

DUKE UNIVERSITY



2024 VOTING ACTION PLAN

ALL IN Campus
Democracy
Challenge


**DUKE
VOTES**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Duke University has a long-standing commitment to increasing voter registration and turnout and providing opportunities for civic engagement for all students, faculty and staff. Proven systems and programs are in place to encourage active participation in democratic engagement activities both on campus and in the community. The purpose of this action plan is to outline goals and priorities for increasing voter registration, education and

turnout among students, faculty and staff at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. This plan will be implemented for the 2024-2025 academic year and updated each election cycle to reflect best practices and outcomes. Members of the Duke University Voting Cabinet created the Voting Action Plan. The Voting Cabinet and Duke Votes student organization are responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plan on campus.

LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

Duke University created a Voting Cabinet in 2020 consisting of membership from the offices of Government Relations, Marketing and Communications, Student Affairs, Event Services, Community Affairs, Human Resources, Undergraduate Education, and faculty members in the Sanford School of Public Policy, and the Duke Votes student organization. Since then, the Voting Cabinet has expanded to represent other offices and student organizations on campus including Athletics, Duke University Health System, representatives for both undergraduates and graduate and professional students, and others. The Voting Cabinet meets regularly leading up to elections to guide decisions to increase voter engagement on campus.

The Voting Cabinet will create various subcommittees to guide its work, including a subcommittee on communications and

subcommittee on programming. The Voting Cabinet is intentionally representative of a wide array of departments across campus and is inclusive of a diverse group of stakeholders. Voting Cabinet membership will be reviewed and updated each election cycle, ensuring that membership is representative and inclusive of Duke's diverse constituencies across campus. After each election, the Voting Cabinet has provided feedback on suggestions for additions to the group to ensure that the right people are at the table to guide decisions to support democratic engagement on campus.

In addition to our partners at Duke, the Voting Cabinet collaborates with the local board of elections to have an early voting site on campus and with many nonpartisan voter engagement groups to help with voter registration and mobilization efforts including ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, NC Campus Compact, Vot-ER, You Can Vote, Campus Election Engagement Project, TurboVote, NC Young People's Voting Alliance, NC Asian Americans Together, NexGen NC, and others.

COMMITMENT

TO ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN OUR DEMOCRACY

2020 was the first year Duke University initiated a comprehensive communications plan and strategy for voter engagement. The coordinated effort between the Voting Cabinet and Duke Votes was well-received and successful in increasing voter turnout and encouraging democratic engagement on campus. The university community provided great feedback on the unified approach, which was made possible with support from university leadership who made democratic engagement a top priority for all students, faculty and staff. During election season, President Vincent Price and various members of Duke's leadership team sent informational emails on several occasions to promote voter registration and participation. President Price signed the ALL IN President's Commitment to Full Voter Participation, demonstrating Duke's commitment to prepare students to become responsible and engaged participants in our democracy and encouraging the right and duty to register and to vote. Duke University Men's Basketball Coach, Jon Scheyer, also signed the ALL IN Coaches' Voter Engagement Pledge to support nonpartisan voter engagement efforts with student-athletes on campus.

The Duke Votes student organization has been supported by Duke University's Office of Government Relations for several years with widespread support and recognition across campus for leading this work amongst students. Duke Votes frequently partners with other student organizations on campus for voter registration events, voter educational programming, nonpartisan candidate forums, and other activities to equip students with knowledge and resources.



In the 2022 midterm and 2024 primary elections, Duke Votes partnered with Duke Student Government, Duke Graduate and Professional Student Government, and other student organizations on campus to host "Democracy Day" during the early voting period. This included a variety of activities aimed at motivating students and other members of the Duke community to register and get out to vote. Democracy Day has featured prominent national speakers on the importance of voting, elections and the state of democracy, scheduled walks to the early voting location on Duke's campus, an event to highlight community and civic engagement activities beyond voting, mural paintings to create an interactive Democracy Wall at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke, acapella performances, and a conversation with local elected officials to discuss the importance of local civic action. This is one of many examples where the Duke community came together to support civic and democratic engagement on campus.

COMMITMENT CONT.

Another way Duke is committed to providing students with resources to participate in elections is through the creation of the Duke Student Voter ID Card. Photo identification became a voting requirement in North Carolina in 2023 and Duke University applied with the State Board of Elections to have a special voter ID card created for students to use as a valid form of ID at the polls. Duke Votes worked with the DukeCard office for students to request a card and held dozens of pickup events on campus during the 2023 municipal elections and 2024 primary elections.

Students, faculty and staff are highly engaged in democratic engagement efforts on campus and participate in a variety of different activities through Duke Votes and other institutional centers, such as Polis Center for Politics and the American Grand Strategy program. Other examples that demonstrate Duke's commitment to civic learning and democratic engagement include:

- Duke has an accessible on-campus early voting location with same-day voter registration available.
- Coordination of a strategic communications plan for voter registration, student voter ID, and voting information (social media posts, mass communications to students, faculty and staff, frequent Duke Today news stories).
- Created a toolkit for communicators to share voting information.
- Duke Votes website with voting resources for students, faculty and staff.
- Multiple political clubs and student organizations on campus focus on democratic and civic engagement.
- Frequent educational speaker events, town halls, research projects and forums on democratic engagement issues.
- Duke Athletics teams had 100% voter registration in 2020. Other student organizations on campus also signed a pledge to commit to 100% voter registration.
- Signage around campus promotes voter registration and election dates (digital signage in buses and buildings, decals on walls, voting information postcards in high-traffic areas across campus).
- Frequent voter registration tabling at convenient locations across campus.
- Voter registration tabling on freshman move-in day.
- Student-led text banking sessions.
- Events and programming to celebrate civic holidays such as National Voter Registration Day, Voter Education Week, Vote Early Day.
- "Dorm Storms" events to post voting reminders in dorms.
- Painting campus bridge with voting information as a photo opportunity.
- Coordinating apartment voting ambassadors to disseminate voting information to off-campus students.
- Frequent social media posts on the Duke Votes student-run Instagram.
- Creation of a Duke Votes GroupMe to engage and recruit volunteers.
- Training students through You Can Vote curriculum to register voters.
- Classroom presentations to provide students with information on registering to vote, voter ID requirements and voting dates.
- Working with Resident Assistants to inform residential students of requirements for voter registration, student voter ID, and voting locations.
- Partner with UNC to host competitions to encourage voter registration and mobilization.

LANDSCAPE

Duke University is a top academic institution in the state and nationally, providing a rich educational experience for all students. Duke is home to more than 16,800 students, including over 6,400 undergraduate students and 10,400 graduate and professional students. The top home states for undergraduate students include North Carolina, New York, California, Florida, and New Jersey. Undergraduate student demographics include: 8% African-American, 23% Asian-American, 11% Hispanic/Latino, 36% Caucasian, 10% Nonresident Alien, 7% two or more, 4% unknown. 55% of the undergraduate population are women, and the student-to-faculty ratio is 8:1.

Duke offers a robust learning experience for students, providing programs and services that support the optimal growth of Duke students, enhance their intellectual, social, cultural and physical development, and complement Duke's academic excellence by providing opportunities for students to experience education and explore interests beyond the classroom. Duke University is home to 400+ recognized student organizations that foster student interaction and exchange, exploration of a variety of interest areas, understanding of the principles of organizational structure and management, and development of valuable collaboration, leadership, and communication skills.

A cornerstone of Duke's commitment to inquiry across disciplines, university-wide institutes, initiatives and centers foster problem-focused education, research, and engagement to generate knowledge in the service of society. Furthermore, a number of organizations and programs on campus are



involved with democratic and civic engagement activities, including Duke Votes, Polis: Center for Politics, Hart Leadership Program, Bass Connections and others.

While Duke has more undergraduate students from North Carolina than from any other state (16%), a majority of Duke's student body is not from North Carolina and students must either choose to register to vote in NC or request an absentee ballot from their home state. Many students choose to vote in NC and therefore many resources and activities are geared toward voter registration for students. This guides a large part of the Voting Cabinet's strategy. Furthermore, many Duke students spend a semester abroad and need resources to be able to vote by absentee ballot.

Given Duke lacks voting data for students beyond what's provided in the NSLVE report, there have been conversations about conducting campus-level research projects to study student voting on campus to gain a deeper understanding of student voting trends.

GOALS

FOR INCREASING CIVIC AND DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT



The Voting Cabinet at Duke University hopes to achieve several short-term and long-term goals in the future, with a focus on increased voter registration and voter turnout levels among students, faculty and staff.

Short-Term Goals (2024-2025)

- Increase the general election registration rate by 10 percentage points in 2024.
- Increase the general election voter turnout rate by 10 percentage points in 2024.
- Integrate voter registration as part of the first-year orientation process.
- Create a Duke Votes Student Council to coordinate programming amongst student organizations and have designated voting representatives with each organization.
- Create a pledge program with You Can Vote for student groups to commit to voting.
- Support students who are studying abroad with resources to vote by absentee ballot.
- Plan voter registration programming as part of first-year orientation week.
- Increase Duke Votes volunteer base on campus.
- Distribute voter ID cards to all incoming freshman.



Long-Term Goals (2024-2025 and Beyond)

- Integrate voter registration in the course registration process.
- Create a better system to distribute voter ID cards.
- Continue to add representation to the Voting Cabinet from more diverse groups on campus (additional faculty, representation from marginalized/minority populations, etc.).
- Incorporate civic learning and democratic engagement learning objectives into the general education curriculum.
- Create a process through Housing and Residence Life to notify students about the need to update voter registration when moving from East to West Campus.
- Train more faculty and staff to do voter registration drives to mitigate student burnout and fluctuating club membership.



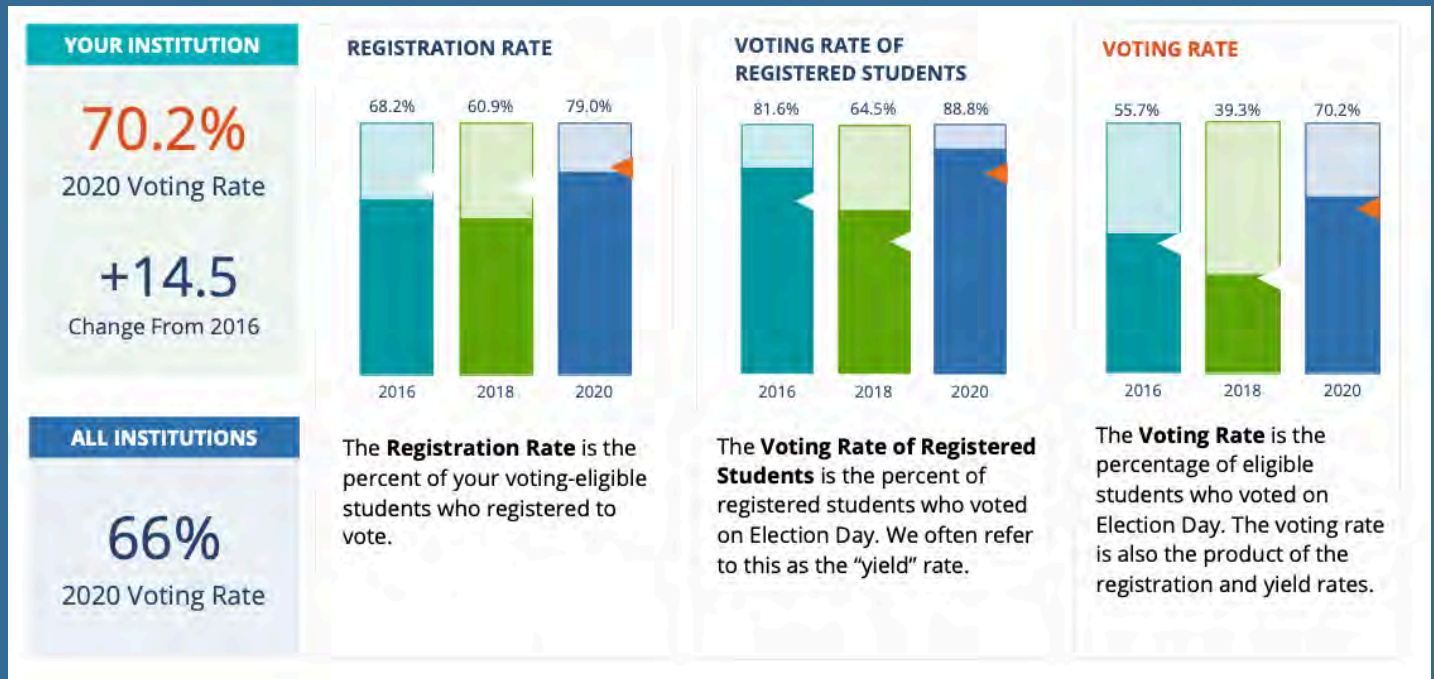
STRATEGY

BRINGING THESE GOALS TO LIFE

- Support the continuation of the Duke Votes events and initiatives (referenced above).
- Train Resident Advisors and Faculty in Residence on the voter registration process to assist students who live on campus. Provide each representative with voter registration materials and resources.
- Coordinate with Housing and Residence Life to provide students living off-campus with voting resources.
- Set up voter registration tables at dorm check-in locations for first-year students during the orientation process.
- Incorporate voter registration into the first-year orientation week programming.
- Maintain voter registration drop-boxes in student centers and library.
- Plan a comprehensive communications strategy and timeline to disseminate voting information to the Duke community (themes for each week leading up to the election, social media posts, news stories, signage, etc.).
- Hold weekly voter registration events and tabling in advance of the voter registration deadline. In addition to voter registration efforts for students, coordinate voter registration opportunities and specific communications for faculty and staff.
- Convene the Voting Cabinet on a regular basis outside of just election season.
- Provide voter registration resources for professors to share with students (i.e., integrate resources into syllabi).
- Continue to involve senior leaders on campus to encourage students to participate in civic engagement (emails from President Price and senior leadership, photos of leaders voting, video messages from notable leaders on campus).
- Engage with the Registrar's office to incorporate voter registration as part of the course registration process or into a Canvas module.
- Include voting information in the Blue Book orientation resource and in communications to new students.

NSLVE DATA

NATIONAL STUDY OF LEARNING, VOTING, & ENGAGEMENT



Duke University received access to the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) data for 2020. In 2020, Duke's registration rate was 79%. In comparison to the data from 2016, this rate increased by 10.8%. Duke's voting rate was 70.2% in 2020, showing a 14.5% increase from 2016. The voting rate among registered students in 2020 was 88.8%, up from 81.6% in 2016. During the 2020 election year, Duke's voting rate was higher than the national average 66%.

Many students chose to vote by absentee ballot or during the early voting period, with

only 356 students voting in-person on Election Day. 65% of undergraduate students and 52% of graduate students voted in the 2020 election.

The Voting Cabinet will utilize these trends, metrics and information to tailor our voting communications and events accordingly. Knowing that most students don't participate in Election Day voting, we will encourage students to utilize the early voting location on campus and provide ample resources for voting by absentee ballot, either in NC or in a student's home state.

REPORTING & EVALUATION

Duke University's voting action plan will be posted on the public Duke Votes website once finalized, along with the most updated NSLVE data. The action plan will be reviewed throughout the election season to ensure the Voting Cabinet's actions are consistent with the goals and priorities outlined in the plan. After the election, the Voting Cabinet will revisit the goals outlined in the plan to identify what was achieved or not achieved, and will use this information to adjust short-term and long-term goals accordingly.

The Voting Cabinet will catalogue all communications initiatives, communications metrics (news stories, social media engagement, email messages from leadership, etc.), participation in voter registration events and educational programming, and general feedback to measure progress and evaluate the success of various initiatives. NSLVE data will also be evaluated each election cycle to measure voter participation rates among students. Success will be measured by an increase in voter registration and turnout rates.

