Study Abroad Students: Overseas Voting for 2018 Midterms

If you’re a US citizen, even if studying abroad, you can vote in the November 6 US midterm election.

Haven’t already registered or requested your absentee ballot? It’s not too late: Go to FVAP.gov today to generate a Federal Post Card Application form (accepted by all 50 states and US territories). Print it, sign it and send it in immediately.

Check at FVAP.gov how your state requires you to send it:

- Many states let this one-page form be emailed. If allowed, you can scan or photograph your signed and dated form with your phone—and email it to the address provided.
- Other states require the form to be mailed or faxed to the address provided. The forms are free to mail within the US, but otherwise you must pay for postage: Find a local post office in the country where you are studying.

Once you’ve filled out the form, almost all 50 states will email ballots to citizens outside the country if requested—the quickest way to get them.

Many states will allow for electronic return of ballots. Others require the form to be printed, filled out and mailed with sufficient postage. Return your ballot as soon as you can to ensure it arrives on time:

- If you’ve already registered and requested your absentee ballot, you should receive it shortly if you haven’t already. States are required to send overseas ballots 45 days before Election Day—September 22. It may go to your spam inbox, so check for it there.
- If you haven’t received your ballot by September 28, contact your Local Election Official. You can find contact details on FVAP.gov.
- If you haven’t received a ballot by October 8, go to FVAP.gov, complete a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) and return it immediately.

If your state ballot arrives after you send in your FWAB, you should still vote the state ballot and return it. The state will discard the FWAB and count only your state ballot. This is not voting twice. Your state ballot will include all the elections you can vote in, for federal, state and local offices. It’s important to vote in all of them. You can find nonpartisan candidate guides here.

Remember, being registered to vote does not mean you have requested your overseas absentee ballot! When you request your ballot using FVAP.gov, you get certain advantages: Your ballot will be protected in the event of a recount, and you may have longer deadlines for returning your ballot.

You never know how close elections will be—or how much your vote could matter.