



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
BAKERSFIELD™

California State University, Bakersfield

2024 – 2026

Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan

Submitted on October 1, 2024 by:

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Executive Summary

California State University, Bakersfield's mission is to educate students to become knowledgeable, engaged, innovative and ethical leaders. In our CSUB Guiding Principles, we encourage all of members of our community to commit themselves to be local and global citizens through open and respectful discourse. Ongoing civic engagement activities are a vital component of our university mission to achieve our higher aim of creating local and global citizens.

California State University, Bakersfield 2024 – 2026 Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan aims to create a culture of civic and voter empowerment by infusing these activities into our overall campus programming. Student Affairs and Associated Students Inc. (ASI) have come together to lead a collaborative student centric committee who believe that civic and voter empowerment activities should take place regardless of an election. At the heart of this committee's work is ensuring that we create programming and opportunities so that students can not only educate themselves but take the resources and knowledge back to their communities. We want students to leave CSUB understanding the power their voice holds in the elections process and the responsibility they hold in helping to create a more perfect union.

CSUB's Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan has three main strategies which include ASI Lobby Corps, educational programming, and campus wide communications. The goal of this multipronged approach is to provide students with the opportunity and means to participate in 2024 Presidential Election and to create a platform for ongoing conversations so that our diverse student population knows their voice matters.

Leadership

CSUB’s Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan was created by the CSUB AB963 Committee. This committee is chaired by the AB963 Coordinator and ASI Vice President for Legislative Affairs. Committee members represent a diverse cross section of campus stakeholders from the following departments: Associated Students Inc. (ASI), Athletics, Campus Programming, Kegley Institute of Ethics, New Student and Family Programs, Political Science Department, President’s Office, Student Involvement, and the Walter Stiern Library. In addition, our committee works with our local Kern County Registrar of Voters who attends meetings and events as needed.

The committee meets twice per semester to review the campuswide communications plan and programming schedule. Event specific subcommittees meet more frequently to plan the educational events and tabling opportunities.

All of the campuswide civic and voter empowerment outreach activities and programs will be non-partisan, provide a space for the campus community to learn more about the issues on the ballot, and create ongoing conversations on the importance of lifelong civic engagement.

Landscape

California State University, Bakersfield is a public 4-year university located in the Central Valley. We are recognized as both a Hispanic-Serving and Minority-Serving institution. We are currently working on AANAPISI eligible institution designation as well as the Seal of Excelencia. California State University, Bakersfield is committed to powering economic change, community development and social growth across the southern San Joaquin Valley and beyond.

STUDENTS

Fall 2023 Enrollment

LEVEL	%	TOTAL
Freshmen	16.5%	1,552
Sophomore	10.8%	1,011
Junior	25.9%	2,434
Senior	32.8%	3,079
Graduate & Postbaccalaureate	14.0%	1,323
Total	100%	9,399



BY AGE	Under 18	18-19	20-21	22-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-49	50-64	65+	TOTAL
Freshmen	213	1,218	69	25	16	7	0	1	0	3	1,552
Sophomore	11	602	340	41	5	4	1	5	2	0	1,011
Junior	2	198	1,086	555	318	121	76	62	13	3	2,434
Senior	0	20	658	1,214	612	246	167	119	37	6	3,079
Graduate & Postbaccalaureate	0	0	27	357	372	235	142	130	55	5	1,323
Total	226	2,038	2,180	2,192	1,323	613	386	317	107	17	9,399

BY ETHNICITY	Count	%	BY SEX	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Black/African American	393	4.2%	Freshmen	924	628	1,552
American Indian/Alaska Native	30	0.3%	Sophomore	655	356	1,011
Asian	640	6.8%	Junior	1,638	796	2,434
Hispanic/Latino	6,409	68.2%	Senior	2,032	1,047	3,079
Non-Resident Alien	137	1.5%	Graduate & Postbaccalaureate	928	395	1,323
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	9	0.1%	Total	6,177	3,222	9,399
Two or More Races	195	2.1%				
Unknown	367	3.9%				
White	1,219	13.0%				
Total	9,399	100%				

National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) Data

CSUB participated in the NSLVE in 2014 and 2018. Here's a sample of our data:

Election Year	Voter-Eligible Registration Rate	Voting Rate	National Student Voting Rate
2018	75.3%	57.9%	39.1%
2014	65.3%	26.8%	19.7%

With our change in leadership in Institutional Research, the 2020 report was unavailable. CSUB just resubmitted our reauthorization with NSLVE which will extend until 2033. In the absence of the 2020 data, our committee is basing our goals on the 2018 data.

As the committee reviewed the available data from the NSLVE reports, we found that CSUB has a high student voter registration rate where $\frac{3}{4}$ of the student body is registered to vote. We are going to continue our robust voter registration efforts so that by 2026 our registration rate is 77%. Even though CSUB students actually vote at a higher rate than the national student voting rate, our committee is going to focus our outreach efforts leading up to the election to work on increasing our voting rate. Our goal is to raise our student voting rate to 65% by 2026.

Reflection

CSUB's AB963 committee has learned a great deal in the past two years as the campus transitioned out of the pandemic and has increased our in-person activities and classes. The pandemic taught us the power of social media and virtual outreach events which will continue to be apart of our ongoing civic and voter empowerment strategy.

In 2022, CSUB still had about 50% of our students continuing with online classes; campus engagement in in-person activities was lower than before the pandemic. In order to reach more students, we held virtual voter registration with 36 sections of the CSUB 1029 course which helped us reach our first-time freshmen students. This has become so popular with the CSUB 1029 faculty that in 2023, we continued virtual voter registration in the courses but added an in-person option.

With the passing of AB963, our committee has a permanent spot on the University's Academic Calendar planning committee. This has allowed us to seamlessly include all the voting specific dates not only on our printed academic calendar but they are included on the university's website under important dates.

In February 2024, CSUB partnered with the Kern County Registrar of Voters to install our Ballot Drop Off Box. In the March 2024 Presidential Primary, we had 2,501 ballots dropped off at our campus location. Our committee is going to begin to track these numbers in order to provide another data point for our future reports. Having the Ballot Box on campus has allowed us to have a more direct relationship with the Kern County Registrar of Voters. They are interested in partnering with our committee and CSUB to be a trusted messenger about voting security and the importance of voting. This has allowed our faculty and students to serve their community in a different way since we have been able to grow this relationship.

In reflecting on the past two years of our civic engagement events and the requirements of AB963, CSUB was able to meet all of the AB963 requirements including:

- Sending a campuswide email in September letting students know that they can register to vote or check their registration through their myCSUB
- Holding an event on National Voter Registration Day
- Holding at minimum of three campus election events
- Including elections dates on the academic calendars

Goals

Short term (2-year)

- Create a Civic and Voter Empowerment website so that we can have a one-stop area for faculty, staff, and students to get information on the upcoming election and programming.
 - AB 963 committee will work in Spring 2025 to build the site so that it will launch in the AY 25-26
- Review the 2024 NSLVE data to create ongoing benchmarks
 - Using the 2018 data, our goal is to grow our registration rate to 80% by 2026
 - ASI will lead voter registration tabling events at CSUB summer orientations, campus events, CSUB 1029 courses, athletic team meetings, club/organization meetings, and classroom presentations
 - Using the 2018 data, our goal is to grow our student voting rate to 65% by 2026
 - ASI will work with CSUB Marketing and Communications to develop a social media strategy to remind students about voting, dropping off their ballots, and polling locations across Kern County
- Find local non-partisan groups to join our AB963 Committee

Long term (5-year)

- Create an assessment plan for our civic and voter empowerment activities to assess impact of events
- By 2030, we would like to grow our student registration rate to 85% and our student voting rate to 70%. Our continued participation in the NSLVE will allow us to see the progress of our rates.
- Assess our AB963 committee and look to expand the structure to include more community non-partisan partners.

Events Requirements

Fall 2024 – Summer 2025

- September 16, 2024 – Presidential Debate Watch Party
 - 6 – 7:30 pm in the Student Union Multipurpose room
 - 80 students in attendance
- September 17, 2024 – National Voter Registration Day Tabling
 - 8 am – 5 pm on the Red Brick Road
 - 400 students came to learn about registering to vote, were able to either register to vote or check their registration status through the link on our myCSUB website
- October 1, 2024 – Voting 101: From Registration to Ballot
 - 2 – 3 pm in the Dezember Reading Room
 - Collaboration with Walter Stiern Library
- October 1, 2024 – Vice President Debate Watch Party
 - 6 – 7:30 pm in the Student Union Multipurpose room
 - 30 students in attendance
- October 7, 2024 – Importance of the Latinx vote in the upcoming election
 - Noon – 1 pm in the Stockdale Room
 - Student panel with featured speaker Aimee Espinoza, Kern County Registrar of Voters
- October 8, 2024 – Ballot Drop off Box Opening
 - Noon – 1 pm on the Student Union Patio
- October 16, 2024 – Voting 101: From Registration to Ballot
 - 2 – 3 pm in the Dezember Reading Room
 - Collaboration with Walter Stiern Library
- October 21, 2024 – Last Chance to Register to Vote Tabling
 - 8 am – 5 pm on the Red Brick Road
- October 30, 2024 – California Propositions: What Do They Do
 - Noon – 1:30 pm in Student Union Multipurpose room
 - Featured Speaker – Dr. Ivy Cargile, Political Science Department

Fall 2025 – Summer 2026

- September 16, 2025 – National Voter Registration Day Tabling
 - 8 am – 5 pm on the Red Brick Road
- October 27, 2025 – Importance of YOUR Voice in local politics
 - Panel of local political leaders
- March 2026 – Status of Voting Right across the US
 - Panel of Ethnic Studies and Political Science faculty