

**Dear Faculty Member,**

**The Emory Votes Initiative needs you to help** the students of Emory University fulfill their civic duty to vote. Young adults aged 18–29 are woefully underrepresented in U.S. elections. They are the largest generation, outcomes will affect them the longest, and yet they vote at the lowest rate of any age group. Only 47 percent of eligible Emory students voted in the 2016 general election.

**Why you?** Students, including grad students, see faculty as trusted authority figures. With remote learning, you may also be one of their *only* regular points of connection to Emory. Devoting a little nonpartisan class or advising time to civic education can set them up for a lifetime as engaged global citizens and strengthen democracy in our country.

**Why do so few students vote?** Their #1 barrier is a simple lack of information. Registration and voting requirements vary. Forms are confusing. It's not obvious how to vote early or by mail. Living away from home adds another wrinkle. On top of all this, the pandemic has upturned procedures nationwide.

**Emory wants to smooth the path to the polls.** As an institution of higher learning, we have a responsibility to help eligible students overcome these process barriers. To that end, the Emory Votes Initiative (EVI), a campuswide effort supported by the provost's office, has contracted to provide the Emory community with **TurboVote**. This online service makes voting easier. It helps students register or reregister in their state of choice, texts reminders about elections, and can send an absentee ballot *application* and stamped envelope to help them **vote by mail**. Emory has also joined the [All-In](#) Campus Democracy Challenge, a national organization devoted to achieving 90% rates of student voting.

**What if your subject doesn't include voting and politics?** Our elected leaders determine policies on issues such as student loan conditions, climate change, and regulation of social media that affect *all* students. But they also influence legislation affecting specific disciplines, such as funding for scientific research, fiscal policy, minimum wage, and taxation. For more detail, see "Why Elections Matter for All Students" in the Faculty Toolkit on [EVI's website](#).

**When and how to help?** The sooner in the fall the better to allow time for registering, processing, and absentee ballot mailings back and forth. Some professors introduce voting right at the start of a course. Or consider aiming for National Voter Registration Day, September 22. For suggestions on how to go about it, see "How to Encourage Student Voting" and other resources in EVI's [Faculty Toolkit](#). Please pick the methods and duration that feel right for you. Note that first-year students will encounter TurboVote through orientation, and not all students are eligible to vote.

Thank you for taking a few minutes out of your teaching—or one-on-one advising—to bring up voting and TurboVote. Your effort can go a long way toward helping students express their voices at the polls.

*The **Emory Votes Initiative** is a nonpartisan collaboration of faculty, students, and staff from across the university supported by the Office of the Provost and Campus Life and housed in the Center for Civic and Community Engagement. Contact: [emoryvotes@emory.edu](mailto:emoryvotes@emory.edu)*

