



Coastal Carolina University 2024 Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Developed by: Emily Gaspar & Leah Levert

Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Coastal Carolina University in South Carolina for the 2024 fall semester. On campus, the plan and associated initiatives are known as Vote 1954: Your Voice Matters. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement by creating a comprehensive curricular and co-curricular campaign of events and initiatives that establish the direct connection between the episodic, sometimes performative, experience of voting, and the potential for a broader and deeper connection to campus and community through engagement with nationally recognized civic holidays including: Constitution Day, Banned Book Week, Voter Education Week, Free Speech Week, Election Day, Kindness Day, and International Volunteer Day.

Leadership:

The core team working on the development and implementation of the plan includes:

1. Emily Gaspar, Interim Assistant Vice President, University Belonging & Student Affairs
2. Amanda Eisele, Senior Director, Student Involvement and Leadership
3. Leah Levert, Coordinator for Civic and Community Engagement
4. Gabrielle Ryder, Student Government Association President & Vote 1954 grant lead

There are many collaborators and partners associated with the plan, including the following:

1. American Democracy Project campus rep
2. Athletics
3. CCU Food Crew
4. Community and Civic Engagement Student Board
5. Department of Political Science
6. Department of Public Safety
7. Emergency Management
8. Faculty Senate

9. League of Women Voters of Horry County South Carolina
10. Scheduling & Event Services
11. Staff Senate
12. Student Government Association
13. Sustain Coastal
14. University Counsel
15. University Housing
16. University Libraries
17. University Marketing and Communication
18. University 110 (first-year experience course) instructors
19. *The Chanticleer* student newspaper
20. Transportation Services
21. Women's & Gender Studies faculty
22. League of Women Voters of Horry County South Carolina

The plan and the core team could be described as a grassroots effort to create a web of civic and community engagement connections this fall capitalizing on the energy associated with the presidential election. Feedback concerning the initial plan referenced the need for a leadership succession plan. Transparently, there is a need to establish a leadership team, along with a campus voting coalition, and in that process a succession plan can be developed as well.

Commitment:

The first line of the University mission directly references the institutional commitment to student development connected to positive citizenship. Moreover, the University mission highlights the value of initiatives and events associated with Your Voice Matters: Vote 1954.

Coastal Carolina University is a public comprehensive liberal arts institution that seeks to develop students who are both knowledgeable in their chosen fields and prepared to be productive, responsible, healthy citizens with a global perspective.

The UNIV 110 course (first-year experience), required for all first-year students, includes course content about voter registration and education developed and provided by the division of University Belonging and Student Affairs.

The following groups of student leaders made a commitment to reach 100% participation in TurboVote voter registration or registration confirmation.

1. Students Navigating and Advising Peers (SNAP) mentors in Intercultural and Inclusion Student Services
2. Resident Advisers in University Housing
3. Fraternity and Sorority Life council presidents and organization presidents
4. *The Chanticleer* student newspaper editorial team
5. Student athletes

All first-year students will receive a GoodCourse voter education module via text and email prior to voter registration deadlines. GoodCourse is a third-party provider specializing in video micro-courses.

A free speech team, Support Positioned to Educate, Act, and Connect (SPEAC, pronounced speak), was established this summer. The SPEAC Team is comprised of University Belonging and Student Affairs professional staff who assist the campus before, during, and after free speech events. Relatedly, a first amendment webpage was created for the University website.

The President's Council on Sustainability & Coastal Resilience awarded two Student Government Association leaders with a Vote 1954 grant. This is an initiative to increase student voter participation in both on and off campus elections.

CCU Athletics and the South Carolina State Election Commission established a one-year branding agreement. The "Surf Turf" field will feature the logo for the South Carolina State Election Commission for the fall 2024 season.

President Benson has agreed to send a presidential commitment email. The email is anticipated to be sent on September 16.

This is the first action plan Coastal Carolina University developed and submitted to ALL IN.

Landscape:

University Description:

Coastal Carolina University is a comprehensive, public, 4-year liberal arts institution in Conway, South Carolina. CCU was founded in 1954, and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2023. The University is designated as a regional comprehensive and predominantly white institution.

Coastal Carolina University has a total enrollment of 10,829 students. Thirty-nine percent of students are South Carolina residents, 60% are out-of-state residents, and 1% are international students.

Approximately, 4800 students live in University Housing. CCU has a two-year live on requirement.

Horry County Voting Information:

Students who live on campus and want to vote in Horry County need to register using the street address of University Housing and not a PO box. There are three precincts around the University. This website provides an interactive map to identify polling place by address: <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/departments/voters-registration-and-elections/>

Students registering to vote in Horry County must vote here. They cannot register here and then go home to vote.

Students from out-of-state do not have to change their driver's license to a South Carolina driver's license in order to register to vote or to cast their votes. That being said, they will not be able to register to vote online at scvotes.gov unless they have a South Carolina driver's license or DMV-issued ID card.

They will have to register to vote another way (in person, mail, NVRA agency, etc.) and may present a passport, military ID, or a South Carolina voter registration card with a photograph

(which can be initiated at county offices) when voting. An out-of-state driver's license would not fulfill the identification requirements of Section 7-13-710 (A).

Student Voters:

Citizens who are not yet 18-years-old but will turn 18 before the next ensuing General Election, and who otherwise qualify to vote, have the right to register beginning 120 days prior to the closing of the books of a preceding primary (see [S.C. Code of Laws 7-5-180](#)).

Students may register to vote where they reside while attending college. This could be at an address in the college community (e.g., a dormitory) or at an address you intend to return to while not in the college community (e.g., family home). For guidance in determining what residence to claim for voter registration purposes, see [S.C. Code of Laws Section 7-1-25](#).

Many college students who live on campus receive their mail at a campus post office box. These students must register at the physical address of their dormitory. The student's P.O. Box can be provided for mailing and contact purposes.

Voter Registration Drives:

If you are planning a voter registration drive at an institution of higher learning, please make sure you have the [National Voter Registration Application](#) for students who maintain their residency outside of South Carolina. For a list of addresses of Election Commissions throughout the country please see the [Election Assistance Commission](#) web site.

South Carolina Registration Deadlines:

There is no length of residency requirement in South Carolina in order to register to vote. You can register at any time.

You must be registered at least 30 days prior to any election in order to vote in that election. Registration by mail applications must be postmarked at least 30 days prior to that particular election to be eligible. If the deadline falls on a Sunday or U.S. Postal Service holiday, the postmark deadline is extended to the next day that is not a Sunday or holiday.

Citizens who are not yet 18-years-old but will turn 18 before the next ensuing General Election, and who otherwise qualify to vote, have the right to register beginning 120 days prior to the closing of the books of a preceding primary (see [S.C. Code of Laws 7-5-180](#)).

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

Coastal Carolina University is authorized to participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), as of 2/22/24. This is the first time CCU has participated in NSLVE, so a data match will be run after the next federal election.

Goals:

On our campus, the plan and associated initiatives are known as Your Voice Matters: Vote 1954. There are four goals associated with the plan.

Goal 1: Undergird the Student Government Association Vote 1954 sustainability grant efforts with campus-wide fall initiatives and events that extend beyond the presidential election. More specifically, the goal is three events or initiatives per month September through November and at least one per month in August and December.

S.M.A.R.T.I.E. Details: Develop and implement initiatives and events in collaboration with student leaders from the Student Government Association, Community and Civic Engagement student board, Fraternity and Sorority Life presidents, The Chanticleer student newspaper editorial board, and University Housing Resident Advisers, along with faculty and staff colleagues. The events and initiatives are guided by the following nationally recognized dates:

- August: Civility Month
- September 10: Anticipated Presidential Debate
- September 17: Constitution Day
- September 17: Voter Registration Day
- September 22-28: Banned Books Week
- October 7-11: Voter Education Week
- October 21-25: Free Speech Week
- October 29: Vote Early Day
- November 5: Election Day
- November 13: Kindness Day
- December 5: Volunteer Day

Goal 2: Implement the fall campaign of civic engagement initiatives across campus with participation from both students and partners in multiple divisions and departments across campus in curricular and co-curricular roles. The intent is to shift campus culture and connect the Vote 1954 brand to broad civic engagement opportunities. The measurable goal is in collaboration with at least ten unique student groups and/or curricular and co-curricular departments on campus.

S.M.A.R.T.I.E. Details: The core planning team developed a project management working document, along with Excel spreadsheets to plan CCU events, initiatives, and social media posts. The planning team started meeting weekly in June and continued throughout the fall semester. The tentative CCU schedule of events and programs are listed below:

- Voter education content in the UNIV 110 first-year experience course
- Civility Campaign w/ CCU Food Crew & University Libraries
- Farmer's Market TurboVote Tabling & TurboVote Canvassing in August, Sept., & Oct.
- Union Takeover / TurboVote Tabling
- Deliberative Dialogues
- Freedom of Expression Lunch & Learn Series once/month
- University Libraries Banned Book Week Read Out
- Constitution Day – Presidential Signature Series & TurboVote Tabling
- Hip Hop to the Polls
- Engaging Across Difference micro-course module by GoodCourse
- Violence Prevention Summit tabletop exercise about free speech and civil unrest
- Teal Mobile to the Polls
- Election Watch Party
- Post-Election Run-Down
- National Kindness Day
- International Volunteer Day

Goal 3: Register 1,954 CCU students via TurboVote. Side note: 1954 is the year CCU was established, so this number is a nod to University history.

S.M.A.R.T.I.E. Details: The Coordinator of Civic and Community Engagement is the primary manager of TurboVote. This platform allows the University to keep track of students who are both registering to vote and checking or confirming their voter registration. A baseline report was documented on August 1 and weekly reporting was completed and documented for the campus community to keep up with the efforts to achieve the goal. The data will also be used to understand the reach and impact of the events and initiatives listed above.

Goal 4: Establish a baseline of information and activity concerning voter registration and engagement in campus-wide civic engagement opportunities.

S.M.A.R.T.I.E. Details: As previously noted, this is CCU's first year participating in NSLVE. While the results will not be available for some time, we are eager to learn about the potential correlations between the Vote 1954 campaign and student voter participation. It will also be imperative to obtain this baseline information for future planning and goal setting. It is challenging to set goals when this is a first-year initiative. In addition to NSLVE data, TurboVote data, event and initiative attendance, and GoodCourse module completion are all additional data points that provide a breadth of baseline information.

Strategy:

Coastal Carolina University will utilize civic holidays as the framework for the development of programs, events, and initiatives. The small, core leadership group is strategically connecting and collaborating with student leaders and departments/divisions across campus to amplify the civic efforts.

CCU considers these dates to be the map:

- August: Civility Month
- September 10: Anticipated Presidential Debate
- September 17: Constitution Day
- September 17: Voter Registration Day
- September 22-28: Banned Books Week
- October 7-11: Voter Education Week
- October 21-25: Free Speech Week
- November 5: Election Day
- November 13: Kindness Day
- December 5: Volunteer Day

And these events and initiatives represent CCU's campus-specific journey:

- Month of August: Civility Campaign w/ CCU Food Crew & University Libraries
- August 21, September 4, October 2: Farmer's Market TurboVote Tabling & Canvassing
- Aug. 29, Sept. 24, Oct. TBD, Nov. 12: Freedom of Expression Lunch & Learn Series
- Sept. 10: Anticipated Presidential Debate Watch Party (tentative)
- Sept 10: GoodCourse voting micro-course distributed to first-year students
- Sept. 16: ALL IN-Campus Democracy Challenge presidential commitment
- Sept. 17: Union Takeover including TurboVote Tabling
- Sept. 17: Constitution Day – Presidential Signature Series Speaker
- Sept. 18: Hip Hop to the Polls
- Week of Sept. 22: University Libraries will host a Read Out for Banned Book Week
- Oct. 21: Free Speech at CCU Lunch & Learn during Free Speech Week

- Tentative Nov. 5: Teal Mobile to the Polls
- Nov. 5: Election Watch Party (tentative)
- Nov. 13: National Kindness Day
- UNIV 110 (first-year experience course): voter registration and education module
- Throughout the Fall Semester: *The Chanticleer* Student Newspaper: voter education & election coverage
- Throughout the Fall Semester: Deliberative Dialogues
- Throughout the Fall Semester: University Libraries display tables

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

Coastal Carolina University is authorized to participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), as of 2/22/24. This is the first time CCU has participated in NSLVE, so a data match will be run after the next federal election.

In addition to NSLVE data, TurboVote data, attendance at events and participation in initiatives, along with GoodCourse module completion are all additional data points that can be reviewed and analyzed to evaluate our efforts.

Reporting:

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website <https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/coastal-carolina-university/>.

Our institution has given ALL IN permission to publish our past NSLVE reports, which can also be found on our campus page above.

In the immediate, we will be providing the campus with a weekly update on the Vote 1954 voter registration status with a fun, old-fashioned thermometer illustrating the progress to the goal!

Some of the other data referenced in the evaluation section will be used internally to inform our small leadership team review of the semester. Once we develop a larger leadership team and potential campus voting coalition, we anticipate sharing data with our strategic partners as well.