



# Service Learning and Civic Engagement Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2022-2023 Academic Year

*This plan was created using the Votes & Ballots Action Planning Form. We highly recommend editing and expanding upon this draft before submitting for review.*

*Throughout this document, we mention the Strengthening American Democracy Guide as a resource for your review. We encourage you to turn to that resource for guidance and support as you complete your action plan!*

## **I. Executive Summary**

This action plan was developed by Rochelle Smarr, Director, Service Learning and Civic Engagement to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Service Learning and Civic Engagement. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2022-2023 Academic Year, on and around our campus in San Marcos, California.

The following groups will be leading this work at Service Learning and Civic Engagement in order to accomplish our goals and further institutionalize our commitment to civic learning, democratic engagement, and youth participation in elections:

- Undergraduate Students
- Faculty
- Civic/Political/Community Engagement Center
- Academic Affairs Staff

The mission of our initiative is:

- To develop and implement civic engagement plans that will proactively prepare the CSUSM community for the upcoming elections through voter education and voter engagement activities, while promoting inclusive and constructive interactions throughout the election seasons.

Through a variety of in-person, virtual events, social media campaigns, automated text messages, and in-class presentations we plan to increase our voter education and registration efforts substantially. We aim to increase the voter engagement turnout to 80%

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Executive Summary* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## II. Leadership

Rochelle Smarr, Director of Service Learning and Civic Engagement. will be overseeing our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- The overall committee is comprised of 11 campus leaders made up of faculty members from various colleges, colleagues from Student Affairs, Associated Students, Academic Affairs, and three student leaders. We developed this action plan based on our NSLV results from 2016, 2018, and 2020.
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- Margaret Chantung, Chief Communications Officer, University Communications
- Jason Schreiber, Dean of Students
- Char Booth, Associate Dean, University Library
- Lori Brockett, AVP of Alumni Engagement & University Events
- Alicia Lores, Digital Communications Specialist, University Communications
- Ryan Maxson, Government Relations, Office of the President
- Tony Pang, Director of Student Leadership
- Erica Perez, Interim Director of Marketing & Communications, Student Affairs
- Rochelle Smarr, Director, Civic Engagement
- Eve Michelle Antekeier - Young Democrats Student Rep (Appointed for 1 year term)
- Jazielyn Morales - CSUSM Republicans Student Rep (Appointed for 1 year term)

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership, Representation from different perspectives and areas of expertise, Trusted leaders and organizations who support communities that are historically underrepresented in democracy, Leaders who can help with outreach and power building by bringing more people across campus in to our work

Our group plans to meet 1/month at Hybrid: Virtual and in-person

In the event that our leadership leaves campus or is no longer involved in this work, we have a succession plan in place. The co-chairs of the committee will defer to the President to nominate a new appoint a new co-chair.

We are also partnering with the following organizations from the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition to support our efforts on campus:

- League of Women Voters, All In Challenge, Ask Every Student, American Democracy Project,

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your Leadership Section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.



### III. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrates commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. We also see this same commitment reflected in our institution's values. They state, "Student Success Students succeed when they achieve their own goals, personal, professional and educational, prepared to thrive in diverse environments as resilient and engaged global citizens. We commit to an expansive and holistic approach grounded in equity and social mobility that looks beyond access, retention and graduation to provide seamless, equitable, and effective support for all. Community Engagement As a regional anchor institution and engine of transformative knowledge, community engagement is a commitment to building a stronger and more vibrant region by connecting the University to surrounding communities in mutually beneficial ways. A strategic process whereby we build and sustain relationships with educational institutions, industry sectors, community organizations, alumni, and individuals that support student learning, university development, faculty research while also addressing community-based issues."

In addition, our campus has mentioned civic learning and democratic engagement in their strategic plan, stating In CSUSM's five-year strategic plan, the Power of CSUSM, two of the five goals are focused on student success and community partnerships: Goal 2.4: Ensure that every student has the opportunity to participate in hands-on, engaged learning and high impact, career-activating practices, including those based in and supportive of the community. Goal 5.4: Partner with community to provide relevant and engaged learning, research, service and civic engagement opportunities. We also have had a senior leader commit to civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.

On campus, we've seen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs or student organizations
- Campus leaders promoting voting
- On campus polling place
- Voter registration tables
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- Signage promoting Election Day
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On campus, we've experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
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- Town halls
- Registering to vote
- Civic Holiday events (such as National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day)
- Deliberative dialogues
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The emphasis on civic learning and democratic engagement could be increased.

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Commitment Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## IV. Landscape

The following tables provide a brief overview of the landscape of our campus. This information is based on data collected from Fall 2021 when our total student enrollment was 16255.

### Enrollment Data:

Undergraduate	Graduate	Full Time	Part Time
89.60%	6.50%		

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents	Commuter
97.70%	2.30%			

### Gender Demographics:

Men	Women	Non-Binary	Transgender
37.50%	62.40%	0.10%	

### Age:

18-21	22-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50+

### Racial Demographics:

Asian	American Indian / Alaska Native	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	2 or More Races
9.80%	0.30%	3.40%	48.10%	0.30%	26.30%	5.20%

Our institution has also utilized the following data gathering tools:

- Ask Every Student First Step Form
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- National Survey of Student Engagement
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They help to inform our institution's civic learning and democratic engagement efforts by For targeted outreach to promote voter education, engagement and turnout.

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Landscape Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.



## V. Goals

Before setting our civic learning and democratic engagement goals on campus, we took the following information into consideration.

We know our campus faces following challenges internally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

- Our institution's mission statement, values, and strategic plan do not mention civic learning and democratic engagement.
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- We don't have a coalition of people who are positioned to implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
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- We don't use the resources readily available to develop and implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- The voter engagement work on our campus is very siloed within one office.
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We also know our campus faces the following challenges externally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

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With that said, we know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:

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- We have someone whose job responsibility is to foster civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
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- The voter engagement work on our campus is distributed throughout many offices and areas of expertise.
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- Voter engagement efforts on campus are nonpartisan.

- We are able to engage student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.
- We have a working relationship with our local election office.
- We have working relationships with community partners who are invested in civic learning and democratic engagement.
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With this in mind, we have set the three goals that we would like to achieve over the next academic year:

We have also set three goals that we would like to achieve over the next five years:

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Goals Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## VI. Strategy

Below, we have outlined a strategy describing how we will bring this vision to life in the coming months and years.

These are tactics that we **are already doing** in the **short term** (within the next year):

- Hosting voter registration days and tabling events with key groups across campus. Hosting civic documentary voter rights watch parties, partnering with community organizations for voter registration drive. Promoting voter registration and education materials via digital screens, email messages, social media, classroom presentations and flyers across campus. Hosting a vote center and ballot drop box.

These are tactics that we **plan to do** in the **short term**:

- Promote civic holidays, rally to the campus vote center, host voter education dialogues and promote vote early day signage.

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **short term**:

- Increase our voter turnout rate to 80%

These are tactics that we **are already doing** for the **long term** (beyond the next year):

- Hosting cross-campus civic engagement opportunities, partnering with campus-community to host democratic and civility conversations, along with hosting days of service.

These are tactics that we **want to do** in the **long term**:

- Promote civic engagement activities year-round, incorporate civic engagement experiential learning courses into the curriculum, year-round Election and Free Speech committee.

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **long term**:

- Increase democratic engagement across campus.

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Strategy Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## VII. National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)

Our campus has access to our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) data for 2020. In 2020 our registration rate was 86.5. In comparison to the data from four years prior in our NSLVE report, this rate increased.

In 2020, our voting rate was 73.6 and our voting rate among registered students was 84.6. During this year, our voting rate was higher than the national average.

The majority of fields of the study saw a voting rate of over 55% across campus. Students in the 50+ age range increased from 46% in 2014 to 82% in 2020

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your NSLVE section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## VIII. Reporting & Evaluation

We plan to share this Action Plan internally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Email to members of our campus coalition
- Email to campus administration
- Email to the President
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We plan to share this Action Plan externally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Post on the campus website
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We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Sending a post-election survey to students
- Sending a post-election survey to faculty
- Regrouping with campus coalition to debrief and reflect
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We plan to evaluate our success by:

- Reviewing our NSLVE data and looking for improvements year over year
- Seeking out feedback throughout the action planning process from people outside of our action planning team
- Revisiting our goals, identifying goals achieved and not achieved, and adjusting our short and long-term goals accordingly
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***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Reporting & Evaluation Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.