

General Education Assessment: Civic Engagement Results 2021

What do we mean by Civic Engagement?

Virginia Western describes Critical Thinking as the ability to contribute to the civic life and well-being of local, national, and global communities as both a social responsibility and a life-long learning process.

A civically engaged student will:

- interact with community organization
- demonstrate social awareness
- identify and apply civic knowledge to their field

How do we assess Civic Engagement?

We assessed students' civic engagement through participation in the 2020 national elections. Virginia Western partners with the [National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement](#) (NSLVE), a service to colleges and universities interested in learning their students' aggregate voter registration and turnout rates in national elections. NSLVE is administered through the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education (IDHE), a non-partisan applied research institute located at Tufts University's Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life.

Based on NSLVE reports, 59.8% of eligible students at Virginia Western registered and voted in the 2012 national elections, and 58.7% voted in the 2016 elections. These rates are 10 percentage points higher than for associate degree institutions nationwide. Virginia Western has established maintaining a 60% voting rate as the standard for success for the 2020 national elections. This standard reflects concerns regarding COVID-19 impact on voter turnout.

What were our results?

Results will be evaluated after release from NSLVE in 2021.

Have results changed since the last time this outcome was assessed?

NSLVE has already provided a summary of voter registration and turnout by Virginia Western students in the 2012 and 2016 national elections. These will be compared against the 2020 voter registration and turnout numbers after release from NSLVE in 2021.

What changes are we making to improve student learning for Civic Engagement?

The need for changes will be evaluated after the 2020 voter registration and turnout numbers are received from NSLVE in 2021.

HOW YOUR NUMBERS COMPARE | PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

By Carnegie Classification

2012 Voting Rate for All Institutions

47.6%

HIGH 75.65%

LOW 19.35%

2016 Voting Rate for All Institutions

50.6%

HIGH 81.35%

LOW 13.12%

Difference from All Institutions **+12.2**

Difference from All Institutions **+8.1**

