

Is North Carolina a Red or Blue State? Politics and Men's College Basketball

Elon University Poll

October 21-26, 2012

Kenneth E. Fernandez, Ph.D.

Director of the Elon University Poll

Assistant Professor of Political Science

kfernandez@elon.edu

(336) 278-6438

Jason A. Husser, Ph.D.

Assistant Director of the Elon University Poll

Assistant Professor of Political Science

jhusser@elon.edu

(336) 278-5239

John L. Robinson

Director of Communications for the Elon University Poll

jrobinson24@elon.edu

Daniel J. Anderson

Vice President for University Communications

Eric Townsend

Director of the Elon University News Bureau

The Elon University Poll conducted a landline and cell phone survey from October 21-26, 2012. The survey consisted of a random sample of 1,238 likely voters. In addition to asking a variety of political and demographic questions, the Elon University Poll also asked residents to name their favorite North Carolina men's college basketball team. The survey found that 36% of likely voters consider the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill their favorite team, followed by Duke with 18% of the sample, and 15% stating support for North Carolina State University.

Basketball fans who support the "red" N.C. State Wolfpack also tend to support the "red" Republicans in politics. Among N.C. State likely voters, Republican Mitt Romney holds a 29 point advantage over Barack Obama. "Carolina blue" UNC Tar Heel fans support the "blue" Democratic incumbent President Barack Obama by a 53-41 percent margin. Duke fans were fairly split (47-45 with an edge to Obama) and any difference in support is within the subsample's +/- 6.7% margin of error. In the statewide gubernatorial contest, Pat McCrory, the former Mayor of Charlotte, seems to have fans from all three camps. Duke, Chapel Hill and N.C. State supporters all lean toward the Republican candidate over his Democratic opponent, current Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton. N.C. State fans lead with 63% saying they have voted for or plan to vote for McCrory.

This light-hearted question was asked for a few reasons. First, North Carolina has often been referred to as the "Basketball Capital of the World." Basketball is arguably a highly salient issue in the state and there may even be wider interest in the sport than in presidential politics. Ending a survey with a question that asks about the economy or about a respondent's race, ideology, age or income can also be a bit awkward. Even our student interviewers begin to feel the burden of asking over a thousand respondents about their employment status and other personal information. We have found that ending on a lighter note can make the survey more enjoyable for both respondent and interviewer.

-Dr. Kenneth E. Fernandez and Dr. Jason A. Husser

Basic Methodological Information

Mode:	Live Interviewer RDD Telephone Interviews (Dual Frame: Cell Phone and Landlines)
Sample Area:	North Carolina
Dates in the field:	October 21 – October 26, 2012
Sample Size (Likely Voters)	1,238
Margin of Error (Likely Voters)	±2.79
Confidence Level	95%
Weighting Variables	Age , Race, Gender, Phone Ownership, and Early Voting

Question: To end on a lighter note, what is your favorite North Carolina Men's College Team?

Duke.....	217	18%
UNC Chapel Hill.....	448	36%
NC State	188	15%
Other.....	137	11%
Don't Know.....	222	18%
Refused	25	2%
N=	1,238	100%

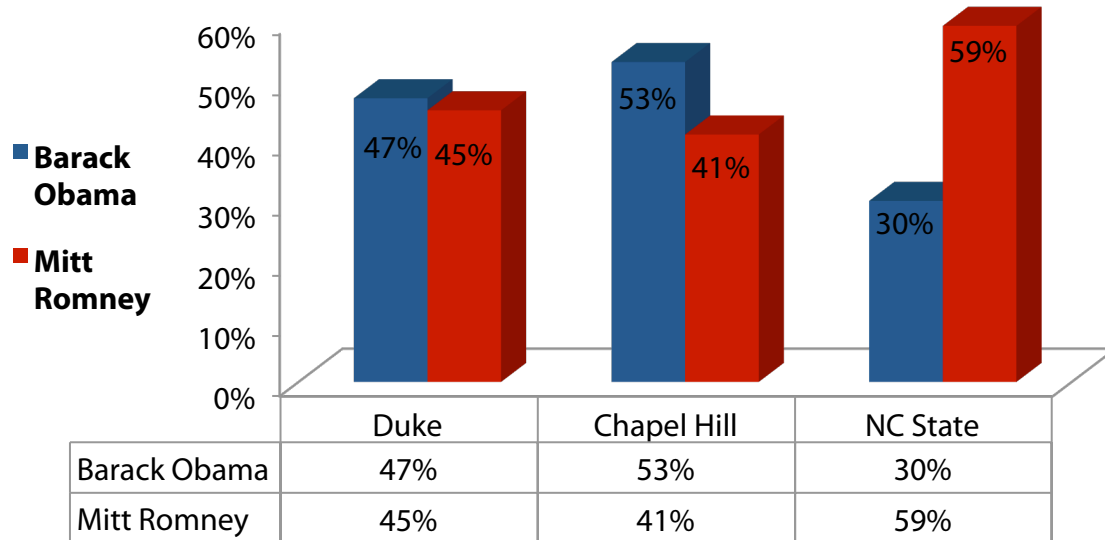
Table 1: Basketball and Presidential Voting

Favorite NC Men's College Basketball Team			
	<u>Duke</u>	<u>Chapel Hill</u>	<u>NC State</u>
Presidential Vote	%	%	%
Barack Obama	47	53	30
Mitt Romney	45	41	59
Neither/ Don't Know	8	6	10
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
	+/- 6.7	+/- 4.6	+/- 7.1

Table 2: Basketball and Gubernatorial Voting

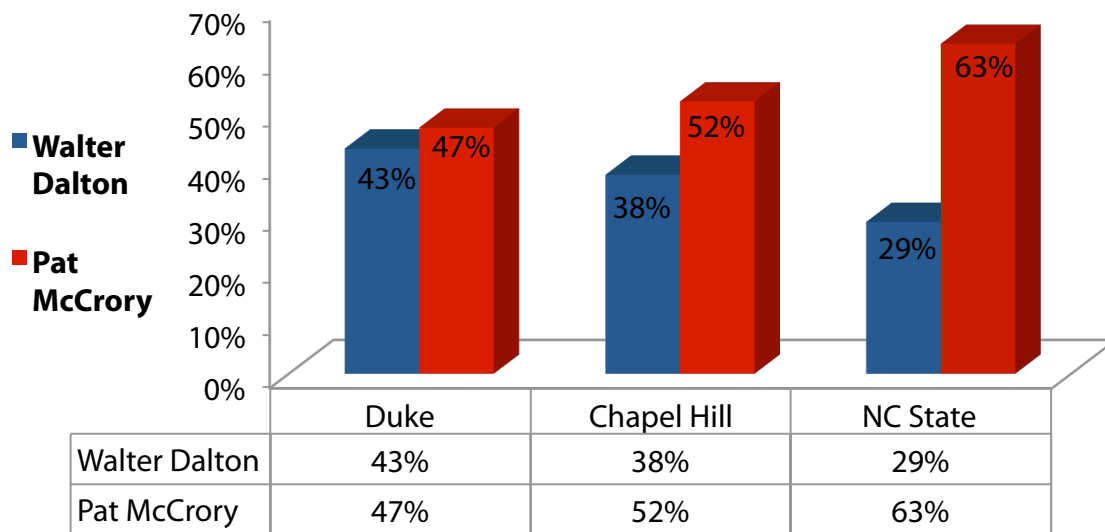
Favorite NC Men's College Basketball Team			
	<u>Duke</u>	<u>Chapel Hill</u>	<u>NC State</u>
Gubernatorial Vote	%	%	%
Walter Dalton	43	38	29
Pat McCrory	47	52	63
Neither / Don't Know	10	10	7
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
	+/- 6.7	+/- 4.6	+/- 7.1

Tobacco Road Politics: President 2012



Source: **Elon University Poll** - October 21-26, 2012.
1,238 NC Likely Voters

Tobacco Road Politics: Governor 2012



Source: **Elon University Poll** - October 21-26, 2012.
1,238 NC Likely Voters