Voter Engagement:
Fostering a Campus Culture of Civic Dialogue & Political Engagement

Voter Engagement Plan
Fall 2016

Washington University in St.Louis

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Point of Contact for Designation

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 2. Institution: Washington University in St. Louis

3. Department: Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement

4. Title: Voter Engagement Fellow

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Washington University Frame for Voter Engagement

- It's important for students to learn the process of democracy
  - This is not about voting, it's about learning
- Politics 365
  - Engagement is beyond the Presidential Debate and election
  - Want to establish a culture of civic dialogue, and learning to dialogue across difference
- Non-partisan
  - We can talk about political engagement AND be inclusive

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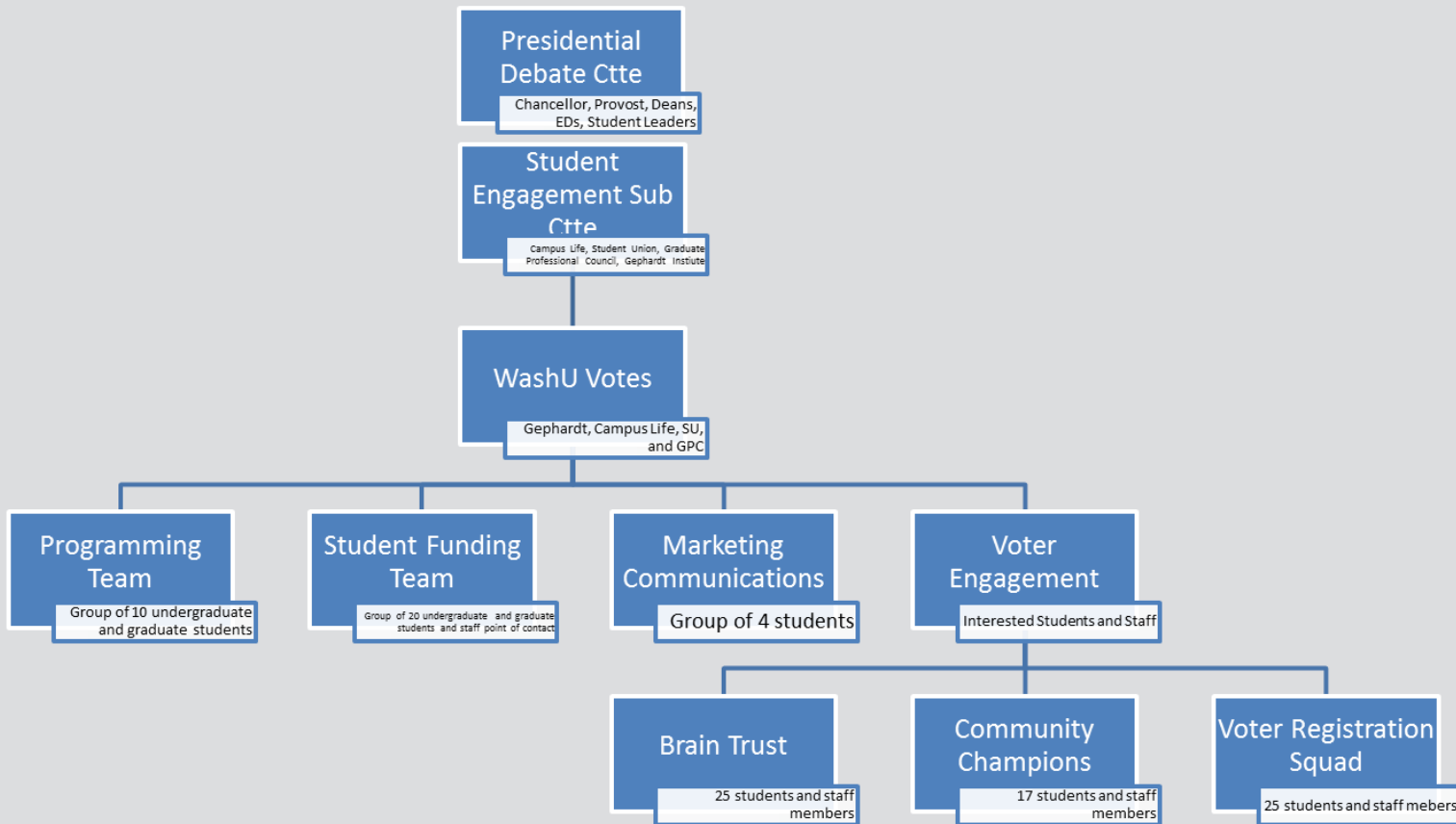
Voter Engagement Structure at WashU

- The Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement leads WashU's voter registration efforts
  - The Gephardt Institute also leads Constitution Day and Voter Registration Day
- This year a full time Voter Engagement Fellow has been hired to coordinate WashU's voter engagement and registration efforts
  - Cassie Klosterman
    - Full time May 31st – December 1st
    - cklosterman@wustl.edu
    - (314)935-7453
- After the fellow's position ends the Assistant Director for Student Engagement and Service will take the lead in carrying out the evaluation of this election cycle's voter engagement efforts.
  - Cara Johnson
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Voter Engagement Structure - Student Engagement Committee

- The Student Engagement Committee is a sub-committee of the Presidential Debate Steering Committee.
- Includes staff representatives from the Gephardt Institute, Campus Life, the Brown School of Social Work, the University Registrar's office, and many others.
- Includes student representatives from Student Union (our student body government) and the Graduate Professional Council
- Meets once a week
- Over sees WashU Votes and the four WashU Votes teams
  - Programing team
  - Student Funding team
  - Marketing and Communications Team
  - Voter Engagement Team.

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Student Engagement Committee Organizational Structure

Presidential Debate Ctte
Chancellor, Provost, Deans, EDs, Student Leaders

Student Engagement Sub Ctte
Campus Life, Student Union, Graduate Professional Council, Gephardt Instiute

WashU Votes
Gephardt, Campus Life, SU, and GPC

Programming Team
Group of 10 undergraduate and graduate students

Student Funding Team
Group of 20 undergraduate and graduate students and staff point of contact

Marketing Communications
Group of 4 students

Voter Engagement
Interested Students and Staff

Brain Trust
25 students and staff members

Community Champions
17 students and staff members

Voter Registration Squad
25 students and staff mebers

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About WashU Votes

- All programing and information relating to the election will carry the WashU Votes Logo

- WashUVotes.wustl.edu - centralized portal for voter registration, events, programing grants, etc.

- The WashU Votes Committee has four teams

    - Student Group Funding

    - Events

    - Voter Engagement and Registration

    - Marketing and Communications

WASHU VOTES

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Voter Engagement Team

- **What:** develop and implement a voter engagement and registration strategy for the fall semester, which will ideally engender a longstanding culture of civic dialogue and political engagement at WashU

- **Who:** a representative group of WashU's various schools, departments, student group organizations, and communities

- **How:** levels of involvement
  - Voter Registration Squad
  - Brain Trust
  - Community Champions

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Washington University 2012 Voting Data

Washington University in St. Louis
is using data and feedback from campus partners, faculty, staff,
and students to drive our campus-wide voter engagement and
registration plan

WashU Stats – 2012 Presidential Election

- Breakdown of WashU's student body
  - Total student enrollment - 13,641
  - Ineligible to vote because too young - 84
  - IPEDS estimated "nonresident aliens" - 2,007
  - **Number of students who registered - 7,924**
  - **Number of students who voted - 4,644**

- Voter registration and turnout
  - Registration rate - 72.24 %
  - Voting rate - 42.34 %
  - Rate of registered voters who voted - 58.61 %
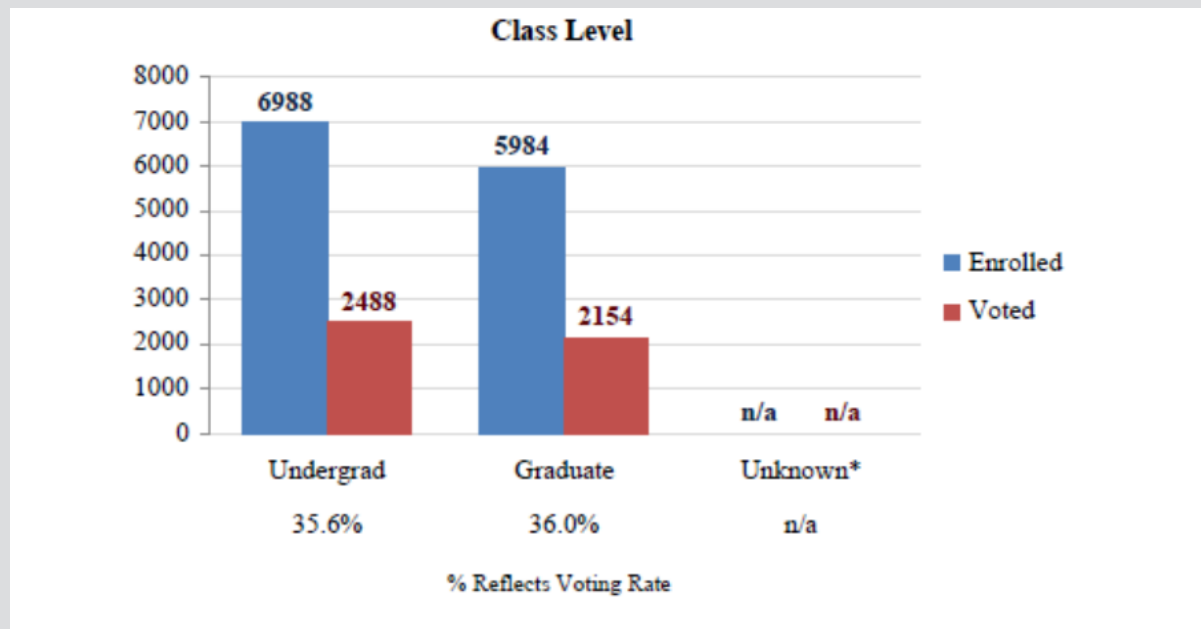 - Note: 581 blocked records (eligible students not included in polling data)

Data from NSLVE 2012

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WashU Stats – 2012 Missouri Voters

- Students registered to vote with their university residence address on the south side of campus:
    - 1520 "active status" – registered voters
    - 1278 voted
    - 84% turnout

- Students registered to vote with their university address on the north side of campus:
    - 408 "active status" – registered voters
    - 389 voted
    - 95% turnout

Data from St. Louis County Board of Elections

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WashU Stats – Undergrad vs. Grad Students

Class Level

	Undergrad	Graduate	Unknown*
Enrolled	6988	5984	n/a
Voted	2488	2154	n/a
	35.6%	36.0%	n/a

% Reflects Voting Rate

**includes non-resident aliens

Data from NSLVE 2012

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WashU Stats – By Academic Area

Combined Fields of Study	Enrolled	Voted	Turnout
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support	1561	508	32.5%
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities	1909	838	43.9%
Health Professions and Related Sciences, Knowledge and Skil	1259	525	41.7%
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	1004	341	34.0%
Social Sciences	886	288	32.5%
Education	45	22	48.9%
Engineering	1705	544	31.9%
Psychology, Personal Awareness, and Self-Improvement	366	154	42.1%
Visual and Performing Arts	469	148	31.6%
Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs	14	11	78.6%
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	472	160	33.9%
Humanities	525	207	39.4%
Computer, Information, and Library Sciences	379	164	43.3%
Physical Sciences	436	129	29.6%
Professions	1747	561	32.1%
Trades	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mathematics and Statistics	128	23	18.0%
Parks and Recreation	n/a	n/a	n/a
Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences	n/a	n/a	n/a
Technologies/Technicians	n/a	n/a	n/a

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Data from NSLVE 2012

Goals for 2016 Voter Engagement Efforts

Goals for Voter Registration and Voter Turn Out

- Increase our total eligible student voter registration rate from 72.24% to 80%

- 60% of all new voter registrations are completed through TurboVote

- Maintain the 2012 voting rate of 95% for those living on the Northside and voting in Missouri

- Increase voting rate from 84% to 90% for those living on the South 40 and voting in Missouri

- Increase our total registered student voting rate from 58.61% to 65%

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Goals for Voter Engagement & Civic Dialogue

- Engage 80 campus community members in dialogue through our post-debate dialogue program

- Elicit 200 responses about which issues are important to our students before College Debate 16

- Provide funding for 10 faculty programs

- 150 posts with #WashUVotes hashtag

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Target Audience

- Undergraduate Students
  - Arts & Sciences, Engineering, Olin, and Sam Fox
- Graduate Students – Danforth Campus
  - Law School, Brown School, Olin, Arts & Sciences, Sam Fox (off-site)
- Graduate Students – Medical Campus
  - Medical School, Occupational Therapy Program, and Physical Therapy Program
- Faculty (All schools)
- Staff

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Challenges

- Approximately 50% of our students choose to vote absentee in their home state
  - Response
    - Focus on messaging about absentee ballots
    - Coordinate an absentee ballot party, where students can fill out their ballots and get the supplies necessary to mail them.
- WashU has a decentralized administrative structure
  - Response
    - Contact schools and departments individually
    - Encourage people to act as community champions and drive programing for their communities with support from WashU Votes and the Gephardt Institute.

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Voter Engagement Encompasses

- Compliance
  - Non-partisan, polling place, all student email

- Voter Registration
  - Voter Registration Squad, TurboVote, access to a notary on campus

- Voter Education
  - Civic dialogue, WashU Votes website, social media

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Compliance

Campus-Wide Communications

- WashU will send two all student emails with voter registration information
  - 1st in September and 2nd in October
- All University and Institute communications will be non-partisan
- Technology integrations with TurboVote
  - Widget integrated on WashU Votes website
    - http://washuvotes.wustl.edu/registration/
  - Widget integrated into WebStac (*tentative*)
    - WebStac is WashU's online student portal where students can view their transcripts, their housing assignments, register for classes, and will be the site where they enter the Debate Ticket Lottery

WashU Voter Experience

- On Campus Polling Place
  - Both on campus residential areas will vote at the athletic center.

- Students living off campus will need to vote at location specific off campus polling places
  - Goal: Ensure every student has a plan for election day – where their polling place is, what they need to bring in order to vote, and how they are going to get to their polling place.

- Strive to create a celebratory environment on election day both on campus and for those waiting in line to vote on campus

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Gephardt Plans for Election Day

- Display a timeline of significant voting related events throughout history along the route where people will be waiting to vote
  - For example
    - 1920 Women's Suffrage
    - 1970s voting age moved to 18 nationally
- Provide treats for people waiting in line
- Host a reception outside the polling place with 1st time voter buttons, candy, and live music
- Engage students in a white board campaign in front of the Danforth University Center – "I voted because…"
- Reserve a section of the underpass for an artistic representation of student voting
  - Students with I voted stickers can stop and add their hand print to the wall

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Voter Registration

TurboVote

- Online voter registration interface
  - Allows individuals to register in all 50 states
  - Provides election reminders
  - Facilitates paper registration and absentee ballot requests where required or requested
  - Tool for tracking WashU voter registration data

- Made by the non-partisan non-profit Democracy Works

- We are required to ensure voter registration forms are widely available to students

- Students are encouraged, but not required, to use TurboVote

TurboVote

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Voter Registration Events

- Utilizing administrative bottlenecks to get students registration information (Aug-Sep)
  - U-Pass Distribution
  - Meet St. Louis Registration
  - Debate Ticket Lottery
  - Webstac online portal

- Voter registration squad at key events (Aug-Sep-Oct)
  - Speakers (Ezra Klein) and Panels (Jack Danforth panel or climate change policy panel)
  - Debate watch parties
  - Activity Fairs and large student events

- Community specific initiatives (Sep-Nov)
  - Residential College Competitions
  - Election Law presentation for Law Students

- Constitution Day September 16th
- National Voter Registration Day September 27th
- St. Louis County Board of Elections event

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Voter Education

Civic Dialogue

- Post-Debate Dialogues
  - During the presidential debates we will offer sign-ups both at the official watch party and on social media for those watching remotely to sign-up for a discussion group the next day.
  - There will be two dialogues the day after each debate one from 12-1, another from 6-7:30.
  - Dialogues will be led by two trained graduate student facilitators.
    - We are working with the Center for Diversity and Inclusion on developing facilitator training and the dialogue model.
    - In total we will train 8 graduate student facilitators.
    - We will advertise the facilitator positions at the grad resource fair etc., application will be due on September 2nd, training will occur between September 12th and September 23rd.

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Civic Dialogue (Cont.)

- Resources for communities to host their own dialogues
  - Toolkit based on the Join the Debates model with WashU companion guide.
  - Will work best for "built communities" i.e. floor meetings, student group general body meetings, in the classroom.

- Principles of dialogue
  - Goal is not to resolve issue but rather to better understand why people think what they think, and learn how to dialogue across difference.
  - Founded upon respect (brave spaces rather than safe spaces).

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Faculty

- A toolkit with information about civic dialogue and how to relate the election to class materials

- Faculty funding will be available through the Gephardt Institute Civic Engagement Fund

- Goal: Encourage every faculty member to mention the election at least once to their classes

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Tools

- WashUVotes.wustl.edu
  - A central portal for all information pertaining to Election 2016 at WashU

- Gephardt Site
  - The hub for all of the Gephardt Institute's initiatives surrounding voter engagement
  - Gephardtinstitute.wustl.edu/vote

- A comprehensive and interactive social media presence
  - College Debate 2016 at the Dominican University of California

Possible Social Media Campaigns

- #DearFuturePresident

- ChalkItUp

- 5 Things that are Harder than Voting: WashU edition

Putting it all together

Timeline

- Phase 1: Planning
  - Now-August 1st
- Phase 2: Connecting
  - August 2nd – September 2nd
- Phase 3: Getting the word out
  - August 25th – October 12th
- Phase 4: Activating
  - October 12th- November 8th
- Phase 5: Envisioning the future
  - November 9th – November 18th

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Timeline
Phase 1: Planning

- Now-August 1st
  - Collect useful information and begin building an archive of references
  - Share plan and solicit input from within the institute and key campus partners
- Message: We are working to develop a comprehensive voter engagement plan that will create a foundation for a long standing campus culture of political engagement.
- Important Dates
  - July 13th and July 20th: Voter Engagement Team Feedback Meetings
  - July 25th: Starting Line publication goes out to incoming Freshman (includes voter registration information)
  - August 1st: Plan Finalized

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Timeline
Phase 2: Connecting

- August 2nd – September 2nd
  - Recruit new students and other interested parties to join VET
  - Get information out to faculty about resources and funding opportunities being offered by the Gephardt
  - Officially Kick-Off WashU Votes

- Message: You can have a tangible impact on not only this election, but also on the development of a politically engaged campus culture by getting involved with our voter engagement efforts.

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Timeline
Phase 2: Connecting (cont.)

- Important Dates
  - August 20th: Present to the Gateway to Global Citizenship Pre-Orientation Program
  - August 22nd: Graduate Student Resource Fair
  - August 24th: Present to the Leadership through Service, World of Politics, and Student Union Pre-Orientation Program
  - August 25th: First Year Student move-in
  - August 26th: 1st Faculty Election Year Programming Grant Deadline
  - August 27th: General move-in and SUp All Night

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Timeline
Phase 2: Connecting (cont.)

- Important Dates (cont.)
  - August 29th: Day 1
  - August 30th: Sophomore Resource Fair and Law School Activities Fair
  - August 31st: WashU Votes Kick-off
  - September 1st: Community Service Fair and Voter Registration Training by the St. Louis County Board of Elections
  - Friday September 2nd: Activities Fair

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Timeline
Phase 3: Getting the word out

- August 25th – October 12th
  - Register people to vote!
  - Direct people to WashU Votes
  - Highlight importance of dialogue

- Message: Now is the time to register! If you have moved recently (even just from the South 40 to the Northside), be sure to update your registration to ensure your vote on November 8th is counted. If you are voting in your home town, be sure to request an absentee ballot.

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Timeline
Phase 3: Getting the word out (cont.)

- Important Dates
  - September 9th-11th: College Debate 16
  - September 16th: Constitution Day
  - September 26th: Presidential Debate @ Hofstra
  - September 27th: National Voter Registration Day
  - September 28th: Post-Debate Dialogues
  - October 4th: Vice Presidential Debate @ Longwood
  - October 5th: Post-Debate Dialogues
  - October 9th: Presidential Debate @ WashU
  - October 10th: Post-Debate Dialogues
  - October 12th: Last Day to Register in MO

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Timeline
Phase 4: Activating

- October 12th- November 8th
  - Encourage everyone to vote!
  - Provide opportunities for dialogue
  - Direct people to WashU Votes
  - Emphasize importance of having a plan for election day
    - Where you will vote, what you need to vote, and how you will get there

- Message: Make sure your voice is heard. Participate in a dialogue about the election with your friends, professors, and families. Go out and Vote!

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Timeline
Phase 4: Activating (cont.)

- Important Dates
  - October 19th: Presidential Debate @ University of Nevada – LV
  - October 20th: Post-Debate Dialogue
  - Week of October 24th: Politics Up Close: *Understanding St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and Missouri State Government*
    - Tentative – a week with programming connecting the general election to local politics. Possible ties include understanding what's happening with Forward Through Ferguson and how your vote can impact this initiative's future.
  - November 8th: Election Day

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Timeline
Phase 5: Envisioning the Future

- November 9th – November 18th
  - Encourage dialogue
  - Look toward the future

- Message: We are one nation and the only way to move beyond harmful partisan rhetoric is to begin a new conversation founded on respect.

- Important Dates
  - November 9th: Recuperation day
  - Week of November 14th: **A Way Forward** panel

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Data Collection

- WashU is participating in the NSLVE

- St. Louis County Board of Elections can provide us with data regarding students who register with their university address and vote in Missouri

- We can access live data from TurboVote about Voter Registrations that are completed through their system

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Evaluation

The Gephardt Institute will:

- Head the process of synthesizing voter registration data from TurboVote and election data from future NSLVE reports to measure outcomes and progress towards goals

- Share data with key Voter Engagement stakeholders including University leaders, Student Engagement and WashU Votes committees, and stakeholders on campus

- Solicit feedback from key partners including St. Louis County Board of Elections, Faculty involved with Civic Dialogue and Voter Engagement events, and continuously improve plans

- Evaluate specific initiatives, strategies, and activities for effectiveness and provide recommendations for future efforts

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