All In Challenge Action Plan

CELEBRATING

150

Est. 1869

YEARS

TRINITY
UNIVERSITY

ALL IN

PLATINUM
CAMPUS

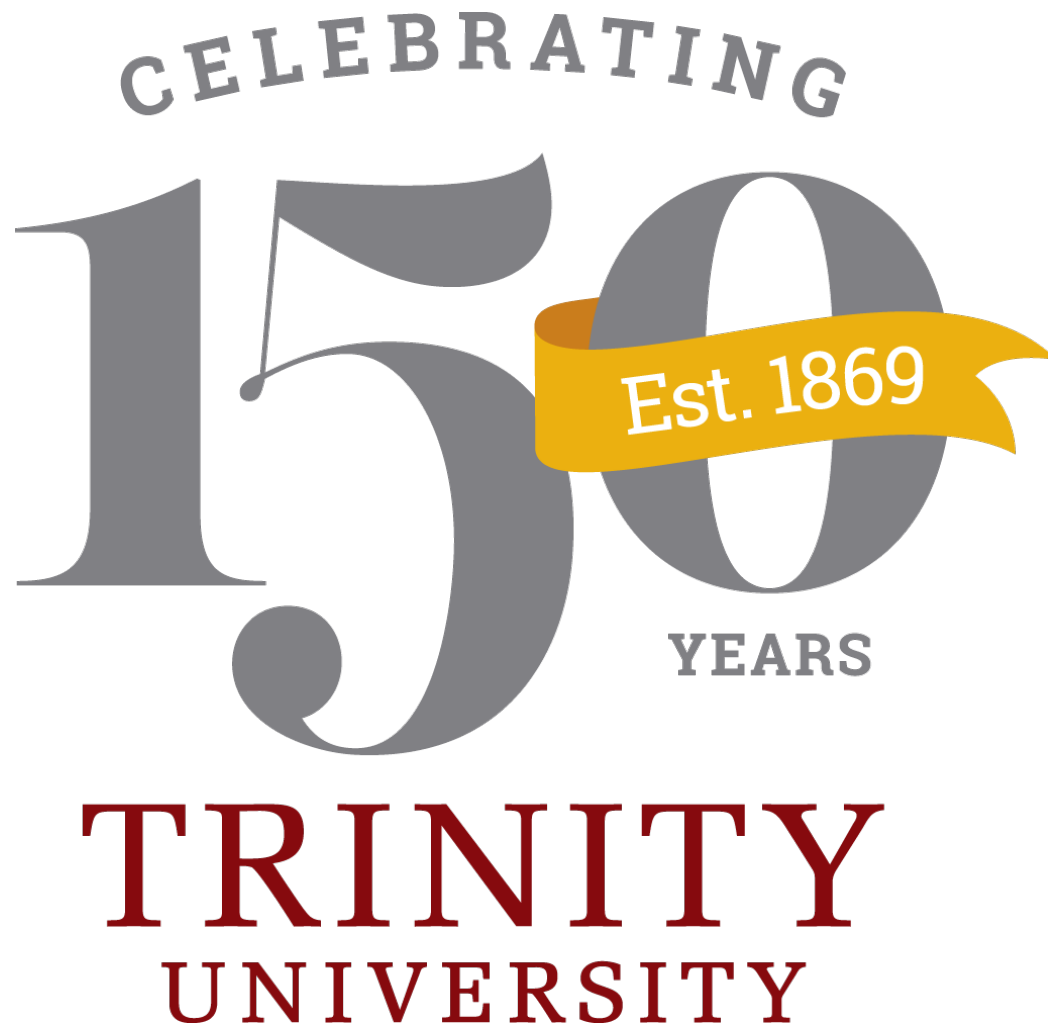50+% VOTING RATE

Excellence *in* Student Voter Engagement

MIDTERM
2018 ELECTION

Executive Summary

Trinity University empowers students for lives of purpose. In fulfilling this mission, civic engagement is threaded throughout the campus culture, including both curricular and co-curricular initiatives. Trinity's commitment to strengthening voter participation and other civic engagement opportunities can be seen through a recently-formed Task Force comprised of students, faculty, and staff.

According to recent NSLVE reports, Trinity University student voting rates in the last two election cycles were up and higher than the "all institutions" data. In 2018, the Trinity University voting rate was 50.1% (compared to 39.1% for all institutions.) This is a strength that Trinity should build upon and continue in future election cycles. In addition, voter registration rates reflect a positive trend line across the 2016 and 2018 data sets. And yet, there is room for improvement in terms of building a cohesive experience in which students understand their civic rights and responsibilities.

Working from October 2019 to December 2020, the 2020 TU Census & Voter Engagement Task Force comprised of students, faculty, and staff volunteers seeks to accomplish the following goals in 2020:
1. Increase awareness of the 2020 Census Count and the impact of being counted;
2. Lower barriers to voting;
3. In collaboration with subject matter experts and faculty partners, educate students about issues and candidates on ballots, including important issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in voter registration and voting, information literacy, and more;
4. Increase eligible registered voters to 90% (from 86.8% in 2016 and 88% in 2018);
5. Increase the presidential election voting rate to 65% (from 44.5% in 2012 and 52.5% in 2016).
   a. Increase the proportion of male students voting to 50% (from 39.9% in 2016 and 41.1% in 2018).
   b. Increase the percentage of early voting voters to 75% (from 62.3% in 2016 and 60.1% in 2018).
   c. Raise the lowest voter turnout rate by discipline to 50% (from 37.6% in 2016 and 37.2% in 2018).

Strategies across the calendar year 2020 will be supported by student leaders, student organizations, and faculty and staff. Specific efforts will be made to engage athletic coaches, student organization advisers, and faculty across disciplines to bring relevant content into the classroom, facilitate educational co-curricular programming, and encourage student participation. The Task Force developed comprehensive strategies designed to engage all corners of the campus community from athletics to the classroom.

Leadership

Trinity University is comprised of civic-minded students who are ready to engage in these efforts. Available institutional resources include faculty and staff in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs who are interested in supporting these efforts.

The All In Challenge action plan will be supported by a variety of departments, faculty, staff, and students. A 2020 TU Census & Voter Engagement Task Force comprised of volunteers was formed to dedicate time and energy to these purposes. As the next calendar year unfolds, the Task Force desires to expand in order to include additional faculty, Residential Life, and Athletics Department, and additional student representatives.

2020 TU Census & Voter Engagement Task Force membership includes:
- Rachel Boaz Toppel, Residential Life
- Beatrice Caraway, Elizabeth Huth Coates Library

- Marcus DePaul, Strategic Communications & Marketing
- Gabriella Garriga, Trinity Diversity Connection representative
- Sarah Pita, SGA senator
- Addison Sheppard, Greek Council representative
- Dr. David Spener, Sociology & Anthropology
- Jamie Thompson, Student Involvement, *chair*
- Unknown at this time, Trinity Progressives representative
- Unknown at this time, Student Athlete Advisory Council representative

Commitment

Trinity University is guided by a mission to prepare its graduates to pursue lives of meaning and purpose and to thrive in an interconnected world. Trinity's guiding values of enduring excellence, intentional inclusion, and perpetual discovery are central to its mission. At Trinity, students are expected to connect across differences while thinking deeply and acting meaningfully.

Mission
Trinity University is a transformational liberal arts and sciences university with selected professional and pre-professional programs. In pursuit of this mission, Trinity is committed to the highest levels of academic and professional excellence in teaching, research, learning, service, leadership, and personal integrity. Trinity embraces innovation in all pursuits: rigorous and relevant courses, supportive mentoring relationships, and a wealth of learning opportunities wherever they occur. Trinity prepares its graduates to pursue lives of meaning and purpose.

Vision
Trinity will redefine liberal arts education for the 21st century. By embracing innovation, Trinity will become a national leader by preparing students to thrive in an interconnected world, strengthening interdisciplinary and experiential education, and integrating academic and residential campus life.

In 2013, the Board of Trustees approved the Trinity Tomorrow Strategic Plan. As a result, in 2015 the newly formed Center for Experiential Learning and Career Success (CELCS) opened its doors. CELCS staff work with campus and community partners to expand sites of learning from the campus classroom to local neighborhoods, the city, and beyond. CELCS in addition to other interdisciplinary programs provide numerous opportunities for students to gain direct experience working with city government agencies, non-profits, cultural institutions, established businesses, and start-ups. Such opportunities include volunteerism, community service, service-learning, community-based federal work-study, internships, and undergraduate research. Students are encouraged to reflect on and consider ways in which their involvement in those opportunities contribute to civic learning and democratic engagement.

Trinity University is also concerned about the common good, which is demonstrated in its curriculum and commitment to faculty development. CELCS has worked with the Faculty Senate and University Curriculum Council to define what constitutes an Experiential Learning (EXL) course. Essentially, an EXL-designated course suggests students will have demonstrated the ability to execute a specific project or experience that involves purposeful engagement with the local, national, or global community or the natural environment outside of the formal classroom.

The university kicked off the 2019-20 academic year by hosting a symposium entitled "Inclusive Excellence: Empowering Faculty and Staff for Serving 21st Century Learners with Diverse Perspectives." The symposium

included guest speakers on topics ranging from inclusion and mental health to rethinking assumptions about race on campus.

Other efforts indicate Trinity University's commitment to improving democratic engagement. For instance, Trinity joined the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to gather data on voter turnout since the 2012 election. In the most recent federal election, Trinity witnessed a 50.1% voting rate among its student body in the 2018 election, which was a 33.2% increase from 2014.
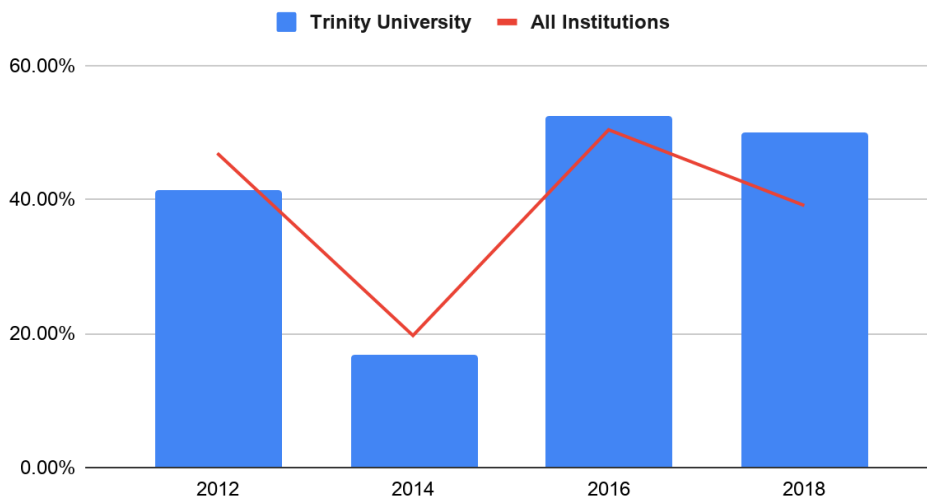
Landscape

History of democratic engagement: The NSVLE reports are a useful tool for examining areas of strength and opportunities for growth and All In Challenge action plan strategies in regards to democratic engagement. The data below provides a snapshot of the landscape of democratic engagement at Trinity University. Key patterns include:

1. Voting rates: Voting rates in the last two election cycles are up and higher than the "all institutions" data. In 2018, the Trinity University voting rate was 50.1% (compared to 39.1% for all institutions.) This is an incredible strength that Trinity should build upon and continue in future election cycles.
2. Registration rates: There is a positive trend line across the data set. This is a strength that Trinity should build upon.
3. Voting by gender: Students who identify as male vote at a significantly lower rate than students who identify as female. Efforts should be made to increase voting by male students.
4. Voting by method: The data vary. As such, there may be opportunities to increase awareness of and access to all voting methods.
5. Voting rates, by discipline: During the last two presidential elections, the lowest voting rates were found in engineering, business, English, health professions, and computer sciences. Opportunities exist to increase voting measures within these disciplines.
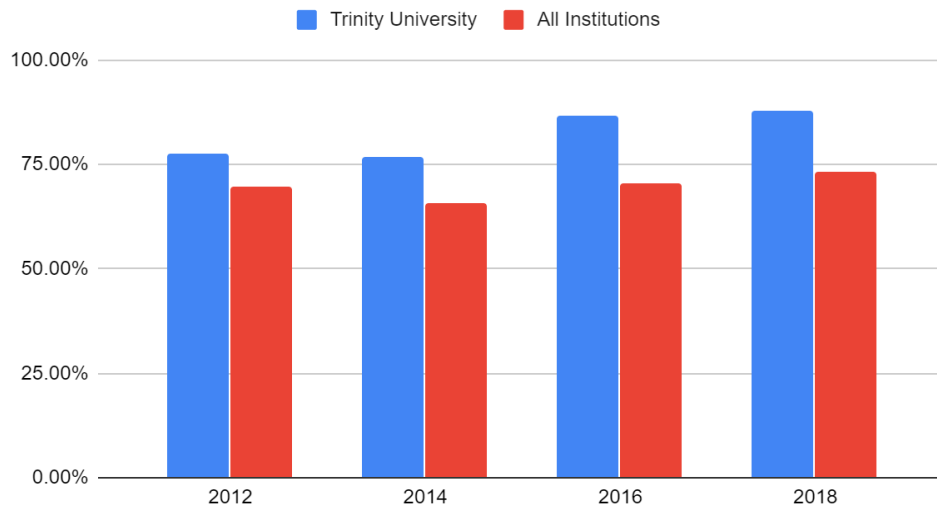
Voting rates

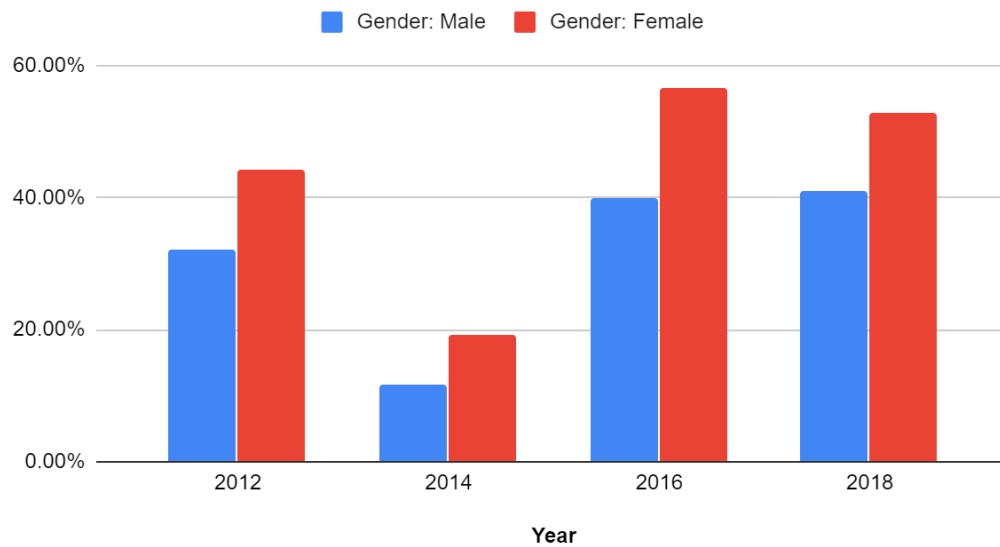**Voting Rates (TU and All Institutions)**
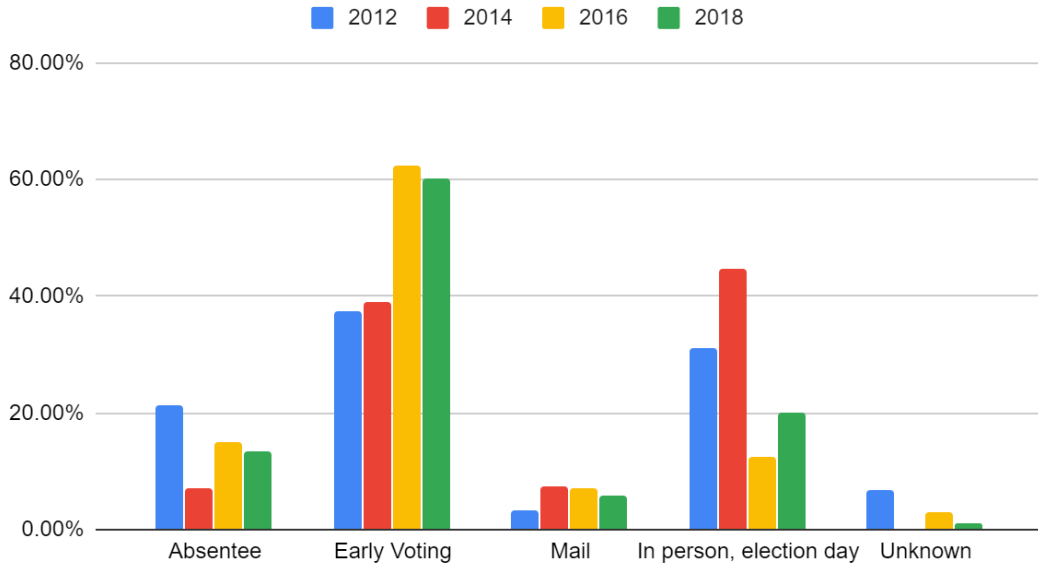
Registration rates

Registration Rates

Legend: Trinity University (blue), All Institutions (red)

Year	Trinity University	All Institutions
2012	~77.5%	~69%
2014	~76.5%	~65.5%
2016	~86.5%	~70.5%
2018	~87.5%	~73%

Voting, by gender

Voting Rates by Gender

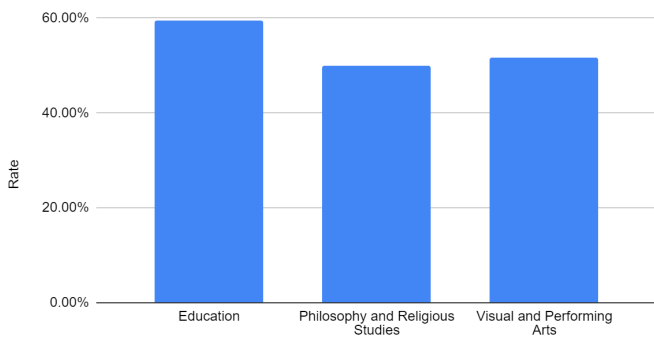Legend: Gender: Male (blue), Gender: Female (red)

Year

<u>Voting method, by year</u>
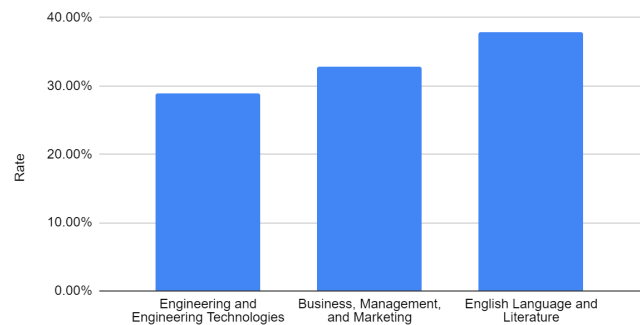
Voting Method, by year

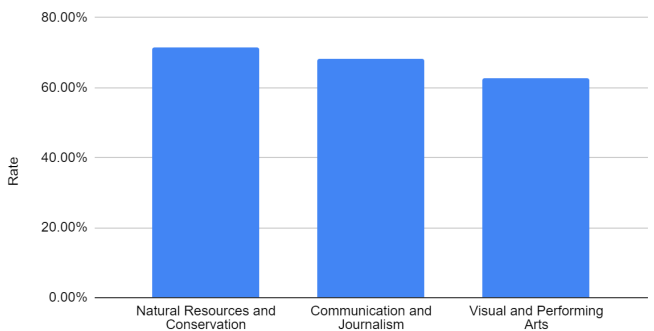<u>Voting during presidential elections, by discipline</u>

Presidential Election (2012): Highest voting rates by discipline

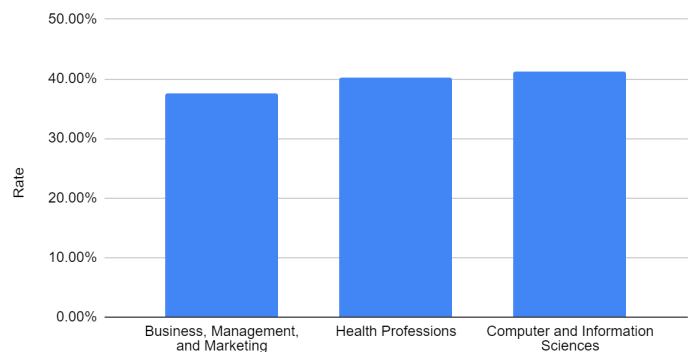**Presidential Election (2012): Lowest voting rates by discipline**

Presidential Election (2016): Highest voting rates by discipline

Presidential Election (2016): Lowest voting rates by discipline

Previous and current efforts: Previous and current efforts related to campus dialogue and civic engagement are broad and reach a variety of campus constituents. Examples are provided below.

- Approximately five years ago, SGA added a cabinet position, Legislative Relations. This position coordinates voter registration and voting efforts, in collaboration with other student organizations, approximately once/year.
- Several departments and student organizations partner with a non-partisan voter registration organization, MOVE Texas. Historically, this includes collaborative efforts with Greek Council, New Student Orientation, SGA, and Trinity Progressives.
- Office of the Chapel and Spiritual Life: Interfaith Teas occur as bi-weekly gatherings for conversation and tea to encourage dialogue and discussion around interfaith issues. Worthy Questions occur as bi-weekly (free) dinner for students interested in discussion about life's big questions.
- Texas Public Radio's "Dare to Listen" campaign: Trinity University, and specifically the University President, participated in the Dare to Listen campaign in 2016 which encouraged active listening as a means to create connections between varying perspectives.
- Milk n' Cookies & Conversation: Once/semester, Student Involvement hosts a special edition of Milk n' Cookies that engages students in dialogue around specific topics.
- Dean of Students "Speaking Of" series: From 2016-2018, the Dean of Students organized and hosted a variety of events that engaged students in discussions around hot topics (athletes and the national anthem, the Muslim student experience, and more).
- Mutual Understanding Dinner: In Spring 2017, the Vice President for Student Life and the University President, in collaboration with Student Involvement, hosted student leaders from varying political student organizations for a mutual understanding dinner. The goals were to establish relationships by learning about one another and their values.
- First Amendment "Free Food" event: From time to time, the weekly newspaper, *Trinitonian*, host a first amendment event that illustrates to students why the first amendment matters and how life might be different without it.
- Trinity University has a long history of living the institutional value of perpetual discovery via campus lectures and speakers (e.g. Soledad O'Brien, Margaret Atwood, Marc Lamont Hill, Bernie Sanders, David Books, Dinesh D'souza, and David Cameron).
- Within the Divisions of Student and Academic Affairs, staff professional development over the last two years included training on critical issues impacting students (DACA, Title IX legislation, etc.).
- Trinity University is a participating institution in the [2019 Diversity, Civility, and the Liberal Arts Institute](#) hosted by Council for Independent Colleges (CIC). Participating institutions deepen students' cognitive understanding of the issues by engaging in the humanities and social sciences and strengthen diversity and civility on campus. An implementation plan is currently in progress.
- A sample of curricular initiatives are identified below that highlight community engagement efforts and Trinity's commitment to engaging students in the San Antonio community:
    - Students in the Accounting program and Arts, Letters, and Enterprise program collaborate to develop budgets for non-profit grant proposals; students also audit transactions and develop internal control procedures for non-profits.
    - Faculty in Psychology department collaborate with the San Antonio Food Bank to study mental health concerns, with a specific emphasis on eating disorders, in those living with food insecurity in San Antonio. Students also receive research course credit for participating in this ongoing research.
    - Department of Education facilitates service-learning courses that connects students to the San Antonio community. One course pairs students with community organizations that serve people with disabilities, and students in another course provide tutoring at The Winston School of San Antonio.

- - Students participating in the Trinity-sponsored summer internship program have gained experience on political campaigns, such as Senator John Cornyn and Texas State House of Representative Diego Bernal, to satisfy internship and credit requirements.

Goals

As previously addressed, Trinity University is in the final years of a 10-year strategic plan. As such, there are no long-term, campus-wide initiatives or plans to explicitly address civic engagement. That said, the abbreviated mission of the institution, "Empowering Lives for Purpose," very closely connects to civic and democratic engagement. Administrators, faculty, and staff work in alignment with this overarching goal on a daily basis.

In the short-term, Trinity University has set the following goals for 2020:
1. Increase awareness of the 2020 Census Count and the impact of being counted;
2. Lower barriers to voting;
3. In collaboration with subject matter experts and faculty partners, educate students about issues and candidates on ballots, including important issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in voter registration and voting, information literacy, and more;
4. Increase eligible registered voters to 90% (from 86.8% in 2016 and 88% in 2018);
5. Increase the presidential election voting rate to 65% (from 44.5% in 2012 and 52.5% in 2016).
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   c. Raise the lowest voter turnout rate by discipline to 50% (from 37.6% in 2016 and 37.2% in 2018).

Strategy

Note: These plans have been modified since the original submission in December 2019. Items in ==yellow== have completed; items in ~~strikethrough~~ were not applicable (due to COVID-19 or other circumstances).

Winter 2019-2020
1. ==Convene 2020 TU Census & Voter Engagement Task Force==
2. ==Complete Census Bureau Campus Committee training==
3. ==Develop All in Challenge action plan==
4. ==Share action plan with wide variety of constituents and seek feedback==

Spring 2020
January
5. ==Develop a detailed implementation plan for these strategies in order to identify the who, what, where, and when for each initiative==
February
6. ==Visit department chairs meeting to share information/updates with academic department chairs and request their participation.== The following forms of faculty participation will be encouraged:
   - Develop informed voters: Use election topics to teach fact-checking and online media literacy in stand-alone programs (teach-in, panel, etc.) or embedding content in Fall 2020 courses
   - Involve faculty across disciplines in elections: Encourage faculty to work with students on election or policy questions in the classroom. Have faculty remind students to register and vote.

7. A member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) disseminates the NSLVE report to academic department chairs and Student Life staff
8. With leadership from the TU Table Talks group host intergroup communication training
9. Continue to build a relationship and collaboration with MOVE Texas
10. Host a deputization training on campus in order to increase the number of Trinity University community members who can register others to vote.
    - Send out call for Deputized registrants to see who is already deputized
    - Provide desk/office/email signature notices for those who are deputized to ensure the community is aware of their options

March

11. Place an ad in the Trinitonian newspaper to inform the community about the Census, the importance of being counted, and how to be counted
12. ~~Submit an opinion piece to the Trinitonian newspaper about the importance of the Census~~
13. ~~Meet with faculty leaders in disciplines with low voting rates to discuss ways in which their departments can be supported~~
14. ~~Email all department chairs with their respective voting rate data~~

April

15. ~~Host Super Nacho Hour on Census Day (April 1)~~
16. Evaluate Task Force membership given student attrition and graduation
17. Request funding from SGA to support Fall voter engagement initiatives, including TurboVote

Summer 2020

June and July

18. Implement TurboVote platform in collaboration with Risk Management, Strategic Communications & Marketing, and SGA
19. Identify students who can complete van certification in order to transport students to voting locations in the fall
20. Meet with Michael Hughes to discuss the ability for First Year Experience (FYE) Peer Tutors to share voter registration/education information during FYE courses
21. Leverage student leadership to recruit student ambassadors/volunteers to support Summer and Fall initiatives as extensions of the Task Force.
    - Specifically, identify fraternity members, male student athletes, and students from underrepresented populations.
    - Utilize coaches, fraternity/sorority advisers, and student organization advisers to support initiatives and nominate students to participate
22. Request to participate in academic department chairs retreat to share relevant information with key faculty decision makers
23. Request that the University president:
    - Send an all-campus email encouraging all eligible voters to register and vote and/or
    - Include a voter registration and voter turnout message in the August Faculty Assembly remarks and/or
    - Create a video and post it on social media about voter registration and voter turnout

Fall 2020

August

24. Send an email to academic department chairs with the following information:
    - Encourage faculty to include early voter registration dates/election date in their Fall 2020 course syllabi

- ○ Resources for voter registration and early voting (TurboVote)
- ○ Calendar of events
25. Request that the Vice President for Student Life send an all-faculty email with the following information:
    - ○ Encourage faculty to include early voter registration dates/election date in their Fall 2020 course syllabi
    - ○ Resources for voter registration and early voting (TurboVote)
    - ○ Calendar of events
26. Send an email to TULeaderTalk listserv with TurboVote resources, calendar of deadlines/programs, and other timely information
27. Distribute welcome kits to all incoming students that includes printed collateral with registration/voting deadlines and campus events and a "I am a voter" button
28. Register first year and transfer students to vote during New Student Orientation, highlighting TurboVote where possible
29. Have a presence at Sophomore College Conference and Junior/Senior Happy Hours (hosted by Residential Life) during Welcome Week
30. Collaborate with Library staff to promote voter registration and voter education efforts, where possible

September
31. Convene the larger group of student ambassadors/volunteers identified in late Summer (by coaches, advisers, student Task Force members, and more). This group's purpose is to be a student-centered marketing and awareness group to educate the student body on voter education issues. The group will meet three times in the Fall to distribute information, share resources, and delegate duties.
32. FYE (common lectures) presentations after Labor Day
33. Place an ad in the Trinitonian newspaper to inform the community about TurboVote, voter registration opportunities, and other relevant programs
34. Submit an opinion piece to the Trinitonian newspaper about the importance of voter registration and voter turnout
35. Request that University leadership send a campus email about Constitution Day and include language about voter registration and campus efforts around civic engagement
36. In collaboration with MOVE Texas and other student organizations, host a National Voter Registration Day event, including moving Super Nacho Hour to Tuesday (instead of the typical Wednesday)
37. Table in Coates Student Center on a recurring basis to:
    - ○ Share resources via TurboVote
    - ○ Register students to vote
    - ○ Distribute "I'm Registered!" stickers
38. Residential Life will host an inter-dorm voter registration competition with incentives

October
39. Share voting messaging via campus emails, social media platforms, including images/videos of Trinity University mascot, LeeRoy, voting
40. Table at football tailgates
41. Request that the large group of student ambassadors/volunteers give short announcements at the beginning of class
42. Table in Coates Student Center on a recurring basis to:
    - ○ Share resources via TurboVote
    - ○ Digital photo program to capture student, faculty, staff responses to "What issues interest you in this election?" and share on social media platforms
    - ○ Distribute "I am a voter" buttons

November
43. Place an ad in the Trinitonian newspaper to publicize early voting options and polling locations

44. Place an ad in the Trinitonian newspaper to publicize Election Watch Party
45. Provide transportation to/from polls during early voting and on election day and widely publicize schedule
46. Host election Watch Party

Long-term Goals
- Meet in December 2020 to discuss long-term goals and next steps, given staffing and committee membership at that time. Examples include:
  - Move Precinct 2055 from Alamo Stadium to Trinity University
  - Build a culture of coalition-building around civic learning and democratic engagement (i.e. transform into an official University committee)

Reporting

The Vice President for Academic Affairs approved the 2020 TU Census & Voter Engagement Task Force co-chairs' request to attend the Department Chairs meeting in February 2020 to discuss the purpose of the Task Force and All In Challenge campaign, review the action plan and strategies developed, and to solicit feedback and ideas. On a more continuous basis, the co-chairs plan to provide periodic updates to the Student Life Leadership Team, to the Associate Vice President for Curriculum and Faculty Development, and SGA.

TurboVote, if/when implemented, will serve as a one-stop-shop resource web page for the Trinity community. In addition, various reporting functions are possible for platform administrators. These functions will be explored for reporting and assessment mechanisms.

The Task Force, with oversight from the chair, will draft a final report at the end of 2020. The Task Force will review the action plan and highlight successes and challenges from the 2020 year. The Task Force will also share data from the next NSLVE report when that is made available.

Evaluation

Evaluation of these efforts will aid future strategies and collaborative partnerships. The most significant form of evaluation will be the 2020 NSLVE report which will indicate whether voter registration rates and voting rates increased, in addition to gender, discipline, and voting methods details. Additional forms of evaluation will include:
1. Budget tracking to determine total costs for these efforts;
2. Census efforts in Spring 2020 will be submitted to the San Antonio Higher Education Task Force via a Google form. A copy of these efforts will be retained for the All in Challenge action plan;
3. Stand-alone events will be evaluated via a brief post-event survey and participation numbers via Presence check-in platform;
4. TurboVote data will reflect student participation in and engagement with TurboVote resources;
5. Consideration will be given to distributing an all-campus survey via SGA post-election day in order to measure student perception of awareness of two of the stated goals, specifically: 1) lower barriers to voting and 2) educate students about issues and candidates on ballots, including important issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in voter registration and voting, information literacy, and more.