



# 2024 Carleton College Voter Engagement Plan

## Executive Summary

Carleton College is committed to ensuring its eligible students are able to vote and understand why voting matters. This commitment stems from our mission to “[developing] qualities of mind and character that prepare its graduates to become citizens and leaders, capable of finding inventive solutions to local, national, and global challenges.” In doing so, “The College works to embody the values of freedom of inquiry and expression and is vigilant in protecting these values within a culture of academic integrity, civil deliberation, and ethical action.”

In order to fulfill these goals, we, as a campus community, develop year-round opportunities for students to practice democracy, including but not limited to voting. This includes embedding ongoing structures of support for student voting, fostering electoral and other civic engagement across all student demographics, and facilitating constructive dialogue about participation in democracy.

A wide range of offices, departments, and people are essential contributors to this campus ecosystem of civic participation. The Center for Community and Civic Engagement (CCCE) takes responsibility for fulfilling the core responsibilities of non-partisan voter education on campus, ensuring students know when and where to vote, why it matters, and the mechanics of voting. CarlsVote, as a student-led program of the CCCE, specifically seeks to increase student voter participation among eligible voters attending Carleton by registering students to vote, removing barriers to voting, and providing non-partisan resources to help students understand the candidates and issues they will encounter at the polls. CarlsVote activities might include political debate watch parties, town halls with local elected leaders, as well as training in non-partisan voter registration efforts.

This document was created with a bottom-up approach: CCCE student fellows and student volunteers from CarlsVote were the primary drafters and editors of this document, with staff and the administration reviewing and approving it. While we acknowledge we still have much to do in order to promote broad-based voter engagement, we believe the actions described

below represent a solid first step towards our goals of educating informed and engaged citizens.

This engagement plan communicates Carleton College's strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of its voting-eligible students. The engagement plan outlined here will be carried out in the 2024 calendar year. This will be an outline for our goals for the coming cycle and will be published on a biannual basis. This means this document discusses Carleton's plans surrounding the 2024 general election cycle, and will be followed in 2025 with a new engagement plan about the 2026 midterm cycle.

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

- Undergraduate members of CarlsVote and the CCCE
- Staff members of the Center for Community and Civic Engagement
- College Faculty and administrators who have a vested responsibility in promoting nonpartisan voter engagement on campus

This action plan will be implemented in three phases.

### **Phase I:**

The first phase will occur during the fall and winter terms of the 2023-2024 academic year (September 2023-March 2024). This phase will be characterized by planning voter registration and engagement efforts for the upcoming election cycle. We will convene a campus wide voting working group to evaluate how to best promote nonpartisan voter engagement for the upcoming general election cycle. This working group will analyze past data from the 2022 midterm elections and work to create a strategy to engage students on campus who voted at lesser rates for the upcoming cycle. This phase will also include more general political engagement activity not explicitly related to Voting engagement. These activities can include debate watch parties, town halls with elected officials, as well as community conversation surrounding topics of political importance. The goal of these activities are to build civic capacity and political efficacy within the student body. Students who engage with these activities can become core members for the push to register voters in the following phases as well as activation points to get their friends interested in politics when election season nears. This phase will conclude with a short registration drive for the Minnesota Presidential primary elections on March 5th, 2024. The lower salience of the primaries makes it harder to actively engage students, and given its proximity to the general election, we want to limit potential voting fatigue of the student body due to the perceived "bombardment" of their inboxes which may hamper our engagement goals on the whole.

### **Phase II:**

The second phase will start in the spring term of the 2023-2024 academic year and continue until the 2024 general election (March 2024- November 2024). This phase of the action plan closely approximates “the election season.” This phase will start in the weeks following the presidential primaries and will be geared towards specifically voter education, registration, and turnout. Activities will include dialogues on “Why My Vote Matters” and “Barriers to Voting”, a campus-wide “dorm storm” with voting information, and the first ever on-campus early voting day, made possible by recent changes to state voting laws. Further work will be done with specific student groups that voted at a lesser rate in the 2022 midterm elections to talk about the importance of voting.

### **Key Programming during Fall Term, 2024**

- Week 0: New Student Week Resource Fair & Vote with Confidence session
- Week 1: National Constitution Day & National Voter Registration Day - September 17 -- campus-wide email blast
- Week 2: Dialogue: Does My Vote Really Matter?
- Week 3: Dorm Storm with voting information
- Week 4: Early voting day on campus - October 10 in Anderson
- Week 5: [LTC Lunch for Faculty & Staff: What to do in the days following the 2024 election](#)
- Week 6: All Politics Are Local: the Impact of State and Local Politics event with local elected officials
- Week 7: Let’s Taco’bout Voting event with free tacos
- Week 8:
  - Election Day Party to the Polls
  - Election Night Watch Party in Sayles --Campus leaders encouraged to attend
  - Processing space night after election - Chapel
- Week 9: Training on Disagreeing Effectively
- Week 10: Student Dialogue Circles -Chapel & CCCE

### **Fall 2024 Communications Campaign:**

- CarlsVote artwork to be designed by local artist
- CarlsVote “ask me about voting” t-shirts
- CarlsVote stickers
- Student voting resource cards
- Postering campaign: Dispelling common college voting myths
  - Myth: I can’t vote because I missed the October 15 voter registration deadline.

- Fact: You can register to vote at the polls in Minnesota. You can just show them your onecard, and you'll be able to vote.
- Myth: I can't register to vote in Minnesota because I don't have a MN driver's license.
  - Fact: It's fine to have a driver's license from another state but vote in Minnesota. You should vote wherever you consider to be home. You can register in MN with a social security number, instead of a driver's license number.
- Myth: I can't register online because my Carleton dorm doesn't have a street address.
  - Fact: If registering from a Carleton dorm address, you should mark "0" for your house number and select your dorm or house name from the street address drop down menu.

### **Phase III:**

The third phase will occur after the 2024 general elections and continue until NSLVE shortly after publishing data on the 2024 election (November 2024- approximately August 2025). This period will largely be about assessment and discussion of the results of our action plan. This phase will start with the reconvening of the campus-wide voting working group to discuss the past cycles' voter engagement efforts. This group will produce an action report of what we thought our successes and failures to be for the previous cycles, with recommendations for improvement to be made in the next election cycle. This report will be paired with the NSLVE data from the general election to create a new campus action plan for the 2026 midterm elections and to further enhance the work that CarlsVote and the CCCE are engaging in on campus.

# Campus-Wide CarlsVote Voting working group

## Students

- Carleton Student Association (CSA) President
- CSA rep, CCCE Liaison
- CCCE student fellow, program coordinator CarlsVote
- CCCE student fellow, head of engagement CarlsVote
- WHOA house program manager
- League of Women Voters student liaison
- Resident Assistant x2
- Chaplain Associate x2
- Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) representative
- TRIO student representative

## Staff

- CCCE Director
- College Communications representative
- Government Documents Librarian
- Sustainability Director
- OIL representative
- GSC representative

## Faculty

- Humanities Center Director
- STEM Manager
- Community and Civic Engagement Committee faculty representative
- Broom Fellow for Public Scholarship

## Administrator

- President's Chief of Staff

This coalition intentionally included representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership, Staff, and faculty. Representation also includes different perspectives and areas of expertise, as well as leaders who can help with outreach to the whole campus community by engaging students where they are.

As a coalition, it will be our job to hold the college as an institution, and each other, accountable for implementing a comprehensive plan and lowering barriers to vote. Students, Faculty, and Staff working on this initiative together all have the responsibility to highlight where barriers remain, and how those barriers can sometimes be created by the very actors and groups designed to lower them (including some within this coalition).

## Contingency Planning:

This plan is to be carried out by a variety of actors who have all displayed commitment to the goals of student voter engagement. If one leader leaves campus and is no longer involved in this work, a meeting should be held to find a suitable replacement. For student leaders, who

are carrying out a large portion of the activities within this plan the CCCE should work to find a new fellow or program who has shown commitment to the goals and objectives of CarlsVote. This coalition will continue to operate as a sponsored and funded Program and should have at least one fellow dedicated to its continuance each year.

## **Leadership**

The recommendations and action items recommended by the working group will be implemented by a core group of staff and student leaders from the CCCE and CarlsVote. Many of whom will also sit on the working group itself. These will include:

### Students

- Robert Healy, CCCE student fellow, program coordinator CarlsVote
- Sydney Tirschwell, program lead and head of communications CarlsVote
- Maxwell Serota, CCCE student fellow, head of engagement CarlsVote

### Staff:

- Sinda Nichols, director of the CCCE
- Danielle Trajano, manager of student development programs and Peace, Conflict, and Democracy cohort lead, CCCE

## **Strengths and Weaknesses**

We know our campus faces the 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.
- There are no streamlined processes in place for registering large percentages of our students at single points in time (new student week, election week, etc.)
- The voter engagement work on our campus is generally contained within one office (this presents both benefits and challenges towards implementing a broad-based registration project)

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

- We currently have limited community partnerships directly related to voter participation and registration on campus
- Re-registering due to changes in campus address are challenging and confusing
- Few students are trained in how to register others to vote

We know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:

- There is an office dedicated to civic and community engagement on Campus (CCCE)
- Nonpartisan voter engagement efforts on campus currently have student and staff support
- We have a working relationship with our local election office.
- Several communication streams to students about Voter registration and Information have been increased, and students have developed novel ways to engage with their peers

## Election engagement goals at Carleton

- **Knowledge:** Students know when, where, and how to vote.
- **Access:** Students are able to get to the polls or vote absentee.
- **Motivation:** Students each know why voting matters to them.
- **Integration:** Students are able to draw connections between the election and their knowledge/values, including topics they're studying and involved in at Carleton.
- **Community Resilience:** Our campus community is able to mitigate the strain this election places on the sense of community on campus.

## Reporting & Evaluation

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

- Receiving approval by the campus wide working group
- Receiving approval from the president's cabinet
- Publishing the document on the CCCE's website

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

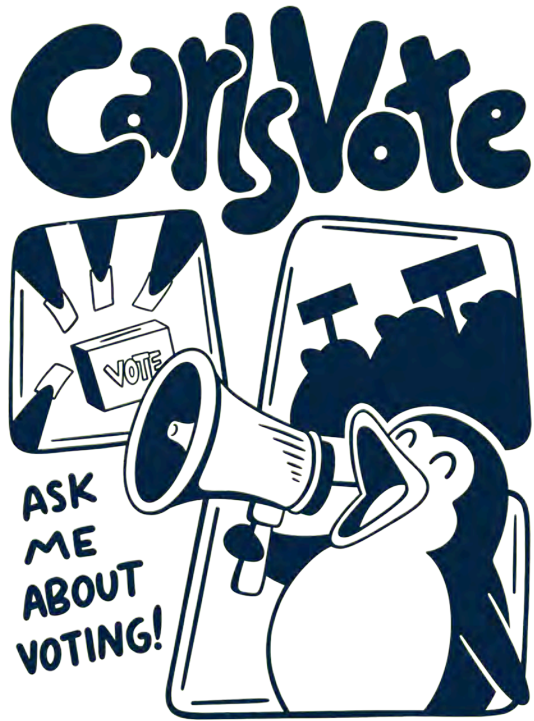
- Publishing the document on the CCCE's website
- Publishing on the ALL-IN website

We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Sending a post-election survey to students and faculty about how they felt about our efforts
- Reassembling the campus working group to discuss where we saw successes and where we saw deficiencies
- NSLVE data will highlight where we need to improve for the next election cycle

## Artifacts

CarlsVote graphic





# Student Voting Resource Card



# Screenshot of Voter Information Webpage

Carleton Academics Campus Life Admissions For » Directory Search

Center for Community and Civic Engagement | **Voting**

CCCE Home  
About  
**Voting**  
For Students  
For Community Partners  
For Faculty  
For Staff  
Initiatives  
Logistical Support

### Key Upcoming 2024 Election Dates

- In Minnesota, early vote by mail or in person: September 20-November 4, 2024
- On-campus early voting: October 10, 2024, 10 am - 3 pm, Anderson Atrium
- In Minnesota, register in advance by October 15, 2024, to save time on election day
- **General Election: November 5, 2024**

[Register to Vote or Check Your Registration](#)

### How do I vote ...

- in Minnesota?
- in another state?
- if I'm studying abroad in the fall?

### What's on my ballot?

Whether you are a first-time voter or registered to vote in another district in the United States, the easiest way to find out how and where to vote is through the national [TurboVote](#) platform. TurboVote will also provide you with reminders about upcoming elections and voting, if you sign up for them.

### Events

- Tue, Oct 15, 2024**  
LTC Lunch - What to do in the Days Following the 2024 Election 11:45 am  
Engaging Across Viewpoints Lecture Series - Beyond Civility: Honing Reason to create safe spaces for dangerous ideas 12:00 pm
- Wed, Oct 16, 2024**  
Community Conversations: Barriers to Voting 6:00 pm
- Fri, Oct 18, 2024**  
Voters Ask the Superintendent: Northfield High School Construction Funding Referendum 11:00 am

New student resource fair (left), and Pop-up early voting on campus, 10.10.24 (right)





# Myth vs. Fact



“Wait, do I need a driver’s license?”



**Myth:** You can’t register to vote in Minnesota if you don’t have a MN driver’s license.



**Fact:** It’s fine to have a driver’s license from another state but vote in Minnesota. You should vote wherever you consider to be home. You can register in MN with a social security number, instead of a driver’s license number.



[go.carleton.edu/vote](https://go.carleton.edu/vote)

**More info**



Carleton

**October 10:** Carleton On-Campus Early Voting  
**October 15:** Minnesota Pre-Registration Deadline  
**November 5:** Election Day





Pop-Up



# Early Voting Day on campus

**Anderson Atrium**  
**Thursday, October 10**  
**10 am - 3 pm**

**Who:** Students voting as Northfield residents are invited to cast their ballots, along with employees who live in Rice County and/or Northfield.

**Especially:** If you live in Jewett, Rice, Page, Wade, Douglas and Parish, this early voting event is especially convenient. Otherwise, you'd vote at St. John's Lutheran Church, across Highway 3, on election day.

**Registration:**

- You can register to vote at the event; however, registering online by Oct. 4 will save you time.
- Reminder: All students who have moved dorms/buildings since last registering need to update their voter registration.

For more information on voting, including how to register online, how to vote in a different state, and what's on this year's ballot:

Free Popcorn!



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