

INSTITUTIONALIZING VOTER ENGAGEMENT

A guide to developing and adopting handbook language



March 2018



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
ABOUT CAMPUS VOTE PROJECT	7
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	8
USING THIS GUIDE	10
FEDERAL GUIDANCE AND STATE REGULATIONS	14
DEVELOPING HANDBOOK LANGUAGE	18
EXAMPLE HANDBOOK LANGUAGE	20
FULFILLING THE INSTITUTION'S VOTER ENGAGEMENT HANDBOOK COMMITMENT	22
WORKING WITH ON- AND OFF-CAMPUS PARTNERS	26
KEY TERMS	27
RESOURCES	28
SOURCES	31

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Main Contributors

Rachel Clay
Southeast Regional Coordinator, Campus Vote Project

Debi Lombardi
National Program Director, Campus Vote Project

Mike Burns
National Director, Campus Vote Project

Kristen Muthig
Communications Manager, Fair Elections Center

Thank You To Our Reviewers

Abe Goldberg
Executive Director Center for Civic Engagement, James Madison University

Bob Frigo
Associate Director Kernodle Center for Service Learning
and Community Engagement, Elon University

Karen Kedrowski
Executive Director of the Center for Civic Learning, Winthrop University

Josh Young
Director of Institute for Civic Engagement and Democracy, Miami Dade College

Partners

Stephanie King
Assistant Director-Knowledge Communities and CLDE Initiatives, NASPA

Jennifer Domagal-Goldman
National Manager-American Democracy Project, AASCU

Verdis Robinson
National Director-The Democracy Commitment



111 K Stree, NE, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20002
Tel: 202.265.7500
Fax: 202.898.5737
www.naspa.org

NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education – supports institutionalizing civic learning and democratic engagement on college campuses. As President of NASPA since 2012, I have personally seen the growth and impact of the NASPA LEAD Initiative,¹ the annual Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement conference, and the Voter Friendly Campus program.

All of these programs provide valuable methods, resources, and information for campuses on ways to institutionalize democratic engagement at their institutions. Institutionalizing Voter Engagement is an indispensable resource that aids administrators, faculty, and students in pushing their campuses to take their initiatives a step further. It offers a tangible and comprehensive process for writing and passing handbook language that makes voter engagement a focal point of civic engagement efforts on campuses.

Civic learning and democratic engagement is critical for educating and preparing students as active citizens. A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy’s Future, calls on campuses to take action to reinvigorate the civic mission of higher education. “As a democracy, the United States depends on a knowledgeable, public-spirited, and engaged population. Education plays a fundamental role in building civic vitality, and in the twenty-first century, higher education has a distinctive role to play in the renewal of US democracy.”² The most fundamental way for students to begin a lifetime of active citizenship is by registering and voting.

Institutions of higher education are trusted sources of information and have the ability to empower students as voters, so they can exercise this most fundamental right. By utilizing the Institutionalizing Voter Engagement, campuses can lay the structural and organizational framework needed to carry out their civic mission in preparing students to be engaged active voters and to further student’s civic participation.

Kevin Kruger, Ph.D.
President
NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the past six years, Campus Vote Project has helped campuses institutionalize reforms that empower students with the information they need to register and vote. Institutionalizing Voter Engagement was created to help campuses unpack what institutionalizing voter engagement means and further campuses' ability to prepare students as active citizens. The guide provides a working definition for voter engagement, methods for building programs, and arguments to support engaging students as voters. The purpose of Institutionalizing Voter Engagement is to support administrators in developing and implementing handbook language that commits institutions to carrying out voter engagement.

ABOUT CAMPUS VOTE PROJECT

In 2012, the Fair Elections Center launched [Campus Vote Project \(CVP\)](#) to focus work around student voting issues. CVP works with universities, community colleges, faculty, students and election officials to reduce barriers to student voting. Our goal is to help campuses institutionalize reforms that empower students with the information they need to register and vote. Our project leverages programs implemented by campus administrators and faculty that can reach all enrolled students. CVP works with schools to deliver vital voting information, and promote candidate and issue forums, debate watch parties, and marches to the polls as part of a campus culture of voting.

College students face specific challenges when attempting to register and vote. Generally newer to the process, they lack information about voter registration rules and deadlines, often do not have acceptable ID for voter registration or voting purposes, are confused about where to vote, may not have transportation to the polls, and occasionally are confronted by unfriendly or unsympathetic elections officials or poll workers. CVP seeks to address these challenges well in advance of Election Day to pave the way for successful student voter turnout.

CVP addresses these barriers through a variety of methods. One is the Voter Friendly Campus program³ created in 2016 in partnership with NASPA. The goal of the program is to help institutions develop plans to coordinate administrators, faculty, and student organizations in civic and electoral engagement. The program helps administrators develop a strategy to engage students and set clear goals so a path can be created in advance of upcoming elections. These activities can be institutionalized for years to come, keeping students engaged as they enter, and move through their time at college. To learn more about how Campus Vote Project addresses barriers to student registration and voting, please visit our [website](#).

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Campus Vote Project (CVP) created *Institutionalizing Voter Engagement* to assist higher education institutions in implementing voter engagement on their campuses. The Institute for Democracy and Higher Education (IDHE)⁴ at the Jonathan M. Tisch College for Civic Life at Tufts University describes voter engagement as “encompass[ing] efforts to increase the knowledge and develop the skills students will need to engage in democracy, politics, policy making, and social action,” and we will be using that as the definition throughout. The following guide provides instruction for adopting handbook language, similar to language used by institutions committing to civic engagement efforts for voter engagement. To create the document, CVP staff interviewed campus partners including administrators and faculty, student groups, partner organizations, and other nonpartisan groups around the country. This guide also uses knowledge and experience gained from working closely with our campus partners, who we thank for making this possible.

Institutions of higher education serve a civic purpose, preparing students with the knowledge and skills to be informed and engaged citizens, and establishing a habit of participating in American democracy. The responsibility to institutionalize voter engagement lies within colleges’ and universities’ civic mission. The umbrella of the civic mission covers voter engagement in a variety of ways, such as providing forums for civil dialogue, an investment in researching democracy, and fostering civic participation. Institutions bear a responsibility to invest in preparing students to be effective and responsible citizens and that must include cultivating a culture of voting.

A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future released by the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement in 2012, makes the importance of this call-to-action more apparent. *A Crucible Moment* concludes that to have an effective democracy, we have to revitalize and strengthen our civics education on college campuses. Engaging and educating students as voters is a key part. The report states, “As a democracy, the United States depends on a knowledgeable, public-spirited, and engaged population. Education plays a fundamental role in building civic vitality, and in the twenty-first century, higher education has a distinctive role to play in the renewal of US democracy.”⁵

Young adults (ages 18-29) made up about 21% of the voting eligible population in 2016, yet because of a turnout rate of only 50% in the 2016 presidential election, young people made up less than 18% of the total electorate.⁶ As their smaller share of the electorate demonstrates, the historical average of 50% turnout for young voters is lower than any other age group.⁷ Many students on college campuses have recently become eligible to vote or are first-time voters, and as such aren't familiar with the process. Having basic information about how, when, and where to register and vote can help students be prepared and reduce intimidation. Voting is habit-forming. If individuals are motivated to get to the polls once, they are more likely to return.⁸ Through voter engagement programs, campuses play a critical role in launching each new generation of voters.

By establishing handbook language and committing to voter engagement, institutions ensure their efforts remain politically neutral. This can affirm an institution's commitment to democratic engagement, fair treatment of diverse opinions and ideas, and encouragement of active participation in democracy, while insulating the institution from outside accusations of partisanship. By combining administrative handbook language with the imaginative ideas faculty and student groups already use, campuses can develop successful institutional practices. CVP started this process for your institution with the information in this guide.

Despite the work of organizations like ours and our committed campus partners, voter engagement efforts are often episodic and only prioritized during major elections. The *Institutionalizing Voter Engagement* guide is our way of pursuing long-lasting effects and aiding campuses in making voter engagement a key component of fulfilling their civic mission year-round.

USING THIS GUIDE

Before diving into in-depth policies and procedures that guide your work, deciding the best way to organize your voter engagement handbook language will make the idea of voter engagement accessible and effective. There are also general institutional procedures that may need to be addressed before some language can be adopted or carried out. Below is an outline of things to consider before starting.

Consider the Needs of the Institution

Institutions are as diverse and unique as the students who attend them. Whether your campus is a small, private institution or a large community college with multiple campuses, it is important to commit to voter engagement that fits the culture and makeup of your institution. The types of programs you put in place will vary from those of other institutions. For example, throwing evening debate watch parties may work to engage students on a campus with residential housing but not for a commuter campus.

Furthermore, election law varies greatly from state-to-state and even between localities. Familiarizing yourself with state and local election laws will be an asset when building a strong voter engagement program. Including local elections officials on your committee is a great way to develop a voter engagement strategy that fits your institution's situation and ensures the information you deliver to students is accurate. See the Federal and State Guidance section for more on how election laws may affect your voter engagement efforts.

Establish a Committee

Build a committee of critical partners who will play a role in developing, integrating, and carrying out your commitment to voter engagement. This can be an extension of a current coalition committed to voter and democratic engagement or a standalone committee.

Having a committee is critical. It gives the institution an opportunity to engage stakeholders across broad perspectives and gives legitimacy to the broader effort. A strong committee has members in student and academic affairs, student leaders, members of your local elections office, faculty, and others. However, the final make-up of the committee should reflect the individual needs of your institution.

A multitude of voices at the table can ensure a holistic voter engagement program approach. Furthermore, broad support makes it more likely handbook language can be passed. Set parameters for the committee so members understand what they are committing to by participating. Consider the following as some guidance for the committee:

- Committee members will meet at designated times (monthly, bi-monthly) during the regular academic year
 - Committee members will focus specifically on voter engagement, identifying strategies for fostering effective voter engagement for students, faculty, and staff
 - Students may apply or be appointed to the committee by designated employee(s) or institutional branch
 - The committee will attempt to include local election official(s)
 - The committee will include a member of institution's general counsel office
-

Define Voter Engagement for the Institution

It is critical to have a working definition of voter engagement before pursuing handbook language and committing the institution to it. The definition for the purpose of this document will be based on the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education's (IDHE's) description of voter engagement.

Voter engagement encompasses efforts to increase the knowledge and develop the skills students will need to engage in democracy, politics, policy making, and social action.⁹

Empowering students to register and vote supplies them with the building blocks to become active and engaged citizens. How the campus defines voter engagement should fit into the institution's civic mission. We consider voter engagement to have four main pillars:

- **Promote Voter Registration.** Aid students in registering to vote for the first time, update their voter registration, and remind them of important deadlines and regulations.
- **Tackle the Information Deficit.** Help students understand the ballot itself, background on who or what issues will be on the ballot, and information on how they can cast a ballot.
- **Reduce Barriers to Voting.** Work with local elections offices to identify ways the institution can help students overcome statutory and non-statutory barriers to voting.
- **Empower Students as Voter Advocates.** Encourage students to spread information, support their peers in getting engaged in democracy, and improve the voting process and access for students.

Review Federal Guidance and State Regulations

Federal guidance and state regulations play important and different roles in helping your institution determine how it will approach voter engagement. Federal guidance, such as the Higher Education Act, provides a baseline requirement that campuses carry out voter registration efforts.

State regulations also help institutions identify what kinds of voter engagement activities will be effective on their campuses. For example, waiting to conduct programs only on Election Day may not be as successful in states that offer early voting or all-mail elections.

Develop Handbook Language

The purpose Institutionalizing Voter Engagement is to aid institutions in developing and implementing handbook language. Once an institution considers their needs, establishes a committee, defines voter engagement, and reviews federal guidance and state regulations, they are ready to develop handbook language.

Most institutions have handbook language dedicating them to civic engagement. Similar to their commitment to civic engagement, institutions can pledge to voter engagement. This commitment can have a lasting impact on institutionalizing a campus's existing voter engagement efforts or catalyze their ability to carry out voter engagement.

CVP's work with higher education partners generally uses the civic learning and democratic engagement (CLDE) language of our partners and focuses on ways our election law and student engagement expertise can assist campus partners in their efforts. For the purpose of Institutionalizing Voter Engagement we deliberately focused only on the voter engagement aspect of this work. Our work has lead us to conclude institutions need handbook language that explicitly addresses the fundamental building block of voter engagement at the core of successful CLDE efforts. Additionally, while some institutions have tremendous programs to engage their students as voters, there is a need to name this work, institutionalize it, and share it broadly in the higher education community.

FEDERAL GUIDANCE AND STATE REGULATIONS

There are federal statutes, rights, and case law that encourage and require institutions to play a part in developing students as voters. Some, such as the Higher Education Act (explained below), mandate particular voter engagement efforts. Others clarify students' rights and election laws that impact students. These materials can be useful in advocating for commitment to voter engagement from your institution. Here are some examples to keep in mind when committing your institution to voter engagement.

The 26th Amendment states "The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age."¹⁰ Many students enter college directly after high school, which often coincides with their 18th birthday, and the first time they are eligible to vote can be at their new campus. During a period of so much change, having their institution, a trusted source, provide information for how they can register and vote can be critical.

Another piece of federal guidance is the 1979 U.S. Supreme Court case *Symm v. United States*, which upheld students' right to register and vote in the towns and cities where they attend college if they so choose.¹¹ Many institutions have out-of-state or non-local students. These students have as much right to vote in their new community as any other resident. Helping students understand their options for voting gives them the choice of registering absentee and mailing a ballot back to their hometown, or voting in their new community.

The Higher Education Act (HEA) requires a direct action from institutions. In Section 487(a)(23), the HEA references the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) and requires institutions to distribute voter registration forms to their students. It states, "[Y]ou must make the voter registration forms widely available to your students and distribute the forms individually to your degree or certificate program students who are physically in attendance at your institution."¹²

Clarifying the HEA requirement, the U.S. Department of Education published a "Dear Colleague" letter in July of 2013. The letter outlined the HEA requirement for institutions to distribute paper voter registration forms, acquired from their state elections office (such as the Secretary of State) to all students who are physically in attendance at the institution. The letter also clarified institutions may instead distribute voter registration forms with an electronic message devoted exclusively to voter registration. Electronic messages must contain an attachment or an Internet address where the form can be accessed or downloaded.¹³

While the federal government provides some framework into voter engagement in higher education, most election laws are determined at the state and local level. We will not dive into each state's unique regulations in this guide, but CVP provides state-specific student voting guides on our website with accurate and up-to-date information on election laws from all 50 states and D.C.¹⁴ We encourage becoming familiar with state and local regulations that will impact your students by communicating with state and/or local election officials.

To demonstrate how different election laws can be across states, the chart below compares several key components of election administration. It includes states ranging from voter friendly to very restrictive to show how elements of the electoral process impact your student voter engagement policies.

REGULATION	OREGON	WISCONSIN	VIRGINIA
Voter Registration	Automatic voter registration	Online and paper voter registration. Must submit paper registration with documentary proof of residence	Online and paper voter registration
Voter Registration Deadline	21 days before Election Day	20 days before Election Day, also has Election-Day registration	22 days before Election Day
Identification Required to Vote	None required	Wisconsin ID, military ID, US passport, certificate of naturalization, tribal ID, student ID	Must present one of many photo ID options, including public or private school IDs
Early Voting	All vote-by-mail	Non-uniform dates and times for absentee in-person voting before Election Day is available in municipal clerk offices	Absentee in-person from 45 to 3 days before Election Day for individuals with an excuse
Election-Day Polling Hours	8 a.m. - 8 p.m.	7 a.m. - 8 p.m.	6 a.m. - 7 p.m.

You can find website and contact information for your state and local election officials at: www.usa.gov/election-office, and information on your local elections office at www.usvotefoundation.org/vote/eoddomestic.htm. Your state's voter registration policy along with important election dates and other useful information can be found on election officials' websites. State, local, and midterm elections, that often include ballot initiatives and referendums, are often overlooked and publicized with varying degrees of accurate information. Find upcoming election information here: www.usvotefoundation.org/vote/state-elections/state-election-dates-deadlines.htm.

While commitment to voter engagement, can be similar across campuses and states, procedures to best support your students vary greatly depending on regulations. For example, trying to host a polling location on campus in Oregon may not be useful since the election is conducted by mail. However, an on-campus polling location on Election Day would raise awareness of an election in Wisconsin where individuals can register and vote on Election Day. Knowing your state's election laws can streamline your efforts aiding your students.

DEVELOPING HANDBOOK LANGUAGE

The final product of the committee is the handbook language. Establishing a formal commitment enables administrators and faculty to expand their voter engagement practices. Below is an outline of sections that could be added to a college or university handbook. Language that addresses the challenges students face while engaging in the voting process can differ for each campus. Keep in mind your specific institutional needs, state and local election laws, and student population.

Handbook Language Components to Consider

Commit to voter engagement directly. This statement can exist on its own or be embedded into the institution's preexisting commitment to civic engagement. The language you use can incorporate all or some of the following components:

- Define what the institution means by voter engagement. For example, engaging student voters “encompasses efforts to increase the knowledge and develop the skills students will need to engage in democracy, politics, policy making, and social action.”
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
 - Dedicate a branch, office, or administrative role to leading voter engagement at the institution
 - Institution designates voter engagement as a specific responsibility of one or more institutional branches i.e. center for student involvement, center for leadership and civic engagement, student affairs, etc.
 - Voter engagement is important to and included in the mission and vision of the institutional branch, office, or administrative role
 - Institution includes information regarding voting on branch's or office's website
 - Describe the relationship to the local elections office and how it will be maintained
 - Institution is committed to working with the local elections office
 - Individual(s) are responsible for communication between state and local election officials
- The institution publicizes the voter engagement policy on institution's website and/or a page dedicated to voter information
 - Institution publishes resources for students, faculty, and staff to carry out the commitment to voter engagement
- State institution's commitment to political neutrality in matters related to voter engagement
 - For example, if your campus holds a candidate forum, all candidates from all parties should be invited, BUT the university is not responsible if different parties or candidates choose not to participate

EXAMPLE OF HANDBOOK LANGUAGE

[Name of Institution] strives to prepare its students to be engaged and informed participants in democracy. Engaging students as voters and voter advocates encompasses efforts to increase the knowledge and develop the skills students will need to engage in democracy, politics, policy making, and social action.

To fulfill this mission, [Name of Institution] commits to:

1. Dedicate [branch or office of institution] to coordinate and lead efforts on campus to inform eligible students of their ability to register and vote in all applicable elections.
 - a. This office ensures voter engagement is a standing part of their vision and mission.
 - b. This office is responsible for making available voter registration applications, pertinent information about upcoming elections, and other relevant nonpartisan election information for students.
 - c. This office works with the local elections office to maintain regular communication and ensure students have access to voter registration and voting sites.
2. [Name of Institution] makes available voting information/where to find voting information on the campus website available to all students.
3. [Name of Institution] is politically neutral in its voter engagement efforts.

**FULFILLING THE
INSTITUTION'S
VOTER ENGAGEMENT
HANDBOOK
COMMITMENT**

Each institution has unique needs, and we have no intention of prescribing activities or tactics for your institution. However, there are important aspects of voter engagement an institution must carry out to have a well-rounded, far-reaching program.

Promote Voter Registration

The Higher Education Act requires institutions to distribute voter registration forms, but it does not go into detail describing how the institution should approach supporting students registering. Here are ways you can ensure students may access and complete the voter registration process:

- Incorporate voter registration into orientation activities for new and transfer students.
- Bring voter registration into the classroom with paper forms or information for how to register online, and with reminders around deadlines for registering to vote.
- Integrate a voter registration opportunity into the class registration process.
- Send notifications to let students know they need to re-register or update their registration every time they change their address.
- Share information about voting from overseas with study abroad students.

Tackle the Information Deficit

Voter education is an important part of a healthy democracy and a great way for an institution to engage students. Unlike other voting groups, students are often much newer to the voting process. Giving students fundamental information can make them feel more comfortable at the ballot box.

- Establish a college/university website or page where the institution and student groups can share valuable nonpartisan election information that's easily accessible to students.
- Host events and debate watch parties to get students information about candidates or issues they will see on the ballot.
- Share information on social media to bring awareness to important events and dates.
- Participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to get valuable information about student voter registration and voting rates for your institution.¹⁵
- Provide information about the voting process, options, and ballot. A major hurdle for someone new to voting is concern about what the ballot or going to the polls entails. Institutions can mitigate these concerns by sharing sample ballots or hosting mock elections.

Reduce Barriers to Voting

Beyond registering and educating students, campuses can play an active role in getting students to turn out and reducing barriers they may face. Issues with campus addresses and proper identification can inhibit a student's ability to vote. However, institutions have the ability to confront those challenges and support their students.

- Work with the local elections office to establish a polling location or early voting site on campus. Having a polling location at an institution has several positive attributes. It helps the campus connect with the community, provides an on-site location for students to vote, and greatly raises awareness of elections.
- Provide rides to the polls programs that get students to their correct polling location. This can be a shuttle or ride-sharing program and can include group walks to closer polling locations.
- Make it fun and participatory. Having music, food, and group activities at the above activities makes the voting process an engaging and social activity so the whole campus community can participate.
- Raise awareness about upcoming elections. All activities from promoting voter registration to educating students about the ballot bring attention to elections. Campus-wide reminders specifically about how and why to vote will only bolster those efforts.

Empower Students as Voter Advocates

Peer-to-peer engagement is the most effective way to spread knowledge and information to students across campus. With direct support from the institution, it can be even more effective. Incorporate students as leaders in voter engagement efforts and get the support of existing student groups to get the word out about upcoming events. Students can also be a part of drafting an action plan for voter engagement on your campus and in your community.

- Train students to educate and engage their peers in voter engagement activities.
- Enable students to lead their campus efforts by motivating them to plan and carry out important events.
- Invite students to participate on the committee and advocating for passing the handbook language.
- Recruit students to be poll workers. Previously, we described the importance of a close relationship with the local elections office. Working with them to have students serve as poll workers is a valuable way to develop and strengthen that relationship while getting students more familiar with the election process.
- Train students to be facilitators of political dialogue on campus so they feel comfortable discussing politics and debating with their peers. This also makes the campus feel more open and less tense. IDHE has a multitude of resources in this area.¹⁶

WORKING WITH ON- AND OFF-CAMPUS PARTNERS

Partnering with Faculty

On many campuses, the best way to reach students is through faculty. Unfortunately, the time commitment and effort voter engagement requires can be limiting to faculty members. Below are some suggestions of how to use classes and classrooms for voter engagement efforts to help alleviate this issue. Faculty, when provided with adequate support, offer tremendous voter engagement opportunities.

- Utilize the syllabus to raise student awareness of important election dates. The voter registration deadline, absentee or early voting information, and Election Day are all dates that could easily be incorporated into a syllabus.
- Encourage faculty to allow 5-10 minutes of class time at the beginning of each semester to have someone speak with their students about how to register and vote.
- Have faculty distribute sample ballots to students so they know what they can expect when they go to the polls. For many first-time voters, filling out a sample ballot provides the confidence needed to cast a ballot.
- Email students voter registration deadline reminders.
- Allow students to use class time on Election Day to go and vote.
- Faculty can find ideas in **Teaching Civic Engagement Across the Disciplines**. “The book explains how campuses can promote high quality education for civic engagement, providing a wealth of examples of successful practices, techniques, and assessment strategies,” and the accompanying website collects many other resources.¹⁷

Communicating with Local Election Officials

We mention working with local elections officials throughout **Institutionalizing Voter Engagement**. Partnering with the local elections office streamlines your ability to provide accurate election information to your students. They can inform you of important election law updates, flag common mistakes student’s make when registering or attempting to vote, provide voter registration training, help make sure your students have access to the polls, and more.

Working with Third Party Organizations

Third party organizations can play an important role in activating students at your institution. Whether they are part of a nonpartisan group registering voters or members of a political party, outside organizations bring a new perspective and information for students. Finding a way for the campus to work with third party organizations can be beneficial to everyone.

KEY TERMS

26th Amendment

Amendment to the Constitution stating “the right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age”

Civic Engagement/Participation

Working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference, promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes¹⁸

Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE)

Promoting the education of students for engaged citizenship through democratic participation in their communities, respect and appreciation of diversity, applied learning and social responsibility¹⁹

Civic Purpose

Sustained intention to contribute to the world beyond the self through civic or political action, integrates the components of motivation, civic activity, and future-oriented civic intention²⁰

Civic Vitality

The strength of social networks within a community. It is reflected in the presence of institutions, organizations and informal practices that people create to share resources and build attachments with others²¹

Handbook Language

Final product of the committee; a formal commitment to action enabling administrators and faculty to expand their voter engagement practices, addressing challenges students face while engaging in the voting process

Higher Education Act (HEA)

Revised version of 1965 legislation that requires institutions to “make the voter registration forms widely available to your students and distribute the forms individually to your degree or certificate program students who are physically in attendance at your institution”

RESOURCES

Campus Vote Project and Fair Elections Center offer user-friendly resources for voter engagement efforts. Campus Vote Project has resources and tools to get started and execute a voter engagement program, and Fair Elections Center can provide legal and technical assistance to voter mobilization organizations.

State-Specific Student Voting Guides

Guides for all 50 states and D.C. to help students understand their rights and how to register and vote in their school or home community. www.campusvoteproject.org/studentguides

Voter Friendly Campus Program

The Voter Friendly Campus designation helps administrators and faculty develop a strategy to engage students and set clear goals so a path can be created in advance of upcoming elections. These activities can be institutionalized for years to come, keeping students engaged as they enter, and move through their time at college.

Learn more at www.voterfriendlycampus.org.

Fair Elections Center Third-Party Voter Registration Drive Guides

Provides basic information on the rules and regulations around conducting voter registration drives in all 50 states and D.C. Find these guides at [www.campusvoteproject.org/voter-registration-drive guides](http://www.campusvoteproject.org/voter-registration-drive-guides)

There are also many other organizations that contribute information and research to this area. Below you can find some of the resources we have found most helpful that can you better understand what it means to work with students as voters and why it's so important.

Institute for Democracy and Higher Education (IDHE), part of the Jonathan M Tisch College of Civic Life at Tufts University

- 2016 NSLVE National Report: Democracy Counts
 - <https://idhe.tufts.edu/research/2016-nslve-national-report-democracy-counts>
- Free Speech and Inclusion on Campus: A Discussion Guide
 - <https://idhe.tufts.edu/resource/free-speech-inclusion-campus-discussion-guide>
- National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)
 - Objectively examines student and institution-level data on student voting and shares these data with campuses. Participation is free, easy, and protective of student privacy. More than 1,100 schools are part of the study.
 - <https://idhe.tufts.edu/nslve>

CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement)

Focuses on young people in the United States, especially those who are marginalized or disadvantaged in political life. Based at the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life at Tufts University.

civicyouth.org

Nonprofit Vote

Guidance and resources on staying nonpartisan, issue advocacy, and engaging nonprofit clients.

www.nonprofitvote.org

National Institute for Civil Discourse

Resources, research, and programs to foster civility.

nicd.arizona.edu

National Issues Forum Institute

Deliberative dialogue approach and discussion guides.

www.nifi.org/es/issue-guides/issue-guides

Center for Civic Reflection

Resources around themes of citizenship and democracy.

<http://civicreflection.org/resources/library/themes-big-questions/category/citizenship-and-democracy>

Students Learn Students Vote

The Students Learn Students Vote Coalition promotes civic learning and engagement on campuses across the country by providing a series of key steps and information on best practices that institutions can use to create a more voter friendly campus.

www.studentslearnstudentsvote.org

SOURCES

1. <https://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/groups/lead-initiative>
2. https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/crucible/Crucible_508F.pdf
3. www.voterfriendlycampus.org
4. <https://idhe.tufts.edu>
5. A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future, The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, available at www.aacu.org/crucible
6. www.civicyouth.org/quick-facts/youth-voting
7. www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2017/comm/voting-rates-age.html (Noting though that in 2016, millennials were the only age group to see a slight increase in turnout over 2012, while all other age groups saw a slight decline.)
8. <http://civicyouth.org/quick-facts/youth-voting>
9. Institute for Democracy in Higher Education, National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, <https://idhe.tufts.edu/nslve>
10. U.S. Const. amend. XXVI §1
11. *Symm v. United States*, 439 U.S. 1105 (1979).
12. 34 CFR 668.14(d). See also Volume 2, Chapter 7 of the 2016-2017 version of the Federal Student Aid Handbook. Institutions in six states are exempt: Idaho, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, because at the time of enactment they allowed Election Day registration or had no voter registration.
13. Federal Student Aid Office, U.S. Department of Education, Dear Colleague Letter, Subject: Requirement for distribution of voter registration forms, July 1, 2013, DCL ID: GEN-13-17, available at <https://ifap.ed.gov/dpccletters/GEN1317.html>
14. See www.campusvoteproject.org/studentguides
15. <https://idhe.tufts.edu/nslve>
16. <https://idhe.tufts.edu/resources>
17. <http://web.apsanet.org/teachingcivicengagement/about/teaching-civic-engagement-across-the-disciplines>
18. Civic Responsibility and Higher Education, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000, Preface page vi, available at www.nytimes.com/ref/college/collegespecial2/coll_aascu_defi.html
19. www.naspa.org/focus-areas/civic-learning-and-democratic-engagement
20. <https://coa.stanford.edu/publications/civic-purpose-integrated-construct-understanding-civic-development-adolescence>
21. www.omahayp.org/2016/05/cultivating-civic-vitality-in-omaha/

FAIR
ELECTIONS
CENTER

The logo for the Fair Elections Center features the word "FAIR" in blue, "ELECTIONS" in dark blue, and "CENTER" in red. A red checkmark is superimposed over the letter "I" in "ELECTIONS".

CAMPUS
VOTE
PROJECT

The logo for the Campus Vote Project features a grey classical building facade at the top. Below it, the word "CAMPUS" is in black, "VOTE" is in blue, and "PROJECT" is in black. A red checkmark is superimposed over the letter "E" in "VOTE".