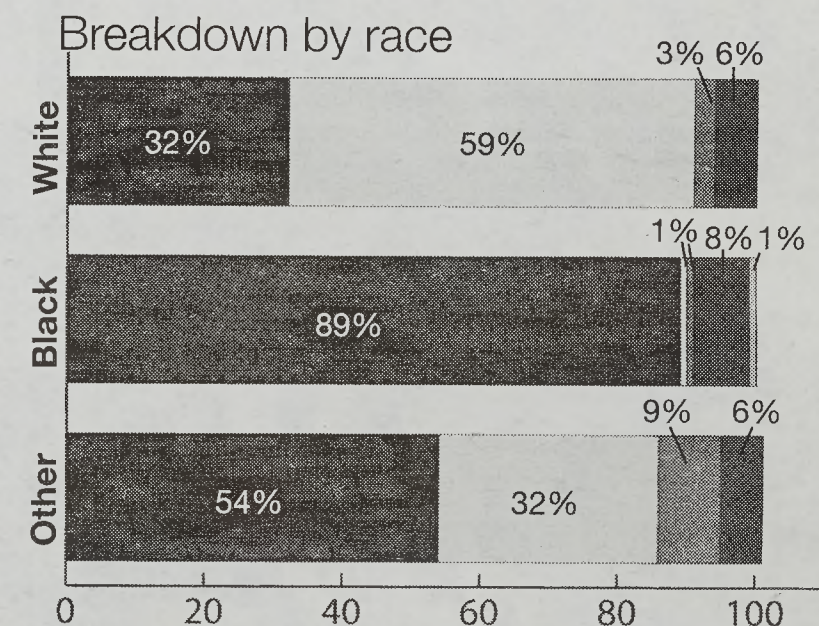
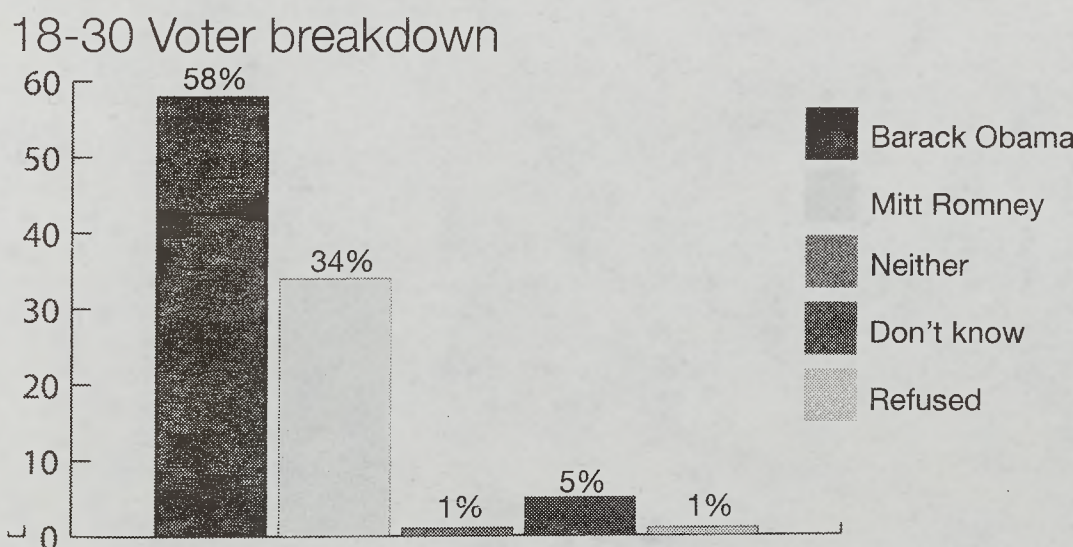
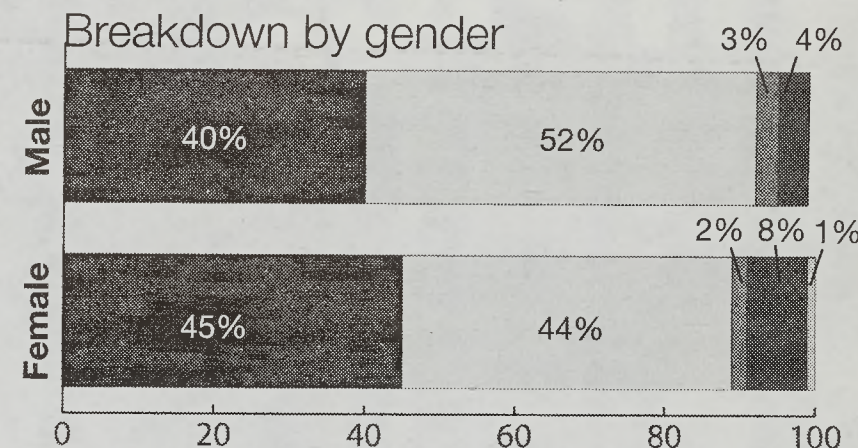
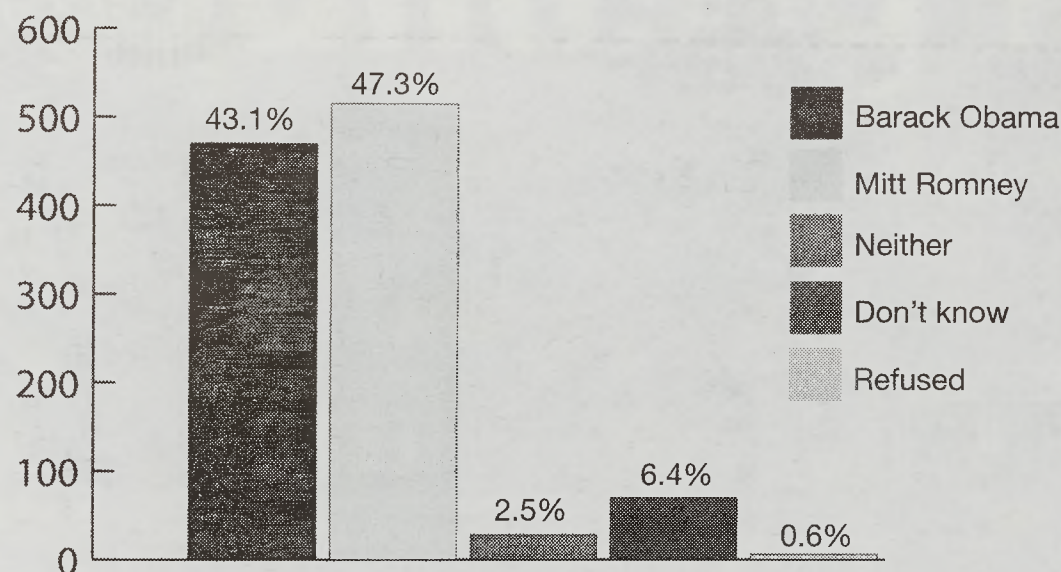


If the election was tomorrow, who would you vote for?

Elon Poll Results



Before the release: Elon Poll strives to collect accurate data about N.C. voter preference

Melissa Kansky
News Editor

The most recent Elon University Poll communicates the significance of North Carolina voter opinions in relation to the upcoming national election. The poll, which began Aug. 25 and concluded Aug. 30, questioned registered voters in North Carolina about issues in the presidential campaign relevant to their state, specifically.

"States and opinions within the state are very important," said Jason Husser, assistant professor of political science and assistant director of the Elon Poll. "Issues come up at state level."

North Carolina's characterization

as a swing state elevates the importance of understanding the interests of the state's voting population.

"Because it's election year, North Carolina is a hot spot for political elections," said Kenneth Fernandez, director of the Elon Poll.

Husser named North Carolina as the third most important state to win in this election, after Florida and Ohio. Their size and unreliable position have provoked the candidates to invest time and money in these dynamic states, he said.

"If you look at the map of the 2012 election as is, Barack Obama tends to have more states that are already leaning in his favor," Husser said. "In order for Romney to win, he has to hit it

hard in North Carolina."

While previous Elon Polls have questioned individuals about political views, this is the first time the Elon Poll directly asked which candidate the interviewee would vote for, according to Janna Anderson, associate professor of communications.

"The outcome of the election will be public knowledge, so we have to make sure we get it right," said Husser in reference to the accuracy of the poll.

The assistant director recognized a potential bias in the Elon Poll results because the Republican National Convention took place during part of the polling period. Although such a spike in attention toward the Republican candidate is ephemeral,

Husser said he expects the poll results to contain a greater inclination toward Romney than normal.

"Surveys are measurements of brief moments of what is on the public conscience," Husser said.

Although surveys provide information to society at large about voter opinions, Husser described the outcomes as "best estimates" and cautioned against touting survey results as absolute truth.

"Opinion is amorphous," he said. "Don't treat surveys as a measuring tape."

Those involved with the Elon Poll conduct a scientific survey of the population of interest, using a random selection of individuals with telephones and

wireless telephone numbers to generate the population sample.

"We're calling randomly constructed phone numbers," Husser said. "We have no idea what the people are like on the other end of those numbers."

If conducted properly, the poll results will also provide insight into the interests of subgroups and what kind of coalitions are in favor of which politicians, he said.

Participation in the Elon Poll allows students and faculty to exercise their civic responsibility.

The Elon Poll employs student volunteers to administer the poll in order to enhance their educational experience. The poll is fully funded by Elon University, a non-partisan entity.