

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The MSUvote Committee is a non-partisan committee consisting of staff, faculty, students, and local residents who seek to increase voter education, engagement, and turnout at Michigan State University and in the City of East Lansing among MSU students. The Committee is participates in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in hopes of bringing awareness and attention to the importance of democratic engagement.

Michigan State University saw an increase in student voting rates from 2014 to 2018. In the past lower student voting rates may have been attributed to state level voting restrictions regarding first-time voters and absentee voting laws. Michigan laws have since changed. Our focus going forward will be on educating students on changes to voting laws and highlighting the benefits of absentee voting.

The MSUvote Committee is working with the Associated Students of MSU (ASMSU - student government), academic college, administrators, and community partners to register current and incoming students to vote, providing voter education, and encouraging voting overall. Voter registration opportunities are provided at new and transfer student orientations.

The 2019-2020 academic year will be the second round of a campus field experiment in first-year writing classes. Current students will continue to lead short presentations about the importance and process of voting for first-year students.

We have hired an MSUvote Intern, who also serves as a CEEP Fellow. This intern is planning the following activities with the committee, the Center for Community Engaged Learning, the academic colleges, ASMSU, and community partners:

1. Classroom announcement about the availability of a new online voter registration opportunity available in Michigan with a direct QR code link
2. Voter Education and Registration Event - AbsenTea Kick-off featuring prominent elected officials and Alumni
3. AbsenTea party boxes available for student groups to host their own registration drives and informational conversations about applying for absentee voting

In partnering with student groups and academic and administrative departments, MSUvote aims to increase our presence on campus for new and returning students, encouraging them to register and to vote.

LEADERSHIP:

The MSUvote Committee is comprised of multiple campus and community stakeholders. The Committee Co-chairs provide leadership, spearhead initiatives and are consistently present.

Committee members play more specific roles and work on particular initiatives. The group is inclusive of any stakeholders who wish to join and commit to increasing voter registration, improving voter education and increasing voter participation on Election Day.

MSUvote Co-Chairs:

Renee Brown, Director, MSU Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL)
Suchitra Webster, MSU Community Liaison

MSUvote Committee Members:

Tova Carter, MSUvote Fellow
Maysa Sitar, Associated Students of MSU (ASMSU) Vice President for Governmental Affairs
Morris Arvoy, Director of Communications, Residential College in the Arts & Humanities
Sarah Reckhow, Faculty, Political Science, College of Social Science
Kjerstin Thorson, Faculty, Communication Arts & Sciences
Jennifer Shuster, East Lansing City Clerk
Marilyn Wilson, League of Women Voters
Talyce Murray, MSU student and Campus Election Engagement Project
ASMSU Members
Council of Graduate Students Representative
Residence Education and Housing Services Representative
Registered Student Organizations
CCEL staff

MSUvote Committee Partners:

Barb Byrum, Clerk, Ingham County
Christopher Long, Dean, College of Arts and Letters

COMMITMENT:

Michigan State University's mission statement is:

As a public, research-intensive, land-grant university funded in part by the state of Michigan, our mission is to advance knowledge and transform lives by:

- *providing outstanding undergraduate, graduate, and professional education to promising, qualified students in order to prepare them to contribute fully to society as globally engaged citizen leaders*
- *conducting research of the highest caliber that seeks to answer questions and create solutions in order to expand human understanding and make a positive difference, both locally and globally*

- *advancing outreach, engagement, and economic development activities that are innovative, research-driven, and lead to a better quality of life for individuals and communities, at home and around the world*

Michigan State is committed to a set of undergraduate learning goals, including:

Effective Citizenship

The MSU graduate participates as a member of local, national, and global communities and has the capacity to lead in an increasingly interdependent world.

- *Understands the structures of local, national, and global governance systems and acts effectively within those structures in both individual and collaborative ways.*
- *Applies knowledge and abilities to solve societal problems in ethical ways*

Michigan State University is a Campus Compact member, a leader in the Campus Compact of Michigan Network, a participating institution in the Big Ten Voting Challenge and the Michigan Collegiate Voting Challenge. In addition to those institutional commitments, MSUvote and the Center for Community Engaged Learning have made the following commitments on behalf of the university:

MSUvote is your on-campus, non-partisan information source for the upcoming elections. We are calling on Spartans far and wide to register to vote this election season, to educate themselves on the issues that will affect them and their communities and participate in local, state, and federal elections. REGISTRATION. EDUCATION. PARTICIPATION.

MSU Center for Community Engaged Learning

In partnership with campus and community, the Center for Community Engaged Learning advances community engaged learning at Michigan State University and prepares students for lifelong civic and social responsibility.

LANDSCAPE:

2020 brings two major opportunities for students to engage in the voting process: the March Presidential Primary and the November General Election. With significant popular interest in all facets of the 2020 National Election and sweeping changes in Michigan Voting Law, including no reason absentee voting and same day registration, voter turnout is anticipated to exceed 2016 levels. One of our committee members sits on the Michigan Secretary of State's Collegiate Student Advisory Task Force and a new President and Provost at MSU have brought renewed interest in political and civic engagement.

According to our NSLVE data, in 2016 62.8% of all MSU students were registered to vote. Of registered students, 66.8% voted and in total, 41.9% of MSU students voted. To bolster these numbers and capitalize on the opportunities inherent in the landscape, MSU has joined in the B1G Ten Voting Challenge, the Michigan Collegiate Voting Challenge, hosts a Campus Election Education Project Fellow, and will renew its Voter Friendly Campus status.

GOALS:

Short Term Goals

MSUvote will work with campus and community partners to increase the 2020 overall MSU student voter registration rate to 55%.

MSUvote will work closely with landlords and property managers to provide voter registration and participation information to the 55% of all students who live off campus.

NSLVE data looks at 31 fields of study. In the 2016 election, 24 of those disciplinary areas experienced a drop in participation from the 2012 Election. In 2020, we will work to show a positive gain in at least 25 of the 31 fields of study.

MSUvote will work closely with Residence Education and Housing Services to provide registration and voting information in all residential neighborhoods by February 4, 2020 and September 8, 2020.

Long Term Goals

MSUvote will work with all MSU College Deans to create opportunities for civic discourse and engagement opportunities in each college.

MSUvote will work to create a day off for student participation on Election Day.

STRATEGY:

The planned activities for 2020 include the following:

- Student Voter Registration at New and Transfer Student Orientations
- Election Day as a campus holiday declaration from our President and Student Government
- College Deans Communication Campaign addressing how voting impacts the disciplines
- Voter Registration Drives in Residence Halls year around.
- Class announcements re: the new online voter registration option and QR code link
- Year 2 of the student voter education field study with first-year writing courses
- AbsenTea Voter Education, Registration, and Absentee Application Drive Events (Kick-off event and small student organization spin-off events)

REPORTING:

MSUvote and partner efforts, student voter registration, and turn-out will be reported in the biennial MSU Community Engaged Learning Index. The data for this campus report is collected annually and reported biennially. This report is shared with campus and community.

EVALUATION:

MSU student voting efforts will be evaluated through the analyzation of the following:

- NSLVE data

- City and County Clerk Analysis
- Data from the continuation of field experience with first year writing courses

DRAFT ONLY