

MEETING WITH COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS

To facilitate lasting reform on campus, approach administrators and faculty on your campus for support. Since you are only on-campus for a few years, gaining administrative support is crucial, so advocate for and foster these relationships. Administrators are there to serve the students. They can help you navigate bureaucracy and make your campaign a sustainable and far-reaching project.

1. Find the Right People

The right contacts in your campus administration will depend on your goals and the structure of your campus. Here are some suggestions to get started:

- **Office of Civic Engagement** – start here if your school has one and if you're interested in establishing an ongoing institutional relationship between your campus and local elections office.
- **Dean of Students/Dean of Student Life** – the Dean can provide support and point you in the right direction of other relationships to cultivate.
- **Residential Life Department** – coordinate with Residential Life for projects like distributing registration forms, information about polling locations, and correct street addresses for residence halls when registering voters.
- **Political Science Department** – faculty in the political science department can help by distributing registration forms in class and discussing voter education, they may also facilitate connections with other academic departments and have subject matter expertise when it comes to planning events like forums and debates. They can also involve faculty from other departments or promote programs through the Academic Senate.

2. Set Up and Prepare for Meetings

It's important to walk into your meeting with a vision and a specific request for help. Treat this like a business meeting. Administrators have busy schedules so the more seriously you take the request and your preparation the more successful you'll be scheduling time and meeting goals.

- Have a clear vision you can articulate in a few sentences
For example: I am interested in increasing civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus by hosting nonpartisan voter registration drives with the support of college administrators. This will enable larger portions of the student body to participate in the electoral process, as my goal is to register 1,000 new voters during our first voter registration efforts. Your support will demonstrate to students that registering and voting is an important value to the college and our community.
- Outline your plans of how to accomplish your goals.
- Explain what you want the administration to do to assist your efforts.
- Bring samples of posters, forms, etc. to show your organization and drive.
- Stay optimistic! If the first person you talk to can't help you, be persistent until you find the right person.

3. Collaborate to Create a Campus Plan

After establishing clear “next steps” during conversations with administrators, make sure to:

- Send a thank you to them for taking the time to meet with you.
- Follow through on your promises and remind them of the next steps they committed to.
- Get administrators involved in your plan— collaborate with them on voter registration drives, Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts, presentations, and communication of events.
- Stay in communication with your contact to ensure they stay enthusiastic about your goals.

Contact CVP! We can help you every step along the way whether you are outlining your goals, identifying contacts, writing an introductory email, or collaborating on outreach to campus administrators.

