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Winthrop Poll Finds Gingrich Leading Romney in GOP Presidential Race

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Winthrop Poll Finds Gingrich Leading Romney in GOP Presidential Race

Quick Facts

- The results of the December 2011 Winthrop Poll were taken between Nov. 27-Dec. 4. Poll callers at Winthrop University interviewed 1073 registered voters from South Carolina.
- Among S.C. Democrats, Republicans and Independents combined, 81.4% of poll respondents disapprove of the way Congress is doing its job while 47.8% feel the same way about President Obama. However, nearly 60% say it's very or somewhat likely the president will be re-elected in 2012.



Scott Huffman

ROCK HILL, S.C. - The latest [Winthrop Poll](#) shows that among those likely to vote in the **S.C. GOP presidential primary**, [Newt Gingrich](#) gets the nod over [Mitt Romney](#), 38.4% to 21.5%. [Texas Governor Rick Perry](#) comes in a distant third at 9 %.

The results are key as the Palmetto State is the first in the South to hold a GOP presidential primary, which is set for Jan. 21.

Among S.C. Democrats, Republicans and Independents combined, 81.4% of poll respondents disapprove of the way **Congress** is doing its job while 47.8% feel the same way about [President Obama](#). However, nearly 60% say it's very or somewhat likely the president will be re-elected in 2012.

The results of the **December 2011 Winthrop Poll** were taken between Nov. 27-Dec. 4. Poll callers at Winthrop University interviewed 1073 registered voters from South Carolina.

Almost 50% of those interviewed think economic conditions in U.S. are getting worse, while over 65% say the country is headed in the wrong direction. One-in-three disapproves of the **Occupy Wall Street Movement**.

Among SC Republicans, more than one-in-four think South Carolina is headed in the wrong direction. Almost 60% say their personal financial situation is either excellent or good. About 83% say they are not a part of the **Tea Party movement** but 61.4% approve of the Tea Party.

Results which use all respondents have a margin of error of +/- 2.99% at the 95% confidence level. Reported results using a subset of the entire sample will naturally have a higher margin of error. Results for Democrats only have a margin of error of +/-5.14%. Results for Republicans only have a margin of error of +/-5.45%. Results for Independents and other only have a margin of error of +/-5.03%. Results for Likely SC Republican Presidential Primary Voters only have a margin of error of +/-5.38%.

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

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

Among other Winthrop Poll findings:

- When asked about Barack Obama's job performance as president, 44.8% of all respondents approved, while 47.8% disapproved.

• Among likely Republican Presidential Primary voters, 38.4% said their first choice to be the Republican nominee was **Newt Gingrich**. This marks a dramatic jump from the September 2011 Winthrop Poll when Gingrich won just 5.3% of the vote. **Mitt Romney** came in second with 21.5%, while **Rick Perry** who placed first in the Winthrop Poll in mid-September, came in third with 9%.

• It is clear that accusations of sexual harassment and an extra-marital affair had already taken a toll on **Herman Cain** in South Carolina before he suspended his campaign. Whereas in September's poll, 7.7% of likely primary voters chose him—and his star appeared on the rise from **April's Winthrop Poll** when he posted 2.1%--in this latest survey he dropped to 6.6%.

• 63.4% of all respondents said it is NOT possible to address national budget concerns without any tax increases on any groups.

• Affection for the **Tea Party in South Carolina** may be on the wane. Among Republicans, 83.3% said they did not consider themselves members of the Tea Party movement—a marked jump from the September Winthrop Poll, when 67.8% felt that way. Meanwhile, 61.4% say they approve of the Tea Party.

• Almost one-in-four Republicans said they were not familiar enough with the **Tea Party movement** to have an opinion of it.

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