin and Zavis, New York, New York

The Cost-Constrained Global Airline Industry Environment: What is Quality?

Gail F. Butler, Dowling College, Oakdale, New York

Martin R. Keller, Dowling College, Oakdale, New York

Safety: A Measure of Airline Quality and a Marketing Tool

Tim A. Becker, Becker Associates, San Deigo, California

Regulations as a Quality Issue in International Aviation

Erwin von den Steinen, International Transport Policy Analysis, Arlington, Virginia

INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON AIRLINE QUALITY
March 6 & 7, 1992
Hotel Washington, Washington, D.C.

Friday, March 7, 1992: (continued)

The Effect of Globalization on Service Quality in the International Airline Industry
Michael W. Pustay, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

A Hedonic Approach to Service Quality Estimation: The Reputations of Domestic Airlines
Joseph P. Schwieterman, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois

When Politicians Build Airports: A Functional Design for Airports
William B. Rourke Jr., Metropolitan State College of Denver, Denver, Colorado

Are U.S. Domestic Hubs Being Quietly Opened to International Foreign-based Airline Carriers?
L. Milton Glisson, North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, North Carolina

Michael K. Jones, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina

Re-regulation and the Implications for Airline Quality
Edward A. Merlis, Air Transport Association of America, Washington, D.C.

Saturday, March 7, 1992:

A "More Bang for Your Buck" Approach to Airline Service Quality
Forrest E. Harding, California State University - Long Beach, Long Beach, California

The Airline Customer Satisfaction Index
Joan K. Strahler, Avitas Aviation, Reston, Virginia

Changes in Quality Perceptions Among Frequent and Non-frequent Flyers
Terrence J. Kearney, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Passenger Defined Critical Quality Factors in Airline Service
M. A. Reynolds, Penn State Harrisburg, Middletown, Pennsylvania

Airline Food Service: The Quickest Route to Passenger Perceptions of Quality
Phillip S. Cooke, Inflight Food Service Association, Louisville, Kentucky

Airline Manager vs Airline Passengers: The Service is Not the Same
Steve A. LeMay, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, Mississippi

S. Roland Jones, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, Mississippi

Ascent to Quality
Edward J. O'Brien, Southwest State University, Marshall, Minnesota