

Campus: University of Chicago

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The University of Chicago's Institute of Politics (IOP), in partnership with the University of Chicago's Democracy Initiative (UCDI), would like to continue to engage students in the upcoming November election. At the University of Chicago, UCDI strives to engage students in meaningful political conversation and instill electoral engagement as a priority throughout the campus community and beyond. Their mission is to "improve the democracy of the United States through public engagement and research", and they work to find non-partisan policy solutions to pressing problems. UCDI and the IOP formed a partnership in March 2016 for the Illinois primaries to promote voter registration and participation. Thanks to our dedicated student leaders, we organized buses to transport University of Chicago students to their local polling places for early voting over the course of three days leading up to the March 15th primary. We had close to 200 students use the busses, 75% of whom were not already registered voters. Given this success, we'd like to partner again for the November 2016 general election to send even more students to their registered polling places. We will also set up voter registration stations using TurboVote during Orientation Week for incoming first year students.

Calendar

April-June 2016

- Meeting with IOP & UCDI to discuss specifics of roles & responsibilities, timeline moving forward, and finalized budget for projects.
- Identify potential campus partners for collaboration.
- Schedule biweekly meetings.

July-August 2016

- Monthly check-in phone calls.
- Select tentative dates for Orientation Week voter registration in September.
- Select tentative dates for early voting bus days in November.
- Create plan for Orientation Week voter registration and recruit student volunteers.
- Work on TurboVote 2.0 Transition.
- Work with Voter Engagement Summit Team.
- Work on IOP as polling place.
- Get IOP on the website.
- Solidify fall plans and begin winter/spring planning.

September 2016

- Organize Orientation Week voter registration materials and volunteers.
- Prepare volunteers for voter registration events.
- Orientation Week student voter registration (end of September).
- Reserve busses for November election voting.
- Get volunteers for the fall solidified.
- Get TurboVote on UChicago website.
- Get general school-wide e-mail through Student Government.
- Plan presence at Grad Student Resource Fair.
- Plan Letter to the Editor of the Maroon.

October 2016

- Create marketing campaign to spread the word about November voting.
- Canvas and table at various on campus events to promote November voting.



- Finalize details with bus company/send in payment.
- Conduct pre-project interviews with students to measure interest in voting, political engagement, etc.

November 2016

- Final voter registration push via tabling and marketing campaign.
- Pre- Election Day registration & early voting
- Election Day voting & transportation (November 8th, 2016)
- Collect data from November election, including number of students transported, number of new voters registered, etc.
- Conduct post-project interviews with participating students to measure levels of engagement, satisfaction, etc.

December 2016

- Finalize qualitative and quantitative data collection.

January-May 2016

- Finalize qualitative and quantitative data collection.
- Canvas and table at various on campus events to promote voter registration.

Budget: We are planning to budget \$3500 for our voting engagement efforts. This will cover the cost of TurboVote membership as well as bus transportation to and from local polling places for three days leading up to the November election as well as on Election Day. The remainder of funds will be used towards our TurboVote student registration tables during Orientation Week for incoming first year students. We'll be using food and prizes to incentivize registration. Any funds not used in either of these efforts will be put towards on-campus publicity and marketing for both events.

Assessment: UCDCI typically measures voter engagement through TurboVote by tracking the number of University of Chicago students registered, as well as the percentage of University of Chicago students registered. We also have access to data on the voting patterns of University of Chicago students from the 2012 general election, the 2014 midterm elections and the 2016 March primary. We hope to use this data to compare similar measurements for the 2016 general election, measuring both students who register to vote through the University of Chicago's TurboVote program as well as University of Chicago students who actually vote. We also plan to use on-campus student surveys to measure how many students are first time voters and how many students plan to vote via absentee ballot. To assess the success of our bussing efforts, we can collect quantitative data on student turnout as well as qualitative data via student interviews and focus groups. Our goal would be to increase voter turnout from the past 2012 general election year and to collect student thoughts about political participation to draw conclusions about attitudes towards electoral engagement on the campus community at large. Once we gather this data, we can compare our numbers to other schools nationally and reach out to share best practices to increase student political engagement.