

Does Hood Vote? : A Case Study of Political Knowledge and Voting on the Hood College Campus

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Abstract: Case study done on Hood College campus to answer my research question: Are college students knowledgeable about the voting process? Also, to what extent do they attribute their voting education to their college institutions? Study is conducted through mixed methods: first, a self-reported survey rating "I" statements about voter knowledge and then rating statements about the College in relation to civic engagement. Then, in-depth interviews were conducted to select students. Findings were that students at Hood consider themselves to be educated on the voting processes and consider Hood College to be a resource in their voter education. However, the information being received to them may be misinformation. This is a study of attitudes not behavior.

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Introduction:

Think about the typical profile of someone who regularly casts their ballot? Are they male? Female? White? Black? Educated? The typical profile of a voter is a college educated person. This begs the question what makes college a variable in this situation? Is it that higher education is geared toward educating students the voting process and in doing so makes them more receptive to politics? Or is it because college is a transitional time where a young person transitions into adulthood. I am a college student, yet whenever I ask a peer about voting or an election their response is usually confusion or ignorance. Is there a difference between voting post grad or voting while in school? What makes college a variable? Why is it confounding? And why is it important in the grand scheme of civic engagement?

In January of 2022 the Maryland State Legislature passed the Student and Military Voter Empowerment Act to establish processes in which collegiate institutions, both public and private, will be giving state funding/ resources to have better comprehensive voting education at schools. I found this out while working at Common Cause Maryland.¹ This got me thinking about how my institution could benefit from this law- this meant more information could be given to my peers. I want more information to be given, however, I first needed to create a baseline of information for students at the school and what they know.

My research topic is voter education, and I am asking are college students knowledgeable about the voting process? This in turn works to answer more questions like how institutions of higher education can bridge the gap between college students and to what extent to they attribute their voting education to their college institutions? My research is important because the midterm

¹ a nonprofit working in voter rights and education

election was in November 2022, and I know people who still believed the current governor of Maryland, Larry Hogan, was a Democrat and that he was running for a third term, even though both statements are false. I want the school to be able to see the importance of educating their students in politics/ political processes because this speaks to an issue in general about higher education institutions: they have the funds to provide students the correct information, they should want their students to be civically engaged. This education needs to be a priority seeing as though every election falls on a school day, during the academic year. Students are at school while elections are happening, they should have ready resources available to instruct them on processes such as absentee or mail in ballot applications or checking their registration status, so they can exercise their civic duty and vote.

The state of research that exists about college students and voting behavior/ voting education is slim. There is a consensus that young people are less likely to vote. However, after the 2016 election, the mobilization of voting on campuses expanded by the 2018 midterm election. As far as literature on what makes a college institution a variable, there is a widespread gap in the literature. My goal is to bridge this paradox between college educated voters versus college students.

My methods for research were as follows. First, I distributed a self-reported questionnaire to students at Hood College as a case study for college campuses. This questionnaire features a series of statements such as “I know how to register to vote” and “I know to apply for an absentee/ mail-in ballot” and the students rated statement on a one to five scale one being “strongly disagree” and five being “strongly agree.” Then, the students rated another set of statements on the same scale based on the institution such as “Classes I have taken at Hood will prepare me to vote.” The final part acts as a control variable targeted at Maryland voters and

asking them who the Democratic and Republican candidates are for the upcoming gubernatorial race in November of 2022 based on four answer choices, without telling them the correct answer. After the survey was complete, I conducted in-depth interviews of Hood Students to have qualitative data on their opinions about Hood and their general voter knowledge. Based on the literature presented I hypothesize that the attitude of students toward voting may be influenced by an undergraduate institution's involvement. However, because of my experience at Hood, I hypothesized that the students will not be knowledgeable on the process with answers such as "strongly disagree" or "somewhat disagree" and that students will not rate the statements about the involvement of school in a favorable manner.

Based on both the survey and interviews, my findings show that the attitude of Hood Students is that they are engaged. However, there is a problem of misinformation in the sample as 30% believed that the former Republican Governor Larry Hogan was a democrat and running for a third term. There are also gaps in gender, race, and partisanship. The largest take away was that my survey only measured attitudes and was self-reported, I cannot predict future behavior of these students.

Literature Review:

The state of research with voter knowledge and participation on college campuses contributes to larger research about civic engagement among young people. The literature I reviewed for this project can be divided into the following categories: surveys and experimentations on college campuses, theoretical framework of collegiate civic engagement, and causes of collegiate voter participation.

The IDEALS (Interfaith Diversity Experience and Attitudes Longitudinal Survey) was a four-year study of 5,762 students enrolled in one of 120 colleges and universities between fall 2015 and spring 2019. (Mayhew 2020) The findings of the research were that of the campaign promises that appeal to college students: free public universities and student loan forgiveness appeal to Democrat leaning students and religious freedom/ freedom of speech assurances appeal to Republican leaning students. The questions asked participants 70 questions - among them whether, in the 2016 election, they: did not vote; voted for the Republican candidate; voted for the Democratic candidate; voted for a third-party candidate; wrote in the name of a candidate; were not eligible to vote; or preferred not to respond. As a result, they expected 71% of college students to vote in the 2020 election. This study sets a framework for studying college students: specifically, via survey and provides context into why a student may vote.

Within the same vein of research, Tufts University Research Center analyzed 2018 voter turnout among more than 10 million students at 1,031 colleges and universities that volunteered to participate across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Schools provided student data, which was matched to a national database of voter registration and turnout records. (Gardner 2019) All attributed to engagement, combined with demographic shifts in university enrollment, led to an increase in the vote share of these two groups and a decline in the vote share of white and black students. Gardner found that among college students, college women voted at higher rates in 2018 than men did, with black women voting more reliably than any other racial or gender group at 43 percent and Hispanic women logging the greatest gains between 2014 and 2018. The engagement piece of the study is specifically civic engagement as a response to the 2016 Presidential election. I include this in my research to emphasize how college students are a

viable population of the electorate and will have turnout. The gap in the research is how they develop the knowledge to vote from their respective undergraduate institutions.

“Does College Make You Vote?”, a study of Harvard University students’ voting habits prior to the 2012 election found that Americans ages 18 to 29 who said they would “definitely” be voting, 55 percent said they planned to cast their ballots for President Barack Obama. Only 36 percent supported Romney, with the rest undecided, and of all students, 58 percent said they would “probably vote.” (Gross 2012) Gross goes further to look at previous theoretical framework from previous studies from political scientists. For example, Benjamin Highton analyzed data from a large longitudinal study that began with a survey of high-school seniors in 1965. Highton found that there were significant differences in political knowledge between college graduates and nongraduates in later waves of the survey--but that those differences were already present in high school. In consultation with the earlier study, Gross concluded that those who want to know about the voting process, will learn, but those who do not are genuinely apathetic, regardless of education level. Gross looks to college as a confounding variable. It asks the question that I am trying to answer: what makes college a factor, and how can it become a factor?

The next theme of literature reviewed included studies about college student voter behavior. This included party affiliation and exposure to voting knowledge. Ardoin, examines college student partisanship in “The Partisan Battle Over College Student Voting: An Analysis of Student Voting Behavior in Federal, State, and Local Elections.” (Ardoin et al., 2015) This was an experiment that aimed to test the hypothesis that college students provide Democratic candidates with greater electoral support and whether it varies among federal, state, and local elections. They tested whether college students mobilized by presidential campaigns are more

likely to abstain from voting for state and local elections. They analyzed the questions via a difference-of-means test in a distribution of votes cast in competitive elections for the November 2008 election in 86 precincts in 42 college campuses across the United States across five states. The analyses of state and local elections highlight substantial variation in the level of support that Democratic candidates receive from precincts located on college campuses found many college students in 2008 cast their ballots for Obama but chose not to participate in lower-level elections. Furthermore, on average, students tend to vote for Democratic party candidates more often than non-students, but they are also more likely than non-students to simply choose not to vote for local candidates. They come to the polls to vote for national offices, not local ones.

In another study about college student voting behavior, Elizabeth Bennion and David Nickerson conducted a controlled experiment across sixteen college campuses about the efficacy of voter registration presentations and how likely college students would register to vote and vote after receiving the presentations. (Bennion, Nickerson 2016) 25.6 thousand students of 1.1 thousand classrooms were given one of three conditions: a control group receiving no presentation, a presentation given by their professor, or a presentation given by a student volunteer. After the presentation, the experimenters verified the registration with national databases and found that it increased overall by 6 points. They found that these presentations are worthwhile and prove that campuses can take simple steps to improve civic engagement within their students. In a subsequent study done by Stacy Ulbig that aimed to answer questions such as: If students register on campus, are they likely to go to the voting booth? Does providing basic information increase voter turnout among students who register at an on-campus voter registration drive? The answer was the same: they found that students who registered on campus were more likely to vote over young people at their age. Based on the findings, I can connect

college campuses as an influential variable in student voter education. This research is vital to my own because it proves that if people are given the opportunity to learn how to do something, they are more likely to do it than trying to figure it out on their own. The operative thing being voting.

The final pieces of literature to consult were works on theoretical framework of college students and civic engagement. The framework of voter knowledge began with general guidelines for civic education. . In “Preparing Students for Democratic Life: The Rediscovery of Education’s Civic Purpose,” Melville lists recommendations for civic engagement on college campuses (Melville et al., 2013) . At a basic level, they argue that civic engagement is not learning about the three branches of government, but to cultivate habits of democratic citizenship: listen to ideas of others, assess alternatives, formulate well-founded opinions, productively engage in the community. First, they outlined the four demands of democratic citizenship: knowing certain things about public life, specific issues, and how the institutions of government work. It also involves caring about the collective well-being. It involves choosing public courses of action through democratic processes of public deliberation. And it involves doing, and in the case of civic engagement, that means voting, volunteering, or protest. They explain that college students do not go to school to learn civic engagement, therefore they do not believe that civic involvement will not be a priority outcome of a college education. As a result, there is a gap in civic education due to practical obstacles like budgetary constraints, key terms about civic education can be ambiguous, lack of respect for civic engagement in academia, learning about public issues, focusing on avoiding conversations that are hard because of biases. In defining civic education and the demands of democratic citizenship, the researchers provide

possible answers as to why there is a gap in knowledge. My research also aims to lessen this gap.

Horowitz: this was a study on the effect of education on social outcome: specifically, college students and civic participation. (Horowitz, 2015) They outlined four existing reasons for student civic engagement: first, college experiences expand human capital- increasing a graduate's ability to engage in civic acts, second, college-educated person are more likely to obtain high paying secure jobs and freedom to take time off work to be involved in organizations, third, college promotes interpersonal interaction- increasing social capital, and fourth, college offers cultural capital (confidence and prestige) by providing a better understanding of how social institutions work. The selection hypothesis suggests that students with high levels of financial and cultural capital are likely to perform civic acts, however it is becoming more of a norm for families across the wealth spectrum to send their children to college, not having a background knowledge of civic participation, like those with high financial and cultural capital. Therefore, Horowitz concludes that because of confounding variables such as race, location, accessibility, and prior scholarship, education's impact on civic participation could be spurious because the relationship between education and civic engagement could be confounded with prior family influences. This is very important to the state of research and literature because it offers a counterclaim that college and education are not important variables in the voting profile and access to voting knowledge. I plan to address this counterclaim with the outcomes of my research.

Methodology:

To get a better understanding about voter knowledge, for my research, I used mixed methods: both qualitative and quantitative. . I chose Hood College as a case study to exemplify the student voter knowledge. First, I will distribute a self-reported questionnaire to students at Hood College as a case study for college campuses. I chose to do a self-reported questionnaire because the best way to test the knowledge of the students is by asking them themselves what they know. In an anonymous platform it gives them the freedom to be as honest as possible about the answers. This questionnaire features a series of statements such as “I know how to register to vote” and “I know to apply for an absentee/ mail-in ballot” and the students will rate each statement on a one to five scale one being “strongly disagree” and five being “strongly agree.” Then, the students will next rate another set of statements on the same scale based on the institution such as “Classes I have taken at Hood will prepare me to vote.” The final part is targeted at Maryland voters and asking them who the Democratic and Republican candidates are for the upcoming gubernatorial race in November of 2022 based on four answer choices, without telling them the correct answer.

One of challenges of this survey was completion rate. I received 102 responses. My goal was to receive responses from a wide variety of students across different years, so I consulted professors to send them to their classes. However, I realized that most responses were from political science students, who were more likely to be educated than other students. If I had more time to go back and tweak my questions, I would include a question on the student’s major, so I could be sure. Another challenge was the fact that this was self-reported, there could be a response bias, having students overestimate their knowledge to sound more intelligent.

After the survey, I conducted in-depth interviews with the students to get more qualitative data. I interviewed 10 students working at the Hood College admissions office, who were from a wide range of grades and majors. This was not a random sample, however I felt to get a truthful answer from the interviewees, I wanted to have a level familiarity with them. I asked them four basic questions, with room to expand. First, I asked about their voter knowledge/ education level prior to going to college. Then, I asked students if they feel like there is an expectation to vote, but lack of resources to educate them on the subject? Next, I asked them to describe their involvement (if any) with politics and civic engagement, specifying if they are involved on campus in any leadership positions, and if they are planning to host any events related to the election. My final question was whether they trusted the voting process- specifically believing that their ballot was secure. Considering recent controversies surrounding far right movements that advocate that the 2020 presidential election was stolen, I wanted to gauge how they felt about the security of the voting process.

Sample:

Of the 102 survey respondents, we can gather different results aggregating by year at hood, race, gender, and political party affiliation. Of the respondents, the majority were White, Female, Democrats, and Senior students. Once I collected the responses, I decided to aggregate and make cross tabs with the demographics race, gender identity, political party identification, and year at Hood College. I then broke up each cross tabulation for questions 11 through 14. Question 11 asked students to rate a series of statements about voter knowledge such as “I know how to register to vote” and “I know what an absentee/ mail-in ballot is”. Question 12 asked students to rate statements involving the college including “There is a staff or faculty member at Hood College that would help me register to vote” and “Classes I have taken at Hood College

have taught me about the electoral process.” Questions 13 and 14 asked Maryland residents who the Democratic and Republican nominees were for governor, but did not give them the right answer, in an attempt to gauge what they believe to be true.

Based on a consensus of the sample, Hood students are politically engaged when rating statements on question eleven. Figure below shows the legend for average responses. Of the respondents, the average response of most statements was “strongly agree” as shown in the yellow color. This disproved my hypothesis that students would not be knowledgeable in general about civic practices. There may have been a social desirability bias to seem more engaged, but this suggests that the students want to be considered engaged in the first place, which can be interpreted as wanting to know more. The only two statements that yielded a different average result were “I know who my congressperson is in the House of Representatives” and “I know the number of my congressional district.” Which in hindsight, a person may not know off the top of their head. For question twelve, which asks the students to rate the involvement of the institution on their voter knowledge, found in Figure 2 below, the average response was “somewhat agree”, shown in the purple color. This also disproved my hypothesis of the lack of involvement of the school in assisting the students in the voter process. In order to fully develop the findings of my data, I decided to aggregate my data by gender, race, political party affiliation, and year at Hood.

Figure 1: Average Results for Question 11

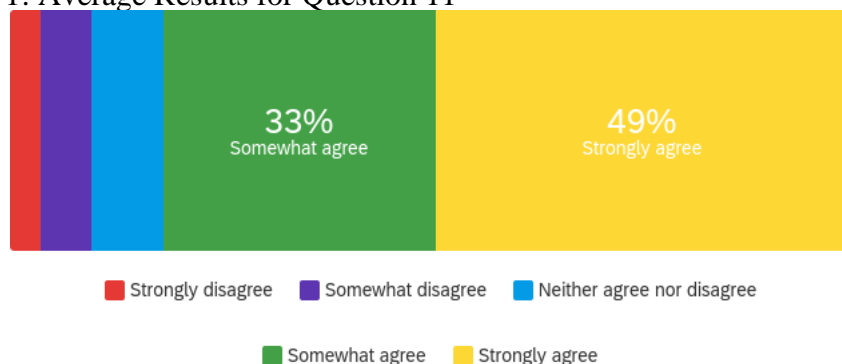
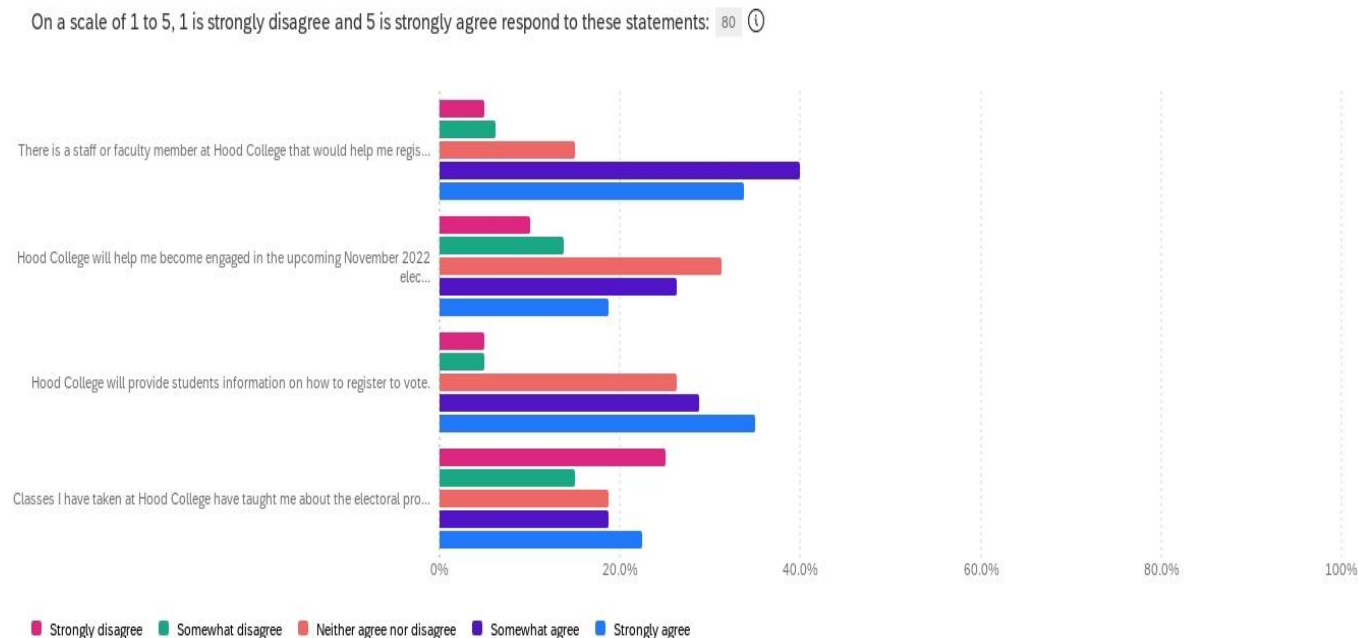


Figure 2: Average Results for Question 12



Disaggregated Results:

Gender:

When I aggregated responses by gender there are statistically significant differences between responses. Even though most respondents identified as female, there is still a significant difference between female and male respondents. For example, in Figure 3, which is a cross-tabulation analysis of the statements in question 11, across the board those who identify as female are less likely to choose “strongly agree” to each statement over those that identified as male. We see this in statements such as “I know what an absentee/mail-in ballot is,” and “I know how to apply for an absentee/ mail-in ballot.” It is the opposite, (those who identify as male are more likely to choose strongly agree than those who identify as female) in the statements: “I

know the difference between local, state, and federal candidates on my ballot,” “I know who is running for governor in my state,” “I know who my congressperson is in the House of Representatives,” “I know the number of my congressional district,” and “I am affiliated with a political party.” The average difference of percentages between those who identify as male, or female is about 12%. The common theme in these select statements is knowing how to be engaged (registering to vote and researching candidates) and who a person is engaged with (their representative in their district).

Figure 3

		Demographics: Gender Identity			
		Total	Male	Female	Non-binary / third gender
Total Count (Answering)		76.0	17.0	54.0	5.0
I know how to register to vote	Strongly disagree	2.6%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	5.3%	5.9%	5.6%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	7.9%	23.5%	3.7%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	32.9%	11.8%	37.0%	60.0%
	Strongly agree	51.3%	58.8%	50.0%	40.0%
I know what an absentee or mail in ballot is	Strongly disagree	3.9%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	3.9%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	5.3%	5.9%	5.6%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	28.9%	29.4%	29.6%	20.0%
	Strongly agree	57.9%	64.7%	53.7%	80.0%

I know how to apply for an absentee/ mail-in ballot	Strongly disagree	25.0%	17.6%	29.6%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	17.1%	11.8%	18.5%	20.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	5.3%	11.8%	3.7%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	19.7%	5.9%	24.1%	20.0%
	Strongly agree	32.9%	52.9%	24.1%	60.0%
I know that there is an upcoming election in November	Strongly disagree	3.9%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	2.6%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	5.3%	11.8%	1.9%	20.0%
	Somewhat agree	14.5%	17.6%	13.0%	20.0%
	Strongly agree	73.7%	70.6%	75.9%	60.0%
I know where I am registered to vote	Strongly disagree	1.3%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	6.6%	11.8%	5.6%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	10.5%	11.8%	11.1%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	14.5%	5.9%	14.8%	40.0%
	Strongly agree	67.1%	70.6%	66.7%	60.0%
I know the difference between local, state, and federal candidates on my ballot	Strongly disagree	3.9%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	14.5%	11.8%	16.7%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	14.5%	5.9%	16.7%	20.0%
	Somewhat agree	26.3%	17.6%	27.8%	40.0%
	Strongly agree	40.8%	64.7%	33.3%	40.0%
I know who is running for governor in my state	Strongly disagree	21.1%	17.6%	24.1%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	17.1%	0.0%	20.4%	40.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	6.6%	5.9%	7.4%	0.0%

	Somewhat agree	26.3%	35.3%	25.9%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	28.9%	41.2%	22.2%	60.0%
I know who my congressperson is in the House of Representatives	Strongly disagree	30.3%	11.8%	33.3%	60.0%
	Somewhat disagree	27.6%	29.4%	29.6%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	3.9%	11.8%	1.9%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	15.8%	5.9%	18.5%	20.0%
	Strongly agree	22.4%	41.2%	16.7%	20.0%
I know the number of my congressional district.	Strongly disagree	46.1%	23.5%	51.9%	60.0%
	Somewhat disagree	17.1%	11.8%	20.4%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	5.3%	5.9%	5.6%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	11.8%	23.5%	9.3%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	19.7%	35.3%	13.0%	40.0%
I am affiliated with a political party	Strongly disagree	14.5%	11.8%	16.7%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	5.3%	5.9%	5.6%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	22.4%	17.6%	22.2%	40.0%
	Somewhat agree	30.3%	17.6%	33.3%	40.0%
	Strongly agree	27.6%	47.1%	22.2%	20.0%

Question twelve (Figure 4 below) is the rating of statements having to do with the involvement of the undergraduate institution, in this case Hood College, in assisting students with voter education. When I disaggregate the responses by gender, I find that across each rating between strongly disagree and strongly agree, there are similarities and stark contrasts between genders. Starting with similarities the percentages of ratings across the gender spectrum. For example, in the strongly agree category for statement “there is a staff or faculty member at Hood

College that would help me register to vote” both those who identify as male, and female will strongly disagree at a similar percentage. However, in the statement “Hood College will provide students information on how to register to vote” those who identify themselves as male will be more likely to strongly disagree than those who identify as female or non-binary. Also, in the statement “Classes I have taken at Hood College have taught me about the electoral process,” those who identify as female or non-binary are more likely to strongly disagree than those who identify as male at a difference of over 20%. Across the gender spectrum there is a consensus that the most similar response for each statement is “neither agree nor disagree.”

Figure 4

		Demographics: Gender Identity				
		Total	Male	Female	Non-binary / third gender	Prefer not to say
Total Count (Answering)		73.0	17.0	51.0	5.0	0.0
There is a staff or faculty member at Hood College that would help me register to vote.	Strongly disagree	5.5%	5.9%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	6.8%	17.6%	3.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	12.3%	5.9%	15.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	41.1%	23.5%	45.1%	60.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	34.2%	47.1%	29.4%	40.0%	0.0%
Hood College will help me become engaged in the upcoming November 2022 election.	Strongly disagree	9.6%	11.8%	9.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	13.7%	0.0%	17.6%	20.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	30.1%	29.4%	31.4%	20.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	26.0%	35.3%	21.6%	40.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	20.5%	23.5%	19.6%	20.0%	0.0%

Hood College will provide students information on how to register to vote.	Strongly disagree	4.1%	11.8%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	5.5%	5.9%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	26.0%	23.5%	21.6%	80.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	30.1%	17.6%	37.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	34.2%	41.2%	33.3%	20.0%	0.0%
Classes I have taken at Hood College have taught me about the electoral process.	Strongly disagree	21.9%	5.9%	25.5%	40.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	16.4%	11.8%	17.6%	20.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	19.2%	23.5%	17.6%	20.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	19.2%	29.4%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	23.3%	29.4%	21.6%	20.0%	0.0%

Questions thirteen and fourteen (shown in Figure 5) ask the participants who is running for governor in Maryland and does not provide the correct answer. Aggregating the results by gender, I find that the majority of respondents (69.6% and 67.1%) across all genders chose the correct candidates: Wes Moore and Dan Cox. To break this down further, of those who chose Wes Moore as the democratic candidate, men were more likely to choose the option than women and non-binary persons at an over 15% difference. Also, those who identify as female were the only ones to choose primary candidate Tom Perez as an answer. For the democratic nominee question, it is also important to note that with the option of Larry Hogan, across all genders at an average 12% chose the option. Larry Hogan is the current Republican governor of Maryland. For question fourteen, which asks about the Republican candidate, those who identify as female were most likely to choose Larry Hogan over men and non-binary persons at an over 11% difference. Also, like the previous question, some men and women chose a primary candidate, Kelly Schulz.

Figure 5

		Demographics: Gender Identity				
		Total	Male	Female	Non-binary / third gender	Prefer not to say
13: Who is the Democrat Candidate running for governor of Maryland?	Total Count (Answering)	79.0	17.0	57.0	5.0	0.0
	Wes Moore	69.6%	82.4%	66.7%	60.0%	0.0%
	Larry Hogan	13.9%	11.8%	12.3%	40.0%	0.0%
	John King	5.1%	5.9%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Tom Perez	11.4%	0.0%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%
14: Who is the Republican Candidate running for governor in Maryland	Total Count (Answering)	79.0	17.0	57.0	5.0	0.0
	Larry Hogan	19.0%	11.8%	22.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	Dan Cox	67.1%	76.5%	64.9%	60.0%	0.0%
	Kelly Schulz	8.9%	11.8%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	Ron DeSantis	5.1%	0.0%	3.5%	40.0%	0.0%

Race:

Based on the sample, most of the respondents identified as white. However, despite the numerical difference, there are important statistics to point out. Figure 6 represents the aggregation of responses by race for question 11 (rating statements about personal voter knowledge). Across the board, students who identify as Black/ African Americans were most likely to choose “strongly disagree” when rating statements, sometimes being the only ones in the category. This is evident in statements such as “I know how to register to vote” and “I know where I am registered to vote.” Of each statement, the majority of responses across those who

identify as White/ Caucasian and Black/ African American was “strongly agree.” For those who identified as Asian/ Pacific Islander, the majority response was “somewhat agree.” The statements that yielded the most responses for “strongly disagree” across races were “I know who my congressperson is in the House of Representatives,” “I know the number of my congressional district,” “I know who is running for governor in my state,” and “I know how to apply for an absentee/ mail-in ballot.”

Notable differences are as follows. For the statement “I know how to register to vote,” 80% of those who identified as Hispanic/ Latino were the majority of those across all races to answer “strongly agree” with a statistical difference of over 40%. For the statement “I know there is an upcoming election in November,” 100% of those who identify as Asian/ Pacific Islander responded with “strongly agree,” which is an over 30% difference than those who identify as White/ Caucasian and chose “strongly agree.”

Figure 6

		Q2: Race Identification					
		Total	Black/ African American	White/ Caucasian	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic/ Latino	Prefer not to say
Total Count (Answering)		78.0	16.0	50.0	6.0	5.0	1.0
I know how to register to vote	Strongly disagree	2.6%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	5.1%	12.5%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	7.7%	6.3%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Somewhat agree	32.1%	25.0%	32.0%	66.7%	20.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	52.6%	43.8%	56.0%	33.3%	80.0%	0.0%

I know what an absentee or mail in ballot is	Strongly disagree	3.8%	12.5%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	3.8%	6.3%	0.0%	16.7%	20.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	5.1%	6.3%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	29.5%	25.0%	28.0%	50.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	Strongly agree	57.7%	50.0%	64.0%	33.3%	60.0%	0.0%
I know how to apply for an absentee/ mail-in ballot	Strongly disagree	24.4%	37.5%	22.0%	16.7%	20.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	17.9%	12.5%	14.0%	50.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	5.1%	6.3%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	19.2%	12.5%	22.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	33.3%	31.3%	36.0%	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%
I know that there is an upcoming election in November	Strongly disagree	3.8%	12.5%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	2.6%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	5.1%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	14.1%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Strongly agree	74.4%	87.5%	68.0%	100.0%	80.0%	0.0%
I know where I am registered to vote	Strongly disagree	1.3%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	7.7%	12.5%	2.0%	16.7%	20.0%	100.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	10.3%	12.5%	10.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	14.1%	6.3%	18.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	66.7%	62.5%	70.0%	66.7%	60.0%	0.0%
I know the difference between local, state, and federal candidates on my ballot	Strongly disagree	3.8%	12.5%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	15.4%	12.5%	14.0%	16.7%	40.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	14.1%	6.3%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

	Somewhat agree	25.6%	31.3%	20.0%	66.7%	0.0%	100.0%
	Strongly agree	41.0%	37.5%	44.0%	16.7%	60.0%	0.0%
I know who is running for governor in my state	Strongly disagree	21.8%	37.5%	16.0%	16.7%	40.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	16.7%	31.3%	16.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	6.4%	0.0%	6.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	25.6%	12.5%	28.0%	33.3%	20.0%	100.0%
	Strongly agree	29.5%	18.8%	34.0%	16.7%	40.0%	0.0%
I know who my congressperson is in the House of Representatives	Strongly disagree	30.8%	50.0%	24.0%	50.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	28.2%	25.0%	30.0%	16.7%	20.0%	100.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	3.8%	0.0%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	15.4%	12.5%	14.0%	33.3%	20.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	21.8%	12.5%	26.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%
I know the number of my congressional district.	Strongly disagree	47.4%	75.0%	34.0%	66.7%	80.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	16.7%	6.3%	22.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	5.1%	6.3%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	11.5%	0.0%	14.0%	16.7%	0.0%	100.0%
	Strongly agree	19.2%	12.5%	24.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
I am affiliated with a political party	Strongly disagree	14.1%	25.0%	8.0%	33.3%	20.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	5.1%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	21.8%	37.5%	22.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	32.1%	25.0%	28.0%	66.7%	40.0%	100.0%
	Strongly agree	26.9%	12.5%	34.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%

For question twelve, outlined in Figure 7, there are no significant differences in percentages across the board. However, it is important to note that for the statements “There is a

staff or faculty member at Hood College that would help me register to vote” and “Hood College will provide students information on how to register to vote,” 0% of those who identify as Asian/ Pacific Islander and Hispanic/ Latino chose “strongly disagree.”

Figure 7

		Q2: Race Identification					
		Total	Black/ African American	White/ Caucasian	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic/ Latino	Prefer not to say
Total Count (Answering)		75.0	15.0	48.0	6.0	5.0	1.0
There is a staff or faculty member at Hood College that would help me register to vote.	Strongly disagree	5.3%	6.7%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	6.7%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	12.0%	13.3%	10.4%	16.7%	20.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	41.3%	53.3%	39.6%	50.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	34.7%	26.7%	35.4%	33.3%	40.0%	100.0%
Hood College will help me become engaged in the upcoming November 2022 election.	Strongly disagree	9.3%	13.3%	8.3%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	13.3%	13.3%	14.6%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	29.3%	33.3%	29.2%	16.7%	20.0%	100.0%
	Somewhat agree	28.0%	20.0%	27.1%	33.3%	60.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	20.0%	20.0%	20.8%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Hood College will provide students information on how to register to vote.	Strongly disagree	4.0%	6.7%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	5.3%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

	Neither agree nor disagree	26.7%	20.0%	25.0%	33.3%	40.0%	100.0%
	Somewhat agree	30.7%	40.0%	27.1%	33.3%	40.0%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	33.3%	33.3%	35.4%	33.3%	20.0%	0.0%
Classes I have taken at Hood College have taught me about the electoral process.	Strongly disagree	21.3%	20.0%	20.8%	16.7%	40.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	16.0%	13.3%	16.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	18.7%	20.0%	20.8%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	20.0%	13.3%	18.8%	33.3%	20.0%	100.0%
	Strongly agree	24.0%	33.3%	22.9%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%

For questions thirteen and fourteen, similar to when aggregated by gender, the majority of respondents across race chose the correct candidates: Wes Moore and Dan Cox, respectively. Also, similar to when aggregated by gender, across Black/ African American, White/ Caucasian, and Asian/ Pacific Islander persons, there was a 13.4% average of those who chose Larry Hogan as the Democratic Candidate. Also, across all races, 19.5% chose the option of Larry Hogan for the Republican Candidate. It is also important to note that across all races, the only race to choose Ron DeSantis as the Republican Candidate were those who identified as White/ Caucasian.

Figure 8

		Q2: Race Identification					
		Total	Black/ African American	White/ Caucasian	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic/ Latino	Prefer not to say

13: Who is the Democrat Candidate running for governor of Maryland?	Total Count (Answering)	82.0	16.0	52.0	8.0	5.0	1.0
	Wes Moore	69.5%	68.8%	69.2%	75.0%	60.0%	100.0%
	Larry Hogan	13.4%	18.8%	13.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	John King	4.9%	6.3%	5.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Tom Perez	12.2%	6.3%	11.5%	12.5%	40.0%	0.0%
14: Who is the Republican Candidate running for governor in Maryland	Total Count (Answering)	82.0	16.0	52.0	8.0	5.0	1.0
	Larry Hogan	19.5%	25.0%	19.2%	12.5%	20.0%	0.0%
	Dan Cox	67.1%	62.5%	65.4%	87.5%	60.0%	100.0%
	Kelly Schulz	8.5%	12.5%	7.7%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	Ron DeSantis	4.9%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Political Party Affiliation:

The majority of respondents identified as Democrats. However, across the board there are statistically significant elements of the data for question eleven (Figure 9 below) For example, for each statement, the group that held the majority percentage of “strongly disagree” was those who identified as Other of at least 14.3%. Those who identified as Republicans did not choose “strongly disagree” for statements such as “I know how to register to vote,” “I know what an absentee ballot is,” “I know there is an upcoming election in November,” “I know where I am registered to vote,” and “I know the difference between local, state, and federal candidates on my ballot.” For those that identified as either Republican or Democrat, 0% chose “strongly disagree” when given the statement “I know where I am registered to vote.” For the statement “I know the number of my congressional district,” those who identified as Other chose “strongly disagree” at the highest percent (71.4%), which was at least over 25% higher than each party

category. It is also important to note that for the statement “I know the difference between local, state, and federal candidates on my ballot,” 63.2% of those that strongly agree came from those who identify as Independent, a rate that is at least 25% higher than others involved. When it came to the statement “I am affiliated with a political party,” 52.9% of Republicans chose “strongly agree” at an over 30% difference from each other party listed.

Figure 9

		Q9: Political Party Affiliation				
		Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other
Total Count (Answering)		83.0	40.0	17.0	19.0	7.0
I know how to register to vote	Strongly disagree	3.6%	2.5%	0.0%	5.3%	14.3%
	Somewhat disagree	6.0%	5.0%	11.8%	5.3%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	8.4%	7.5%	17.6%	5.3%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	32.5%	37.5%	17.6%	26.3%	57.1%
	Strongly agree	49.4%	47.5%	52.9%	57.9%	28.6%
I know what an absentee or mail in ballot is	Strongly disagree	4.8%	2.5%	0.0%	10.5%	14.3%
	Somewhat disagree	4.8%	2.5%	5.9%	5.3%	14.3%
	Neither agree nor disagree	4.8%	5.0%	5.9%	0.0%	14.3%
	Somewhat agree	30.1%	35.0%	23.5%	26.3%	28.6%
	Strongly agree	55.4%	55.0%	64.7%	57.9%	28.6%
I know how to apply for an absentee/ mail-in ballot						
Strongly disagree		24.1%	22.5%	23.5%	26.3%	28.6%

	Somewhat disagree	20.5%	22.5%	17.6%	15.8%	28.6%
	Neither agree nor disagree	6.0%	0.0%	11.8%	10.5%	14.3%
	Somewhat agree	18.1%	15.0%	23.5%	21.1%	14.3%
	Strongly agree	31.3%	40.0%	23.5%	26.3%	14.3%
I know that there is an upcoming election in November	Strongly disagree	3.6%	2.5%	0.0%	5.3%	14.3%
	Somewhat disagree	2.4%	2.5%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	4.8%	2.5%	11.8%	5.3%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	16.9%	17.5%	17.6%	15.8%	14.3%
	Strongly agree	72.3%	75.0%	64.7%	73.7%	71.4%
I know where I am registered to vote	Strongly disagree	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	14.3%
	Somewhat disagree	6.0%	7.5%	5.9%	5.3%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	12.0%	12.5%	11.8%	5.3%	28.6%
	Somewhat agree	15.7%	15.0%	17.6%	15.8%	14.3%
	Strongly agree	63.9%	65.0%	64.7%	68.4%	42.9%
I know the difference between local, state, and federal candidates on my ballot	Strongly disagree	3.6%	2.5%	0.0%	5.3%	14.3%
	Somewhat disagree	13.3%	22.5%	5.9%	5.3%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	14.5%	10.0%	23.5%	10.5%	28.6%
	Somewhat agree	25.3%	30.0%	23.5%	15.8%	28.6%
	Strongly agree	43.4%	35.0%	47.1%	63.2%	28.6%
I know who is running for governor in my state	Strongly disagree	21.7%	25.0%	23.5%	15.8%	14.3%
	Somewhat disagree	16.9%	15.0%	5.9%	21.1%	42.9%
	Neither agree nor disagree	7.2%	7.5%	5.9%	10.5%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	25.3%	17.5%	41.2%	21.1%	42.9%
	Strongly agree	28.9%	35.0%	23.5%	31.6%	0.0%

I know who my congressperson is in the House of Representatives	Strongly disagree	28.9%	27.5%	11.8%	42.1%	42.9%
	Somewhat disagree	30.1%	35.0%	35.3%	15.8%	28.6%
	Neither agree nor disagree	4.8%	0.0%	11.8%	10.5%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	14.5%	15.0%	17.6%	10.5%	14.3%
	Strongly agree	21.7%	22.5%	23.5%	21.1%	14.3%
I know the number of my congressional district.	Strongly disagree	45.8%	42.5%	41.2%	47.4%	71.4%
	Somewhat disagree	18.1%	22.5%	23.5%	10.5%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	6.0%	5.0%	5.9%	10.5%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	12.0%	12.5%	17.6%	10.5%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	18.1%	17.5%	11.8%	21.1%	28.6%
I am affiliated with a political party	Strongly disagree	14.5%	2.5%	5.9%	31.6%	57.1%
	Somewhat disagree	7.2%	5.0%	5.9%	15.8%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	22.9%	20.0%	23.5%	26.3%	28.6%
	Somewhat agree	27.7%	45.0%	11.8%	15.8%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	27.7%	27.5%	52.9%	10.5%	14.3%

When we aggregate for question twelve (Figure 10 below), we find that the general response is “somewhat agree” for each statement. For both statements “There is a staff or faculty member at Hood College that would help me register to vote,” both those who identify as Independent and Other responded at a 0% rate for the options “strongly disagree” and “somewhat disagree,” respectively. The statement that yielded the most variation in answers was “Classes I have taken at Hood College have taught me about the electoral process,” for this statement each response has a statistical outlier coming from the Other category that is significant. For example, while on average about 20% across all political parties strongly

disagreed with the statement, 66.7% of those who identified with Other chose “strongly disagree.” Also, Other was at 0% in the “somewhat disagree,” “somewhat agree,” and “strongly agree” categories with a statistically significant difference between other parties of at least 11%.

Figure 10

		Q9: Political Party Affiliation				
		Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other
Total Count (Answering)		80.0	39.0	17.0	18.0	6.0
There is a staff or faculty member at Hood College that would help me register to vote.	Strongly disagree	5.0%	7.7%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	6.3%	5.1%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	15.0%	5.1%	23.5%	16.7%	50.0%
	Somewhat agree	40.0%	43.6%	29.4%	50.0%	16.7%
	Strongly agree	33.8%	38.5%	23.5%	33.3%	33.3%
Hood College will help me become engaged in the upcoming November 2022 election.	Strongly disagree	10.0%	10.3%	11.8%	5.6%	16.7%
	Somewhat disagree	13.8%	15.4%	17.6%	11.1%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	31.3%	35.9%	17.6%	38.9%	16.7%
	Somewhat agree	26.3%	23.1%	41.2%	11.1%	50.0%
	Strongly agree	18.8%	15.4%	11.8%	33.3%	16.7%
Hood College will provide students information on how to register to vote.	Strongly disagree	5.0%	5.1%	5.9%	5.6%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	5.0%	5.1%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	26.3%	28.2%	23.5%	22.2%	33.3%
	Somewhat agree	28.7%	28.2%	23.5%	38.9%	16.7%
	Strongly agree	35.0%	33.3%	35.3%	33.3%	50.0%

	Strongly disagree	25.0%	20.5%	23.5%	22.2%	66.7%
Classes I have taken at Hood College have taught me about the electoral process.	Somewhat disagree	15.0%	20.5%	5.9%	16.7%	0.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	18.8%	12.8%	17.6%	27.8%	33.3%
	Somewhat agree	18.8%	17.9%	29.4%	16.7%	0.0%
	Strongly agree	22.5%	28.2%	23.5%	16.7%	0.0%

For questions thirteen and fourteen (seen in Figure 11 in the appendix), there was no variation amongst each option. However, what is interesting is that those who identified as either Democrat or Republican, about 30% of them each chose the wrong candidates.

Year at Hood:

When we look at data aggregated by year at Hood for question eleven (seen in Figure 12 located in the appendix), most of the sample comes from Seniors, and there is not much variance among percentages. However, it is important to note that across all years, those who identified as Juniors were most likely to choose “strongly agree” with most statements. Also, the most likely to choose “strongly disagree” for each statement were First Year students.

For question twelve (shown in Figure 13 below), like question eleven, there was not many variances with each statement amongst years at Hood. However, it is noteworthy that for the statements “There is a staff or faculty member at Hood College that would help me register to vote” and “Hood College will provide students information on how to register to vote,” both sophomores and juniors responded at a 0% rate strongly and somewhat disagree respectively. Also, for those that identified as Seniors at Hood, 41.4% strongly disagreed with the statement “Classes I have taken at Hood College have taught me about the electoral process,” this percentage was at least 15% higher than the rest of the years represented, therefore statistically significant. This answer could be caused by the fact that Seniors are already established in their

majors and have a good sense of all the classes they have taken to graduate, and some might not have taken anything civics related.

Figure 13

		Q5: Year at Hood				
		Total	First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
Total Count (Answering)		80.0	16.0	18.0	17.0	29.0
There is a staff or faculty member at Hood College that would help me register to vote.	Strongly disagree	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.8%	6.9%
	Somewhat disagree	6.3%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%
	Neither agree nor disagree	15.0%	18.8%	16.7%	17.6%	10.3%
	Somewhat agree	40.0%	31.3%	38.9%	29.4%	51.7%
	Strongly agree	33.8%	37.5%	44.4%	41.2%	20.7%
Hood College will help me become engaged in the upcoming November 2022 election.	Strongly disagree	10.0%	12.5%	0.0%	17.6%	10.3%
	Somewhat disagree	13.8%	6.3%	16.7%	0.0%	24.1%
	Neither agree nor disagree	31.3%	43.8%	33.3%	29.4%	24.1%
	Somewhat agree	26.3%	25.0%	27.8%	35.3%	20.7%
	Strongly agree	18.8%	12.5%	22.2%	17.6%	20.7%
Hood College will provide students information on how to register to vote.	Strongly disagree	5.0%	12.5%	0.0%	11.8%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.8%
	Neither agree nor disagree	26.3%	37.5%	22.2%	23.5%	24.1%
	Somewhat agree	28.7%	18.8%	50.0%	17.6%	27.6%

	Strongly agree	35.0%	31.3%	27.8%	47.1%	34.5%
Classes I have taken at Hood College have taught me about the electoral process.	Strongly disagree	25.0%	25.0%	11.1%	11.8%	41.4%
	Somewhat disagree	15.0%	12.5%	27.8%	11.8%	10.3%
	Neither agree nor disagree	18.8%	12.5%	16.7%	35.3%	13.8%
	Somewhat agree	18.8%	37.5%	11.1%	17.6%	13.8%
	Strongly agree	22.5%	12.5%	33.3%	23.5%	20.7%

For questions thirteen and fourteen (Figure 14 in the appendix), the majority of each year at Hood was able to identify the correct candidates as Wes Moore and Dan Cox. However, like those aggregated by race, gender identity, and political party affiliation, about 30% of each year chose another candidate.

Interviews:

I interviewed ten persons/people across different years at Hood that all worked in the Admissions office. When I asked the four questions, I found similarities within each response. First, I asked about their voter knowledge/ education level prior to going to college. The majority of responses were that the students had taken a class on civics in high school but did not remember explicitly learning how to vote. For example, student 8 said; “I vividly remember learning about the three branches of government, but I don’t remember my teachers telling me how to get involved.” The purpose of the question was to gauge the political socialization of each person.

Then, I asked students if they feel like there is an expectation to vote, but lack of resources to educate them on the subject? 90% of the responses here were in agreeance to the statement, except for Student 6 that said, “Yes and no, resources are readily available on the internet, it is more of an issue in being pointed in the right direction.”

Next, I asked them to describe their involvement (if any) with politics and civic engagement, specifying if they are involved on campus in any leadership positions, and if they are planning to host any events related to the election. For all the answers, all students were civically engaged via volunteering this ranged from soup kitchens to the fire department. However, only 30% of those I interviewed said that they voted. The students participate in community activities, but do not vote. When it came to leadership positions on campus I heard from the President of Black Student Union, the Secretary of Students and Peers Advocating Relational Consent, Editor of the Wisteria Literary Magazine, and Secretary of the Least Squares Club: all of which held no events relating to the November 2022 election. Perhaps the most interesting response was from Student 8 that said, “I canvassed for the David Trone campaign; however, I will not vote.” This was the most fascinating to me because to canvass for a candidate is a form of getting out the vote. I then asked the student if she was not registered to vote, to which they responded that they are registered, but are not convinced to vote in any of the races.

My final question was whether they trusted the voting process- specifically believing that their ballot was secure. 70% of respondents said: “For the most part, yes.” The rest of respondents said, “I don’t know.” To those that responded with “I don’t know,” to which I asked them to explain, and the consensus was because of the 2020 election cycle with mail-in ballots.

Implications/ Discussion:

Misinformation:

The general findings of my survey rejected my hypothesis that the students are not knowledgeable in voting processes: students are, in fact, civically engaged. However, this does not mean their voter knowledge is all correct, some are still lacking knowledge of the processes at play: evident in those who selected “Larry Hogan” as the Democrat and Republican candidate for Governor. Further, back to their interview statements that the students feel expected to vote but are not given any further tools on how to do so, like researching candidates.

Volunteerism over Voting:

Based on interviews, students are more likely to volunteer in their local communities as a form of civic engagement over casting a ballot. Further research should be done to explore this phenomenon and perhaps ask further questions on what is more impactful to them.

Gender:

After disaggregating the results, I was able to see how my study related back to the literature at large. For example, there is a gap between gender like the study by Gardner that showed college women were voting at higher rates in 2018 than men. This is not true to my research because across the gender spectrum, men were most likely to choose “strongly agree” when evaluating voter knowledge statements in question eleven. The average difference of percentages between those who identify as male, or female is about 12%. The majority of statements that those who identify as male strongly agreed with were about how to be engaged. For example, the statements that they strongly agreed to included “I know what an absentee/mail-in ballot is,” “I know how to apply for an absentee/ mail-in ballot,” and “I know

the difference between local, state, and federal candidates on my ballot.” The behavior of voting outlined by Gardner is not likely because of these attitudes.

Race

Based on the data, there was a clear divide in responses across race. This was evident in rating statements in question eleven. Those who identify as Black/ African American were on average the most likely to choose “strongly disagree” over any other race. Specifically in statements about how and where to register to vote. The implications of disagreeing with those statements could mean that these students are not registered at all. This differs from Gardner’s study where those who identified as African American / Black were the most reported voters in the 2018 mid-term election.

Partisanship

Those who identified with either the Republican or Democrat Party were most confident in their ratings. Those who identified as Republicans did not choose “strongly disagree” for statements such as “I know how to register to vote,” “I know what an absentee ballot is,” “I know there is an upcoming election in November,” “I know where I am registered to vote,” and “I know the difference between local, state, and federal candidates on my ballot”; all are statements in which require knowledge of civic engagement. For those that identified as either Republican or Democrat, 0% chose “strongly disagree” when given the statement “I know where I am registered to vote.” The students who identified with either party may be receiving information by their respective parties. However, both may be receiving misinformation as 30% chose the wrong candidates for governor., some choosing primary candidates such as Tom Perez and Kelly Schulz.

Hood College As a Case Study

I chose Hood because it is a private higher education institution in Maryland, that could be subject to the Student and Military Voter Empowerment Act. Hood is a small private institution, and I figured with a survey for a small school I could hit an almost 10% margin of the population. The top majors at Hood are Business and Biology, so I thought with that knowledge, I would see more “disagree”-related responses in my data. This sample was not random, so if I has more time, I would have tried to oversample underrepresented groups such as non-binary persons or racial groups to get further information.

In relation to the literature, I was able to see variance within the statement “Classes I have taken at Hood have taught me about the electoral process” because as Melville explained, college students do not go to school to learn civic engagement, therefore they do not believe that civic involvement will not be a priority outcome of a college education. Some students at Hood may never have taken a civics or government related course.

What makes Hood students different from the findings from Melville, is that on average they agree with the statement that “there is a staff or faculty member at Hood College that would help me register to vote.” Meaning that the students may not be actively learning about civics, but if it is a priority to them, they trust the Hood faculty to get them involved. As a result, my hypothesis that students would not agree with the statements in question twelve about the involvement of Hood was also disproven. Based on the survey, the students are comfortable with relying on Hood College to provide them with voting information.

Attitudes Cannot Predict Behavior

The most important take away was that the methods used in this case study measured attitudes, not behavior. When answering the research questions: are college students educated about the voting process, to what extent to they attribute their voting education to their college

institutions, and how can a college bridge the gap between college students and college educated voters: we are only measuring how the students feel on the subject, the attitudes of students in the study suggest that they are educated about the voting processes and can use Hood as a resource.

Conclusion/ Further Research:

The collection of my research was done in a month and did not reach at least ten percent of the population of Hood College. However, my data and findings can be used as a base for attitudinal data about students on the campus. Based on the findings we know that there is a gap between gender and race in responses. All of the numbers help support that students have civic engagement aspirations.

Looking back at the literature, Horowitz claims that college is not a significant factor in voter education because of confounding variables like privatized education, race, income, etc. (Horowitz 2015) My work supports the opposite, as Hood students who were surveyed suggested that Hood College was a viable resource for voter education. This study is beneficial to the literature about civic education on college campuses is general because the priority is the opinion of the individual student's attitude.

If I did not have time constraints with completing the data collection before the 2022 mid-term election, I would revise the questioning to include a demographic question on the student's major/ area of study. Also, I would give a post-election survey where respondents could rate their voting experience/ note if they voted at all.

For further research, I also recommend distributing the survey in a non-election year to compare if the answers change. To have more quantitative results, I would also recommend an experimental study where students are given the information on how to research candidates and vote and a control group is given a separate presentation and then after each presentation, measure who registered to vote.

With the implementation of the Student and Military Voter Empowerment Act in Maryland, Hood is entitled to the resources provided as a Maryland institution. However, another

policy recommendation is the All-In Challenge. This is a national non-partisan group that encourages college campuses all over the United States to navigate the voting process. With All-In, each campus has the tools to distribute how to vote, where to vote, learn about who is on the ballot and pledge to vote. (Wolfe 2022) Each campus then publishes a plan for civic education on campuses and reports on the voting population.

The opportunities to learn how to vote are there, higher education can be a resource and some students feel confident that it is a resource. There is still more work to be done , but I am excited to see what comes next.

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Appendix

Survey Questions:

Section One: Demographics

1. Gender Identity: male, female, nonbinary, other
2. Race: white/ Caucasian, black/ African American, Hispanic, Asian, other
3. Age: 17-18, 19, 20, 21, 22, other *If below 18, they will be out of the survey via Qualtrics
4. Year at Hood: first year, sophomore, junior, senior
5. State you reside: *enter*
6. Political Party Affiliation:
7. I am registered to vote (choose yes or no)

Section Two: Background Knowledge

On a scale of one to 5, 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree where do you stand on these statements:

1. I know how to register to vote
2. I know what an absentee ballot is
3. I know how to apply for an absentee ballot
4. I know that there is an upcoming election in November
5. I know the district I am registered in
6. I know the difference between state, local, and federal candidates on my ballot
7. I know who is running for governor in my state
8. I know who my congressperson is in the House of Representatives
9. I know my congressional district
10. I am affiliated with a political party

Section Three: School Assessment

On a scale of one to 5, 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree where do you stand on these statements:

1. There is a staff member at Hood College who would help me register to vote
2. Hood College will help me be engaged with the upcoming election
3. Hood College will provide information to students on how to register to vote
4. Classes I have taken at Hood College have taught me about the voting process
5. I can rely on Hood to provide voting information for me

Section Four: If the student selects Maryland as their state, they will be asked these questions:

1. Who is the Democrat Candidate running for governor of Maryland?
 - a. Wes Moore
 - b. Larry Hogan
 - c. John King
 - d. Tom Perez
2. Who is the Republican Candidate running for governor of Maryland?
 - a. Larry Hogan
 - b. Dan Cox

- c. Ron DeSantis
- d. Kelly Schulz

Interview Questions:

1. Prior to going to college, what was your education on the voting process like?
2. Do you feel like there is an expectation to vote, but lack of resources to educate you on the subject?
3. Can you describe your involvement with politics and civic engagement?
 - a. On Campus?
 - b. Are you a leader on campus/ hold any leadership positions, do you do any activities regarding elections?
4. Do you trust the voting process?

Figure 11

		Q9: Political Party Affiliation				
		Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other
13: Who is the Democrat Candidate running for governor of Maryland?	Total Count (Answering)	79.0	39.0	16.0	18.0	6.0
	Wes Moore	69.6%	74.4%	68.8%	66.7%	50.0%
	Larry Hogan	13.9%	10.3%	12.5%	16.7%	33.3%
	John King	5.1%	2.6%	12.5%	5.6%	0.0%
	Tom Perez	11.4%	12.8%	6.3%	11.1%	16.7%
14: Who is the Republican Candidate running for governor in Maryland	Total Count (Answering)	79.0	39.0	16.0	18.0	6.0
	Larry Hogan	19.0%	12.8%	18.8%	27.8%	33.3%

	Dan Cox	67.1%	74.4%	68.8%	61.1%	33.3%
	Kelly Schulz	8.9%	10.3%	6.3%	5.6%	16.7%
	Ron DeSantis	5.1%	2.6%	6.3%	5.6%	16.7%

Figure 12

		Q5: Year at Hood				
		Total	First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
Total Count (Answering)		83.0	17.0	18.0	18.0	30.0
I know how to register to vote	Strongly disagree	3.6%	5.9%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	6.0%	17.6%	5.6%	0.0%	3.3%
	Neither agree nor disagree	8.4%	17.6%	11.1%	0.0%	6.7%
	Somewhat agree	32.5%	29.4%	44.4%	27.8%	30.0%
	Strongly agree	49.4%	29.4%	38.9%	61.1%	60.0%
I know what an absentee or mail in ballot is	Strongly disagree	4.8%	5.9%	5.6%	11.1%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	4.8%	11.8%	5.6%	0.0%	3.3%
	Neither agree nor disagree	4.8%	11.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	30.1%	41.2%	27.8%	16.7%	33.3%
	Strongly agree	55.4%	29.4%	61.1%	61.1%	63.3%
I know how to apply for an absentee/ mail-in ballot	Strongly disagree	24.1%	35.3%	27.8%	16.7%	20.0%
	Somewhat disagree	20.5%	35.3%	22.2%	11.1%	16.7%
	Neither agree nor disagree	6.0%	17.6%	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%

	Somewhat agree	18.1%	0.0%	11.1%	22.2%	30.0%
	Strongly agree	31.3%	11.8%	33.3%	44.4%	33.3%
I know that there is an upcoming election in November	Strongly disagree	3.6%	5.9%	0.0%	5.6%	3.3%
	Somewhat disagree	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%
	Neither agree nor disagree	4.8%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%
	Somewhat agree	16.9%	17.6%	11.1%	16.7%	20.0%
	Strongly agree	72.3%	58.8%	88.9%	77.8%	66.7%
I know where I am registered to vote	Strongly disagree	2.4%	5.9%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
	Somewhat disagree	6.0%	11.8%	5.6%	0.0%	6.7%
	Neither agree nor disagree	12.0%	29.4%	16.7%	11.1%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	15.7%	5.9%	22.2%	0.0%	26.7%
	Strongly agree	63.9%	47.1%	55.6%	83.3%	66.7%
I know the difference between local, state, and federal candidates on my ballot	Strongly disagree	3.6%	0.0%	5.6%	5.6%	3.3%
	Somewhat disagree	13.3%	29.4%	5.6%	5.6%	13.3%
	Neither agree nor disagree	14.5%	17.6%	11.1%	16.7%	13.3%
	Somewhat agree	25.3%	17.6%	33.3%	22.2%	26.7%
	Strongly agree	43.4%	35.3%	44.4%	50.0%	43.3%
I know who is running for governor in my state	Strongly disagree	21.7%	41.2%	11.1%	11.1%	23.3%
	Somewhat disagree	16.9%	5.9%	5.6%	27.8%	23.3%
	Neither agree nor disagree	7.2%	5.9%	11.1%	5.6%	6.7%
	Somewhat agree	25.3%	29.4%	38.9%	33.3%	10.0%
	Strongly agree	28.9%	17.6%	33.3%	22.2%	36.7%

I know who my congressperson is in the House of Representatives	Strongly disagree	28.9%	41.2%	22.2%	27.8%	26.7%
	Somewhat disagree	30.1%	35.3%	16.7%	38.9%	30.0%
	Neither agree nor disagree	4.8%	5.9%	11.1%	5.6%	0.0%
	Somewhat agree	14.5%	11.8%	27.8%	5.6%	13.3%
	Strongly agree	21.7%	5.9%	22.2%	22.2%	30.0%
I know the number of my congressional district.	Strongly disagree	45.8%	52.9%	50.0%	27.8%	50.0%
	Somewhat disagree	18.1%	17.6%	5.6%	16.7%	26.7%
	Neither agree nor disagree	6.0%	11.8%	11.1%	0.0%	3.3%
	Somewhat agree	12.0%	17.6%	11.1%	16.7%	6.7%
	Strongly agree	18.1%	0.0%	22.2%	38.9%	13.3%
I am affiliated with a political party	Strongly disagree	14.5%	17.6%	22.2%	16.7%	6.7%
	Somewhat disagree	7.2%	11.8%	5.6%	5.6%	6.7%
	Neither agree nor disagree	22.9%	11.8%	22.2%	27.8%	26.7%
	Somewhat agree	27.7%	23.5%	22.2%	22.2%	36.7%
	Strongly agree	27.7%	35.3%	27.8%	27.8%	23.3%

Figure 14

		Q5: Year at Hood				
		Total	First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
13: Who is the Democrat Candidate running for governor of Maryland?	Total Count (Answering)	79.0	15.0	18.0	17.0	29.0
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	Larry Hogan	13.9%	13.3%	5.6%	5.9%	24.1%
	John King	5.1%	6.7%	0.0%	11.8%	3.4%

	Tom Perez	11.4%	13.3%	11.1%	11.8%	10.3%
14: Who is the Republican Candidate running for governor in Maryland	Total Count (Answering)	79.0	15.0	18.0	17.0	29.0
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	Kelly Schulz	8.9%	6.7%	0.0%	17.6%	10.3%
	Ron DeSantis	5.1%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	6.9%