



Voting While You Are Studying Abroad

If you plan to study abroad, take steps before you leave to ensure that you can vote. Plan ahead about:

- Registering to vote
- Getting an absentee ballot
- Photo ID

“One of our missions as an American educational institution is to prepare and encourage everyone who passes through the university to be an active, engaged citizen. Voting is one important aspect of this. It is essential to our democratic form of government and a responsibility that comes with citizenship.”

– Blog of UW-Madison Chancellor Rebecca Blank, January 29, 2016

Background

The qualifications for voting in Wisconsin: 18 years old, U.S. citizen, resident for 10 days, and not on probation or parole for a felony.

All Wisconsin college students who are eligible voters can choose one option:

- Register and vote using your school address. Vote at your local campus polling place, and vote for local campus-area offices. You will need to register each time you change address.
- Register and vote using your Wisconsin home address. This may be a good option for those who are eligible for online registration and also plan to vote via absentee ballot.
- Register and vote in your home state, outside Wisconsin. Students abroad can use the services of www.overseasvotefoundation.org.

If you are a Wisconsin voter and you leave the US to study abroad, you can continue to vote using your last Wisconsin address. You may use that address to vote if you intend to return to Wisconsin.

Registering

If you have a Wisconsin driver license or state ID card, you can complete your voter registration online at myvote.wi.gov. In order to successfully register online, the data you enter will need to match the data on file with the Department of Motor Vehicles, including your zip code. Therefore, if you have an address change, update your address with the DMV before you register. There is a link to the DMV at myvote.wi.gov. Online registration closes 20 days before each election.

If you do not have a Wisconsin driver license or state ID card, you can start your registration at myvote.wi.gov. This web page will give instructions on printing, signing, and mailing the form. Mail registrations must be postmarked at least 20 days before each election. If you use this method to register, you will need to include proof of your Wisconsin residence. The document at go.wisc.edu/verify is acceptable for proof of residence if it shows your voting address. The address can be updated through your UW Student Center, by editing your mailing address.

Requesting an absentee ballot in Wisconsin

Voters who are registered in Wisconsin can request an absentee ballot for a specific election, or for any or all elections in a calendar year. Absentee ballots can be requested at myvote.wi.gov. Requests must be accompanied by a copy of your photo ID, which can be uploaded at myvote.wi.gov.

If your voting address is in the city of Madison, you can request an absentee ballot via an email to voting@cityofmadison.com. Be sure to include your name, address at which you are registered to vote, the address to which the ballot should be sent, and a copy or picture of your voter ID.

Receiving your absentee ballot

If you want to receive the ballot by mail, you can request an absentee ballot at MyVote.wi.gov or through your municipal clerk. To receive your ballot by email, contact your municipal clerk. To return it, you will need to print the ballot, furnish an inner and outer envelope, and provide return postage. The ballot will be accompanied by detailed instructions – follow them closely. In order to be counted, the ballot must be received by your election official by Election Day.

Photo ID

Acceptable voter IDs for Wisconsin include a Wisconsin driver license, state ID card, or US passport. These documents are valid IDs if they have an expiration date after November 6, 2018. (The address on a photo ID does not matter for voter ID purposes.) The UW Wiscard does not qualify. However, you can take your Wiscard to the Wiscard office at Union South and get a free student voter ID card. (Hint: Do this before you leave!) To use the student voter ID for voting, the card needs to be accompanied by proof of your enrollment, such as your document from go.wisc.edu/verify.

Resources

For any voting questions, contact the clerk of your municipality – contact info is at myvote.wi.gov. If your voting address is in Madison, the clerk is at 608-266-4601, or email voting@cityofmadison.com. Madison web page: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/clerk/elections-voting>

Associated Students of Madison Vote Coordinator: vote@asm.wisc.edu

League of Women Voters of Dane County will have information from the candidates as the election approaches in “Candidates Answers”. <https://www.lwvdanecounty.org/>

Wisconsin Election Commission. <http://elections.wi.gov/elections-voting/voters/military-overseas>

2020 Elections in Wisconsin

Election Date Tuesdays	Type of Election	Offices	Online Registration Closes 11:59 pm	First Date Absentee Ballots Sent
February 18	Primary	Supreme Court, School Board, County Board, Judges April Only: Presidential Primary – absentee voters overseas will be sent a Presidential Primary ballot first (in case the mail takes too long) and a complete ballot after the February Primary.	January 29	January 28
April 7	Spring (and Presidential Primary)		March 18	February 14 (Presidential Only) March 16 (Regular)
August 11	Primary	President, US House of Representatives, State Senate and State Assembly, Sherriff, District Attorney, Clerk of Courts	July 22	June 10
November 3	General		October 14	September 18

