

REGISTERING STUDENTS TO VOTE

Nonpartisan voter registration drives led by students can be effective in registering large numbers of students to vote because they reach parts of the student population campaigns cannot. See www.nonprofitvote.org/documents/2016/10/seven-reasons-nonprofit-voter-registration.pdf

Voter Registration Education

The Higher Education Act requires most institutions of higher education to distribute voter registration forms to their students. Read this [2013 letter](#) from the Department of Education explaining this requirement and the option to distribute forms electronically. See <https://ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN1317.html>

As a student, you are uniquely positioned to work with administrators, local elections officials (LEOs), and Campus Vote Project (CVP) to raise awareness and institutionalize voter registration efforts on your campus. There are a variety of ways to do this.

Integrate voting information into your school website.

- Work with administrators to include links to [state](http://www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state/) (www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state/) or [federal](http://www.eac.gov/voters/national-mail-registration-form/) (www.eac.gov/voters/national-mail-registration-form/) registration forms on the home page of your college website.
- Most states now offer the ability to register to vote online (OVR), however you generally must have a driver's license or state ID number to use these online voter registration systems. Including information about OVR and paper registration forms for your state as well as the federal form for out-of-state students interested in registering and voting at their home address.
- Make available [CVP state student guides](http://campusvoteproject.org/studentguides) (campusvoteproject.org/studentguides) – these have deadlines, eligibility, answers to common questions and other state-specific registration information.

Create a webpage for civic engagement with election deadlines and ballot information.

- You can also work with administrators to provide information on frequently trafficked sites like the library homepage, course management pages such as Blackboard or Moodle, course registration pages, the bookstore page when students are purchasing textbooks, and school social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- For an example check out www.mdc.edu/vote, www.gvsu.edu/service/democratic-engagement-programs-187.htm, and <https://olce.uncg.edu/students/voting>

Partner with administrators in student or academic affairs to send campus-wide emails with information about voter registration drives and election laws in your state to make it easy for

students to access registration and voting information.

- Include links to voter registration forms for your [state \(www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state\)](http://www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state) and [CVP state student guides \(campusvoteproject.org/studentguides\)](http://campusvoteproject.org/studentguides).
- Attach social media graphics students can post and share with their network and multiply your reach. Contact CVP to ask what graphics they have available.
- For a simpler ask, go to your professors and ask them to share voting information with their classes via email or ask if they will allow you to speak to your peers before class about how to register and vote.

Organizing a Voter Registration Drive

Step 1: Research Requirements for Hosting a Drive in Your State

Fair Elections Center and Campus Vote Project provide guides on requirements for hosting a 3rd party voter registration drive. Visit, <http://campusvoteproject.org/voter-registration-drive-guides>, and reach out to CVP with questions beforehand. Only answer a question if you are complete sure of the answer, otherwise direct students to local election officials or get their contact information and follow-up with them.

Step 2: Find Support

To host a successful voter registration drive, gather support from school administrators, faculty, LEOs (www.fvap.gov/search-offices/), and student groups. Here are some places to start:

- Dean of Students
- Office of Civic Engagement
- Political science professors
- Student Government
- College Democrats, College Republicans, or other political student groups
- Partner with CVP and we can help you “make a plan”, find contacts, and send you registration materials.
- Be sure to recruit as many volunteers as possible throughout this step!

Step 3: Organize Your Event

- Reserve a space that has a lot of first-year student foot traffic, such as a university center, student union, or dining-area.
- If your state offers online voter registration, try to find a space with WiFi so you can set up computers, or tablets. This way you don’t have to handle paper forms!
- Gather all the paper [state \(www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state\)](http://www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state) and [federal \(www.eac.gov/national-mail-registration-form/\)](http://www.eac.gov/national-mail-registration-form/) forms you need.
- Make it fun! Bring stickers, candy, and food to draw crowds.

Note that you generally cannot exchange something of value for someone’s voter registration. This means if you are giving away food or items at your event make them available to folks who engage with you whether or not they register to vote. For more details contact Campus Vote Project.

Step 4: Advertise Your Event

- Make posters and flyers to hang around campus and to leave in residence halls and academic buildings.
- Announce your event on campus radio stations, television, newspapers, and social media.
- Partner with administrators and faculty to send emails detailing the location, time, and what information is needed to register.
- Ask faculty members to bring their classes to your voter registration drive or to tell their students to go, otherwise see if professors will all you to take five minutes of class time to register their students.

Step 5: Make a Plan to Return Forms

- If you collect paper forms determine where you need to send them and the deadlines for submitting them, always be sure to return forms as soon as possible after collecting them.

Step 6: Take Advantage of National Voter Registration Day

National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) is a nonpartisan national holiday started in 2012 and sees thousands of people register to vote every year. It takes place on the fourth Tuesday of September, and you can partner with [NVRD \(nationalvoterregistrationday.org\)](http://nationalvoterregistrationday.org) and join over 2,500 campuses and organizations in this yearly nationwide effort to register new voters.

Step 7: Share With Us

On the day of your voter registration drive, get excited, post on social media, and register new voters! Share photos with CVP at info@campusvoteproject.org or tag us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram and let us know how it goes.

Other Ways to Register Students to Vote

You may face some barriers to hosting your own voter registration drive such as the state having restrictive rules on 3rd party registration or having a lot of out-of-state students. Here are some others options for getting students registered to vote at your institution.

- Check to see if your state has online voter registration. If so, work with administrators, faculty, and social media to share links to online voter registration.
- Provide registration applications at new student orientations. For a long-term effect work with student government or administrators to integrate voter registration into all orientations on an annual basis.
- Leave voter registration cards in dining halls, academic buildings, mailboxes, residence halls, and classrooms with the permission of the campus.
- Work with residential life to create resident advisor programming.
 - They can make bulletin boards with voter registration applications.
 - Provide voter registration opportunities at residence meetings.
 - Canvass residence halls, if allowed, in the evenings to register new voters.