

VOTER BREAKDOWN

Percentage of student population
that voted in ASUO elections:

PRIMARY ELECTION	GENERAL ELECTION
2004 14.05 %	2004 -
2003 15.22 %	2003 14.3 %
2002 15.3 %	2002 10.5 %
2001 9 %	2001 9 %
2000 12.3 %	2000 * not available

* results unavailable due to unreported data

SOURCE: Emerald archives

ELECTION

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focused on networking with people he already knew and having them spread information by word-of-mouth.

"I hate it when I'm walking to class and somebody hands me a flier," he said. "I don't want to be in anyone's face."

Other candidates say they have found the flier method effective and that students have been eager to hear about campus issues.

Executive candidate Adam Petkun, who was the front-runner in the primary and made it to the general election, said he's tried to talk to as many people as possible and inform them of his platform.

"The more people we talk to face-to-face, the better off we'll be," he said. "The downside, of course, is that you can only talk to so many people."

Freshman chemistry major Noah Van Horn said he was handed his first candidate flier Wednesday, and it encouraged him to seek more information about the elections.

"At least it gets the message out there," he said.

Senior international studies major Danielle Chiacco agreed that getting out and talking to students is a good way to increase student interest, but only if candidates are explaining their platforms, not just prodding students to vote for them.

"Anybody can interact and put on a show," she said, adding that unless the candidates are talking about the issues, students are likely to ignore them.

She said she feels one main cause of voter apathy is that many students don't feel like their voices matter in the governmental process.

"I feel like there's just this lack of connection," she said.

Other schools face similar challenges of getting students involved despite attempts from candidates to increase interest.

Oregon State University, which has about 19,000 students, saw a voter turnout between 6 and 8 percent in last year's general election, said Amber Bonte, spokeswoman for the Associated Students of Oregon State University. She added that most of those students are likely the only ones who vote on a regular basis.

"The hard thing is reaching out to those students who have never voted before," she said.

ASOSU Vice President Danielle

Cox said candidates for OSU's student government apply campaigning methods similar to those at the University such as posting signs, advertising in the campus newspaper and reaching out to student groups, although few stand outside the school's memorial union catching students on their way to class.

"Basically it's more about the name that they're going to recognize when they get to the polls," she said. "We're just trying to do whatever we can."

Portland State University saw similar voter turnout in their student government elections, which ended last week, with about 8 percent of students voting. PSU has about 23,000 students.

Associated Students of Portland State University President Amara Marino said although the number was not as high as she had hoped, turnout is increasing every year, with 5 to 6 percent of students voting last year.

She said the candidates at her school work together to encourage students to vote, and many use typical campaigning methods such as fliers, mass e-mailing and entertainment attractions.

"It's becoming a bigger deal on campus," she said. "It's a sign that the student population is changing on campus."

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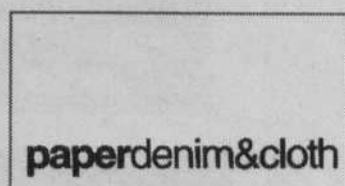
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