

Student Voice Project

Speaker's Guide

Subject: Voting & Elections

Listening Session: 10/20/2020

Prompt 1: *Are there specific local or national issues your organization is paying attention to in this election?*

Several answers to this prompt came up more than once including equality (in multiple forms) and concerns about the supreme court. Issues mentioned included the handling of COVID-19, racial equality, pay equality, BIPOC issues, social justice issues, equal rights for all, LGBT+ rights issues, religious freedoms, Title IX law, and any issues affecting general student freedoms.

Prompt 2: *What impacts might this election have on your organization?*

Most groups were unsure how the election would impact their organization, and were not expecting many direct impacts on campus. There was a general hope for very little impact to be seen on campus. One group didn't care for the prompt, signaling that the elections and events around the country have impacts that affect their lives in general, on campus or off. There is a desire to make campus a continually safer, more equitable space. One group saw a need to provide mental health services to students impacted by the elections, no matter the outcome.

Prompt 3: *What can NDSU do to support students no matter the outcome of the election?*

One group wants NDSU to continue working to reduce risk associated with COVID-19. There was also a call to invest more in educating the NDSU community on local and national issues that affect minorities. Continue protecting freedoms on campus, educate about the process, and promote access to voting (including the early voting options available close to campus). One group asked that NDSU maintain policies supportive of individual groups despite any national changes, and to be vigilant in those protections. NDSU could increase counseling services. Wait times can be long, and faculty don't always realize the amount of stress elections can cause students.

Prompt 4: *Is voting important to your organization?*

This was a definite yes, even from feedback from international student. Students see voting as an important right and see a need to continue working towards protections for organizational members. One group says they, "...have to take an active role in creating our own future." Another says, "All voices need to be heard." Yet another offered, "If you don't vote, you've got no reason to complain."

Prompt 5: *Do your members know how to vote, if able to do so?*

Overwhelmingly yes. Students are confident in their ability to vote, and generally aware of requirements and multiple paths (absentee, early voting, registration, etc.).