



## Amherst College 2022 Democratic Engagement Action Plan

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### **Executive Summary:**

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Amherst College in Massachusetts for the 2022 election. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout in the 2022 midterm election. The goals for Amherst College for the 2022 election are:

- Assist first-year students in getting registered to vote
- Increase awareness of mid-term elections and their importance
- Assist students with understanding absentee voting
- Provide clear and accurate voter registration information (deadlines, forms, etc)

### **Leadership:**

Our leadership team includes the following:

Liz Agosto - Dean of Students and Chief Student Affairs Officer  
Sarah Barr - Advisor to the Provost on Campus Initiatives  
Jelani Johnson - Interim Director of Student Activities Office  
Olivia Ward - President of AC Votes, class of 23

Our campus works with these following nonprofit partners: Campus Compact, Turbo Vote

### **Commitment:**

Commitment to civic engagement has been a cornerstone of Amherst College for its 200 years. The [college mission](#) states “Amherst College educates students of exceptional potential from all backgrounds so that they may seek, value, and advance knowledge, engage the world around them, and lead principled lives of consequence.” President Martin, who ended her tenure as College President, this last July invested time and energy into supporting voter registration. President Elliott, who took on the role in August, has already similarly shown commitment to civic engagement and supporting the voter registration initiatives.

Amherst College has been a signatory to the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation since 2020.

### **Landscape:**

Amherst College is a private 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2018.

Our campus demographic and voting data:

Amherst College is a small liberal arts college located in Amherst, Massachusetts. The overall enrollment is 1,970 students. 10% of the student body is international students, and the remaining domestic students come from 48 different states and the District of Columbia. The most common states that students come from are California, Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey. Additionally, 49% of the domestic students self-identify as students of color.

Amherst College has authorized NSLVE.

Our institution had a 2020 campus voting rate of 75.5%.  
Our institution had a 2020 voter registration rate of 86.9%.

Our institution had a 2018 voter turnout rate of 38.6%.  
Our institution had a 2018 voter registration rate of 79.3%.

Our institution has been recognized by ALL IN with the following seals: 2016 Bronze, 2018 Gold, 2020 Gold

### **Goals:**

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:

**Increase Student Awareness:** Helping students be aware of midterm elections and the importance they play in setting local and national agendas for the country. In addition to advertising the 2022 mid-term election, ACVotes will highlight the four Rs needed to cast a ballot – registering, requesting, receiving, and returning – so that students have a better understanding of what they need to do in order to vote.

- Improve overall campus voter registration to 90% or higher.
- Increase voter turnout among students to 80% or higher

### **Strategy:**

Amherst College will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation.

- **Tabling:** Starting in October, there has been tabling multiples times per week in the atrium of the Campus Center and Dining Hall from 11 am – 2 pm. Each day of tabling was staffed by two to three student volunteers. The goal of tabling was to provide accurate information to students and assist them in completing registration forms and absentee ballots.
- **Registration Events:** Volunteers from ACVotes organized a voter registration drive for first-year students in collaboration with Residential Engagement and Wellbeing. This collaboration was an attempt to focus specifically on registering new students to vote. many for their first election.

- **Targeted Emails:** Student Affairs created email lists of students living in each state, and sent targeted emails to those students informing them of their voter registration deadline, absentee ballot request deadline, and information on how to register. Particularly for students living in states with complicated registration forms or early deadlines, these emails helped to get information out efficiently and en masse.
- **Use Social Media:**
  - Amherst College Votes will use its [instagram page](#) to disseminate information and voter awareness campaigns.
  - We will utilize the Amherst College instagram and other social media platforms to highlight and augment the messages from AC Votes.
  - President Elliott will showcase the college's commitment to civic engagement and voter registration by interviewing President of AC Votes, Olivia Ward, in inaugural Between 2 Mammoths video.

### **Evaluation:**

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

ACVotes will rely on the 2022 Campus Report for the College provided by the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement provided after the election.

As for qualitative goals, ACVotes will work with existing organizations and campus partners to review efforts and to begin planning for 2024.

### **Reporting:**

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website <https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/amherst-college/>.

Our institution has given ALL IN permission to publish our NSLVE reports which are posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website.

Our action plan and NSLVE reports will be shared with the senior leadership of the college, the Board of Trustees, and we will share out portions with the community.