

Duquesne University 2024 Democratic Engagement Action Plan Draft
Submitted by: Dr. Alia M. Pustorino-Clevenger on behalf of the Duquesne
University Coalition

Executive Summary:

This Duquesne University All In Campus Democracy Challenge Action Plan Draft is a work in progress that is being developed to: increase civic learning, political engagement, and voting rates for the 2024 election among our campus community—encouraging participation in the democratic process as a Core Value at Duquesne University.

Mission and History

Duquesne University was founded in 1878 by Catholic missionaries known as the Spiritans. As a school originally founded to serve the children of Pittsburgh’s impoverished immigrant population, the university has grown to become one of the leading institutions of higher education in western Pennsylvania. Through the last two centuries, Duquesne has exemplified its unwavering commitment to serve students, give back to the community in which we live and work, and provide an education for the mind, heart, and spirit.

Background

The mission of the University and the Spiritan charism of our founding congregation frame the social justice-oriented nature of the University to ensure that community engagement is a hallmark of our students’ collegiate experience. In pursuit of this mission, the Duquesne University community has historically worked with local and global communities; providing support in order to make a positive and sustainable difference by addressing the most pressing public issues of our world alongside stakeholders such as community members, community-based agencies, legislators, etc.

Coalition

The Duquesne University Coalition—comprised of staff and faculty representatives from student life, academic affairs, community engagement, mission and identity, the library, center for teaching excellence, global engagement, athletics, and students—has expanded upon our 2020 and 2022 action plans to increase our campus community’s civic engagement and voter turnout. Our aim for the 2024 election is to once again increase voter registration, education, and participation among Duquesne University students.

All In Membership

As new members to the All In Democracy Challenge, we had not previously had access to historical student voter engagement data prior to the election cycle. The data provided through the NSLVE report has given us thresholds or baselines to maintain that include:

- Achieve a 2022 student Voting Rate of 75%
- Achieve a 2022 student Registration Rate of 89%
- Achieve a 2022 Rate of Registered Students who Voted of 84%

Leadership:

The action plan is a developing framework that has been developed by the following coalition members:

Leader

Dr. Jessica Mann, Assistant Vice President for Community Engagement
 Institution: Duquesne University City/State: Pittsburgh, PA
 Office: Office of Civic Engagement and External Relations
 Email: mannj@duq.edu
 Phone: (412) 396-5893

Membership

Beth Bauer, Assistant Director of Law School Student Organizations
School of Law

Sherene Brantley, Associate Athletic Director, Academic and Student Services, Senior Woman Administrator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator
Duquesne Athletics

Dr. Joseph DeCrosta, Executive Director
Center for Global Engagement

Dr. Luci-Jo DiMaggio, Director of Mission Animation
Mission and Identity

Dr. Erik Garrett, Associate Professor
Department of Communication and Rhetorical Studies

Joan Hilton, Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Community Engagement
Office of Civic Engagement and External Relations

Amber Lasure, Assistant Director Wellness and Fitness
Center for Student Wellbeing

Tim Lewis, Director
Commuter Affairs

Dr. Mary Parish, Associate Director of Online Learning & Strategy
Academic Affairs

Dr. Alia Pustorino-Clevenger, Director of Extracurricular Community Engagement
Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research

Dr. Erin Rentschler, Associate Director for Faculty Development
Center for Teaching Excellence

Diana Sasso, Assistant University Librarian for Teaching, Research and Engagement
Gumberg Library

Quincy Stephenson, Director
Diversity and Inclusion

Anne Lahoda, Assistant Vice President
*Office of Residence
Life*

Dr. Adam Wasilko, Assistant Vice President of Student Involvement/Dean of Students
Center for Student Involvement

Leadership Responsibilities within Coalition

Dr. Jessica Mann, Coordinator of the Civic Action Plan

Dr. Adam Wasilko, Coordinator of Freshman Advisement Summer Transition (FAST)

Quincy Stephenson, Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion Programming

Anne Lahoda, Coordinator of Residential Student Programming

Timothy Lewis, Coordinator of Commuter Student Programming

Dr. Alia Pustorino-Clevenger, Coordinator of Voter Registration, Activity Calendar,
Polling Places and Election Day Engagement

Diana Sasso, Coordinator of Library Engagement

CETR Undergraduate Staff, Coordinators of Campus and Social Media Outreach

Coalition Meetings

The coalition has agreed our evolving framework of scaffolded events has worked effectively during the past two voting cycles and will begin to meet with more regularity in the spring of 2024 as this will enable us to better utilize projected academic course offerings and accessibility to begin to plan and schedule events on the university master calendar.

Succession Plan

Our current plan has enabled for leadership succession with flexibility to allow for each department to designate representation due to staffing transitions and/or vacancies.

Student Organizations and Clubs

With the assistance of the Assistant Director of Student Organization Services, *Center for Student Involvement*, Linda Farrow and Assistant Director of Law School Student Organizations and International Programs, Beth Bauer, we hope to partner with the following student organizations to collaboratively program for student voter registration, education, and voting.

- American Bar Association/Law Student Division
- American Constitution Law Society
- Animal Law Society
- Black Greek Council
- Black Law Students Association
- Black Student Union
- BSNES Multicultural STEM Group
- Campus YMCA Congress
- Christian Legal Society
- College Democrats
- College Republicans
- Corporate Law Society
- Cultural Ambassadors
- Hillel Jewish Students Association
- Intellectual Property Law Association
- Italian-American Law Society
- Ebony Women: Women for Social Change
- Educational Initiative for Individual Diversity
- Education Law and Policy Society
- Election Law Society
- Environmental Law Society
- Evergreen
- Family Law Society
- Filipino American Student Association of Duquesne
- First Generation Society
- Graduate and Professional Student Council
- Health Law Society
- International and Immigration Law Society
- International Student Organization
- Jewish Law Students Association
- Labor & Employment Law Society
- Lambda
- Latin American Student Association
- Military Law Society

- NAACP
- Non-Traditional Students Association
- Older and Wiser Law Students
- Phi Alpha Theta
- Political Science Club
- Pre-Law Society
- Public Interest Law Association
- Puerto Rican Students Association (PRSA)
- Saudi Students Organization
- School of Law—Office of Student Organizations
- Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)
- Sports Entertainment Law Society
- Student Bar Association
- Student Government Association
- Undergraduate Mock Trial Team
- Women’s Law Association

External Partners

- Allegheny County Elections Office
- All In Campus Democracy Challenge
- Ask Every Student
- Campus Vote Project
- Casa San Jose
- Civic Nation
- Democracy Works
- Every Vote Counts
- League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh (LWVGP)
- National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE)
- Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA)
- PA Student Voter Coalition (PASVC)
- Rock the Vote
- TurboVote
- Voter Friendly Campus

Commitment:

The mission of Duquesne University expresses a profound concern for moral and spiritual values as well as a strong emphasis on service to the church, the community, the nation, and the world. Moreover, the current strategic plan for the university, *Re-Imagining Duquesne’s Spiritan Legacy for a New Era*, plays a crucial role in shaping our direction for the future. Within the plan, it clearly outlines in Strategic Imperative 1 “identifying pathways to offer students the knowledge and skills needed to have fulfilling and successful lives and careers in the 21st century by providing a safe, comfortable, interactive living environment that fosters the growth of students as citizens and incorporating civil discourse into the curriculum.” Strategic Imperative #2 outlines

Duquesne's commitment to community engagement and its desire to enhance the University's community engagement initiatives in order to promote civic awareness among the entire campus community.

Landscape:

Service and justice are core values deeply rooted in Duquesne's history and unique Spiritan identity. Duquesne University was founded on Oct. 1, 1878, as Pittsburgh Catholic College by the Rev. Joseph Strub and the Congregation of the Holy Ghost. The College's 40 students and six faculty members held classes in rented space above a bakery on Wylie Avenue, in Pittsburgh's lower Hill District. The institution was founded to educate children of local immigrant families. Duquesne moved to its current home on the Bluff, in 1885. According to the Hill District Consensus Group, the Greater Hill District includes the Bluff, Uptown, and Hill District neighborhoods and is bounded by Sixth Avenue to the West, Boulevard of the Allies to the South, Robinson Street to Aliquippa Street to Centre Avenue to the Southeast, to Bigelow Boulevard to the East and North. From Wylie Avenue to the Bluff, Duquesne has always made a home in the Greater Hill District.

Duquesne students and faculty are involved in a wide range of community-engaged projects at the state, national, and global level while maintaining partnerships with a large number of hyper-local Pittsburgh-based agencies and community organizations. Duquesne University's Collaboratory, a database of community engagement and public service activities, includes over 700 community agencies and lists more than 200 activities that the campus community has partnered on over the past four years.

Assessment of Current Work and Outcomes

We have tremendous room to grow in regard to student participation and the coordination of a unified effort to engage students in the civic process. In spite of efforts, the institution is still nascent is on formalized process for registering, educating, and mobilizing students to the polls. Despite committee efforts, there are still challenges in successfully implementing this system across campus so there have been efforts to mobilize in spaces and utilize resources that proved successful in the 2020 and 2022 election cycles.

Duquesne University is recognized as a private 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2020. The university currently has 8,179 students and first authorized NSLVE in 2020. As we currently do not yet have access to our NSLVE data from 2022, the institution previously has observed the following data relative to our voter engagement:

- Our institution had a 2020 campus voting rate of 74.8%
- Our institution had a 2020 voter registration rate of 88.5%
- Our institution had a 2018 voter turnout rate of 37.6%
- Our institution had a 2018 voter registration rate of 77.4%

Our institution was recognized by ALL In with the following seals: 2020 Gold Campus; 2022 Highly Established Action Plan

Overview:

Our coalition has identified the following overarching goals for democratic engagement in 2024:

Voter Registration

- Register as many unregistered students as possible to vote, including efforts in graduate programs, with emphasis upon the School of Osteopathic Medicine which will matriculate its first cohort in fall 2024
 - Efforts will be made to focus on populations that may have reduced voter registrations using national benchmarks and various campus units will be instrumental in increasing outreach (e.g., campus success coaches (campus academic advisors), first-generation committee, Residence Hall staff, Commuter Affairs, Veteran's Affairs, Center for Excellence in Student Diversity and Inclusion, School of Osteopathic Medicine, Spiritan Division, etc.)
- Casa San Jose and the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh (LWVGP) will be asked to continue to support conducting in-person voter registration on campus.
- TurboVote will be relocated on the newly redesigned university website to a more visible location to increase student visibility and remove technical barriers related to the process for students registering online.

Voter Education

- Make information available and easily accessible to all students regarding the process and purpose of voting as well as details specific to the upcoming 2024 general election. We plan to offer ample opportunities for voter education through workshops and other events both on campus and virtually.
- Utilize Gumberg Library comprehensive resources to help students find more information on gubernatorial as well as senatorial candidates and judges.
- Explore the creation of digital modules to provide voter education, current state of voting rights, voting basics, and information literacy with either Gumberg Library or Online Learning and Strategy.

Voter Turnout

- We are looking to maintain a strong voter turnout of at least 75% of the student body in the 2024 elections. To accomplish this, we plan to offer a diverse slate of activities to encourage students to vote. To our knowledge, this is the second

time our campus has put together a campus-wide effort to mobilize students for civic engagement.

- Outside of our coalition, we hope to work with constituencies across campus such as: Public Safety, Office of the Registrar, Online Learning and Strategy and English as a Second Language department.

Goals:

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:

Short Term (2024 General Election)

As we had not had previous voter engagement data, the 2020 election helped to establish baselines for our efforts. Since those rates were higher than anticipated, our goals would be to at least meet those rates:

- Achieve a 2024 student Voting Rate of 75%.
- Achieve a 2024 student Registration Rate of 89%.
- Achieve a 2024 Rate of Registered Students who voted of 84%.

Long Term

Our long-term goal is to foster students' civic development, encouraging their lifelong active participation in the community. To move toward that goal over the next 10 years, we hope to:

- Inspire the University President sign on to the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation before the 2024 All In deadlines
- Increase voter participation to over 90% for eligible voters
- Meaningfully engage students who are not eligible to vote including international and undocumented students
- Expand opportunities for students to stay engaged in the community all year long

Strategy:

Duquesne University will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation:

Voter Registration

TurboVote

- We will partner with TurboVote in the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 academic years.

Civic Engagement and Voter Registration Event

- Gumberg Library will continue to partner with national libraries for a registration event led by American University
- Ongoing registration efforts will take place in AY 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 prior to the election

Constitution Day

- Constitution Day programming has been developed and lead by several academic units.

National Voter Registration Day

- We will be hosting an event on campus to get as many students as we can registered to vote on National Voter Registration Day. We will collaborate with TurboVote, Casa San Jose and the League of Women Voters of Allegheny County.

Debate Watch Parties

- During the Fall 2024 semester, students will be able to register to vote at any debate watch party as they are scheduled. These debate parties will be organized by campus units who will host with the intention to increase democratic engagement.

Faculty Involvement

- We plan to coordinate with faculty members to encourage their students to register to vote in classes. A list of courses that incorporate civic engagement in their sections has been created to target faculty and their students for outreach and inclusion by the Center for Community Engaged Teaching and Research.

Increasing Availability of Information

- We plan to create 2024 infographics that provide voter registration information, voter guides, and sample ballots, that will be showcased in different offices and highly-frequented locations around the university that include residence halls, commuter lounge, Student Union, academic buildings, Gumberg Library and Law School Library and Lounge, the College of Osteopathic Medicine, and campus parking garage elevator lobbies.

Voter Education

Introduction to Critical Education course voter education

- Students in Dr. Patricia Sheahan’s course will engage with the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh (LWVGP) in a three-session presentation on voter education.
- Students will have the opportunity to participate in additional optional voter education programs with reflective experiences that include:
 - The experience of connecting course objectives and goals, commentary on persons involved, the philosophy of voting, democracy, critical education, personal understanding of grass roots art projects and the importance of integration of the arts in contemporary educational issues.
 - Students will create artifacts of their engagement in a presentation of slides, iMovie, video or documentary journals.

Debate Watch Parties

- Through hosting debate watch parties, students will have access to learning about candidates and their various viewpoints related to their candidacy and the election.

“Duquesne Votes!” Information Site

- Due to recent redevelopment of the university webpage by Marketing and Communication, the Duquesne Votes Information Site has temporarily been moved to the student-friendly Campus Link portal to provide information about voter registration, information for voting, sample ballots, candidate issue guides, upcoming events, and other resources that may prove helpful to students.
- It will be vital the Duquesne Votes Information Site has a presence on the University website to ensure convenient access to Turbo Vote and other resources.

Make a Plan Voter Information Page

- Gumberg Library has developed an interactive page to assist students in understanding all elements of voter engagement that is housed on the Library webpage during each election cycle and 2024 will be no exception.

Voter Information Flyers

- We plan to regularly distribute voter information flyers with non-partisan details on candidate issues, voter registration information, and promotions for early voting across campus in highly visible locations.

University Mass Email

- We will send timed weekly campus all-student emails regarding voter information and registration in the Fall 2024 semester. The mass email will include links to

TurboVote and other resources on voting, as well as information for upcoming events surrounding civic engagement.

Voter Participation

- University Mass Emails/Targeted Emailing/Election Engagement Strategy for students

TurboVote

- We plan to partner with TurboVote again in the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 academic years.
- We plan to send weekly campus all-student emails regarding voter information and registration in the fall 2024 semester. The mass email will include links to voter registration hyperlink to the DU TurboVote portal. Prior to election, another email will be sent to students reminding them about early voting and Election Day and provide information on how they can find their polling place—particularly as our County has approved Libermann Hall (on campus) as a site for local polls, depending upon strength of registration in the district. Confirmation to occur if this site will become the polls for voters registered to vote from campus.
- Students will be able to send emails to pustorinoa@duq.edu with questions or concerns they have regarding the elections. Dr. Alia Pustorino-Clevenger will read and respond to said emails as quickly as she can.

Flyer Distribution

- In the days leading up to the general Election, we will post and distribute flyers encouraging students to get out and vote.

Social Media

- We will organize social media campaigns to encourage student engagement and voting. This will involve sending regular updates through various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) across multiple accounts to remind students of important deadlines and other pertinent information regarding the elections, deadlines, and the candidates

Campus Link

- Campus Link will serve as a hub for students with information about general election day voting.

Election

- Libermann Hall was designated as a polling place by the Allegheny County Board of Elections from 2022 onward. Facilities Management acts as the liaison to the ACBE but will be instrumental in developing a campus plan should the site be used as this is also an active academic building so Campus Police will also be required to monitor for student and polling safety.

Election Results Watch Party

- We will host a watch party to reveal the election results on campus during the evening of elections.

Available Resources

- We will utilize partnerships with various academic and student-facing departments to assist in engaging students in educative programs throughout fall term.

Challenges and Limitations

With the presidential election, it will be important to consider potential polarization that is likely to occur as a result of divided political ideologies. All departments will be required to demonstrate non-partisanship in activities and to encourage civil discourse as across campus.

Potential Coalition Timeline and Campus Calendar of Events As of 12/2023

December 2023

- Distribute current Action Plan Draft to Coalition members

January 2024

- Confirm intention of members of Coalition to participate in planning for AY 2023-2025

February 2024

- Convene Coalition members to review current Action Plan Draft

March-April 2024

- Request campus departments intended democratic engagement activities for fall 2024
- Utilize Campus Master Calendar Scheduling to Reserve Spaces for All-In focused campus activities Fall 2024

May-July 2024

- Confirm Voter Registration Programs with League of Women Voters, Allegheny County and Casa San Jose
- Confirm Poll Worker Registration with Allegheny County
- Confirm Campus Poll Site with Allegheny County
- Redevelop web materials for campus website and Campus Link
- Write all-student email templates for fall 2023

August 2024

- Voter Registration
 - a. New Student Orientation program
 - b. Community Engagement Fair
- Allegheny County Poll Worker Registration
 - c. Community Engagement Fair

September 2024

- Voter Registration—Casa San Jose and League of Women Voters of Allegheny County

- Allegheny County Poll Worker Registration
- Constitution and Citizenship Day Event
- Introduction to Critical Educational course activities including: League of Women Voter's Voter Education, optional participation in voter education sessions with Elaine Harris-Fulton or other designated speaker
- Voter Registration Week Event – Gumberg Library
- National Voter Registration Day Campus Wide Event
- Campus All-Student Emails Commence First Week of School
- Debate Watches—dates TBD

October 2024

- Introduction to Critical Education course activities including: student participation in fiber arts VOTE sign educational events
- Indigenous People's Day/Native American's Day/Columbus Day
- Official Mass Email About Voter Registration,
- Last day to register to Vote for general election
- Debate Watches—dates TBD
- Allegheny County Poll Worker Trainings (including those for Libermann Hall if confirmed as a poll site)

November 2024

- Last day to apply for a mail-in or civilian absentee ballot emails to be sent
- November 5, 2024 General Election
- Veteran's Day Voter Registration & Education

January 2023

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day/Civil Rights Day

February 2024

- National Freedom Day Voter Registration & Education
- President's Day Voter Registration & Education

March 2025

- Cesar Chavez Day Voter Registration & Education

May 2025

- Law Day Voter Registration & Education
- Memorial Day

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

The core coalition will lead the assessment evaluation process, building on engagement data from the 2020 and 2022 voting cycles.

The data will then be used to improve process and procedure for future civic engagement initiatives campus wide. Data including campus event and program attendance, participant satisfaction, and NSLVE voter participation will be used.

We will share the information gathered with all of the coalition members and upper administration, and plan to share with the broader campus community as appropriate.

Reporting:

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website <https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/duquesne-university/>.

Our institution has given ALL IN permission to publish our NSLVE reports which are posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website.

This action plan will be shared with all members of the larger coalition, posted on the "Duquesne Votes!" website and incorporated into reports to upper administration. We will also share the data from the NSLVE report on the Office of Community Engagement (OCE) website under Government Relations. Where applicable, we will also share updates and information through social media channels and official University news outlets.