



Student Activism

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PINPOINT YOUR PASSION

STEP 1

- Whether it's protecting a historic building on your college campus, ensuring fair treatment to animals, or fighting for LGBTQ equality, the most passionate student activists have identified a cause that makes them get up each morning believing they can make things better.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

STEP 2

- Depending on your chosen area of activism, there's a good chance a few others have identified this issue. First, find out if others are fighting for the same cause. If so, go to their website and read up on the topic. To be fully informed, try to find position papers from groups on the other side. Once you have a firm grip on the issue, you can see if you can commit to its strategy for change or need to adopt a different approach.

DETERMINE YOUR GOAL

STEP 3

- When you start making others aware of the injustice you've identified, what action are you hoping to encourage? It could be you want to gain signatures in support of a proposed plan for the administration, or perhaps you're more interested in raising public awareness. Either way, listing short, intermediate and long-term goals keeps you organized and shows supporters you've thought things out.

TAP INTO RESOURCES

STEP 4

- Resources come in many forms, and one of the first types a student should find is peer groups. Activists looking for strength in numbers should start on their campus, preferably by reaching out to a faculty or staff member who will advise you. But don't shy away from contacting national groups. Many have toolkits filled with media strategies and organizational plans.

CREATE AN ACTION PLAN

STEP 5

- Think about the objectives that need to be in place to achieve that goal. Then develop detailed action steps to complete the objectives and meet your goals.

GO!

STEP 6

- You've identified your passion, educated yourself on it, set goals, found resources, and created a plan for success. The final step to becoming a student activist is to bring awareness to your cause. This could mean speaking at student club meetings, blogging, organizing a speaker series, or meeting with the administration.



DIVERSITY & RACISM

Although the Civil Rights Movement began more than half a century ago, racism and lack of diversity continue to be issues both on college campuses and across the country. In the context of higher education, poor race relations can fester, eventually manifesting in learning distractions or threats to student safety. Although these issues have greatly improved in recent decades, there is still much work to be done.

ENVIRONMENTALISM & SUSTAINABILITY

The concept of “going green” – or enacting environmentally friendly and sustainable policies – has been discussed on hundreds of college campuses in recent years. Whether pushing for more recycling receptacles, encouraging faculty to shift from paper essays to online ones, or installing water stations for refillable bottles, there are many ways to promote the preservation of natural resources in higher education settings.

LGBTQ & GENDER EQUALITY

The first widespread LGBTQ activism efforts began in the late 1960s and stemmed from wider issues surrounding second-wave feminism and the Civil Rights Movement. Student activists were on the frontlines of this movement, and many campuses' LGBTQ groups started during that time. Some of the issues directly affecting students include equal access to housing and transgender bathrooms.

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

Decisions made within the political arena by government officials have long been scrutinized by student activists, with examples ranging from local government intervention in education to national issues like the Vietnam War. Many student-led political groups originated from other student clubs focused on conservative and liberal platforms.

SEXUAL HEALTH & SAFETY

Student activists run the gamut on issues surrounding sexual health, with some working to expand abstinence programs in high school and others seeking to increase access to birth control. Sexual harassment is an area where most people come together to lessen the number of incidents by providing greater campus security and educating men and women about anti-harassment policies.

SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS

A wide ranging concept, social justice is concerned with any mistreatment of an individual by society. In the case of student activism, this may relate to student mistreatment by the school administration. Issues span from racism and sexism to access to healthcare or education, and students often join with larger activism groups to amplify their collective voice.

Thank you

Any Questions ?