

## “Is Trump’s Popularity the Result of the Current Administration?”

### Introduction

- Donald Trump’s race for the 2016 Presidential Ballot has created one of the most unique and divisive campaigns in our nation’s history. We seek to identify causes of the candidate’s rise in popularity, namely sentiments towards the current administration and the partisan divide.
- Partisanship has long-standing roots within the American political system, and is a preeminent determinant of individual voting preferences (Bonneau et al, 2013).
- The degree to which individuals vote along party lines in U.S. Presidential election cycles has increased overall since the 1950’s (Bartels, 2000 & Weinschenk, 2013). *Graph 3* shows the estimated outcomes of Weinschenk’s probit model predicting voting behavior in Presidential election years based on party identification. A negative value indicates a decrease in the likelihood of voting for a Republican official, and a positive value would increase that likelihood.
- While incumbent parties typically have an advantage in election cycles where the sitting official is running, defection rates are higher amongst incumbents than challengers when the sitting official is not running (Weisberg, 2002).
- Resulting political gridlock has been the cause of economic inefficiencies, such as the 2013 sequestration. The cost of partisanship may be significantly higher than current literature accounts for (Farina, 2015).

### Hypotheses

- $H_0$ : Favor and lack of favor for the current administration are not significant determinants of approval for presidential candidates.
- $H_a$ : Favor and lack of favor for the current administration are significant determinants of approval for presidential candidates.

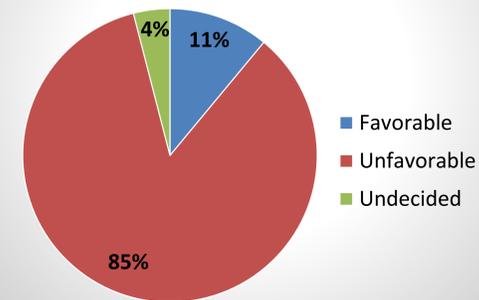
### Descriptive Data and Results

Variable	Description	Average	Probit	dy/dx
ObamaFavor	Dummy variable equal to 1 if favorable opinion of the Obama administration, 0 otherwise.	0.4325	-.8786+++	-.3059
ObamaUnfavor	Dummy variable equal to 1 if unfavorable opinion of the Obama administration, 0 otherwise.	0.4871	.4232++	.1545
Republican	Dummy variable equal to 1 if identify as Republican, 0 otherwise.	0.3522	.3152++	.1172
Democrat	Dummy variable equal to 1 if identify as Democrat, 0 otherwise.	0.4385	-.0302	-.0111
ClintonFavor	Dummy variable equal to 1 if favorable opinion of Clinton as a candidate, 0 otherwise.	0.4504	-.5105+++	-.1835
RubioFavor	Dummy variable equal to 1 if favorable opinion of Rubio as a candidate, 0 otherwise.	0.3581	-.1923	-.0695
CruzFavor	Dummy variable equal to 1 if favorable opinion of Cruz as a candidate, 0 otherwise.	0.2738	.5176+++	.1957
BushFavor	Dummy variable equal to 1 if favorable opinion of Bush as a candidate, 0 otherwise.	0.3433	-.4033+++	-.1429
White	Dummy variable equal to 1 if white, 0 otherwise.	0.8026	.3158++	.1104
Age1834	Dummy variable equal to 1 if between the age of 18 and 34, 0 otherwise.	0.0387	.4616†	.1790
Age3554	Dummy variable equal to 1 if between the age of 35 and 54, 0 otherwise.	0.1458	.1919	.0721
Age5574	Dummy variable equal to 1 if between the age of 55 and 74, 0 otherwise.	0.4435	.1298	-.0477

N=1,008  
† p<.1; †† p<.05; ††† p<.01

Chart 1

### FAVORABILITY OF TRUMP AMONG THOSE WHO APPROVE OF PRESIDENT OBAMA



Graph 1

### Model

$$TrumpFavor_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ObamaFavor_i + \beta_2 ObamaUnfavor_i + \beta_3 Republican_i + \beta_4 Democrat_i + \beta_5 ClintonFavor_i + \beta_6 RubioFavor_i + \beta_7 CruzFavor_i + \beta_8 BushFavor_i + \beta_9 White_i + \beta_{10} Age1834_i + \beta_{11} Age3554_i + \beta_{12} Age5574_i + u_i$$

### Data and Methodology

- The data used comes from the Florida Atlantic University poll conducted from Friday, January 15th at 1pm, through Monday morning, January 18th. The polling sample was a random sample of registered voters in the state of Florida purchased through Aristotle, Inc. After collection, data was pruned to remove incomplete or falsified responses.
- After adequate screening, the sample was reduced to 1,008 observations. Using these observations, we deconstructed the categorical responses into binary variables and included them in a probit regression.

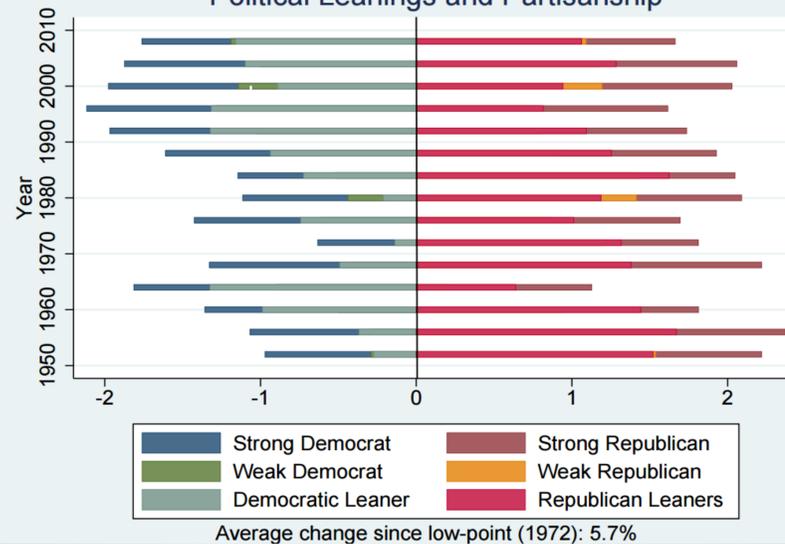
### Results and Discussion

- Based on our survey data, *Graph 1* indicates that among those who approve of President Obama, 85% have unfavorable opinions of Trump as a candidate, and 11% have favorable opinions. Conversely, *Graph 2* indicates that 24% of those who disapprove of the Obama administration have unfavorable opinions of Trump as a candidate, compared to 69% with favorable views.
- Our analysis in Chart 1 shows that both positive and negative sentiments towards the current administration are significant determinants of approval of Donald Trump as a candidate.
- Our findings are also consistent with Weisberg’s findings on incumbents, and show the existence of partisanship in the 2016 election cycle.

### References

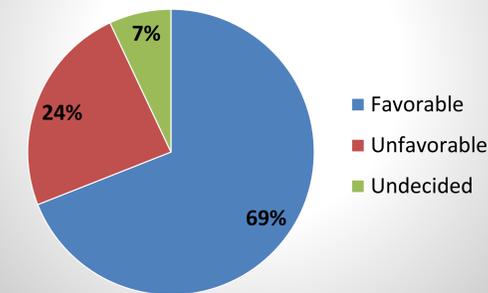
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### Political Leanings and Partisanship



Graph 3

### FAVORABILITY OF TRUMP AMONG THOSE WHO DISAPPROVE OF PRESIDENT OBAMA



Graph 2