

Editor's Note: Dr. Martin Kifer, director of the HPU Poll, is onsite at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte today and is available for comment.



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N.C. VOTERS SAY ROMNEY ‘CAN GET THINGS DONE’ WHILE OBAMA ‘CAN BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER’

HIGH POINT, N.C., Sept. 4, 2012 – A new High Point University Poll of registered voters finds North Carolinians split on which characteristics best fit the presidential candidates.

Forty-two percent of respondents say that the phrase “can get things done” better describes Gov. Mitt Romney, and 37 percent say the same about President Barack Obama. Forty-two percent of registered voters say that the phrase “can bring people together” better describes President Obama, while 37 percent say the same about Governor Romney.

When asked which candidate the phrase “shares my values” best describes, the candidates each receive 42 percent of registered voters’ support. While 42 percent of respondents say that “strong leader” better describes Romney, 40 percent say the same about Obama.

"These new findings shed light on reasons for the continually tight race for president here in North Carolina," says Martin Kifer, director of the HPU Poll and assistant professor of political science at HPU. "How voters feel about the candidates on characteristics like these is a crucial element of how people make decisions about voting. That registered voters are so closely divided on these key considerations helps explain the closeness of the race itself."

Candidate Characteristics

As I read a list of phrases, tell me if you think each phrase better describes Barack Obama, better describes Mitt Romney, if it applies to neither, or if it applies to both.

Can get things done

Better describes Barack Obama – 37 percent

Better describes Mitt Romney – 42 percent
Applies to neither – 14 percent
Applies to both – 4 percent
Not sure – 4 percent

Can bring people together

Better describes Barack Obama – 42 percent
Better describes Mitt Romney – 37 percent
Applies to neither – 15 percent
Applies to both – 3 percent
Not sure – 2 percent

Shares my values

Better describes Barack Obama – 42 percent
Better describes Mitt Romney – 42 percent
Applies to neither – 11 percent
Applies to both – 2 percent
Not sure – 3 percent

Strong leader

Better describes Barack Obama – 40 percent
Better describes Mitt Romney – 42 percent
Applies to neither – 9 percent
Applies to both – 5 percent
Not sure – 4 percent

(for registered voters, n = 543, Margin of sampling error +/- 4.3 percent)

For the survey, the HPU Poll through SurveyUSA interviewed 600 state of North Carolina adults Aug. 26 to Aug. 30. Of the adults, 543 were registered to vote. This research was conducted using blended sample, mixed mode. Respondents reachable on a home telephone (71 percent of registered voters) were interviewed on their home telephone in the recorded voice of a professional announcer. Respondents not reachable on a home telephone (29 percent of registered voters), were shown a questionnaire on their smartphone, laptop, tablet, or other electronic device. In this research, consistent with findings in other states, cell-phone respondents are more Democratic than are landline respondents. Romney leads by 14 points among landline respondents. Obama leads by 22 points among cell-phone respondents. When the two groups are proportionally blended, the contest is, as reported here, 46 percent for Romney and 43 percent for Obama. Additional methodological explanation is available at: <http://www.surveysusa.com/client/methodology6.aspx>

Additional details including crosstabs of these questions are available at the High Point University Survey Research Center website: <http://src.highpoint.edu/>

You can follow the HPU Poll on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/SurveyResearchCenter> and Twitter at <http://twitter.com/HPUSurveyCenter>.

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