Marquette University: New Marquette Law School Poll finds Biden lead over Trump stable at five percentage points

Posted on Wednesday, Oct 28, 2020

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. Get the app or access via desktop.

MILWAUKEE – A new Marquette Law School poll finds former Vice President Joe Biden the choice of 48% of likely voters in Wisconsin, President Donald Trump supported by 43% and Libertarian Jo Jorgensen receiving 2%. Another 7% say they will vote for none of these candidates, don't know how they will vote or declined to say. These results include those who are undecided but say they lean to a candidate. This is the final Marquette Law School poll before the November 3 election.

The results are little changed from the Marquette Law School poll conducted from Sept. 30 to Oct. 4, in which Biden was the choice of 47%, Trump the choice of 42% and Jorgensen the choice of 4%. Those results also included those who were undecided but leaned to a candidate.

Among Republicans, 7% say they are voting for Biden, while 86% are voting for Trump, 3% for Jorgensen and 4% undecided or declining to say. Among Democrats, 3% are voting for Trump and 92% are voting for Biden, with none for Jorgensen and 4% undecided or declining to say. Independents say they are voting for Biden over Trump by a 36-28% margin, with 12% for Jorgensen and 24% undecided or declining to say.

The poll was conducted Oct. 21-25, 2020. The sample included 806 registered voters in Wisconsin, who were interviewed by cell phone or landline, with a margin of error of +/- 4.3 percentage points. There are 749 likely voters, with a margin of

error of +/- 4.4 percentage points.

Table 1 shows the trend in presidential preference among likely voters from September through October. None of the poll-to-poll changes in support is outside the margin of error.

Table 1: Vote preference among likely voters, September-October 2020

Poll Dates	Net Dem-Rep	Joe Biden	Donald Trump	Jo Jorgensen	None/other (VOL)	Don't know	Refused
8/30-9/3/20	4	48	44	4	0	2	2
9/30-10/4/20	5	47	42	4	1	1	4
10/21-25/20	5	48	43	2	1	0	6

Sensitivity of results to turnout and undecided voters

The vote margins may be sensitive to assumptions about turnout. The model results for likely voters are based on those respondents who say they are certain they will vote or have already done so. Table 2 shows vote both if turnout is lower than the likely-voter sample implies and, by contrast, if turnout is higher using all registered voters as the sample. The results range from a margin for Biden of 3% in a lower turnout than expected, a margin for Biden of 4% in a high turnout in which all registered voters voted, and the previously mentioned 5% Biden margin in our standard likely-voter model.

Table 2: Vote by level of turnout

STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Joe Biden 48
Donald Trump 47

Jo Jorgensen None/other (VOL) Don’t know

Refused

In the likely-voter sample, 7% say they are undecided or declined to say how they would vote. To assess the probable impact of their votes, an “allocated” vote assigns these respondents to Biden if they have a favorable view of Biden and not a favorable view of Trump and assigns them to Trump if they are favorable to Trump and not favorable to Biden. If they are favorable to both or not favorable to both, they remain unallocated and remain undecided. Table 3 compares the vote among likely voters without allocation against the allocated vote. While the allocation reduced the undecided, refused and other categories, it does not change the margin, which remains 5 points in favor of Biden. The allocation does raise Biden to 50% and Trump to 45%, while Jorgensen remains at 2 percent.

Table 3: Vote for likely voters and allocated vote, respectively

Likely voters Likely voters Likely voters

STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Joe Biden 50
Donald Trump 45
Jo Jorgensen 2

None/other (VOL) 0
Don't know 0
Refused 0

Expectations for the election

Among likely voters, 91% say their minds are made up while 6% say they might change their minds. Among Biden supporters, 95% say their minds are made up. Among Trump supporters, 93% say their minds are made up.

Sixteen percent of likely voters expect Trump to win the election by a lot, 23 percent think Trump will win by a little, 29% think Biden will win by a little and 17% think Biden will win by a lot.

Eighty percent of Trump voters expect him to win and 11% expect Biden to win. Among Biden voters, 80% expect him to win and 6% expect Trump to win.

Twenty-seven percent of likely voters say they are very confident that the votes will be accurately cast and counted in the election, with 43% somewhat confident, 21% not too confident and 7% not at all confident.

Among Republicans, 61% say they are very or somewhat confident the votes will be accurately counted and 37% are not too confident or not at all confident. Eighty-two percent of Democrats are very or somewhat confident the vote will be accurately counted, while 18% are not too or not at all confident.

Choice of ballot type in November

In the poll, 41% of registered voters say they have already voted either by absentee or in-person early voting. According to the Wisconsin Elections Commission data, 37.5% of registered voters had voted as of the end of the poll's field period on Oct. 25.

Among those who say they have already voted, 64% report they voted for Biden, 25% voted for Trump, and 2% voted for Jorgensen. An additional 9% declined to say for whom they voted. Among those likely voters who have not yet cast a ballot, 35% report they will vote for Biden, 56% for Trump and 3% for Jorgensen. An additional 6% said someone else or declined to say how they will vote.

Views of Trump, Biden, Pence and Harris

Cares about you

Among all registered voters, 43% say "cares about people like you" describes Trump and 54% say this does not describe him. Fifty-six percent say this describes Biden and 40% say this does not describe him. Tables 4 and 5 shows trends on this question since June.

Table 4: Does 'Cares about people like you' describe Trump, June-October 2020

STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Dr. Peoplaintrew

6/14/2008/3-9/3/2011/2-5/2

Table 5: Does ‘Cares about people like you’ describe Biden, June-October 2020

Does Peoplelike Trustee	**Dwe**
6/14	46
8/20	8/3-9
3/20	53

Favorability

Among registered voters, 44% have a favorable view overall of Trump and 54% have an unfavorable view of him. Forty-nine percent have a favorable view of Biden and 46% have an unfavorable view of him.

The full trends for favorability of Trump and Biden are shown in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6: Favorable or unfavorable view of Trump, May-Oct. 2020

Have U

5/3 [illegible]/20

6/14 [illegible]/20

8/4 [illegible]/20

8/3 [illegible]/20

9/3-9/4/2020
1/21-1/25/2020

Table 7: Favorable or unfavorable view of Biden, May-October 2020

STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Have Unpaid Unemployment Benefits Gone Through

5/3/2006/14/28/20

8/4 4/2 8/20 8/3-9/2 9/3/20 9/3-4/2 4/2 8/4/20 1/2 1/2 4/2 5/20

The vice-presidential candidates are less familiar to respondents, with 10% unable to give a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Vice President Mike Pence and 13%

unable to give an opinion of Sen. Kamala Harris.

Tables 8 and 9 show favorable and unfavorable ratings for Pence and Harris this fall.

Table 8: Favorable or unfavorable view of Pence, September-October 2020

Have enough heard/read about Pence	8/3-9/3	9/3/20

9/3-4/20

1/21-5/20

Table 9: Favorable or unfavorable view of Harris, September-October 2020

STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Have Unpublished Endorsements Been Through

8/3-9/3/2009

9/3-4/2009

1
/
2
1
1
5
/
2
0

Trump job approval

As of late October, 47% approve and 52% disapprove of Trump's job performance. That is a 3-point increase in approval and no change in disapproval since early October. The trend since March is shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Approve or disapprove of Trump's handling of his job as president, March-October 2020

3
/
2
4
4
9
/
2
0

5/3 4/3 9/2 0 6/1 4 5/3 1 8/2 0 8/4 5/2 9/2 0 8/3 - 9/2 4 3/2 0

9/3-4/20
1/21-25/20

Trump’s handling of the coronavirus pandemic

After an initial approval rating in March of over 50% for his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, Trump’s approval on this front has fallen to 40 percent in late October, a slight change since early October, with approval down 1 point and disapproval up 2 points. The full trend is shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Approve or disapprove of Trump’s handling of the coronavirus pandemic, March-October 2020

3/24/2009/2005/3/4/2006/14/2008/4/2009/20

8/3-9/6 3/20

9/3-4/6 4/20

1/21-5/20 5/20

Approval of Trump’s handling of protests

Table 12 shows approval since June of Trump’s handling of mass protests since the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Approval is 3 points higher than in early October, with no change in disapproval.

Table 12: Approve or disapprove of Trump’s handling of protests, June-October 2020

STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Dates and Deadlines

Page Number

6/14

8/20

8/4

9/20

8/3-9

3/20

9/3-3/4 4/20 1/21 5/20

Trump’s handling of the economy

Handling of the economy remains Trumps strongest area of approval, with 51% approval and 48% disapproval in the new poll, a 3-point increase in disapproval. The full trend since March is shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Approve or disapprove of Trump’s handling of the economy, March-October 2020

3/24/2005/3/24/2005/3/24/2006/14/2008/4/2008/4/2008/4

8/3-9/2 4/3/20

9/3-5/4 4/5/4/20

1/2-1/5 5/8/5/20

Age group variation in this poll

In this poll, the 18-29-year-old sample is more Republican and more likely to vote for Trump than has typically been the case. This appears to be noisy sampling variation. The 18-29-year-old group is only 60 respondents (unweighted) which has a large margin of error of more than +/- 15 percentage points. Because vote by age has been an important topic, Tables 14 and 15 show the vote by age for this sample and compare it to vote by age for the last three polls combined, using likely voters. Given the consistency of Biden’s margin in multiple polls this year, it is likely that

the 18-29-year-old result in October is a sampling anomaly rather than a real change. Because the group is small, this anomaly has little effect on the overall vote margin. If all age groups are weighted to match their long-term partisan composition, the overall vote margin changes by only 1 percentage point, to 48% Biden and 42% for Trump.

Table 14: Vote by age, October only

Age	Joe Biden	Donald Trump	Jo Jorgensen	None/other (VOL)	Don't know	Refused
18-29	48	45	1	1	0	5
30-44	50	39	4	0	0	8
45-59	46	45	5	1	1	2
60+	48	43	0	1	0	8

Table 15: Vote by age, September-October combined

Age	Joe Biden	Donald Trump	Jo Jorgensen	None/other (VOL)	Don't know	Refused
18-29	54	34	6	0	1	4
30-44	47	41	5	1	2	4
45-59	44	47	4	1	2	3
60+	48	44	1	1	1	5

Attitudes concerning COVID

In late October, 22% say they are very worried about becoming ill from the coronavirus, a decrease from 27% in early October despite the rise of cases in the state. Nineteen percent say they are not at all worried, virtually the same as the 21% in early October.

Table 16 shows how worries have varied since March, when the percent very or somewhat worried was at the highest level seen so far, while the number of those not at all concerned has stabilized close to 20 percent for some time.

Table 16: Taking into consideration both your risk of contracting it and the

seriousness of the illness, how worried are you personally about experiencing coronavirus? March-October 2020

Poll date	Very worried	Somewhat worried	Not very worried	Not worried at all	Already had COVID-19 (VOL)	Don't know
3/24-29/20	30	40	18	11	0	0
5/3-7/20	25	35	20	19	0	0
6/14-18/20	19	36	21	24	1	1
8/4-9/20	27	36	17	19	1	0
8/30-9/3/20	21	39	19	19	1	0
9/30-10/4/20	27	34	16	21	2	0
10/21-25/20	22	35	20	19	3	1

In the new October poll, 64% say they always wear a mask when in a public place, 20% say they do so most of the time, 12% do so only now and then and 3% say they never wear a mask when in public.

Fifty-two percent say they are comfortable eating inside at a restaurant, while 47% say they are uncomfortable doing so. In May, 42% were comfortable and 57% were uncomfortable, while in June 49% were comfortable and 49% were uncomfortable.

Looking back to the closing of schools and businesses last spring, 68% say this was an appropriate response to the coronavirus epidemic, while 26% say it was an overreaction. The full trend for this question is shown in Table 17.

Table 17: Do you think the decision last spring to close schools and businesses and to restrict the size of public gatherings was an appropriate response to the coronavirus outbreak or was it an overreaction that did more harm than good? March-October 2020

Approve	3/24/2009
Oppose	3/29/2005
Conditional	3/30/2009
Interested	5/3/2009
Wrong phone	6/4/2009

6/14/2018/20

1/21/2025/20

Supreme Court nomination and upcoming Affordable Care Act case

On Monday, Oct. 26, the Senate confirmed the nomination of Amy Coney Barrett to fill the vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court created by the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Forty-eight percent say, if they were in the Senate, they would vote to confirm Barrett, while 38% would vote against her confirmation. This is a sharply partisan issue, as shown in Table 18.

Table 18: Vote to confirm Barrett to the Supreme Court by party identification, October 2020

Do Opposing Now

Republican Independent Democrat

On Nov. 10, the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments in cases that challenge the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act, also known as the “ACA” or “Obamacare.” Thirty-five percent would favor the Court’s declaring the law unconstitutional, while 55% would oppose it doing so.

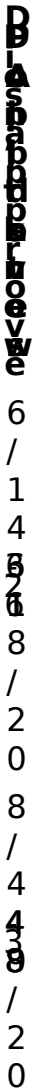
The partisan divide over the ACA is shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Favor or oppose the Supreme Court’s declaring the ACA unconstitutional, by party identification, October 2020

Views of protests, Black Lives Matter

Approval of protests over police violence against Black Americans declined from June to early August, prior to a police officer's shooting Jacob Blake in Kenosha, but barely moved following the Kenosha shooting and protests, as shown in Table 20.

Table 20: Approval of protests against police shootings, June-October 2020



8/3-9/3/20

9/3-14/4/20

1/21-5/20

Favorable views of the Black Lives Matter movement also declined from June to August, but has remained fairly stable since August, as shown in Table 21.

Table 21: Favorable or unfavorable view of Black Lives Matter movement, June-October 2020

Have Up-to-the-Dark-Ave Through

6/14/2018/208/4450/20

8/3-9/3/2009
9/3-14/4/2010
1/21-25/2010

Approval of Evers' job performance and handling of coronavirus

In the new late-October poll, 50% approve and 43% disapprove of Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers' job performance. In early October, 52% approved and 42% disapproved. The trend in overall approval of Evers since March is shown in Table 22.

Table 22: Gov. Evers job approval

STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Dis[illegible]

3/24[illegible]

[illegible]9/20

5/3[illegible]

[illegible]/20

6/14[illegible]

[illegible]8/20

8/4 5/9/20

8/3-9/3/20

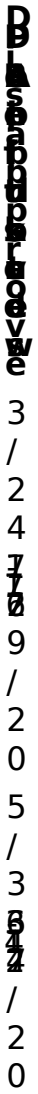
9/3-4/2 5/4/20

1/21 5/2 5/20

Evers’ handling of the coronavirus issue has 52% approval and 45% disapproval. This is a decline from three weeks ago, when 56% approved and 38% disapproved.

The trend in approval and disapproval is shown in Table 23.

Table 23: Gov. Evers handling of coronavirus outbreak, approval



6/14/2008/4/2009/3-3/2009/3-4/20

1/21/25/20

Approval of how the Wisconsin legislature is handling its job

In October, 36% say they approve of the way the Wisconsin legislature is handling its job, while 50% say they disapprove. This is the first time since January 2019, when the legislature's job approval was first asked, that more disapprove than approve. The full trend for this question is shown in Table 24.

Table 24: Wisconsin legislature's job approval

1/16/2/19

4/3[illegible]/19

8/25[illegible]9/19

11/13[illegible]17/19

2/19[illegible]3/20

5/31/2015
1/21/2015
5/20

Views of the economy, past and future

Views of the direction of the economy have turned sharply down since February, with many more people saying the economy has gotten worse over the past year. However, respondents have a strongly positive outlook for the economy over the next 12 months. Tables 25 and 26 show the recent trends in these measures.

Table 25: Change in economy over past 12 months

STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

1/8/2021
2/19/2021
3/24/2021
5/3/2021

6/14-[illegible]8/20

8/4-[illegible]4/20

8/3-[illegible]3/20

9/3-[illegible]4/20

1/21-1/25/20

Table 26: Outlook for the economy over the next 12 months

S

1/8-1/12/20

2/19[illegible]3/20

3/24[illegible]9/20

5/3[illegible]/20

6/14[illegible]8/20

8/4[illegible]/20

8/3-[illegible]3/20

9/3-[illegible]4/20

1/21[illegible]5/20

Family financial situation

Table 27 shows the trend in family finances since January. In late October, the percentage living comfortably rose while the percentages just getting by or struggling declined.

Table 27: Family financial situation

2/19/20

3/23/20

3/24/20

5/29/20

5/30/20

6/14/20

6/18/20

8/4/20

8/3-3/20

9/3-4/20

1/21/25/20

Views of state officials

Tables 28-30 present the recent favorability ratings of elected officials in Wisconsin and the percentage of respondents who haven’t heard enough about them or say they don’t know.

Table 28: Evers recent favorability trend

Have enough heard	Undecided/Haven't heard enough
1/8-12/20	

2/19 [illegible]

[illegible]3/20

3/24 [illegible]9/20

5/3 [illegible]/20

6/14 [illegible]8/20

8/4 5/2 9/2 0

8/3-9/3 0/2 1/3/2 0

9/3-4/2 0 1/2 1/2 4/2 5/2 0

Table 29: Sen. Tammy Baldwin recent favorability trend

STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Have you subscribed yet? Click here to learn more about WISPOLITICS.com
1/8/2020 1:45:32 PM

3/24/2009/2005/30/2006/14/2008/4/2009/20

Table 30: Sen. Ron Johnson recent favorability trend

Have Up, Through Reverse Through

1/8 - 3/2 2/20 2/19 3/4 3/20

3/24 3/29/20 5/33 5/8/20 6/14 3/18/20 8/43 9/20

8/3-9/3/20

9/3-3/4/20

1/21-3/5/20

About the Marquette Law School Poll

The Marquette Law School Poll is the most extensive statewide polling project in Wisconsin history. This poll interviewed 806 registered Wisconsin voters by landline or cell phone, Oct. 21-25, 2020. The margin of error is +/-4.3 percentage points for the full sample. There are 749 likely voters, with a margin of error of +/- 4.4 percentage points.

The partisan makeup of the sample, including those who lean to a party, is 45% Republican, 44% Democratic and 9% independent. The partisan makeup of the

sample, excluding those who lean to a party, is 30% Republican, 29% Democratic and 40% percent independent.

Since January 2017, the long-term partisan balance, including those who lean to a party, in the Marquette poll has been 45% Republican and 45% Democratic, with 9% independent. Partisanship excluding those who lean has been 30% Republican and 29% Democratic, with 40% independent.

The entire questionnaire, methodology statement, full results and breakdowns by demographic groups are available at law.marquette.edu/poll/results-and-data.