April 21, 2008

I. Survey Methodology

The Elon University Poll is conducted using a stratified random sample of households with telephones in the population of interest – in this case, citizens in North Carolina. The sample of telephone numbers for the survey is obtained from Survey Sampling International, LLC.

Selection of Households

To equalize the probability of telephone selection, sample telephone numbers are systematically stratified according to subpopulation strata (e.g., a zip code, a county, a state, 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 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 systematically selected in proportion to the density of listed household "working blocks." A *block* (also known as a *bank*) is a set of contiguous numbers identified by the first two digits of the last four digits of a telephone number. A working block contains three or more working telephone numbers. Exchanges are assigned to a population on the basis of all eligible blocks in proportion to the density of working telephone households. Once each population's proportion of telephone households is determined, then a sampling interval, based on that proportion, is calculated and specific exchanges and numbers are randomly selected. Because exchanges and numbers are randomly selected by the computer, unlisted as well as listed telephone numbers are included in the sample. Thus, the sample of telephone numbers generated for the population of interest constitutes a random sample of telephone households of the population, stratified by exchange.

Procedures Used for Conducting the Poll

The survey was conducted Monday, April 14th through Thursday, April 17th of 2008. During this time calls were made from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm EST. The Elon University Poll uses CATI system software (computer assisted telephone interviewing) in the administration of surveys. For each working telephone number in the sample, several attempts were made to reach the household. Only individuals in households 18 years or older were interviewed; those reached at business or work numbers were not interviewed. Within each household, one adult is generally selected based on whether s/he is the oldest or youngest adult in the home. Interviews, which are conducted by live interviewers, are completed

with adults from households in the target population as specified. Interviews for this survey were completed with 543 adults from households in North Carolina. For a sample size of 543, there is a 95 percent probability that our survey results are within plus or minus 4.3 percent (the margin of sampling error) of the actual population distribution for any given question. For sub-samples (a subgroup selected from the overall sample), the margin of error is higher depending on the size of the subsample. When we use a subsample, we identify these results as being from a subsample and provide the total number of respondents and margin of error for that subsample. In reporting our results, we note any use of a subsample where applicable. Because our surveys are based on probability sampling, there are a variety of factors that prevent these results from being perfect, complete depictions of the population; the foremost example is that of margin of sampling error (as noted above). With all probability samples, there are theoretical and practical difficulties estimating population characteristics (or parameters). Thus, while efforts are made to reduce or lessen such threats, sampling error as well as other sources of error – while not all inclusive, examples of other error effects are non-response rates, question order effects, question wording effects, etc. – are present in surveys derived from probability samples.

Questions and Question Order

The Elon University Poll provides the questions as worded and the order in which these questions are administered (to respondents). Conspicuous in reviewing some questions is the "bracketed" information. Information contained within brackets ([ ]) denotes response options as provided in the question; this bracketed information is rotated per question to ensure that respondents do not receive a set order of response options presented to them, which also maintains question construction integrity by avoiding respondent acquiescence based on question composition. Some questions used a probe maneuver to determine a respondent's intensity of perspective. Probe techniques used in this questionnaire mainly consist of asking a respondent if their response is more intense than initially provided. For example, upon indicating whether s/he is satisfied or dissatisfied, we asked the respondent "would you say you are very _____". This technique is employed in some questions as opposed to specifying the full range of choices in the question. Though specifying the full range of options in questions is a commonly accepted practice in survey research, we sometimes prefer that the respondent determine whether their perspective is stronger or more intense for which the probe technique used. Another method for acquiring information from respondents is to ask an "open-ended" question. The open-ended question is a question for which no response options are provided, i.e., it is entirely up to the respondent to provide the response information.

The Elon University Poll

The Elon University Poll is conducted under the auspices of the Center for Public Opinion Polling (Hunter Bacot, Director), which is a constituent part of the Institute for Politics and Public Affairs (George Taylor, Director); both these organizations are housed in the department of political science at Elon University. These academic units are part of Elon College, the College of Arts and Sciences at Elon University, which is under the direction of Dr. Steven House (Dean). The Elon University administration, led by Dr. Leo Lambert, President of the university, fully support the Elon University Poll as part of its service commitment to state, regional, and national constituents. Dr. Hunter Bacot, a professor in the department of political science, directs the Elon University Poll. Elon University

students administer the survey as part of the University's commitment to experiential learning where "students learn through doing."

II. Survey Instrument and Percent Distributions by Question

Interviews were completed with 543 adults from households in the North Carolina. For a sample size of 543, there is a 95 percent probability that our survey results are within plus or minus 4.3 percent (the margin of sampling error) of the actual population distribution for any given question. Data are weighted to reflect the adult population in terms of age.

About the Codes appearing in Questions and Responses	
Response Options not offered	Response options are <u>not</u> offered to the person taking the survey (respondent), but are included in the question as asked (and usually denoted by brackets, [ ]). Response options are generally offered only for demographic questions (background characteristic, e.g., age, education, income, etc.).
v = volunteered response	Respondents volunteer response option. As response options are <u>not</u> offered to those taking the survey, some respondents offer or volunteer response options. Though not all volunteered options can be anticipated, the more common options are noted.
p = probed response	Respondents self-place in this option or category. A probe maneuver is used in questions to allow the respondent to indicate whether her/his response is more intense than initially provided for in the choices appearing in the question. For example, on probe questions the interviewer, upon a respondent indicating that she/he is satisfied (or dissatisfied), is instructed to ask him/her "Would you say you are "very satisfied"?"

First, thinking about things in the country, do you feel things in this country [have gotten off on the wrong track, or are going in the right direction]? (probe)

		Percent
	Strongly Gotten Off on the Wrong Track (p)	51.1
	Gotten Off on the Wrong Track	28.2
	Going in the Right Direction	10.3
	Strongly Going in the Right Direction (p)	3.9
	Don't Know (v)	6.3
	Refused (v)	.1
Total (543,+/-4.3)		100.0

Now, I would like to know what you think is the most important issue facing the state of North Carolina? (open ended)

	February 2008 Percent	**April 2008 Percent**
Economy	29.4	**34.8**
Gas Prices	1.9	**9.4**
Elementary & Secondary Education	12.4	**8.6**
Immigration	6.7	**6.2**
Taxes	7.4	**4.8**
Environment and Energy (includes drought)	10.3	**4.6**
Public Assistance (includes Medicaid or Medicare)	5.6	**4.3**
Economic Development	2.0	**2.6**
War in Iraq	1.7	**2.1**
Traffic & Road Construction	2.9	**2.0**
Health Care	1.7	**1.8**
Crime & Drugs	1.0	**1.1**
Family Values & Morals	0.6	**1.1**
Other	8.6	**7.4**
Don't Know (v)	6.8	**9.1**
Total	100.0 764,+/-3.6	**100.0** **543,+/-4.3**

Since we're talking about issues, I'd like to know how some issues [may or may not] affect your votes in the upcoming primaries in North Carolina . . . I'm going to read you a *list of issues* and I'd like for you to tell me whether the issue [will influence or will not influence] your vote, or have you not given it any thought?

> **If respondent indicates that the issue *will* influence his/her vote, a follow-up question is asked about which election the issue will influence his/her vote:**

"Which election will this influence your vote in -- Governor, US Senate, or President?" **(respondent can select any or all election races in which the issue will influence her/his vote)**

ISSUE	Will Not Influence	Will Influence	Have Not Given It Much Thought	Don't Know (v)		Percent Indicating It Would Influence Election for:		
						Governor	US Senate	President
EDUCATION	18.4	71.1	8.0	2.4		54.9	40.9	49.4
EDUCATION	15.1	73.7	10.0	1.1		52.5	34.9	47.8
IMMIGRATION	19.0	72.7	5.3	3.0		41.3	42.4	62.2
IMMIGRATION	24.3	66.8	7.1	1.8		36.5	32.1	53.4
HEALTH CARE COSTS	15.2	79.0	3.4	2.4		46.2	46.1	67.1
HEALTH CARE	12.6	81.4	4.7	1.3		45.1	40.1	64.9
ECONOMY	11.6	83.3	2.7	2.4		53.0	51.7	70.4
ECONOMY	8.1	87.6	2.3	2.0		51.2	47.0	73.3
HOUSING MARKET	40.2	45.4	10.5	3.9		25.7	22.3	35.0
IRAQ WAR	15.3	78.9	2.0	3.7		25.3	33.8	71.1
IRAQ WAR	15.9	80.2	1.6	2.2		23.0	29.2	70.0
TAXES	15.7	79.6	2.3	2.4		55.5	51.0	65.0
TAXES	19.7	74.8	4.2	1.3		46.3	38.5	58.8
TRANSPORTATION	44.1	39.1	13.0	3.8		31.0	18.1	19.3
TRANSPORTATION	37.9	46.0	12.8	3.2		31.0	19.0	25.7
FAMILY VALUES	29.7	62.8	4.6	2.9		45.5	40.6	51.0
FAMILY VALUES	28.2	63.8	5.4	2.6		41.3	35.4	49.7

Notes: Total=543,+/-4.3. Shaded rows are results from February 2008, Elon University Poll (N=764, +/-3.6). "Political Corruption" was not asked in the April 2008 Elon University Poll; "Health Care Costs" (asked in the February 2008, Elon University Poll) was changed to simply "Health Care" in the April 2008 Poll.

Now, I d like to know which party you think will do a better job of handling these issues . . . I d like for you to tell me whether you think [the Democrats or the Republicans] will do a better job handling . . .?

ISSUE	Republicans	Democrats	Neither Party (v)	Have Not Given It Much Thought (v)	Don't Know (v)
EDUCATION	28.7	50.4	9.0	3.0	8.9
IMMIGRATION	42.7	37.2	8.8	2.7	8.6
HEALTH CARE	27.6	52.6	9.0	2.1	8.6
ECONOMY	33.0	48.9	8.4	1.8	8.0
HOUSING MARKET	26.0	43.5	11.8	5.1	13.5
IRAQ WAR	35.7	46.8	7.7	2.2	7.5
TAXES	35.7	44.3	8.5	2.2	9.3
TRANSPORTATION	22.6	43.2	10.5	8.4	15.2
FAMILY VALUES	36.7	38.1	11.5	3.8	9.9
Average per Column	32.1	45.0	9.5	3.5	9.9

Total=543,+/-4.3

Now, I d like to know which party you think will do a better job of handling these issues . . . I d like for you to tell me whether you think [Hillary Clinton, John McCain, or Barack Obama] will do a better job handling . . . ?

ISSUE	Clinton	McCain	Obama	None of these Candidates (v)	Don't Know (v)
EDUCATION	29.1	25.7	26.8	6.6	11.7
IMMIGRATION	16.5	44.5	19.0	7.0	13.0
HEALTH CARE	33.2	26.8	22.6	5.7	11.7
ECONOMY	21.8	30.7	28.8	7.1	11.6
HOUSING MARKET	18.9	27.3	23.5	10.4	19.9
IRAQ WAR	16.2	40.1	27.8	5.9	10.1
TAXES	20.0	34.1	25.2	7.3	13.5
TRANSPORTATION	20.1	24.0	21.8	8.2	26.0
FAMILY VALUES	17.4	36.6	26.2	7.7	12.0
Average per Column	21.5	32.2	24.6	7.3	14.4

Total=543,+/-4.3