

ShipVotes Campus Plan 2020

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Executive Summary: ShipVotes is a non-partisan coalition of faculty, staff, students, and university administrators, whose primary goal is that of maximizing Shippensburg student voting in local, state, and federal elections. The current coalition is led by faculty members David Monaghan, Eyoel Delessa, and Jordan Windholz, Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP) student fellow Ian Coyne, and Campus Vote Project (CVP) student fellows Madison Holland and Meghan Sharpe. Catherine Clay led ShipVotes until Summer 2020; she is retiring this year but will remain active in an advisory capacity.

ShipVotes currently faces many challenges. In the past, we relied on the enthusiasm and dedication of faculty and student fellows to fulfill its central mission of registering voters on campus. We will build upon that enthusiasm through broadening our coalition, formalizing our status as a permanent university committee, and diversifying strategies to build civic engagement on campus.

ShipVotes recognizes that student registration and voting depends on making them as easy as possible. To do so, we will maximize the visibility of ShipVotes and voter registration resources for students across numerous spaces and activities on campus, including but not limited to student orientation and welcome week, the first year experience, library services, residence life activities, greek life activities, and sporting events. Additionally, we aim to inculcate a spirit of civic responsibility among students so that they influence their peers to be engaged citizens. Students remain the best influencers of each other.

In the long term, ShipVotes will formalize its operations by establishing itself as a university committee and securing an accessible and visible office space from which coalition members can organize outreach efforts. We will grow our coalition to include key leaders of the university community to join our efforts. These leaders include representatives from the university administration, the Student Government Association and other student groups, Residence Life, APSCUF-SU, and Athletics. ShipVotes will engage the administration to secure from Shippensburg Township a polling place on or immediately near campus. It will establish a virtual presence across major social media platforms where the coalition can share or amplify important voter registration resources, information, and deadlines.

Data collection and analysis will be central to evaluating our success. This data will be collected by student fellows, who will report this data to the Campus Vote Project (CVP) and the Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP). Shippensburg has also, in August, 2019, signed on to participate in NSLVE. This summer Professor Luis Melara will begin to analyze this data as it is available. ShipVotes will use this data to set benchmarks and target organization and registration in future plans as well as to map trends and identify areas of growth.

Who is ShipVotes in 2020?

ShipVotes is a coalition of Faculty, Staff and Student leaders. Working groups and partners represent a variety of stakeholders from across campus. Faculty, staff, administration, and students from all departments, offices, and organizations on campus are all welcome to participate in ShipVotes. A leadership team (* below) has written the 2020 plan and oversees the group's activities, arranges biweekly/monthly meetings, oversees student Fellows and plans for the future of the coalition.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
David Monaghan*	dbmonaghan@ship.edu	Sociology; APSCUF mobilization
Eyoel Delessa*	ezdelessa@ship.edu	Library
Jordan Windholz*	jrwindholz@ship.edu	English; APSCUF social justice
Katy Clay*	cbclay@ship.edu	History (emeritus)
Ian Coyne*	ic9047ship.edu	CEEP Fellow
Madison Holland*	mh9825@ship.edu	CVP Fellow
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Steve Burg	sbburg@ship.edu	1 st Year Seminar Program/History
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Javita Thompson	jlthompson@ship.edu	Community Engagement
Kapri Brown	klbrown@ship.edu	Multicultural Students Association
Douglas Dieuveuill	dfdieuveuil@ship.edu	Success Center

Student Partner Groups: SU Student Body, and student groups such as: PanHellenic Council, Athletic Teams, RHA, Band, SGA, Slate, SU radio, Clubs such as Social Work Club, Poli Sci Club, etc

Faculty Partners: Advisors of students groups, e.g. Kate Shirk kbshirk@ship.edu, Faculty with In-Class Registration, 1st Yr Seminar Faculty, Michael Lyman, Shari Horner, Robert Shafer, Ben Culbertson, Mark Hartman, Sam Forlenza, Amy May, Sharlene Herbert, Casey Brenneman, Matthew Shupp, Tiffany Weaver, Jen Clements, Ali Dagnes

Outside Partners: CVP- Chuck Black, CEEP- Johanna Mudry, All-In- Ryan Drysdale,

GOTV 2020 Mark Spicka (F) mespic@ship.edu Rides-to-the-polls Co-ordinator

Future Coalition Recruiting from Administration: Stephanie Jirard, Ashley Spencer (1st Yr Orientation)

National and Local Landscape 2018-2020

It is useful to consider recent electoral history, even though the Co-vid outbreak will have as yet unforeseen effects on student voter engagement. The Center for Research and Information on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) has estimated that 2016 saw only 50% of young people eligible to vote voted in the presidential election. 28.2% of young citizens (ages 18-29) voted in the 2018 midterm elections, after only 19.9% of young people voted in the 2014 midterm election. So the midterm electoral trend is that more youth voters cast electoral ballots. Several factors made the 2018 election cycle different, and produced “a remarkable rise in youth political participation”:

- Ongoing and Early Outreach and Engagement: Young people’s political activism and action was in the spotlight since the beginnings of 2018. ...Our research has shown that those

three elements—starting early, peer-to-peer outreach, and focusing on issues youth deeply care about—are key features of any successful youth engagement strategy.

- **Multiple Entry Points:** Young people need multiple avenues, outlets, and entry point to political engagement. Activism on gun control, the environment, and other issues of concern to youth were certainly pathways in 2018.
- **A New Political Generation:** The post-Parkland movement may have helped crystallize another key element of increased youth engagement: a growing sense among young people that they can effect real political change. Despite some popular cliches, youth are not apathetic about politics, but they have been frustrated by political messages and actions that do not include their voices, and skeptical about the political process' ability to deliver positive social change.
- **Decisive Impact on the Election:** Young people excited about their ability to shape politics and influence election results saw some evidence that is indeed the case.

In 2018, the Ship Votes Action Plan 's assessment of local institutional commitment found that civic learning and democratic engagement were not overall campus learning outcomes, and they had not been formally assessed on the Shippensburg University campus. Internal barriers, such as limited funding and staff have prevented growth in the formalization of civic learning and democratic engagement on campus, while external barriers such as confusion about polling places and local resistance to students voting have made gaining traction outside the university an uphill battle. In 2018, Ship Votes coalition concluded that “dedicated staff time, or at the very least a formalization of the ShipVotes working group, would be the first step toward increasing the visibility and success of civic engagement on campus.”

In 2019, a press release appeared: “Shippensburg University a Voter Friendly Campus” (https://www.ship.edu/news/2019/03/voter_friendly Campus/). Communications and Marketing reported that Shippensburg University

“is once again designated a ‘Voter Friendly Campus’ by the national non-partisan organizations Campus Vote Project and NASPA- Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. The mission of the Voter Friendly Campus designation is to encourage students to participate in the political process.

Ship and its non-partisan voter registration group, Ship Votes, works closely with student, faculty and staff to organize voter education and registration events and coordinate student transportation to polls on Election Day.

As part of Ship’s efforts, over 600 students registered to vote for the first time, changed their registration or voted absentee. Many sections of Ship’s first year seminar course engaged in basic non-partisan voter education and Ship staffed voter registration tables during home football games and other campus events and locations.

‘This designation makes it clear that the institution takes a stand for voter friendliness and civic engagement in the community,’ said Dr. Catherine Clay, associate professor of History and Ship Votes advisor. The designation is valid through December of 2020.”

Our question is: What percentage of youth will vote in 2020? How can we make SU an [On-line] “Voter Friendly Campus? The initial consideration of barriers and challenges to on-line student engagement during the spring Semester’s virtual learning experiment has suggested that we need to be innovative in engaging the SU student body. How can we support student voter engagement in this era at Shippensburg University?

Commitment and Present Resources in 2020

ShipVotes is ideally a coalition of four equal partners from Shippensburg University: university administration, students, staff, and faculty. At present we fall far short, though the coalition is growing.

Shippensburg University is formally committed to securing and advancing its students' civic involvement. But as of yet the University has made few practical investments in so doing. It has assisted in driving voters to the polling place. But it has not provided ShipVotes with an office which is one of three Voter Friendly Campus goals of 2020. It has been complacent in regards to securing a polling site on or near campus. It has relied upon the endeavors of faculty and students to register voters. A major aspect of our campaign this year will be to get the University to more actively join the ShipVotes coalition and to use its organizational power to advance the cause of civic involvement.

Students are at present primarily represented through ShipVotes fellows. But student participation is essential to success. Efforts must be dedicated to organizing student involvement in ShipVotes. Obtaining the involvement of the Student Government Association (SGA) other student organizations is essential to establishing continuity beyond this year. We also seek to organize an independent base of volunteers to spread information and encouragement through social media and in-person networks.

At present Ship Votes is happy to include a number of university staff members in its coalition. We have active participation from the Women's Center, Ceddia Union Building (CUB), the Student Success Center, and Residential Life. ShipVotes will seek to involve others from student affairs as much as possible, as well as the participation of staff unions formally in the ShipVotes coalition.

Faculty have to date formed the backbone of ShipVotes. It emerged as an intermittent working group organized through APSCUF, the faculty union. APSCUF's Executive Committee has pledged its support to ShipVotes for this election cycle, and also has backed its demands for greater administration involvement. Nonetheless, faculty support at present is passive rather than active, and faculty can be better mobilized to reach out to students.

2020 Strategy

ShipVotes' specific strategy this fall depends on if students return to campus in the fall, or if we remain remote as at the end of spring semester. We describe two separate strategies below in accordance with these two scenarios. The reality of student return may be something between a return to pre-COVID normal and a fully remote fall. In that case, we will employ a mixture of the two strategies.

In either event, our strategy is framed by three key principles of organizing.

1. Make student registration, and voting as easy as possible.
2. The best influencers of students are other students
3. Maximum visibility will encourage participation.

Key dates:

Oct. 19, 2020- Voter registration deadline. Completed forms must be received at County Elections Office or on-line registration must be completed.

Oct. 27, 202- Mail-in ballot application must be received at the county office.

Nov. 3, 2020- Election day. Mail-ballot must be received at the county office.

Social Media Tools:

Ship Votes Website: <https://shipvotes.wordpress.com/>

Ship Votes Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/ShipVotes/>

Ship Votes Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/shipvotes/>

Ship Votes Twitter: @shipvotes
SU TV

Scenario A: Back on Campus

- Administrative pressure campaign. ShipVotes will pressure the administration to:
 - Work with Shippensburg Township to secure a polling site on or near campus
 - Incorporate voter registration into the formal program at Freshman Welcome Week
 - Supply ShipVotes with an easily findable office in the CUB
 - Make voter registration and mail-in ballot request materials available and visible at administrative offices
 - Participate fully as an equal partner in the ShipVotes coalition
- Student organizing campaign
 - Recruit and mobilize a broad network of student volunteers to spread information publicize participation, and encourage others to participate
 - Secure participation from SGA and other prominent student organizations
 - Develop a sophisticated viral social media campaign
 - Encourage faculty to develop course materials that incorporate voter encouragement into curriculum, such as FYS (1st Year Seminars) and special programs, (I.E. Democracy Day)
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- Visibility
 - Distribute ShipVotes buttons to students in large numbers and encourage them to wear on their backpacks/jackets
 - Distribute ShipVotes flyers widely to faculty and staff for prominent placement
 - Regular tabling in the CUB and Library
 - Voter registration drives with sports teams and in large classes

Scenario B: Totally Remote

- Administrative pressure campaign. ShipVotes will pressure the administration to:
 - Incorporate voter registration into the online orientation materials
 - Make voter registration and main-in ballot request links available and visible on University websites
 - Participate fully as an equal partner in the ShipVotes coalition
- Student organizing campaign
 - Recruit and mobilize a broad network of student volunteers to spread information publicize participation, and encourage others to participate
 - Secure participation from SGA and other prominent student organizations
 - Develop a sophisticated viral social media campaign
- Visibility
 - Voter registration drives with sports teams and student groups
 - Encourage faculty to develop course materials that incorporate voter encouragement into curriculum, such as FYS, and special programs, (I.E. Virtual Democracy Day)

Long-term Goals 2020

The *ultimate* goal - both long term and short term - is to register as many Shippensburg University students to vote as possible before October 19, and to apply for mail-in ballots before October 27. These are the chief aims of ShipVotes. In order to accomplish these objectives, ShipVotes seeks to:

- Establish ShipVotes, through the University or APSCUF, as a university committee. This will help stabilize the organization's membership and leadership. It will create a more accessible model of University wide collaboration on registration efforts.
- Create a network of specific and targeted faculty, staff, and students that can extend their expertise or influence to spur registration efforts.
- Make use of social media and networking tools to create a civically engaged student body. The aim is to have students not only understand the importance of voting but also advocate voter registration to peers organically.
- *Advance to more complex areas of Civic Engagement. Using tools and resources available to us, to not only continue our work to register and engage students to vote, but to also create opportunities for students to engage more deeply in the civic process in our local community, state and nation. (from previous campus plan)*
- Work with the township of Shippensburg to place a voting site in the town of Shippensburg. This will create an accessible and reachable voting site for students.

Through the accomplishment of these long term goals, ShipVotes will establish itself both as an organization and a campus initiative - which in turn will help with student registration efforts.

Reporting & Evaluation 2020

ShipVotes members will collect record data after events. This data includes: number of people registered to vote, number of people registered for absentee ballots, number of people engaged, and total participants. Groups like the Campus Vote Project (CVP) and Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP) ask fellows to collect and report this data after each event as it is an efficient way to track the impact of events. As many ShipVotes members will likely be employed by such organizations, this data will be collected regardless.

Using the collected data and contrasting it against voting data available to the public, ShipVotes and Shippensburg University, will shed light on trends in civic engagement amongst students, will quantify success of strategies, and will improve the impact of events. Events with high engagement and registration numbers, such as in-class presentations and registration assistance, can be repeated and improved whereas less successful events can be altered or abandoned altogether. Evaluating the data ShipVotes collects will allow it to be more efficient and optimize its impact on campus. In 2018, our campus plan concluded that assessments, such as NSLVE, could provide a more accurate picture of campus needs and provide perspective of the campus success as compared to similar and aspirational institutions." We have moved a step closer with the University 2019 signing on to participate in NSLVE.