



Davidson College
2024 Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement
Action Plan



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I. Executive Summary

Davidson College actively encourages engagement in democracy by providing to students, faculty and staff resources and programs for voting, civic action and issue awareness. In partnership with local and national organizations, the college offers curricular and cocurricular initiatives that facilitate mutual respect and difficult conversations and that prepare students to become effective, ethical leaders and citizens who help advance the public good.

This Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement Action Plan, and the people operationalizing it, seek to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education and turnout in the 2024 election. Goals for this action plan were developed during the 2023-24 academic year. The goals of Davidson College for the 2024 election cycle are (1) to maintain the 2020 registration rate of 98% among voting-eligible students; (2) to increase the voting rate of registered students by five percentage points from 88.5% to 93.5%; and (3) to develop a programming and publicity strategy that raises awareness of centralized resources for democratic engagement and promotes various forms of civic participation, including but not limited to voting. This plan will guide voter education and engagement throughout the 2024 election cycle.

II. Leadership / Partners

This plan is a result of the efforts of various student organizations, campus partners, and external partners. Given our existing engagement infrastructure and the reality that Davidson has a significant number of “Engaging in Democracy” efforts already in progress, we chose to capitalize on the opportunity to elevate and unify existing campus action efforts in our plan. We convened with leaders of student political organizations in the spring of 2024, met with faculty to learn about their desired resources for civic learning and engagement within their courses in the fall of 2023 and spring of 2024, and met with College Communications colleagues to cross promote resources and opportunities and discuss best practices for engaging in democracy. While each part of this plan is the result of convening with campus partners, the Associate Dean of Students and Director for the Center for Civic Engagement, and the Experiential Learning Program Coordinator are the campus contacts for compiling the overall plan and tracking institutional progress.

The offices and organizations listed as “campus partners” are those who offer programming or resources as part of Davidson’s centralized “Engaging in Democracy” efforts and/or were part of the fall ’23 and spring ’24 meetings to discuss needed resources and goals related to democratic

engagement. The external partners are organizations with which Davidson is affiliated. They are committed to the civic purposes of higher education and provide resources and support at every level of our institution.

Campus Partners

- Center for Civic Engagement
- Center for Political Engagement; a student organization that coordinates the Davidson Votes Initiative
- Center for Student Health and Well-being
- Chaplains' Office
- College Communications
- Dean of Students Office
- Leaders of the various political or civic action oriented student organizations (e.g., Civic Engagement Council, Davidson Democrats, Davidson Republicans, Davidson Libertarians, Young America's for Freedom)
- Deliberative Citizenship Initiative
- Student Activities Office
- The E.H. Little Library
- The President's Office
- The Van/Every Smith Galleries

External Partners & Resources

- ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
- Charlotte is Creative
- College Presidents for Civic Preparedness
- Constructive Dialogue Institute
- EAB
- National Study of Learning, Voting & Engagement
- NC Board of Elections
- NC Campus Engagement
- TurboVote through our Anthology Engage platform

III. Institutional Commitment

Immersed in the vibrant Charlotte-metro region, Davidson College is a highly selective, top-ranked liberal arts college that strives to create an environment where students are

anchored by relationships and experiences — connections that cultivate curiosity, empathy, and intellectual bravery. Davidson’s strong value for community engagement is enacted across all aspects of campus.

The primary purpose of Davidson College is to assist students in developing humane instincts and disciplined and creative minds for lives of leadership and service. Davidson College actively encourages engagement in democracy by providing to students, faculty and staff resources and programs for voting, civic action and issue awareness. In partnership with local and national organizations, the college offers curricular and cocurricular initiatives that facilitate mutual respect and difficult conversations and that prepare students to become effective, ethical leaders and citizens who help advance the public good.

Davidson’s Senior Leadership is committed to cultivating a culture of civic engagement across campus. In 2023-24, President Doug Hicks announced a campus-wide strategic planning effort co-led by Vice President and Dean of the Faculty, Shelley Rigger, and Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students, Byron McCrae. A key priority of the plan is to deepen our strong “curricular and cocurricular work in the areas of ethical leadership and public good. We will establish an Institute for Public Good, which will help our students and employees become effective, ethical leaders and citizens by creating initiatives to support this goal, with emphasis on ethics and integrity, sustainability, social capital, and racial education and reconciliation.” Additionally, President Hicks joined College Presidents for Civic Preparedness through the Institute for Citizens and Scholars; an organization dedicated to deepening higher education’s civic commitments. Furthermore, Davidson continues its already-strong relationships with NC Campus Engagement and the national Bonner Scholars network.

The Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) at Davidson College advances the institution’s commitment to leadership, learning, and civic engagement by integrating academic study, co-curricular activities, and community involvement. These efforts focus on building meaningful relationships within the local communities of Davidson and Charlotte, as well as fostering connections with national and international partners dedicated to civic responsibility. The CCE collaborates with students, faculty, and community members to cultivate a culture of active citizenship, ethical leadership, and shared learning. By aligning academic inquiry with practical experience, the CCE empowers students to address complex social issues and contribute to the public good.

While the Center for Civic Engagement is the centralized hub for resources and support, civic engagement is enacted across campus. The campus partners represented in section III of this report work collaboratively to provide programming, resources and communication for voting, advocacy, and issue awareness. For example, Davidson Votes is a student-led voting coalition,

coordinated by the Center for Political Engagement (student group), that registers students to vote, educates students about candidates and policy, and turns students out to vote by coordinating a number of events and resources leading up to and during elections.

While this is Davidson's first ALL-IN Action Plan, the college has been consistently committed to empowering our students, faculty, and staff to engage in the democratic process. In 2016, the college developed a civic action plan following our signing of Campus Compacts 30th Anniversary Action Statement.

IV. Landscape

Davidson College, a private liberal arts institution in Davidson, North Carolina, is home to 1,983 students¹. Institutional data collected during the 2023-24 academic year showed 27.9% of students were domestic students of color, 61.1% of students were white, and 9.7% of students were international, representing 57 countries. Of the 1,699 domestic students at Davidson, 27.9% of students were from the Southeast, and 21.9% were from North Carolina.

Davidson College students are highly engaged in voter registration and elections. In the 2020 Election Cycle, 98% of voting-eligible students at Davidson College registered to vote and 88.5% of registered students voted (NSLVE Report, 2020). Davidson College currently conducts civic and democratic engagement through the CCE in partnership with various student organizations and faculty on campus. The goal of this action plan is to illustrate how the CCE and involved partners intend to expand upon our 2020 and 2022 election cycle successes and continue to prioritize voter education and engagement for the 2024 cycle. The vision for the Action Plan is captured in Davidson College's primary purpose: "to assist students in developing humane instincts and disciplined and creative minds for lives of leadership and service." In collaboration with campus and external partners, Davidson College hopes to maintain strong voter registration and voting rates, as well as increase democratic education and engagement among Davidson students.

Davidson College has authorized the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) and receives campus voting data. The following is a snapshot of Davidson College's student voting and registration rates between 2014 and 2022 provided by the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE).

¹ Data in this section is based on 2023-24 [FactFile](#) data.

	Registration Rate	Voting Rate of Registered Students	Voting Rate of All Eligible Students	Voting Rate of All NSLVE Institutions
2014	67.1%	19.8%	13.3%	19.1%
2016	77.3%	52.0%	40.2%	50.4%
2018	88.3%	58.2%	51.4%	39.1%
2020	98.0%	90.3%	88.5%	66%
2022	89.4%	47.9%	42.8%	30.6%

Voting in North Carolina

Davidson College regularly communicates information about voting dates, registration and acceptable voter identification in North Carolina to the student body. North Carolina will hold a general election on **November 5, 2024**. The deadline to register to vote in North Carolina is **October 11, 2024**. Additionally, North Carolina offers same-day registration during the one-stop early voting period, beginning October 17, 2024, and ending November 2, 2024. College students can register and vote in the county where they are attending college. A registered voter may only have one residence. If the college student considers his or her school address to be his or her residence, the college student may register and vote in the county where the school is located. More information about students voting in North Carolina is available in the [Registering as a College Student](#) section of the NC State Board of Elections [website](#) and on the college's website. North Carolina requires that voters show an approved photo ID when they check in to vote in person and a copy of an acceptable ID when voting by mail. Davidson College's student ID has been approved by the North Carolina State Board of Elections as an acceptable form of photo identification in North Carolina along with this list of [acceptable photo IDs for voting](#). If students are registered to vote in another state, they may request an absentee ballot and are directed to resources for more information about absentee ballot deadlines for all states.

Voter education and registration efforts are continuous but increase beginning in the academic year prior to the general election. Davidson provides a range of resources to help students participate in the democratic process, including support for voter registration, information on advocacy, issue awareness, and absentee voting for those voting from elsewhere or studying

abroad. Various offices and student groups promote voter engagement through activities such as registration drives, shuttles to the polls, and discussions on election issues. The Davidson Votes initiative, led by the Center for Political Engagement, a student organization, plays a key role in fostering campus-wide collaboration and developing strategies to keep students informed and engaged.

V. Goals

Our institution's nonpartisan democratic engagement goals for the 2024 election cycle are to:

- Match or increase 2020 rates in the following ways:
 - Maintain our 2020 registration rate of 98% among voting eligible students;
 - Increase our 2020 voting rate of registered students by five percentage points from 88.5% (2020) to 93.5%; and
 - Develop a programming and publicity strategy that builds awareness of the centralized resources for democratic engagement and the breadth of ways students can be civically engaged including but not limited to voting.

VI. Strategy

Davidson College is committed to cultivating a robust culture for democratic engagement and achieving the goals set forth in this action plan through a range of strategies coordinated through the Center for Civic Engagement.

Strategy #1 - Centralize “Engaging in Democracy” resources and programming that amplify our campus assets and provide clear direction towards resources.

- Develop a centralized webpage that provides resources to students, faculty and staff for voting, civic action and issue awareness.
- Amplify the already-strong efforts of the student-led Davidson Votes initiative.
- Facilitate events surrounding the theme of “Engaging in Democracy” including curricular and cocurricular initiatives that facilitate mutual respect and difficult conversations and that prepare students to become effective, ethical leaders and citizens who help advance the public good. Offer mini-grants to student organizations and other campus departments to support their efforts. (See appendix for a list of events)

Strategy #2 - Engaging in Democracy publicity/communications campaign.

- The College Communications team will develop a communications plan to showcase the college's mission driven approach to civic engagement and the promotion of civil

discourse; promote healthy exchanges on social media and elsewhere; and, increase participation in democratic process by sharing opportunities for engagement.

- The Civic Engagement team will develop marketing assets to promote the centralized webpage and programming efforts. Assets will be used on social media and on our internal co-curricular engagement platform: WildcatSync. The platform allows us to enable messaging from Turbovote so that a message appears on every individual's portal upon each login to remind them to register and vote.

Strategy #3 - Offer clear pathways to democratic engagement for new students.

- Incorporate information about the college's value for civic engagement into new student orientation programming and small group discussions. Include voter registration information in welcome packets.
- Offer voter engagement programs as part of Wildcat Welcome Week and First 45 Days programming.
- Provide a deliberative experience for all new students featuring Charlotte is Creative. Charlotte is Creative specializes in organizing experiences that meet participants where they are while seeking to inspire them. The event will spark students' curiosity and creativity, engage dispositions such as attentiveness and open-mindedness, and kindle new connections.

Strategy #4 - Convene campus partners for collaborative professional development & networking opportunities to strengthen relationships across our ecosystem for engaging in democracy.

- Students and staff from the Center for Political Engagement and the Center for Civic Engagement will attend the NC Campus Engagement College Voter Summit in September to learn and share innovative strategies and practical information to support college voter registration, voter education, and electoral participation.
- Host several professional development sessions on constructive dialogue, building community during the election, and campus flashpoints engaging the resources of the All-In Campus Engagement, Constructive Dialogue Institute, EAB, NC Campus Engagement, and National Issues Forum with colleagues from across campus.

VII. Reporting

Our action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website and will be shared with campus and external partners, and in the Center for Civic Engagement's portal in our campus engagement platform. We have shared and will continue to share NSLVE data with campus

partners, as well as making the data publicly available on the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge website. In partnership with College Communications, student organizations, and other campus partners, we plan to share updates and information through various social media channels and campus news to ensure broad exposure and transparency.

VIII. Evaluation

We will evaluate the effectiveness of our action plan by collecting data related to our stated goals. Our NSLVE data will provide us with information about our institutional voter registration rates and voting rates of registered students. Analytics from our webpage and our co-curricular engagement platform will help us understand centralized resource usage. Additionally, Davidson regularly administers the Personal & Social Responsibility Inventory that provides us with data about the perceptions of the resources that exist on campus related to 5 dimensions in the inventory, including contributing to one's community. Finally, our Carnegie Community Engagement reclassification will provide us with an additional opportunity for self study on aspects of our mission, identity and commitments related to community engagement.

Appendix - Fall 2024 [Engaging In Democracy](#) Programs, Events, and Resources

Davidson College actively encourages democratic engagement by providing resources and programs for voting, advocacy, and issue awareness. The following is a list of events and resources related to “Engaging in Our Democracy.” In partnership with local and national organizations, the college offers curricular and cocurricular initiatives that facilitate mutual respect and difficult conversations and that prepare students to become effective, ethical leaders and citizens who help advance the public good.

Events

Wynton Marsalis Speaks on Culture & Civic Life - September 8

1:30-3:30 p.m., Duke Family Performance Hall

Sponsored by the President's Office

Constitution Day Display - September 17

E.H. Little Library

Every Vote Counts: It is a Serious Matter - September 19

7:00-8:00 p.m., The Black Student Coalition House

Sponsored by the Black Student Coalition, Sigma Psi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the Center for Political Engagement, and Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity, Inc.

“You Might Be Right” Live Podcast- September 24

7:00 p.m., Duke Family Performance Hall

Sponsored by the President’s Office

A Votar: A Latino Voter Engagement Session - September 26

7:00-8:00 p.m., Spencer-Weinstein Center

Sponsored by Las Hermanas of the Alpha Gamma chapter of Latinas Promoviendo Comunidad/Lambda Pi Chi Sorority, Inc.

How to Spot Misinformation with David Boraks - September 26

6:30-7:30 p.m., Library Davidsoniana Room

Sponsored by the EH Little Library

We Need To Talk: Repairing Our Social Fabric One Creative Conversation At a Time with

Philippa Pham Hughes - September 30

5:30 p.m., Lilly Family Gallery

Elements of a Flourishing Community - Conversations w/Philippa Pham Hughes - October 1
Various times and locations throughout the day

Wildcat Kindle: A Deliberative Experience with Charlotte is Creative - October 15
5:30 p.m., C. Shaw Smith 900 Room
Sponsored by the Dean of Students Office

Debate from the Balconies of Philanthropic and Eumenean Halls - October 18
5:00-7:00 p.m.
Sponsored by the Center for Political Engagement, the College Democrats and the College Republicans

Deliberative Forum on Income and Wealth Disparities - October 29
7:00-9:00 p.m., Lilly Family Gallery
Sponsored by the Deliberative Citizenship Initiative

Davidson Votes

Davidson Votes is a student-led voting coalition, coordinated by the Center for Political Engagement (student group), that registers students to vote, educates students about candidates and policy, and turns students out to vote by coordinating a number of events and resources leading up to and during the election.

- **Voter Registration Tabling**
 - August 27, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
 - September 5, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Vail Commons
 - September 10,- 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Union Stadium Entrance
 - September 12, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Union Stadium Entrance
 - September 17, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Union Stadium Entrance
 - September 25, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Union Stadium Entrance
 - October 1, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Union Stadium Entrance
 - October 2, 12 p.m.-3 p.m., Union Stadium Entrance
 - October 3, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Union Stadium Entrance
- **Presidential Debate Watch Party - September 10**
9 - 11 p.m., Spencer Weinstein Center
- **National Voter Registration Day Tabling + Event - September 17**
5-6 p.m., Chambers Building Room 1003

- **NCAAT Voter Registration Event** - September 18
12-3 p.m., Union Stadium Entrance
Sponsored by Pan-Asian Student Association and Center for Political Engagement
- **Pre-VP Debate & Voter Registration** - October 1
5-7 p.m., Union Outdoor Amphitheatre
Sponsored by Center for Political Engagement & Davidson Dems
- **2024 Vice Presidential Debate Watch Party** - October 1
9-11 p.m., Hance Auditorium
- **National Voter Education Week Tabling** - October 7 - 11
 - October 7, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Wall Atrium
 - October 8, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Union Stadium Entrance
 - October 9, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Wall Atrium
- **CPE x The TEAM Athlete Voter Registration Drive** - October 8, 8-10 p.m., Alvarez College Union Room 209
- **Vote Early Day Tabling** - October 29
- **Early Voting Shuttles to the Polls** - Specific days from October 17 - 31
- **Democracy Day Event** - November 1
The Old Tennis Court Lawn
- **'Twas the Night Before the 2024 Election** - November 4
8-9 p.m., C. Shaw Smith 900 Room
- **Election Day Shuttles to the Polls** - November 5
10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Election Night Livestream w/food + drink** - November 5
C. Shaw Smith 900 Room & Morcott Room
Co-sponsored by CPE and Union Board

Resources

See the [Center for Civic Engagement Engaging in Democracy](#) webpage for resources on [Voter engagement](#) , [Advocacy](#), and [Issue Awareness & Education](#)

Self Care & Support

Holding Space for the Election - November 4 - 7

2-4 p.m., The Oasis

Sponsored by the Chaplains' Office

“Smores and Scores”: **Election Night Campfire** - November 5

7 p.m.-12 a.m., the Union Amphitheatre

Sponsored by the Center for Student Health and Well-Being