

STUDENT VOTER GUIDE

2020

WHO WHAT WHY



Despite constituting a significant voting cohort and having the potential to shape elections, youth have historically turned up to vote at lower levels than older adults.

Barriers to the youth vote include proof of residency and identification requirements, missing class or work to wait in line, and finding transportation to off-campus polls. Given the prominent role that colleges and universities play in the lives of new voters across the country, it is crucial to analyze

what they are doing to encourage democratic citizenship.

How This Guide Helps

Sourced through primary research, WhoWhatWhy's Student Voter Guide highlights these efforts. Key data points include the number of polling places on campus,

student voting rates, and the number of polling stations within five miles of campus. It should be noted that these statistics are reflective of the 2016 general election and do not address any changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the spirit of friendly civic competition, the 76

schools included in this analysis can see how they rank in terms of formal democratic participation and prioritize ways to facilitate and improve campus engagement.

Project Goals

WhoWhatWhy intends that the Student Voter Guide advise prospective students on university voter policies, inform and encourage current students to vote, and recognize universities that facilitate accessible and student-friendly on-campus voting. This guide will also serve as a primary source for journalists seeking to cover university civic engagement ahead of the 2020 general election and all that follow.

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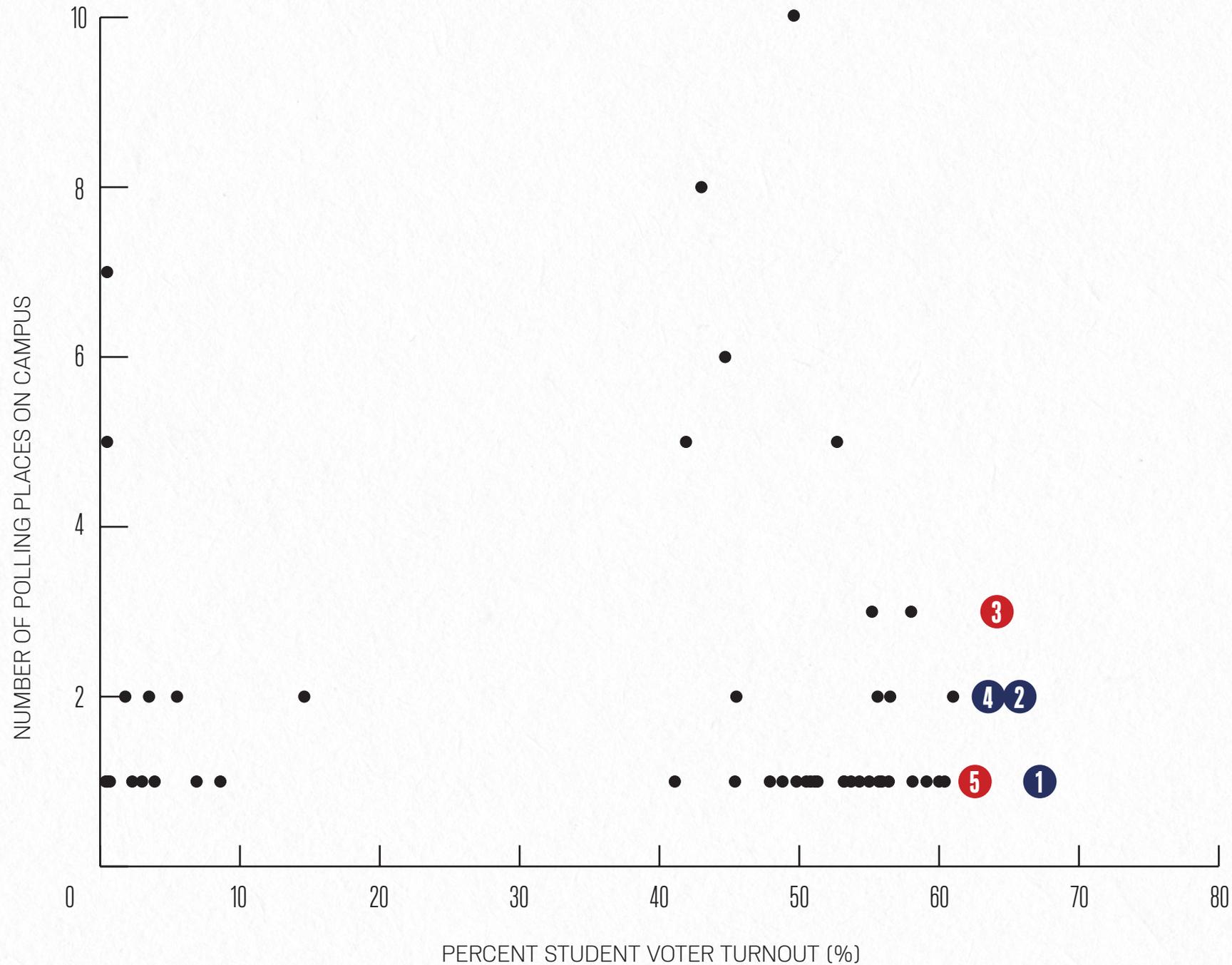
Cover image: The graduate image is based on a photo courtesy of Charles Deloye via Unsplash. The "I Voted" sticker graphic is courtesy of Visuals via Unsplash

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On-campus polls help remove barriers to student voting, such as finding transportation to off-campus polling locations.

During the 2016 general election cycle, most schools with a 47-67 percent student voter turnout rate had one on-campus polling location. While some schools with two or more on-campus locations saw a higher turnout, overall results demonstrate that having more polling stations does not guarantee a higher voter turnout. That said, increasing the number of campus polling stations can have other benefits, such as reducing wait times and the number of students who miss class to vote.

NUMBER OF ON-CAMPUS POLLS VS. STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT



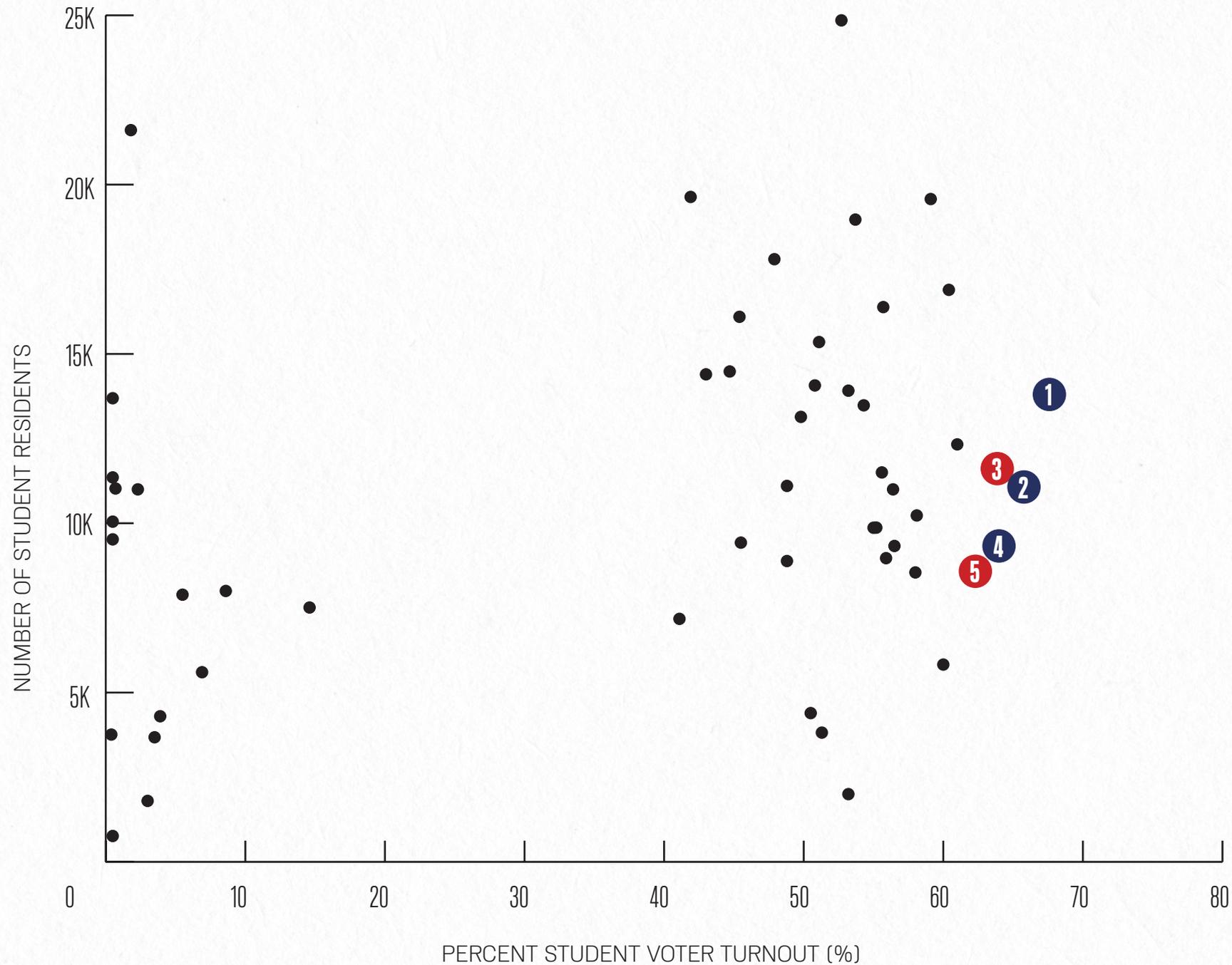
- 1. University of Washington**
SEATTLE
67.6% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
1 POLLING PLACE ON CAMPUS
 - 2. University of Minnesota**
MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL
65.0% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
2 POLLING PLACES ON CAMPUS
 - 3. University of Florida**
GAINESVILLE, FL
64.2% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
3 POLLING PLACES ON CAMPUS
 - 4. University of Virginia**
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA
64% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
2 POLLING PLACES ON CAMPUS
 - 5. Florida State University**
TALLAHASSEE, FL
62.3% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
1 POLLING PLACE ON CAMPUS
- IN 2016
■ STATE VOTED DEMOCRAT
■ STATE VOTED REPUBLICAN

Students living on-campus often have an easier time voting

since their proof of residency is issued by the university, and on-campus polling locations are determined, in part, by their proximity to dorms and residential dwellings.

Schools with a greater number of students living on campus see higher voter turnout rates during presidential elections. **Given that 73 percent of schools analyzed had at least one on-campus polling station** during the 2016 general election, this finding suggests that a large percentage of college students across the country rely on on-campus voting options.

NUMBER OF CAMPUS RESIDENTS VS. STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT



1. University of Washington
SEATTLE
67.6% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
13K LIVING ON CAMPUS

2. University of Minnesota
MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL
65.0% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
11K LIVING ON CAMPUS

3. University of Florida
GAINESVILLE, FL
64.2% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
11K LIVING ON CAMPUS

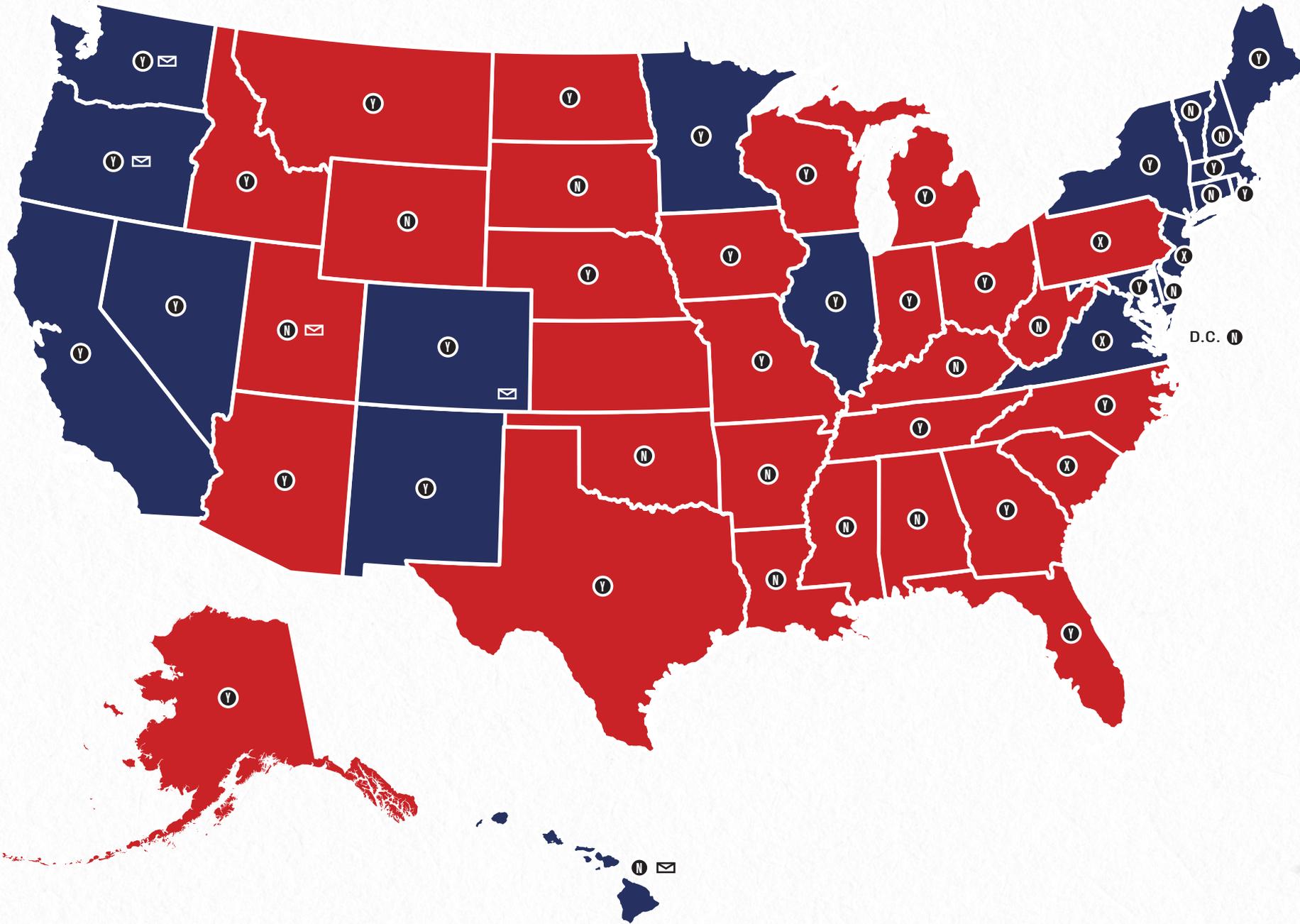
4. University of Virginia
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA
64% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
9K LIVING ON CAMPUS

5. Florida State University
TALLAHASSEE, FL
62.3% STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT
8.5K LIVING ON CAMPUS

IN 2016
■ STATE VOTED DEMOCRAT
■ STATE VOTED REPUBLICAN

ON-CAMPUS POLLS VS. 2016 STATE POLITICAL OUTCOMES

IN 2016 ■ VOTED DEMOCRAT ■ VOTED REPUBLICAN
 SCHOOLS HAD POLLS ON CAMPUS ● YES ● NO ● MIXED
 HOLD ELECTIONS ENTIRELY BY MAIL ✉



Since decisions to allocate on-campus polling places reside with state governments, it is necessary to analyze whether partisanship influences student-friendly voting options.

While 48 percent of schools with on-campus polls voted Democrat in the 2016 election, 60 percent of schools without on-campus polls voted Republican. Beyond reflecting President Trump's victory in the electoral college, the fact that Republicans lead the study in schools both with and without on-campus polls is largely attributable to the data set.

56 schools had polls on campus

20 did not



40 schools are located in states that voted Republican in the 2016 presidential election

36 schools are located in states that voted Democrat in the 2016 presidential election

Ranking criteria

Schools are ranked according to formal civic engagement. In contrast to informal political participation, including protest, activism, and service-oriented work, formal participation involves voting, political party membership, and working on a campaign. Both forms of participation are essential for democracy to thrive. However, for fair measurement and concrete comparison, schools were ranked based on the following:

- Percentage of student turnout in the 2016 election
- Percentage of early student turnout in the 2016 election
- Number of on-campus polling places
- Voter registration drives
- Voter registration rate
- Student ID accepted as voter ID
- ID requirements (Photo vs. no photo)

RANK			TOTAL ENROLLMENT* (UNDERGRAD GRADUATE)	NUMBER OF STUDENT RESIDENTS	HOW MANY POLLING PLACES ² ON CAMPUS	STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT	EARLY VOTING ON CAMPUS?	# POLLING PLACES WITHIN 5 MI ³	CAN STUDENT ID BE USED TO VOTE?	VOTER REG. DRIVES*	TOTAL GRADE OF ALL FACTORS	2016 STATE ELECTION RESULT
1	University of Washington	Seattle, WA 	47K (32K 15K)	13,734	1	67.6% (24,220)	No	11	Yes	Yes	A+	Democrat
2	University of Minnesota	Minneapolis, MN	51K (35K 16K)	11,207	2	65.3% (25,640)	No	2	No ID needed	Yes	A+	Democrat
3	University of Florida	Gainesville, FL	52K (35K 17K)	11,487	3	64.2% (31,116)	Yes	3	Yes	Yes	A+	Republican
4	University of Virginia	Charlottesville, VA	25K (17K 8K)	9,362	2	63.9% (13,981)	No	12	Yes	Yes	A+	Democrat
5	Florida State University	Tallahassee, FL	41K (32K 9K)	8,611	1	62.3% (23,979)	Yes	50	Yes	Yes	A+	Republican
6	University of Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh, PA	29K (19K 9K)	12,329	2	61.0% (17,444)	No	25	No ID needed	Yes	A+	Republican
7	University of Maryland	College Park, MD	41K (31K 10K)	16,892	1	60.4% (20,873)	No	48	No ID needed	Yes	A+	Democrat
8	University of Nebraska (Lincoln)	Lincoln, NE	25K (21K 5K)	5,826	1	60.0% (12,474)	N/A	18	No ID needed	Yes	A+	Republican
9	Ohio State University	Columbus, OH	61K (47K 14K)	19,574	1	59.1% (34,233)	No	15	No	Yes	A	Republican
10	Clemson University	Clemson, SC	25K (20K 5K)	10,229	1	58.1% (12,595)	No	11	No	Yes	A	Republican
11	University of Iowa	Iowa City, IA	32K (24K 8K)	8,547	3	58.0% (14,440)	Yes	26	No	Yes	A	Republican
12	University of Texas	Austin, TX	52K (41K 11K)	9,329	2	56.5% (22,640)	No	37	No	Yes	A	Republican
13	University of California, Los Angeles	LA, CA	46K (32K 14K)	11,000	1	56.4% (14,372)	No	109	No ID needed	Yes	A	Democrat
14	Miami University	Oxford, OH	20K (17K 3K)	8,969	1	55.9% (11,376)	No	5	No	Yes	A	Republican
15	Pennsylvania State University	University Park, PA	47K (40K 6K)	16,383	1	55.7% (43,605)	No	27	No ID needed	Yes	A	Republican
16	Virginia Tech	Blacksburg, VA	35K (28K 7K)	11,500	2	55.6% (19,376)	No	10	Yes	Yes	A	Democrat
17	University of California, Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara, CA	26K (23K 3K)	9,870	3	55.2% (12,053)	No	21	No ID needed	Yes	A	Democrat
18	University of Colorado	Boulder, CO 	37K (30K 6K)	9,867	1	55% (20,101)	No	5	Yes	Yes	A	Democrat
19	North Carolina State University	Raleigh, NC	35K (25K 10K)	13,482	1	54.3% (15,643)	Yes	40	No ID needed	No	A-	Republican
20	University of Alaska, Anchorage	Anchorage, AK	13K (12K 1K)	764	1	54.2% (7,131)	Yes	66	No ID needed	Yes	A-	Republican
21	University of Massachusetts	Amherst, MA	101K (24K 77K)	18,967	1	53.7% (14,631)	Yes	8	No ID needed	Yes	A-	Democrat
22	The University of New Mexico	Albuquerque, NM	21K (15K 5K)	2,000	1	53.2% (15,254)	Yes	18	No ID needed	Yes	A-	Democrat
23	Stony Brook University	Stony Brook, NY	26K (18K 9K)	13,915	1	53.2% (11,099)	No	30	No ID needed	Yes	A-	Democrat
24	University of California, Irvine	Irvine, CA	36K (30K 6K)	13,692	7	53% (19,096)	Yes	70	No ID needed	Yes	A-	Democrat
25	University of California, Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz, CA	20K (18K 2K)	10,047	5	53% (10,441)	No	24	No ID needed	Yes	A-	Democrat
26	University of California, Berkeley	Berkeley, CA	43K (31K 12K)	11,353	1	53% (22,525)	No	73	No ID needed	Yes	A-	Democrat

¹ Figures may not sum due to rounding

² "Polling Places" include ballot drop boxes and voter service centers

³ From/on campus

 State votes entirely by mail

RANK			TOTAL ENROLLMENT* (UNDERGRAD GRADUATE)	NUMBER OF STUDENT RESIDENTS	HOW MANY POLLING PLACES ² ON CAMPUS	STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT	EARLY VOTING ON CAMPUS?	# POLLING PLACES WITHIN 5 MI ³	CAN STUDENT ID BE USED TO VOTE?	VOTER REG. DRIVES*	TOTAL GRADE OF ALL FACTORS	2016 STATE ELECTION RESULT
28	University of Illinois	Champaign, IL	50K (34K 16K)	24,851	5	52.7% (18,634)	Yes	57	No ID needed	No	A-	Democrat
28	University of Kansas	Lawrence, KA	28K (19K 6K 9K)	3,817	1	51.3% (12,536)	Yes	43	Yes	Yes	A-	Republican
29	University of North Carolina	Chapel Hill, NC	30K (19K 11K)	15,351	1	51.1% (14,241)	Yes	26	No ID needed	Yes	A-	Republican
30	Georgia Tech	Atlanta, GA	33K (16K 17K)	14,070	1	50.8% (16,623)	No	59	Yes	Yes	A-	Republican
31	University of Maine	Orono, ME	12K (9K 2K)	4,393	1	50.5% (5,149)	No	4	No ID needed	Yes	A-	Democrat
32	University of Georgia	Athens, GA	39K (30K 9K)	13,141	1	49.8% (16,596)	Yes	18	Yes	Yes	B+	Republican
33	University of California, Davis	Davis, CA	38K (31K 7K)	9,524	1	49% (18,645)	No	33	No ID needed	Yes	B+	Democrat
34	University of Wisconsin	Madison, WI	44K (33K 12K)	11,102	10	48.8% (16,806)	Yes	42	No	Yes	B+	Republican
35	Binghamton University	Binghamton, NY	18K (14K 4K)	8,884	1	48.8% (6,887)	No	3	No ID needed	Yes	B+	Democrat
36	Purdue University	West Lafayette, IN	43K (33K 11K)	17,798	1	47.9% (15,093)	No	7	No ID needed	Yes	B	Republican
37	University of Tennessee	Knoxville, TN	29K (23K 6K)	9,427	2	45.5% (12,009)	Yes	19	No	Yes	B	Republican
38	Indiana University	Bloomington, IN	44K (33K 10K)	16,096	1	45.4% (17,183)	No	20	Yes	Yes	B	Democrat
39	University of Michigan	Ann Arbor, MI	47K (30K 16K)	14,481	6	44.7% (16,740)	No	34	No ID needed	Yes	B	Republican
40	University of California, San Diego	La Jolla, CA	38K (30K 8K)	14,397	8	43% (11,776)	No	15	No ID needed	Yes	B	Democrat
41	Michigan State University	East Lansing, MI	50K (39K 11K)	19,636	5	41.9% (16,388)	No	20	Yes	Yes	B	Republican
42	University of California, Riverside	Riverside, CA	24K (21K 3K)	7,176	1	41.1% (8,059)	No	22	No ID needed	Yes	B	Democrat
43	University of California, Merced	Merced, CA	9K (8K 1K)	3,759	1	41% (3,503)	Yes	5	No ID needed	Yes	B	Democrat
44	University of Missouri	Columbia, MO	30K (23K 6K)	7,511	2	14.6% (4,402)	No	28	Yes	Yes	B-	Republican
45	University of Arizona	Tucson, AZ	46K (36K 10K)	8,000	1	8.6% (3,964)	Yes	49	No	Yes	B-	Republican
46	University of Rhode Island	Kingston, RI	17K (14K 3K)	5,600	1	6.9% (1,206)	No	6	Yes	Yes	B-	Democrat
47	University of South Florida	Tampa, FL	44K (32K 12K)	7,890	2	5.5% (2,429)	Yes	43	Yes	Yes	B-	Republican
48	Montana State University	Bozeman, MT	17K (15K 2K)	4,300	1	3.9% (653)	No	5	Yes	Yes	C+	Republican
49	Boise State University	Boise, ID	26K (23K 3K)	3,679	2	3.5% (921)	No	42	Yes	Yes	C+	Republican
50	University of Nevada, Las Vegas	Las Vegas, NV	30K (25K 4K)	1,800	1	3% (915)	Yes	16	No ID needed	Yes	C+	Democrat
51	Texas A&M University	College Station, TX	68K (54K 15K)	11,000	1	2.3% (1,603)	Yes	13	No	Yes	C+	Republican
52	Rutgers University	Piscataway, NJ	50K (36K 14K)	21,609	2	1.8% (892)	No	19	No ID needed	Yes	C+	Democrat

Grading criteria

The grade reflects a range, based on the school's rank. Schools are grouped based on similar characteristics, such as percent voter turnout, percent of students registered to vote, and voter ID laws.

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² "Polling Places" include ballot drop boxes and voter service centers

³ From/on campus

✉ State votes entirely by mail

RANK			TOTAL ENROLLMENT* (UNDERGRAD GRADUATE)	NUMBER OF STUDENT RESIDENTS	HOW MANY POLLING PLACES ² ON CAMPUS	STUDENT VOTER TURNOUT	EARLY VOTING ON CAMPUS?	# POLLING PLACES WITHIN 5 MI ³	CAN STUDENT ID BE USED TO VOTE?	VOTER REG. DRIVES*	TOTAL GRADE OF ALL FACTORS	2016 STATE ELECTION RESULT
53	University at Buffalo	Buffalo, NY	32K (22K 10K)	11,026	1	0.7% (231)	No	13	No ID needed	Yes	C+	Democrat
54	University of North Dakota	Grand Forks, ND	14K (11K 3K)	3,748	1	0	No	9	No	No	C+	Republican
55	Colorado School of Mines	Golden, CO ✉	6K (5K 1K)	1,880	1	0	No	2	Yes	Yes	C+	Democrat
56	University of Oregon	Eugene, OR ✉	23K (19K 4K)	4,981	1	0	No	6	No ID needed	No	C+	Democrat
57	College of William and Mary	Williamsburg, VA	9K (6K 2K)	6,260	No Polls on Campus	0	No	2	Yes	Yes	C	Democrat
58	University of South Carolina	Columbia, SC	35K (27K 8K)	9,394	No Polls on Campus	0	No	47	No	Yes	C	Republican
59	University of Delaware	Newark, DE	23K (19K 4K)	9,545	No Polls on Campus	0	No	0	Yes	Yes	C	Democrat
60	The George Washington University	Washington, DC	26K (11K 16K)	15,804	No Polls on Campus	0	No	80	No ID needed	Yes	C	Democrat
61	The University of Oklahoma	Norman, OK	26K (20K 5K)	8,372	No Polls on Campus	0	No	29	Yes	Yes	C	Republican
62	University of Mississippi	Oxford, MS	20K (17K 3K)	5,068	No Polls on Campus	0	No	5	Yes	Yes	C	Republican
63	Temple University	Philadelphia, PA	40K (29K 10K)	7,955	No Polls on Campus	0	No	497	No ID needed	Yes	C-	Republican
63	University of Vermont	Burlington, VT	13K (11K 2K)	5,800	No Polls on Campus	0	No	12	No ID needed	Yes	C-	Democrat
64	University of Connecticut	Storrs, CT	27K (19K 8K)	17,817	No Polls on Campus	0	No	1	Yes	Yes	C-	Democrat
64	Utah Valley University	Orem, UT ✉	42K (41K 1K)	No on-campus housing	No Polls on Campus	0	No	7	Yes	Yes	C-	Republican
64	West Virginia University	Morgantown, WV	27K (21K 6K)	5,426	No Polls on Campus	0	No	16	No ID needed	Yes	C-	Republican
65	Auburn University	Auburn, AL	30K (25K 6K)	5,783	No Polls on Campus	0	No	4	Yes	Yes	C-	Republican
65	University of Kentucky	Lexington, KY	29K (22K 7K)	9,046	No Polls on Campus	0	No	116	Yes	Yes	C-	Republican
65	Louisiana State University	Baton Rouge, LA	32K (26K 6K)	8,490	No Polls on Campus	0	No	33	Yes	Yes	C-	Republican
66	University of Hawai'i at Mānoa	Honolulu, HI ✉	17K (13K 5K)	2,884	No Polls on Campus	0	No	2	No	Yes	C-	Democrat
67	University of Wyoming	Laramie, WY	12K (10K 2K)	3,062	No Polls on Campus	0	No	7	No ID needed	No	D+	Republican
68	New Jersey Institute of Technology	Newark, NJ	11K (9K 3K)	2,741	No Polls on Campus	0	No	183	No ID needed	No	D+	Democrat
69	University of Arkansas	Fayetteville, AR	26K (21K 4K)	12,548	No Polls on Campus	0	No	17	Yes	No	D	Republican
69	South Dakota State University	Brookings, SD	12K (10K 1K)	3,500	No Polls on Campus	0	No	3	Yes	Yes	D	Republican
70	University of New Hampshire	Durham, NH	15K (13K 2K)	5,306	No Polls on Campus	0	No	5	Yes	No	D	Democrat

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³ From/on campus

✉ State votes entirely by mail

WhoWhatWhy
embodies a form
of investigative
reporting that is
rigorous, relentless,
and scientific — we
call it forensic journalism.

Election integrity is at the heart of our democracy. Without it, our country won't run the way the founders intended—the way we deserve it to. In our EI coverage, we look deeply at the issues facing voters today and determine how we got here: from gerrymandered districts to voter registration purges to voter ID laws and everything in between. We are working to protect your vote from start to finish and knowledge is power.

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