



COLUMBUS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS 2022 ACTION PLAN



COLUMBUS STATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

Columbus State Community College is one of Ohio's largest and most diverse community colleges.

We are located in Central Ohio, a dynamic region experiencing historic population growth and economic development, with two campuses and three regional learning centers. We pride ourselves on being a community leader and a driving force for positive social and economic change.

We are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. These values are woven into everything we do. Our student democratic engagement is no exception. Based on our National Study of Learning Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) data from the last few election cycles, we have identified gaps in student registration and voting rates among different demographic segments of our student family. The data are guiding our democratic engagement initiatives as we work to close these gaps.

Outlined in this action plan are our targeted efforts to ensure all our students are educated and engaged political participants.

We have taken intentional steps to institutionalize the critical work of educating and engaging our students in the political process. A few of the highlights you'll read about in proceeding pages include:

- Hiring a full-time coordinator to manage our student voter education initiative.
- Branding all our efforts under "Columbus State Votes."
- Creating a student voter education module for our new student seminar.
- Placing a student voter registration kiosk in a high-traffic area for students.
- Hosting student educational forums with political science faculty.
- Expanding our social media presence around student voter education.

Because of our student voter outreach during the 2020 election, Columbus State was recognized as a "Voter Friendly Campus," a prestigious award we are proud of and are working hard to earn again. We are seeing progress as more of our students become actively involved in the election process.

For example, from our most recent NSLVE report, we saw a 4.1 percent increase among our students' voting rate from the 2016 election to the 2020 election. There was a 0.6 percent increase in our students' registration rate during this same period. And while these numbers are moving in the right direction, we know there is still more work to do. You'll see in this action plan how we are building on these successes for the 2022 election cycle.



ABOUT COLUMBUS STATE

Columbus State serves a diverse group of over 45,000 students from multiple counties in Central Ohio. The College's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion means voter outreach is critical. In addition, the student body represents several categories of citizens who are traditionally underrepresented among the voting population, including young people and ethnic and racial minorities.

And the student population is more diverse than our state population. For example, more than 12% of students are under 17, while nearly one-third are non-traditional adult students. What's more, hundreds of students are active or retired military veterans. And for the dozens of recently naturalized citizens, they may be experiencing their first elections.

Within seven academic pathways, our students can earn certificates or one of the following degrees, in various areas of study:

- Associate of Arts and Associate of Science (Degree-to-Degree Transfer Programs)
- Associate of Applied Science (Career Programs, including certificates)
- Associate of Technical Studies (Career Programs individualized degree)



Our role as a community college, and our unique construct greatly informs our civic engagement work. Our student makeup, and the time our students spend on our campus is different than that of our 4-year, residential school counterparts. We aspire to be a leader in this field for community colleges across the country as we continue our program.

COALITION

Columbus State's Student Democratic Engagement Committee (SDEC) is a cross functional group, dedicated to educating and activating student participation in the democratic process. The driving force behind institutionalizing democratic engagement at Columbus State, SDEC is building on our 2020 success.

We have expanded (and continue to do so) to include more internal and external members, including additional academic and student support departments to further institutionalize our work. In addition, in 2021, Columbus State hired a full-time coordinator to manage our voter education initiative.

Diana Wisse – Co-chair

Senior Director, Advising and Student Support

Jonathan Kreger – Co-chair

Faculty, Political Science

MacKenzie Wilcox

Coordinator, Voter Education and Special Projects

Direye Ahmed

Student, Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow

Martha Crone

Faculty, Political Science

Averee Fields

Coordinator, Delaware Campus & Regional Learning Centers, Student Engagement

Elizabeth Grieser

Operation Manager, League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus

Kristine Kinzer

Library Coordinator, Delaware Campus

Sophia Lombardo

Specialist, Civic Engagement, Student Engagement, and Inclusion

Janet McDermott

Academic Advisor

Liz Rose-Cohen

Manager, Marketing & Communications

Hari Ruiz

Volunteer, League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus

Roger Vandergriff

Student, Campus Votes Project Democracy Fellow

Brett Welsh

Director, Student Engagement & Inclusion



SPRING 2022 STUDENT DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

The following is a list of specific activities we completed in the Spring Semester 2022. Our efforts concentrated on the areas of increasing voter registration, educating students about the voting process and developing partnerships with other local voter registration organizations.

Voter Registration

- Created lobby slides with information on registering to vote, displayed on tv slideshows in different buildings across campus
- Hosted voter registration drives at various campus events and locations

Voter Education

- Designed a Voter Education Module for our COLS courses (seminar course for all new students)
- Updated Columbus State branded videos to go on the College's main YouTube page discussing registering to vote and absentee voting for 2022
- Posted print marketing in bathroom stalls across campus that share key information about registering to vote and important deadlines

Students as Voter Advocates

- Created a federal work study student position to support the work of the Voter Education Coordinator
- Introduced office hours for Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellows at the voter registration kiosk

Communication

- Created a graphic to connect all of our voter education work under one brand, "Columbus State Votes"
- "Columbus State Votes" branded materials including buttons, stickers, cups, t-shirts, and information cards
- Launched social media webpages dedicated to the College's voter education initiatives
- Submitted updates to be included in the marketing department's weekly newsletters to students, staff, and faculty on events and election information

Community Partnership

- Established connections at the Franklin County Board of Elections, Capital University, and the Ohio State University (OSU)
- Hosted events in partnership with OSU Votes, the League of Women Voter's, WOSU (public radio), and 4 Paws for Ability OSU
- Partnered with Jeni's Splendid Ice Cream to provide students with free scoop cards at our events

Spring Events

- **February 2nd** – Voter registration table at the Propel Ohio Conference (on civic engagement and student leadership) hosted at Columbus State with US Senator Sherrod Brown's office
- **February 16th** – Voter registration table at the MLK Keynote Event and Community Vendor Fair
- **March 21-24** – Voter Outreach Week with the League of Women Voters, WOSU, and OSU Votes
- **April 14th** – Voter registration and information table at the Student Engagement and Inclusion Office's Spring Fling event
- **April 28** – Columbus State Votes (for the Cutest Service Pup) - Voting with Disabilities in Ohio, with the Columbus State Office of Disabilities and 4 Paws for Ability Ohio State Chapter



AUTUMN 2022 STUDENT DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

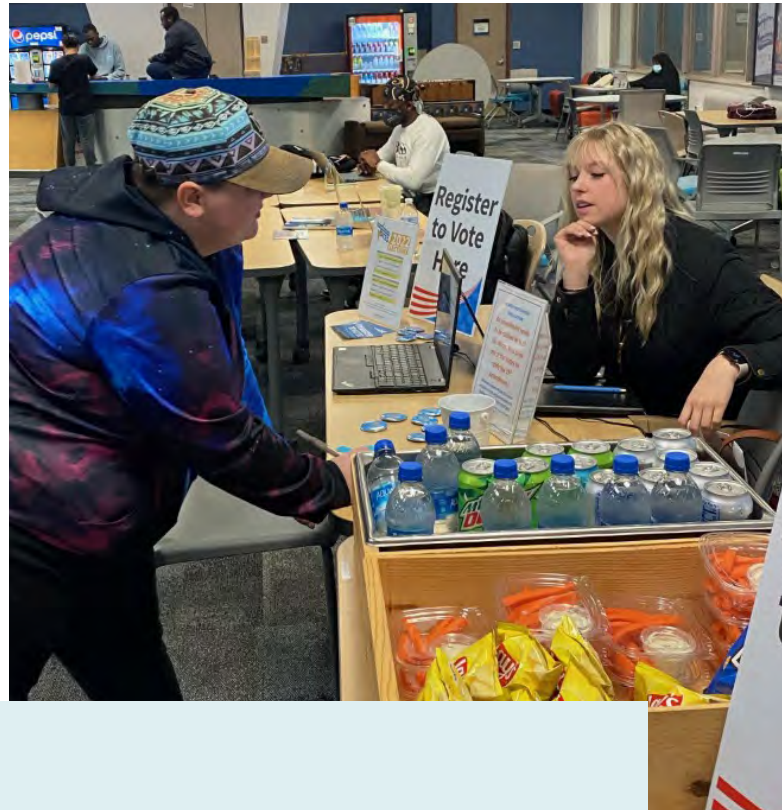
For Autumn Semester 2022, we will continue expanding our outreach to students in the following areas:

Voter Registration

- Registration tables at New Student Orientation sessions and Welcome Week events
- Partner with student organizations to host voter registration events
- Continue office hours at the voter registration kiosk
- Send out reminders from the College's academic management system

Voter Education

- Host virtual panels about the election processes with faculty and community partners
- Create a webpage on Columbus State's website for voter information and updates
- Engage faculty with syllabus language, resources, and classroom materials



Autumn 2022 Events

June – August | New Student Orientation voter registration

June – August | Full roll out of Voter Education Module into freshman seminar courses

August – September | Weeks of Welcome student voter registration

September | Voting with Disabilities event with 4 Paws for Ability – Ohio State

September 17 | Constitution Day Events

September 26 – September 30 | Voter Registration Week Events

September – November | Student Voter Turnout Campaign with mass messaging and social media posts

September – October | Student Voter Registration Campaign (for October 11th deadline)

October – November | Campaign with emphasis on early voting

LONG TERM GOALS AND ONGOING PROJECTS

As Columbus State moves forward, we aim to expand on the progress we've made on our voter education initiatives in three major ways: continued institutionalization, students as voter advocates, and community.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Faculty and Staff

Moving forward, we will implement programs to expand the inclusion of our faculty and staff. For example, we would like to create informational and training resources that empower faculty instructors to include democratic engagement in their classrooms. We imagine faculty being able to create lesson plans that tie voter education and engagement into all disciplines. We will create resources for our staff, including counselors, advisors, engagement specialists, etc. As our students begin to establish what their Columbus State experience will look like, we want them to know that there is a functional space available to them.

Functional and Physical Space

As our students begin to establish what their Columbus State experience will look like, we want them to know that there is a functional space available to them. We will continue to expand the physical presence of our voter education work, including our voter registration kiosk and keeping in mind an ultimate goal of having a Student Democratic Engagement Office. The physical space that we hold on campus gives students the opportunity to interact with our work and get involved. We imagine a physical space where students can develop their passions and leadership skills and enrich their time at Columbus State.

In 2022, we expanded our online presence to our student engagement platform, CougarConnect, and to social media. As we expand our reach on social media, we will work with Columbus State's marketing team to create a branded webpage on the Columbus State website. This will allow students to easily access our work and give students confidence in the materials they engage with.



Visibility

An important part of creating a culture of civic engagement on campus is having an active presence on campus. In alignment with our goal of creating functional space for students to engage with, we also wish to increase our visibility on campus to increase our reach and reputability on campus. To do this, we will continue to work on attending campus events, and partnering with departments across the College. We will continue to develop and distribute our branded materials to create a recognizable presence on campus.

LONG TERM GOALS AND ONGOING PROJECTS



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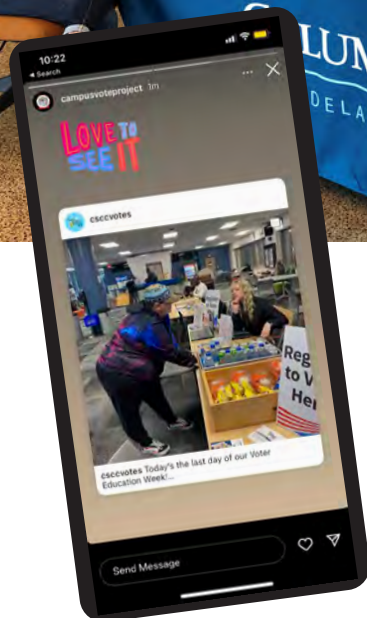
Student Engagement

Students are our primary focus. Future projects will center around students as voter advocates. We want to make a life long impact on our students by getting them personally involved with this work. To increase our effectiveness on campus, we will include more opportunities for student leadership and student led initiatives. Our goal is to create space for students to be creative, develop their skills, and engage with their peers.

We imagine a program where students are a large part of the leadership. We will expand our student led initiatives by investing in our work study positions, creating room for student volunteers, and welcoming more students onto our coalition, the Student Democratic Engagement Committee.

Community

We want to give our students the best resources and experiences available to our civic engagement programs. To do this, we will expand our connections with local partners and the other higher ed institutions in our area. Central Ohio is home to many higher education institutions that are located close to Columbus State. We imagine expanding our partnerships with these schools to create events and programs that can reach students across many different campuses in the area.



PLAN EVALUATION

The Student Democratic Engagement Advisory Committee views our plan as a living document. To that end, we engage in continuous evaluation of our efforts and measure the progress of our work. These important steps will allow us to adjust our plan in real time to maximize our impact on student democratic engagement.

Our evaluation methods include:

- Utilizing Columbus State's NSLVE baseline data to determine:
 - increases in voter registration among our students
 - increases in the number of contacts with our students
 - relative comparisons with other community colleges using NSLVE
- Conducting debriefings and anonymous surveys after events
- Publishing event summaries for review with the Columbus State community
- Completing and submitting the Voter Friendly Campus Report by January 31, 2023





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