

# Obama has better leadership skills, survey shows

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(Phys.org)—A survey conducted by the University at Buffalo School of Management that evaluated the leadership skills of President Barack Obama and Republican challenger Mitt Romney has found that Obama scored significantly better than Romney in most leadership categories and in overall leadership skill.

Jerry Newman, PhD, SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor in the UB School of Management, conducted a nationwide survey of 250 professors specializing in American politics and the presidency. He asked them to rate the two [presidential candidates](#) using the 10 leadership dimensions that are at the heart of the School of Management's LeaderCORE program, a unique leadership certification for UB MBAs.

More than 100 professors responded, rating Obama and Romney on the 10 competencies of LeaderCORE: problem solving/decision making, global and diversity mindset, strategic thinking, team leadership, team skills, communication, interpersonal skills, integrity, results orientation and self-management/adaptability.

"We put the [candidates](#) under the same LeaderCORE lens that we use to assess our MBA students," says Newman, who initially conceived the LeaderCORE program. "The students then use the results to create their personal development plans."

The survey asked the professors to rate the candidates' skill level in the

10 leadership competencies on a scale of 1 (well below the average president) to 7 (well above the average president). They also were asked to rank the candidates for overall leadership using the same scale.

According to the results, Obama particularly showed strength as a leader in global and diversity mindset, communication and interpersonal skills.

In fact, on seven of the 10 competencies, Obama's scores were significantly better than Romney's. The only areas where there were no significant differences between the two candidates were team [skills](#), team leadership and results orientation.

Respondents who gave a score of 1 or 7 on any dimension were asked to give an open-ended example of what behavior led to that evaluation.

"We've seen what a good presenter Obama can be," Newman says. "But the professors also commented on his management of the financial and automotive crises. Obama's ability to adapt in the ever-changing landscape of health care reform and his stance on gay marriage also earned him high marks in adaptability and results orientation."

In a final question, the respondents were asked to provide their political orientation on a scale of 1 (very conservative) to 7 (very liberal).

Seventy-four percent of the professors described themselves on the liberal end of the scale, yet in a regression analysis, the professors' political leaning was not a significant determinant of how they evaluated overall [leadership](#).

Provided by University at Buffalo

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