



2016-18 Voter Friendly Campus Designation End-Of-Year Report

Reporting on Results from January – December 2016

BINGHAMTON | CENTER FOR
UNIVERSITY | CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



vote everywhere

THE ANDREW GOODMAN FOUNDATION



2016-18 Voter Friendly Campus Designation End-Of-Year Report

Overview

The Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) used the “four buckets of work” to organize a multifaceted political engagement effort in the Spring and Fall semesters of 2016, leading up to the Primary and General Elections.

The CCE had record-breaking success in voter registration efforts and registered nearly 2,500 new students to vote between January and December of 2016. During the fall semester alone, the CCE registered 869 students with an on-campus address, 415 students with an off-campus address and assisted 126 students with filling out a change of address form. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of these newly registered students opted to register with their local address in Broome County, with only 56 students registering with an address outside of Broome County.

The CCE also prioritized assisting students with the absentee ballot application process. CCE assisted 347 students with filling out an absentee ballot application for both the Primary and General Election and provided information about the absentee ballot voting process.

The CCE provided students with non-partisan voting information through several different channels. CCE worked in collaboration with University Communications and Marketing, the Student Association, the Off Campus College and Off Campus Apartment Management to send important Election Day email reminders to students about upcoming deadlines and how to find one’s polling location. CCE also created non-partisan infographic flyers for races at local, state and federal levels, which were posted around campus and made available on our website. While CCE was unable to host a debate with local candidates on campus, CCE did interview four local candidates on our weekly public affairs radio show.

In 2016 CCE developed new and expanded existing institution-level initiatives to streamline and improve ballot access for students. These initiatives include but are not limited to providing an opportunity for all in-coming freshman to register to vote at new student orientation, an agreement to use change of address forms with the Broome County Board of Elections (BOE), and a new layout at the on-campus polling location to minimize waiting times for students.

CCE partnered with several student organizations and other groups on and off campus which strengthened Get-Out-The-Vote efforts. Of the students who were registered with their campus address, 84% turned out on Election Day in November 2016 — 900 more students than 2012.

Numbers at a Glance



2,479

Students who registered to vote through the Center for Civic Engagement

84%

The campus voter turn-out rate in the General Election for students who were registered with their campus address

675

The number of hours spent during the Fall 2016 semester preparing for the General Election





Coalition

Political Engagement Advisory Committee

The Political Engagement Advisory Committee meets regularly during the academic year to set strategic direction, share information, address challenges, brainstorm ideas and plan events and programs. In the past the Political Engagement Advisory Committee helped CCE launch voter registration programming. In Spring 2016, the Committee helped think through voter registration during freshman orientation, the voter registration student coordinator program and Primary Election Day planning and evaluation. During the fall semester, CCE did not lean on the committee as much because of the foundation created in the spring semester. However, CCE expanded and developed relationships with student groups and other political engagement organizations on campus. Looking toward the future, CCE plans to leverage this student-based coalition to streamline all voter registration efforts through the CCE office, specifically making prepopulated campus forms, change of address forms and absentee ballot applications, in addition to New York State voter registration forms, available to all groups and organizations registering students to vote.

Listed under each Political Engagement event and program are the campus and community partners with which we worked.

Political Engagement Advisory Committee Members

Alison Handy Twang, Assistant Director, Center for Civic Engagement;
 Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Campus Champion, SUNY
 Designated Campus Voter Registration Coordinator (Staff)
 Indy Li, Community Engagement Coordinator, Center for Civic
 Engagement (Staff)
 Nick Doran, Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassador
 Team Leader (Graduate Student)
 Sarah Knoell, Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassador
 (Undergraduate Student)
 Nicole Bruno, Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere
 Ambassador (Undergraduate Student)
 Kanupriya Pandey, Political Engagement Intern, Center for Civic
 Engagement (Undergraduate Student)
 Brianna Cea, Student Association Representative, Binghamton University
 Student Association (Undergraduate Student)
 Pete Nardone, Associate Director, New Student Programs (Staff)
 Dr. Jonathan Krasno, Associate Professor of Political Science (Faculty)
 Margaret Goodfellow, League of Women Voters (Community Partner)
 Broome County Board of Elections (Community Partner)

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

The Center for Civic Engagement at Binghamton University partners with the Andrew Goodman Foundation to host three Vote Everywhere Ambassadors. These Ambassadors oversee the CCE's efforts to engage students in the political process through voter registration, get out the vote efforts, sharing candidate/issue information and educational programming. The CCE began its partnership with the Andrew Goodman Foundation in 2014.



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Successes from 2016

- ✓ 52% increase over the 2012 **General Election turnout rate on campus**
- ✓ 679 **freshman registered** as a direct result of a new voter registration initiative during summer orientation.
- ✓ 10+ **student groups and organizations** took on voter registration and GOTV efforts leading up to the election.

Barriers in 2016

- ✓ A decentralized campus continued to posed a challenge for getting information out to students, especially to students who live off campus and are only on campus for classes.
- ✓ While many students have registered locally, they often forget or do not know to change their address if they move within the county. This led to a high number of students voting by affidavit for the Primary and General Elections.

Analysis of Our Work

Voter Registration

On-Campus Outreach

CCE's voter registration outreach can be divided into on-campus and off-campus outreach. CCE accomplished several initiatives laid out in our NASPA Voter Friendly Campus Plan. In addition to the more detailed programming, outlined below, all CCE staff were trained in the voter registration process so that professional and student staff would be comfortable assisting student walk-ins with the process. By including the other CCE staff members, a student could walk into our office at any time and easily register to vote.

Streamlined Voter Registration Forms

Similar to previous semesters, CCE used prepopulated voter registration forms for students living on campus. The prepopulated form includes the portion of the University's mailing address that is the same for all students living on campus. When a student registers with their campus address, they only need to fill in their living community and their BU Box Number. This has been very effective in making it easier for students to register locally and with minimal errors. CCE also continued to use the change of address form, which allows students who are already registered in Broome County to change their address without filling out a new voter registration form.

Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Develop a campus prepopulated form for absentee ballot applications that includes the campus mailing address

In-Class Presentations

Leading up to the voter registration deadline, CCE sent out an email notification to all faculty and staff offering voter registration presentations in classes or in a campus office. Faculty or staff would send an email request to the CCE email account and members of the political engagement team would take turns presenting and registering students, faculty and staff.

Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Recruit volunteers to assist with presentations (changing slides on power point, handing out and collecting forms)

Name: _____
Current Address (Old): _____
Date of Birth: _____
Broome County Board of Elections
P.O. Box 1756
60 Hawley Street
Binghamton, NY 13901
Dear Broome County Board of Elections,
I am writing to inform you that as of _____ my
address has changed and would like to update my voter registration at this time.
My new address is: _____
Thank you very much.
Sincerely,

Signature of Voter



New Student Orientation

During the Spring 2016 semester, CCE worked with the BOE, New Student Programs and Residential Life to develop a "bottleneck" approach for registering new students at orientation. CCE provided New Student Programs with prepopulated on-campus forms for each student's orientation folder and guided all new students through the voter registration process during the mandatory "Find Your Fit" session. "Find Your Fit" showcased opportunities for students to get involved through different Student Affairs offices on campus, including CCE. Voter registration forms were collected at the end of each session, to minimize work on the students' end. During New Student Orientation, 679 new students were registered to vote.

While this was very successful, new students had not received their BU Box Numbers yet, which posed a challenge to submitting the forms to the BOE. BU Box Numbers are a critical piece of information for voter registration forms, due to the format of Binghamton University's mailing address. Later in the summer, Residential Life shared a list of all on-campus students and their BU Box Numbers. CCE, with the help of New Student Programs and the Orientation Advisors' team of students, wrote in each students' BU Box Number on their voter registration form.



Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Hire a summer political engagement intern to oversee voter registration during New Student Orientation
- ✓ Work with off-campus apartment management to create a similar bottle-neck approach for students living off campus

Campus and Community Partners





Residential Life Voter Registration Competition

This is the third time CCE ran the Residential Life Voter Registration Competition leading up to the General Election, with the help of political science professor Jonathan Krasno. Communities were pitted against each other to register as many eligible students as possible. A \$1000 and \$500 prize, provided by the Division of Student Affairs, was offered to the first and second place communities with the highest percentage of locally registered voters. Money was awarded to the community governments to be spent in any way they would like as long it was not exclusive to the community members who registered to vote.

Resident directors, collegiate professors and the community governments were contacted and asked to share information about the competition to their staff. The collegiate professors nominated students to be community champions (the point person for registering students within their community). All of the communities, except College-In-the-Woods (CIW) whose community champion also worked for NYPIRG, brought their forms through the office to be checked for mistakes.

415 students were directly registered through participation in the competition, though the actual number is higher because CIW was unsure of how many forms they brought to the BOE.

Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Identify one community champion per community early in the semester
- ✓ Schedule training sessions for community champions and volunteers instead of allowing walk-in trainings
- ✓ Place more emphasis on community champions turning in voter registration forms to CCE to be proofread
- ✓ Create "Best Practices" document to share with future community champions

Campus and Community Partners



Department of Political Science, Binghamton University





Campus-Wide Events

CCE attended several campus-wide one-time events, throughout the spring and fall 2016 semesters, which had varying levels of success.

In March, CCE worked with NYPIRG, Roosevelt Institute, College Progressives, College Democrats and College Republicans to put on "Shamrock the Vote." CCE tabled outside of the office and assisted nearly 150 students with registering to vote or changing their address.

In August, CCE tabled at University Fest, where 145 students were registered to vote and/or assisted in some way. There were several other groups registering students to vote and many students stopped by the CCE table to ask questions about the political process, their voter registration status or how to fill out forms. University Fest continues to be a dependable event to get CCE's name out as the location for reliable information about voter registration and the voting process.

CCE also tabled at the CCE's Community Opportunities Fair, the Multicultural Resource Center's Culture Fair and reBOLD Binghamton's Mural Fest. The latter two events were less successful for voter registration, however, all of the events we attended this year were good ways to get our name out and answer any questions students might have.



Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Better prioritize time and effort spent on one-time tabling events that don't yield high returns

Campus and Community Partners





National Voter Registration Day

On National Voter Registration Day, CCE set up a table on the University Union Patio to register students to vote. CCE provided students, faculty and staff voter registration, change of address forms and absentee ballot applications. CCE collaborated with the Roosevelt Institute, Democracy Matters, College Democrats, Thurgood Marshall Pre-Law Society, Asian Student Union and NYPIRG. All of these groups provided volunteers for our table or led their own voter registration efforts on campus. Additionally, five students from a civic engagement course volunteered to assist at the table.

To generate buzz, CCE took over the University's Snapchat, taking pictures and videos of students telling us why their vote mattered. CCE also got a video of President Harvey Stenger encouraging students to register.

In total, CCE received 219 voter registration forms, 37 absentee ballot application forms and 30 change of address forms.



Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Partner with more cultural groups to expand reach on campus
- ✓ Have more space and resources for people to fill out forms, including tables, chairs and clipboards.

Campus and Community Partners





Tuesday Tabling

After a great experience tabling outside the office during Shamrock the Vote, CCE set up a table outside of the office every Tuesday during the Fall 2016 semester from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The response was mixed depending on the week, but it was a good way to interact with students and made the office more approachable. CCE had copies of each form and a sign-up sheet for students who were interested in being a poll worker on Election Day.

The most successful weeks were not in front of the office, but rather at the University Union Patio. CCE tabled here twice – once on National Voter Registration Day and then again on the Tuesday before the voter registration deadline. This was a better trafficked area and was more visible to students passing by.

Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Rotate through other locations and days of the week to reach more students
- ✓ Work with student groups to recruit volunteers to walk around and register people during “Tuesday Tabling”





Off-Campus Outreach

Following the presidential primary there was a large number of students who attempted to vote on campus despite living off campus. Leading up to the November General Election we made off-campus outreach one of our priorities. Our goal was to alert students to the fact they could no longer vote on campus because they had moved off campus. CCE tried a number of initiatives because it is difficult to reach all students who live off campus due to the decentralized nature of the University.

The most effective off-campus outreach were emails sent to the off-campus students listserv through the Assistant Dean for Off Campus Programs and Services. He sent three emails on our behalf; the first was sent on National Voter Registration Day, the second was on the voter registration deadline and the third was on Election Day. The first two emails contained information on how students could register to vote and the relevant deadlines. The email on Election Day contained information on how to find your polling place and the hours of the polling places. For all of the emails, but especially the voter registration emails, we had many students approach us with questions or mention they saw the email and they wanted to register to vote.

CCE attempted to table at a number of communities, but were only able to go to two, Chenango Place and the Printing House, due to the size of our team. Neither tables were very successful and had a combined number of approximately six people registered. CCE tabled in the lobby of both buildings at different times and would not recommend this approach in the future because the rate of the return was not high.

However, many of the off-campus apartment communities sent emails on our behalf to their student residents. These emails included reminders about the voter registration deadline and how to find your polling location. This was the more effective and resourceful way to connect to students through the off-campus apartment communities.



Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Register off-campus students at bus stops and the University Downtown Center, instead of in the lobbies of off-campus apartments
- ✓ Work with off-campus apartment management to provide voter registration forms in residents' move-in packets



Voter Education

University-Wide Emails

CCE sent out several university-wide emails during the Fall 2016 semester. A message was sent out through B-Line in September reminding students about the upcoming voter registration deadline. The body of the message was not embedded in the email and was instead included in a link. Based on talking to students both inside and outside of the office, the style of the B-Line email was not effective for disseminating voting information and most people did not know there was an email sent out. The Student Association, Graduate Student Organization and the Off-Campus College also sent emails on CCE's behalf, which reached all undergraduate students, graduate students, and students living off campus, respectively.

Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Work with communications department to include a second reminder on Election Day and how to find one's polling location
- ✓ Work with groups and offices like the Student Association, the Graduate Student Organization and the Off-Campus College to send out messaging on voting and voter registration

Political Engagement Website & Candidate Information

CCE maintained an up-to-date website with information about all things related to political engagement. Links to printer-friendly voter registration forms, important deadlines, candidate infographics and more were made publically available on our website. In the spring and fall semesters, CCE compiled information on each of the presidential candidates for the presidential primaries and reached out to local candidates for the House of Representatives; Broome County Legislature Districts 4, 14, and 15; Broome County Executive; State Senate District 52; and State Assembly District 123 to create similar infographics for the fall. CCE did not create an infographic for the presidential or federal Senate race due to the saturation of coverage of the presidential race and the lack of information for the federal Senate race.

Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Promote and share the infographics on more media platforms

B-Line <b-line@binghamton.edu>
to B-LINE ▾



The official source for University news

Today's B-Line for Tuesday, September 27

Welcome to B-Line News, your source for news announcements, sent

Administrative

- [Are you ready to vote on Nov. 8?](#)

All registered students receive B-Line, which is distributed directly to v



Radio Show

CCE hosts a public affairs radio show on WHRW, the University's Public Radio station. In Spring 2016 we featured State Senator Fred Akshar, City Councilman Conrad Taylor and a few alumni who are very active in politics, among other guests. In the fall, we hosted four political candidates from the State Senate 52nd and State Assembly 123rd races to speak about their platforms. Each candidate interview was pre-recorded and then aired twice; once at the end of the week of the recording and then again during CCE's time slot. The recordings were saved and then added to CCE's YouTube channel.



Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Promote and share interviews on more media platforms

Campus and Community Partners



Debate Viewing Party

For the first presidential debate, CCE hosted a debate viewing party on campus and partnered with College Democrats, College Republicans, College Libertarians, Roosevelt Institute, NYPIRG, Democracy Matters and the Thurgood Marshall Pre-Law Society. The room, which seats 250 people, was filled and some people were standing in the back.



The event turnout was excellent. Students were respectful towards each other and the candidates, despite a very contentious race and national atmosphere.

Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Announce that voter registration forms are available
- ✓ Host debate viewing parties for other debates (or support student groups who are putting on debate viewing parties) and provide more food



Campus and Community Partners

What Now?

Staying Politically Engaged Beyond the Election

Wondering what to do after the election?
Want to create change in the Binghamton community?
Learn what YOU as a student can do to stay politically engaged!

Featuring Panelists:

Tuesday, Nov. 15 | 6-7p.m. UU-202
Cospponsored by:
College Progressives, R MATTERS, Harpur Edge
The Department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies
Refreshments provided by:
Campus Activities, The Department of Public Administration



Passion to Action

In the Spring of 2016, CCE hosted two separate Passion to Action workshops that focused on becoming an agent of change in your community and starting a service project. The event was divided into two parts: the first was a general panel that was open to the public that focused on broad actions that students could take. The second part was for students who preregistered for a hands-on workshop where they could talk and work side-by-side with panelists further. Students were allowed to pick a panelist to work with and this allowed for a more tailored experience based on students' areas of interest.

Following the 2016 General Election, CCE hosted an event titled "Passion to Action: What Now?" Three panelists discussed the importance of staying involved with local politics and informed students of the various ways they can remain politically engaged after the 2016 elections. The three key takeaways for attendees were: learn to listen and work with people who think differently than you; learn to compromise, but never compromise your values; and there are abundant opportunities for students to get involved in politics.

Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Create a student focus group to recommend topics and event formats appealing to students
- ✓ More hands-on workshops like: how to write a policy memo, grant writing basics and how to contact your representative

Campus and Community Partners



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Ballot Access

Campus Polling Location

For the Primary and General Elections, the campus polling site was located in the University Union. The BOE used a larger space on campus to better accommodate a larger student turnout. On Primary Election Day, polls opened at noon. Due to the layout of the room, the line wrapped around the lobby of the University Union for at least an hour or two. For the General Election, a different layout was used, which minimized student lines into the lobby of the union, but had a large amount of exit traffic that interfered with other traffic in the Union.



Off-Campus Assistance Table



Outside of the campus polling site, CCE set up an off campus assistance table for the General Election. The off campus assistance table was a solution to deal with the few hundred off-campus students who mistakenly came to campus to vote during the Presidential Primaries. CCE created reminder cards to write down students' correct polling location and a summary about how to request an affidavit ballot if necessary. The BOE was very impressed by the difference that the table made and requested to have an off campus assistance table in future elections.

Areas for Future Improvement and Expansion

- ✓ Use a room layout that utilizes another main entrance as an exit to solve any traffic issues
- ✓ Encourage the BOE to separate the poll books into smaller groups so that lines would be better distributed

*Because the BOE runs the polling site, there is a limited number of improvements that CCE can implement, besides giving feedback.



Voter Turnout

Primary Election

Almost 1,000 students turned out for the Presidential Primaries in April. Similar to other Election Days, CCE hosted an Election Day celebration; we had music and food for students and poll workers. The Primary Election allowed us to troubleshoot a lot of things for the larger General Election in November.



“Helping out on Election Day was also pretty cool in realizing how much organization it took to host a polling location on campus. Seeing the great turn out felt good, and especially great because I was trying to encourage people to come vote by the front doors.”

- Civic Engagement Course Student Volunteer

General Election

On Election Day in November, over 2,500 students voted at the on-campus polling site. This was a 52% increase over the 2012 turnout rate and represented an increase of nearly 900 students. Moreover, of the students who were registered on campus, 84% voted — well above the national average. This information is very telling and supports the idea that simply registering students is a Get Out the Vote effort in and of itself. Leading up to the Election, CCE sent out reminder emails through the University, the Student Association and the Assistant Dean for Off Campus Programs and Services. With the help of students from a civic engagement class, the Student Association and other student groups, CCE also requested a contact list from the BOE to phone bank on November 7. CCE also took over the University SnapChat and showed followers a day-in-the-life of a poll worker.





Political Engagement Beyond 2016

Voter Registration

In 2017, CCE will continue to run voter-registration events such as Shamrock the Vote, and will collaborate with New Student programs to initiate a voter registration effort for transfer students who begin after the winter intersession. CCE will also prioritize finding effective, university-wide ways of communicating change of address information and absentee ballot education to students, based on a perceived high number of students voting by affidavit at off-campus polling locations and a general misunderstanding of the absentee ballot voting process.

Voter Education and Engagement

CCE has already taken strategic steps to expand voter education and engagement efforts in 2017. CCE is taking on a new Andrew Goodman Foundation Ambassador who will be charged with expanding voter engagement initiatives amongst cultural and identity groups on campus. CCE has also hired two interns for Spring 2017 to help coordinate community issue forums and pilot a new program on helping students contact their representatives.

SUNY-Wide Collaboration & Policy Change

CCE plans to shift efforts towards creating institutional-level change that makes voter registration and the voting process more accessible to students. In 2017, CCE plans to accomplish this in two ways. First, CCE will work with two other SUNY schools that have an established Andrew Goodman Foundation partnership — Stonybrook and Geneseo — to create a SUNY Political Engagement Playbook. This collaborative playbook will be shared with other SUNY campuses interested in developing or expanding their own political engagement efforts. Second, CCE plans to identify a policy or process that can be improved upon to minimize voting barriers to students.

NSLVE DATA

Upon receiving our campuses' NSLVE data, CCE will review the findings, call a committee meeting to discuss the results and adjust our efforts accordingly.
