



Colby College 2022 Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Developed by: Elizabeth Jabar, Lawry Family Dean of Civic Engagement

Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Colby College in Maine for the 2022 election. This action plan aims to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout in the 2022 midterm election. The goals for Colby College for the 2022 election are:

- Institutionalize Democratic Engagement and Student Voting
- Expand and integrate civic learning across all spheres of the college
- Increase the student voter registration and voting rates

Leadership: Our leadership team includes the following:

President David Greene, Office of the President
Elizabeth Jabar, Lawry Family Dean of Civic Engagement
Patti Dubois, City Clerk, Waterville, Maine
Allyson Gardner, Director, Maine Students Vote
Ellie Batchelder 23', Colby Votes Fellow
Saia Patel 26', Colby Votes Fellow
Conor Mynahan 25', Colby Votes Fellow
Maya Sachs 24', Colby Votes Fellow
Brunda Karikireddy 24', Colby Votes Fellow

Our nonprofit partners: Ask Every Student, Maine Campus Compact, and Maine Students Vote

Commitment:

Educating students for lives of active citizenship and democratic engagement is core to the liberal arts mission of Colby College and the Office of Civic Engagement and Community Partnerships. Colby students are encouraged to “explore the relationships between academic work and one’s responsibility to contribute to the world beyond the campus and assume leadership roles as

students and citizens. Historically, civic learning has been part of the Colby curriculum and has expanded significantly with establishment of the Civic Engagement program in 2018. Civic Engagement staff collaborate with the Dean of the College colleagues, campus centers and faculty to integrate and expand community-based learning and civic leadership opportunities for students to develop the intellectual grounding, skills and confidence to address complex public problems and impact change. Curricular and co-curricular civic learning goals are framed within a set of *common understandings* developed by the Dean of Civic Engagement and Faculty and articulate the broad learning goals of democratic engagement at the college. The common understandings give faculty and staff clear learning outcomes and guidelines for developing new courses and co-curricular experiences that elevate civic learning and democratic engagement as a pervasive part of institutional culture. Additionally, the Provost has recently committed funding to support civic engagement course development grants, and Colby alumni have given significant gifts to establish funded civic leadership opportunities for students. These financial commitments help support the long-term and college-wide efforts to build democratic participation into the curriculum and the culture of student life.

In the spring of 2018, President David Greene signed Colby onto the NESAC Votes challenge and has been a signatory to the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation since 2020. Starting in 2018, President Greene has committed funding to the Office of Civic Engagement to support the initiative long-term, including paid student leadership positions, transportation to the polls, and campus event sponsorship. Additionally, the college participates in NSLVE, and Colby Votes utilizes the NSLVE data to identify opportunities and set campus goals. Colby's data demonstrate positive trends in student democratic participation since 2014. Voter registration has increased from 64.8% in 2014 to 73.0% in 2018, and 93.1% in 2020. General election turnout also increased significantly to 83.8% in 2020. These substantial gains are attributed to having an institutional commitment from senior leaders, professional staff oversight and leadership, non-profit partners, a relational organizing model and funding support for student leadership positions and educational opportunities. The impact of having a clear 2020 campus action plan combined with staff leadership, support from non-profit partners and empowering student roles can not be overstated. The Office of Civic Engagement will continue to organize and lead Colby Votes and is deeply committed to sustaining this critical initiative within the OCECP program.

Landscape:

Colby College is a private 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2019.

Our campus demographic and voting data:

- Colby College has 2,155 students, 100% full-time enrollment
- The enrolled student population at Colby College is 60.7% White, 9.23% Asian, 7.84% Hispanic or Latino, 5.61% Two or More Races, 4.69% Black or African American, 0.186% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.0464% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders.
- Colby College has authorized NSLVE.
- Our institution had a 2020 campus voting rate of 83.8%.
- Our institution had a 2020 voter registration rate of 93.1%.
- Our institution had a 2018 voter turnout rate of 55.8%.
- Our institution had a 2018 voter registration rate of 86.5%.
- Our institution has been recognized in the past by ALL IN for these awards: 2020 Student Honor Roll - Lutie Brown / ME Campus Voting Challenge Best Action Plan
- Our institution has been recognized by ALL IN with the following seals: 2018 Silver, 2020 Platinum

Goals:

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:

Goal: Plan and implement peer-to-peer relational organizing model in 2022

Goal: Increase student voter registration rate by 7% by 2024

Goal: Institutionalize student voting by 2024

Goal: Disseminate important voting information through multiple channels in 2022

Goal: Increase voting rate of registered students by 5% by 2024

Strategy:

Colby College will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation.

- Implement peer or peer relational organizing mode: Colby Votes Fellows + Campus Organizers + Voting Captains + Voting Squads
- Implement funded student leadership positions for Fellows and Organizers
- Identify and recruit student organizations and leaders to joining Colby Votes Campus Stakeholder Group
- Recruit student leaders from a diverse range of groups and organizations to serve as Voting Captains
- Design Colby Votes Captain training and onboarding plan

- Organize weekly voter registration drives
- Participate in Civic Holidays and organize events for National Voter Registration Day, Voter Education Week, Vote Early Day
- Incorporate important voting and election information at Orientation and FYE online platforms
- Distribute syllabus language/template to faculty and advocate for including voting information and statements about voting
- Work with faculty to schedule 5 Minutes for Democracy presentation into all courses
- Design a fall 2022 social media plan for Colby Votes channels
- Establish and maintain Colby Votes google site to centralize resources and share critical voter information
- Utilize nonprofit partners voting guides and online tools to share information on voting deadlines for other states and other topics
- Disseminate nonpartisan candidate guides from our nonprofit partners
- Promote “vote early” materials and organize campaign
- Promote same-day voter registration
- Organize transportation to the polls on Election Day
- Recruit at least one staff member to serve as Deputy Registrar for the City of Waterville
- Utilize 2020 NSLVE data to identify opportunities and challenges for increasing democratic engagement and student voter participation

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

- Review and utilize 2022 NSLVE data to identify opportunities and challenges for increasing democratic engagement and student voter participation
- Record participation and collect student feedback on Colby Votes campus events
- Office of Civic Engagement will conduct assessment process with Colby Votes leaders, including surveys and focus groups

Reporting:

- Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN’s website <https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/colby-college/>.
- Our NSLVE report is shared with the Office of Civic Engagement, Office of the Provost and President of the College
- Our campus action plan is shared with the Dean of the College
- Our institution has given ALL IN permission to publish our NSLVE reports which are posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website.