



ELON POLL

North Carolina Races Tighten as Election Day Approaches

Likely Voters in North Carolina
October 23-27, 2016

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Key Survey Insights

Presidential Race

Who is ahead in North Carolina and why?

The race between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump is extremely close, with Clinton receiving 42% of the vote and Trump receiving 41% of the vote. The Libertarian candidate, Gary Johnson, is now receiving 3% of the vote, a significant drop in support from our previous poll, in which he received 9% of the vote.

9% of North Carolina voters are undecided in this race. When pressed, those voters favor Trump over Clinton, 27% to 18%. Third party voters appear to be split between the two candidates. These results suggest North Carolina will continue to be a battleground state in the remaining days before the election on November 8th, 2016.

How big are racial and gender gaps?

Clinton continues to have a significant advantage among black voters, with 100% indicating they will vote or have already voted for the Democratic nominee. In contrast, Trump has an advantage among white voters, with 67% of those surveyed expressing a preference for the Republican nominee.

The gender gap in candidate support has narrowed since our last poll, which occurred after a particularly bad week for Trump. However, Clinton still has a ten-point advantage with female voters, with 55% intending to vote for her, and 45% for Trump. In contrast, 56% of male voters intend to vote for Trump, and 44% for Clinton.

Presidential Election Issues

Election Legitimacy and Media Bias

83% of North Carolina voters say they will accept the results of the presidential election, regardless of who wins and who loses, while only 9% answered that they will not accept the results. 8% were unsure of whether they will accept the results of the election.

16% of Trump supporters said they would not accept the results of the election regardless of the outcome. However, it is not just Trump supporters expressing wariness about the legitimacy of this election: 11% of Democrats, 15% of Independents, and 5% of Clinton supporters answered “No” to this question.

Views about the extent of election fraud are more varied. Overall, 36.5% believe election fraud will be a major problem this year, and 49% believe it will not be a major problem. As one might expect, these beliefs are highly polarized according to both party identification and vote choice. 56% of Republicans and 75% of Trump supporters believe fraud will be a major problem, while 70% of Democrats and 84% of Clinton supporters believe it will not be a problem.

A majority of North Carolina voters, 57%, believe the media is biased against Donald Trump. In contrast, only 19% believe media is biased against Clinton. Some Democrats (28%) and Clinton

supporters (23%) believe media is biased against Trump. A smaller group of Republicans (18%) and Trump supporters (15%) believe media is biased against Clinton.

Worries about Candidates as President

On average, more North Carolina voters are very worried about Donald Trump's decisions as president than they are about Hillary Clinton's: 44.4% about Trump, 39.7% about Clinton. These beliefs can largely be explained by party identification. However, 13% of Republicans are very worried about Trump's decisions, while only 7% of Democrats are very worried about Clinton's decisions.

Belief in Assault Accusations against Trump

North Carolina voters are divided about the truthfulness of sexual assault allegations about the Republican nominee. 45% believed the accusations were mostly true while 36% said mostly false. 14% responded "Don't Know." Responses appear motivated largely by partisan loyalties. 79% of Democrats said "mostly true" compared to only 15% of Republicans and 37% of Independents. Among those planning to vote for Trump, 7% believed the allegations were mostly true.

Governor's Race

Like the presidential contest, this race is a statistical dead heat, with Roy Cooper the Democratic challenger receiving 44.4% of the vote, and Pat McCrory, the Republican incumbent, receiving 44.3% of the vote. The Libertarian candidate, Lon Cecil, is receiving 1.2% of the vote, down from 5.2% in our previous poll, while 7.5% of North Carolina voters remain undecided in this race.

Both McCrory and Cooper have strong support within their party. 91% of Republicans are backing McCrory over Cooper while 89% of Democrats favor Cooper over McCrory. McCrory holds an advantage among Independent voters, winning 54% to Cooper's 46%. The campaigns are also divided on race. Cooper is winning 91% of African-American likely voters, and McCrory leads Cooper 63% to 37% among whites.

U.S. Senate Race

Richard Burr, the Republican incumbent, is now leading Deborah Ross, the Democratic challenger, with 43.5% of the vote to her 39.9%. The Libertarian candidate, Sean Haugh, is receiving 3% of the vote, and 10.9% of North Carolina voters are undecided in this race.

Split Ticket Voting

Split ticket voting is a rare phenomenon according to our results. Only 6% of Clinton voters and 4% of Trump voters indicate they intend to vote for the opposing party's nominee for Governor, Pat McCrory (R, incumbent) and Cooper (D) respectively. Similarly, only 5% of Clinton and 2% of Trump voters intend to vote for the opposing party's nominee for U.S. Senate, Richard Burr (R, incumbent) and Deborah Ross (D).

Topline Results

Vote Choice

Presidential Race

Who are you planning to vote for in the presidential race: [Hillary Clinton, the Democrat], Gary Johnson, the Libertarian, or [Donald Trump, the Republican]?¹

Hillary Clinton	298.....	42.00%
Donald Trump.....	293.....	41.20%
Gary Johnson	19.....	2.60%
Jill Stein	4.....	0.50%
Other	10.....	1.40%
Don't Know	62.....	8.70%
Refused	24.....	3.40%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Presidential Race: Undecided Probe

If you had to choose, who do you lean more towards: [Hillary Clinton], Gary Johnson, or [Donald Trump]?

Hillary Clinton	11.....	17.60%
Donald Trump	17.....	26.90%
Gary Johnson	9.....	14.30%
Undecided / Don't Know.....	25.....	39.80%
Refused	1.....	1.50%
N=	62.....	100.00%

Presidential Race: Johnson Probe

If you had to choose, who do you lean more towards: [Hillary Clinton] or [Donald Trump]?

Hillary Clinton	10.....	34.90%
Donald Trump	10.....	34.80%
Other Candidate	6.....	18.60%
Undecided/Don't Know.....	1.....	3.10%
Refused	3.....	8.60%
N=	30.....	100.00%

¹ For all vote choice questions, the results are combined for those who are likely voters and those who voted early or via absentee ballot.

Governor's Race

Who are you planning to vote for in the North Carolina governor's race: [Roy Cooper, the Democrat,] Lon Cecil, the Libertarian, or [Pat McCrory, the Republican]?¹

Pat McCrory	314.....	44.30%
Roy Cooper	315.....	44.40%
Lon Cecil.....	8.....	1.20%
Don't Know	53.....	7.50%
Refused	19.....	2.60%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Governor's Race: Undecided Probe

If you had to choose, who do you lean more towards: [Pat McCrory], Lon Cecil, or [Roy Cooper]?

Pat McCrory	10.....	20.80%
Roy Cooper	11.....	24.00%
Lon Cecil	2.....	3.30%
Undecided/Don't Know.....	24.....	50.30%
Refused	1.....	1.50%
N=	47.....	100.00%

Governor's Race: Cecil Voter Probe

If you had to choose, who do you lean more towards: [Pat McCrory] or [Roy Cooper]?

Pat McCrory	3.....	31.40%
Roy Cooper	4.....	43.70%
Undecided/Don't Know.....	2.....	25.00%
N=	9.....	100.00%

Senate Race

Who are you planning to vote for in the North Carolina U.S. Senate race: [Deborah Ross, the Democrat,] Sean Haugh, the Libertarian, or [Richard Burr, the Republican]?¹

Deborah Ross	283.....	39.90%
Richard Burr.....	309.....	43.50%
Sean Haugh	22.....	3.00%
Other	1.....	0.10%
Don't Know	78.....	10.90%
Refused	18.....	2.50%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Senate Race: Undecided Voter Probe

If you had to choose, who do you lean more towards: [Deborah Ross], Sean Haugh, or [Richard Burr]?

Deborah Ross	14.....	21.00%
Richard Burr	11.....	15.80%
Sean Haugh	3.....	3.70%
Undecided/Don't Know.....	41.....	59.50%
N=	69.....	100.00%

Senate Race: Haugh Voter Probe

If you had to choose, who do you lean more towards: [Deborah Ross] or [Richard Burr]?

Deborah Ross	7.....	37.20%
Richard Burr	9.....	46.40%
Other Candidate	1.....	4.00%
Undecided/Don't Know.....	2.....	12.50%
N=	20.....	100.00%

Vote Likelihood

Plan to Vote in 2016²

Do you, yourself, plan to vote in the election this November, or not?

Yes	535.....	100.00%
N=	535.....	100.00%

Vote Certainty²

How certain are you that you will vote?

Absolutely certain	516.....	96.40%
Fairly certain	18.....	3.40%
Not certain.....	1.....	0.10%
N=	535.....	100.00%

² Early voters were not asked these questions.

Know Their Voting Location²

Do you happen to know where people who live in your neighborhood go to vote?

Yes	463.....	86.60%
No.....	58.....	10.80%
Don't Know	14.....	2.60%
N=	535.....	100.00%

Thought about Election Much²

How much thought have you given to the upcoming November election?

Quite a lot.....	464.....	86.70%
Some	58.....	10.90%
Only a little	8.....	1.50%
None.....	5.....	0.90%
N=	535.....	100.00%

Presidential Election Issues

Election Legitimacy

Will you accept the results of the election as valid, regardless of who wins and who loses?³

Yes	581.....	82.60%
No.....	66.....	9.40%
Don't Know	56.....	8.00%
N=	703.....	100.00%

Do you think election fraud will be a major problem this year?³

Yes	259.....	36.50%
No.....	348.....	49.00%
Don't Know	101.....	14.20%
Refused	2.....	0.30%
N=	710.....	100.00%

³ Question order for these questions was randomized, to test whether priming respondents about voter fraud influenced their willingness to accept the election results. Differences were insignificant.

Media Bias

In general, do you believe the media is biased against Donald Trump?⁴

Yes	395.....	55.60%
No.....	276.....	38.80%
Don't Know	32.....	4.60%
Refused	7.....	1.00%
N=	710.....	100.00%

In general, do you believe the media is biased against Hillary Clinton?⁴

Yes	137.....	19.30%
No.....	535.....	75.30%
Don't Know	33.....	4.70%
Refused	5.....	0.70%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Worried About Decisions as President

If Donald Trump wins the election, how worried would you feel about his decisions as president: [not at all worried], somewhat worried, or [very worried]?⁴

Very worried	315.....	44.40%
Somewhat worried	212.....	29.90%
Not at all worried	168.....	23.70%
Don't Know	8.....	1.10%
Refused	6.....	0.90%
N=	710.....	100.00%

If Hillary Clinton wins the election, how worried would you feel about her decisions as president: [not at all worried], somewhat worried, or [very worried]?⁴

Very worried	282.....	39.70%
Somewhat worried	208.....	29.30%
Not at all worried	208.....	29.20%
Don't Know	6.....	0.90%
Refused	6.....	0.90%
N=	710.....	100.00%

⁴ Question order was randomized, so that respondents were asked about Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton first.

Belief in Assault Accusations

Multiple women have accused Donald Trump of sexual assault. Do you believe the accusations against Trump are [mostly true] or [mostly false]?

Mostly true	321.....	45.20%
Mostly false.....	256.....	36.10%
Other	18.....	2.50%
Don't Know	99.....	13.90%
Refused	16.....	2.30%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Party and Ideology

Self-Reported Party Identification

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or something else?

Democrats	247.....	35.40%
Independents	246.....	35.20%
Republicans.....	205.....	29.30%
N=	697.....	100.00%

Registration Party ID: From Sample File

Democrats	315.....	44.30%
Independents	161.....	22.70%
Republicans.....	234.....	33.00%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Ideology

When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as liberal, moderate, conservative, or haven't you thought much about this?

Conservative	278.....	39.10%
Moderate	240.....	33.80%
Liberal	135.....	19.00%
Don't Know	53.....	7.40%
Refused	5.....	0.70%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Demographics

Education

Less than HS	19.....	2.70%
High School / GED	102.....	14.30%
Some College/ AA / Technical	223.....	31.40%
College Graduate	239.....	33.60%
Graduate School.....	122.....	17.20%
Don't Know	2.....	0.30%
Refused	3.....	0.40%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Age

18-25	73.....	10.30%
26-40	154.....	21.70%
41-65	344.....	48.40%
66+	139.....	19.60%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Income

Less than \$25,000.....	71.....	9.90%
\$25,000 to \$50,000.....	127.....	17.90%
\$50,000 to \$75,000.....	144.....	20.20%
More than \$75,000	300.....	42.30%
Don't Know	32.....	4.60%
Refused.....	36.....	5.10%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Race

White.....	507.....	71.40%
Black	164.....	23.10%
Other	39.....	5.50%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Landline/Cellphone

Landline only	21.....	3.00%
Dual Use.....	393.....	55.60%
Cell only.....	293.....	41.40%
N=	707.....	100.00%

Post-Interview Questions

Interviewer-Assessed Gender

Male	316.....	44.50%
Female.....	394.....	55.50%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Interviewer-Assessed Southern Accent

Did the person have a Southern accent?

Strong Southern Accent	188.....	26.50%
Slight Southern Accent	293.....	41.20%
No Southern Accent.....	229.....	32.20%
N=	710.....	100.00%

Cross Tabulations

Presidential Vote Choice (as share of two party vote)

	Clinton %	Trump %	Total %
Race			
White	33	67	100
Black	100	0	100
Other	64	36	100
Education			
Less than HS	56	44	100
High School / GED	48	52	100
Some College/ AA / Technical	44	58	100
College Graduate	49	51	100
Graduate School	73	27	100
Gender			
Male	44	56	100
Female	55	45	100
Income			
Less than \$25,000	54	46	100
\$25,000 to \$50,000	57	43	100
\$50,000 to \$75,000	59	41	100
More than \$75,000	44	56	100
Ideology			
Conservative	11	89	100
Moderate	70	30	100
Liberal	93	7	100
Party Identification			
Democrats	93	7	100
Independents	42	58	100
Republicans	5	95	100
Age			
18-40	55	45	100
41-65	48	52	100
66+	50	50	100
Accent			
Strong Southern Accent	31	69	100
Slight Southern Accent	49	51	100
No Southern Accent	69	31	100
County Density (population / square mile)			
<100	36	64	100
100-200	38	62	100
200-700	44	56	100
>700	67	33	100

Governor Vote Choice (as share of two party vote)

	McCrory	Cooper	Total
	%	%	%
Race			
White	63	37	100
Black	9	91	100
Other	37	69	100
Education			
Less than HS	53	47	100
High School / GED	52	48	100
Some College/ AA / Technical	47	42	100
College Graduate	51	49	100
Graduate School	32	68	100
Gender			
Male	54	46	100
Female	46	54	100
Income			
Less than \$25,000	44	56	100
\$25,000 to \$50,000	46	54	100
\$50,000 to \$75,000	43	57	100
More than \$75,000	55	45	100
Ideology			
Conservative	86	14	100
Moderate	34	66	100
Liberal	11	89	100
Party Identification			
Democrats	11	89	100
Independents	54	46	100
Republicans	91	9	100
Age			
18-40	48	52	100
41-65	51	49	100
66+	51	49	100
Presidential Vote Choice			
Clinton	6	94	100
Trump	96	4	100
Senate Vote Choice			
Ross	6	88	100
Burr	87	8	100
County Density (population / square mile)			
<100	62	38	100
100-200	63	37	100
200-700	55	45	100
>700	34	66	100

U.S. Senate Vote Choice (as share of two party vote)

	Ross	Burr	Total
	%	%	%
Race			
White	33	67	100
Black	97	3	100
Other	67	34	100
Education			
Less than HS	53	47	100
High School / GED	46	54	100
Some College/ AA / Technical	47	61	100
College Graduate	46	54	100
Graduate School	69	31	100
Gender			
Male	42	58	100
Female	52	48	100
Income			
Less than \$25,000	53	47	100
\$25,000 to \$50,000	53	47	100
\$50,000 to \$75,000	54	46	100
More than \$75,000	42	58	100
Ideology			
Conservative	11	89	100
Moderate	64	36	100
Liberal	91	9	100
Party Identification			
Democrats	88	12	100
Independents	45	55	100
Republicans	5	95	100
Age			
18-40	51	49	100
41-65	45	55	100
66+	48	52	100
Presidential Vote Choice			
Clinton	95	5	100
Trump	2	98	100
Governor Vote Choice			
McCrory	7	93	100
Cooper	92	8	100
County Density (population / square mile)			
<100	37	63	100
100-200	36	64	100
200-700	45	55	100
>700	61	39	100

Election Legitimacy

Will you accept the results of the election as valid, regardless of who wins and who loses?

	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %	Total %
Race				
White	81	10	9	100
Black	89	7	5	100
Party Identification				
Democrats	89	5	5	100
Independents	82	10	8	100
Republicans	76	13	11	100
Gender				
Male	82	8	9	100
Female	83	10	7	100
Presidential Vote Choice				
Donald Trump	72	14	14	100
Hillary Clinton	92	5	3	100

Do you think election fraud will be a major problem this year?

	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %	Refused %	Total %
Race					
White	40	45	15	0	100
Black	25	64	11	0	100
Party Identification					
Democrats	18	70	13	0	100
Independents	38	46	16	0	100
Republicans	56	28	15	1	100
Gender					
Male	37	51	12	0	100
Female	36	47	16	1	100
Presidential Vote Choice					
Donald Trump	60	20	19	1	100
Hillary Clinton	15	76	9	0	100

Media Bias

In general, do you believe the media is biased against Donald Trump?

	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %	Refused %	Total %
Race					
White	66	29	4	1	100
Black	22	71	7	1	100
Party Identification					
Democrats	26	68	6	1	100
Independents	62	32	5	1	100
Republicans	83	14	3	0	100
Gender					
Male	61	35	4	0	100
Female	51	42	5	2	100
Presidential Vote Choice					
Donald Trump	92	5	2	1	100
Hillary Clinton	21	72	6	1	100

In general, do you believe the media is biased against Hillary Clinton?

	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %	Refused %	Total %
Race					
White	16	79	4	1	100
Black	23	69	7	1	100
Party Identification					
Democrats	20	73	6	0	100
Independents	20	75	4	0	100
Republicans	17	80	3	0	100
Gender					
Male	18	79	3	0	100
Female	21	72	6	1	100
Presidential Vote Choice					
Donald Trump	15	82	3	1	100
Hillary Clinton	22	72	6	0	100

Worried About Decisions as President

If Hillary Clinton wins the election, how worried would you feel about her decisions as president?

	Very worried %	Somewhat worried %	Not at all worried %	Don't Know %	Refused %	Total %
White	52	26	20	1	1	100
Black	2	42	55	1	1	100
Democrats	7	36	56	0	0	100
Independents	42	34	21	1	2	100
Republicans	77	17	5	1	0	100
Male	45	28	25	1	1	100
Female	35	31	32	1	1	100
Donald Trump	84	13	1	1	1	100
Hillary Clinton	0	38	62	0	0	100

If Donald Trump wins the election, how worried would you feel about his decisions as president?

	Very worried %	Somewhat worried %	Not at all worried %	Don't Know %	Refused %	Total %
White	34	35	30	1	1	100
Black	75	15	7	2	1	100
Democrats	80	15	4	1	0	100
Independents	34	39	23	2	2	100
Republicans	13	39	47	0	0	100
Male	37	31	30	1	1	100
Female	51	29	19	1	1	100
Donald Trump	2	48	48	1	1	100
Hillary Clinton	88	9	3	0	0	100

Believe Assault Allegations Against Donald Trump

Multiple women have accused Donald Trump of sexual assault. Do you believe the accusations against Trump are [mostly true] or [mostly false]?

	Mostly true %	Mostly false %	Other %	Don't Know %	Refused %	Total %
White	34	47	3	14	2	100
Black	75	3	3	16	3	100
Democrats	79	7	1	11	2	100
Independents	37	40	4	17	3	100
Republicans	15	68	2	14	1	100
Male	38	40	4	16	3	100
Female	51	33	1	13	2	100
Donald Trump	7	74	4	13	2	100
Hillary Clinton	85	3	2	8	2	100

Question Ordering

- Introductory Screen
- Have you already voted? If yes:
 - Vote for President
 - Vote for Governor
 - Vote for Senate
- Vote Choice [If have not already voted]
 - Presidential Race: Clinton v. Trump v. Johnson
 - Undecided Probe
 - Johnson Probe
 - Governor's Race: McCrory v. Cooper v. Cecil
 - Undecided Probe
 - Cecil Probe
 - Senate Race: Burr v. Ross v. Haugh
 - Undecided Probe
 - Haugh Probe
- Vote Likelihood
 - Plan to Vote in 2016
 - How Certain Will Vote in 2016
 - Know Their Precinct
 - Thought About Election Much
- Presidential Election Issues
 - [Is fraud a problem in U.S. elections?] / [Will you accept the results of the election?]
 - Is media biased against [Clinton] / [Trump]?
 - If elected, are you worried about [Clinton's] / [Trump's] decisions as president?
- Party and Ideology
 - Self-Reported Party Identification
 - Ideology
- Demographics
 - Education
 - Income
 - Age
 - Race
 - Own landline [cell #s only]
 - Own cell [landline #s only]
- Post-Interview Questions
 - Interviewer-Assessed Gender
 - Interviewer-Assessed Southern Accent

Methodological Information

Mode:Live Interviewer, Cell Phone and Landline
PopulationLikely Voters, North Carolina
Sample:Voter Registration List, North Carolina
Dates in the field:October 23-27, 2016
Sample Size:.....710
Margin of Error:+/- 3.7 %
Confidence Level:95%
Weighting Variables:Age, Race, and Sex, Registered Party Identification

Procedure

The Elon University Poll uses a random sample of North Carolina voters with telephones and wireless (cell) telephone numbers.

For the administration of surveys, the Elon University Poll uses CATI system software (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). We attempt to reach each working telephone number in the sample up to three times. We only interview residents of North Carolina who are over 18. In compliance with FCC rules, each phone number was dialed manually by a human interviewer. An interview is complete only if a respondent progresses through the entire survey.

The Elon University Poll conducted the survey in English. Live interviewers called from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm on Sunday 10/23, and 5:20 pm to 9:20 pm, Monday through Thursday, 10/24-10/27.

Please direct questions about the Elon University Poll's methodology to the Director of the Elon University Poll, Dr. Jason Husser at 336-278-5239 or jhusser@elon.edu.

Weighting

Weights were generated using a technique known as iterative proportional fitting, also known as raking. We typically weight results from the Elon University Poll on multiple demographic characteristics. In the case of this survey, our target population was likely voters in North Carolina.

The weight variables were race, gender, age and registered party identification. Each variable was weighted to match relative proportions of ballots cast in the 2012 general election. Note that registered party differs significantly from self-identified party identification, which is more of a psychological attachment than a stable demographic.

Because the sample was from the voter registration list rather than a random digit dial, we did not weight on phone usage (as is our practice with RDD surveys), largely because CDC parameters of phone usage are reflective of the general population rather than registered voters alone. However, phone usage (reported in the topline) is roughly approximate CDC estimates for all North Carolina Residents.

Final results in the topline above deviate from these parameters because the sample was later restricted to likely voters from the larger sample of registered voters.

Design Effects

The standard error of an estimate for a simple random sample is different from the standard error of an estimate based on a weighted sample. This is referred to as a design effect. For example the overall design effect for the final weights for the sample of *Registered Voters in North Carolina* was 1.037. So an adjusted margin of error for that sample that takes into account the design effect of a survey would be +/- 3.82 instead of +/- 3.68.

Likely Voter Model

We completed 821 interviews of registered voters in North Carolina. This report is limited to the 710 likely voters we identified from those initial interviews. In order for a respondent to qualify as a likely voter, they had to (a) say they already voted or (b) provide appropriate answers to at least three out of the four following questions:

- Do you, yourself, plan to vote in the election this November, or not? (Yes)
- How certain are you that you will vote? Absolutely certain, fairly certain, or not certain. (Absolutely certain)
- Do you happen to know where people who live in your neighborhood go to vote? (Yes)
- How much thought have you given to the upcoming November election? (Quite a lot or some)

Support for Transparency

The Elon University Poll supports transparency in survey research and is a charter member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research Transparency Initiative, which is a program promoting openness and transparency about survey research methods and operations among survey research professionals and the industry. All information about the Elon University Poll that we released to the public conforms to reporting conventions recommended by the American Association for Public Opinion Research and the National Council on Public Polls.

Question Construction and Question Order

In releasing survey results, the Elon University Poll provides the questions as worded and the order in which respondents receive these questions. In some cases question ordering rotates to avoid biases. In an effort to provide neutral, non-biased questions, we attempt to observe conventional question wording and question order protocols in all of our polls. In order to avoid recency or primacy effects, we randomize candidate names and directional response options (e.g. support / oppose) within the text of each question. We pretest every questionnaire multiple times before entering the field.

Branching Questions

For questions with multiple response options, we often program our surveys to branch into a secondary probing question.

“Don’t Know” & “Refused” Response Options

All questions include an option for respondents to volunteer “Don’t Know” or to refuse. Unless otherwise noted, interviewers do not prompt “don’t know” responses.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who pays for the Elon University Poll?

Elon University fully funds the Elon University Poll. The poll operates under the auspices of the College of Arts and Sciences at Elon University, led by Dean Gabie Smith. The Elon University administration, led by Dr. Leo Lambert, president of the university, fully supports the Elon University Poll as part of its service to the community. Because of this generous support, the Elon University poll does not engage in any contract work. This permits the Elon University Poll to operate as a neutral, non-biased, non-partisan resource.

2. Does the Elon University Poll favor a certain party?

The Elon University Poll is an academic, non-partisan survey. We do not engage or work with any political candidates or parties. We employ best practices to ensure the results are not biased.

3. Where do you get your numbers?

We obtain a random sample of the North Carolina registered voter list from Survey Sample International (SSI). SSI enhances this list to provide up-to-date phone numbers for voters. In order to adjust for differing probabilities of completion by age, the sample was adjusted prior to making phone calls based on the likelihood of respondents of an age group to complete a survey.

4. How many times do you call a number before giving up?

We will attempt to call each working number up to three times before removing it from the sample.

5. Do you call both cell phones and land lines?

Yes. We use a mixed sample of both cell phones and landlines.

6. Do you report non-response rates?

Yes. We report non-response rates based on AAPOR guidelines. The response rate for the October 23-27, 2016 poll was 13%. The response rate is calculated using the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) formula RR4.

7. Do you weight the data?

Yes. We apply weights to the data. An iterative proportional fitting algorithm generates weights based on North Carolina State Board of Election statistics.

8. Do you randomize response options?

Yes. We rotate the order of candidate names in all applicable questions. We also rotate order of text for other questions, such as those that include response options such as “more” and “less.” Furthermore, we rotate the order of some questions themselves if we suspect the order of a question could bias results.

9. How are students involved in the Elon University Poll?

Elon University students are involved with the survey as part of the University’s commitment to civic engagement and experiential learning where “students learn through doing.” Student interviewers receive training prior to engaging in interviewing. A team of student polling associates assists the directors with data collection.

The Elon University Poll Team



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