



**CONTACT:** Pam Haynes  
Communication Specialist  
336-841-9055; [phaynes@highpoint.edu](mailto:phaynes@highpoint.edu)

## **HPU POLL: NORTH CAROLINA VOTERS DIVIDED OVER PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES**

**HIGH POINT, N.C., Feb. 14, 2012** – The most recent HPU Poll finds President Barack Obama in a tight race with an unnamed Republican candidate. Democratic and Republican candidates for the Congress receive almost equal support. And almost half of North Carolinians are paying closer attention to the 2012 elections than in 2010, though they have not yet spent much time on candidate Web or social media sites.

### **Presidential race questions – Registered Voters**

If the election for President of the United States were held today, would you be voting for Barack Obama or his Republican opponent?

Barack Obama – 42 percent  
Republican opponent – 47 percent  
(Other) – 2 percent  
(Don't know/refused) – 9 percent

*(For registered voters, n = 538, margin of sampling error is approximately 5.3 percent)*

### **Congressional generic ballot questions – Registered Voters**

If the elections for U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, which party's candidate would you vote for in your congressional district – the Democratic Party's candidate or the Republican Party's candidate?

Democratic candidate – 42 percent  
Republican candidate – 40 percent  
(Don't know/refused) – 18 percent

*(For registered voters, n = 538, margin of sampling error is approximately 5.3 percent)*

“Taken together, these findings highlight the divisions of North Carolina electorate on the races for the Presidency and Congress,” said HPU Poll director Martin Kifer. “We have known for some time that President Obama would likely face a competitive race here in North Carolina. These numbers foreshadow a competitive contest for North Carolina’s electoral votes.”

### **Republican Primary for President – Registered Voters**

If the Republican presidential primary were held today, would you vote for Newt Gingrich, Ron Paul, Mitt Romney, or Rick Santorum (*responses rotated*)?

Newt Gingrich – 19 percent  
Ron Paul – 11 percent  
Mitt Romney – 30 percent  
Rick Santorum – 13 percent  
(Don’t know/refused) – 26 percent

*(Asked of registered voters who identify with the Republican Party or are independent/unaffiliated, excluding respondents who said they would not vote in the Republican Primary on May 8<sup>th</sup>, n = 250, margin of sampling error is approximately 6.2 percent)*

“These numbers suggest that Mitt Romney currently has an edge in the North Carolina Republican primary,” adds Kifer. “But the primary campaign has thus far seen a lot of movement in candidate support. We’ll be watching closely to see if North Carolinians reevaluate the candidates closer to the primary date.”

### **Campaign Attention questions**

Would you say you have been following news about the 2012 elections more closely or less closely than you did in 2010?

More closely – 49 percent  
Less closely – 32 percent  
(About the same as 2010) – 17 percent  
(Don’t know/refused) – 2 percent

During the past month, have you accessed the campaign website of a presidential candidate such as Barack Obama or one of his possible Republican opponents?

Yes, Barack Obama – 8 percent  
Yes, one of the Republican candidates – 7 percent  
Yes, both – 7 percent  
No – 76 percent  
(Refused) – 1 percent

*(Asked of respondents who are computers users, n = 565, margin of sampling error is approximately 4.3 percent.)*

During the past month, have you accessed a social networking site like the campaign website of a presidential candidate such as Barack Obama or one of his possible Republican opponents?

Yes, Barack Obama – 9 percent

Yes, one of the Republican candidates – 3 percent

Yes, both – 4 percent

No – 84 percent

*(Asked of respondents who are computers users and use social networking sites, n = 405, margin of sampling error is approximately 5 percent.)*

“Although residents of North Carolina say they are paying closer attention to this campaign than in 2012, that focus has not yet moved online,” said assistant HPU Poll director Sadie Leder. “We’ll continue tracking this trend as the fall elections approach.”

The High Point University Survey Research Center fielded the survey from Jan. 30-Feb. 2 and Feb. 4-9, 2012. The responses came from 660 adults with landline and cellular telephones in North Carolina selected by a Random Digit Dial (RDD) method giving the survey a margin of sampling error of approximately 4 percentage points. For smaller subsamples the margin of sampling error is larger. In addition to sampling error, factors such as question wording and other methodological choices in conducting survey research can introduce additional error into the findings of opinion polls.

Further results and methodological details from the survey and can be found at the Survey Research Center website, <http://src.highpoint.edu/>, or from Dr. Martin Kifer, the center’s director, at [mkifer@highpoint.edu](mailto:mkifer@highpoint.edu) or 336-841-9333.

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