



Voter Registration Online Access Proposal

Proposed Motion: Support efforts to increase the accessibility of online voter registration.

Sponsor: Kaylee Galloway, AS VP for Governmental Affairs

Persons of Contact: Graham Marmion, AS REP Associate Director

Guest Speaker: Graham Marmion

Date: April 17, 2014

Background & Context

Currently, students have the option to register to vote through their MyWestern Web4U under Student Registration. The link can be found third from the bottom titled "Do You Wish To Register To Vote" and links to this page: <http://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/Print-Voter-Registration-Forms.aspx>. Having online voter registration is mandated by RCW 29A.08.310 (4) which reads: "Each institution of higher education shall put in place an active prompt on its course registration web site, or similar web site that students actively and regularly use, that, if selected, will link the student to the secretary of state's voter registration web site. The prompt must ask the student if he or she wishes to register to vote." It is important to have the online voter registration option be accessible to all students. Our 2013 Vote Coordinator identified the online voter registration as a primary weakness in our current voter registration efforts because the current location is not noticeable and the link is outdated. Graham met with David Brunner, the Registrar, to discuss this issue. Brunner was open to changing the location, formatting, and link, but wanted AS Board approval.

Summary of Proposal

Graham is seeking board support and approval to make online voter registration more accessible by:

1. Advocating for additional university programs to provide the voter registration link on websites including, but not limited to, MyWestern, Web4U, Registrar, and ResLife. Students benefit from having the link made widely available and easily accessible.
2. Improving the current Web4U voter registration link by:
 - Changing the location: We would like the "Do You Wish To Register To Vote" link to be the top option under the Web4U Student Registration tab.
 - Changing the font color: We would like the "Do You Wish To Register To Vote" link to be in bold red font as opposed to the standard blue.
 - Changing the link: We would like the "Do You Wish To Register To Vote" to link to www.registerinwa.org/western. This is a link that is provided to WWU by the Washington Bus. When students register using this link, it allows us to track the number of students registered as well as provide students with the opportunity to give us their contact information for get out the vote purposes.

Fiscally: There are no fiscal implications.

Rationale: Voter registration is an imperative component to student representation, which is a core AS value. Increased accessibility benefits all students and their ability to participate in civic engagement.

Online Voter Registration Tool
Washington Bus Education Fund
Website: www.registerinwa.org/western
Date: April 21, 2014

The Washington Bus Education Fund “registerinwa.org” online tool is a resource for partners to use to increase their voter registration, education, and mobilization efforts.

Background:

Washington Online Voter Registration Unique URLs

The Washington Secretary of State’s (SOS) office implemented online voter registration in 2007 through a website called MyVote (www.myvote.wa.gov). In order to help groups track their progress and outreach efforts the SOS office implemented unique URLs. Organizations and groups in Washington can request a unique url from the SOS office to be able to track the amount of users that have registered through their efforts. The SOS office will provide the first name, last name, and birth date of every user who uses the unique url to register to vote in a monthly excel sheet. For more information see the SOS online guide here: http://www.sos.wa.gov/assets/elections/MyVote_unique_URL.pdf

In 2013 the Washington Bus Education Fund developed an online voter registration cover page to direct users before they register to vote using MyVote.

Purpose of an online voter registration cover page:

1. Capture contact information to increase education and voter turn out: See below.
2. Provide information for out of state students and those without a state- ID. You cannot register to vote online if you do not have a state ID, so students who are out of state cannot register online. The cover page provides a link for a paper form that you can print.
3. Provide campus – specific voting information on the cover page.
4. Mobilize students who want to get further updates about campus civic engagement information.

1. Contact information and voter turnout

The SOS office only provides the first name, last name, and birthdate of those who use the unique url, which means they do not provide contact information. Research shows that new voters who are contacted with a reminder to vote and information on how to return their ballots are more likely to vote. In 2012 those that were registered to vote with the coordinated Youth Vote Coalition (including Western) and who were called with a reminder to vote, turned out to vote at 81% in comparison to 60% of the 18-29 year old voters in Washington State.

Gathering contact information is a necessary component of creating a voter registration and education program. Contact information should only be used for get out the vote purposes before an election to provide education and voting information.

2. ***Provide information for out of state students and those without a state- ID.*** Currently MyVote requires that the voter must have a Washington state ID in order to have a signature on file for verifying the voter's ballot. This means that you cannot register to vote online if you do not have a state ID, so students who are out of state cannot register online. The cover page provides a link for a paper form that you can print and explains why you cannot register online without state ID.
3. ***Provide campus – specific voting information on the cover page***
Registering to vote is only one step in engaging a new voter in the voting process. Most campuses have specific resources on campus. By having a cover page, a campus can include specific information about their campus resources. For example this could include ballot drop box locations, an address for your campus civic engagement office, etc.
4. ***Mobilize students about campus involvement opportunities.***
The cover page has an option to stay updated on upcoming campus events. This allows a user to keep updated on any other education or civic engagement related events on campus. Because you can only use contact information from voter registration for get out the vote purposes, the check box allows for a second permission to contact the person.

Cover Page Information:

Online website: www.registerinwa.org/western

Page Administrator: Katie Stultz, Campus Coordinator, Washington Bus Education Fund

Type of Website: Wordpress

Organization: The Washington Bus Education Fund is a 501 c3 non-profit, non-partisan organization that serves to get young people engaged in the political process through education, leadership development and voter registration.

Website Privacy Policy:

Privacy Policy

Registerinwa.org is offered as a service of The Washington Bus Education Fund to promote Washington's Online Voter Registration option for voters. The Washington Bus does not sell personal information or data from registerinwa.org. A volunteer may contact you (using the phone number you inputted on the registerinwa.org website) around election time to remind you to vote and see if you have any questions about the voting process (i.e. how to vote, when to vote, etc). Voters who check the "Send me a text and give me a call to remind me to vote!" box are opting into a text message communication program and may receive a text message voting reminder around election time. This is a "get out the vote" courtesy to assist voters with knowing important information so that they can cast their ballot come election day. Contact info@washingtonbus.org if you have any inquiries.

Data process:

Data capture	Contact Information from www.registerinwa.org/western	SOS Voter Registration Information from MyVote	Contact Information for any user who checked “keep me updated on upcoming campus events”
Where the data goes	Contact information goes into an excel sheet that is matched with the data from the SOS office once someone has registered to vote. The contact information is used only for get out the vote reminder contacts made through the WWU Rep office.	SOS office sends the Bus an excel sheet of those who registered to vote using the unique URL every month.	Contact information for users who checked that they wished to stay updated is sent in an excel sheet to the AS WWU Rep office to use for further contact., they are not contacted by the Bus or added to any other database.

FAQ:

Will a person be contacted if they include their contact information and who will contact them?

Yes, they will be called the week before the elections by a WWU volunteer if the WWU Rep office plans to host a phone bank. The Washington Bus Education Fund serves a resource for setting up phone banks, but will not call those registered to vote through www.registerinwa.org/western independently of the WWU Rep office.

Where does the contact information from the online cover page go?

The data from www.registerinwa.org/western goes into a database through the wordpress website that is administered by Katie Stultz, Campus Coordinator, Washington Bus Education Fund. The information is kept in the database until it is matched with the voter information from the SOS unique URL page in the Voter Activation Network. The data is kept in a separate list for WWU 2013 - 2014 Voter Registration.