



UCHIVOTES 2020

Our ambition is for UChicago to be the #1 college campus in the country for both voter registration and turnout rates. We will accomplish this by having a sustained, organized effort through the primary process that will span into the General Election. This effort will require clear, coordinated 2019-2020 plans from both IOP staff and IOP students, who are now formally organized as UChiVotes with two elected co-chairs (Juliana Rossi and Josh McKie) and under the umbrella of the IOP's Civic Engagement program (Purvi Patel & Ashlee Johnson).

Our shared goal is to increase student registration to 80% and turnout rate to 65% for 2020 Primary Elections during this school year and the 2020 General Election next fall, according to the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) compiled by the Institute for Democracy in Higher Ed.

Our organizing context will adjust due to the restrictions and changes related to COVID-19.

On the IOP staff side, we envision a three-track UChiVotes plan:

- 1) **Provide staff support to UChiVotes student leaders:** We'll be working this summer and fall with UChiVotes to flesh out their quarter-by-quarter plans for Summer 2020 and Fall 20. This will include efforts such as:
 - Recruiting core UChiVotes members & through implementing an application for Core Lead members
 - Outreach/partnerships with other campus entities (Registered student organizations, Greek life, athletics, etc)
 - Social media campaign and targeted digital communications to emphasize mail v
 - Identifying additional web-based opportunities to promote TurboVote
 - Early voting site support to drive turnout efforts
- 2) **Cultivate other university administrative partners for UChiVotes:** Identify, educate, and enlist other influential offices on campus that could support voter awareness & registration efforts
 - Disseminate NSLVE report on UChicago's 2018 midterm numbers to partners involved & convene discussion of what worked/what we could do differently for 2020 (depending on results, consider broader dissemination/media)
 - Meet individually with teams from Campus & Student Life, Office of Civic Engagement, dining, athletics, libraries, and each of the graduate/professional schools to identify how they can engage their respective populations and partner with UChivotes
 - Create a regular touchpoint and connection to the administrative coalition partners
 - Identify orientation touch points with as many administrative partners as possible. We will do this through participating in the Ask Every Student Commitment program.
- 3) **Weave a focus on 2020 & voter engagement into IOP programming in Fall 2020:** This will include:
 - **Speaker Series events:** featuring 2020 candidates or panels focused on democracy/election related issues
 - **Fellows:** Fellows in the fall will spotlight issues and demographics related to the 2020 race (could consider enlisting all relevant Fellows as informal advisors to UChiVotes)
 - **Communications:** use IOP newsletter, web, and social channels to amplify student UChiVotes communications efforts. Seek more earned media coverage of student efforts within national, local, and campus publications.

The UChivotes student coalition is an essential part of achieving the voter registration and turnout goals. For the student effort the goals/tactics are as follows:

- 1) Build a strong grassroots student engagement infrastructure by ensuring every student has at least 2 in person engagements with a voting ambassador**
 - a. Use the digital organizing model to create outreach to key constituents. Students will encourage members of campus to participate in the pledge to vote program, and sign up for turbovote
 - b. Create a partnership model with successful and active registered student orgs which will allow RSO's to serve as a conduit to funnel people into UChivotes
 - c. Identify partnership opportunities with fraternities and sororities
 - d. Identify partnership opportunities with Athletics

- 2) Create a robust digital communications infrastructure to build a relationship with every student after registration to encourage turnout**
 - a. Engage students throughout the primary and election cycle via text messaging (Ref. Andrew Goodman Foundation Resource)
 - b. Social Media Strategy regular activity on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
 - c. Email Communications through MailChimp

- 3) Leverage Statewide affinity: Create accountability groups for each state in which students from the regions are encouraged to and informed on how to engage**
 - a. Create state captains that serve as conveners, and create state specific programming/messaging to encourage students to vote in their respective home states and inform that group of voters
 - b. Create state specific digital hubs (i.e. facebook groups, group chats etc) to mobilize turnout and inform voters about state specific voter access issues and ballot initiatives

- 4) Maintain a Voting Ambassador Program which will serve as a peer leadership program for students to encourage their peers to make voting engagement commitments and turnout plans**
 - a. Recruit 200 new voting ambassadors through creating an interactive, effective, and inspirational training
 - b. Retain 50 voting ambassadors to stay engaged throughout the '19-'21 years by:
 - i. Implement greater student accountability by creating a voter ambassador lead position that will serve as a peer coach/mentor to voting ambassadors. This will take place through weekly check ins, and voter ambassador programming
 - ii. Identify opportunities and serve as a referral for students to be engaged in voter registration off campus with Chicago Votes, and the League of Women Voters
 - iii. Provide professional development opportunities for voting ambassadors to continue honing their voter mobilization skills

Tools Available

TurboVote:

When you create an account, TurboVote keeps track of your elections, local and national. And if you need to get registered, update your voter registration, or request an absentee ballot, TurboVote will get you all the forms and information you need, when you need them.

The benefits of using TurboVote include:

- Verification of voter registration status
- Updated information on voter registration requirements, including absentee voting, for all 50 states
- Can mail paper copies of your completed forms, with stamped, addressed envelopes for their local election officials
- Text and email reminders about registration deadlines, upcoming elections, and more.

Because potential student voters at the University of Chicago represent all 50 states, and may plan to vote absentee in any one of those states, we recommend using TurboVote to ensure they get access to accurate voter registration information.

BallotReady

BallotReady aggregates content from candidates' websites, social media, press, endorsers and board of elections for comprehensive, nonpartisan information about the candidates and referendums on your ballot. BallotReady links everything back to its original source so voters can verify any piece of information, and makes every effort to confirm details with the candidates themselves, giving them the opportunity to share even more information.

Election Protection Hotline

1-886-687-8683. A dial in service available for anyone to help in situations in which one's right to vote is being impeded. Immediate access to professional help.

AGF Text Platform

The Andrew Goodman Foundation has provided a text marketing platform to the team. We can use this platform to communicate with those who have consented about upcoming election information. The average open rate for marketing sent via text is about [98%](#) compared to 24.79% for emails. Considering especially the percentage of college aged students that have smartphone which they use throughout the day this can be a powerful tool to communicate with different segments of the student body about when, how, and why to engage.

MailChimp

Email marketing presents another opportunity to engage with the student body. The team will utilize email in an ongoing way to support voter engagement.

All in Campus Voting Challenge

