

# Denison University Voter Engagement Initiative

## Fall 2024 Action Plan



*Developed by the DU Votes Leadership Team  
- and -  
The Alford Community Leadership and Involvement Center*

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## **Executive Summary**

This plan, developed in part with feedback from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, outlines civic engagement initiatives regarding the 2024 election cycle for Denison University's campus. Denison's campus saw a tremendously active 2020 election cycle, with 99.6% of voting-eligible students who were registered to vote and 82.9% of registered students voted (NSLVE Report, 2020). Denison University currently conducts civic learning and democratic engagement work through the Alford Community Leadership and Involvement Center (CLIC), with work driven by the non-partisan student run organization, DU Votes. DU Votes has been present on campus since the 2018 election cycle, with the primary mission of promoting civic and election education for students while making the voting process as easy as possible. This plan was developed by students and staff working within DU Votes and CLIC, incorporating feedback from various other campus stakeholders. The goal of this plan is to demonstrate how DU Votes and CLIC intend to expand upon our 2022 election cycle successes and continue to strive for record voter engagement and education during the 2024 election cycle. This work is completed primarily through collaboration with Denison University offices, departments, staff, and faculty, athletic teams, Fraternity and Sorority Life, campus organizations, and external community-based organizations. DU Votes partners with Campus Compact (Newman on-campus fellowship), Campus Vote Project, the ALL-IN Campus Democracy Challenge, and the local county Board of Elections, League of Women Voters, NAACP, the Board of Developmental Disabilities. We hope to maintain strong voter registration rates and strengthen campus and community partnerships to increase voter education efforts, and increase voting rates among Denison students. We will achieve this by increasing the number of DU Votes ambassadors and voting committee members across Denison's campus. This plan will guide voter engagement throughout the 2024 election cycle.

## **Leadership**

The Denison Voter Engagement Initiative is executed in large part by the DU Votes student leaders. These students will be responsible for the planning and on-the-ground efforts surrounding voter registration and civic engagement. They will be responsible for collaborating with other campus organizations, Denison offices/departments, staff, and faculty and other stakeholders.

DU Votes functions as a campus organization, advised by professional staff within the Alford Community Leadership and Involvement Center (CLIC), which oversees Denison University's voter registration and civic engagement efforts. CLIC's mission is dedicated to, "...empowering Denison students through involvement and engagement experiences, with a focus on meaningful

*connections and sense of belonging within the Denison community. CLIC aligns values, passions, and interests, preparing students for a lifetime commitment to leadership and service both on and beyond the Hill.”*

Student representatives as listed below will work with CLIC in receiving resources, materials, funds, and other items needed to implement the 2024 Voter Engagement Initiative. The Associate Director and the Program Coordinator for CLIC will work closest with DU Votes in the execution of this plan.

Members listed below that are not representatives of DU Votes or CLIC will serve as either members of a Fall 2024 Voting Committee or as offices/department contacts that have committed to helping facilitate and coordinate the Voter Engagement Initiative. This Committee will meet at least monthly to discuss further initiatives, planning, and best practices for the implementation of this plan.

**DU Votes Leadership Team:**

DU Votes Co-Coordinator	Jakob Lucas '24 TBD for Spring 24
DU Votes Co-Coordinator	AJ Hartwick '25
DU Votes Communications Chair	TBD
DU Votes Events Coordinator	TBD
DU Votes Data Chair	Jalal Elbatal
DU Votes FSL Liaison	Carrie Emerman
DU Votes Athletics Liaison	Caliyah Bennett, Jaylon Jackson, Drew Duffey
CLIC Director	Dana Pursley
CLIC Associate Director	Emily Vermillion
CLIC Program Coordinator	Katie McKenney

**Denison University Offices/Department Partners:**

Division of Student Life	Dr. Nicole Ausmer
Center for Belonging and Inclusion	Richard Brown

Lisska Center for Intellectual Engagement	Dr. Adam Davis
Mailroom	Amy Hannahs
Doane Library	Debra Andreadis
Residential Communities and Housing	Adam Wood; Ethan Cardy
Athletics	Nan Carney De-Bord '80
Fraternity & Sorority Life	Kyle Fowler, Ashley Metzger
University Communications	Ginny Sharkey
Faculty Representatives	Dr. Nestor Matthews, Dr. Emily Nemeth, Dr. Heather Rhodes
Campus Safety	TBD (Dave Rose)

**Denison University Campus Organization Partners:**

**Representatives..... /**

Denison Campus Governance Association (DCGA) President	Evan Snively '24
Denison Campus Governance Association (DCGA) Vice-President	Ashwin Krishnamurthy '26
Denison Campus Governance Association (DCGA Representatives)	Lily-Ann Smith '27 and Katherine Mims '25?
Black Student Union President	Taylor Trimble '24
Green Team President	Tara Sefchick '26
La Fuerza Latina President	Dailin Morfa '24
Denison Republicans President	Elijah Van Farowe '26
Denisonians for Liberty	Luke Alley '25
Democratic Socialists of America	Fletcher Williams '25
Outlook	Izzi Howard

FSL IFC Representative	TBD
FSL NPHC Representative	Tef Tewoldeberhan
FSL MGC Representative	TBD (Alex Pan or Tony Baldovinos)
FSL PHC Representative	TBD (Julia Assis Azevedo)

**Licking County Community Partners:**

League of Women Voters	Mary Tuonimen; Emily Vermillion
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)	Deveonne Gregory; Emily Vermillion
Board of Elections	Brian Mead, Bev Hansel
Board of Developmental Disabilities	Anna Jeffries
American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and RevUP	Lilian Aluri: Rev UP Campaign Manager and Civic Engagement Manage with AAPD
VoteRiders	Olivia Julien: Voter ID Assistance Deputy Director
Common Cause	Mia Lewis
Campus Compact	Stephanie Dodd

*Succession Plan*

DU Votes Leadership Team members are recruited when there is an opening due to a student graduating, studying abroad, or choosing to leave the team. The process of recruiting new DU Votes Leadership Team members involves an open application phase, followed by interviews, and the selection of new team members by a unanimous vote within the existing student leadership team. Open spots for Fall 2024 are indicated by “TBD,” all spots will be filled by August, 2024.

The DU Votes team and the CLIC office are jointly developing a master engagement plan to ensure that best practices are communicated consistently even after students graduate and/or CLIC staff leave their position. This engagement plan will include a training manual for the entire campus regarding voter registration, requesting absentee ballots, information regarding voter education, information about voting laws, information to connect students/faculty/staff to

representatives for their districts, etc... There will also be a toolkit with quick links for students that will be on the Denison DU Votes website.

### **Commitment**

Denison's mission statement is to *"...inspire and educate our students to become autonomous thinkers, discerning moral agents and active citizens of a democratic society."*

Ensuring Denison students are "...discerning moral agents and active citizens of a democratic society", as our mission statement makes evident, getting students to be civically engaged is at the heart of Denison's identity. This work goes beyond voter registration and turnout, it extends to ensuring all Denison graduates are informed civic community members who feel empowered to participate in American democracy. To this end, the CLIC office and the DU Votes organization are committed to utilizing all relevant campus resources and stakeholders to achieve full campus civic participation at the ballot box and in the community.

We have received support from campus offices, organizations, and departments in our efforts. Notably, we have collaborated with senior administrators in order to ensure that our efforts reach as broad an audience as possible.

Our University's President Adam S. Weinberg has demonstrated ongoing and consistent efforts to champion civic engagement. For both the 2020 and 2022 election cycles, President Weinberg has collaborated with DU Votes to produce video messages urging students to vote. Also, Weinberg has penned several academic articles and written a book regarding the role higher learning institutions play in fostering civic engagement. President Weinberg signed the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation in 2022. President Weinberg has also agreed to collaborate with DU Votes again to produce an updated video message about the importance of voting and civic engagement for the 2024 election cycle.

Additionally, Denison's Vice President of Student Life, Alex Miller, routinely issues emails to the entirety of the student body, faculty, and staff highlighting events pertaining to civic engagement. Prior to the most recent election, Miller sent an email reminding students of election day and advertised a "March to the Polls" event hosted by DU Votes.

The members of our campus partner teams help to weave civic engagement into the culture of Denison University. Our partnerships with the Mail Services have historically been helpful because they would provide zero dollar utility bills to students registered to vote in Ohio, and they would use this as ID. With the changes to Ohio voting laws, we still have an important partnership with mail services related to absentee ballots. Mail services work with us during elections to mark ballots as packages because students are more likely to check their campus

mailbox, receive their absentee ballot quickly, and then return their ballots to the board of elections more efficiently.

Another partnership that helps to engrain the importance of civic/voter engagement in Denison's culture is the partnership with Residential Communities and Housing. Residential Communities and Housing staff share information and helpful links about how to register to vote and contact information for our DU Votes team in their housing letter that goes out in July, so that students are already registered and/or are prepared to register when they get to campus. They also have all the appropriate contact information for current DU Votes and administrative staff to reach out to with questions. Another key factor of the partnership with ResComm is that they compiled a list of all the physical dorm addresses on Denison's campus for DU Votes to utilize for voter registration efforts, because students often do not know their physical dorm address. These steps help to illustrate that voter engagement is an expectation as soon as students arrive on campus.

Faculty have been helpful in exhibiting the importance of voter engagement across Denison's culture because they allow DU Votes to come into their classrooms and register voters and share voter education. DU Votes works to meet students where they are. DU Votes has created information for faculty to share on projectors during the beginning of semesters and during voter registration, prior to elections, in their classes with QR codes on how they can get involved and register to vote. [DU Votes November Election Information for Students, Faculty, and Staff](#) This will be updated every year with relevant election details.

We have had a great partnership with Denison University Communications that creates space on the Denison webpage for elections, and quickly worked with the DU Votes team to update the website for all Ohio voting law changes. [Denison Voter Registration Website](#) Making sure the Denison Website is up to date with factual information helps to increase voter engagement and the civically engaged culture of Denison as a whole.

DU Votes has partnered with the Director of Campus Safety regarding protecting the rights of students to vote with their campus address. Some individuals came to campus and spread disinformation about students' right to vote in Licking County, put mailers in student mailboxes, and posted flyers with disinformation in the Student Union. Some students questioned whether they could vote in Licking County because of these community members' actions. The Director of Campus Safety immediately worked with the CLIC Associate Director to investigate this issue, found the person responsible, and addressed the issue within three days time. The Director of Campus Safety shared that Denison students are allowed to vote where they live, and they live on Denison's campus for 9 months out of the year. Campus safety showed dedication to support student's voting rights.



## **Our Mission**

Through passionate and consistent efforts, we will spread information on campus that showcases how civic engagement can lead to a more connected and well-informed society.

## **Our Vision**

As things stand now, our engagement with senior administrators, academic departments, student organizations, and other stakeholders are key in guaranteeing that civic engagement acts as a common thread across all aspects of the Denison experience. As a small campus, we want to ensure a highly visible and active “voter committee” that intimately connects campus resources and empowers students to access their right to vote and be active democratic citizens. This would effectively streamline our engagement with our partners and increase opportunities for different communities, student organizations, academic departments, and campus officials to engage with each other on how to best foster civic engagement. We believe Denison University can be a nation-wide model for civic participation at the ballot box and beyond.

## **Landscape**

In previous years Denison saw an increase in the number of students that chose to vote using their home address, instead of their campus address. This may have been associated with declining activity among campus partisan organizations, which tended to encourage local registration. However, we have seen an increase in students using their Denison Dorm address as their permanent residence in the 2023 election cycle. This may be related to the two citizen-led ballot initiatives that were on the ballot in November of 2023, in the State of Ohio. Nearly 80% of Denison students are out-of-state, so we are utilizing the Denison branded voter registration portal to track which students are voting out of state, this allows us to share state specific election information with those students. DU Votes and CLIC continue to monitor this trend in order to ensure every student receives adequate voting support regardless of where they choose to vote. The DU Votes leadership team continues to meet weekly to coordinate and plan for the 2024 election cycle, and ran many events throughout the 2023 elections. According to Tufts Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, 31% of people, under the age of 30, voted in 2022. That is the third highest youth midterm election turnout in the past 50 years (Tufts CIRCLE, 2023). The fact that young people are motivated to vote will inform this action plan for 2024. We also know that not all young people know specifics about voting laws and all the logistics that come with the voting process, so DU Votes will prioritize voter education efforts for the 2024 election cycle. We share more specifics on voter education efforts in the strategy section.

We have not received the NSLVE data for the 2022 election cycle, and we will be using this data to inform our goals for the 2024 action plan and comparing that data to the 2018 election cycle. Here is a description of the most recent data we have to inform our goals. The 2022 election cycle marks 10 years since Denison first joined the NSLVE study, and voter and civic engagement efforts have evolved significantly since then. Both the number of Denison students who register to vote and the number of students who turn out to the ballot box have increased drastically. In 2012, 71.9% of eligible Denison students were reported by NSLVE as registered. In 2016, this number jumped to 91%. In 2020, Denison recorded the highest registration rate among eligible voters across all four year NSLVE institutions, 99.6%. Similar jumps occurred for the voting rate of Denison students. Our campus saw a nearly 15% increase in voter turnout from 2016 to 2020, a greater jump than national averages as reported by NSLVE.

Of course, these numbers all reflect high-momentum, high-energy Presidential election cycles. We plan to capitalize on this energy and excitement from students during the 2024 Presidential election cycles to register voters, educate voters, and continue our work to institutionalize civic engagement across Denison's campus. As with many institutions, Denison tends to see dips in both registration and turnout rates in midterm and "off-year" election cycles. Although Denison still saw increased registration and turnout rates from 2014 to 2018, rates remained 5 - 10 points below Presidential cycles. While there are a myriad of factors that contribute to this problem at Denison and many other colleges and universities, the primary problem identified by campus stakeholders has been the lack of sustained civic and voter engagement activity on campus in non-Presidential election years. We believe creating an environment with sustained and institutionalized activity and programming around civic and voter engagement is crucial to meeting Denison's goals to increase civic engagement across campus and in our local community. Denison is committed to ensuring a sustained civic engagement effort in the 2024 election cycle.

In the summer of 2018, Denison's CLIC office formed a non-partisan voter engagement committee headed up by student fellows from CLIC and a student fellow with Civic Influencers. Since 2018, this committee (DU Votes) has expanded to include campus stakeholders from a variety of offices, departments, and organizations. Some of these include (but are not limited to): Residential Communities, Student Life, Fraternity and Sorority Life, Athletics, and various academic departments. Further, DU Votes has expanded its student leadership team to include an events coordinator, communications coordinator, FSL liaison, and data collection coordinator. These additions have furthered the scope of the student-run committee and allowed for a two-pronged approach tackling voter registration/turnout and education. DU Votes is working to strengthen stakeholders, ambassador programs by adding representatives in each FSL council, and having voter registration/education information with community coordinators in each residence hall across campus. DU Votes represents a unified effort to further institutionalize the civic engagement work occurring on campus and increase the availability and accessibility of

voting information and resources. The work done by CLIC, and other student organizations on campus contributed to a more visible and robust non-partisan voter initiative.

Since the 2020 election, DU Votes has continued to institutionalize voter registration, piloting programs in first-year orientation, the housing selection process (required for all students), and Denison's all-campus mailroom. This engagement allows DU Votes to mobilize students in all election cycles, including local elections in 2019 and 2021, both of which saw high engagement. Denison and DU Votes have also worked to strengthen ties between community partners like the Licking County League of Women Voters, the Licking County Board of Elections, the Licking County NAACP, the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and will be working more closely with VoteRiders in the 2024 election cycle.

Following the momentum of the 2023 election cycle, and a larger leadership team, DU Votes believes 2024 could see record voting rates for Denison's campus. Strong groundwork was laid throughout 2022 and 2023 as campus stakeholders remained informed and engaged in voter registration, turnout, and education efforts.

Most recent data on registration among Denison students (self-reported):

Are you registered to vote? Which of the following statements best captures your status?

- 13.1% I am not a US citizen
- 13.3% I am registered to vote in Granville
- 61.8% I am registered in my home state\*
- 11.6% I am not registered to vote and am a US citizen

*Spring 2022 127 Survey (Paul Djupe), n=500*

\*We estimate that this number has risen since the survey was completed in Spring 2022, likely closer between 55%-60% of eligible Denison students. Further, this data does not accurately represent that number of Denison students who are not U.S. citizens. This number is more likely between 18%-20% based on current Admissions data.

## **Goals**

### **Short-Term Goals**

- To increase our midterm Registration Rate among eligible students by five percentage points from 86.5% (2018) to 91.5%. These numbers will be adjusted relative to our 2022 rates once we receive the latest NSLVE data.

- To increase our midterm Rate of Registered Students who Voted by ten percentage points from 52% (2018) to 62%. These numbers will be adjusted relative to our 2022 rates once we receive the latest NSLVE data.
- Host monthly Civic Socials, where students can come to connect and become educated voters. This will also serve as a way for students to discuss current events on a local, state, and national level.
- Give all students a calendar of 2024 voting events and make this calendar accessible publicly online via DU Votes social media and Denison's website.
- Provide more robust election education for students choosing to vote out-of-state using their home address (~80% of Denison students are out-of-state) and disperse said materials on our social media platforms.
- Ensure that the Denison Campus Governance Association sufficiently implements a partner ambassador program with DU Votes for the 2024 election cycle, and work with representatives to increase involvement in promoting student government elections.
- Reconvene bi-weekly campus civic engagement committee meetings with representatives from DU Votes, CLIC, Residential Communities, Student Life, Student Organizations, and others in January of 2024.
- To create a voter toolkit and training manual that will be shared with ambassadors, stakeholders, and students, faculty, and staff across campus by Spring of 2024.
- Increased civic education related to local, state, and federal policies and elections with a focus on gerrymandering for the 2024 election.
- Share and promote 2024 webinars, trainings, and/or events offered by non-partisan partners such as: ALL IN, Campus Compact, League of Women Voters, NAACP, Board of Developmental Disabilities, American Association of People with Disabilities, Rev UP, ACLU Ohio, VoteRiders, Common Cause, and Ohio Voting Rights Coalition on our Campus Groups platform so that everyone on campus can receive accurate nonpartisan voter education by Spring of 2024.

### Long-Term Goals

1. Strengthen program for voter registration and civic education / community-building in first-year August Orientation and advising circles.
2. Ensure a comprehensive and adequate program for civic education and dialogue in the classroom-space through relationship-building with faculty and academic departments
3. Fostering an equitable approach to voter registration and civic engagement in conjunction with the Center for Belonging and Inclusion and campus organizations for underrepresented campus populations.
4. Build a consistent civil dialogue and discourse program in conjunction with the Lisska Center for Intellectual Engagement, the Denison Debate Society, campus partisan

organizations, and through participation in Unify America College Bowl across Denison's campus.

5. Maintain a stronger and more productive relationship with local elected officials and political community organizations, implementing various opportunities for engagement for our Ambassadors and Leadership Team members.
6. Work with campus and community stakeholders to combat the spread of misinformation surrounding students' right to vote using their campus address.
7. Develop a spreadsheet and social media slide deck with all states 2024 election calendars, in one place, for students instead of linking them to another website and utilize Campus Groups software to get more data related to student voting tracks and checklists.
8. Develop a training program for Community Advisors to conduct voter registration and advertise election calendars, and ensure that at least one Community Advisor in each residence hall partners with DU Votes in 2024.
9. Expand our Ambassador program to incentivise community-wide engagement, strengthen our partnerships, and increase our presence on campus in 2024.

### **National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)**

As we await our 2022 NSLVE data, we will be basing our action plan on the most up-to-date data set we have, the 2020 NSLVE. After the 2022 NSLVE is released, our action plan will be further updated to reflect new priorities, goals, and strategies informed by the most recent data.

### **Strategy**

*Detailed information regarding voter registration, absentee ballot request, and other voting processes beyond general engagement strategy is included in the Appendix*

There is a large increase in the number of millennial and gen-z population who are voting, and this number is only going to increase. Part of DU Votes strategy is to provide voter education through webinars, in person events, and collaborations with campus and community partners that are focused on policies and issues. DU Votes has heard from students that they value issues and policies over political parties. Since the 2022 election, DU Votes has shifted its focus to include more civic education initiatives as a route to encourage voter registration and turnout. Many of our standard voter registration and GOTV strategies remain the same, but we plan to be more intentional about engaging stakeholders and building a strong civic community on Denison's campus throughout the 2024 election cycle. Our primary focus remains peer-to-peer / relational organizing that prioritizes opportunities where registration and turnout is grounded in civic education. In addition to strengthening voter education programming, below are the three primary foundations for our campus voter engagement strategy: Stakeholder Identification, Relational Contact, and Data Collection.

### *Stakeholder Identification*

During the 2020 and 2021 elections, we found that students did not respond well to mailers, emails, or in-person contact from a volunteer they did not know. During the 2022-23 election cycles we utilized tabling two times a week that allowed students to register to vote, fill out absentee ballot request forms, and receive voter education regarding various topics. Therefore, we plan to focus our 2024 strategy on strengthening stakeholder contact and engagement. Ideally, we will extend our list of key campus leaders in Athletics, Fraternity and Sorority Life, Student Organizations, Campus Government, Faculty, and others that will be able to hold student communities accountable. We have already built relationships with the Denison Athletics Department and FSL representatives. Leading up to Fall 2024, we plan to have representatives in student government, representatives in each council and chapter of Fraternity and Sorority Life, a representative on each athletic team, Community Advisor representatives in residence halls, and various faculty and staff across campus. These stakeholders and voter committee members will be trained in voter registration, voter education related to deadlines and key election dates, and be provided with a Voting Manual and Toolkit that will be helpful in answering students' questions. We will also collaborate to develop plans for them to engage their respective campus community. It has been more successful when civic engagement is prioritized with many contacts in students' lives.

### *Relational Contact*

Following the 2023 Election cycle, DU Votes has developed goals of improving relational contacts, strengthening the existing voter committee, and creating more opportunities for campus and community collaboration for voter registration, voter education, and GOTV events. We will continue to utilize tabling and text-banking for voter registration and GOTV efforts. We have found that utilizing our ambassador base has increased the effectiveness of these tactics, so involving a wider variety of people will continue to be a priority in 2024. DU Votes found that canvassing was not super effective and produced disdain for the initiative from peers, so the team will not continue with canvassing “dorm storms.”

We will strengthen relational contacts by collaborating on voter education events. We will continue to partner with our cross cultural communities for tabling events regarding gerrymandering and voting rights for communities of color as well as registering voters. We plan to partner with Unify America and participate in their College Bowl. This will provide students, faculty, and staff, an opportunity to have dialogues across differences with people who are different from them. We plan to host monthly civic chats where the campus can come together and discuss current issues regarding politics, student government, voting rights, voting, current events, and have the opportunity to learn from each other. We will continue the partnership with Outlook for our Drag Out the Vote, voter registration event. By having representatives within all FSL councils, CA's in residence halls, DU Votes Ambassadors, faculty and staff, and student

organization representatives; we will be able to have a robust voter education and GOTV campaign for the 2024 election cycle. By strengthening relational contacts on Denison's campus we will in turn increase the level of institutional civic engagement on Denison's campus.

### *Data Collection*

DU Votes plans to utilize the Denison branded voter registration portal, created by ALL IN/Civic Nation, to obtain real time data on voter registration in all 50 states. Many of our students vote in their home state and this voter registration portal will assist with targeted voter education for key election deadlines for each state. We hope to utilize this voter registration portal so we can have accurate information, while we wait on NSLVE data. We hope to move away from paper voter registration forms so that we can have data in the portal dashboard to review for all voters on Denison's campus. During the 2023 election cycle we realized that this is not realistic because student's that want to vote in Ohio, from out of state, must use the last four digits on their social security number to register, and the portal requires you to have a valid ID to register online. Moving forward the team will use a combination of paper forms and online voter registration, and will direct our out of state students to use the VR portal.

DU Votes has previously worked with Denison's Data for Political Research Program (thereafter DPR) in order to collect data on student voter demographics and attitudes. Furthermore, DU Votes has expanded our partnership with the Director of the DPR Program, Dr. Paul Djupe, in order to craft questions which will provide more data that will be directly applicable to our civic education efforts and programming, and to ensure data is collected semesterly. This data will allow us to gauge the level willingness students exhibit for engaging with many of our short term tactics such as tabling and GOTV efforts, and it will help us identify gaps in civic education.

DU Votes plans to work with the University to implement the Pathways of Public Service and Civic Engagement Survey. This will help us to understand where students are on their civic identity development journey, and what is important to them. We will also be able to adapt our programming based on these survey results. "As students craft their college experience to be positive contributors to society, it is important that they understand there are multiple ways to create a more just and sustainable world. To meet this goal, Stanford University's Haas Center for Public Service developed a framework called the Pathways of Public Service and Civic Engagement, by which students are encouraged to think about the ways they can contribute toward the common good through six different pathways: community engaged learning and research, community organizing and activism, direct service, philanthropy, policy and governance, and social entrepreneurship and corporate social responsibility" (Campus Compact, 2023). DU Votes advisor will participate in a working group Haas Center for Civic Engagement at Stanford and Campus Compact to learn more robust ways to engage Denison students in the survey. Participation in this survey will give the DU Votes team key data and insights into overall

civic engagement and why students might not be engaging in voting. Having understanding regarding what motivates students, will strengthen future engagement.

**To make these core foundations actionable, below is information regarding our short-term tactics and long-term strategies for Fall 2024 developed in tandem with the goals listed above.**

### Short-Term Tactics

In the short term, the DU Votes will prioritize relational contact in an effort to turnout voters for the 2024 general elections. We hope to further emphasize the importance of down-ticket elections and further educate people on local governance. As a foundation, DU Votes plans to table in and around the Denison Student Union at least once a week, ideally twice. This will offer students a constant reminder of the election in a high traffic environment. Further, this table will be equipped with forms and resources to assist a student voting in any state through the entire registration and ballot request process. DU Votes will include physical forms for the state of Ohio as well as a QR code to an online portal to help facilitate voter registration in all states. Using the Denison voter registration portal will be beneficial in obtaining real time data, ensuring we can have a better picture of voter registration rates, per state, which will inform our outreach to students regarding getting out the vote. To build on this, DU Votes will complete at least two all-campus mail drops with specific voting information and work closely with campus offices and departments to communicate important deadlines and upcoming events. DU Votes is creating a one page infographic to place in students' Slayter Student Union mailboxes, share on our faculty and staff newsletter, and display on posters in residential buildings.

DU Votes will host bi-weekly or monthly civic chats that will function as voting office hours, and give students a space to discuss current events, voting rights, voter education, and civic engagement overall. More short term tactics include utilizing our DU Votes ambassadors more for tabling and voter education. This will give students across campus to connect with different people, and not just the DU Votes leadership team. When students work with people they know they are more likely to be receptive to the information.

DU Votes' Events Director will also be implementing campus text banking opportunities for DU Votes volunteers at least four times leading up to the November election, debate watch parties for Primary and General Elections, a Fall Fest voter registration event featuring games pertaining to civic education, Drag Out the Vote Voter Registration event, and GOTV events. These campaigns will focus on different aspects of the voting process, and will rely heavily on peer-to-peer contact from volunteers. Further, text banking will allow consistent and fast voting information to be transmitted to students. The Communications Coordinator will be creating social media voter education materials regarding gerrymandering and the citizen led ballot



initiative that could impact the November general election in 2024. They will also create social media slide decks with key election dates for all 50 states. This student will also send out emails about voter education and GOTV events through our campus groups software, which grants us the ability to target specific groups.

In order to have constant contact with key campus stakeholders throughout the semester, DU Votes will hold weekly leadership team meetings and monthly stakeholder meetings to review processes, progress, and new initiatives. Meeting with stakeholders and the larger voting committee will increase voter engagement across campus.

### Long-Term

DU Votes will be grounding all short term voter engagement strategies in institutionalized voter assistance programs across campus. Historically, DU Votes developed a voter registration and civic community program in August Orientation, and has continued this partnership. DU Votes continues to partner with Residential Communities and Housing to provide key voting information in the housing letters, and this continues today. DU votes have accomplished a long term goal of developing relationships with many academic departments to provide voting information to students. DU Votes is currently working on long term goals of fostering an equitable approach to voter registration and civic engagement in conjunction with the Center for Belonging and Inclusion and campus organizations for underrepresented campus populations. DU Votes will hope to do this by continuing to partner with cross-cultural communities, by developing voter registration/education information that can be added to the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-racism (IDEA) Student and Staff Certificates, and to strengthen voter education regarding voting rights for communities of color.

DU Votes hopes to build a stronger and more productive relationship with local elected officials and political community organizations, implementing various opportunities for engagement for our Ambassadors and Leadership Team members. DU Votes will work to have members attend Granville Village council meetings to connect with local elected officials, and this will also help to inform voter education for local elections. DU Votes and Advisor will work to build connections with Mayors in Licking County to create voter education regarding the importance of engaging in local elections. DU Votes envisions this being a very long-term process.

DU Votes plans to develop a training program for Community Advisors to conduct voter registration and advertise election calendars, and work to identify at least one Community Advisor in each residence hall to partner with DU Votes in 2024. This will ensure that all students have contacts all across campus that understand voting information and will ideally increase access to voting.

DU Votes will begin to make progress on all three of the long term strategies described above, during the 2024 cycle, and will work to make them permanent if they are successful.

## **Reporting**

DU Votes plans to strengthen feedback forms and surveys utilized in the past. DU Votes plans to use Denison's campus groups software surveys and forms feature to create a civic engagement survey form that can be sent to all students after every event. This form would be filled out on a voluntary basis.

Following the November election, there will be outreach to all closely-affiliated campus stakeholders and ask for feedback on our election organizing. We want to make sure that each of our stakeholders feel empowered and excited about their involvement with DU Votes. This feedback form will ensure that DU Votes is best able to engage and work with our campus stakeholders in future election cycles.

*Various collection methods listed below:*

Voter Engagement Initiative Reflection Tools:

- Pathways Survey participation with Stanford Haas Center for Civic Engagement and partnership with Campus Compact
- Work alongside the DPR Program to administer a semesterly student survey, collecting data on the effectiveness of our civic engagement programming, voter outreach efforts, and civic education materials.
- Feedback forms distributed to closely affiliated campus stakeholders

Pre-existing Reflection Tools:

- Office of Student Development Student Experience Survey – add questions on involvement and civic engagement
- CLIC senior reflections and staff reviews
- DPR Surveys with results discussed in this plan

DU Votes is coordinated with the CLIC office and the University Communications team to publicly display the Fall 2024 Action Plan, alongside 2022 NSLVE data when it is received. The plan will be included alongside voter registration and ballot request information on the

[www.denison.edu](http://www.denison.edu) website. Additionally, we will make the plan available on our social media platforms through providing a link to the plan and posting content which displays aspects of the plan which are particularly relevant to students. Furthermore, we will highlight excerpts of the plan to various stakeholders to whom they are especially applicable in order to maximize engagement.

## **Evaluation**

The Denison Voter Engagement Initiative will convene with CLIC staff and other campus stakeholders on a monthly basis to review data arriving via all of our reporting systems and reevaluate and discuss improvements we can make in the short and long-term to our programs. Our feedback forms from various campus stakeholders and event volunteers will be a critical component of internal evaluation.

A simple metric for evaluating success during the fall semester will be the number of volunteers and attendees at DU Votes events. Each semester requires a trial-and-error period for determining how and when to best turnout interested students. Further, DU Votes conducts its own internal data collection monitoring the voter status of each student. This data is collected through either direct contact with students or when a student uses the DU Votes VR/Ballot Request Tool. Leading up to each deadline (registration, ballot request, election day), DU Votes leadership will compile data on percent of registered students leading up to key registration deadlines (30 days prior to election day) and compare against Action Plan Goals. The same will be done with ballot requests and early voting self-collected data.

We used this strategy in the Fall 2020 election, and it allowed us to more effectively target students in need of assistance and indicated if current programming was on track.

## **Appendix**

### **Voter Registration**

#### **Registration of First-Year Students**

Some students may be previously registered using their home address, but most will not be. DU Votes makes sure to explain both the process for registering using their home address and registering using their Denison campus address. If students are registering with the campus address they must use their physical dorm address as their primary address, and use their Student Union Mailbox number as their secondary address. DU Votes will have to be vigilant about asking if students will be 18 on or before the election, because some of our students are not yet 18 years old.

## Registration and Re-Registration of Returning Students

Returning students who are registered to vote using their Denison address will need to update their voter registration every Fall, since housing assignments will change. If students do not update their dorm address they will have to vote provisionally. Students registered using their home address need not update their voter registration unless their home address has changed between election cycles.

## **Voter Education and Engagement**

DU Votes will be working closely with campus and community stakeholders to provide at least bi-weekly voter education events. In collaboration with partners, DU Votes plans to bring relevant candidates to campus to speak, to host issues-based discussions with expert faculty, host discussions with visiting speakers on democracy and civic participation, and much more!

We implemented training for clients of the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities in the Fall of 2023, during Disability Voting Rights Week. We were able to work with the Public Information Officer to provide training for people experiencing intellectual and/or developmental disabilities at SPARK, PALS, and the Board and the Staff Coordinators. We were able to assist clients with voter education regarding their voting rights, assist with voter registration, and absentee ballot requests. We plan to continue providing these training sessions, throughout the 2024 election cycle, with clients of the organizations that work with the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and work to improve these training and update them as needed. If people with disabilities voted at the same rate as people without disabilities there would be around 2 million more voters (Shur, Kruse, and Amari, 2022). It is important to DU Votes to work with voters with disabilities because we need their voices to have a true representative democracy. This voter education, training, and continued partnership with staff will hopefully facilitate an increase voter turnout for Licking County, and voters with disabilities on Denison's campus. [Self Advocacy through Voting](#)

We plan to increase the number of voter education events on campus and in the community with the LWV of Licking County, Licking County NAACP, AAPD, ACLU of Ohio, and other community partners. One way we plan to increase youth voter turnout is to revitalize the LWV Licking County mentor program with Licking County high school students. The DU Votes ambassadors and voter committee members would be able to provide voter education and guidance to high school students in Licking County and potentially increase the voting rate for young voters and Licking County overall. Another way we plan to strengthen voter education is to work with the ACLU of Ohio to have education sessions on campus regarding key policy issues that would impact Denison students for the 2024 election cycle.

## **Get Out The Vote (GOTV)**

### Early Voting / Absentee Voting

Students registered in Licking County (or in surrounding counties, like Franklin) may choose to vote early at their Board of Elections. The CLIC office will provide shuttles to the Licking County BOE once early voting begins in Spring of 2024. Due to the new Ohio voting law, out-of-state students registered using their Denison address and who do not possess an Ohio ID, will not be able to vote early in person. These students can request an absentee ballot and return it to the Board of Elections before election day.

Ohio voting now requires students to have a valid Ohio ID if they are going to vote in person. These forms of ID include: an Ohio Driver's License, a State of Ohio ID, a military ID, or a Passport. Because of this law, the majority of Denison students are going to be voting absentee by mail. They will have to request an absentee ballot with the last four digits of their social security number, and they will have to vote using the last four digits of their social security number. CLIC will also no longer be providing utility bills for students to use as proof of address. Almost 80% of Denison students are from out of state and they do not want to surrender their out of state drivers license and have to retake driving courses in the State of Ohio to get an Ohio Driver's license. DU Votes has been doing a lot of voter education work regarding these new voting laws so that students understand they can still vote, they just have to vote by mail. Many students will need to start this process early, especially those registered in the Western, Southern, and Northeastern sections of the United States. Consequently, DU Votes advises students to request their absentee ballots weeks ahead of deadlines. DU Votes uses a best practice and ensures students are requesting absentee ballots when they register to vote. DU Votes plans to compile absentee ballot requests from each state to provide to students or instruct them to use DU Votes' new voter registration portal to help facilitate absentee ballot requests from other states.

DU Votes provides voter education regarding early voting hours to students on a regular basis. The DU Votes team has provided transportation to the Licking County Board of Elections in the past for early voting. The team currently plans to provide this same service for students depending on demand. DU Votes wants to make it clear to students that election day is the last day to vote and students are better off going through this process as early as possible so as not to risk missing any deadlines.

*Below is the process for students to request a ballot via mail:*

Ensure voter registration at Denison or at home is up-to-date → Request an absentee ballot to be mailed to their Slayter Student Union Mailbox → Complete absentee ballot in its entirety → mail back to local Board of Elections → Counted!

## **Election Day**

This year DU Votes will be providing voter education about the Primary Election. Ohio has open primaries, so students will be able to select which ballot they would like to vote for the primary. DU Votes will have to educate voters that the ballot they choose, is the party they will be affiliated with until the next election.

Students who have valid Ohio ID or a Passport will be able to vote in person on election day. Students who chose to register using their Denison dorm address will vote at Denison's polling location in Granville. The polling location is down the hill from campus. Occasionally, students may choose to drive home and vote in-person on election day. DU Votes will host a march to the polls for the elections, as people are able, and we will also provide transportation to the Granville polling location if anyone is unable to walk. We want to ensure everyone has access to the polls on election day.

*Below is the process for students to vote in-person:*

Ensure voter registration at Denison or at another Ohio home address is up-to-date →  
Arrive at the corresponding precinct polling location on election day and vote using a valid form of identification OR vote early in-person at the Board of Elections →  
Counted!

## **Ohio Voting Laws**

There were changes to Ohio voting laws that were enacted in April of 2023 and Denison University students are still being educated on needing valid forms of state ID to vote in person, and are no longer allowed to use zero dollar utility bills. DU Votes has worked to educate student voters regarding the changes to the voting laws through tabling, social media education, educational events, and discussion panels with community partner organizations such as the League of Women Voters of Ohio, ACLU of Ohio, and the Licking County Board of Elections. Please see the link of the panel that DU Votes and the LWV of Licking County hosted in early March regarding the Ohio Voting Law changes, and how these changes would impact students and millions of Ohio voters.

[Panel Discussion of New Ohio Voting Law](#)

**IMPORTANT:** For students who choose to vote in-person on or before election day, it is vital that they understand and provide the proper form of identification. Information on valid forms of identification may be found on the Ohio Secretary of State's website [Ohio Voter ID Requirements](#) Out-of-state students registered using their Denison dorm address now have to vote by mail unless they have a passport, as that is a valid form of identification now.

We plan to make election day on November 5th, 2024 a fun and exciting event for all students. We will be organizing a collaborative election day rally with a “march” to the polling location in Granville. Further, we will work with faculty and staff to ensure students may get time off class and work in order to vote.

## Ohio 2024 Elections Calendar

*This calendar is specifically for Ohio voting deadlines. Given that a large number of Denison students vote using their home state address, DU Votes ensures students are educated on all of the relevant deadlines for their state. For the sake of brevity, only the Ohio deadlines are included here.*

<b>Feb. 20th</b>	<b>Deadline for voter registration for March 19 presidential primary election (30 days before presidential primary election)</b>
<b>Feb. 21st</b>	Early in-person absentee voting begins (first day after close of voter registration)
<b>March 12th</b>	Applications for absentee ballots to be mailed for March 19 presidential primary election must be received by boards of elections by the close of business (7 days before presidential primary election)
<b>March 19th</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Presidential Primary Election Day. Polls open from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.</a></u></b>
	Absentee ballots must be returned in person or via a method other than the U.S. Mail to the Board of Elections by the close of polls
<b>March 23rd</b>	Absentee ballots returned by U.S. Mail must be postmarked no later than March 18 and received by boards of elections by this date to be counted (4 days after presidential primary election)
	UOCAVA absentee ballots must be received by boards of elections by this date to be counted (4 days after presidential primary election)
<b>October 7th</b>	<b>Deadline for voter registration for Nov. 5 general election (30 days before general election)</b>
<b>October 8th</b>	Early in-person absentee voting begins (first day after close of voter registration)
<b>Oct. 29th</b>	Applications for absentee ballots to be mailed for Nov. 5 general election must be received by boards of elections by the close of business (7 days

	before general election)
<b>November 5th</b>	<b>General Election Day. Polls open from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.</b>
<b>November 9th</b>	Absentee ballots returned by U.S. Mail must be postmarked no later than Nov. 4 and received by boards of elections by this date to be counted (4 days after general election)
<b>Other State Election Deadlines</b>	We will include a link for all states pertinent deadlines for the 2024 election cycle when we have compiled all of the information. For not here is a slide deck for social media voter education we plan to use when we have all the correct dates: