

MEREDITH COLLEGE POLL

September 18-22, 2016

Women in politics and law enforcement

With approximately three weeks until Election Day and the possibility that Democrat Hillary Clinton will be elected as the first woman president in our nation's history, most North Carolinians (72%) state that there are no differences between men and women as political leaders.

Also, with so much national attention in the presidential campaign being on the differing visions of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton on the issue of crime and safety, a large majority of North Carolinians perceive themselves to feel safe (62%) and have respect for police officers (92%). However, with much media attention on episodes of police officers shooting civilians, including the highly publicized shooting of Keith Lamont Scott in Charlotte on September 20, a majority of North Carolinians feel that male police officers are much more likely to use excessive force (59% v. 3%) or exceed their authority (46% v. 6%) than are women police officers.

Executive Summary

The Meredith College Poll asked questions about North Carolinian's views on women as political leaders and women in law enforcement. The former questions were also used in the spring of 2015 and results from that survey were compared to the results from the most recent Meredith Poll. The survey was conducted using a live-caller, dual frame (landline and cell phone) survey of 487 **registered voters** of North Carolina between September 18-22, 2016. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.43 percentage points for registered voters. Details regarding the methodology of this survey can be found at the end of this report.

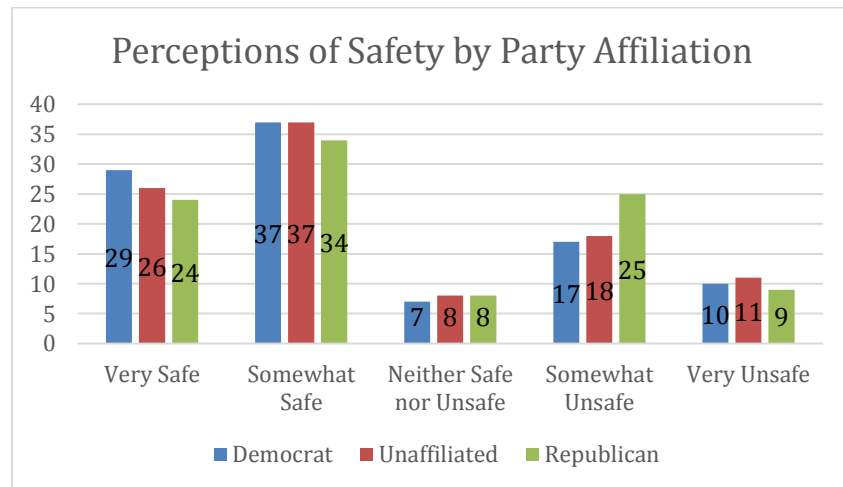
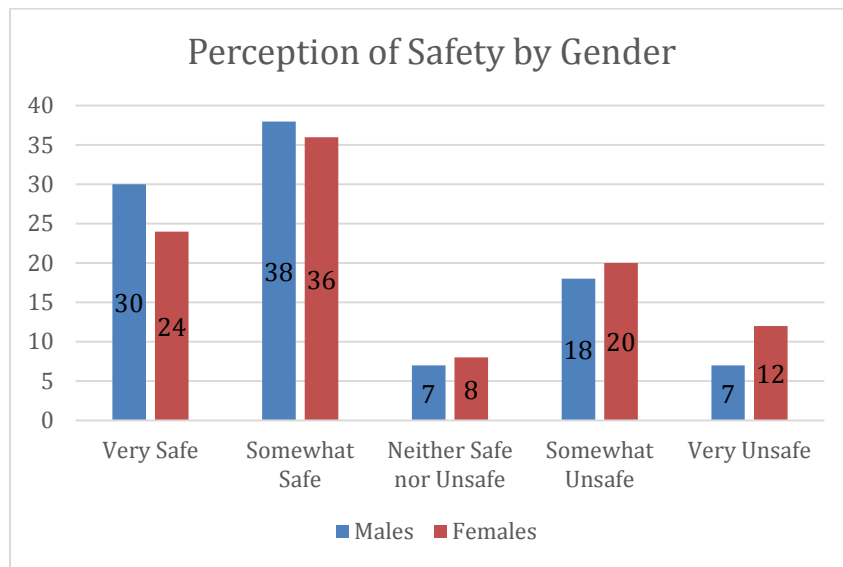
Voter Satisfaction with the Direction of the Country and Feelings about Safety

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of North Carolina registered voters report being dissatisfied with the direction of the country. Registered Republican voters report the highest level of dissatisfaction with the direction of the country (84%), while registered Democratic voters report the least (61%). Registered unaffiliated voters' level of dissatisfaction was just below the state average (71%). The level of dissatisfaction has remained consistent since the last administration of the Meredith Poll in March.

In terms of feelings about safety, a majority of North Carolinians report feeling safe (62%) with some differences between men and women in North Carolina (68% of men felt safe or very safe v. 60% of women) or between people of different party affiliations (68% of Democrats, 58% of Republicans, and 63% of unaffiliated voters). In terms of race and ethnicity, whites feel safer than nonwhites in North Carolina (62.6% v. 56.5%).

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Women as Political Leaders

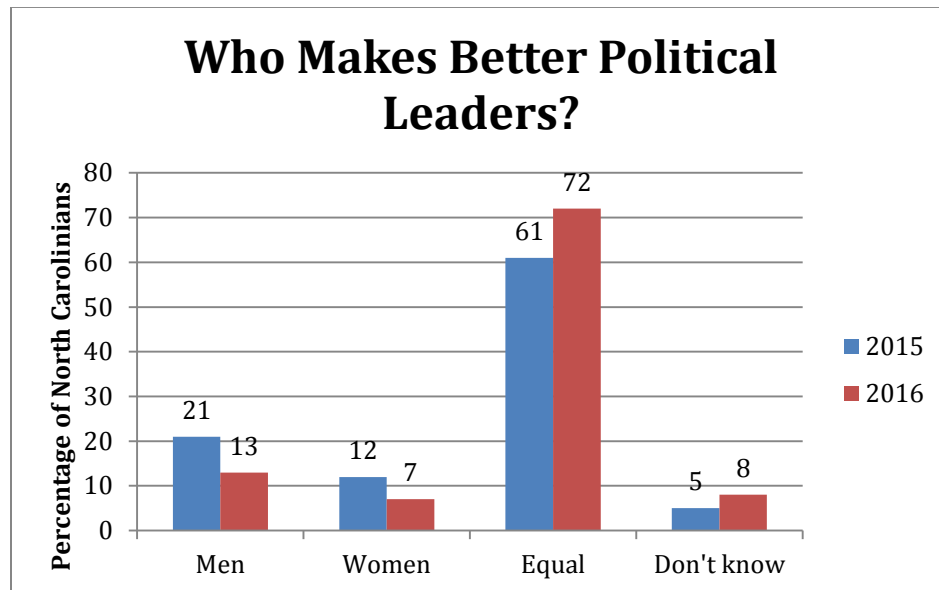
With the historical nomination of Hillary Clinton by the Democratic Party, North Carolinians face the possibility of electing the nation's first woman president. At the Democratic convention in July, there was a great deal of attention given to the theme of Clinton breaking the glass ceiling that has been associated with the underrepresentation of women in elected office. In North Carolina, women currently hold 24 percent of elected offices, a percentage that has changed little over the last two decades.

Even with the increased publicity given to women in office generally and Hillary Clinton specifically, a large majority of North Carolinians (72%) state that men and women are equally effective as political leaders and only a relative small number of citizens believe that men make better political leaders (13%) or that women are superior political leaders (7%). As compared to 2015 when the same questions were used in a previous version of

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the Meredith Poll, more people consider men and women to be indistinguishable in terms of being better political leaders and fewer people identify a specific gender as superior.



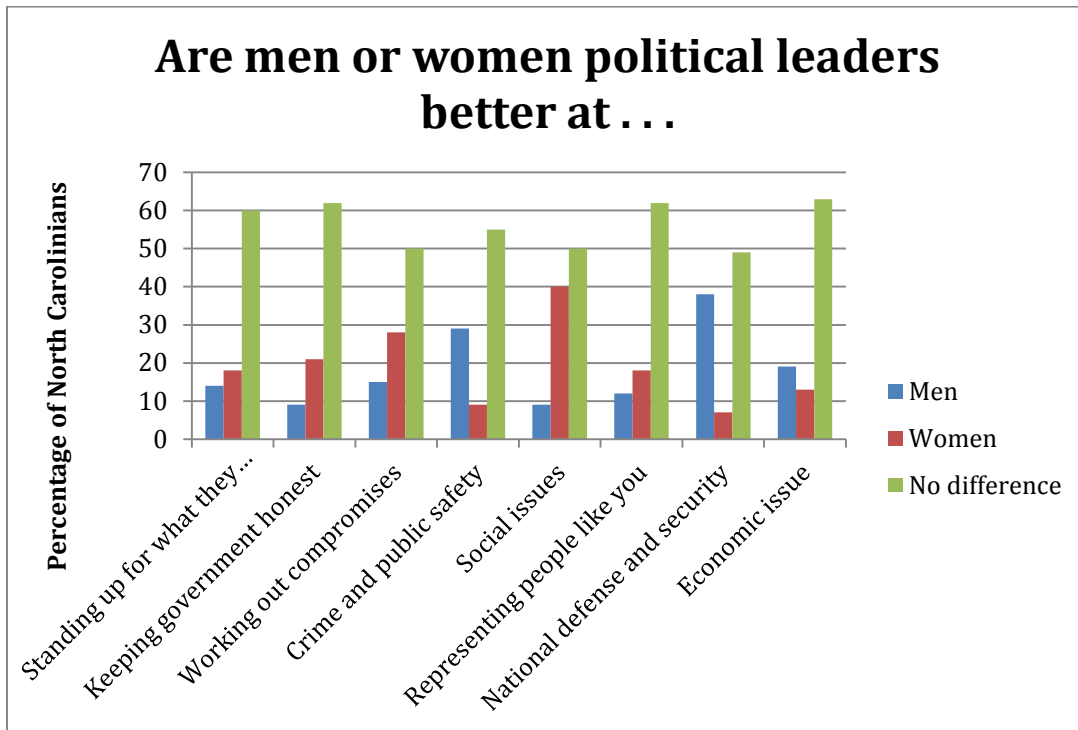
Males are more likely than females (85% v. 75%) to state that there are no differences between men and women as political leaders. Female citizens are more likely than males to favor either men (9% v. 4%) or women (16% v. 11%) political leaders. In terms of party affiliation, Democrats are far more likely to see women more favorably or at least equal to men in terms of political leadership, than are Republicans. Over one-quarter of Republicans (26%) see men as better political leaders, whereas only 7 percent of Democrats favor men in the same roles.

In terms of specific attributes of political leadership, most North Carolinians consider that there are no differences between men and women in terms of standing up for what they believe in or keeping government honest. The one area in which women have an advantage is in working out compromise with almost one-third of North Carolinians (28%) stating that women were better than men and half of the state's citizens believing that women were equal to men.

In policy areas there were greater differences in the perceptions of men and women political leaders. Men were considered significantly more capable at dealing with issues involving public safety and national security, while women were considered to be better than men at dealing with social issues, such as education. On economic issues, there were few differences among the perceptions of men and women political leaders.

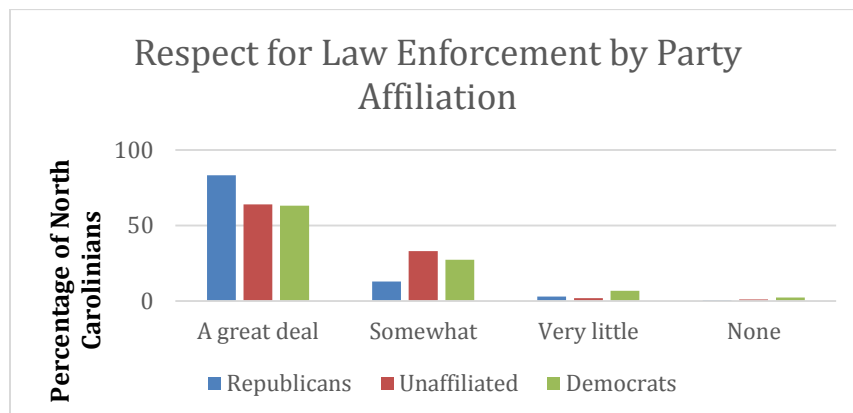
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Respect for Law Enforcement and Who Makes a Better Police Officer or Chief

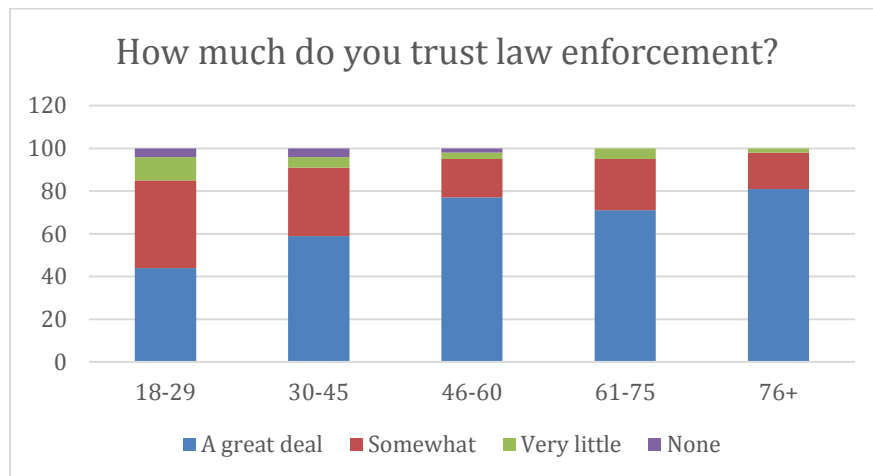
A large majority of North Carolinians (69%) have great respect for law enforcement officers in the state, with only 4 percent of its citizens stating that they have very little respect for officers. Among demographic groups, whites have higher respect for police officers (74.9%) than do nonwhites (62.6). Republicans have significantly higher levels of respect for those in law enforcement (81%) than do Democrats (63%) or unaffiliated citizens (64%).



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The most striking difference in respect for law enforcement, however, is related to age with young people possessing decidedly less respect for law enforcement officers than their older counterparts. Those in the youngest age category (19-29) had about half as much respect for police officers as those in the oldest age category (76+).



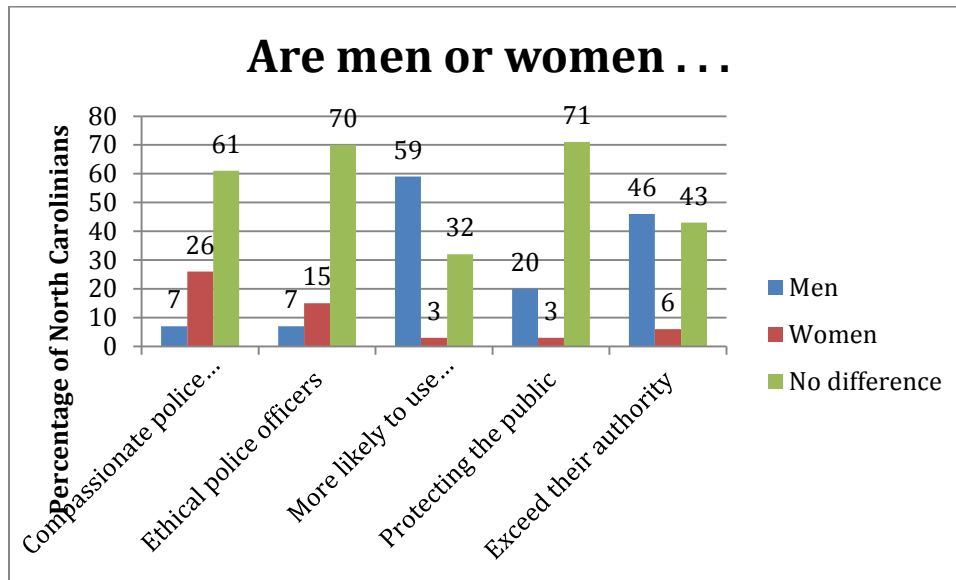
In terms of police officers themselves, over three-quarters of North Carolinians believe that men and women officers are equally capable, with only 16% stating that male officers were more capable and 3 percent stating that female officers were superior. Also, when asked about whether men or women made better police chiefs, over two-thirds of North Carolinians (68%) felt there were no differences between men and women in law enforcement leadership. Twenty-one percent felt that men made better police chiefs and five percent perceived that women made better police chiefs.

In terms of qualities associated with police officers, most North Carolinians believe that men and women police officers equally possess compassion and a sense of ethics, as well as possessing the skills to protect the public.

Some of the negative traits often associated with police officers, such as using excessive force or exceeding their authority, are where many North Carolinians favor women police officers over men. Only 3 percent of citizens consider women more likely to use excessive force, while 59 percent consider men more likely to do so. Similarly, 46 percent of North Carolinians state that men are more likely to exceed their authority, while only 6 percent consider women more likely to do so.

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Topline Results

Are you satisfied with the direction of the country?

All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

Satisfied	90	18%
Dissatisfied	357	73%
Don't Know	29	6%
Refused	11	2%

Men or women as political leaders?

Which of the following comes closest to your opinion of men and women as political leaders?

Men generally make better political leaders	63	13%
Women generally make better political leaders	33	7%
In general, men and women make equally good political leaders	349	72%
Don't know/Refused	37	8%

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Standing up for what they believe in?

In general, do you think men or women in political office are better at standing up for what they believe in, despite political pressure?

Men	67	14%
Women	88	18%
No difference	291	60%
Don't know/refused	37	8%

Keeping government honest?

In general, do you think men or women in political office are better at keeping government honest?

Men	45	9%
Women	99	21%
No difference	299	62%
Don't know/refused	37	8%

Better at working out compromises?

In general, do you think men or women in political office are better at working out compromises?

Men	70	15%
Women	133	28%
No difference	240	50%
Don't know/refused	37	8%

Crime and public safety?

In general, do you think men or women in political office are better at dealing with crime and public safety?

Men	140	29%
Women	41	9%
No difference	264	55%
Don't know/refused	33	7%

Social Issues

In general, do you think men or women in political office are better at dealing with social issues, such as education and health care?

Men	28	6%
Women	190	40%
No difference	241	50%
Don't know/refused	19	4%

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Representing the interests of people like you

In general, do you think that men or women in political office are better at representing the interests of people like you?

Men	59	12%
Women	87	18%
No difference	298	62%
Don't know/refused	33	7%

National defense and security

In general, do you think men or women in political office are better at dealing with national defense and security?

Men	182	38%
Women	33	7%
No difference	233	49%
Don't know/refused	28	6%

Economic issues

In general, do you think men or women in political office are better at dealing with economic issues, like creating jobs and dealing with budgets?

Men	89	19%
Women	61	13%
No difference	302	63%
Don't know/refused	24	5%

How safe do you feel?

In general, how safe do you feel in this country?

Very safe	125	26%
Somewhat safe	171	36%
Neither safe nor unsafe	34	7%
Somewhat unsafe	93	20%
Very unsafe	47	10%
Don't know/refused	4	1%

Respect for law enforcement

In general, how much do you respect those in law enforcement in this country?

A great deal	329	69%
Somewhat	110	23%
Very little	21	4%
None	7	1%
Don't know/refused	7	1%

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Compassionate police officers

In general, do you think men or women are more compassionate police officers?

Men	31	7%
Women	121	26%
No difference	288	61%
Don't know/refused	32	7%

Ethical police officers

In general, do you think men or women are more ethical police officers?

Men	31	7%
Women	72	15%
Do difference	332	70%
Don't know/refused	37	8%

Excessive force

In general, do you think men or women police officers are more likely to use excessive force?

Men	279	59%
Women	13	3%
No difference	152	32%
Don't know/refused	27	6%

Protecting the public

In general, do you think men or women police officers do a better job of protecting the public?

Men	93	20%
Women	16	3%
No difference	333	71%
Don't know/refused	29	6%

Exceed their authority

In general, do you think men or women police officers are more likely to exceed their authority?

Men	219	46%
Women	27	6%
No difference	201	43%
Don't know/refused	24	5%

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Better police officer

Which would make a better police officer?

Men	74	16%
Women	13	3%
Both would be equally good	359	76%
Don't know/refused	25	5%

Police chief

Which would make a better police chief?

Men	98	21%
Women	24	5%
Both would be equally good	318	68%
Don't know/refused	30	6%

Demographics

Party ID

Democrats	42.1%
Libertarian	.1%
Republicans	36.4%
Unaffiliated	21.5%

Sex/Gender

Male	41%
Female	59%

Income

Less than \$25,000	13%
\$25,000 to \$50,000	28%
\$50,000 to \$75,000	24%
More than \$75,000	21%
Unknown	14%

Race

White	67%
Black	21%
Other	11%

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Age

18-30	7.5%
31-45	16.1%
46-65	36.1%
65+	40.3%

Location¹

Rural	52%
Urban	48%

Phone Type

Landline	61%
Cell	39%

Cross Tabulations

Better Political Leader

	Female	Male	Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
Women	9%	4%	10%	5%	5%
Men	16%	11%	7%	26%	12%
No difference	75%	85%	83%	69%	83%

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Perceptions of Safety

	Female	Male	White	Non-White
Very safe	24%	30%	23.5%	27.8%
Somewhat safe	36%	38%	39.1%	28.7%
Neither safe nor unsafe	8%	7%	6%	8.7%
Somewhat unsafe	20%	18%	19.7%	20%
Very unsafe	12%	7%	11.3%	12.2%

	Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated	Prefers Clinton	Prefers Trump	Prefers Johnson
Very safe	29%	24%	26%	34%	17%	30%
Somewhat safe	37%	34%	37%	38%	38%	37%
Neither safe nor unsafe	7%	8%	8%	8%	5%	0%
Somewhat unsafe	17%	25%	18%	13%	27%	30%
Very unsafe	10%	9%	11%	7%	13%	3%

Who Makes a Better Police Officer?

	Female	Male	Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
Women	3%	2%	4%	3%	2%
Men	19%	13%	13%	26%	8%
No difference	78%	85%	83%	71%	90%

Who Makes a Better Police Chief?

	Female	Male	Democratic	Republican	Unaffiliated
Women	6%	4%	7%	3%	7%
Men	24%	20%	16%	34%	15%
No difference	70%	76%	77%	63%	78%

How much do you respect law enforcement?

	Men	Women	Democrats	Republicans	Unaffiliated
A great deal	68.3%	71.7%	63%	81%	64%
Somewhat	22.8%	23%	27%	13%	33%
Very little	5.8%	3.2%	7%	3%	2%
None	.5%	2.1%	%	1%	1%

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	White	Nonwhite	18-29	30-45	46-60	61-75	76+
A great deal	74.9%	62.6%	44%	59%	77%	71%	81%
Somewhat	14.7%	28.9%	41%	32%	18%	24%	17%
Very little	5.7%	8.4%	11%	5%	3%	5%	2%
None	1.8%	3.1%	4%	4%	2%	0%	0%

Methodological Information

Mode:	Live Interviewer RDD Telephone Interviews (Dual Frame: Cell Phone and Landlines)
Population & Sample Area registered	North Carolina; Adults (Primarily English speaking voters with some Spanish speaking voters)
Dates in the field:	September 18-22, 2016
Registered Voter Sample Size	487
Registered Voter Margin of Error	±4.43%
Confidence Level	95%
Weighting Variables	Age, Race, Gender

Procedures Used for Conducting the Poll

The Meredith College Poll uses a stratified random sample of households with telephones and wireless (cell) telephone numbers. Please direct questions about the Meredith College Poll's methodology to David McLennan (919-760-2287 or dbmclennan@meredith.edu).

The Meredith College Poll uses CATI system software (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) for the administration of surveys. We attempt to reach each working telephone number in the sample up to five times. We only interview residents of North Carolina who are over 18. The Meredith College Poll conducted the survey in English with two students who are fluent in Spanish. Live interviewers called from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sunday-Thursday.

Additional Methodological Decisions

“Don’t Know” and “Refused” Options

All questions include an option for respondents to volunteer “don’t know” or to refuse. In most questions, callers do not prompt these possible responses.

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Completion Criteria

An interview is a complete only if a respondent progresses through the entire survey. Respondents who hang up before completing the last question or refuse to more than 10 percent of the questions are incompletes.

Sampling

Survey Sampling International, LLC, provide samples of telephone numbers. To equalize the probability of telephone selection, sample telephone numbers are systematically stratified according to subpopulation strata (e.g., a zip code, a county, 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 selected systematically in proportion to the density of listed household "working blocks." We use SSI because they produce valid samples for many polling organizations, including the Meredith College Poll.

Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting at each of these stages. The margin of sampling error at the 95% confidence level is plus or minus 4.43 percentage points for results based on the full sample (n=364). In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The Meredith College Poll Team

- Dr. David McLennan is Director of the Meredith Poll and a Visiting Professor of Political Science at Meredith College. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin.
- Dr. Whitney Ross Manzo is the Assistant Director of the Meredith Poll and an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Meredith College. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Texas, Dallas.

Faculty members in the History/Political Science program supported the poll and helped recruit students to work as callers. Dr. Greg Virtarbo is chair of the department and has

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provided a great deal of support for this project. The poll operates under the auspices of the School of Arts and Humanities, led by Dean Garry Walton, Ph.D.

The Meredith College administration, led by Dr. Jo Allen, president of the College, and Dr. Matthew Poslusny, Provost of the College, fully support the Meredith College Poll as part of its service commitment to state, regional, and national constituents. Meredith College fully funds the Meredith College Poll. This permits the Meredith College Poll to operate as a neutral, non-biased, non-partisan resource.

Meredith College students administer the survey as part of the College's commitment to civic engagement and producing strong women.

For more information on the Meredith College Poll and this survey, visit

<http://www.meredith.edu/>

or

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References