

# Faculty Leadership


First Edition - 2020

As teaching staff and faculty at Harvard, you influence students, staff, and fellow faculty. Together, we can shift campus to 100% voter engagement. When discussing voting with students, use the clause “if eligible” to include international and undocumented populations, and encourage students to mobilize their peers.

Join your school's voting team to get started: <https://voteschallenge.harvard.edu/meet-team>

## Promotion





 **Key Voting Dates:** Add three key voting dates to your course syllabus and make in-person and email announcements on these days. Give students five minutes to check their voter registration at [www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting](http://www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting) or make a plan to vote.


**Tuesday, 9/22** National Voter Registration & Request Your Absentee Ballot Day

**Tuesday, 10/13** Submit Your Ballot Day

**Tuesday, 11/3** Election Day

 **Canvas:** Create a separate tab for Voting Engagement. See appendix for sample language.

 **Email Signature:** Add a line to the bottom of your email signature with why you vote or encouraging others to engage in voting. Link to: [www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting](http://www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting).


 **Election Day:** Avoid major assignments and tests (11/3). Allow excused absences.


 **Promotion:** Display non-partisan voting collateral in your office or on your website.


 **COVID-19:** Present end of semester voting advisement in class or via email. See appendix.

## Engaging Your Students




 **Poll Workers:** Allow excused absences for students to be Election Day poll workers or provide extra credit for poll working / joining the HVC team.

 **Invite:** HVC Organizers can attend your class to discuss voting importance and resources.

 **Connect:** Invite students to join the HVC team — [voteschallenge.harvard.edu/take-action](http://voteschallenge.harvard.edu/take-action)

## Curricular Integration



 Democracy and voting can be woven into **lectures and assignments** of any subject: Computer Science problem sets, film class PSA's, science analyses of public funding, and education policy. Discuss key tenants of democracy such as media literacy and participation.

*Want to discuss? Contact Kevin Ballen at [voteschallenge@harvard.edu](mailto:voteschallenge@harvard.edu).*

## Engage Your Peers



 Mobilize **THREE** faculty members to join you in promoting voter engagement.

 Host a **departmental event** focused on voting or that has voting resources.

 **Attend a training.** Learn how to engage voters from all 50 states — [bit.ly/hvctrainings](http://bit.ly/hvctrainings)

Let us know your plan: [bit.ly/facultycommitment](http://bit.ly/facultycommitment)

## **Appendix**

### What is the Harvard Votes Challenge?

The Harvard Votes Challenge is a university-wide non-partisan initiative working towards 100% voter registration, engagement, and turnout across all of Harvard's degree-granting schools and beyond. Created by students, administrators, and faculty members in 2018, the initiative is coordinated by the Institute of Politics and the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the Harvard Kennedy School. We build a culture of participation through a diverse coalition, institutionalization, and creative organizing.

### Voting on Harvard's Campus

- Only 1/2 of eligible Harvard students vote at our institution priding ourselves on civic leadership. Fortunately, our culture is changing. In recent US elections, Harvard student voter turnout increased from 22.4% in 2014 to 48.6% in 2018, ten percentage points above the national average and on par with presidential election turnout in previous cycles. If we double again, we can hit 100% engagement. Participation translates education into action. Voting as a student is a proven pipeline into lifelong civic commitment and engagement.
- Voter engagement is non-partisan. Per the Higher Education Act of 1965, universities must do their best effort to provide voter information to students.
- Voting is often seen as an extracurricular student activity — our goal is to make participation an institutional priority in which everyone has a role.
- Students can either vote in-person using their Cambridge/Boston address or by-mail (absentee) using their home address. Since more than half of students University-wide vote absentee, there are many barriers (moving deadlines, stamps, multiple step processes) that make voting difficult for students. Our goal is to build a culture of engagement, while mitigating these barriers, to push forward participation. Becoming voter-ready as early as possible is critical.
- Elections at all levels are incredibly important. Encourage students to research all candidates and elected offices.
- 75% of students are registered to vote but only 48.6% turn out, creating an “engagement gap.”
- Our Campus has many undocumented and ineligible students. Elections and how we vote affect these populations. In language discussing elections use the terminology “if eligible,” emphasize that anyone can organize, and point people to a variety of civic resources.


## Email Signature Samples

Be sure to include a link to [voteschallenge.harvard.edu](https://voteschallenge.harvard.edu)

- Be a voter.
- 2020 is here. Vote with me!
- Want to engage voters with me?
- Are you ready for November 3? Register to vote.
- I vote because:
- Register. Request. Vote.
- Don't just talk about change. Vote.
- Education is preparing you to vote.

## COVID 19 Information

In your final classes of the semester, you can use the below information to make sure your students are ready to participate in elections over the summer.

 <p><b>HARVARD VOTES</b> CHALLENGE</p>	<p>Given our current times, making sure you are voter-ready is more urgent and important than ever. There are many critical local and national elections taking place this summer. Visit <a href="https://voteschallenge.harvard.edu">voteschallenge.harvard.edu</a> to register to vote, request an absentee ballot, or research your candidates. You may have to forward your mail or update your voter registration based on your current location. Keep an eye on changing election dates and processes at <a href="https://vote.org/covid-19">vote.org/covid-19</a>.</p>
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## Language for Key Voting Dates

*National Voter Registration & Request Your Ballot Day — Tuesday, 9/22*

Today is National Voter Registration & Request Your Ballot Day! Your assignment today is to check your voter registration (pay special attention to your address), register to vote, or update your registration. If you are registered to vote at home, request your absentee ballot today. If you are registered to vote on Campus, add a visit to the polls into your calendar and invite three friends. The Harvard Votes Challenge website - [www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting](https://www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting) - can help you through the process.

If you are not eligible to vote in US elections, mobilize three friends to vote. Elections affect all of us.

*Submit Your Ballot Day — Tuesday, 10/13*

Today is Submit Your Ballot Day! Research your elections and take action. If you haven't requested your ballot yet, there is still time. [www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting](https://www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting)

If you are not eligible to vote in US elections, mobilize three friends to vote. Elections affect all of us.

*Election Day — Tuesday, 11/3*

Today is election day! When are you voting? Find your MA polling location here:

[www.sec.state.ma.us/voterregistrationsearch/myvoterregstatus.aspx](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/voterregistrationsearch/myvoterregstatus.aspx).

If you are not eligible to vote in US elections, mobilize three friends to vote. Elections affect all of us.

### Canvas Integration

*Feel free to customize with how voting is important to your course subject.*

As a student in this class, we expect that each of you apply your studies to action. One critical way to act is through full voter participation — research your elections, make a plan to vote, and encourage your community to turn out.

Register to Vote & Request Your Ballot by 9/22

Submit Your Ballot (if voting by mail) by 10/13

Turnout on Election Day on 11/3

[www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting](http://www.voteschallenge.harvard.edu/voting) will guide you through the process. If you are not eligible to vote in US elections, mobilize three friends to vote. Elections affect all of us.

### Poll Working Information

Direct student and peers here: <https://www.workelections.com>

### Curricular & Event Ideas

#### *Potential Projects*

- Life Sciences: Hold a facilitated discussion on climate and energy. Train students on how to communicate their research findings with elected officials.
- Social Sciences: Design an ethnography of nonvoters.
- Computer Science: Design and implement solutions to mail-in voting systems.
- Statistics: Assign a problem set that analyzes voting power across different municipalities or states.
- Health: Hypothesize the future of health care based on voting behavior.
- Design: Redesign the voting booth or the voter registration form.
- History & Law: Discuss voting enfranchisement over time.

### *Departmental Events*

- Invite local elected officials to speak about your academic subjects relationship to public leadership.
- Hold a “Why I Vote” event.
- Integrate a voter engagement table into an already existing gathering.

### Additional Reading

*Teaching Civic Engagement Across Disciplines:* <http://web.apsanet.org/teachingcivicengagement>