



October 2021

# Student Voting Rates for Virginia Commonwealth University

2020 NSLVE Campus Report

**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.



Vessel Chart

This chart shows rates out of 100%, with arrows to the right of each bar representing relevant national averages (medians), which you can find in IDHE's national report Democracy Counts 2020.

	2014			2018			2014-2018 Change (p.p.)
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	
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.



Overlapping Donut Chart

This chart is used to show the breakdown of vote method utilization (page 10), with the outer ring showing your campus method utilization and the inner ring showing the national breakdown. These are described in percentages.

# Voting, Registration and Yield Rates

YOUR INSTITUTION

75.2%

2020 Voting Rate

+13.0

Change From 2016

ALL INSTITUTIONS

66%

2020 Voting Rate

REGISTRATION RATE

Year	Registration Rate
2016	84.1%
2018	84.0%
2020	89.1%

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

VOTING RATE OF REGISTERED STUDENTS

Year	Voting Rate of Registered Students
2016	74.0%
2018	59.1%
2020	84.4%

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	Voting Rate
2016	62.2%
2018	49.7%
2020	75.2%

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	30,766	30,685	29,007	↓ -1,760
(Age under 18/Unknown)	–	20	–	–
(IPEDS estimated non-resident aliens)	1,591	1,258	981	↓ -610
(FERPA records blocked)	19	26	21	↑ 2
(Non-Degree Seeking Students)	2,107	2,050	1,438	↓ -669
Total eligible voters	27,048	27,331	26,566	↓ -482
Number of students who registered	22,755	22,961	23,678	↑ 923
Number of students who voted	16,832	13,572	19,975	↑ 3,143
Registration Rate %	84	84	89	↑ 5
Voting Rate of Registered Students %	74	59	84	↑ 10
Voting Rate %	62	50	75	↑ 13

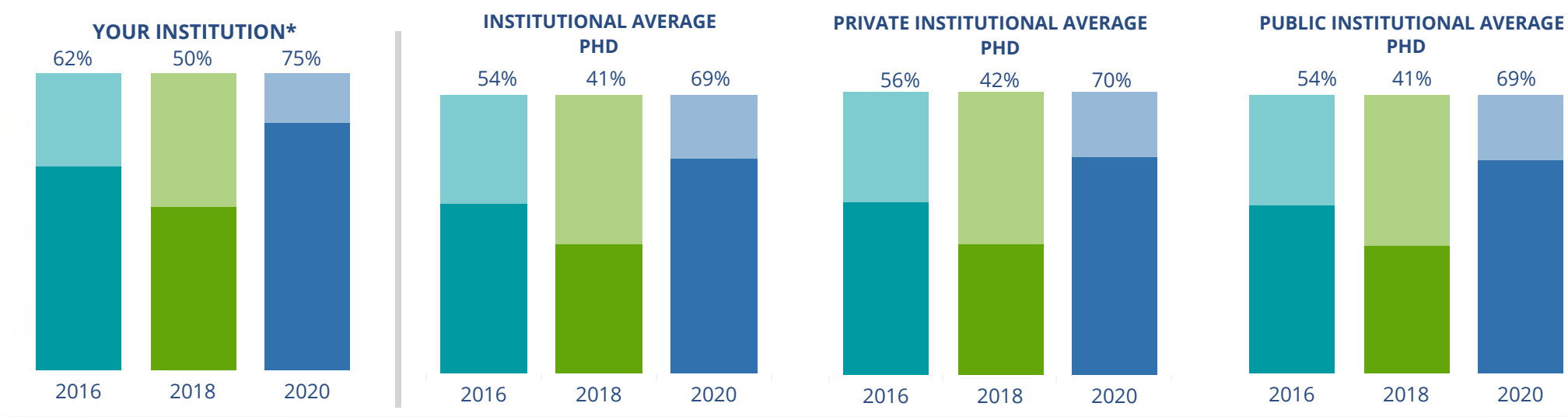
This page provides the numbers we used to calculate your voting, registration, and yield rates. The sub-categories under total student enrollment are the adjustments that we make to account for students who are ineligible to vote due to age or citizenship status. We also exclude, when correctly flagged, 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>.

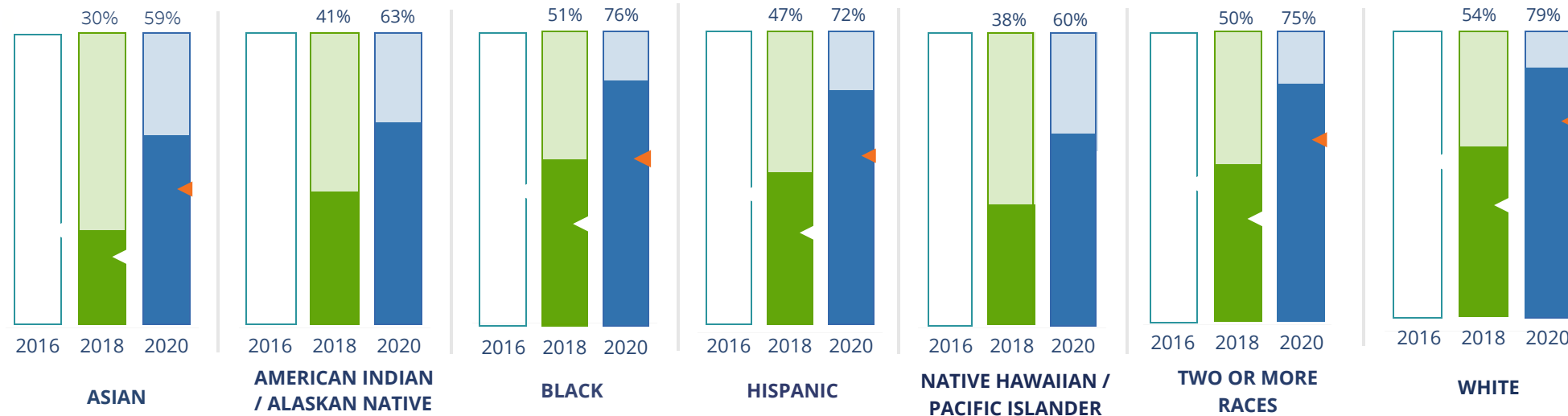
## By Institution Types



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-nslve-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

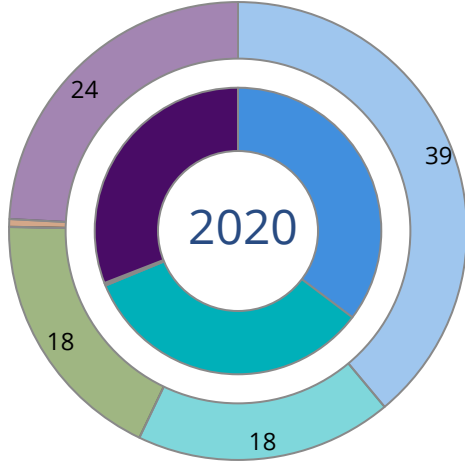
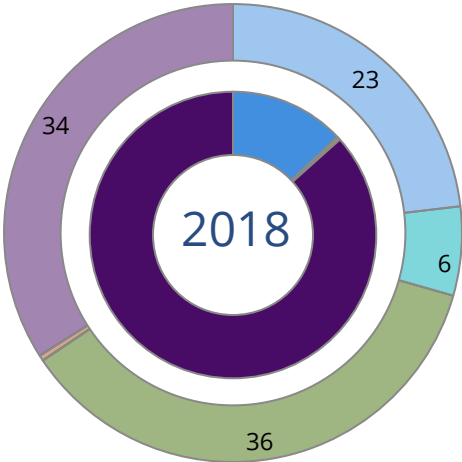
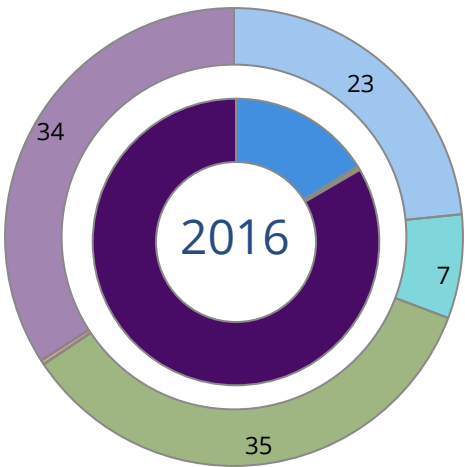
This page provides the numbers we used to calculate race / ethnicity group voting rates. We include the counts of students and the change in rates between the two most recent comparable election years. If you notice unavailable/missing data in this page, it could mean any of the following for your institution: (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	-	-	-	4,288	1,267	30	4,175	2,457	59	-
American Indian/ Alaska Native	-	-	-	58	24	41	35	22	63	-
Black	-	-	-	5,008	2,573	51	4,971	3,756	76	-
Hispanic	-	-	-	2,536	1,192	47	2,723	1,966	72	-
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	-	-	-	29	11	38	20	12	60	-
2 or More Races	-	-	-	1,721	855	50	1,824	1,361	75	-
White	-	-	-	13,457	7,234	54	12,298	9,668	79	-
Race Unknown	28,524	16,832	59	1,403	416	30	1,449	733	51	 -8



# 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	31	0	16	0	6,685	34	33	↑
In-Person on Election Day	43	0	40	0	49	0	0	↓
Not-In-Person	2,704	16	1,768	13	7,053	35	19	↑
Other	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	
Provisional	–	–	–	–	11	0	–	
Voting Method Unknown	14,050	83	11,747	87	6,177	31	-53	↓

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	57%	45%	73%
22-24	58%	46%	72%
25-29	61%	48%	71%
30-39	65%	59%	71%
40-49	77%	70%	77%
50+	84%	78%	86%

**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 Change (p.p)
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	
18-21	14,883	8,473	57	15,725	7,132	45	15,175	11,078	73	↑ 16
22-24	6,486	3,761	58	6,106	2,794	46	5,992	4,325	72	↑ 14
25-29	4,189	2,538	61	3,816	1,846	48	3,570	2,539	71	↑ 11
30-39	2,063	1,343	65	2,015	1,193	59	1,915	1,362	71	↑ 6
40-49	605	468	77	579	406	70	579	445	77	↓ 0
50+	298	249	84	259	201	78	264	226	86	↑ 2

# Looking Closer

## By Sex

	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Change (p.p)
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**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	22,231	12,812	58	22,300	10,251	46	21,125	15,244	72	↑ 15	
Graduate	6,291	4,020	64	6,198	3,319	54	6,360	4,721	74	↑ 10	
Class Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
CLASS YEAR											
First Year	4,033	51	2,054	4,284	41	1,746	3,533	67	2,374	↑ 16	
Second Year	4,894	54	2,662	4,855	44	2,130	4,584	72	3,289	↑ 17	
Upper Level	13,447	61	8,197	13,201	48	6,395	13,063	74	9,639	↑ 13	
ENROLLMENT STATUS											
Full-time	24,827	14,355	58	24,855	11,502	46	23,424	17,003	73	↑ 15	
Part-time	3,697	2,477	67	3,645	2,070	57	4,071	2,972	73	↑ 6	

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	
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, and Gender Studies	330	218	66	307	193	63	239	199	83	↑ 17
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	2,363	1,258	53	2,430	1,057	43	2,334	1,592	68	↑ 15
Business, Management, and Marketing	3,690	1,954	53	3,497	1,446	41	3,169	2,181	69	↑ 16
Communication and Journalism	1,015	692	68	898	502	56	793	637	80	↑ 12
Computer and Information Sciences	639	302	47	819	324	40	878	572	65	↑ 18
Education	1,883	1,208	64	2,056	1,040	51	2,252	1,737	77	↑ 13
Engineering and Engineering Technologies	1,561	773	50	1,573	596	38	1,468	973	66	↑ 17

**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	
English Language and Literature	441	323	73	404	254	63	399	300	75	↑ 2
Family and Consumer/Human Sciences	26	23	88	23	18	78	18	15	83	↓ -5
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Lingui..	113	77	68	96	51	53	69	59	86	↑ 17
Health Professions	4,293	2,681	62	4,325	2,000	46	4,254	3,201	75	↑ 13
History	277	207	75	244	166	68	235	192	82	↑ 7
Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Protec..	1,341	787	59	1,313	590	45	1,276	958	75	↑ 16
Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Humanities	1,291	670	52	1,388	604	44	911	616	68	↑ 16
Mathematics and Statistics	323	171	53	292	151	52	258	173	67	↑ 14
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	1,209	763	63	987	492	50	876	641	73	↑ 10
Natural Resources and Conservation	276	193	70	237	159	67	243	208	86	↑ 16
Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Fitness Stu..	64	37	58	81	18	22	81	57	70	↑ 13
Philosophy and Religious Studies	111	75	68	124	73	59	102	74	73	↑ 5
Physical Sciences	699	341	49	721	292	40	607	396	65	↑ 16
Psychology	1,621	1,005	62	1,678	858	51	1,804	1,364	76	↑ 14



# By Field of Study

FIELDS	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020 Change (p.p)
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	
Public Administration and Social Service Professions	896	688	77	805	539	67	1,009	822	81	↑ 5
Social Sciences	1,096	795	73	1,106	683	62	1,075	867	81	↑ 8
Visual and Performing Arts	2,943	1,581	54	3,096	1,466	47	3,134	2,132	68	↑ 14
Unknown	23	-	-	-	-	-	11	-	-	-

# 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.

Virginia Commonwealth University

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.



Barnum Hall  
163 Packard Ave.  
Medford, MA 02155

tischcollege@tufts.edu  
617.627.3453



Institute for Democracy & Higher Education:  
National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement  
Barnum Hall, Medford, MA 02155

Follow Us on Twitter: @TuftsIDHE  
NSLVE@tufts.edu  
617.627.0620