



November 19, 2010

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.

Methodological information is also available at:

<http://www.elon.edu/e-web/elonpoll/methodology.xhtml>.

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, November 15, through Thursday, November 18, 2010. During

this time calls were made from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm on Monday through Thursday. 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 520 adults from North Carolina. For a sample size of 520, there is a 95 percent probability that our survey results are within plus or minus 4.4 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 randomly 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 520 adults from households in the North Carolina. For a sample size of 520, there is a 95 percent probability that our survey results are within plus or minus 4.4 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 as indicated. Data are weighted to reflect the adult population in terms of gender, age, and race.

About the Codes appearing in Questions and Responses	
Response Options not offered	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.).
v = volunteered response	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.
p = probed response	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"?"

Frequency Table

First, what do you think is the most important issue facing the state of North Carolina? (open ended)

	Percent
ECONOMY (JOBS, UNEMPLOYMENT, ETC)	60.1
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION	12.7
HEALTH CARE	4.1
TAXES	3.7
CRIME & DRUGS	2.3
IMMIGRATION	1.2
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	1.1
TRAFFIC & ROAD CONSTRUCTION	1.0
FAMILY VALUES & MORALS	0.8
OTHER	6.5
DON T KNOW (v)	4.2
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

Note: issues mentioned less than 1 percent are not listed.

Now, I'd like to ask you some questions about the state budget and what you think should be done about it . . .

As you may know, North Carolina faces a budget shortfall next year. . . do you think the budget problem [is only temporary or do you think the state will have problems over the next few years, or do you not have an opinion on this issue?]

	Percent
BUDGET PROBLEMS ARE ONLY TEMPORARY	13.2
BUDGET PROBLEMS WILL CONTINUE	75.8
NO OPINION	6.7
DON T KNOW (v)	4.3
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

For the following questions about the budget, if a respondent indicated too much, or too little, s/he was asked a follow up question about the percentage of the budget it should be.

With the state budget's current shortfall, I would like your opinions about funding for state services . . .

North Carolina's government is currently allocating __ percent of the state budget to _____, which is: . . . Do you believe that North Carolina spends [too much, too little, or about the right amount] on funding for _____?

Follow-up Question:

If respondent indicated 'TOO LITTLE', s/he was then asked: "Since you indicated that _____ funding is too little at its current level of __ percent of the budget, what percent do you think it should be?"

If respondent indicated 'TOO MUCH', s/he was then asked: "Since you indicated that _____ funding is too much, at its current level of __ percent of the budget, what percent do you think it should be?"

If respondent indicated *another answer*, s/he skips the follow-up question.

	Higher Education 13%	Kindergarten through 12 th grade 35%	Community Colleges 5%	Justice & Public Safety 10%	Health & Human Services 21%	Transportation 12%
TOO LITTLE	32.5	43.1	55.4	24.2	27.4	17.5
THE RIGHT AMOUNT	40.6	39.2	33.2	55.5	43.2	54.5
TOO MUCH	16.1	11.0	5.3	12.1	22.3	21.6
DON T KNOW (v)	10.7	5.6	5.0	7.8	6.9	6.1
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
If respondent indicated ' <i>too little</i> ', s/he was then asked: "Since you indicated that _____ funding is too little at its current level of __ percent of the budget, what percent do you think it should be?"						
Median Percent Increase	20.0	45.0	10.0	15.0	30.0	15.0
If respondent indicated ' <i>too much</i> ', s/he was then asked: "Since you indicated that _____ funding is too much, at its current level of __ percent of the budget, what percent do you think it should be?"						
Median Percent Decrease	9.0	25.0	3.0	5.0	15.0	9.0
Totals	N=253; +/-6.3%	N=281; +/-5.9%	N=316; +/-5.6%	N=189; +/-7.3%	N=258; +/-6.2%	N=204; +/-7.0%

Questions asked:

North Carolina's government is currently allocating 13 percent of the state budget to higher education, which is the public university system. Do you think that spending 13% of the state budget for higher education is [too much, too little, or about the right amount]?

North Carolina's government is currently allocating 35 percent of the state budget to Kindergarten through 12th grade education, which includes items such as: teacher salaries, school supplies, building maintenance, and other similar things.

North Carolina's government is currently allocating 5 percent of the state budget to community colleges, which is the technical school or community college in your county or area.

North Carolina's government is currently allocating 10 percent of the state budget to Justice & Public Safety, which includes items such as: highway patrol, prisons, courts, and other similar services

North Carolina's government is currently allocating 21 percent of the state budget to Health & Human Services, which includes items such as: medical assistance, social services, child development, and other similar services.

North Carolina's government is currently allocating 12 percent of the state budget to Transportation, which includes items such as: D.M.V., Highways, Ferries, Public Transportation, and other similar transportation services.

Now, I'd like to change topics to state taxes. Do you think that higher income residents pay [less than their fair share, more than their fair share, or their fair share of state taxes]?

	Percent
LESS THAN THEIR FAIR SHARE	38.6
THEIR FAIR SHARE	28.3
MORE THAN THEIR FAIR SHARE	18.1
DON T KNOW (v)	14.6
REFUSED (v)	0.5
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

What about businesses and corporations . . . do you think they pay [less than their fair share, more than their fair share, or their fair share of state taxes]?

	Percent
LESS THAN THEIR FAIR SHARE	41.0
THEIR FAIR SHARE	30.3
MORE THAN THEIR FAIR SHARE	15.6
DON T KNOW (v)	12.9
REFUSED (v)	0.2
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

If taxes in the state must be increased, would you prefer to increase [property taxes, income taxes, or sales taxes]?

	Percent
PROPERTY TAXES	12.1
INCOME TAXES	15.7
SALES TAXES	50.6
OTHER	2.3
NONE OF THESE TAXES/ NO INCREASES AT ALL (v)	14.9
INCREASE ALL OF THESE TAXES (v)	0.2
DON T KNOW (v)	4.2
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

Now, turning attention to the national budget, I'd like to ask you about what the United States Congress budget priorities should be . . .

In your opinion, which is most important for Congress to focus on [reducing the deficit, or boosting the economy]?

	Percent
REDUCING THE DEFICIT	32.7
BOOSTING THE ECONOMY	51.4
BOTH - SAME/EQUALLY (v)	13.5
OTHER (v)	0.4
DON T KNOW (v)	2.0
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

Now I am going to switch topics and ask you some questions about specialized programs supported by the United States Congress.

Do you [support or oppose] government investment or spending that specifically benefits only your community?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	22.6
OPPOSE	37.6
SUPPORT	19.1
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	10.7
DON T KNOW (v)	9.7
REFUSED (v)	0.3
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

Would you [support or oppose] more government investment or spending to create jobs specifically in your community?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	14.6
OPPOSE	22.7
SUPPORT	29.3
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	29.5
DON T KNOW (v)	3.7
REFUSED (v)	0.2
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

As you may know pork barrel spending refers to members of Congress getting money for projects in their local district . . . these projects are also commonly referred to as "bringing home the bacon" . . . doing things this way helps to spread out the costs of these projects across everyone.

Generally, do you [support or oppose] pork barrel spending?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	30.0
OPPOSE	33.3
SUPPORT	18.8
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	6.2
DON'T LIKE IT, BUT IF EVERYONE ELSE IS (v)	1.3
DON T KNOW (v)	9.9
REFUSED (v)	0.5
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

Do you think [Democrats in Congress, or Republicans in Congress] are more responsible for pork barrel spending?

	Percent
DEMOCRATS IN CONGRESS	24.0
REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS	23.7
BOTH ARE RESPONSIBLE (v)	33.6
DON T KNOW (v)	17.9
REFUSED (v)	0.8
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

Now I am going to switch topics and ask you some questions about earmarks. "Earmarks" are provisions of a law that dedicate money for specific purposes . . . an example of an earmark would be a gas tax being dedicated only to transportation projects.

Generally, do you [support or oppose] earmarks, or have you really not given it much thought?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	13.9
OPPOSE	11.3
SUPPORT	18.0
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	7.2
HAVEN'T GIVEN IT MUCH THOUGHT	43.5
DON T KNOW (v)	6.0
REFUSED (v)	0.1
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

Do you believe [Democrats in Congress, or Republicans in Congress] are more responsible for earmark provisions?

	Percent
DEMOCRATS IN CONGRESS	23.2
REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS	18.6
BOTH ARE RESPONSIBLE (v)	27.5
DON T KNOW (v)	28.9
REFUSED (v)	1.8
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

Now, I'd like to ask you about the North Carolina state budget situation. . .

As you may be aware, the state of North Carolina is facing a budget shortfall of over 3 billion dollars . . . about half of this shortfall is based on the expiration of some taxes, while the other half is based stimulus funds not being available any more. . . .So, with this 3 billion dollar budget shortfall in mind, we like to ask you some questions about taking care of it . . .

To take care of this budget shortfall, would you [support or oppose] creating new taxes to increase revenues?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	33.5
OPPOSE	27.3
SUPPORT	28.5
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	5.9
DON T KNOW (v)	4.6
REFUSED (v)	0.2
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

To take care of this budget shortfall, would you [support or oppose] making the temporary one percent increase in the sales tax permanent?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	19.4
OPPOSE	21.7
SUPPORT	39.2
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	17.1
DON T KNOW (v)	2.4
REFUSED (v)	0.2
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

To take care of this budget shortfall, would you [support or oppose] making the temporary 2 percent tax surcharges permanent for individuals making more than \$60,000 dollars and couples making more than \$100,000 dollars a year?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	22.9
OPPOSE	26.7
SUPPORT	30.7
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	13.2
DON T KNOW (v)	6.4
REFUSED (v)	0.2
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

To take care of this budget shortfall, would you [support or oppose] making the temporary 3 percent tax surcharges permanent for individuals making more than \$150,000 dollars and couples making more than \$250,000 dollars a year?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	16.7
OPPOSE	22.1
SUPPORT	33.7
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	23.4
DON T KNOW (v)	3.4
REFUSED (v)	0.7
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

To take care of this budget shortfall, would you [support or oppose] reducing funding for all state programs equally?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	18.2
OPPOSE	32.9
SUPPORT	32.3
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	11.5
DON T KNOW (v)	5.2
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

To take care of this budget shortfall, would you [support or oppose] eliminating jobs for current state employees?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	26.7
OPPOSE	29.4
SUPPORT	25.0
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	12.4
DON T KNOW (v)	6.5
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0

To take care of this budget shortfall, would you [support or oppose] increasing the state sales tax by one cent?

	Percent
STRONGLY OPPOSE (p)	13.7
OPPOSE	22.6
SUPPORT	43.3
STRONGLY SUPPORT (p)	18.6
DON T KNOW (v)	1.6
REFUSED (v)	0.1
Total (N=520; +/-4.4%)	100.0