

CIVIC

LEARNING/ENGAGEMENT

NKU puts a high value on preparing our students to be informed citizens who participate in the American democracy—and those efforts are paying off: NKU students vote at significantly higher rates than their peers at other universities, according to a national study by Tufts University.

Voter registration rates for NKU students also exceed the national average, according to the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, which is coordinated at Tufts.

The study analyzed university student voting trends in 2012 and 2014. In the 2012 presidential race, 60.2 percent of NKU students who were eligible to vote did so, compared with 46.9 percent of students nationally at comparable institutions.

In the 2014 midterm elections—where turnout is typically lower than in presidential elections—voter turnout among NKU students was 27.1 percent, compared with 18.8 percent among students at comparable institutions.

NKU has a portfolio of programs geared toward engaging students in public affairs, including voters registration drives, public affairs discussions in small groups, and volunteer opportunities with Kids Voting Northern Kentucky.

The Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement and several campus co-sponsors also support a Newspaper Readership Program on campus that includes a limited daily delivery of free copies of USA Today and the New York Times; free digital delivery of the Times; and classroom access to the Associated Press wire.



SPECIAL SPEAKERS

Princeton neuroscientist and polling analyst Sam Wang spoke at NKU in March 2016. He is an example of an ongoing commitment to bring national speakers to campus to discuss public affairs and elections.

DEMOCRACY SQUARE

A white board wall in the lobby of Steely Library invites student commentary on a public affairs questions each week. By week's end, the wall is typically full, with vibrant back-and-forth dialogue. The wall is part of an overall effort to keep public affairs discussions front and center at NKU.

VOTING TRENDS

In October 2015, NKU hosted a regional conference on voting trends and issues, with about 70 college students in attendance from eight universities. The students heard from national and local speakers in the morning and in the afternoon discussed ways to improve voter access and participation. One of their recommendations was online voting registration. Kentucky has since implemented that innovation. Secretary of State Alison Grimes launched the new initiative at NKU in