



**Date
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Type of action:
Recommendation

Final vote
11-0-0

2021-0007: The 2020 Ithaca College Voting Act

Sponsored by: Agnes Scotti, Jordan Wiener, Weiser

Co-Sponsored by: Powers, Shea, Elliott Weil, Tommy Socolof, Grey Peckham, Matthew Clement, Maddie Koury, Alexandria Renna, Kelly Campbell, Liza Dhameeth, Ithacapella, IC Voicestream, IC Second Stage, IC Votes

Recognizing that in the 2016 presidential election, only 55.7% of the American voting-age population cast a ballot.¹

Recognizing that in the 2016 election, the third highest reason cited for not voting was being “too busy.”²

Emphasizing that there was only a 16.4% increase in youth voter turnout in New York state during the 2018 midterm elections.³

Emphasizing that due to the nature of the fall 2020 semester being remote, we now have Ithaca College students all around the United States who may presumably be voting in person and may need an excused absence to do so.

Emphasizing that giving students the optional excused absence for their classes on election day sets a precedent that voting is necessary for a functioning democracy.⁴

Drawing attention to the petition circulating that, as of the date of this bill’s submission, has 427 signatures from community members in support of an excused absence on Election Day.
https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/make-election-day-nov-3-an-optional-excused?fbclid=IwAR1x1YGjTOnKFGv6FrQa0VXVRiXf_b8Bi_1DMLSv1DVXSM79tENTL8JWADg

¹ <https://www.procon.org/headlines/election-day-national-holiday-top-3-pros-and-cons/>

² <https://www.procon.org/headlines/election-day-national-holiday-top-3-pros-and-cons/>

³ <https://now.tufts.edu/news-releases/youth-voter-turnout-analysis-shows-across-board-increases-2018-midterms>

⁴ <https://www.procon.org/headlines/election-day-national-holiday-top-3-pros-and-cons/>

It is resolved that, to ensure equitable access to voting, Ithaca College should take the following steps by October 9th, or immediately upon receiving this bill:

Section 1. Ithaca College should allow for November 3rd, 2020 to become an optional excused absence day if you are voting in the 2020 general election.

1. Any student who misses class due to voting will be excused from class or examinations on that day.
 - a. Students will be excused on the basis that they provide documentation that they voted in the general election including, but not limited to, pictures of them at a polling location, voting stickers, etc.
 - b. Students who voted in the general election with mail in ballots will also be excused on the basis that they provide documentation they voted.

Section 2. Ithaca College should ensure that the Ithaca College community is made aware of this new policy by:

1. Announcing the new policy to the Ithaca College community via mass email and/or other comparable mass communication system;
2. Announcing the policy on all of Ithaca College's social media platforms including, but not limited to, Instagram and Facebook;
3. Encouraging Deans and professors to reinforce the policy with their respective students and the Ithaca College community in relevant communications.
4. Adding a temporary announcement to the Ithaca College website that can be removed November 4th, 2020.