National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement

Winthrop University Results, 2016 Election
What is NSLVE?

• The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) is an ongoing project at Tufts University to determine college students’ voter participation nationwide.

• Over 1,000 institutions participate, representing about half of all college students.

• Winthrop has participated since 2012.

• NSLVE is grant-funded. There is no cost to institutions to participate.
How Does It Work?

• NSLVE researchers match student enrollment data (from Banner) with each state’s voting records. Matches are based upon common data elements such as name, social security number, etc.

• Institutions only learn WHETHER students voted, but not HOW they voted.

• Institutions only receive summary data to protect student privacy.

• NSLVE eliminates students who are ineligible to vote (i.e. < age 18, international students) from its calculations.
WU Student Voter Turn Out

- 58.1% of Winthrop students cast votes in the 2016 Presidential Election
  - WU Goal: 53.4% (to remain constant with 2012 turnout)
  - WU student voter turnout was up 4.8% from 2012
- 83.5% of Winthrop students were registered to vote
  - Up 1.6% from 2012
  - 69.6% voter turnout rate for registered students, up 4.4% from 2012
Voter Turn Out Comparisons

• National Comparisons:
  • 2016 Voting Rate for all NSLVE Institutions: 50.4%*
  • 2016 Voting Rate for Public Master’s Institutions: 49.8%*
  • US, all 18-24 year olds: 43%**
  • US, all ages: 61.4%**
  • South Carolina, all ages: 62%***

WINTHROP STUDENTS: 58.1%*

*Source: NSLVE
**Source: US Census Bureau
***Source: South Carolina Election Commission
Kudos!

• A large team of Winthrop faculty, staff, and students worked to get students to vote in 2016.
• This success is a tribute to their hard work and dedication.
Further Analysis: Age

- WU student voter turnout increased from 2012 across all age groups:
  - 18-21: 52.9%, Up 6.0%
  - 22-24: 56.6%, Up 5.9%
  - 25-29: 60.8%, Up 11.3%
  - 30-39: 68.8%, Up 4.1%
  - 40-49: 82.8%, Up 9.8%
  - 50+: 89.2%, Up 6.7%

This pattern of higher voter turnout among older voters is consistent with national trends.
Not surprisingly, WU upperclassmen and graduate students voted at higher rates than Freshmen and Sophomores. WU Freshmen had the lowest voting rate of any class year (48.5%).
Further Analysis: Race/Ethnicity

- WU student voter turn out increased in almost all racial/ethnic groups:
  - Asian: 44.6%, Up 21.5%
  - Black: 57.6%, Down 6.4%
  - Hispanic: 50.7%, Up 10.6%
  - White: 59.6%, Up 11.1%
  - Two or more races: 47.0%, Up 13.7%

The decline is Black student voter turnout is consistent with national trends. In 2012, Black students at Winthrop had a voter turn out of 64%, well above the national average.
FURTHER ANALYSIS: Fields of Study

Highest Voter Turn Out, 2016
• Undeclared (75.7%)
• History (72.1%)
• Liberal Arts (64.6%)
• Social Service Professions (63.6%)
(Names of majors are as listed by NSLVE using CIP codes)

Greatest Increases over 2012
• History: Up 16.9%
• Visual and Performing Arts: Up 13.6%
• English Language & Literature: Up 11.4%
Further Analysis: Fields of Study (con’t.)

Lowest Voter Turn Out (2016)

• Natural Resources & Conservation: 42.1%
• Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Fitness Studies: 45.0%
• Biological and Biomedical Sciences: 49.8%

(Names of majors are as listed by NSLVE using CIP codes)

Smallest Increases over 2012

• Philosophy & Religious Studies: Down 8.8%
• Natural Resources & Conservation: Down 3.4%
• Computer & Information Sciences: Up 0.6%
Next Steps

• To use NSLVE results
  • To set goals for 2018 and 2020;
  • To design targeted voter registration and turn out messages;

• To continue participation in Voter Friendly Campus Initiative and All In Campus Democracy Challenge.
Questions?

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