



The Meredith College Poll Examines North Carolinians' Views of Women as Political Leaders

Contact: Melyssa Allen, Meredith College, (919) 760-8455, allenme@meredith.edu

For Immediate Release

March 23, 2015

Meredith College, Raleigh, N.C. — A poll of North Carolina voters has explored the state's views of women as political leaders and examined the prospects of Hillary Clinton as a potential presidential candidate.

View the full report at http://www.meredith.edu/about_meredith/college-research/poll

The Meredith College Poll found the majority of North Carolinians believe men and women make equally good political leaders.

"The general picture for women seeking office is good," said Visiting Professor of Political Science David McLennan, one of the directors of The Meredith College Poll. "The voters generally have no bias against women as political leaders and believe that women possess many attributes, such as the ability to compromise, that make them better as leaders."

As shown in Meredith College's recently released report on *The Status of Women in North Carolina Politics*, the issue is that men are four times more likely to declare themselves to be candidates. While women make up 54% of registered voters in North Carolina, they hold less than 24% of elected and appointed offices in the state.

Other questions explored by the poll include the leadership attributes of women and men, the political strengths of men and women leaders, and reasons why there are so few women in North Carolina political office.

Hillary Clinton and the 2016 Presidential Election

The Meredith College Poll found that Hillary Clinton may face difficulties winning over voters in North Carolina.

Given that North Carolina will continue to be a key state in presidential elections and that the margin of victory for the winning presidential candidate will be slim in the state, Clinton, should she be the Democratic nominee, has a difficult road ahead of her with voting groups that will be key to her victory. Clinton's electoral victory will be heavily dependent on the women's vote, but her support among large blocs of women voters is soft 18 months from Election Day.

Of all voters surveyed, fully half (51%) said that they were either somewhat unlikely or very unlikely to vote for her, compared to only 41 percent that stated that they were somewhat likely to very likely to vote for her. Democrats had the greatest support for Clinton with 78 percent of respondents saying they were somewhat likely or very likely to vote for Clinton, as compared to 10 percent of Republicans and 38 percent of those registered as unaffiliated. Clinton's potential candidacy garners support from about one-third of unaffiliated voters in the state, a real problem for a Democrat hoping to repeat Barack Obama's 2008 victory in North Carolina.

The release of the results of The Meredith College Poll is part of the College's weeklong focus on women in public service. Meredith also released its report on *The Status of Women in North Carolina Politics*, and will present its 2015 Woman of Achievement Award to former North Carolina Supreme Court Chief Justice Sarah Parker on Thursday, March 26 at 7 p.m. in Jones Auditorium. Parker attended Meredith College from 1960-62.

About Meredith College

Chartered in 1891, Meredith College opened with just over 200 women. Today, our student body has grown to nearly 2,000, and includes men at the graduate level. Meredith challenges students to explore their interests, expand their skills, and build on their strengths.

—END—