

Connecticut College - Camels Vote
Holleran Center for Community Action & Public Policy
2022 Campus Election Action Plan

“Connecticut College educates students to put the liberal arts into action as citizens in a global society. Connecticut College fosters civic responsibility and enhances academic excellence through a long tradition of community involvement and through courses that provide opportunities for service. The College promotes an understanding of local, regional, national, and international peoples, groups, cultures, and issues, and encourages students to take a life-long interest in them.”

- [Connecticut College's Mission & Values](#)

Executive Summary

Starting in the summer of 2022, The Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy will implement the following Campus Election Action Plan to elevate students' understanding of democracy and civic engagement, specifically related to voting, at Connecticut College. The Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy is an interdisciplinary, academic center that is dedicated to cultivating responsible civic engagement and leadership for social justice through engaged scholarship and reciprocal community collaborations. The Holleran Center will work in partnership with academic divisions, departments, and professors, as well as the Dean of the College Office, the Office of the President, the Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion (DIEI), the Office of Student Engagement, the Center for the Critical Study of Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE), the Department of Government Student Advisory Board (SAB), Connecticut College Shain Library, Connecticut College Athletics, Connecticut College club sports, Residential Education and Living (REAL), the Office of Admission, the Walter Commons, the Student Government Association (SGA), CC Republicans and Conservatives, and Connecticut College's Women in Politics club. Possible additional partnerships may include the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, The Hale Center for Career Development, CC Democrats, League of Women Voters of Southeastern Connecticut (LWVSECT). The partnerships listed here, along with others, will help to ensure that the goals outlined in this action plan are met by the end of 2022. Through continued partnerships with these organizations, Holleran Center professional staff were able to develop this plan and indicate clear goals for Connecticut College with the assistance of our Camels Vote Ambassadors: Emma Pyles, '24, Emily Swintak, '24 & Miranda Van Mooy, '24. Since the initial proposal of this plan, the Holleran Center has had some staff departures. Angela Barney, who led the initiative left the college in the summer of 2022 and Rebecca McCue, Director of Community Engagement and Holleran Center Operations, has stepped in temporarily to cover the transition until our new staff member begins in December 2022. The oversight and leadership of Camels Vote has been written into this new employee's position description.

In collaboration with the Holleran Center staff, the Camels Vote Ambassadors, Holleran Center fellows, and student volunteers continue to plan and execute strategies, activities, and programs that target different student groups. Through these initiatives we are further institutionalizing

Connecticut College's commitment to nonpartisan civic learning, political engagement, and voter participation.

This plan was informed primarily by the following resources: [Election Imperatives from the Institute for Democracy in Higher Education](#), [The Institute for Democracy & Higher Education's Report: Politics 365: Fostering Campus Climates for Student Political. Learning & Engagement](#), [Strengthening American Democracy from the Students Learn Students Vote \(SLSV\) Coalition](#), [Democracy Works' Votes & Ballots activity](#), and the [National Study of Learning. Voting. and Engagement](#) (NSLVE) [2016](#), [2018](#) (midterm election), and [2020](#) campus reports for Connecticut College.

Connecticut College is dedicated to increasing voter participation and civic engagement for the 2022 election cycle and beyond. Developed out of conversations with our fellow New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) schools and work completed at the 2019 NESCAC Votes summit we recognized the importance of establishing a core structure and group to promote voter engagement and strategies for deepening civic learning on campuses. Therefore, in 2020, "Camels Vote" was created in collaboration with students and professional staff members at Connecticut College. We are hoping to keep the momentum and excitement from the 2020 election going into the 2022 midterms and continue to raise student engagement and voting rates for Connecticut College. We want to instill that every election is important and there's no "off-year" when it comes to voting, especially as we look even further ahead to the 2024 presidential election cycle.

Camels Vote

Camels Vote is a nonpartisan student-led initiative overseen by professional staff in the Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy that was developed to create and support voting registration, participation, and civic engagement efforts at Connecticut College.

Camels Vote strengthens voting and civic engagement initiatives at Connecticut College by providing resource-sharing, communication, and collaboration across groups, clubs, organizations, departments, teams, etc. It has also created a unifying presence that has fostered a sense of community motivated by a common goal to increase voter participation and civic engagement on campus.

Leadership

The Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy is well integrated throughout the campus and provides support to numerous departments for research, community learning, academic certificate programs, and other initiatives consistent with the Center's mission. Holleran Center professional staff manage and coordinate all events, programs, and activities surrounding voter engagement held at Connecticut College. The Holleran Center works in partnership with academic divisions, departments, and professors, the Dean of the College Office, the Office of the President, the Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion (DIEI), the Office of Student Engagement, the Center for the Critical Study of Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE),

the Department of Government Student Advisory Board (SAB), Connecticut College Shain Library, Connecticut College Athletics, Connecticut College club sports, Residential Education and Living (REAL), the Office of Admission, the Walter Commons, the Student Government Association (SGA), CC Republicans and Conservatives, and Connecticut College's Women in Politics club. Holleran Center professional staff are assisted by Emma Pyles, '24, Camels Vote Lead Ambassador, Holleran Center Fellows, student clubs, and additional volunteers to execute these events, activities, and programs. Other members may join the working group based on the commitment to involvement, strategies, and degree of an overall mutually beneficial relationship. The level of involvement and membership responsibility will be decided and agreed upon by Holleran leadership and the members. Some members may provide resources and data, while others will develop programming and materials or volunteer at events. The Holleran Center for Community Action at Connecticut College looks to further institutionalize Camels Vote into the College framework in the future by creating a Camels Vote Fellow Position and creating a formal leadership structure that includes a diversity of class years to ensure that the program will continue and essential knowledge and information related to this work can be shared.

Commitment

As an institution, Connecticut College is very committed to increasing civic engagement and political participation on campus, as is reflected by the mission statement. However, this dedication and commitment is reflected in everyday practice as well. First, Camels Vote was created within the Holleran Center to continue this work across campus, both during election times and throughout the rest of the academic year as well. Furthermore, partnerships established by Camels Vote have helped to cement commitment to voting across disciplines, clubs, and departments. Additionally, formal commitment has been provided by the College President through the ALL IN Challenge Presidential Commitment and through all-school emails encouraging students to vote.

National Research & Landscape

Connecticut College participates in the [National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement](#) (NSLVE) and continues to use the research to measure the effectiveness of our work on campus and to motivate us to increase student participation in the voting process.

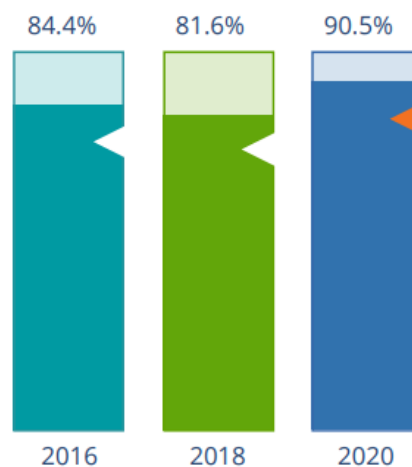
For this action plan, we referenced our 2016, 2018, and 2020 NSLVE campus reports. We paid particular attention to our 2018 midterm election NSLVE report as it is most comparable to the upcoming races in 2022.

In Fall 2020, Connecticut College enrolled 1,737 students (1,689 full-time and 48 part-time undergraduates). The percentages of female and male full-time students are 62% and 38%, respectively. 99% of our students are residential and we have an 83% graduation rate. 35% are student athletes. The majority of the students are from New England.



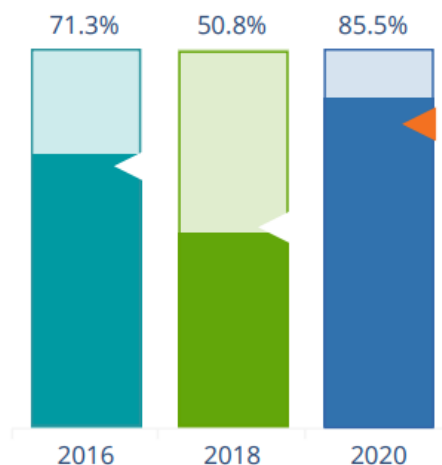
Overall, our NSLVE reports indicate that we have experienced an increase in voting rates from 2016 to 2020 with a change of 17.3 with an overall voting rate of 77.4%.

Connecticut College Student Voter Registration Rate



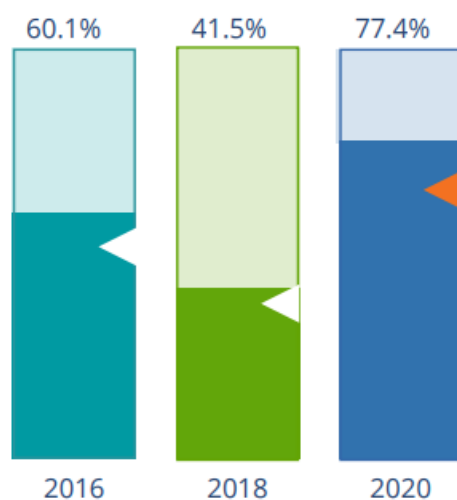
**The registration rate is the percentage of voting-eligible students who are registered to vote.*

Connecticut College Student Voting Rate of Registered Students



**The voting rate of registered students is the percentage of registered students who voted on Election Day.*

Connecticut College Student Voting Rate



**The voting rate is the percentage of eligible students who voted on Election Day.*

By Sex

	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020	
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Change (p.p)	
Female	1,125	705	63	1,088	483	44	1,040	808	78	↑ 15	
Male	660	294	45	671	192	29	638	385	60	↑ 16	

More female students voted in the 2018 midterm election (44% females compared to 29% males) and in the 2020 presidential election (78% females compared to 60% males). Camels Vote will attempt to address this disparity through targeted programming and partnerships with student clubs/organizations so they can personally urge their members to register and vote. A student organization Camels Vote could partner with is Connecticut College's Men of Color Alliance.

By Field of Study

The report also assesses student voter participation by field of study. At Connecticut College, Human Science majors were responsible for the highest level of voter participation in 2020 at 88%. Psychology majors were the second-highest student voters at 84%, and Computer and Information Sciences had the lowest voter turnout at 57%. For the 2018 midterm, Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics had the highest voting rate at 58%, followed by Ethnic, Cultural & Gender Studies, and Computer and Information Sciences with the lowest rate at 31%. To address the lower voting rates in certain fields of study, Camels Vote will work to contact faculty members across various disciplines and provide information that they can share with their classes in order to encourage their students to register and vote in the upcoming election.

Voting Methods

In terms of voting methods, in the 2018 midterm election, 28% of students voted “in person on Election Day,” and 38% voted “not in person,” and for the 2020 presidential election, 47% of students voted “not in person,” 12% voted “in person on Election Day,” and 5% voted early. The increase of students voting “not in person” is not surprising given the COVID-19 pandemic. Camels Vote will work to inform students that they have the right to vote using their university address if they so choose to, especially as Connecticut College is a primarily residential campus and Camels Vote recognizes that it may be difficult for students to return home on Election Day. To further support students who wish to vote in-person using their Connecticut College address in the town of New London, the Holleran Center will offer students rides to the polls. If students prefer to vote via absentee ballot, we will facilitate this process by signing those students up through online voter engagement tools like TurboVote and Rock the Vote. TurboVote and Rock the Vote allow students to request a state-specific absentee ballot. To further assist students who wish to continue voting in their home state via absentee ballot, Camels Vote and the Holleran Center will provide stamps to students to assist with this process and limit potential voting barriers.

Goals

In keeping with Connecticut College’s mission & values to foster “civic responsibility,” Connecticut College has taken the “ALL IN Democracy Challenge” with the intent of increasing student civic engagement through:

- voter registration
- voter education - informed about ballots, candidates, platforms, and issues
- voter participation/turnout

Informed by our NSLVE campus reports from previous years, and paying specific attention to our 2018 midterm election report, we hope to increase to achieve the following data-driven goals:

- Increase our student voting rate by approximately 15% points from 50.8% (2018 midterm) to 58.4% (2022 midterm)

- Increase our student voter registration rate by approximately 15% from 41.5% (2018 midterm) to 47.7% (2022 midterm)
- Increase the number and consistency of voter registration drives leading up the midterm elections in order to increase student participation while also increase Camels Vote visibility
- Host collaborative events that draw from many different areas of campus in order to show how voting is impactful for all students

Informed by our understanding of the importance of voting outreach throughout the academic year, as there are “no off-years” when it comes to voting, we created several longer term goals, which we will work to implement well before the 2024 presidential election. These goals include:

- Incorporating voter registration information into First Year Orientation materials
- Create state specific voter registration guides with relevant election information
- Establish additional campus partnerships that can be utilized to mobilize the student body during election years
- Identify ways that Camels Vote and the Holleran Center can help students engage with the broader community around voting and civic engagement

We will also expand our efforts beyond voting to promote greater civic engagement on campus, especially with encouragement to engage with local elected officials and community projects. We feel this broader focus on campus wide civic engagement is especially important to create an inclusive space on campus for students who may not be able to, or eligible to, register to vote.

Strategies

To achieve the goals set forth above, we have created the following strategies. Please note that due to limited staff capacity for this year, we did not use every strategy listed. We are keeping these strategies listed as we plan to use them as we move forward.

Voter Registration

- Incorporate voter registration into the process for student government elections
- Work with Residential Life to incorporate voter engagement into at least one residence hall/dorm meeting or event each semester (e.g., Plant House - community engagement dorm)
- Work with IT Service staff to incorporate voter registration into online platforms used frequently on campus (e.g., within the campus student portal)
- Work with Mail Services on campus to include registration information with package and mail notifications
- Have the Student Government Association send out a campus-wide email about the importance of voting including voter registration and education resources
- Incorporate voter registration into unrelated, yet popular social events including athletic events, Fall weekend, and the club fair

- Hold registration tabling events throughout the semester in highly trafficked areas of campus
- Post signs with voter registration information prominently around campus
- Post voter registration information consistently on the Camels Vote (Instagram - @camelsvote), Holleran Center, and other social media platforms around campus
- Provide registration information to professors, who can then share the information with their individual classes and provide support
- Hold registration events specifically for different groups on campus (clubs, athletics, etc.)

Voter Registration at Pre-Orientation and Orientation

- All new students receive a Voter Registration form in their orientation packet
- Include voting resources and civic engagement opportunities in the New Student Guide: *Over the Hump*
- Have Student Government Association send out a blurb about voting and civic engagement opportunities in an email to incoming first-year and transfer students during the summer
- Have student volunteers attend open Orientation and Pre-Orientation events with Camels Vote t-shirts and tablets. They will conduct informal voter registrations and spread the word to recruit volunteers for Camels Vote's 2022 efforts
- Co-sponsor Orientation activity and hand out Camels Vote give-aways while registering students to vote
- Train Student Advisors (who assist and support First Year Students in their First Year Seminars (FYS)) about the basic voting information and voter registration information

National Voter Registration Week

- Continue expansion of National Voter Registration Day to National Voter Registration Week
- Host registration tables at high traffic locations on campus throughout the week (e.g. library and student center)
- Host Get out the Vote activities in residential halls (e.g. [Storm the Dorm](#))
- Engage in large social media pushes towards registering to vote and plan College and Camels Vote *Instagram* takeovers
- Coordinate with other campus social media accounts, such as the official Connecticut College account and the Library account, to promote National Voter Registration Day
- Engage the wider college community by speaking with a representative from the local newspaper
- Voter registration forms, absentee ballot applications, and other educational voting materials will be made available through the Holleran Center
- Ask students to pledge to vote and follow up on the pledges
 - One pledge card will be created for all students to indicate whether they are registered to vote, politically engaged, asking 3 friends to vote, etc.
 - Follow-ups will include election reminders, information on polling locations, and reminders about transportation to the polls

- Target coaches & student-athletes - making it a friendly competition

Voter Education

- Coordinate with faculty experts (Prof. MaryAnne Borrelli & Prof. Mara Suttman-Lea) and interested student organizations and clubs to host guest speakers and events
- Bring legislation and campus issues together for educational forums or panels
 - Example: Work with the Pathway in Public Health and Career to invite health policy experts, legislators, public health faculty, and alumni working in the field to discuss the ramifications of local and national changes to health care policies
- More fully exploit the educational potential of co-curricular activities
 - Highlight and promote what students learn by volunteering and through political activity
- Voter Education Materials
 - Work with John Nugent, Director, Institutional Research and Planning to identify the 5 states from which the most students draw from
 - Distribute nonpartisan documents from national and local organizations as well as Connecticut College and Connecticut specific-materials
 - Information will include:
 - How to register to vote absentee
 - Where to find polling locations
 - Sample ballots for the 5 states from which the most students draw
 - Information on swing states
 - Education video tutorials (e.g., how to vote by mail)
 - How to be civically engaged at Connecticut College and the local community
 - Educational materials will be made available online through Camels Vote's voter education webpage & social media channels as well as campus platforms
- [Camels Vote's Webpage](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - Camels Vote created and maintain a website and popular Instagram account that includes access to information and resources related to voter registration, ballot casting, promotion of other engagement opportunities, etc
 - Beginning in September and running through to Election Day, Camels Vote will send out a trivia question on *Instagram* every few days to make it fun while keeping the students engaged and thinking about the Election
- Mock Polling Station on campus
 - Borrow or purchase voting machines from Registrars of Voters and create sample ballots to set up opportunities for our students to learn and become comfortable with the voting process
- Voter Registration Office Hours
 - Host registration office hours to assist students with any questions relating to voting
 - Volunteers are trained by Camels Vote & League of Women Voters

Voter Participation/Get Out the Vote

- The week before Election Day:
 - Work with local election clerks to recruit students to be poll workers on Election Day
 - Post upcoming election and poll information on available platforms throughout the college and on social media
 - Include an Election Day countdown on social media
 - Send an email detailing how students can receive rides to the polls to vote
 - Coordinate an all school email from the College President to encourage students to vote on Election Day
 - Organize a campus-wide pledge to vote campaign
 - Visit with or email faculty about encouraging students to vote after each of their classes the week leading up to Election Day and provide election related materials
 - Do a student takeover of the college's *Instagram* account with voting content
 - *Instagram* campaign on Camels Vote's account
- **Election Day:**
 - Host registration and Get Out the Vote tables at high traffic locations on campus (e.g. library and student center) to encourage voting participation
 - The Holleran Center will offer a shuttle bus system to the local polling location for students who are registered to vote in Connecticut
 - Send email and post to the Camels Vote's *Instagram* on election day encouraging students to vote and detailing how they can receive rides to the polls to vote
 - Do a student takeover of the college's *Instagram* account on Election Day
 - Offer "I Voted" stickers for students who submit 'voting selfies' at the mailroom (absentee) or polling place
 - Virtual "I Vote" stickers will be made available for students to post on their social media accounts

Institutionalization

- Continue to promote and integrate education for civic engagement across the curriculum
 - Involve all disciplines, not only the social sciences—to reach more students and also engage the insights and models of more fields of study
 - Offer an example syllabus statement for faculty members and share civic engagement opportunities and project examples
 - Provide information that professors can share at the beginning of class to help students register to vote, request an absentee ballot, take the ALL IN Voter Pledge, etc.
- Brainstorm funding sources for ideas not already built into campus budgets
- Continue to participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to learn more about our student registration and voting rates
- Incorporate civic learning and engagement activities into First-Year Experience courses

- Partner with the Walter Commons and Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts (CISLA) to promote and host a discussion where international students to share their political experiences from their own countries with peers
- Continue to participate in the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) Votes initiative
 - Share and learn about best practices used by peer institutions similar to Connecticut College through participation in conference calls, webinars, and attendance at the NESCAC Votes Summit
- Continue to participate in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge and the Coaches Pledge
- Explore the possibility of applying to become a Voter Friendly Campus
- Harness the capacity of our campus partners & develop new partnerships:
 - Encourage leaders of various departments, clubs, teams, and affinity groups to personally urge their members to register and vote.
 - Create relationships with other faculty, staff, and student organizations on campus, such as athletics, clubs, and other student-led projects

Tentative Schedule of Events:

Camels Vote will be a part of [Campus Takeover](#) again this year and partner with the major [civic holidays](#) in addition to other campus and community activities and events:

- May through August – New Student Orientation Voter Registration
- September – Email about Voter Registration, Events, and Resources
- September 19-23 National Voter Registration Week
 - September 20 - National Voter Registration Day
- October 3-7 - National Voter Education Week
- October 19 - Department of Government and Camels Vote Collaborative Event
- October 21 - Voter Registration Table
- October 25 - Voter Information Table
- November 1 - Voter Information Table
- November 7 - Election Hero Day
- November 8 - Election Day

Reporting

This plan will be shared with all members of the voting coalition and incorporated into reports to the upper administration. Our NSLVE data/campus reports are also made available on the Camels Vote's website (camelsvote.org). We will also share updates and information through Camels Vote and SGA social media channels and official College news outlets as appropriate. The Camels Vote website is visible to the general public so our local community can also have access to this information.

Follow Up & Evaluation

The evaluation will be based on readily available NSVLE data from previous election cycles. Additionally, the team will meet throughout the year to review turnout numbers and assess the success of individual events and overall efforts.

Some of our assessment measures will include the following:

- # of students eligible to vote
- # of students registered to vote
- # of students pledged to vote
- # of coaches pledged to vote
- # of hours of tabling (remote through virtual office hours & in person)
- # of students, staff, and faculty registered to vote
- # of events/programs
- # of people at events
- # of volunteers
- # of partners throughout the college & local community
- # of students who used the transportation system to the polls
- # of views and activity on websites, social media platforms, and email communications

We hope to gain some information about outcomes related to our goals (e.g., did they register, did they vote in CT and why, etc.) and overall impression of our efforts (e.g., what events did students find successful, what and how information reached them, etc.) through a survey administered shortly after election day. This survey will be completely voluntary and anonymous. The link to the survey will be shared on the Camels Voter's social media channels. Results will be shared with the voting coalition and used to help inform future efforts and iterations of our ALL IN plan.

Recognition

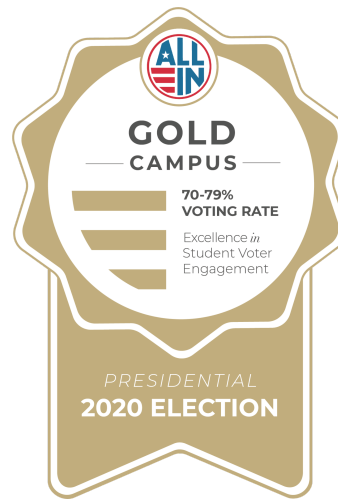
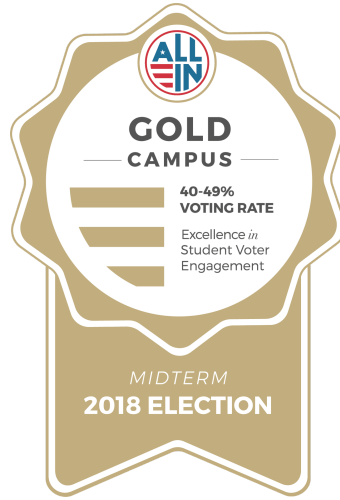
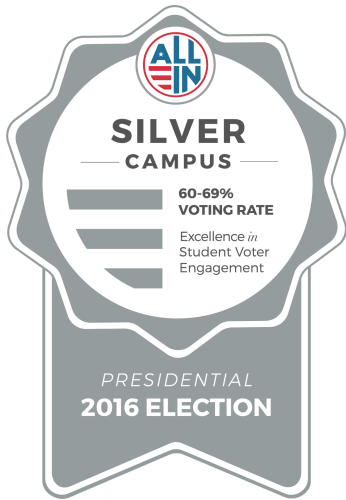
From Media:

- Received over 72,000 Likes on a viral Camels Vote's [Instagram post](#) on why the youth vote matters.
- Featured on Lydia Calitri's "[The Youth Vote](#)" Podcast.
- Featured in an article in the [CT Examiner](#).
- Featured in the local newspaper, [The Day](#).
- Featured in an [article](#) in the local newspaper about National Voter Registration Day

From the *All In Campus Democracy Challenge*:

- Recognized with a Silver Seal for Excellence in Student Voter Engagement for achieving a student voting rate between 60-69% in the 2016 presidential election.
- Recognized with a Gold Seal for Excellence in Student Voter Engagement for achieving a student voting rate between 40-49% in the 2018 midterm election.

- Recognized with a Gold Seal for Excellence in Student Voter Engagement for achieving a student voting rate between 70-79% in the 2020 presidential election.
- Achieved a first place campus ranking in the All In Campus Pledge-to-Vote Challenge for the highest percent of the student body pledged to vote with over 28% of our students pledged to vote.
- Received a Presidential Commitment Seal for signing on to strive towards full student voter participation in the 2020 presidential election and beyond.



ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge @allintovote · Nov 6

Congratulations to @ConnCollege for winning the @allintovote challenge for the highest % of the student body pledged to vote with over 28% of their students pledged to vote. #allintovote #StudentVote

