



Augustana College 2024 Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Developed by: Kai Swanson

Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Augustana College in Illinois for the 2024 election. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout in the 2024 election. The goal for Augustana College for the 2024 election is to increase voting by students who are U.S. citizens.

Leadership:

Our leadership team includes the following, campus groups, and organizations:

Dr. Andrea Talentino, president
Ashley Allen, director, Office of Student Inclusion and Diversity
Chloe Baxter, student; chair of Young Minds Alliance (formerly Politics Club)
Erica Eastland, intern in the Office of Student Life
Janelle Rozendaal, intern in the Office of Student Life
Kai Swanson, special assistant to the president

Commitment:

Augustana College's mission calls on it to provide a challenging education that develops the qualities of mind, spirit and body necessary for students to lead and serve in a diverse and changing world. Augustana's roots in Lutheran understanding of education for the common good mean that it believes individuals flourish only as they are embedded in larger communities, families, civic spaces and ecosystems that are also empowered to flourish. Healthy communities go hand-in-hand with the well-being of individuals. In the context of a democracy, engaged citizenship is a requirement for the health of both communities and individuals.

A partnership with PEN America has engendered conversations across campus on civic dialogue and freedom of expression, ranging from the board room to individual residence hall floors, with trustees and student Community Advisors leading their respective colleagues in conversation about citizen engagement.

President Andrea Talentino is a current signatory to the ALL IN Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation most recently signing the commitment in 2024.

Landscape:

Augustana College is a private 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2021. A once predominantly white institution, today's FTE enrollment of 2,556 includes 24.4% domestic students of Color, and 19.7% international students.

Fortunately, the State of Illinois makes it very easy to register. Since every county in Illinois sends its registered voters an application to vote by mail, care must be taken in educating students about their right to vote at their campus address, and its contingency upon not having requested a vote-by-mail ballot.

An additional challenge is in ensuring out-of-state students (including those from neighboring Iowa) are registered and able to vote at their campus address, even if restrictions in their home states may have disqualified them.

Goals:

Our institution's nonpartisan democratic engagement goals are:

1. Increase percentages of both registration and voting among eligible students.
2. Achieve gold seal status

Strategy:

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

- All campus emails from administrative, student, faculty and student organizational sources.
- In-person registration/information events September 16, and October 4, 11, 14, 16, and 18. Sponsors of these include community activists, administration, a student advocacy organization and a campus Greek group. (See promotional materials below)
- A final push for those who missed opportunities to vote by mail at "home" will be made to inform eligible students of Illinois' **Vote Center Grace Period** registration, allowing same-day registration and voting on November 5.

Sample promotional materials:



Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

Augustana College will use the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement to evaluate the increase of student voting by comparing our campus voter turnout and voter registration rates to past elections to measure progress on increasing both.

Care will be taken to ensure the percentages are calculated using U.S. citizen enrollment, and not overall enrollment.

Reporting:

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

Our institution has given ALL IN permission to publish our past NSLVE reports, which can also be found on our campus page above.