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## Winthrop Poll Results of September: Perry Leads Romney by Slight Margin

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# Winthrop Poll Results of September: Perry Leads Romney by Slight Margin

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## Quick Facts

- Also in the GOP presidential race, U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn, is losing momentum while Georgia businessman Herman Cain is slowly rising. Still, 11% say they're unsure who they'll vote for.
- Among S.C. Democrats, Republicans and Independents combined, 83% of those surveyed disapprove of the way Congress is doing its job. About half feel the same way about President Obama, with 40% giving him a thumbs-up.



Scott Huffman

ROCK HILL, S.C. - The latest **Winthrop Poll** shows that among Republicans/GOP leaners definitely planning to vote in the S.C. Primary for president, **Texas Governor Rick Perry** gets a slight nod over **Mitt Romney**, 30.5% to 27.3%.

Also in the GOP presidential race, **U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann**, R-Minn, is losing momentum while **Georgia businessman Herman Cain** is slowly rising. Still, 11% say they're unsure who they'll vote for.

Among S.C. Democrats, Republicans and Independents combined, 83% of those surveyed disapprove of the way **Congress** is doing its job. About half feel the same way about President Obama, with 40% giving him a thumbs-up.

Among S.C. Republicans/Republican leaners, almost 75% say the term "socialist" describes the president well or very well. Of those responding, 36% say he was definitely or probably born in another country. Nearly 30% say Obama is a Muslim. In this grouping, 67% say they are not part of **Tea Party movement**, but almost 75% of them agree with its principles. And 62% cite economy/jobs as most important problems facing the U.S.

Nearly 70% of S.C. Republicans/Republican leaners approve of **S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley's** job performance as governor, while 23% say she's failed to meet their expectations since taking office.

**Scott Huffman**, director of the **Winthrop Poll** and a political science professor at Winthrop, said the poll interviewed 1,552 registered voters from South Carolina between Sept. 11-18. Results which use all respondents have a margin of error of +/- 2.49% at the 95% confidence level.

The majority of questions, however, were only asked of Republicans and Independents who lean Republican. These results come from 596 Republicans and Republican leaners in SC who are also registered to vote and have a margin of error of +/- 4.01%. The margin of error for data using only those who "definitely" plan to vote in the 2012 Republican presidential primary is +/- 4.57%.

For further explanation of methodology, check the [Winthrop Poll website](#).

To see what questions were asked and responses, check [here](#).

## Among the Winthrop Poll findings:

- When asked about **Barack Obama's job performance** as president, 40% of all respondents approved, while 50.7% disapproved. Independents—whom many cite as a key factor in the 2012 election—disapproved by 56.5%.

• Among Republicans/Republican leaners definitely planning to vote in the GOP Primary, **Rick Perry**—who entered the race for the GOP nod during an appearance in SC—lead **Mitt Romney** by 30.5% to 27.3%--within the margin of error.

• When Republicans/Republican leaners who are definitely planning to vote in the Primary were asked who they thought the eventual 2012 Republican nominee would be—regardless of the one they currently supported—**Rick Perry** was named most frequently, by 35.4%, while 29.4% chose **Mitt Romney**.

• **Michele Bachmann** is polling back to where she was in [Winthrop's April 2011 Poll](#), when the two frontrunners—Huckabee and Romney—were chosen by 35.7% of Republicans/Republican leaners definitely planning to vote in the GOP Primary. In the new Winthrop Poll, the two frontrunners (Perry and Romney) collectively hold 57.8% of the support from that group. In absolute terms this means Bachmann is back to where she started in April. In relative terms, she has slipped.

• **Herman Cain's** numbers, among Republicans/Republican leaners definitely planning to vote in the S.C. Primary, have gone from 2.1% in the [Winthrop April 2011 Poll](#) to 7.7% in this current poll.

• Among Republicans/Republican leaners, 67.8% said they did not consider themselves members of the **Tea Party movement**, but 74.4% of the same group said they generally agree with the Tea Party's principles.

• Among Republicans/Republican leaners who are definitely planning on voting in the GOP Primary in SC, 59.9% said that it was more important to select a Republican presidential nominee who matched their beliefs, while 33.5% in this category disagreed, saying it was more important to select a candidate who could beat **President Obama** in 2012.

• Among Republicans/Republican leaners, 74.7% feel the term “**socialist**” describes **President Obama** very well or well.

• Among Republicans/Republican leaners, almost 30% believe **President Obama** is a Muslim.

• Among Republicans/Republican leaners, 36% continue to believe the president was either probably, or definitely, born in another country. Even though a long-form birth certificate for the president was produced between the [Winthrop April 2011 Poll](#) and now—showing he was born in Hawaii—just 5.2% fewer respondents now believe Obama was born outside the country than those back in April (36% now vs. 41.2 % in April).

• Among Republicans/Republican leaners, 62.4% identify the economy/financial crisis and jobs/unemployment as the biggest problems facing the U.S.

• As events were recently held in the U.S. to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the **September 11th attacks**, nearly three-in-four (73.3%) Republicans/Republican leaners said they believed our country's efforts to combat terrorism have made it much more safe, or somewhat more safe. But when the same group was asked if the **Obama administration** has been more or less effective than the **George W. Bush administration** at combating terrorism, 42.3% said they felt it has been either somewhat less effective or much less effective than the **Bush administration**.

For more information, contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at 803/323-2404 or e-mail her at [longshawj@winthrop.edu](mailto:longshawj@winthrop.edu).

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