



October 2021

# Student Voting Rates for The University of Tennessee-Knoxville

2020 NSLVE Campus Report



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INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY  
& HIGHER EDUCATION

**October 2021**

**Dear Colleagues:**

We are pleased to send this tailored report containing your students' voting rates for 2020. This report contains three years of relevant topline data: 2016, 2018, and 2020. As always, we disaggregate the data so you can better identify and address gaps in participation.

College and university students participated in record-breaking numbers in the 2020 election. In 2016, the Average Institutional Voting Rate was 53%. This year, it jumped to 66%. We encourage you to review Democracy Counts 2020, our most recent national report.

As in past years, we urge you to share this report widely and strategically, particularly with faculty who, in 2020, were often the most consistent communicators with students about ever-changing voting conditions and deadlines. We also urge you to review our recommendations for engaging elections to cultivate a robust and healthy campus climate for political engagement, discourse, equity, and participation: Election Imperatives (2019) and the more recent Election Imperatives: A Time of Physical Distancing and Social Action. Since "pervasive political discussions" and attentiveness to the campus culture around speech and academic freedom are among our top recommendations, we direct you to our discussion guides on talking about your NSLVE report, on free speech and inclusion, and on hot topics, our Making Sense of ... guides.

Finally, we always encourage you to work with us. Help us help you get better data by reaching out. Email [IDHE@Tufts.edu](mailto:IDHE@Tufts.edu) for more information. And as always, watch your inbox for our periodic newsletter, IDHE Update, for announcements about upcoming releases and new resources.

Congratulations on engaging your students in the 2020 election. Remember, student political learning is a year-round objective. Elections may be episodic, but student political engagement should not be.

All the Best,  
IDHE Team



**(Top Row from left) Duy Trinh, Program Administrator; Adam Gismondi, Director of Impact; Dave Brinker, Senior Researcher;**  
**(Bottom Row from left) Nancy Thomas, Director; Norma López, Postdoctoral Scholar; Prabhat Gautam, Data Manager.**

We also want to acknowledge and thank **Syed Golam Mohaimen, M.S. student in Data Science at Tufts University** for his contributions toward the creation of these reports.

# In This Report

This report presents data on student voter participation rates for your campus. The topline counts on page 5 tells you how many students voted, but we encourage you to look carefully at the data on subsequent pages to learn who voted. Data are presented in the form of vessel charts, overlapping donut charts, and tables.



	2014			2018			2014-2018
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Change (p.p.)
Asian	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
American Indian/ Alaska Native	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Black	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

## Tables

The tables show, on the left-side columns, the numbers of students and the rates from 2016, 2018, and 2020. On the left-side, percentage point (p.p.) changes between 2016 and 2020. A red down arrow indicates a decrease, a green up arrow indicates an increase, and a yellow arrow pointing to the right indicates no change. "-" in these tables indicates that the data is unavailable/missing, or is available for 10 or less students.



# Voting, Registration and Yield Rates

**YOUR INSTITUTION**

66.0%

2020 Voting Rate

+20.8

Change From 2016

**ALL INSTITUTIONS**

66%

2020 Voting Rate

**REGISTRATION RATE**

Year	Rate
2016	74.4%
2018	76.5%
2020	86.3%

The **Registration Rate** is the percent of your voting-eligible students who registered to vote.

**VOTING RATE OF REGISTERED STUDENTS**

Year	Rate
2016	60.7%
2018	45.3%
2020	76.5%

The **Voting Rate of Registered Students** is the percent of registered students who voted on Election Day. We often refer to this as the “yield” rate.

**VOTING RATE**

Year	Rate
2016	45.2%
2018	34.7%
2020	66.0%

The **Voting Rate** is the percentage of eligible students who voted on Election Day. The voting rate is also the product of the registration and yield rates.

# Looking Closer

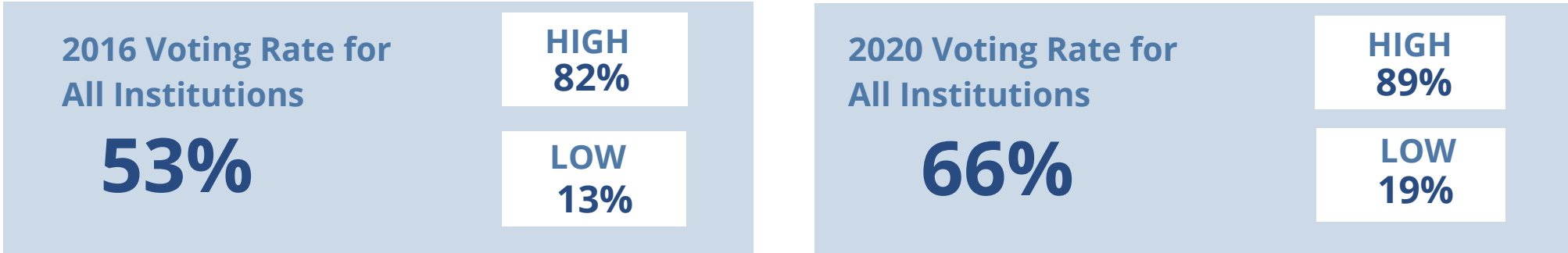
## Voting and Registration Rates

	2016	2018	2020	2016-2020 Change (p.p.)
Total Student Enrollment	27,685	28,737	31,157	↑ 3,473
(Age under 18/Unknown)	–	–	–	–
(IPEDS estimated non-resident aliens)	1,252	1,151	963	↓ -290
(FERPA records blocked)	24	12	16	↓ -8
(Non-Degree Seeking Students)	92	264	321	↑ 229
Total eligible voters	26,316	27,310	29,853	↑ 3,537
Number of students who registered	19,582	20,885	25,757	↑ 6,175
Number of students who voted	11,893	9,466	19,709	↑ 7,816
Registration Rate %	74	76	86	↑ 12
Voting Rate of Registered Students %	61	45	77	↑ 16
Voting Rate %	45	35	66	↑ 21

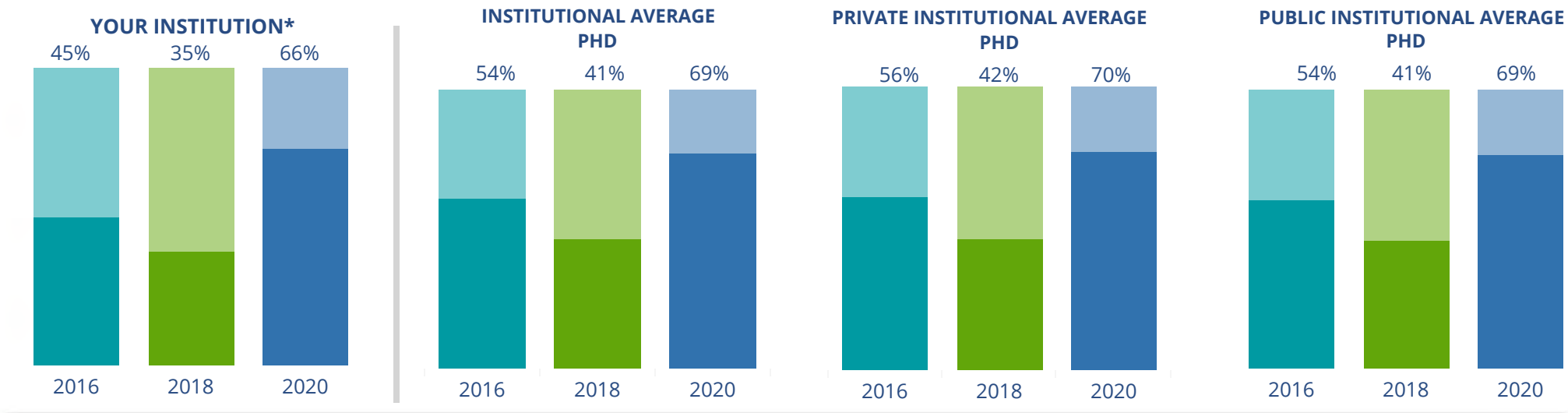
**This page provides the numbers we used to calculate your voting, registration, and yield rates.** The sub-categories under total student enrollment are the adjustments that we make to account for students who are ineligible to vote due to age or citizenship status. We also exclude, when correctly flagged, students who are not pursuing degrees.

We use IPEDS-derived estimates of NRAs when institutions do not submit non-resident alien status data to NSC, or we cannot verify the accuracy of the reported counts. This estimate is given by "IPEDS estimated non-resident aliens" on this page. If you believe the number of international students reported on this report is incorrect, you can manually adjust your institution's voting rates by using our recalculation tool. <https://id-he.tufts.edu/nsive/nsive-recalculation-tool>.

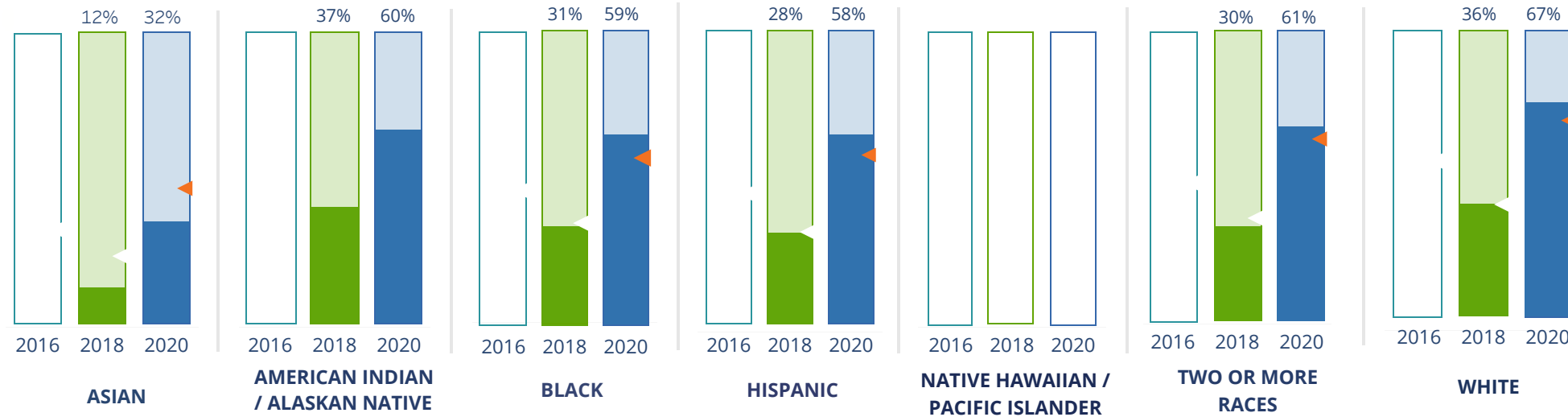
# By Institution Types



These are estimated voting rates of your institution compared to the average voting rates of similar institutions in NSLVE. \*"Your Institution" chart is presented at a different scale.



## By Race / Ethnicity



**These are estimated voting rates for race / ethnicity groups.** These classifications are provided by campuses and are obtained following race reporting procedures\* defined by the National Center for Education Statistics of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). Please see our FAQ for more detail on why we cannot report national benchmark for some of the demographic groups:

<https://tufts.app.box.com/v/idhe-nsve-report-faq>

If you notice unavailable/missing data in this page, it could mean any of the following for your institution: (i) does not report this data; (ii) did not provide this data in past years; (iii) does not separately submit data for one or more of the demographic groups, or (iv) the data is reported for 10 or fewer students.

\* <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data/race-ethnicity-collecting-data-for-reporting-purposes>



# Looking Closer

## By Race/Ethnicity

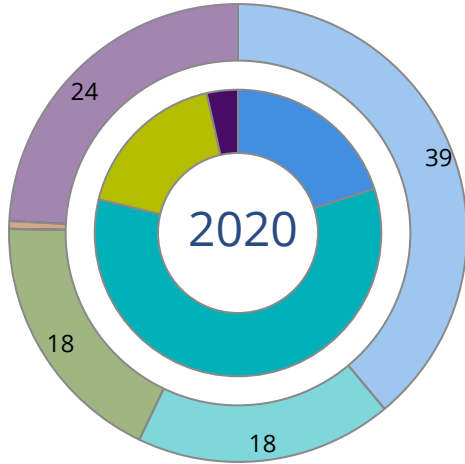
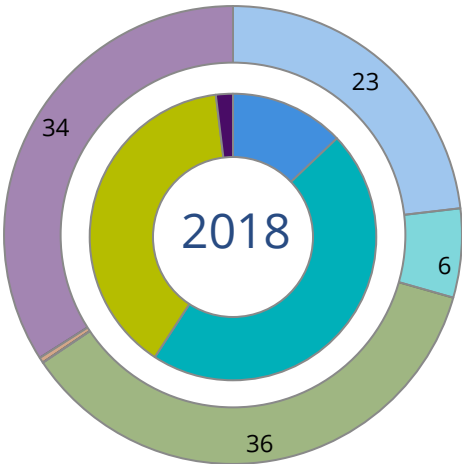
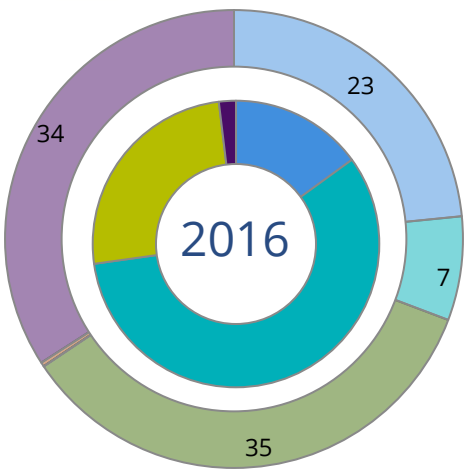
This page provides the numbers we used to calculate race / ethnicity group voting rates. We include the counts of students and the change in rates between the two most recent comparable election years. If you notice unavailable/missing data in this page, it could mean any of the following for your institution: (i) does not report this data; (ii) did not provide this data in past years; (iii) does not separately submit data for one or more of the demographic groups, or (iv) the data is reported for 10 or fewer students.

	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020 Change (p.p)
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	
Asian	-	-	-	1,761	203	12	1,705	546	32	-
American Indian/ Alaska Native	-	-	-	63	23	37	53	32	60	-
Black	-	-	-	1,721	529	31	1,765	1,037	59	-
Hispanic	-	-	-	1,271	359	28	1,558	908	58	-
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	-	-	-	30	-	-	18	-	-	-
2 or More Races	-	-	-	897	267	30	1,184	724	61	-
White	-	-	-	21,902	7,801	36	23,943	16,120	67	-
Race Unknown	27,562	11,893	43	803	278	35	578	333	58	↑ 14



# By Voting Method

Not-In-Person Early Vote In-Person Other Provisional Unknown



	2016		2018		2020		2016-2020	
	Voted	Rate	Voted	Rate	Voted	Rate	Change (p.p.)	
Early Vote	6,869	58	4,383	46	11,590	59	1	↑
In-Person on Election Day	3,003	25	3,678	39	3,486	18	-8	↓
Not-In-Person	1,784	15	1,217	13	3,933	20	5	↑
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Provisional	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Voting Method Unknown	237	2	188	2	692	4	2	↑

These are estimated rates for vote method utilization, the number of students utilizing each method, and the percent of students utilizing each method. Not all U.S. states provide information on vote method; voting method for voter files from these states are classified "Voting Method Unknown." For a list of these states, see our FAQ. <https://idhe.tufts.edu/nsive/nsive-faq#CampusReports>

## By Age Group

	2016	2018	2020
18-21	41%	28%	65%
22-24	43%	36%	61%
25-29	45%	41%	58%
30-39	54%	51%	60%
40-49	68%	62%	78%
50+	73%	78%	80%

**Voting is habit-forming and young voters will usually continue as voters in subsequent elections.** Also, young voters are more likely to be contacted by campaigns and are visible, and therefore significant, to elected officials. While in the past, we have seen voting rates increase across age groups, in recent cycles, the most significant increases have been among first-time and the youngest voters. Some colleges serve primarily young students, traditionally viewed as students in the 18-21 or 22-24 categories here. Others have much higher numbers of enrolled older undergraduate or graduate students.

# Looking Closer

## By Age Group

Here, we provide the numbers of students in each age category and the voting rates for each group. These are based on the student's age on the day of the election, as calculated by the National Student Clearinghouse using data from student enrollment records.

	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020	
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Change (p.p)	
18-21	16,805	6,818	41	17,854	5,007	28	19,816	12,976	65	↑	25
22-24	5,331	2,284	43	5,383	1,960	36	5,550	3,388	61	↑	18
25-29	2,908	1,303	45	2,806	1,162	41	2,893	1,665	58	↑	13
30-39	1,718	929	54	1,655	837	51	1,701	1,016	60	↑	6
40-49	541	369	68	529	328	62	569	443	78	↑	10
50+	259	190	73	221	172	78	275	221	80	↑	7

# Looking Closer

## By Sex

	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Change (p.p)
Female	-	-	-	14,544	5,222	36	16,289	11,164	69	-
Male	-	-	-	13,904	4,244	31	14,450	8,503	59	-

**These are estimated voting rates for sex groups and the numbers we used to calculate their voting rates.** These classifications are provided by campuses and are obtained following the reporting procedures defined by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). Presently, NCES requires institutions to report students as “Male” or “Female” only.\*

If you notice missing data in this page, it could mean any of the following for your institution: (i) does not report this data; (ii) did not provide this data in past years; (iii) does not separately submit data for one or more of the demographic groups, or (iv) the data is reported for 10 or fewer students.

\*<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/survey-materials/faq?faqid=11>

# Looking Closer

## By Education Level / Undergraduate Class Year

	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020	
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Change (p.p)	
EDUCATION LEVEL											
Undergraduate	21,797	9,064	42	22,661	6,847	30	24,686	15,986	65	↑ 23	
Graduate	5,746	2,821	49	5,787	2,619	45	6,051	3,681	61	↑ 12	
Class Unknown	19	-	-	-	-	-	67	42	63	-	
CLASS YEAR											
First Year	5,770	35	2,032	6,068	22	1,318	6,572	62	4,093	↑ 27	
Second Year	4,903	40	1,947	5,060	26	1,317	5,497	65	3,546	↑ 25	
Upper Level	10,989	46	5,025	11,414	36	4,154	12,281	66	8,157	↑ 21	
ENROLLMENT STATUS											
Full-time	-	-	-	25,880	8,172	32	27,366	17,468	64	-	
Part-time	-	-	-	2,568	1,294	50	3,438	2,241	65	-	

These are estimated voting rates by Education Level (undergraduate/graduate), Class Year, and Enrollment Status (full-time/part-time), and the numbers we used to calculate these rates.

If you notice missing data in this page, it could mean any of the following for your institution: (i) does not report this data; (ii) did not provide this data in past years; (iii) does not separately submit data for one or more of the demographic groups, or (iv) the data is reported for 10 or fewer students.

## By Field of Study

FIELDS	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020 RateChange (p.p)
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	
Architecture	301	121	40	488	125	26	592	406	69	↑ 28
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, and Gender Studies	–	–	–	–	–	–	18	–	–	–
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	1,207	493	41	1,384	455	33	1,920	1,210	63	↑ 22
Business, Management, and Marketing	5,471	2,078	38	5,860	1,560	27	6,716	4,111	61	↑ 23
Communication and Journalism	1,403	613	44	1,381	449	33	1,381	933	68	↑ 24
Computer and Information Sciences	465	186	40	483	167	35	603	378	63	↑ 23
Education	613	335	55	540	271	50	507	369	73	↑ 18

**These are estimated voting rates by field of study, and the numbers we used to calculate the field of study rates.** For an explanation of CIP codes, please see our FAQ.\* There are roughly 8,000 fields of study among U.S. colleges and universities, so we provide rates for condensed categories.

\*<https://tufts.app.box.com/v/idhe-nslve-report-faq>

## By Field of Study

FIELDS	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020 Change (p.p)
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	
Engineering and Engineering Technologies	3,920	1,568	40	3,933	1,236	31	3,899	2,326	60	↑ 20
English Language and Literature	437	228	52	424	207	49	420	297	71	↑ 19
Family and Consumer/Human Sciences	430	199	46	405	118	29	428	294	69	↑ 22
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Lingui..	238	115	48	213	84	39	183	128	70	↑ 22
Health Professions	1,459	742	51	1,523	543	36	1,704	1,184	69	↑ 19
History	285	162	57	270	151	56	281	196	70	↑ 13
Legal Professions and Studies	333	189	57	350	165	47	363	265	73	↑ 16
Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Humanities	1,119	429	38	1,124	297	26	1,399	799	57	↑ 19
Mathematics and Statistics	326	136	42	343	126	37	364	217	60	↑ 18
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	1,319	531	40	1,449	433	30	1,076	706	66	↑ 25
Natural Resources and Conservation	311	154	50	342	143	42	396	281	71	↑ 21
Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Fitness Stu..	1,573	622	40	1,531	358	23	1,512	950	63	↑ 23
Philosophy and Religious Studies	96	47	49	108	53	49	96	66	69	↑ 20



## By Field of Study

FIELDS	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020 Change (p.p)
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	
Physical Sciences	777	311	40	784	267	34	750	423	56	↑ 16
Psychology	1,114	474	43	1,228	435	35	1,479	963	65	↑ 23
Public Administration and Social Service Professions	773	453	59	694	376	54	862	652	76	↑ 17
Social Sciences	1,404	713	51	1,435	587	41	1,615	1,058	66	↑ 15
Visual and Performing Arts	781	350	45	672	281	42	691	478	69	↑ 24
Unknown	12	-	-	-	-	-	68	42	62	-

# About This Report

## Thank you for participating in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement.

Since NSLVE's launch in 2013, nearly 1,200 colleges and universities have signed up to receive their voting rates for the 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 federal elections.

Along with others, your institution's participation in this study has allowed us to build a robust database of over 50 million college student records, about 10 million for each election year, that serve as a foundation for innovative research on college student political learning and engagement in democracy.

NSLVE is a signature initiative of the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education (IDHE) at Tufts University's Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life. The mission of IDHE is to shift college and university priorities and culture to advance political learning, agency, and equity. We achieve our mission through research, resource development, technical assistance, and advocacy.

### About the Data

The voter registration and voting rates in this report reflect the percentage of your institution's students who were eligible to vote and who actually voted in the 2016, 2018, and 2020 elections.

These results are based on enrollment records your institution submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) and publicly available voting files collected by L2 Political.

Enrollment lists are adjusted by deducting students under age 18 (at the time of the election), people identified as non-degree seeking and those identified by campuses as "nonresident aliens" (NRAs) (the federal government's category for mostly international students). Unfortunately, not all campuses report NRAs to NSC. For those campuses, we use IPEDS to calculate the number of NRA students on each campus and adjust NSC enrollment numbers to estimate the number of students to remove. We also quality check NRA removals by verifying that there is little to no discrepancy between the number of international students reported by the campus to IPEDS and to NSC. We cannot adjust subgroup analyses absent identification of NRAs verified by the process above. We welcome closer partnerships with individual colleges and universities to provide more accurate rates. For more on the data and the matching process, see our FAQ on Campus Reports.

The University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Thank you for the work you do to improve your students' political learning and engagement. We hope that you find your NSLVE report useful. For up-to-date news on NSLVE data, resources, and to sign up for our newsletter visit: <https://idhe.tufts.edu>.

References: IDHE encourages report recipients to share this report as broadly as possible, including posting it on the college or university's website. When doing so, please use the following citation: Institute for Democracy & Higher Education: National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement. (2021). 2016, 2018, and 2020 report for \_\_\_\_\_ [name of institution]. Medford, MA.



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