



Academic Year 2022- 2023 Voting Education & Engagement Plan

Prepared By: Rochonda Farmer-Neal, Director of Government Relations
Contact Information: Rochonda_farmer-neal@baylor.edu; 254.710.1453

Summary

Baylor University is no longer operating with a Civic Learning Initiatives Office; therefore, the Office of Governmental Relations is taking over all civic engagement efforts and initiatives for the upcoming academic year. In the past, we have participated the NASPA Civic Learning & Democratic Engagement (CLDE) Lead Initiative. We plan to make it a priority of ours to participate in it again. Baylor is committed to working to institutionalize civic engagement throughout our campus and to communicate with other campuses our insights, work, and best practices. We have made significant strides in a number of focus areas. However, voting engagement has remained one of our top priorities. In gaining responsibility for our civic engagement programs, our department's goal is to evaluate what is currently working across campus and how we might be able to strengthen and grow our civic engagement efforts.

We have had opportunities to participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), which has provided valuable data to inform our efforts as we begin to explore voting engagement, the All-In Campus Democracy Challenge, Voter Friendly Campus, +1 The Vote, and a partnership with Vote Everywhere with the Andrew Goodman Foundation which have connected us with valuable resources on best practices, planning, and funding.

Baylor has outstanding partnerships and student organizations filled with promising leaders. We want to capitalize on that and give them the opportunity to participate in and help lead our efforts to increase engagement in voter education and registration efforts. We want to utilize our Andrew Goodman Foundation Campus Champion and Student Ambassadors to help create initiatives to help stimulate voter engagement and registration.

Reflecting on the past year: Identified Goals & Progress Notes

- *Gather NSLVE data on campus voting & voter registration rates.*
Institutional reports were shared with key administrators and disseminated across campus through presentations and email. From the NSLVE data, we have learned that over 80% of our students are registered to vote, yet just over 30% actually voted. While our voting rates did increase 23% from 2014 to 2018, we still are below the national average and still below the 50 mark. We attribute the gains we have seen to existing

programs and anticipate further gains as we coordinate & grow collective campus efforts.

- Connect with other institutions working on voter engagement efforts and build our knowledge base on best practices in getting started in this work.

As part of our partnership with the Andrew Goodman Foundation, and their Vote Everywhere initiative, and the All-In Democracy Challenge, we would like to adopt best practices and the tools necessary to increase the voting culture on campus. By partnering with Voter Friendly Campus, +1 The Vote programs, among other collaboratives, this supplies us with funding and resources for our learning communities and positions us closer to our civic engagement goals.

- Identify key groups or individuals working on voter engagement efforts.

We have generated reports identifying all voter registration drives hosted by Baylor student organizations and hosted voter registration drives and Census 2020 awareness programs. We plan to continue working with these organizations and host additional voter registration drives and get out the vote education campaigns. We also leveraged our Andrew Goodman Foundation Campus Ambassadors and established a relationship with our Student Government's External Vice President's office to stabilize our civic engagement efforts with students.

Below is a list of identified stakeholders and potential partners:

- Baylor Public Deliberation Initiative
- Taelor Andrews, Andrew Goodman Foundation, Vote Everywhere Campus Ambassador & Baylor Ambassadors
- Dr. Elizabeth Palacios, Dean of Student Development
- Dr. Christina Chan-Park, Associate Librarian & President, Central Texas League of Women Voters
- Dr. Joshua Ritter, Assistant Director of Spirituality and Public Life
- Dr. Ivy Hamerly, Director, International Studies Program
- Student organizations (voting registration drives)
 - Baylor Democrats
 - Baylor Republicans
 - NAACP
 - Hispanic Student Association
 - Baylor Ambassadors
 - Texas Rising
 - Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.,

- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.,
 - Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.
- *Host campus forums on public issues through our Baylor Public Deliberation Initiative (PDI).*
 Last year, there were various lectures and events hosted by Baylor to increase awareness and encourage participation in civic engagement. These events ranged from panel discussions all the way to partnering with the McLennan County Elections Administration Office to host a voters registration drive. As meeting restrictions have continued to decrease following the pandemic, our priority is to host more events in the coming year.
 - 4/5-10/21 Baylor PDI Campus Forum, Cross-Campus Common Ground for Action (CGA) Nations Issues Forum Series
 - 2/23/22 - Civil Discourse in Action- Baylor in Washington Panel
 - 4/9/21- Does Civility Matter- Baylor in Washington Panel
 - 9/28/21- Voter registration drives sponsored by student organizations partnered with McLennan County Elections Administration Office
 - 10/18/21- Cherry Award Public Lecture, Jeb Barnes PH.D., “Turning on Those Who Turn to the Courts: Litigation, Polarization, and What to Do About it”
 - 11/1/21- W.R. Poage Legislative Library panel discussion, “Redrawing Texas: Who Chooses Whom?”

Looking Ahead: Goals for the New Year

- Make voter registration forms available to students in various locations including, Academy for Leadership Development office, Residence Halls, and Student Government Office
- Initiate opportunities with New Student Programs to promote voting information through orientation or Welcome Week.
- Continue meeting of key stakeholders, potential partners, and student organizations engaged in voting efforts (see list above).
- Develop potential programming and joint calendar for fall election cycle.
- Establish branded programming and initiatives for voting registration and outreach
- Develop and implement Vote Everywhere initiative and partnership with Andrew Goodman Foundation

- Initiate a consistent voting culture