



We did the Monster Mash! Turns out it's a graveyard smash.

Students indifferent during midterm elections

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Six out of ten Brevard College students are planning to vote this election season, according to a recent poll conducted around campus.

With a nine percent margin of error, meaning the actual percentage of BC students who plan to vote is probably between 51 and 69 percent, BC's projected turnout is actually higher than the average college's. Of course, the actual turnout is often much lower. Voter enthusiasm may be dying on college campuses across the nation.

According to a Harvard Institute of Politics poll, 35 percent of students say they "definitely plan to vote" in 2010. This is down from 70 percent in 2008, during Obama's presidential campaign.

It's easy to see why students may get fired up about a presidential election, but conveying the importance of midterm elections is a much more difficult task, especially when the average

student doesn't recognize the names on the ballot.

"I don't know any of the candidates running," said BC student Jessica Ames. "If I did I probably would vote."

Even with record spending on political advertising in 2010, candidates are still finding it hard to get their names recognized by potential voters. High profile U.S. Senatorial candidates like Rand Paul of Kentucky and Christine O'Donnell of Delaware have found themselves in the spotlight, but some, such as N.C.'s Elaine Marshall, are still unknown to many voters.

The local government elections are even more exclusive. In one N.C. Court of Appeals race, 13 non-partisan candidates' names appear on the ballot. With the average student's time constraints and low interest in politics, few take the time to research these names and opt to stay home on Election Day.

The state of the economy, education, and healthcare also have many feeling indifferent towards the upcoming election.

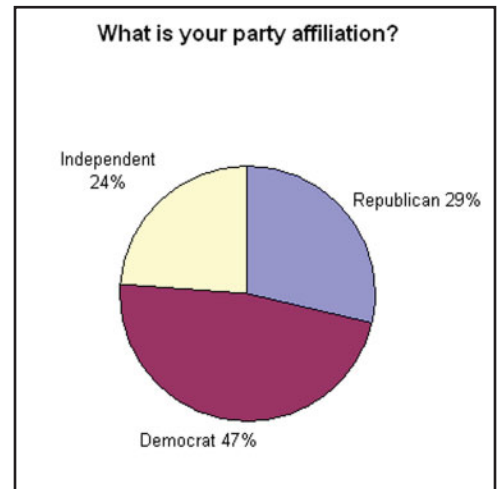
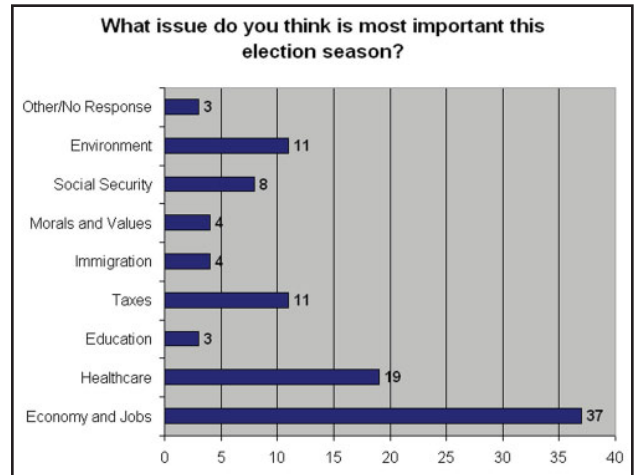
Many students, like other Americans, aren't as fond of President Obama as they were in 2008. What was a 60 percent approval rating in May 2009 is now 44 percent, according to an AP survey from late September.

Even though 47 percent of BC students claim affiliation with the Democratic Party, Democrats running for election aren't exciting their voter base like they did in 2008.

This may be directly related to the state of economics and the high unemployment rate across the U.S., especially in North Carolina. Of those surveyed at BC, 37 percent said economics and jobs were the most important issue this election season. While the U.S. has seen some growth over the past year, unemployment was still reported at 9.6 percent in September.

The current administration, along with Congress, haven't done enough to either fix the economy or to communicate to voters that they are actively working toward progress.

The BC student poll suggests a drop in approval for the Democratic Party, where only 58 percent of those polled said they would vote along party lines, compared to the polling done



on campus in 2008, where even 22 percent of Republicans said they would probably vote Democratic.

Currently, Republicans are favored to gain control of the House of Representatives after the votes are counted. In the latest Gallup polling, 51 percent of registered voters say they would vote for the Republican candidate in their district if the election were held today; 41 percent say they would support the Democrat. This is the largest lead for the Republicans in Gallup polling since 1942.

Early voting is open until 6 p.m. today and from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Saturday at the library in downtown Brevard. The polls open on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 2, at 6:30 a.m. and close at 7:30 p.m.

In this issue...

CAMPUS NEWS:

BC Honors Alumni 2

NEWS:

Tornado Warning Confusion 3

Jones Hosts Haunted House 3

Art Students Travel to Exhibition 3

SPORTS:

Men's Soccer Update 4

Women's Soccer Update 4

Volleyball Plays in Tournament 4

OPINION:

These Hills: Blue Ridge Parkway 6

ARTS & LIFE

Chef Boy-ar-Dave 7

The History of Halloween 7

ODDS AND ENDS:

Your Horoscope 8

American Hero 8