



# Political Engagement Campus Plan 2018

BINGHAMTON  
UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR  
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

# Summary

The Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) at Binghamton University began voter engagement efforts during the 2012 presidential election. Since then, the CCE's political engagement efforts have grown exponentially, thanks in large part to strong support from University administration, student groups, faculty and community partners.

The following political engagement campus plan outlines the proposed events and initiatives that the CCE and its partners will undertake in 2018. With specific attention to voter registration, voter education, ballot access, voter mobilization and evaluation techniques, this plan serves as a compendium of existing programs as well as new initiatives that will encourage political engagement at Binghamton University.

In 2014, Binghamton University began a partnership with the Andrew Goodman Foundation and now hosts three Vote Everywhere Ambassadors out of the CCE office. Since the launch of this partnership, more than 5,200 students have been registered to vote through the efforts of these Ambassadors and other CCE staff. Prior to elections, a political engagement team comprised of the Ambassadors, CCE staff, students, faculty and community partners works to inform campus about local elections through candidate forums and questionnaires. The CCE also partners with other campus entities to host workshops and speakers on a variety of community and policy issues.

Every summer the CCE collaborates with Residential Life and New Student Programs to implement a voter registration "bottleneck" in which a large number of students are registered to vote through a centralized campus process during orientations. Every student in attendance at first-year summer orientation sessions has the opportunity to register to vote. More than 650 students were registered in the summer of 2017, with 96% of those students opting to register locally using their on-campus address.

## Partnership Highlight

The CCE partners with the Andrew Goodman Foundation to host three Vote Everywhere Ambassadors who work to engage students in the political process through voter registration, get out the vote efforts, sharing candidate and issue information, and educational programming. The CCE began its partnership with the Andrew Goodman Foundation in 2014.



**vote everywhere**

THE ANDREW GOODMAN FOUNDATION

**Two annual Vote Everywhere Ambassador Scholarships**

**\$1,000**

**One annual Vote Everywhere Ambassador Team Leader Scholarship**

**\$1,200**

**Annual programmatic funds**

**\$1,000**



# Political Engagement Advisory Committee

*This group of students, staff, faculty and community partners meets regularly to set strategic direction, share information, address challenges, brainstorm ideas and plan events and programs.*

**Alison Handy Twang**, Associate Director, Center for Civic Engagement; Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Campus Champion (staff)

**Samantha Ng**, Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassador Team Leader (undergraduate student)

**Jacob Bezner**, Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassador (undergraduate student)

**Ferdous Dehqan**, Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassador (undergraduate student)

**Ben DeAngelis**, Graduate Assistant for Political Engagement, Center for Civic Engagement (graduate student)

**Jonathan Krasno**, Associate Professor of Political Science (faculty)

**Margaret Goodfellow**, 1st VP and Voter Service Chair, League of Women Voters (community partner)

**Christina Dutko**, Deputy Commissioner, Broome County Board of Elections (community partner)

Student Volunteers

Representatives from Residential Life, Off Campus College, Dean of Students and the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

## Our Work in Numbers

During the 2016 election, the number of **student voters increased by 10.2 percentage points** over the 2012 election, more than double the national average at similar institutions.



# Voter Registration

## Constitution Day

As part of the Constitution Day celebration, a table will be set up during the week of Sept. 17 to engage students outside the University Union. In addition to voter registration efforts, this event will include opportunities for students to articulate why voting matters and post their thoughts on social media. Copies of the U.S. Constitution will be distributed, and students, faculty and staff can participate in activities. The Vote Everywhere Ambassadors will also take over the University's official Snapchat account to promote the day.

## National Voter Registration Day & Political Engagement Week

On Sept. 25, the CCE will participate in National Voter Registration Day, which will be embedded in a larger Political Engagement Week celebration. Activities may include voter registration on campus and at off-campus student housing, a campus-wide email to students, social media campaigns, campus media outreach and more. Likely student group partners for large-scale voter registration events include NYPIRG, College Democrats, College Republicans, the Roosevelt Institute and others.



## University Fest

During University Fest, a table devoted to voter registration will be set up. Representatives from the CCE will be on hand to review the options for voter registration (at home or on campus), provide assistance with voter registration forms, answer questions and collect completed forms. Students who register to vote will also be asked if they would like to receive reminder emails about important dates and information.

## Voter Registration Competition

Each living community (including the Off Campus College) will compete to win a prize for the highest local registration rate leading up to the general election. Residential assistants, Collegiate Professors, community governments and others will be provided with voter registration forms, promotional posters, information sheets and directions for completing the forms. The Residential Life Voter Registration Competition will be kicked off as part of Political Engagement Week.

## Our Work in Numbers

Since the fall of 2014, more than **5,200 students** have registered to vote through the CCE.



## Off-Campus Outreach

A significant challenge at the on-campus polling station is the high volume of off-campus students attempting to vote on campus. To address this, the CCE will target voter registration efforts to students living in off-campus communities.

- Representatives from the CCE will identify apartment communities where large portions of the student body live. If students were previously registered to vote on campus, they will be provided with a change of address form, instructions and a secure way to turn these into the Board of Elections. If students were not previously registered to vote on campus or with a local address, they can fill out a New York State voter registration form with their current local address.
- Off-campus apartment complexes will distribute voter registration forms and instructions in welcome packets for new residents.
- CCE staff will identify other means of contacting off-campus communities, like the Off Campus College e-newsletter.

## Student Organization Outreach

Now that the CCE has been positioned as the clearinghouse for all voter information on campus, many student organizations utilize the office to pursue updates on election policies and deliver forms collected during their voter registration drives. In the spring of 2018, representatives from the CCE will host a series of training sessions to update student organization leaders on the 2018 election cycle and train incoming organization executive boards to host their own voter registration drives on campus.

## Other Programming/ Outreach

The CCE will assist with and participate in any other voter registration initiatives on campus. The CCE will also serve as a hub of information and resources for students, student groups or student and professional staff members (residential assistants, professors, other staff members, etc.).

## On-Campus Tabling and Outreach

Twice a week until the General Election voter registration deadline (Oct. 12), the CCE will have a table in a high-traffic location to register student voters. The table will have pre-populated campus forms, New York State registration forms, change of address forms, information on voter registration options, absentee ballot applications and information, informational fliers on candidates' stances, upcoming events, important deadlines and a countdown to Election Day. The table will be staffed by voter outreach volunteers, Vote Everywhere Ambassadors and other CCE staff/volunteers. The CCE will collaborate with student group partners on other tabling and campus outreach efforts, including NYPIRG, College Democrats, College Republicans, the Roosevelt Institute and others.

## On-Campus Registration Form

In collaboration with the Broome County Board of Elections, a pre-populated form is available for students registering with their on-campus address. This form has greatly reduced student voter registration errors. The CCE will continue to promote the use of this form and provide copies to student groups and others engaged in voter registration.

I mailed my absentee ballot application...

### NOW WHAT?

- ✓ **ALLOW** at least one week for your application to be processed and your ballot delivered.
  - Ballots are not sent out before the second week of October. The exact timeline depends on your county's board of elections.
  - If you have not received your ballot within a week of mailing the application (and it is after the second week of October), call your local board of elections.
- ✓ **CHECK** your mailbox regularly.
  - Your ballot will be delivered directly to your mailbox. If you live on campus, this will be your BU Box.
- ✓ **COMPLETE** your ballot and follow instructions for enclosing, signing and mailing your ballot.
  - Most counties require you to put at least one stamp on the envelope.
  - Your ballot must be postmarked the day before Election Day. Do not wait until the last minute to mail your ballot!


If you do not mail your ballot by \_\_\_\_\_, you will be unable to vote. Absentee ballot requests do not allow you to vote in person in Binghamton.

All questions should be directed to your local BOE:

\_\_\_\_\_ County Board of Elections

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

binghamton.edu/cce/vote







## Campus-Wide Student Email

An official University email will be sent on National Voter Registration Day, reminding students of their right to register to vote and providing information on how to do so.

## Classroom Presentations

In the weeks leading up to the voter registration deadline, representatives from the CCE will engage students through classroom presentations at the request of faculty. During the ten-minute presentations, CCE representatives will inform students about their rights as voters and help students register to vote or request an absentee ballot. This service will be advertised to all faculty through the University's faculty/staff listserv.



## New Student Orientation

Representatives from CCE will devote a portion of the "Find Your Fit" first-year orientation session to voter registration, going over the options for voter registration (at home or on campus), reviewing the pre-populated campus voter registration form, answering questions and collecting completed forms. Additionally, the CCE will distribute voter registration forms and instructions to incoming transfer students in the welcome packet they receive when arriving to campus.

## Our Work in Numbers

In the summer of 2017  
**659 students registered to vote**  
 at New Student Orientation.

## Walk-Ins

All CCE student and professional staff will be trained to assist students who wish to register to vote. Any students who come into the CCE office will be asked if they are registered to vote, if they would like to check if they are registered to vote and if they would like to fill out a voter registration form. The staff member assisting the student will review their options when filling out the voter registration form, answer any questions and/or refer them to a Political Engagement team member if they need further assistance. Students who register to vote will also be asked if they would like to receive reminder emails about important dates and information.

# Voter Education

## CCE Political Engagement Website

The CCE maintains a website with current political engagement information, such as voter registration information, where to vote, how to get an absentee ballot, candidates' stances on current issues, upcoming events and opportunities to get involved.

## Our Work in Numbers

In 2017, the CCE took over the University's Snapchat account on Constitution Day, reaching 2,500+ followers.

## Candidate Information

The CCE provides non-partisan information on candidates' positions on major issues relevant to college students. Questionnaires are distributed to candidates, with their answers published in their own words, not digested by members of the media or the CCE. The information is posted on social media, large flyers in high traffic locations and the CCE website.

## Candidate Forum

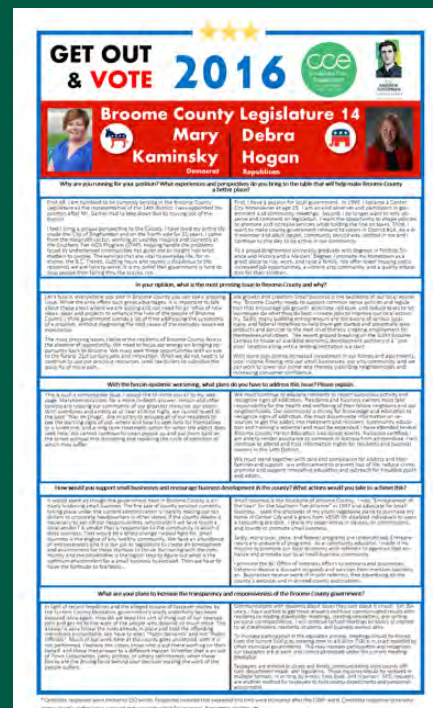
A mayoral candidate forum hosted by the CCE in the fall of 2017 proved to be a success, providing students an opportunity to interact directly with the two candidates. Building on this momentum, the CCE will work to initiate opportunities for students to interact directly with local candidates through in-person forums or radio programs that allow question submissions from the campus population. These events differ from other debates or forums because they focus on issues that impact the student population.

## Other Voter Education Programs

Partnerships with other offices in Student Affairs will result in educational programs on social justice, deliberative dialogue and more. The CCE will also explore the possibility of hosting debate viewing parties and/or assisting students, student groups or other campus entities in doing so. A representative from the CCE will be available during additional programming to register people to vote.

## Passion to Action

Passion to Action events throughout the semester feature invited speakers, discussion panels, movie screenings, hands-on workshops, etc. The workshops empower students to take action to create positive change in their communities and provide students with concrete strategies and tools that can be applied to any issues they care about.



# Ballot Access

## On-Campus Polling Place

Binghamton University students who live on campus can vote on campus in the University Union.

## Pre-populated Campus Registration Form

Pre-populated voter registration forms are available for students who currently live on campus in an effort to streamline the voter registration process and minimize confusion with the “Address Where You Live” and “Address Where You Receive Mail” sections.

## Provide Information and Assistance on Absentee Ballot Process

The CCE Political Engagement team can walk students through the absentee ballot application and ballot submission process. A pre-populated form with local address information is available for students living on campus. The CCE provides forms and will send completed forms on students’ behalf.

## Assistance for Off-Campus Students

On Election Day, a table in the University Union will be designated to assist off-campus students with the affidavit process, finding their off-campus polling location and transportation information.

## Promote the Right to Register Locally

Representatives from the CCE educate students on their right to register with their local address during voter registration initiatives. Students who live on campus are offered the opportunity to fill out a pre-populated on-campus registration form.

## Improved Polling Place Efficiency

In order to improve access to the polls, efforts have been coordinated with the Broome County Board of Elections to combine voter rolls for the three on-campus districts that vote at the University Union poll site. This change alleviates confusion for students on Election Day. Additionally, the campus polling location has moved to a large room within the University Union, to accommodate an influx of students and minimize wait times. The CCE provides poll workers and volunteers with educational flow charts with potential scenarios that may arise on Election Day.

**New York State Absentee Ballot Application**

Please print clearly. See detailed instructions.

This application must either be personally delivered to your county board of elections not later than the day before the election, or postmarked by a governmental postal service not later than 7th day before election day. The ballot itself must either be personally delivered to the board of elections no later than the close of polls on election day, or postmarked by a governmental postal service not later than the day before the election and received no later than the 7th day after the election.

**BOARD USE ONLY:**  
Town/City/Ward/Dist: \_\_\_\_\_  
Registration No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ voted in office

1. I am requesting, in good faith, an absentee ballot due to (check one reason):  
☐ absence from county or New York City on election day  
☐ patient or inmate in a veterans' administration hospital  
☐ temporary illness or physical disability  
☐ permanent illness or physical disability  
☐ detention in jail/prison, awaiting trial, awaiting action by a grand jury, or in prison for a conviction of a crime or offense which was not a felony  
☐ duties related to primary care of one or more individuals who are ill or physically disabled

2. Absentee ballot(s) requested for the following election(s):  
☐ Primary Election only  
☐ General Election only  
☐ Special Election only  
☐ Any election held between these dates: absence begins: \_\_\_\_\_ absence ends: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Address of applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
City name: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
County where you live (check one):  
☐ Broome ☐ Sullivan ☐ Ulster ☐ Albany ☐ Rensselaer ☐ Schoharie ☐ Warren ☐ Hamilton ☐ Westchester ☐ Dutchess ☐ Orange ☐ Sullivan ☐ Ulster ☐ Albany ☐ Rensselaer ☐ Schoharie ☐ Warren ☐ Hamilton ☐ Westchester ☐ Dutchess ☐ Orange

5. District where you live (check one):  
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12 ☐ 13 ☐ 14 ☐ 15 ☐ 16 ☐ 17 ☐ 18 ☐ 19 ☐ 20 ☐ 21 ☐ 22 ☐ 23 ☐ 24 ☐ 25 ☐ 26 ☐ 27 ☐ 28 ☐ 29 ☐ 30 ☐ 31 ☐ 32 ☐ 33 ☐ 34 ☐ 35 ☐ 36 ☐ 37 ☐ 38 ☐ 39 ☐ 40 ☐ 41 ☐ 42 ☐ 43 ☐ 44 ☐ 45 ☐ 46 ☐ 47 ☐ 48 ☐ 49 ☐ 50 ☐ 51 ☐ 52 ☐ 53 ☐ 54 ☐ 55 ☐ 56 ☐ 57 ☐ 58 ☐ 59 ☐ 60 ☐ 61 ☐ 62 ☐ 63 ☐ 64 ☐ 65 ☐ 66 ☐ 67 ☐ 68 ☐ 69 ☐ 70 ☐ 71 ☐ 72 ☐ 73 ☐ 74 ☐ 75 ☐ 76 ☐ 77 ☐ 78 ☐ 79 ☐ 80 ☐ 81 ☐ 82 ☐ 83 ☐ 84 ☐ 85 ☐ 86 ☐ 87 ☐ 88 ☐ 89 ☐ 90 ☐ 91 ☐ 92 ☐ 93 ☐ 94 ☐ 95 ☐ 96 ☐ 97 ☐ 98 ☐ 99 ☐ 100

6. Delivery of Primary Election Ballot (one only):  
☐ I authorize (name): \_\_\_\_\_ to pick up my ballot at the board of elections.  
☐ Mail ballot to me at (mailing address):  
BU Box # \_\_\_\_\_ PO Box 6020 Binghamton NY 13902  
State: NY

7. Delivery of General (or Special) Election Ballot (one only):  
☐ I authorize (name): \_\_\_\_\_ to pick up my ballot at the board of elections.  
☐ Mail ballot to me at (mailing address):  
BU Box # \_\_\_\_\_ PO Box 6020 Binghamton NY 13902  
State: NY

**Applicant Must Sign Below**

8. I certify that I am a qualified and a registered (and for the primary, enrolled) voter, and that the information in this application is true and correct and that this application will be accepted for all purposes as the equivalent of an affidavit and, if it contains a material false statement, shall subject me to the same penalties as if I had been duly sworn.

Sign Here: ☒ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If applicant is unable to sign because of illness, physical disability or inability to read, the following statement must be executed by my mark, duly witnessed hereunder. I hereby state that I am unable to sign my application for an absentee ballot without assistance because I am unable to write by reason of my illness or physical disability or because I am unable to read. I have made, or have the assistance in making, my mark in lieu of my signature. (No power of attorney or preprinted name stamp allowed. See detailed instructions.)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of voter: \_\_\_\_\_ Mark: \_\_\_\_\_

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the above named voter affixed his or her mark to this application in my presence and I declare him or her to be the person who affixed his or her mark to said application and understand that this statement will be accepted for all purposes as the equivalent of an affidavit and if it contains a material false statement, shall subject me to the same penalties as if I had been duly sworn.

(Signature of witness to mark) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of witness to mark) \_\_\_\_\_

Board Use Only: \_\_\_\_\_  
2017-2018 EAB-1 (1/1/2017)

## Partnership Highlight

In 2017, the Broome County Board of Elections implemented the CCE's election district referral slips in **141 election districts** county-wide, helping voters who arrive at the incorrect polling site by directing them to their correct polling location where they may cast an affidavit ballot.



# Get Out the Vote

## Student Poll Workers

The CCE works with the Broome County Board of Elections to recruit student poll workers for the on-campus polling place.

## Phone Banking and Text Message Blasts

The CCE will explore the possibility of texting students and recruiting volunteers to participate in nonpartisan phone banking before the General Election.



## Election Day Party

The Union will be decorated with balloons, signs and streamers and Baxter the Bearcat is invited to get students excited to vote. Refreshments and food are provided to all students regardless of if they vote.

## Social Media

The CCE will utilize social media platforms to remind students when and where they can vote and provide information for students living off campus on where they can find their local polling location.

## Campus-Wide Emails

Two campus-wide emails are sent out during the fall semester. The first is distributed on National Voter Registration Day to remind students to register to vote before the Oct. 12 deadline. The second is sent in the days before the General Election to remind students to vote on Nov. 6.

## Our Work in Numbers

During the 2017 local elections, on-campus **voter participation increased by 187%** over the 2015 local election.

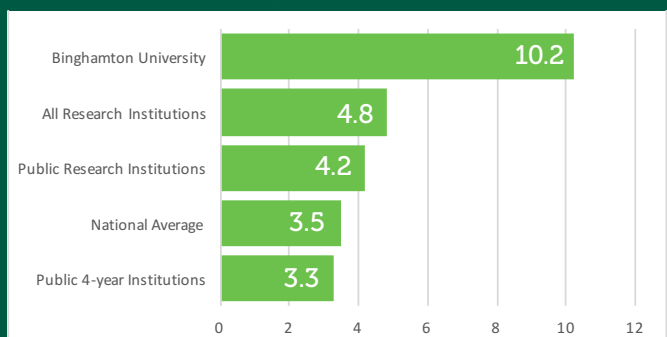
## CCE Newsletter

A weekly newsletter includes reminders for students about upcoming dates, candidate information and other Election Day reminders.

## Flyers and Posters

Promotional materials publicizing Election Day are posted throughout campus in high-traffic areas.

## Percentage Point Increase in Student Voting Rate (2012-2016)



# Tentative 2018 Timeline



## Spring 2018

- January** Update **legislative outreach** components of website
- February** **Passion to Action**: Democratic Access
- March** Establish **Residential Life voter registration** timeline  
Work with Board of Elections to **clarify and amend address change** procedures  
**Clarify absentee ballot** procedures  
Host **Passion to Action** event
- April** Voter registration **training for student organizations**  
Host **Passion to Action** event
- May** Voter registration **training for student organizations**  
Prepare for **New Student Orientation** outreach  
Prepare for **off-campus apartment complex** outreach

## Ongoing

Class presentations  
Voter information tables  
Passion to Action programming

## Summer 2018

- June** **New Student Orientation** Voter Registration  
1 - Deadline for Voter registration for Federal Primary  
6 - Deadline for address changes for Federal Primary (within-county moves)  
19 - Deadline to postmark absentee application for Federal Primary  
25 - Deadline for in-person absentee application for Federal Primary, Deadline to postmark absentee ballot for Federal Primary  
26 - **Federal Primary**
- July** **New Student Orientation** Voter Registration

## Fall 2018

### August

#### **New Student Orientation** Voter Registration

- 17 - Deadline for Voter registration and party changes for State Primary
- 22 - Deadline for address changes for State Primary (within-county moves)
- 25 - **University Fest Tabling**

### September

#### **Launch Voter Registration Contest**

- 4 - Deadline to postmark absentee application for State Primary
- 10 - Deadline for in-person absentee application for State Primary  
Deadline to postmark absentee ballot for State Primary
- 11 - **State Primary**
- 17 - Constitution Day Event
- 25 - National Voter Registration Day

### October

- 12 - **Deadline for Voter registration** and party changes for General Election
- 17 - Deadline for address changes for General Election (within-county moves)
- 30 - **Deadline to postmark absentee** application for General Election
- Local debate watch parties
- Candidate forum**
- Candidate questionnaire infographics released

### November

- 2-5 - **Get out the vote** email blasts
- 5 - Deadline for in-person absentee application for General Election  
Deadline to postmark absentee ballot for General Election
- 6 - **General Election Day**  
Tables in University Union

### December

- Assess, evaluate and debrief** 2018 efforts
- Finalize 2019 Campus Plan





# Evaluation

*The CCE will evaluate all Political Engagement programming in several ways*

- The CCE will **conduct a debrief** after every event and at the end of each semester to go over what worked well, what needs improvement and potential changes for the future. Following a debrief meeting, the point person will complete an **event summary** which will detail the event, debrief discussion and any primary metrics and outcomes.
- For programs such as Passion to Action, the CCE will **identify learning outcomes** and **assess student learning** through surveys and notes on quality and depth of discussion and reflection.
- The CCE will **track voter registration data** and assess which activities are most effective at encouraging student registration.
- The CCE will also participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to **track student voting rates** and utilize data to expand programming efforts to targeted student populations.



## Our Work in Numbers

More than **260 campus community members participated** in the CCE's 2017 Political Engagement Survey.

Data from this report was used to shape the Mayoral Candidates Forum and will inform future practices and programming.

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