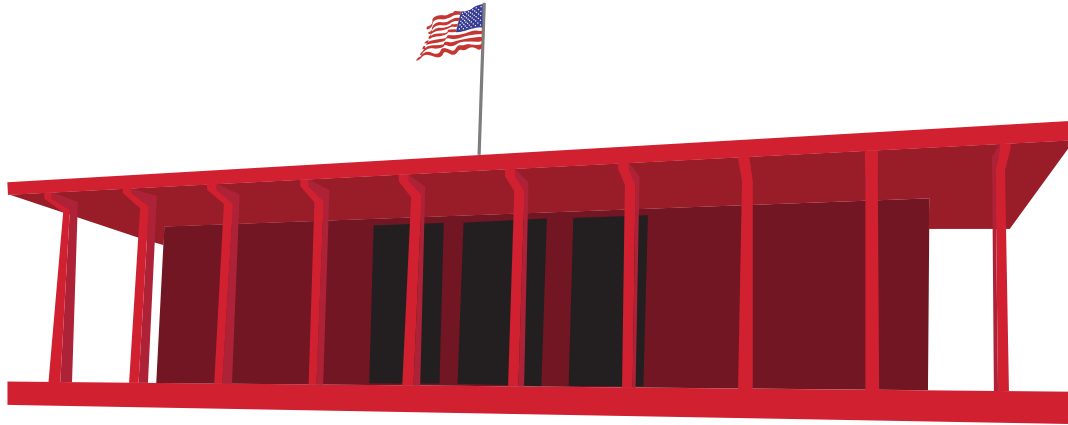


CSUN Student Voters

In light of the upcoming election, this report shares data on CSUN student engagement in recent elections.

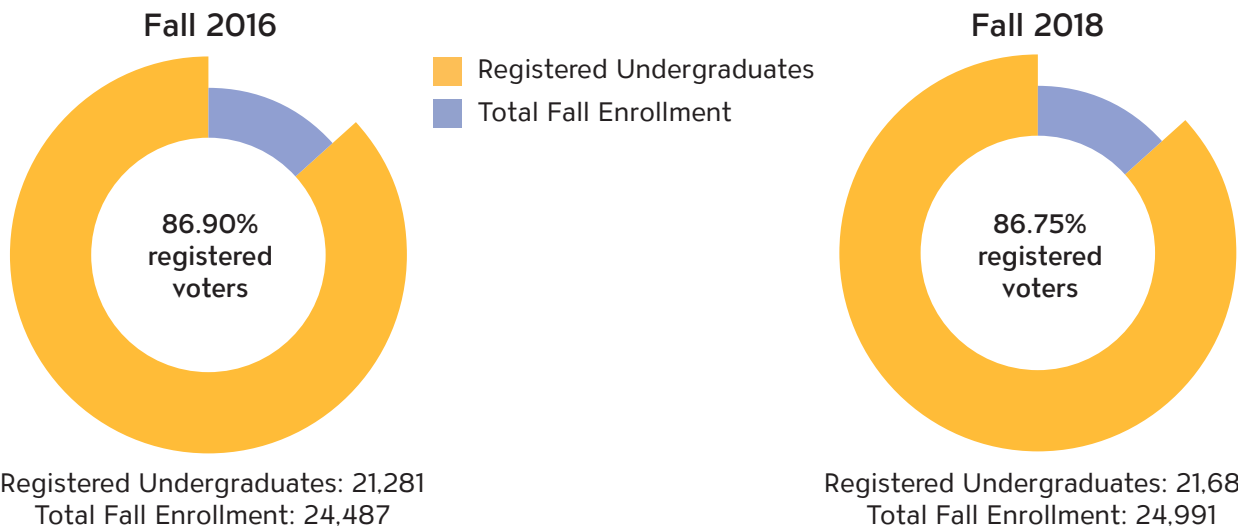


Publicly available voter registration and turnout records from the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk’s Office were cross-referenced with student demographic data compiled by the CSUN Office of Institutional Research for this report. The dataset therefore consists of CSUN undergraduates who were registered to vote in Los Angeles County during the 2016 general and 2018 midterm elections.

Although we recognize that these data are not inclusive of all CSUN student voters, Los Angeles County residents nonetheless account for about 80% of undergraduates enrolled at CSUN during the Fall 2016 and 2018 semesters.

Student Voter Registration

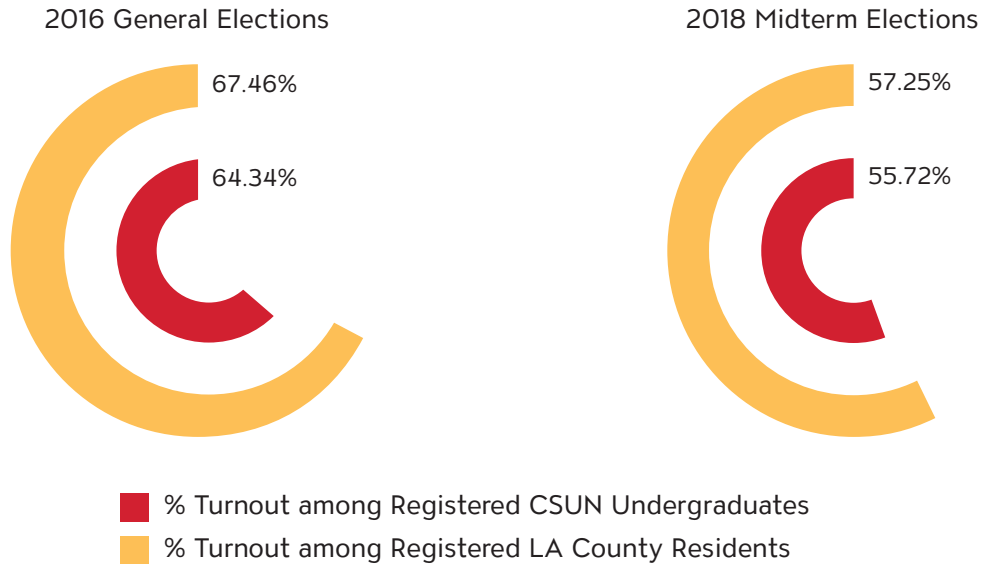
Among undergraduate CSUN students who are eligible to vote in LA County, ***an overwhelming majority are registered.***



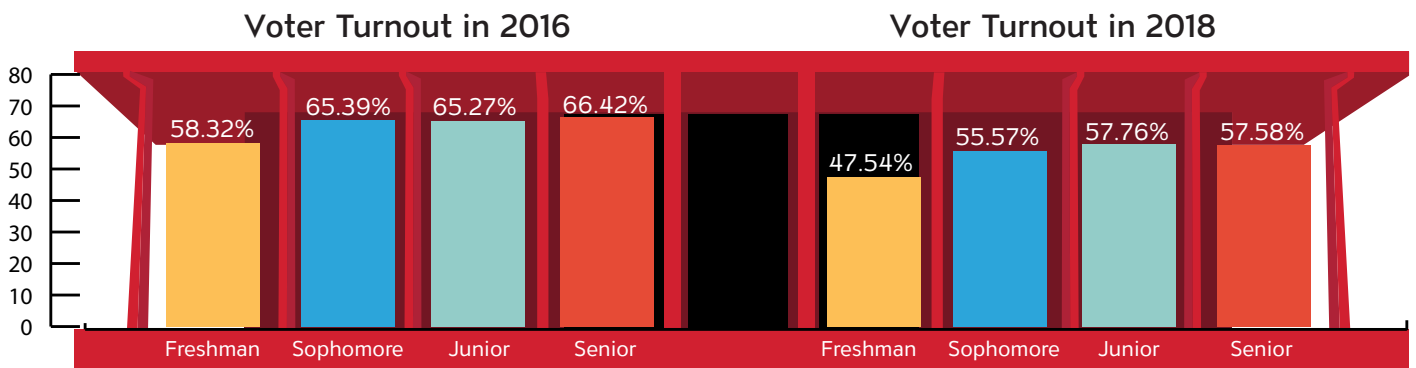
Voter Turnout

A majority of registered students turned out to vote in the 2016 general and 2018 midterm elections. Voter turnout is similar to voter turnout in LA County overall.

Research consistently demonstrates that young adults (18-24) are less likely to vote compared to older adults (25+) in U.S. elections.¹ Yet our findings show that CSUN undergraduates, whose average age is 23 years, turned out to vote at rates comparable to the registered Los Angeles County population – an older population on average.



Voter turnout is higher among seniors, juniors, and sophomores than freshmen.

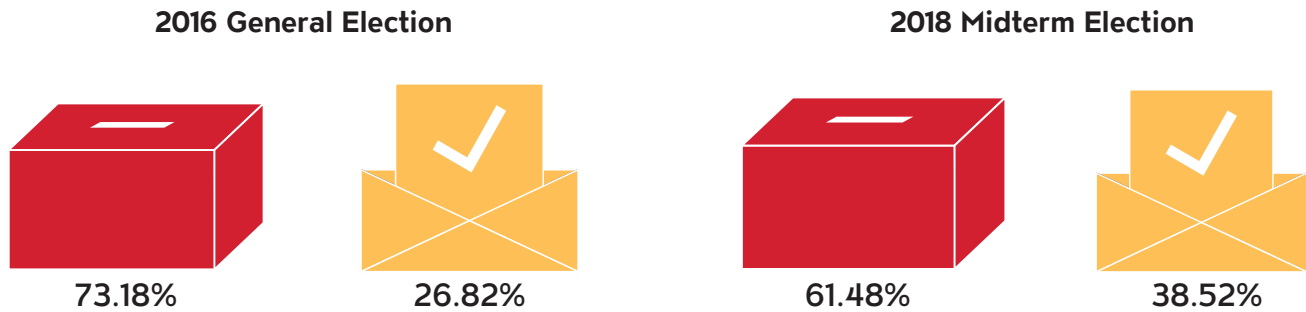


¹ For an overview, see Leighly, Jan E., and Jonathan Nagler. 2014. *Who Votes Now? Demographics, Issues, Inequality, and Turnout in the United States*. Princeton University Press.

Voter Turnout

A majority of students voted in person. The percentage of students who voted by mail increased between 2016 and 2018.

While many students vote in person, the percentage of students voting by mail increased from 2016 to 2018. Due to California's recent implementation of automatic mail-in ballots, the percentage of mail in ballots among CSUN students will likely increase after the 2020 election.



Conclusion

A majority of registered CSUN students living in LA County turned out to vote in the 2018 and 2016 elections. After crossing the registration hurdle, it is likely that these students will vote again in future elections. Still, there remains a sizeable gap between students registered to vote and students who turned out to vote. Disparities in voter turnout among CSUN students also exist, as freshmen are less likely to participate in elections.

Overall, these findings suggest that colleges and university campuses may serve as important mobilizing agents that have the potential to encourage participation in politics. As the 2020 election approaches, members and organizations within the CSUN community have worked to inform students about the election process as well as relevant candidates and propositions on the ballot. The research literature on civic engagement among college students points to correlations with academic outcomes; we will continue to examine civic engagement among CSUN students, especially its association with student success outcomes such as retention and graduation.

Acknowledgement

This report was prepared by Jason L. Morín, IR Faculty Scholar and Associate Professor of Political Science, in collaboration with the CSUN Office of Institutional Research