



October 2021

Student Voting Rates for Western Carolina University

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 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
	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.



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

72.0%

2020 Voting Rate

+15.3

Change From 2016

ALL INSTITUTIONS

66%

2020 Voting Rate

REGISTRATION RATE

Year	Rate
2016	80.9%
2018	81.2%
2020	91.2%

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

VOTING RATE OF REGISTERED STUDENTS

Year	Rate
2016	70.1%
2018	40.4%
2020	78.9%

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	56.7%
2018	32.8%
2020	72.0%

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

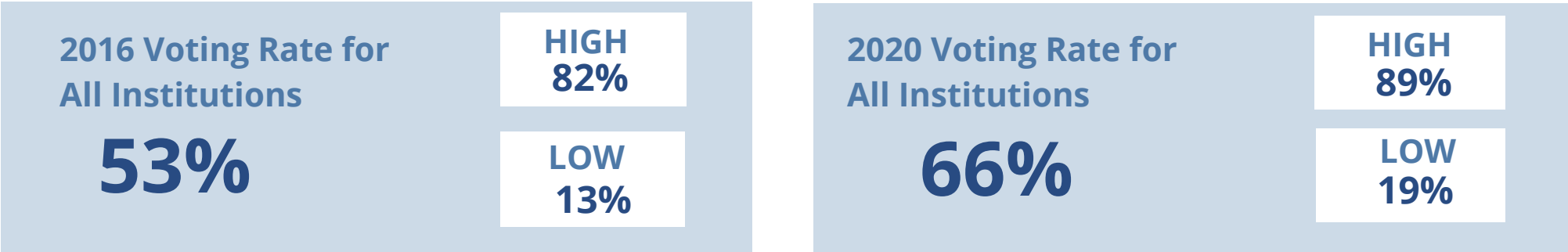
Voting and Registration Rates

	2016	2018	2020	2016-2020 Change (p.p.)
Total Student Enrollment	10,777	11,488	12,065	↑ 1,288
(Age under 18/Unknown)	–	–	–	–
(IPEDS estimated non-resident aliens)	179	184	203	↑ 24
(FERPA records blocked)	–	15	14	–
(Non-Degree Seeking Students)	236	216	165	↓ -71
Total eligible voters	10,357	11,073	11,683	↑ 1,327
Number of students who registered	8,375	8,994	10,659	↑ 2,284
Number of students who voted	5,872	3,635	8,411	↑ 2,539
Registration Rate %	81	81	91	↑ 10
Voting Rate of Registered Students %	70	40	79	↑ 9
Voting Rate %	57	33	72	↑ 15

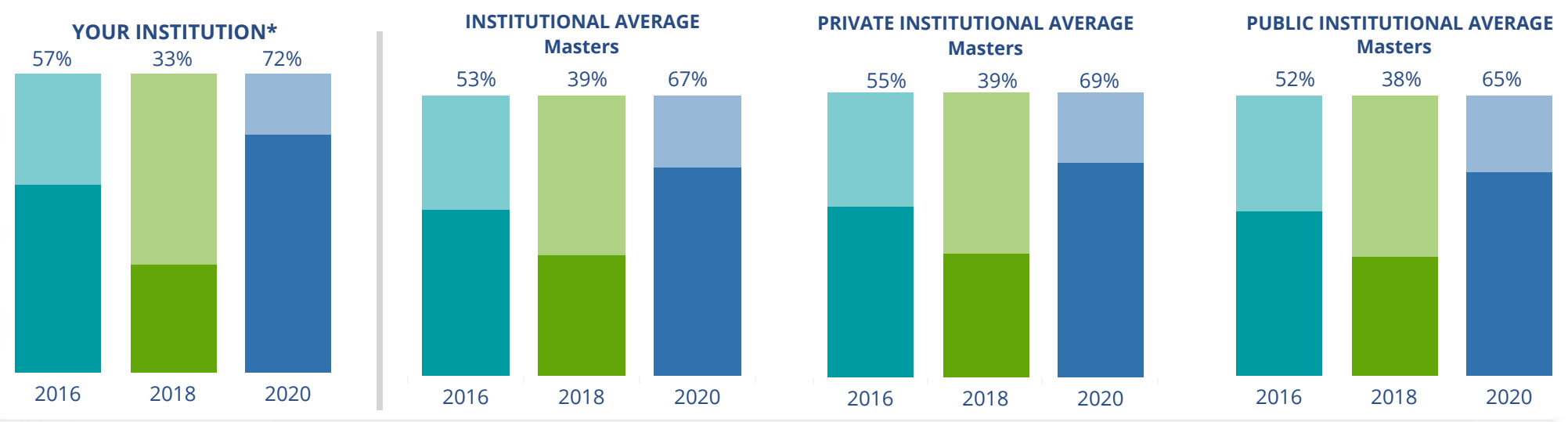
This page provides the numbers we used to calculate your voting, registration, and yield rates. The sub-categories under total student enrollment are the adjustments that we make to account for students who are ineligible to vote due to age or citizenship status. We also exclude, when correctly flagged,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

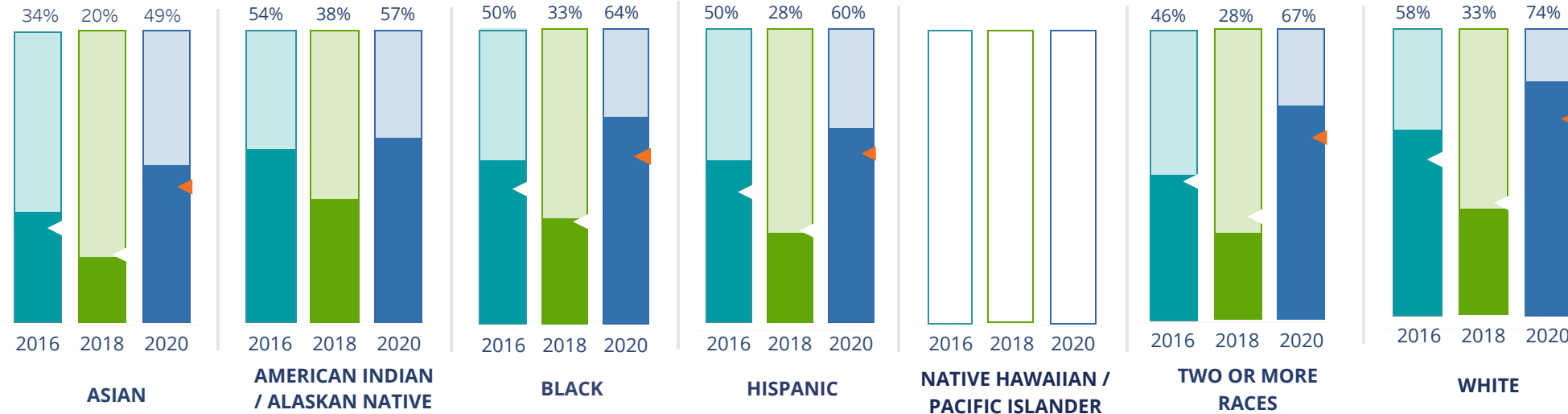
By Institution Types



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-nsive-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

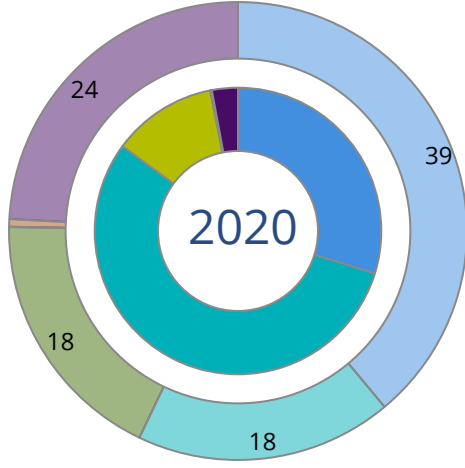
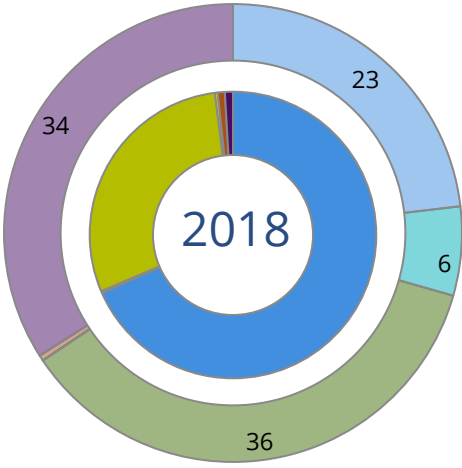
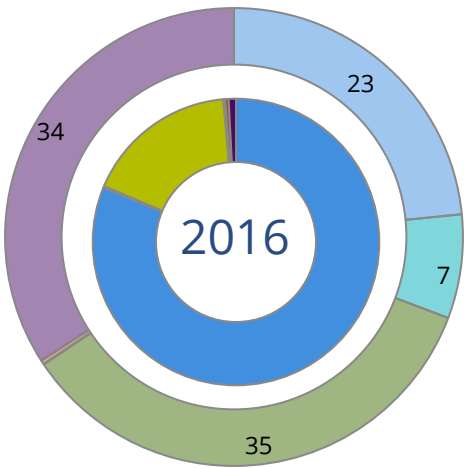
include the counts of students and the change in rates between the two most recent comparable election years.

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	143	49	34	138	28	20	166	81	49	↑ 15
American Indian/ Alaska Native	84	45	54	89	34	38	107	61	57	↑ 3
Black	712	358	50	693	225	32	698	444	64	↑ 13
Hispanic	661	330	50	797	219	27	943	566	60	↑ 10
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 or More Races	396	181	46	443	122	28	406	273	67	↑ 22
White	8,312	4,853	58	8,899	2,967	33	9,336	6,888	74	↑ 15
Race Unknown	209	50	24	186	39	21	219	92	42	↑ 18

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	12	0	-	-	4,648	55	55	↑
In-Person on Election Day	1,012	17	1,069	29	996	12	-5	↓
Not-In-Person	4,769	81	2,485	68	2,503	30	-51	↓
Other	14	0	12	0	-	-	-	
Provisional	23	0	28	1	12	0	0	↓
Voting Method Unknown	42	1	35	1	242	3	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	53%	24%	70%
22-24	48%	31%	68%
25-29	59%	41%	69%
30-39	67%	54%	75%
40-49	76%	61%	81%
50+	77%	67%	82%

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	6,045	3,194	53	6,681	1,618	24	6,829	4,761	70	↑ 17
22-24	1,708	828	48	1,760	553	31	1,857	1,260	68	↑ 19
25-29	939	552	59	976	404	41	1,011	695	69	↑ 10
30-39	1,078	719	67	1,049	566	54	1,246	930	75	↑ 8
40-49	529	400	76	578	355	61	684	556	81	↑ 6
50+	232	179	77	209	139	67	256	209	82	↑ 4

Looking Closer

By Sex

	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020	
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Change (p.p)	
Female	5,925	3,519	59	6,338	2,159	34	6,751	4,947	73	↑	14
Male	4,604	2,352	51	4,908	1,473	30	5,129	3,462	67	↑	16

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	8,972	4,818	54	9,678	2,784	29	10,188	7,108	70	↑	16
Graduate	1,555	1,052	68	1,570	849	54	1,695	1,303	77	↑	9
Class Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CLASS YEAR											
First Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Second Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Upper Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ENROLLMENT STATUS											
Full-time	8,509	4,541	53	9,226	2,652	29	9,513	6,662	70	↑	17
Part-time	2,022	1,331	66	2,027	983	48	2,370	1,749	74	↑	8

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	
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	462	252	55	453	117	26	404	277	69	↑ 14
Business, Management, and Marketing	1,957	1,056	54	2,100	688	33	2,256	1,571	70	↑ 16
Communication and Journalism	255	140	55	244	81	33	254	188	74	↑ 19
Computer and Information Sciences	133	67	50	143	27	19	166	95	57	↑ 7
Education	1,175	677	58	1,254	473	38	1,305	947	73	↑ 15
Engineering and Engineering Technologies	713	373	52	864	233	27	882	578	66	↑ 13
English Language and Literature	176	114	65	179	82	46	170	116	68	↑ 3


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	
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Lingui..	68	44	65	53	15	28	45	30	67	↑ 2
Health Professions	2,087	1,223	59	2,150	695	32	2,259	1,669	74	↑ 15
History	107	58	54	112	56	50	132	108	82	↑ 28
Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Protec..	551	332	60	495	158	32	541	391	72	↑ 12
Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Humanities	440	220	50	507	97	19	576	384	67	↑ 17
Mathematics and Statistics	60	29	48	80	25	31	71	44	62	↑ 14
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	24	15	63	42	11	26	39	28	72	↑ 9
Natural Resources and Conservation	146	70	48	174	55	32	217	158	73	↑ 25
Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Fitness Stu..	272	125	46	321	74	23	303	215	71	↑ 25
Philosophy and Religious Studies	31	16	52	32	11	34	25	14	56	↑ 4
Physical Sciences	166	78	47	167	40	24	160	108	68	↑ 21
Psychology	414	196	47	509	137	27	545	349	64	↑ 17
Public Administration and Social Service P..	471	307	65	502	256	51	645	491	76	↑ 11
Social Sciences	346	216	62	356	140	39	336	244	73	↑ 10

By Field of Study

FIELDS	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020	
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Change (p.p)	
Visual and Performing Arts	468	258	55	507	160	32	548	402	73		18
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-

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.

Western Carolina 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.



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