



Dalton State College Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2023-2024

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

I. Executive Summary

This action plan was developed by Kaycee Painter, Roadrunner Campus Plan to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Dalton State College. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2023-2024, on and around our campus in Dalton, Georgia.

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

- Undergraduate Students

The mission of our initiative is:

The Dalton State Democracy Fellows promote engaged citizenship through democratic participation and social responsibility by creating awareness campaigns, educational programming, and professional development that provide fellow Roadrunners with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to make a difference in their communities. This group will plan and execute projects, events, and initiatives to meet all aspects of the Campus Plan for Democratic Engagement.

Responsibilities of this group include:

- • Overseeing, implementing, and assessing the campus engagement plan
- • Constitution Week Programs
- • Voter Registration, Education, and Engagement
- • Political Education Events

II. Leadership

Heather Williams | Assistant Director for Leadership and Civic Engagement will be overseeing our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- This initiative's leadership includes student leaders such as Dalton State Democracy Fellows as well as the Student Life organization Students Advocating for Volunteer Efforts (SAVE).

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership

Our group plans to meet twice monthly at 4:00 PM on Thursdays

In the event that our leadership leaves campus or is no longer involved in this work, we have a succession plan in place.

III. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrates commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement.

On campus, we've seen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs or student organizations
- On campus polling place
- Voter registration tables
- Protests / rallies / walkouts

On campus, we've experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
- Registering to vote

The emphasis on civic learning and democratic engagement could be increased.

IV. Landscape

The following tables provide a brief overview of the landscape of our campus. This information is based on data collected from 2021 when our total student enrollment was 3,839.

Enrollment Data:

Undergraduate	Graduate	Full Time	Part Time
100.00%	0.00%	40.40%	59.60%

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents	Commuter
unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown

Gender Demographics:

Men	Women	Non-Binary	Transgender
38.10%	61.90%	Unknown	Unknown

Age:

>18	18-21	22-24	25-29	30-39	40+
8.20%	56.40%	20.46%	.09%	.05%	.03%

Racial Demographics:

Asian	American Indian / Alaska Native	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	2 or More Races
1.92%	0.77%	3.67%	32.40%	0.17%	57.20%	0.89%

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:

- Our institution's mission statement, values, and strategic plan do not mention civic learning and democratic engagement.
- We don't have processes in place for registering large percentages of our students.
- We have trouble engaging student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.

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

- Being a commuter heavy campus, there are students from several voting districts and a fair number of students from out of state.

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

- Having an official Student Life group Dedicated to Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement.

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

- Increase voter registration of STEM majors on campus, specifically math (voting rate of 59%) and engineering (voting rate of 56%) .
- Host at least one hot topics event every month.
- Reach at least 100 students with our events (measurable by student ID#).

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

- Register 75% of incoming students to vote during orientation.

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):

- Host Congress on Campus to educate students on how congress works and give students an option to learn directly from conversations with congresspeople.
- Host a constitution week on-campus events including constitution night trivia and a mass hot topics event.

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

- Host Weekly Hot Topics events connected to current legislation in the State or Country. This will aim to foster a discussion of political topics among students, educate students on current or existing legislation, and aim to increase the overall political interest on campus.

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

- Host a Constitution Carnival and guest speakers as an interactive part of our constitution week.

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

- Host a campus wide voter registration each semester.

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

- Host an event each spring dedicated to education about primaries. This will ensure students have an option to learn about primaries each semester.
- Utilize a Campus voter registration software

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

- Host Congress on Campus each year to educate students on how congress works and give students an option to learn directly from conversations with congresspeople.
- Develop A voter registration system as a part of our orientation

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

Our campus has access to our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) data for 2020. In 2020 our registration rate was 87.7. In comparison to the data from four years prior in our NSLVE report, this rate increased.

In 2020, our voting rate was 65.3 and our voting rate among registered students was 74.5. During this year, our voting rate was about the same as the national average.

VIII. Reporting & Evaluation

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

- Email to Campus Vote Project
- Email to campus administration

We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Regrouping with campus coalition to debrief and reflect
- Integrate feedback collection into individual campus efforts

We plan to evaluate our success by:

- Reviewing our NSLVE data and looking for improvements year over year
- Seek out feedback throughout the action planning process from people outside of our action planning team.
- Revisiting our goals, identify goals achieved and not achieved, and adjusting our short and long-term goals accordingly.