

IDHE REPORT

The Institute for Democracy & Higher Education is dedicated to shifting institutional priorities, practices, and culture to increase student political learning, equity, and engagement in democracy. The Institute's signature initiative, the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) is both a service to colleges and universities —providing more than 1,000 colleges and universities nationwide with tailored reports containing their students' voter registration and voting rates — and a database of 30 million student records, which is used for research on college student political learning and engagement. The Institute also conducts other research, including studies of institutions with high (and low) levels of student political engagement. These reports stem from that research to bridge theory and practice.

IDHE is a part of Tufts University's Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life, a national leader in civic education whose model and research are setting the standard for higher education's role in civic engagement.

Data Brief: Out-of-State College Students and Voting

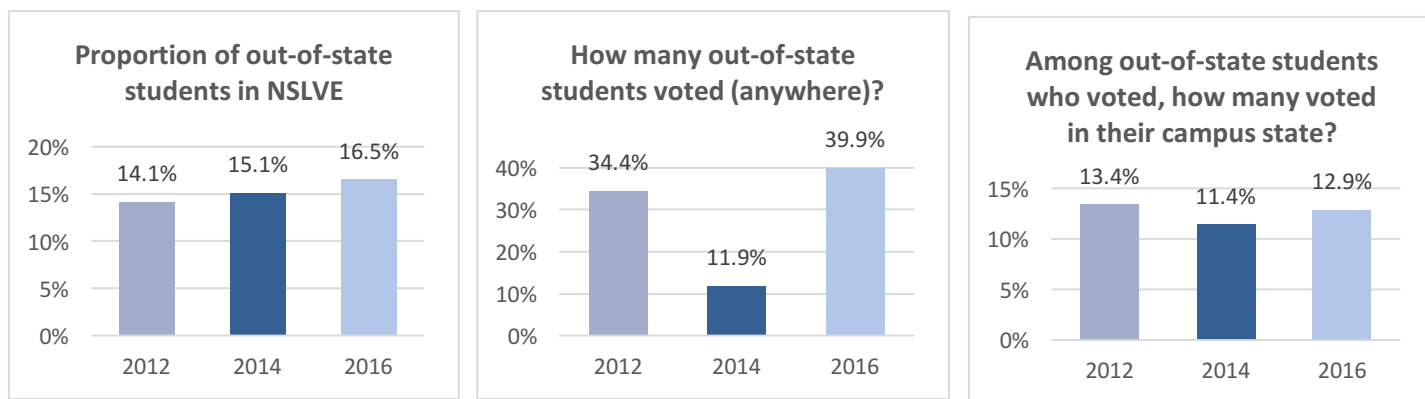
Many college students attend college outside of their home state and have the option of voting in either locale. Where do they choose to vote?

BY INGER BERGOM & PRABHAT GAUTAM

Data Brief: Out-of-State College Students and Voting

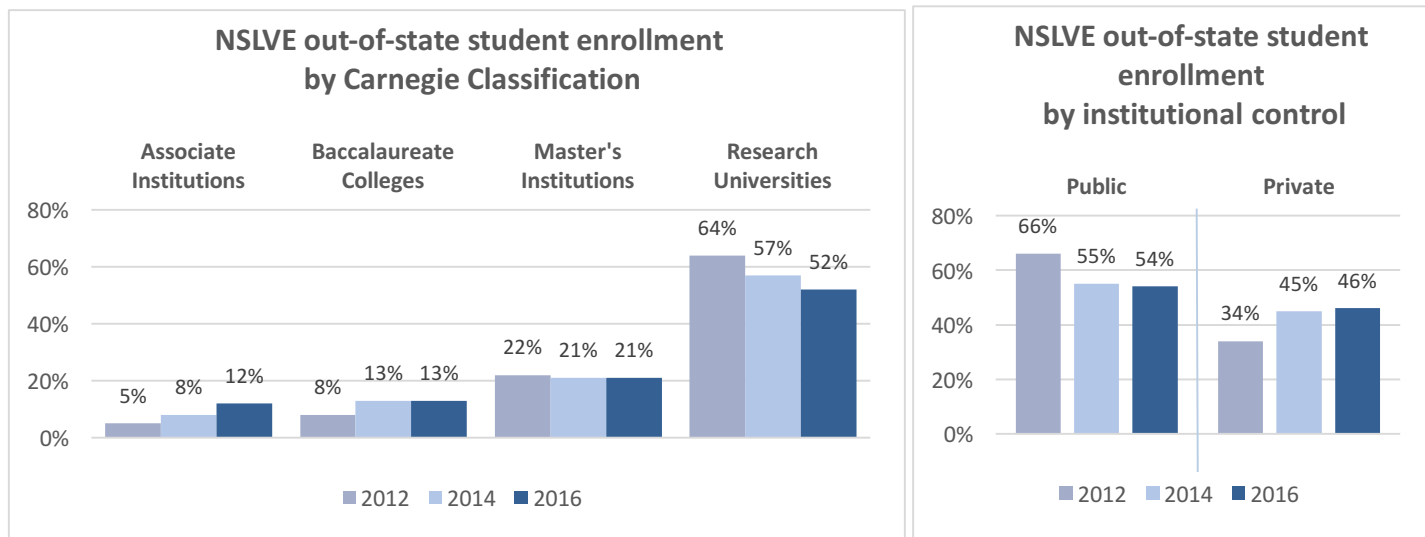
About the Dataset

The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement is a study of U.S. college and university student voting. Currently, the database consists of nearly 10 million deidentified student enrollment and voting records for each of the 2012, 2014, and 2016 elections. These students attended over 1,000 higher education institutions in the U.S. across all 50 states. Participating institutions give NSLVE permission for their student enrollment records to be matched with public voting records, yielding voting rate estimates of students' turnout. The demographics of the nearly 10 million students per election year in NSLVE resemble those of the approximately 20 million college students in the U.S.



At which types of institutions are out-of-state students enrolled?

Out-of-state students are disproportionately enrolled at research institutions, relative to NSLVE students overall. About 43% of NSLVE students are enrolled at research institutions, but among out-of-state students over half are enrolled at research institutions. Two-thirds of out-of-state students in NSLVE are enrolled at public institutions, but among all NSLVE students, about 84% are enrolled at public institutions.



Which states enroll high or low proportions of out-of-state students, and where do these students tend to vote?

In several states, including Vermont, New Hampshire, North Dakota, and Rhode Island, a majority of NSLVE students enrolled in these states are out-of-state students. Texas, Florida, California are among the states enrolling the lowest proportion of out-of-state students in NSLVE.

Proportion of NSLVE students enrolled outside home state					
2012		2014		2016	
<i>States with highest proportion of out-of-state students</i>					
VT	67%	VT	68%	NH	71%
ND	57%	NH	62%	VT	71%
DE	57%	ND	60%	ID	60%
RI	56%	RI	58%	RI	60%
ID	51%	DE	56%	ND	59%
<i>States with lowest proportion of out-of-state students</i>					
UT	7%	NM	8%	GA	9%
NM	7%	GA	8%	FL	9%
CA	7%	CA	8%	CA	8%
FL	6%	FL	7%	AK	8%
TX	5%	TX	6%	TX	6%

Proportion of out-of-state NSLVE students who voted in their campus state (versus home state)					
2012		2014		2016	
<i>States with highest proportion out-of-state students voting in campus state</i>					
NJ	47%	AK	51%	FL	46%
FL	47%	FL	46%	MT	34%
CA	32%	WI	31%	IA	33%
IA	31%	MT	31%	AK	31%
OH	30%	CA	30%	WI	31%
<i>States with lowest proportion out-of-state students voting in campus state</i>					
WV	6%	NH	5%	NH	6%
ID	6%	ID	4%	WV	5%
MS	5%	AL	4%	VT	5%
DC	3%	DC	4%	DC	3%
DE	2%	DE	3%	DE	2%

**note: 2012 registration data for AK students in NSLVE is not complete, so AK was excluded from the 2012 analyses for this table.*

Registration requirements vary by state, and states have changed laws over time regarding residency and domicile requirements for registering to vote.¹ The New Hampshire legislature recently struck down a bill that would have required out-of-state college students to provide proof that they are "domiciled" in New Hampshire—such as a vehicle registration or payment of state or local taxes—before being permitted to vote.² Online resources³ provide state-specific ID requirements, voting method options, and registration deadlines.

¹ For an historical perspective on the legal landscape around college student voting, see Richard Niemi et al.'s (2009) article Where Can College Students Vote? A Legal and Empirical Perspective. Available at <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/abs/10.1089/elj.2008.0029>

² <https://www.lfda.org/issues/student-vote>

³ For instance, see <http://campusvoteproject.org/studentguides/>