



November 2, 2009

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## I. Survey Methodology

The Elon University Poll is conducted using a stratified random sample of households with telephones and wireless telephone numbers in the population of interest – in this case, citizens in North Carolina. The sample of telephone numbers for the survey is obtained from Survey Sampling International, LLC.

### *Selection of Households*

To equalize the probability of telephone selection, sample telephone numbers are systematically stratified according to subpopulation strata (e.g., a zip code, a county, a state, etc.), which yields a sample from telephone exchanges in proportion to each exchange's share of telephone households in the population of interest. Estimates of telephone households in the population of interest are generally obtained from several databases. Samples of household telephone numbers are distributed across all eligible blocks of numbers in proportion to the density of listed households assigned in the population of interest according to a specified subpopulation stratum. Upon determining the projected (or preferred) sample size, a sampling interval is calculated by summing the number of listed residential numbers in each eligible block within the population of interest and dividing that sum by the number of sampling points assigned to the population. From a random start between zero and the sampling interval, blocks are systematically selected in proportion to the density of listed household "working blocks." A *block* (also known as a *bank*) is a set of contiguous numbers identified by the first two digits of the last four digits of a telephone number. A working block contains three or more working telephone numbers. Exchanges are assigned to a population on the basis of all eligible blocks in proportion to the density of working telephone households. Once each population's proportion of telephone households is determined, then a sampling interval, based on that proportion, is calculated and specific exchanges and numbers are randomly selected. The methodology for the wireless component of this study starts with the determining which area code-exchange combinations in North Carolina are included in the wireless or shared Telcordia types. Similar to the process for selecting household telephone numbers, wireless numbers involve a multi-step process in which blocks of numbers are determined for each area code-exchange combination in the Telcordia types. From a random start within the first sampling interval, a systematic  $n$ th selection of each block of numbers is performed and a two-digit random number between 00 and 99 is appended to each selected  $n$ th block stem. The intent is to provide a stratification that will yield a sample that is representative both geographically and by large and small carrier. From these, a random sample is generated. Because exchanges and numbers are randomly selected by the computer, unlisted as well as listed household telephone numbers are included in the sample. Thus, the sample of telephone numbers generated for the population of interest constitutes a random sample of telephone households and wireless numbers of the population.

### ***Procedures Used for Conducting the Poll***

The survey was conducted Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, through Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, of 2009. During this time calls were made from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm EST. The Elon University Poll uses CATI system software (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) in the administration of surveys. For each working telephone number in the sample, several attempts were made to reach each number. Only individuals 18 years or older were interviewed; those reached at business or work numbers were not interviewed. For each number reached, one adult is generally selected based on whether s/he is the oldest or youngest adult. Interviews, which are conducted by live interviewers, are completed with adults from the target population as specified. Interviews for this survey were completed with 703 adults from North Carolina. For a sample size of 703, there is a 95 percent probability that our survey results are within plus or minus 3.8 percentage points (the margin of sampling error) of the actual population distribution for any given question. For sub-samples (a subgroup selected from the overall sample), the margin of error is higher depending on the size of the subsample. When we use a subsample, we identify these results as being from a subsample and provide the total number of respondents and margin of error for that subsample. In reporting our results, we note any use of a subsample where applicable. Because our surveys are based on probability sampling, there are a variety of factors that prevent these results from being perfect, complete depictions of the population; the foremost example is that of margin of sampling error (as noted above). With all probability samples, there are theoretical and practical difficulties estimating population characteristics (or parameters). Thus, while efforts are made to reduce or lessen such threats, sampling error as well as other sources of error – while not all inclusive, examples of other error effects are non-response rates, question order effects, question wording effects, etc. – are present in surveys derived from probability samples.

### ***Questions and Question Order***

The Elon University Poll provides the questions as worded and the order in which these questions are administered (to respondents). Conspicuous in reviewing some questions is the “bracketed” information. Information contained within brackets ( [ ] ) denotes response options as provided in the question; this bracketed information is rotated per question to ensure that respondents do not receive a set order of response options presented to them, which also maintains question construction integrity by avoiding respondent acquiescence based on question composition. Some questions used a probe maneuver to determine a respondent’s intensity of perspective. Probe techniques used in this questionnaire mainly consist of asking a respondent if their response is more intense than initially provided. For example, upon indicating whether s/he is satisfied or dissatisfied, we asked the respondent “would you say you are very ‘satisfied’/‘dissatisfied’”. This technique is employed in some questions as opposed to specifying the full range of choices in the question. Though specifying the full range of options in questions is a commonly accepted practice in survey research, we sometimes prefer that the respondent determine whether their perspective is stronger or more intense for which the probe technique used. Another method for acquiring information from respondents is to ask an “open-ended” question. The open-ended question is a question for which no

response options are provided, i.e., it is entirely up to the respondent to provide the response information.

### ***The Elon University Poll***

The Elon University Poll is conducted under the auspices of the Center for Public Opinion Polling (Hunter Bacot, Director & Mileah Kromer, Assistant Director), which is a constituent part of the Institute for Politics and Public Affairs (George Taylor, Director); both these organizations are housed in the department of political science at Elon University. These academic units are part of Elon College, the College of Arts and Sciences at Elon University. The Elon University administration, led by Dr. Leo Lambert, President of the university, fully support the Elon University Poll as part of its service commitment to state, regional, and national constituents. Dr. Hunter Bacot, a professor in the department of political science, directs the Elon University Poll. Elon University students administer the survey as part of the University's commitment to experiential learning where "students learn through doing."

## II. Survey Instrument and Percent Distributions by Question

Interviews were completed with 703 adults from households in the North Carolina. For a sample size of 703, there is a 95 percent probability that our survey results are within plus or minus 3.8 percentage points (the margin of sampling error) of the actual population distribution for any given question. Due to rounding, column totals may not equal 100 percent. Data are weighted to reflect the adult population in terms of age and race.

About the Codes appearing in Questions and Responses	
<b>Response Options not offered</b>	Response options are <u>not</u> offered to the person taking the survey (respondent), but are included in the question as asked (and usually denoted by brackets, [ ]). Response options are generally offered only for demographic questions (background characteristic, e.g., age, education, income, etc.).
<b>v = volunteered response</b>	Respondents volunteer response option. As response options are <u>not</u> offered to those taking the survey, some respondents offer or volunteer response options. Though not all volunteered options can be anticipated, the more common options are noted.
<b>p = probed response</b>	Respondents self-place in this option or category. A probe maneuver is used in questions to allow the respondent to indicate whether her/his response is more intense than initially provided for in the choices appearing in the question. For example, on probe questions the interviewer, upon a respondent indicating that she/he is satisfied (or dissatisfied), is instructed to ask him/her "Would you say you are "very satisfied"?"

Now, I'd like to change topics and ask you about some issues . . . first about the economy

Do you expect our national economy [to get better, stay about the same, or get worse] by the end of this year?

	Percent
GET WORSE	28.5
STAY ABOUT THE SAME	46.6
GET BETTER	24.2
DON T KNOW (v)	.7
Total	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

Do you expect the state economy to [to get better, stay about the same, or get worse] by the end of this year

	Percent
GET WORSE	36.0
STAY ABOUT THE SAME	44.7
GET BETTER	18.6
DON T KNOW (v)	.7
Total	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

**Thinking about the economy overall, do you think that . . .[it has started to improve, that the worst is yet to come, or that it has leveled off, but has not started to improve yet]?**

	Percent
THE WORST IS YET TO COME FOR THE ECONOMY	35.8
THE ECONOMY HAS LEVELED OFF, BUT HAS NOT STARTED TO IMPROVE	40.6
THE ECONOMY HAS STARTED TO IMPROVE	20.7
DON T KNOW OR NOT SURE (v)	2.9
Total	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

**By the end of this year, do you expect your personal financial situation to [stay about the same, get better, or get worse]?**

	Percent
GET WORSE	17.0
STAY ABOUT THE SAME	56.3
GET BETTER	26.4
DON T KNOW (v)	.3
Total	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

**Now I'd like to change the topic to ask whether the economy has already affected you personally . . . Has the downturn in the economy already affected your own financial situation?**

	Percent
NO	23.5
YES	76.0
DON T KNOW (v)	.5
Total	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

Now, I'm going to read some common ways people across the country have been affected by the changing economic conditions. . . As I read each one, simply let me know, by saying yes or no, if you too have been affected . . .

	PERCENT AFFECTED
HAVE LOST MONEY IN THE STOCK MARKET	46.6
HAVE HAD YOUR HOME VALUE DECLINE	41.0
HAVE LOST MEDICAL COVERAGE OR MEDICAL INSURANCE	18.4
HAVE HAD YOUR HOURS REDUCED AT WORK	31.8
HAVE LOST A JOB	20.0
HAVE YOUR RETIREMENT PLAN LOSE MORE THAN 25 OF ITS VALUE	37.8
HAVE HAD TROUBLE PAYING THE MORTGAGE	20.3
HAVE HAD TO DEAL WITH A FORECLOSURE OR LOSING YOUR HOME	5.5
HAVE LOST A CAR	5.0
OTHER	14.2
Total	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

Now, I'd like to ask you some questions about health care in the United States.

Are you generally [satisfied or dissatisfied] with the quality of health care in this country?

	September 2008	March 2009	October 2009
STRONGLY DISSATISFIED (p)	24.3	19.7	24.3
DISSATISFIED	21.2	25.1	19.9
SATISFIED	38.2	41.5	34.6
STRONGLY SATISFIED (p)	14.4	10.2	16.9
DON'T KNOW (v)	1.9	2.8	4.0
REFUSED (v)	0.0	0.6	0.4
Total	100.0 N=411 +/-4.9	100.0 N=758 +/-3.6%	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

Do you have some form of private health insurance or private health care coverage?

	Sept. 2008 Percent	October 2009
NO	16.3	27.2
YES	83.0	72.6
DON'T KNOW (v)	0.7	0.2
Total	100.0 N=411 +/-4.9	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

Thinking about the current health care system in the United States, would you say it is [in need of reform, or it is fine the way it is]?

	October 2009
FINE THE WAY IT IS	16.4
IS IN NEED OF REFORM	76.6
NEITHER (v)	0.6
NEEDS SOMETHING DONE TO IT, JUST NOT BY THE GOVERNMENT (v)	5.3
DON T KNOW (v)	1.0
Total	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

Would you [support or oppose] a national insurance plan paid for by the federal government that pays most medical and hospital costs for all citizens?

	September 2008	March 2009	October 2009
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	21.9	16.3	33.6
OPPOSE	19.7	21.4	13.0
SUPPORT	20.7	31.7	20.9
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	28	23.8	26.5
DON T KNOW (v)	9.5	6.2	6.0
REFUSED (v)	0.2	.6	
Total	100.0 N=411 +/-4.9	100.0 N=758 +/-3.6%	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

**Thinking about your current personal situation, if the federal government started a national health insurance plan, do you think this plan would affect you [positively or negatively]?**

	September 2008	October 2009
EXTREMELY NEGATIVE (p)	15.6	20.1
NEGATIVE	26.3	25.3
POSITIVE	24.8	25.0
EXTREMELY POSITIVE (p)	13.1	10.4
NEITHER NEGATIVELY OR POSITIVELY (v)	8.8	9.6
DON T KNOW (v)	11.4	9.4
REFUSED (v)	0.0	.1
Total	100.0 N=411 +/-4.9	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

**Which of the following do you prefer:**

**[the current health insurance system in the US, in which most people have private health insurance, and some people are not covered by insurance,**

**or**

**a universal health program in which everyone is covered under a program that's run by the government and funded by tax payers]**

	September 2008	March 2009	October 2009
THE CURRENT SYSTEM	40.4	37.2	45.6
A UNIVERSAL HEALTH INSURANCE SYSTEM	44.3	49.9	41.1
DON T CARE AS LONG AS GOVERNMENT IS NOT INVOLVED (v)	2.7	1.8	2.7
MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO ME (v)	1.7	1.3	2.0
DON T KNOW (v)	10.2	9.1	7.5

REFUSED (v)	0.7	0.6	1.2
Total	100.0 N=411 +/-4.9	100.0 N=758 +/-3.6%	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

Now I would like to ask you about the public option being discussed by Congress . . . As you are likely aware, the public option is a health insurance option provided by the federal government . . .so, with this in mind, would you [support or oppose] health insurance legislation that would offer a public option?

	October 2009
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	23.4
OPPOSE	14.5
SUPPORT	33.5
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	20.6
DON T KNOW (v)	7.1
REFUSED (v)	.9
Total	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%

If the public option became available, would you use it?

	October 2009
NO	43.3
YES	41.3
DON T KNOW (v)	15.0
REFUSED (v)	0.3
Total	100.0 N=703 +/- 3.8%