



Campus Action Plan

Alfred State College has a long tradition of community engagement, outreach, collaboration, and service. This tradition is exemplified in the institutional seal with the words “Enter to Learn, Go Forth to Serve”. Currently, this outward focus is core to an institutional strategic plan that highlights applied learning, local & regional impact, and student success as priorities. Our current Civic Action Plan is designed to further enhance this orientation to civic leadership and hands on learning.

The Center for Civic Engagement provides dedicated infrastructure and leadership to civic initiatives. The mission of the Center is to promote a culture of civic engagement on campus preparing students to be civic leaders in their community. This Center will continue to serve as a catalyst for political engagement efforts on campus in 2018 in collaboration with a representative leadership team. This leadership team includes the following key internal stakeholders:

- Director of Student Engagement
- Student Civic Engagement Advocate
- Coordinator of Civic Engagement
- Student Senate President (or representative)
- Associate Vice President of Student Affairs
- Ad Hoc Faculty Member
- Director of Civic Engagement

Included in this leadership team are Civic Engagement Advocates, Student Senate, and student leadership organizations. These internal organizations are made up of student groups that facilitate voter registration drives, nonpartisan candidate information, and various election based events in an effort to engage the community. These student groups act as voting advocates for the rest of the student body.

Externally, the Allegany County Board of Elections is a key community partner in exchanging information and coordinating efforts to maximize student engagement. In addition, the Center's Community Advisory Board serves as a valuable resource. This board is made up of leaders from key sectors within the region who provide input on the activities and direction of this office. Their inclusion provides additional insight for future effective action.

Overall, these stakeholders serve as an effective coalition designed to enhance the creative work in democratic engagement. Their role will continue to be important for future elections including local village elections on Tuesday, March 20th 2018 and mid-term elections on Tuesday, November 6th 2018.

Alfred State has identified three primary goals for democratic engagement in 2018 that focus on efforts to maximize student involvement in the electoral process. These goals include:

1. Enhance knowledge on the pathways to political engagement
2. Develop a greater understanding of candidates, parties, and platforms.
3. Increase voter participation in general to maximize the political impact of the student body.

The first goal is to enhance knowledge on the pathways to political engagement. Many students are confused by the paperwork, regulations, and other similar barriers that depress young adult turnout and participation in New York. Alfred State plans to continue making significant traction in achieving this goal by leveraging multiple platforms and events throughout the year. Examples include:

- Register students during new student orientation in January and July
- Embed voter registration in the move-in process for returning students in August
- Embed voter registration materials in the parking decal procurement process for commuter students
 - Embed voter registration in the Pioneer Cup residence hall competition
- Leverage National Voter Registration Day, Constitution Day, and other key events to initiate pushes for new registrations
- Utilize social media, emails to students, tabling, hand-outs, and other platforms to publicize key dates, resources, and websites
 - Linking online voter registration sources to campus-wide announcements.
- Create posters and design informational bulletin boards in residential halls focusing on the impact of voting
- Explore embedding voter registration opportunity within the class registration process for returning students
- Continue leveraging the Office of the President to send reminders to students on registration and participation

- Inviting community partners such as the League of Women Voters to help promote participation and engage students
- Reminding students of registration and absentee ballot request deadlines via campus-wide announcements.

The second goal is to develop a greater understanding of candidates, parties, and platforms. Consistent avenues for non-partisan information will be designed to raise awareness around important local, regional, and national issues. A few examples include:

- Distribute and display non-partisan information on candidate positions. Make available straightforward party platform posters and handouts in the weeks leading to the election
- Leverage Constitution Day and National Voter Registration Day programming to register and share voter education materials
- Hold mock ballot election around election days in March and November to help students better understand the voting process
- Made available resources so students knew their electoral rights. One example would be the “Student Voting Guide for New York” produced through the Fair Elections Legal Network.
- Leverage platforms like Rock the Vote and other apps designed to make involvement and engagement easier for online oriented students
- Hold debate watch parties in the residence halls
- Design informational bulletin boards and posters in residence halls & academic building with important election oriented dates
- Collaborate with faculty to engage students via course projects and assignments.

The third and final goal is to increase voter participation in general to maximize the political impact of the Alfred State student body. A few examples of specific programs designed to enhance voter participation include the following:

- Partner with food services to decorate the Central Dining Hall with voting paraphernalia and information on election day
- Partner with Student Senate to have a van shuttle students to the polling station throughout election day
 - Leverage the student newspaper to share information and feature student voices on why they are voting.
 - Encourage students to sign a “Pledge to Vote”
- Use chalk to clearly mark out the footpath through village from campus to the local polling station, on the day of the election, to make it as easy as possible for students to locate this venue.

As a unified college, we recognize the importance of getting college students more engaged in our democratic processes by acknowledging the responsibility of higher education to help their students overcome the institutional and psychological obstacles that new voters often face. The success of our voter registration efforts will be determined by comparing this year's data to years past, and adjust our efforts accordingly. Attendance of our political engagement events will be noted and compared to similar events in years past to determine the success of each event. Effectiveness of methods and strategy will be evaluated by collecting key metrics such as event participation and voter registrations completed. Student survey data will also be leveraged to inform effectiveness and efficiency of efforts. Finally, data from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement will continue to play a central role in measuring progress over time and developing benchmarks to further streamline goals and objectives of this effort. The political engagement team will utilize this ongoing feedback loop to inform programming focus and communication strategies throughout the year.