

CIVICALLY ENGAGED CAMPUS

ACTION PLAN 2022
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

engage@emu



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ABOUT THE EMU VOTER REGISTRATION TEAM

For this initiative, Engage@EMU, a EMU department responsible for creating an entryway to enhance, navigate and cultivate collaboration and partnerships between the university and business and community entities will be working to enhance civic engagement on campus and in the EMU community partnered with various organizations to ensure all students were offered abundant opportunities to register to vote, as well as educate themselves, and engage with the 2022 midterm election.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This action plan was created by leaders in multiple organizations on and off EMU's campus. They are listed here:

Kaitlyn Savage: Engage@EMU Project Coordinator GA

Tyler Calhoun: Engage@EMU Communications & Operations Coordinator

Jessica Alexander: Engage@EMU Director Academic Engagement Programs

Naomi Barbour: Campus Vote Project Fellow

Alysha Rossetto: Campus Vote Project Fellow

The goal of the action plan is to outline and define how to increase civic engagement with regards to voter registration and census participation both on campus and in our local community. . In 2018, the voting rate at EMU was 45.3%, up 22.4% from 2014 when the voting rate was 22.9%. The campus was a considerable percentage more successful than the national average of 39.1%. We do not have the data for 2020 but are working to ensure we get the data for 2022.

This plan will be implemented by Engage@EMU who has a strong connection to faculty, staff and community relations the aforementioned organizations who have a strong relationship with students and within the community. These partnerships will ensure that all sectors of the university are covered, creating the potential for the most impact possible.

EMU is one of the only campuses in Michigan with an on-campus polling location which we hope causes an increase in voter turnout and engagement in this midterm election as does make voting more accessible for students.

Our action plan will begin taking effect at the start of Fall Semester 2022 on campus and will continue until November 8th, 2022 - the Midterm election.

The action plan will be implemented through a series of events that will focus on a three tier effort that focuses on registration, education, and engagement. The various partners will run and attend events that will offer students opportunities that will allow them to register as first time voters, change their voter register address, learn about the candidate, and the ballot proposals .

Through the hard work and dedication of different organizations EMU will see an increase in voter engagement in the 2022 midterm election.

LEADERSHIP

Kaitlyn Savage, Graduate Student, Engage@EMU Project Coordinator GA

Naomi Barbour, Junior, PoliSci

Alysha Rossetto, Junior, Paralegal

We also collaborated with:

Jessica Kwek, EMU Student Government

Olivia Gajewski, RISE

Gunner Japp, NARAL

Austin Atchley, NARAL

Jeffery Bernstein: Professor of Political Science

Sara Tisdale: EMU Athletics

Although some organizations listed are not historically non-partistian, they agreed to commit to being nonpartisan this election to partner with EMU.

The primary focus of Engage@EMU is to enhance, navigate and cultivate collaboration and partnerships between the University and business and community entities.

Connecting students with resources and knowledge regarding voting falls to this department due to the nature of the community partnerships. Engage, with Kaitlyn Savage, as the point of contact will manage event planning and facilitating the various partnerships. Other organizations to participate in educational events and promotional resources are the City of Ypsilanti, The League of Women Voters, EMU College, and other related organizations both on campus and in the community. Events are free to attend for all students.

COMMITMENT

EMU has a dedicated team of students, faculty, staff, and administration that work tirelessly to make the university a supportive, intellectually dynamic and diverse community. EMU has five core principles; excellence, respect, inclusiveness, responsibility, and integrity. The administration is devoted to helping students learn not only in the classroom but outside of the classroom too, bettering and learning from our community as we expand our knowledge through courses.

EMU offers over 200 undergraduate majors, most if not all of which stress the importance of civic engagement in one way or another. By knowing the importance of increasing civic engagement in all students, each faculty and staff members make this a theme in their teaching and make a conscious effort to apply it to their classrooms. Students have seen firsthand the importance of civic engagement, through field trips, professional presentations, or classwork assigned by professors in all fields. Many EMU professors offer their students unofficial days off on Election Day, and the Student Government is beginning work to encourage the administration to close campus on election day.

Along with faculty, we also have dedicated administrators who want to see higher rates of civic engagement in students, because it is beneficial to all involved in university operations. The Provost's office sets goals of academic quality, institutional accreditation, and accountability, to ensure a positive learning environment. The Provost's office examines curriculum before it becomes available to students, this ensures the inclusion of civic learning and democratic engagement as part of all curriculums.

EMU will use their devoted students, staff, faculty, and administration to continue increasing civic engagement in the community and on campus. The goal is to get students involved and interested now and to keep them involved in the future to create a generation of civically minded citizens.

LANDSCAPE

Eastern Michigan University was founded in 1849, and is one of the oldest colleges in the state and is an accredited R3 research institution.

The enrollment is as follows:

Undergraduate: 12,730

Race/Ethnicity

White: 7,605

Black/African-American: 2,202

Hispanic/Latino: 1,040

Nonresident Alien: 267

Other/Unknown: 1,616

Graduate: 2,640

Race/Ethnicity

White: 1,733

Black/African-American: 334

Hispanic/Latino: 184

Nonresident Alien: 154

Other/Unknown: 235

Although Eastern Michigan University did not receive data from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement for the 2020 election, EMU did receive data from the 2018 election, therefore that will be the data we use for this report.

In 2018, the voting rate for all students across the nation was 39.1%; EMU voter turnout in 2018 was 45.3%. This was 6.2% higher than the national average. EMU had a rate of 69% registered students in 2018 and the voting rate of registered students was 65.7%. In 2018, 85.6% of EMU students cast their votes in person, likely because the university's honors college building became a polling location, walking distance from campus

GOALS

Short - Term Goals

Our main goal is 55% student turnout at the polls this midterm election.

- EMU has successfully increased student voting in past elections from 22.9% in 2014 to 45.3% in 2018.

Another goal is to have 80% of the student body registered before the November 8th election.

- In 2018, student registration was 69%.

Getting students to attend, participate in and engage with events like webinars, townhall, and education events.

- Engage@EMU and our various partners will host various events throughout the fall semester leading up to Nov. 8th that will give students opportunities to register to vote or update their registration, learn about the ballot proposals, candidates, or new districts, or engage with local government officials.
- Engage@EMU also used their social media platforms to promote these events as well post educational materials on the ballot proposals and candidates to reach a wider audience of students.

Get 100% of athletics to register to vote

- With our partner Sara Tisdale, a mini action plan (Get Engaged Athletes) was created. This included meeting with every EMU athletic team and providing them with voter registration materials.
- Kaitlyn also held office hours for the out of state athletes to help clear any confusion surrounding voter registration.

The university will know which goals were met by the NSLVE data when released. It is our hope that these efforts will increase civic engagement and educate students on the relevant matters of voting in the state of Michigan and will carry over into the 2024 election.

Long - Term Goals

Syllabus having voter registration form

- Providing voter registration forms with syllabi would make voter registration more accessible for students.

Incorporating Voter Registration into orientation and housing

- Providing voter registration forms within college orientation would make voter registration more accessible for students.

100% student voter registration

- If the two goals above are enacted, then we would hope to see 100% voter registration on campus.

STRATGEY

Our core team and the organizations we have partnered with have developed a series of events that are focused on our three tiered approach of voter engagement, education and registration. These events will take place throughout the 2022 fall semester and will continue into the 2023 winter semester. While our main focus is to get students prepared for the upcoming midterm elections, we also want to further educate students on different topics surrounding voting and also encourage students to become more civically engaged. Below are some events and ideas for events that we hope to accomplish.

Work with local city clerks and SOS (Fall and Winter): Some of the engage staff and other interested members of our leadership team have met with the city clerk to learn how to register students to vote on campus. We have also worked with the city clerk to get a ballot drop-box in the student center, which has made it easier for students living on campus to drop off their ballots. We also hope to strengthen our connection with both offices so that we will continue to have access to resources.

Classroom Discussions/teachings (Fall and winter): Fellows from RISE have been going into classrooms to help get students registered to vote and answering any questions they may have. The plan is to continue this till the deadline to register students to vote, but to also continue this after the election. Hopefully these discussions will focus more on educating students on the voting laws in Michigan and how they have changed and also still focus on registering students to vote and talk about why voting is important. We hope that we can also have these discussions with Student Organizations as well.

Fellow events (Fall and Winter): Both fellows Naomi and Alysha have attended the Michigan Voting Summit in Lansing and plan to continue to be active with fellows on other campuses. We hope to continue to build connections with other fellows so that we can share resources and knowledge, and possibly collaborate on larger events in the future.

Social Media Campaign (Fall and Winter): A social media campaign that focuses on informing students about what's on the ballot, the different propositions, and governor & congressional candidates in a nonpartisan way. The campaign will also focus on voter education resources, redistricting information, and testimonials from students on why voting is important. Leading up to the election we will focus on registration and different information regarding the midterms, but we hope to continue the campaign in some way that focuses on different topics.

Viewing party for the Governor Debate (Fall): Fellows from RISE organized a viewing party on campus for students who were interested in watching the Gubernatorial debate on Tuesday October 25, 2022. Food and drinks were provided as an incentive to get more students to attend. While this is a political debate the event itself was simply focused on getting students civically engaged and more prepared for these issues that will be covered in the midterm election.

National Voter Registration Week (Fall): To celebrate National Voter Registration Day our campus turned it into National Voter Registration Week. The engage office, CVP fellows, NARAL and Rise all worked together to have tabling events all week in multiple buildings. We also had people registering students to vote at different athletic events that were happening that week.

Partnership with Athletics for voter registration (Fall): At the beginning of the semester the head of athletics reached out to the Engage office hoping to partner with them to register student athletes to vote. The plan is to have students at every athletic event to register students to vote, they also want to have a 100% voter registration rate among their student athletes.

Townhall (Fall): The plan is to host a town hall with different elected officials or officials running for office. The hope is to use it as a way to educate students on what will be on the ballot for the midterms and to also register students to vote.

FALL in love with voting (Fall): This is the final big event before the deadline to register to vote online and by mail. The event will have food and cider and NARAL will have a table where they will help students register to vote, check their registration status, and change their voting address if needed.

Bagels and ballots (Fall): This event is focused on getting students better acquainted with their ballot and answering any question they have about filling out their ballot. Bagels will be given to students who fill out their sample ballot or engage in a discussion about voting.

Black Votes Matter Bus (Fall): This event will be run with Zeta Phi Beta Sorority and Inc. Rho Delta Zeta Chapter. Food and drinks will be provided for all attendees and will be a place to talk about the upcoming election and the issues that are important to students.

Ballot Proposals & Election Process (Fall): This event will be hosted by the League of Women Voters and will focus on the pros and cons of the three proposals on the ballot. They will also talk about Michigan's election process in general.

Voter Registration Labs (Fall): Voter registration labs will be held throughout the month of October and will focus on getting students registered to vote and answer any question they have about the upcoming election.

Ballot Box on campus (Fall): We will work with the city clerk's office to obtain a ballot box in the student center so that students living on or in the same district as Eastern can drop their absentee ballots. This will hopefully make voting more accessible to students and encourage them to vote.

Campus wide emails (Fall): The plan is to have a campus wide email to celebrate National Voter Registration Day to remind students to register to vote. We will also have emails throughout the semester to remind students of upcoming deadlines and important dates such as the deadline to register to vote online, to request an absentee ballot, and election day.

Wall painting event (Fall): The plan is to have an event where we paint the graffiti wall on campus to remind students to vote. We also hope to get students involved by allowing students to put their handprint on the wall as a pledge to vote.

Website with all this information (Fall and Winter): Eastern has a voting page on their website, but the plan is to draw more attention to it and to update it consistently so that students have access to the most up-to-date information.

NSLVE

Eastern Michigan University was not participating in the NSLVE program in the 2020 election, but we are now working on re-enrolling in the program for the 2022 Election.

REPORTING

For the leadership team, communications on efforts will come from Kaitlyn Savage. The team will have monthly meetings and will share reports and notes to the relevant members across campus following each meeting. Students will receive event announcements and resources through combined marketing efforts of EMU Student Government, the University marketing department, and Engage@EMU social media. These notifications will come in forms of

- University-wide emails
- Social media posts
- Flyers
- Lobby tables
- Campus announcement posts

The final external data will come from the NSLVE report, internally, event leads will track how many students are registered and attend educational events. This data will be reported following the 2022 Midterm Election. All information will be made public through a webpage on myemich.edu/engage and through the NSLVE report.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of our action plan is necessary to ensure that our team is following guidelines set by the law, the university and the Campus Democracy Challenge while interacting with and engaging as many students as possible. Ideally, we want to continue to raise the rates of voter registration and voter participation in our community, as done in previous years. Evaluation of the action plan will be carried out by the leading members of our team, Jessica Kewk from Student Government, Kaitlyn Savage and Jessica Alexander from Engage@EMU and Naomi Barbour and Alysha Rossetto from the Campus Voter Project. Our team will evaluate and plan for the following years.

The evaluation will be completed over the summer of each year. We will begin planning in the summer and begin the campaign in the fall and hold events all throughout the school year leading up to the election day that year. This year, we only were able to campaign one semester. The summer months can be used for planning and adjusting the action plan, while the fall and spring can be used to host events.

Our team will share the success of the voter registration task force and report any notable changes found in the NSLVE report on Engage@EMU social media pages and any other partners' socials that would like to share them. We will also create a google form after the semester is over to get feedback from members of the voter registration task force on how to improve this program and the events we held. Feedback and evaluation of data and events are the keys to improving civic engagement and voter registration rates in colleges and universities. We will also compile all the important data on the events in a google folder for the next Engage@EMU employee.