



CUNY Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy 2024 Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Developed by: Lynn Roberts, PhD

Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy in New York 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 general election. The goals for CUNY Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy (CUNY SPH) for the 2024 election are: 1) inform all SPH students of how and when to register to vote by the deadline; 2) establish a campus culture that supports engaged and informed civic participation year-round; and 3) support students, faculty and staff who might be challenged in getting to the polls on election day.

Leadership:

Our leadership team includes the following:

Ayman El-Mohandes, Dean, CUNY SPH

Lynn Roberts, Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Alumni Relations, CUNY SPH

James Warren, Student Life Coordinator, CUNY SPH

Meg Krudysz, Director of Admissions, CUNY SPH

(TBD), Communications Officer, Graduate Student Government Association, CUNY SPH

Sumana Chandra, Director of Communications, CUNY SPH

Heidi Jones, Associate Professor & Director of Doctoral Program in Epidemiology, CUNY SPH

Alexis Feinberg, Institutional Research Specialist, CUNY SPH

Deborah Levine, Director of Harlem Health Initiative, CUNY SPH

Sara Ingram, Student Disabilities Coordinator, Office of Accessibility, CUNY SPH

Staci Emanuel, University-wide Voter Registration Coordinator, CUNY

Commitment:

As one of 25 campuses that comprise the City University of New York, CUNY SPH is an active participant in CUNY Votes, a comprehensive non-partisan initiative to promote student voter registration, voter participation and voter awareness through campus-based activities, external partnerships and university-wide campaigns. Each year, we develop and execute a CUNY Voter Registration Plan to coordinate our efforts across campus. Some of those activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Dissemination of voter registration forms to all prospective, incoming and continuing students through in-person and virtual events, and digital media;
- Collaborating with external partners to host in-person and virtual voter education forums and film screenings;

- Creation of a dedicated web page with voter information and deadlines throughout the election cycle.
- Periodic announcements by faculty and integration of voter education in graduate curriculum.
- Engagement of student leaders in disseminating voter information and encouraging voter participation through tabling events and social media platforms.

Our Dean is fully supportive of our participation in the ALL IN Challenge as indicated by his signing of the [Higher Education Presidents' Commitment](#).

CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy

Landscape:

CUNY SPH is a public professional institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2022.

Our campus demographic and voting data:

CUNY SPH currently has 915 enrolled students as of Fall 2023. As a graduate school, our students range in age from 18% under age 25, 39% age 25-30, 19% age 31-35, 11% age 36-40, and the remaining 13% are over age 41. The majority of our students identify as women (77% vs 23% men) and an undetermined percentage identify as trans/binary/gender non-conforming. Our student body is racially and ethnically diverse with 35% White, 26% Black, 15% Latino, 24% Asian/Pacific Islander.

CUNY SPH has previously authorized the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), as a subdivision of the CUNY Graduate Center [OPEID 004765.12] and has requested campus specific voter registration and voter turnout data for our campus, but we were not able to receive a report in time for preparation of this plan. Thus, our baseline goals reflect the national averages. We will update our baseline goals upon receipt of this report.

Goals:

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:

Goal 1: Establish our baseline voter turnout rate of at least 66%+ in 2022 and increase by 15% in 2024.

Goal 2: Establish our baseline voter registration rate of at least 83%+ in 2022 and increase by 15% in 2024.

Goal 3: Establish our baseline voter turnout rates of at least 60%+ for each ethnic/racial group in 2022 and increase by 10% in 2024.

Strategy:

CUNY SPH will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation:

1. The Office of Student Affairs will host virtual and/or in-person voter education and registration events during National Voter Registration Day in September, National Voter Education Week and/or Vote Early Day in October, with tabling, forums, film screenings, and targeted social media postings in Twitter, FaceBook and IG.
2. Throughout the academic year, the CUNY SPH Communications team will include instructions on how to register to vote and how to obtain voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications in their weekly emails to students, on a dedicated webpage, and on all campus screen monitors.
3. The Graduate Student Government Association (GSGA), Student Clubs and Alumni Network will announce voter registration and voting deadlines at their meetings and in their communications with students and alumni. The GSGA Communications Officer will share and/or create digital materials to encourage students to take the pledge to vote during the early voting period in NYS (as well as in their home state and local elections as appropriate) and on Election Day.
4. Faculty will be encouraged to include voter registration information on course syllabi and their course websites, make periodic announcements about voter registration and pertinent voting deadlines, incorporate where feasible, lesson plans highlighting “Why Voting Matters to Public Health” in their curricula, and will establish flexible and accountable expectations for student attendance on Election Day.
5. The Office of Admissions will distribute voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications at all [recruitment events](#) held in-person or virtually (i.e., Info Sessions, Open Houses, New Student Orientations and Admitted Students Days). For virtual events, the links to registration forms and absentee ballots will be included in presentation slides and/or posted in the chat.
6. The Office of Accessibility will include links to voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications, as well as accessible voting information in all communications with students they serve.
7. All CUNY SPH staff, administrators and faculty will be encouraged to include links to voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications in their email signatures, and to develop a voting plan and/or to assist others in voting during the early voting period or on Election Day.
8. All CUNY SPH common areas such as student lounges, info walls, and the video monitors located on each floor of the campus will be designated as central spaces for dissemination of voter registration information, and digital messages highlighting the importance of and guidance for voting on election days in the fall and spring.
9. The Coordinator of the Harlem Health Initiative will identify opportunities to collaborate with local community partners to co-host GOTV events when feasible.

10. CUNY SPH recognizes that not all of our students are eligible to vote in U.S. elections. As part of our school's overarching commitment to social justice, our messaging and strategies will emphasize the importance of those who can vote exercising that right to ensure a more inclusive society and participatory democracy for those who cannot vote.

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

1. The Office of Institutional Research will review and compile reports on the NSLVE voting data for our campus to establish our baseline and monitor progress in achieving our voter turnout and voter registration goals as specified above.
2. The Office of Student Affairs, GSGA and Alumni Network will track attendance at all voter education and voter registration events held.
3. The Office of Admissions will track attendance at all recruitment and orientation events where voter education and voter registration information will be disseminated.
4. The Office of Communications will track "clicks" for all visitors to our dedicated [Voter Information webpage](#).
5. Based on the process and outcome data specified above, the Office of Student Affairs will review and summarize the data and share with the Leadership Team for their input and to inform development of our future action plans, as needed.

Reporting:

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website <https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/cuny-graduate-school-of-public-health-h>.

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 campus action plan and NSLVE reports will be shared with our SPH community via email and will be posted on our dedicated [Voter Information webpage](#).