



Cornell College Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2022-2023 Academic Year

This plan was created using the Votes & Ballots Action Planning Form. We highly recommend editing and expanding upon this draft before submitting for review.

Throughout this document, we mention the Strengthening American Democracy Guide as a resource for your review. We encourage you to turn to that resource for guidance and support as you complete your action plan!

I. Executive Summary

This action plan was developed by Coady Sierra, Civic Engagement Coordinator to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Cornell College. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2022-2023 Academic Year, on and around our campus in Mount Vernon, Iowa.

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

- Undergraduate Students
- Faculty
- Civic/Political/Community Engagement Center

The mission of our initiative is:

- We are committed to connecting Cornellians with one another, the community, and to a better understanding of themselves and others through civic engagement and service learning opportunities.

This action plan is for voter engagement on our campus, and to register and help as many students vote in the general election November.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Executive Summary* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

II. Leadership

Coady Sierra, Civic Engagement Coordinator will be overseeing our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- Luke Baldwin, work study student. He is involved because he is majoring in Politics and is interested in United States politics. Megan Goldberg, Assistant Professor of American Politics. Megan is involved for her research, and promotion of her department. I would love to have more students involved in the planning of events, and to help with getting voter turnout high.

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership,
Representation from different perspectives and areas of expertise

Our group plans to meet 2 times a week at Civic Engagement Office when participants are available

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Leadership Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

III. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrates commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. As stated in our mission statement, Mission Cornell College offers an innovative and rigorous learning community where faculty and staff collaborate with students to develop the intellectual curiosity, creativity, and moral courage necessary for a lifetime of learning and engaged citizenship. We also see this same commitment reflected in our institution's values. They state, "Core Values A liberal education that celebrates discovery and embraces the integration and application of knowledge Intellectual, moral and personal growth Civic and social responsibility The dignity and worth of each individual in a diverse community"

On campus, we've seen:

- Voter education resources
- On campus polling place
- Voter registration tables
-
- Signage promoting Election Day
-

On campus, we've experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
- Political speakers
- Walks / rides to polls
- Town halls
- Registering to vote
- Civic Holiday events (such as National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day)
-

We can point to the above institutional commitments to support our work.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your Commitment Section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

IV. Landscape

We do not have access to comprehensive demographic information about our student body at this time.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Landscape Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

V. Goals

Before setting our civic learning and democratic engagement goals on campus, we took the following information into consideration.

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

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
- The voter engagement work on our campus is very siloed within one office.
- We don't have sustainable or consistent funding.
-
-
-

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

-
-
-
-
-

With that said, we know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:

- Our institution's mission statement, values, and strategic plan mention civic learning and democratic engagement.
- We have someone whose job responsibility is to foster civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- We have a coalition of people who are positioned to implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- We have processes in place for registering large percentages of our students.
- We have ways in which we communicate voting information to our students.
- We use the resources readily available to develop and implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
-
-
- Voter engagement efforts on campus are nonpartisan.

- We are able to engage student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.
- We have a working relationship with our local election office.
-
-

With this in mind, we have set the three goals that we would like to achieve over the next academic year:

Over the next year I would like to have majority of registered voters on campus to vote, either early or on election day. I would also like to promote voter engagement after the election. I would like to have politicians on campus to speak after the election.

We have also set three goals that we would like to achieve over the next five years:

Over the next five years I would like to see more cohesive and structured plans for voter registration on campus. I would like to develop better funding our office. I would also like to have more faculty involvement.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Goals Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

VI. Strategy

Below, we have outlined a strategy describing how we will bring this vision to life in the coming months and years.

These are tactics that we **are already doing** in the **short term** (within the next year):

- We are promoting voting throughout campus with poster, social media posts, and promotional items (i.e. stickers, and t-shirts).

These are tactics that we **plan to do** in the **short term**:

- We have set up a satellite voting day location on campus.

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **short term**:

- We will be having a state senate townhall/debate on campus.

These are tactics that we **are already doing** for the **long term** (beyond the next year):

- Legislation education on campus.

These are tactics that we **want to do** in the **long term**:

- Starting up the political parties student organizations.

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **long term**:

- Inviting candidates, and politicians to campus.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Strategy Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

VII. National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)

We are not currently enrolled in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE).

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your NSLVE section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

VIII. Reporting & Evaluation

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

- Email to members of our campus coalition
- Email to campus administration
-
-

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

-
-
-

We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Sending a post-election survey to students
- Sending a post-election survey to faculty
-
-
-

We plan to evaluate our success by:

-
- Seeking out feedback throughout the action planning process from people outside of our action planning team
- Revisiting our goals, identifying goals achieved and not achieved, and adjusting our short and long-term goals accordingly
-

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Reporting & Evaluation Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.