



ELON POLL

Holiday Spending and Thanksgiving among North Carolina Voters

Registered Voters in North Carolina
November 6-9th, 2017

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The Elon University Poll conducted a live-caller, dual frame survey of 771 registered North Carolina voters, between November 6 and November 9, 2017. The overall results reported have a margin of error of +/- 3.5%.

The following reports details responses to questions about holiday spending and Thanksgiving. Overall, Republicans and Democrats have very different outlooks on the future of the economy with 71% of Republicans saying they expect the economy to get better over the next year compared to only 17% of Democrats. In turn, 32% of Democrats plan to spend less this holiday season, almost twice the proportion of Republicans planning to reduce spending.

Members of both parties indicate similar levels of intention to shop on Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Consistent with a pattern the Elon Poll [first measured in 2013](#), more North Carolinians say they will shop on Cyber Monday than on Black Friday.

Only 28% of North Carolina voters say they are more likely to talk about politics this year at Thanksgiving than in previous years. Forty-five percent said they are less likely. A higher percentage of Democrats than Republicans said they are more likely to talk about politics.

We asked voters an open-ended question, “What’s your favorite Thanksgiving tradition?” The top-two responses by far were answers about (# 1) food and (# 2) spending time with family. Turkey was the food most commonly volunteered. A distant third was the tradition of sharing what everyone at the table is most thankful for this year.

Topline Results

Brackets indicate random rotation of response options within question.

Economy

Do you expect the economy to get better, get worse, or stay about the same over the next year?

Get Better	290.....	37.60%
Get Worse	157.....	20.30%
Stay Same.....	297.....	38.50%
Don't Know [Don't Read]	22.....	2.80%
Refused [Don't Read].....	6.....	0.70%
N=	771.....	100.00%

Black Friday

Will you go shopping on the day after Thanksgiving known as Black Friday?

Yes	159.....	20.60%
No.....	588.....	76.30%
Don't Know [Don't Read]	18.....	2.40%
Refused [Don't Read].....	6.....	0.70%
N=	771.....	100.00%

Cyber Monday

Will you go shopping online the Monday after Thanksgiving known as Cyber Monday?

Yes	267.....	34.60%
No.....	427.....	55.40%
Don't Know [Don't Read]	71.....	9.30%
Refused [Don't Read].....	6.....	0.70%
N=	771.....	100.00%

Holiday Spending

Compared to last year, do you think you will spend more, less or about the same amount of money on gifts this holiday season?

More	104.....	13.40%
Less	190.....	24.70%
About Same.....	453.....	58.80%
Don't Know [Don't Read]	13.....	1.70%
Refused [Don't Read].....	11.....	1.40%
N=	771.....	100.00%

Politics Thanksgiving

Compared to previous years, will you be more or less likely to talk about politics with your family at Thanksgiving?

More	218.....	28.30%
Less	344.....	44.60%
About same [Don't Read]	163.....	21.10%
Don't Know [Don't Read]	36.....	4.60%
Refused [Don't Read]	11.....	1.40%
N=	771.....	100.00%

Thanksgiving Tradition

What's your favorite Thanksgiving tradition? [open-ended]

Food	312.....	40.5%
Spending Time with Family.....	280.....	36.3%
Sharing Thanks	33.....	4.3%
Watching Football.....	23.....	3.0%
Watching Parades.....	14.....	1.8%
Relaxing	9.....	1.2%
Christmas Decorating.....	8.....	1.1%
Outdoor Activities.....	7.....	0.9%
Shopping	5.....	0.6%
Outdoors Activity.....	5.....	0.6%
Miscellaneous	20.....	2.6%
Missing.....	17.....	2.2%
Don't Know	38.....	5.0%
Total	771.....	100%

Sample Characteristics

Registered Party ID (from Voter File)

Democrats	309.....	40.10%
Unaffiliated	231.....	30.00%
Republicans.....	231.....	29.90%
N=	771.....	100.00%

Party Identification¹

Democrats	207.....	31.80%
Independents	286.....	43.90%
Republicans.....	158.....	24.30%
N=	651.....	100.00%

Age

Millennial (18-36).....	229.....	29.70%
Gen X (37-52).....	199.....	25.80%
Boomer (53-72).....	238.....	30.90%
Silent+ (73+).....	104.....	13.50%
N=	771.....	100.00%

Race (from Voter File)

White.....	534.....	69.30%
Black	172.....	22.30%
Other	65.....	8.40%
N=	771.....	100.00%

Gender

Male	357.....	46.30%
Female.....	414.....	53.70%
N=	771.....	100.00%

County Type

*County type is based on 2014 U.S. Census Population density estimates (Rural <250/ sq. mile; Suburban 250-750/sq. mile; Urban >750/sq. mile. <http://www.ncruralcenter.org/rural-county-ma>)

Rural.....	304.....	39.40%
Suburban	193.....	25.10%
Urban.....	274.....	35.50%
N=	771.....	100.00%

¹ Self-reported party identification is used in the cross tabulations presented below. If they initially answered Independent, Something Else, or Don't Know, they were asked if they think of themselves as closer to the Republican or Democratic party.

Cross Tabulations

Economy

Do you expect the economy to get better, get worse, or stay about the same over the next year?

	Get Better	Get Worse	Stay Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Democrats	17	33	43	7	0	100
Independents	37	19	42	2	0	100
Republicans	71	3	25	0	0	100
	Get Better	Get Worse	Stay Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Millennial	37	23	35	2	2	100
Gen X	36	23	37	4	0	100
Boomer	38	18	41	3	0	100
Silent+	40	14	43	2	0	100
	Get Better	Get Worse	Stay Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
White	44	14	39	3	0	100
Black	18	39	37	5	1	100
	Get Better	Get Worse	Stay Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	48	14	36	1	0	100
Female	28	26	41	4	1	100
	Get Better	Get Worse	Stay Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Rural	43	18	37	2	1	100
Suburban	37	18	41	4	0	100
Urban	32	25	39	3	1	100
Total	38	20	39	3	1	100

Black Friday

Will you go shopping on the day after Thanksgiving known as Black Friday?

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Democrats	20	78	2	0	100
Independents	20	79	1	0	100
Republicans	23	74	3	0	100
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Millennial	31	65	2	2	100
Gen X	22	74	4	0	100
Boomer	13	84	2	0	100
Silent+	12	87	1	0	100
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
White	17	80	2	0	100
Black	31	64	3	1	100
Other	22	73	0	5	100
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Male	17	81	2	0	100
Female	23	72	3	1	100
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Rural	21	76	2	1	100
Suburban	18	78	3	0	100
Urban	22	75	2	1	100
Total	21	76	2	1	100

Cyber Monday

Will you go shopping online the Monday after Thanksgiving known as Cyber Monday?

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Democrats	34	57	9	0	100
Independents	37	51	12	0	100
Republicans	30	63	7	0	100
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Millennial	41	45	12	2	100
Gen X	43	46	11	0	100
Boomer	30	62	7	0	100
Silent+	16	79	4	0	100
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
White	33	58	9	0	100
Black	36	57	6	1	100
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Male	33	55	12	0	100
Female	36	56	7	1	100
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Rural	36	56	8	1	100
Suburban	32	61	7	0	100
Urban	35	51	13	1	100
Total	35	55	9	1	100

Holiday Spending

Compared to last year, do you think you will spend more, less or about the same amount of money on gifts this holiday season?

	More	Less	About Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Democrats	13	32	53	1	1	100
Independents	15	22	61	1	1	100
Republicans	14	17	65	4	0	100
	More	Less	About Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Millennial	18	28	49	2	3	100
Gen X	10	29	58	3	0	100
Boomer	13	21	65	0	1	100
Silent+	10	18	68	2	1	100
	More	Less	About Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
White	14	21	63	1	1	100
Black	14	32	50	2	3	100
	More	Less	About Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	15	21	62	2	1	100
Female	12	28	56	2	2	100
	More	Less	About Same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Rural	13	25	58	2	1	100
Suburban	16	22	60	2	0	100
Urban	12	26	58	1	2	100
Total	13	25	59	2	1	100

Politics Thanksgiving

Compared to previous years, will you be more or less likely to talk about politics with your family at Thanksgiving?

	More	Less	About same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Democrats	32	46	17	3	1	100
Independents	25	45	25	5	0	100
Republicans	26	42	26	6	1	100
	More	Less	About same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Millennial	27	44	21	5	3	100
Gen X	30	43	24	3	1	100
Boomer	32	44	18	4	1	100
Silent+	20	49	24	7	0	100
	More	Less	About same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
White	26	45	23	5	1	100
Black	40	37	16	4	3	100
	More	Less	About same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	29	42	23	6	0	100
Female	28	47	19	4	2	100
	More	Less	About same	Don't Know	Refused	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Rural	22	46	26	5	1	100
Suburban	29	47	18	5	0	100
Urban	35	42	18	4	2	100
Total	28	45	21	5	1	100

Question Ordering

- intro
- consent
- Approve Trump
- Approve Cooper
- Approve Burr
- Approve Tillis
- Senators Trump
- Trump media [Random half]
- Russia seriousness
- Russia criminal
- Russia Turnout
- Trump media [Random half]
- Opioid importance
- Opioid impact
- Opioid vs heroin
- Opioid resources
- Opioid crime
- North Korea
- Economy
- Black Friday
- Cyber Monday
- Holiday Spending
- Politics Thanksgiving
- Thanksgiving Tradition
- Party Id
- Party Id Independent Branch
- age
- Interviewer-assessed gender (Post-Interview)

Methodological Information

Mode:Live Interviewer, Cell Phone and Landline
PopulationRegistered Voters, North Carolina
Sample:Voter Registration List, North Carolina
Dates in the field:November 6-9, 2017
Sample Size:.....771
Margin of Error:+/- 3.5%
Confidence Level:95%
Weighting Variables:Age, Race, Gender, Registered Party Identification, Urban/Suburban/Rural
County

Procedure

The Elon University Poll uses a random sample of North Carolina voters with telephones and wireless (cell) telephone numbers.

For the administration of surveys, the Elon University Poll uses CATI system software (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). We attempt to reach each working telephone number in the sample up to three times. We only interview residents of North Carolina who are over 18. In compliance with FCC rules, each phone number was dialed manually by a human interviewer. An interview is complete only if a respondent progresses through the entire survey.

The Elon University Poll conducted the survey in English. Live interviewers called from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm, Monday through Thursday, 11/6-11/9.

To ensure accurate identification of individuals from voter registration records, interviews were deleted if self-reported age and interviewer-assessed gender varied from voter file data.

Weighting

Weights were generated using a technique known as iterative proportional fitting, also known as raking. We typically weight results from the Elon University Poll on multiple demographic characteristics. In the case of this survey, our target population was registered voters in North Carolina.

The weight variables were race, gender, age and registered party identification. Each variable was weighted to match relative proportions of registered voters in North Carolina (active and inactive). These proportions were calculated from the NC SOBE voter file accessed on 9/3/17 Note that registered party differs significantly from self-identified party identification, which is more of a psychological attachment than a stable demographic.

Because the sample was from the voter registration list rather than a random digit dial, we did not weight on phone usage (as is our practice with RDD surveys), largely because CDC parameters of phone usage are reflective of the general population rather than registered voters alone.

Design Effects

The standard error of an estimate for a simple random sample is different from the standard error of an estimate based on a weighted sample. This is referred to as a design effect. For example, the overall design effect for the final weights for the sample of *Registered Voters in North Carolina* was 1.31. So an adjusted margin of error for that sample that takes into account the design effect of a survey would be +/- 4.62 instead of +/- 3.53.

Support for Transparency

The Elon University Poll supports transparency in survey research and is a charter member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research Transparency Initiative, which is a program promoting openness and transparency about survey research methods and operations among survey research professionals and the industry. All information about the Elon University Poll that we released to the public conforms to reporting conventions recommended by the American Association for Public Opinion Research and the National Council on Public Polls.

Question Construction and Question Order

In releasing survey results, the Elon University Poll provides the questions as worded and the order in which respondents receive these questions. In some cases, question ordering rotates to avoid biases. In an effort to provide neutral, non-biased questions, we attempt to observe conventional question wording and question order protocols in all of our polls. In order to avoid recency or primacy effects, we randomize candidate names and directional response options (e.g. support / oppose) within the text of each question. We pretest every questionnaire multiple times before entering the field.

Branching Questions

For questions with multiple response options, we often program our surveys to branch into a secondary probing question.

“Don’t Know” & “Refused” Response Options

All questions include an option for respondents to volunteer “Don’t Know” or to refuse. Unless otherwise noted, interviewers do not prompt “don’t know” responses.

Panel Respondents

The Elon Poll has developed a probability-based panel of North Carolina registered voters. This allows us to track changes in individual-level opinions over time. Panel members are recruited at the end of our regular voter list probability-based telephone survey interviews by asking respondents for permission to contact them again. Over 95% of interviewees typically agree to be contacted again, and demographics are similar between panel and non-panel respondents. This survey consisted of 307 non-panel interviews and 464 panel interviews.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who pays for the Elon University Poll?

Elon University fully funds the Elon University Poll. The poll operates under the auspices of the College of Arts and Sciences at Elon University, led by Dean Gabie Smith. The Elon University administration, led by Dr. Leo Lambert, president of the university, fully supports the Elon University Poll as part of its service to the community. Because of this generous support, the Elon University poll does not engage in any contract work. This permits the Elon University Poll to operate as a neutral, non-biased, non-partisan resource.

2. Does the Elon University Poll favor a certain party?

The Elon University Poll is an academic, non-partisan survey. We do not engage or work with any political candidates or parties. We employ best practices to ensure the results are not biased.

3. Where do you get your numbers?

We obtain a random sample of the North Carolina registered voter list from Survey Sample International (SSI). SSI enhances this list to provide up-to-date phone numbers for voters. In order to adjust for differing probabilities of completion by age, the sample was adjusted prior to making phone calls based on the likelihood of respondents of an age group to complete a survey.

4. How many times do you call a number before giving up?

We will attempt to call each working number up to three times before removing it from the sample.

5. Do you call both cell phones and land lines?

Yes. We use a mixed sample of both cell phones and landlines. In the case of this poll, our sample consisted of 75% cell phones and 25% landline phones. Cellphone ratios depend on age of respondent (Cellphones were used for 100% of Millennials, 60% of GenXers and Boomers, and 0% of Silent generation members).

6. Do you report non-response rates?

Yes. We report non-response rates based on AAPOR guidelines. The response rate for the non-panel respondents in this poll was 13%. The response rate is calculated using the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) formula RR4.

7. Do you weight the data?

Yes. We apply weights to the data. An iterative proportional fitting algorithm generates weights based on North Carolina State Board of Election statistics.

8. Do you randomize response options?

Yes. We rotate the order of candidate names in all applicable questions. We also rotate order of text for other questions, such as those that include response options such as “more” and “less.” Furthermore, we rotate the order of some questions themselves if we suspect the order of a question could bias results.

9. How are students involved in the Elon University Poll?

Elon University students are involved with the survey as part of the University’s commitment to civic engagement and experiential learning where “students learn through doing.” Student interviewers receive training prior to engaging in interviewing. A team of student polling associates assists the directors with data collection.

About The Elon University Poll



Dr. Jason Husser is Director of the Elon University Poll and Assistant Professor of Political Science & Policy Studies at Elon University. Dr. Husser holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Vanderbilt University.



Kaye Usry is Assistant Director of the Elon University Poll, Instructor in Political Science & Policy Studies at Elon University, and a Ph.D. Candidate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Daniel Anderson is Vice President of Elon University Communications.



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