

# Resolution 46: Promoting Civic Engagement

**Abstract:** This Resolution supports the expansion of voting rights, civic engagement, and education initiatives on campus.

**Sponsored by:** Shelby Lynn Williams '25, Elana Woo '24, Lauren Sherman '24, Serena Wang '25, Camille Simmons '25, Rahul Verma '24, Josh Weiner '24, Alicia González '24

**Reviewed by:** Academic Policy 05/04/2023 (4-0-3)

**Type of Action:** Recommended

**Originally Presented:** 05/04/2023

**Current Status:**

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**Whereas,** Students on campus have expressed their difficulty with registering to vote, requesting their absentee ballots, and successfully participating in elections that they are eligible to vote in<sup>1</sup>

**Whereas,** Student Assembly has previously advocated for the creation of a civic holiday, as demonstrated in *Resolution #49: Cornell Civic Holiday*, which was adopted by the assembly during the 2021-2022 academic year.<sup>2</sup>

**Whereas,** recognizing the need to expand civic engagement infrastructure on campus Cornell Votes recently launched their Voting Ambassador Program, to inform students about how to register voters in a nonpartisan fashion.<sup>3</sup>

**Whereas,** According to a study from the Institute of Democracy & Higher Education, dated in October 2021, 47.4% of eligible Cornell students voted in 2016 whereas 66.1% of eligible Cornell students voted in 2020, while national averages on college campuses at the time were 53% and 66% respectively.<sup>4</sup>

**Whereas,** Student-led initiatives to register voters have led to an 18.7% increase in voter turnout on Cornell's campus.

**Whereas,** Cornell University must utilize every tool at its disposal to ensure that our students are good global citizens, which includes democratic participation.

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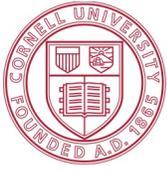
<sup>1</sup> <https://cornellsun.com/2022/11/06/guest-room-your-vote-matters/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://assembly.cornell.edu/resolution-actions/sa-r49-cornell-civic-holiday>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.instagram.com/p/Co7t2b7unEo/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/Co7t2b7unEo/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

<sup>4</sup> <https://allinchallenge.org/wp-content/uploads/Cornell-University-2020-NSLVE-Report.pdf>

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## Cornell University Student Assembly

26 **Be it therefore resolved,** Student Assembly supports the vital work of Cornell Votes and will  
27 continue to lend its influence and infrastructure to the promotion of civic engagement on  
28 campus.

29 **Be it further resolved,** Student Assembly will work in partnership with Residential Student  
30 Congress and Housing & Residential Life to ensure that students in Cornell residential facilities  
31 have easy access to information about voting, voter registration, and civic engagement.

32 **Be it finally resolved,** Student Assembly recommends the following proposals to reaffirm the  
33 university's commitment to civic engagement:

- 34 • Suggest that faculty members notify their students of approaching voter registration  
35 deadlines and provide links to registration through their canvas pages, in-class  
36 announcements, and through other forums
- 37 • Communicate with Residential Student Congress and Housing & Residential Life to  
38 recommend that Residence Advisors participate in the Voting Ambassador Program
- 39 • Continue utilizing all accessible forums of communication to convey election information  
40 to students and emphasize the importance of civic engagement on campus
- 41 • Consider the creation of a *Civic Fest* celebration in the fall semester of every even  
42 numbered year to raise awareness for the importance of civic engagement and democratic  
43 participation, uniting relevant organizations, individuals, and entities in the Cornell  
44 community.

45 **Respectfully Submitted,**

46 Shelby Lynn Williams '25

47 *College of Arts & Sciences Representative, Student Assembly*

48 *Director of Advocacy, Residential Student Congress*

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50 Elena Woo '24

51 *President, Cornell Votes*

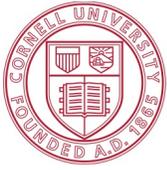
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53 Lauren Sherman '24

54 *Vice President of External Operations, Cornell Votes*

55

56 Serena Wang '25



Cornell University  
Student Assembly

57 Vice President of Internal Operations, *Cornell Votes*

58

59 Camille Simmons '25

60 Vice President of Finance, *Cornell Votes*

61

62 Rahul Verma

63 Community Engagement Department Chair, *Cornell Votes*

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65 Josh Weiner '24

66 Coalition Department Chair, *Cornell Votes*

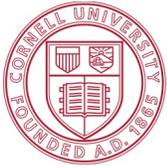
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68 Alicia González '24

69 Communications Department Chair, *Cornell Votes*



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# Cornell University Student Assembly

CAMPUS REPORT: Cornell University

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.

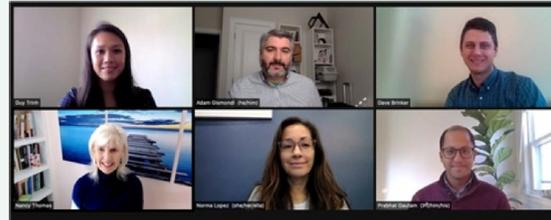
College and university students participated in record-breaking numbers in the 2020 election. In 2016, the Average Institutional Voting Rate was 53%. This year, it jumped to 66%. We encourage you to review Democracy Counts 2020, our most recent national report.

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.

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CAMPUS REPORT: Cornell University

## Voting, Registration and Yield Rates

### YOUR INSTITUTION

**66.1%**

2020 Voting Rate

**+18.7**

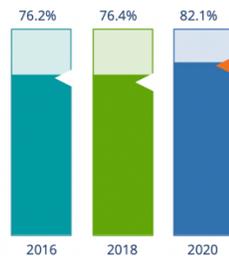
Change From 2016

### ALL INSTITUTIONS

**66%**

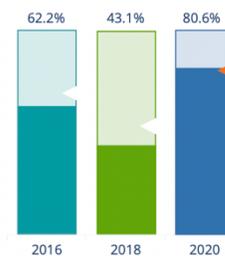
2020 Voting Rate

### REGISTRATION RATE



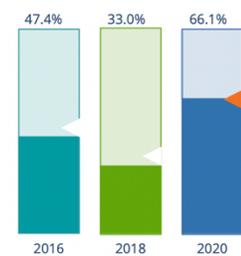
The **Registration Rate** is the percent of your voting-eligible students who registered to vote.

### VOTING RATE OF REGISTERED STUDENTS



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

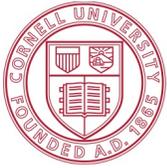


The **Voting Rate** is the percentage of eligible students who voted on Election Day. The voting rate is also the product of the registration and yield rates.

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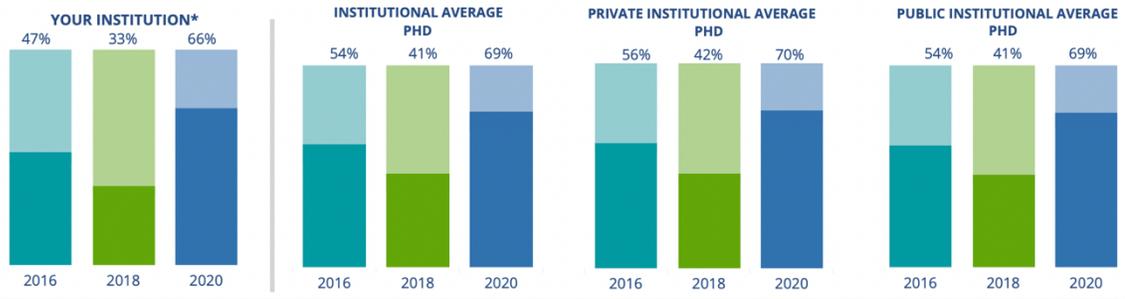
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## By Institution Types



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.



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