

Student Government Association

201 High Street
Farmville, VA 23909

March 3, 2021

Cheryl Steele

Dean of Student Engagement

Longwood University

Upchurch 309A 201 High Street

Farmville, VA 23901

Dear Dean Cheryl Steele:

Subject: Getting Voting Day as a registered day off on campus.

The most important part of being an American is the ability to practice in our democracy. The ability to get to the polls has been limited in the past. Virginia is one of the few states to hold elections every year. In the previous year the voter turnout was only 78%.

There are a total of 413,315 students enrolled in higher education in Virginia. There are also 5,975,806 voters registered in the state of Virginia. The ability to participate in our free elections should not be a decision to miss class and be penalized. As citizen leaders it is important to be engaged in our local governments and all affairs that determine the shape of the nation.

In 2020, when Longwood University became the campus that was number one in Virginia on Motivote we had voter participation highest in the state. That platform that helped students register to vote, find polling locations and get their friends involved. With your help voter turnout was the highest it had ever been in youth in history. Taking that momentum into more than just presidential elections would help Virginia be the best state it could be. By taking the time and dedicating a day to ensuring students are able to be at the polls voting, giving other voters rides to polls, or serving their communities at various polling locations. This ensures that the focus is not just on engaging Longwood University citizen leaders but bettering the world they will go on to be leaders in. The desire of Longwood University to mold citizen leaders comes from servant leadership. That servant leadership is not practiced in the classroom. You have the opportunity to really demonstrate the true values of Longwood University.

The ability of the students to be engaged in a society that they are the future leaders of is a pressing issue that needs action. If the day set aside was in place within the next year student would begin to be more mindful of their local elections. They would see the important steps that campus leaders such as yourself took and begin to follow in those footsteps. Having the day off for the next election would be the best time frame so that Longwood University can continue to be leaders in the Virginia Higher Education System.

Yours Proudly,

Javion Peterson

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Senator