

## Undergraduate Conference Call for Proposals

### Beyond Voting: How Christians Could Think and Act Politically in a New World

In U.S. political culture, voting is often presumed to be the paradigmatic form of political participation: it is a(n imperfect) mechanism for the expression of popular will, and a right long denied to and jeopardized today for those oppressed on the basis of race, sex, class, and other forms of social identity. Ensuring the right to vote and deliberating about how to vote are crucial forms of political action. But we might also ask: how else can Christians think about and mobilize for political engagement, after going to the voting booth? What other sites for political action deserve our attention? How can we imagine politics expansively in relation to our hopes for liberation and transformation of our communities?

Wesley Theological Seminary is now accepting submissions for the 2022 Virtual Conference on Christian Political Engagement for undergraduate students and recent graduates (having graduated in the last three academic years, and not having enrolled in a postgraduate program in the meantime).

Possible topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Underappreciated forms of Christian political action, organizing, and advocacy, especially those coming from the social margins: their aims, methods, and achievements
- How to think theologically alongside the political and social world in conversation with contemporary movements, such as the Movement for Black Lives, the Sunrise Movement, student organizing for gun safety policies, etc.
- The resources Christian communities and traditions have for motivating and shaping political engagement/what Christians need to learn about political life from other communities and traditions, religious or otherwise
- How the Church is itself a political actor: the role of churches in forming citizens, the limits on how churches should act politically
- Christian thinking and practice in relation to contemporary issues, such as climate change, migration, economic disparities, and many others.

The conference will be held virtually on Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, from 10:00am-3:00pm EDT. We welcome presentations that take the form of either a:

- 1,500-2,000-word paper, to be read at the virtual conference on April 8<sup>th</sup>, or
- 15-minute presentation with accompanying audio &/or video aids or script.

Proposals of 250-400 words briefly describing the topic, thesis, and methods of a presentation can be [submitted online](#). **The deadline to submit a proposal is March 5, 2022, at 11:59 pm EDT.**

Additionally, one participant who best embodies Wesley's commitment to Christian leadership and the political activism will be awarded the \$500 David and Dreama McAllister-Wilson Award for Reflection on Christian Political Engagement and Civic Action. We may also award up to two runners up \$100.

For more information, contact the conference administrator Elizabeth Pruchnicki at [epruchnicki@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:epruchnicki@wesleyseminary.edu) or visit [www.wesleyseminary.edu/beyondvoting](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/beyondvoting)