

# Florida Atlantic University Civic Action Plan



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## Executive Summary

Florida Atlantic University is committed to being a force for positive change by engaging in civic learning and democratic engagement in its various communities. We look to achieve this by leveraging the knowledge and expertise of our faculty, staff, and students, along with the resources of the community partners in authentic engagement for mutual benefit.

As Florida Atlantic University strives to maintain the prestigious Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, the ultimate goal of this civic engagement plan is to create civically-minded and socially responsible students and alumni by bringing together curricular and co-curricular programs and experiences. The Roadmap to Civic Engagement for Florida Atlantic University incorporates elements of curricular and co-curricular service-learning and civic engagement, as well as resources directed specifically to continuing to build a culture of voter engagement at FAU.

This plan incorporates the definition of civic engagement from the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) as defined in Ehrlich, 2000:

“Civic engagement is working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community.

To accomplish this, the Civic Action Plan centers around five themes:

- Community Partnerships
- Voter Engagement and Literacy
- Experiential Programs
- Faculty and Staff Engagement
- Equity and Social Justice

FAU is an institution with a footprint that spans over 100 miles of coastline in southeast Florida, across a 4-county service area with students attending campuses in Dania Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Davie, Jupiter, and Fort Pierce, and the main campus in Boca Raton. Re-envisioning democratic engagement for the 21<sup>st</sup> century involves utilizing various platforms including online, in-person, and hybrid approaches.

Additionally, this plan serves to support the *Pillars* and *Platforms* of the university’s Strategic Plan which strive to “create knowledge that benefits society”. This plan was assembled in alignment with FAU’s *A Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence 2015-2025* and lives out the Mission of the institution, which states:

Florida Atlantic University is a multi-campus public research university that pursues excellence in its missions of research, scholarship, creative activity, teaching, and active engagement with its communities.

This action plan addresses short and long-term goals. FAU strives to have year-round non-partisan civic engagement in election years and non-election years. Goals are set and benchmarked utilizing data from the NSLVE report which comes out every 2 years corresponding with the election cycle.

Our short-term goals include building more relationships with various populations of students. This includes aiming to work with student organizations across the five councils of student organizations including academic, multicultural/spiritual, fraternity & sorority, sports, and special interests. Part of this goal also includes outreach to commuter students by working with the iCommute Student Life Program which offers a variety of programs where we can promote civic engagement. Intentional partnerships have also been planned with the Office of First-Generation Student Success, Transfer Student Services, and Student Accessibility Services to plan collaborations that will further provide civic engagement resources to various student populations.

Additional goals include building upon our relationship with the Supervisor of the Elections Office. One of the goals of the Campus Vote Project Democracy fellows is to increase involvement with the Supervisor of Elections Office and plan to invite representatives to participate in events for National Voter Registration Day and National Voter Education Week. Student leaders are also working on sending letters to the Supervisor of Elections office to express their support and advocate to keep an early voting site at the FAU Boca Raton Campus. By making more of these connections this year and in the short term, we hope that the connections will create long-term partnerships for ongoing resources and support.

FAU has worked to strengthen the partnership between the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs to further develop a holistic approach of civic engagement that brings social issues from outside the classroom into inside of the classroom. Connections have been made with faculty that are teaching courses that are designated as academic service-learning. The Academic Service-Learning Program incorporates direct, hands-on engagement in the local community that brings students together with local community partners to address a specific social issue. At FAU, we currently have over 200 courses spread across all of our academic colleges that combine real-world experience, academic instruction, and a desire to make our community a better place. Each of these courses have to meet the minimum university requirements including, but not limited to, "Purposeful Civic Engagement" which means that the projects students get involved in should be designed to have them practice the learning strategies and/or class content that meets course learning objectives. Examples of these courses include: Communication & Civic Life (SPC 4271), Seminar In Criminal Justice Policy Analysis (CCJ 6485) where students engage in a semester-long civic engagement projects.

Collaborations between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs create events that allow students to share different points of view and perspectives on current/trending topics. Examples of some of these programs include hybrid panels/speakers for Constitution Week featuring expert faculty

and staff as well as local government officials and national correspondents. In person and virtual events are being planned on all campuses for National Voter Registration Day.

FAU will also be promoting opportunities for students, faculty and staff to participate in the primary and general elections and emphasize voting early at either our on campus voting site or local polling site. This will be promoted through email campaigns and newsletters as well as virtual, in person, hybrid events and tabling. Student Government has an active role in civic engagement and plans to include resources for voter registration as part of their tabling and events. Student Government has a contract with the rideshare organization Lyft, which can be utilized to help address the barrier of transportation needs to take students to their polling location.

The Weppner Center works closely with the Center for Inclusion, Diversity, Education and Advocacy (IDEAs) to highlight the experiences of traditionally marginalized groups through intentional interactions aimed at fostering awareness and cultivating new perspectives. By offering quality programs and educational opportunities to all students, we create a campus climate that values differences and promotes equity.

Civic engagement is part of social justice week which is planned annually in January. The Weppner Center has been involved through the collaboration for the MLK Day of Service and Diversity Address which features a keynote speaker to inspire students and staff to not only serve their community but be a part of the change they want to see. This week also includes the We Lead Diversity Matters Conference which aims to broaden participants' cultural fluency while also promoting informed and effective social justice advocacy. This past year staff from the Weppner Center presented on Social Media Vs. The Movement which discussed the pros and cons of social media in the realm of activism and slacktivism. The presentation included examples and discussion about how social media influences voting and generational democratic engagement.

Also, part of Social Justice Week is Tunnel Vision which is a multi-sensory experience where students walk through interactive displays including a display on voting rights and voter suppression. In the past students have volunteered to help create this display and we are planning more ways to enhance this partnership. This may also include the new Office for Black Student Success and Initiatives which we look forward to partnering with as well.

The Weppner Center is planning collaborations with office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning and Allyship to host events that discuss legislation affecting the LGBTQ+ Community. We are working on a virtual event in June for Pride month and exploring formats for an event in October as part of LGBTQ+ history month. We are also planning collaborations for World AIDS Day in December. World AIDS Day serves as a platform to inspire action through education, testing, and volunteering with the Compass Community Center as well as raise awareness about social issues.

Florida Atlantic University is a Hispanic Serving Institution and through partnerships with the Office of Hispanic/Latina/o/x Initiatives we have created various programs to enhance experiences for Hispanic/Latina/o/x students including civic engagement. National Voter Registration Day falls during Hispanic Heritage Month. Many of our marketing materials

including posters, videos and campaigns have featured Spanish and other languages to be inclusive. Partnerships also include days of service where we have worked with organizations such as the Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC), El Sol and Cross Ministries to explore social issues such as immigrant labor workers and the fair food alliance. We have also collaborated to host interactive programs such as the Hunger Banquet which explores hunger on a global scale with reflection of how to get involved in your local community including through volunteering and voting.

## **Leadership**

FAU has a working group consisting of diverse stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, and spanning across the division of academic affairs and student affairs to provide a multitude of points of view as we aim to reach a wide range of individuals and intersecting identities.

- Lindsey Goldstein, Assistant Director, Weppner Center for Civic Engagement and Service-Learning
- Renee Fellingner, Associate Director, Office of Leadership Education and Development (Lead)
- Donald Vanpelt, Director, Student Activities and Involvement
- Juan Izaguirre, Director, Center for Inclusion, Diversity, Education and Advocacy
- Marlynn Lopez, Associate Director, Office of Hispanic Latina/o/a/x Initiatives
- Jamaise Jones, Assistant Director, Office of LGBTQ+ Initiatives and Allyship
- Aaron Hackman, Associate Director, Broward Campus Life
- Ashley Erickson, Associate Director, Student Accessibility Services
- Dax Boatwright, Assistant Director, Transfer Student Services
- Keven Allen, Director, First-Generation Student Success
- Dr. Kevin Wagner- Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science (Constitution Day Planning committee and classroom presentations)

- Dr. Dilys Schoorman- Department of Curriculum, Culture and Educational Inquiry (Classroom presentations)
- Dr. Karen Leader- Associate Professor of Art History, Department of Visual and Art History (Classroom presentation and events to pre-register Barb Schmidt Fellows)
- Dr. Katie Burke- Professor of Leadership and Social Change Class and Executive Director of New Student Transitions and Family Engagement (Classroom Presentation)
- Dr. Evelyn Frazier- Professor of Biological Sciences (Collaboration/Planning for previous and upcoming service projects)
- Aloha Balza Montes, Coordinator-Office of Community Engagement (Liaison to Academic Service-Learning Professors)
- Academic Service-Learning Professors

Students Advocating Volunteer Involvement (SAVI) is a Student Government program that provides community service and leadership opportunities to all interested students. SAVI promotes a positive environment through volunteerism and community engagement. SAVI also assists clubs and other student organizations in their community service efforts. SAVI is based on the Boca Raton, Broward, and Jupiter campuses.

SAVI is advised by the Weppner Center for Civic Engagement and Service-Learning. SAVI and the Weppner Center co-host days of service throughout the year, centered around a variety of social issues. The academic year begins with Red and Blue Day of Service (formerly Weeks of Welcome) followed by Homecoming Day of Service and Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.

In addition to the larger days of service, SAVI hosts ongoing projects where students serve various organizations in the community. Some examples of projects being planned include exploring partnerships with the student Organization SEEDS (Strategies for Ecology, Education, Diversity, and Sustainability) and the College of Science to create ongoing volunteer opportunities with our on-campus trail and garden. This has the potential to inspire students to become more environmentally minded and want to work toward more civic action around environmental issues. Student Government has also recently created a sustainability action committee which SAVI will be working closely with to further provide connections to civic engagement resources.

SAVI and the Weppner Center plan to create more partnerships with registered student organizations. This can be done by working with the Council of Student Organizations to expand outreach and resources relating to participating in service and community engagement. An

example of an event being planned to increase partnerships with student organizations is vOwlunteer Tank. This entails having student organizations pitch their ideas of community engagement projects and having a panel of students, faculty and staff select the most comprehensive ones to fund and assist with implementing. By getting more students involved in service relating to their passion areas they will be able to build upon their interest to take civic action.

A goal is to work more with the Council of Student Organizations to bring in more student organizations. Aim to work with student organizations across the five councils of student organizations including academic, multicultural/spiritual, fraternity & sorority, sports, and special interest. We plan to partner with at least 3 new student organizations which will bring new ways to connect and collaborate missions toward civic engagement. Potential New Student Organizations Some potential new student organizations we plan to reach out to include: Crystal Queer, LatinA/O/X Student Union, Owls Speech and Debate, Owls for Social Change, Green Wings of FAU Broward

FAU has been able to expand its outreach by partnering with community and national nonprofit and government organizations. FAU was selected to be one of 40 campuses in the nation to be part of the Campus Vote Project to participate in the MTV Early Vote Challenge. Through this program, FAU has been awarded a \$3,000 grant to assist with funding programs relating to non-partisan voter engagement and education. In addition, this partnership has provided funds to hire two students as Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellows. These students will receive hands-on guidance from the Campus Vote Project as well as university staff to advocate for voting resources with an emphasis on early voting. This will include promoting summer primary registration deadlines as well as planning events for Vote Early Day and Election Day for the general election in the Fall.

In the 2020 Election, Florida Atlantic University was among one of the top ten universities on the Conference USA leaderboard for the All-In Pledge to Vote Challenge. FAU plans to continue its partnership with All In Democracy Challenge and promote the campaign to get students, faculty and staff to pledge to vote.

New partnerships with the Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) will allow Florida Atlantic University to utilize their free voter registration tool StudentVote.Org. Utilizing this resource will allow us to access the data of how many students are registering to vote and especially how many new voters are registering for the first time.

We also plan to work with The Civic Life Project to participate in the Democracy Youth Film Challenge. The Democracy Youth Film Challenge provides a platform for students to create short videos and documentaries examining important social issues. By having students create videos for this challenge, we will be able to further see which social issues are important to students and connect them to corresponding civic engagement resources and ways to take action.

Representatives from the Supervisor of Elections Office have come to campus to table and participate in panel events. In the past we have worked with Blaine Moss the Communications Coordinator Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections Office who works for Wendy Link the Supervisor of Elections. We helped promote events hosted by the Supervisor of Elections Office

such as the “Let's Taco About Elections” event at Tijuana Flats where participants enjoyed complimentary tacos while learning about upcoming elections.

One of the goals of the Campus Vote Project Democracy fellows is to increase involvement with the Supervisor of Elections Office and plan to invite representatives to participate in events for National Voter Registration Day and National Voter Education Week. Student leaders are also working on sending letters to the Supervisor of Elections office to express their support and advocate to keep an early voting site at the FAU Boca Raton Campus.

Strengths of the students and staff members involved is creativity in their approach to providing voter education. An example of this can be seen through the gamification of teaching concepts relating to voting such as spinning a wheel to answer trivia questions and playing Connect Four with chips numbered to reflect teaching about districts and electoral college voting systems.

Another strength is our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusivity. In addition to the previously mentioned programs we partner with for various events, we have also worked with Student Accessibility Services, Center for Inclusion, Diversity, Education and Advocacy and the Office of Student Media to promote civic engagement through videos and digital resources such as “Why Owls Vote” and “FAU Your Voice Counts”. Having these videos and digital content reflect the diversity of our students is extremely important and at the forefront of all of our efforts. Many of our video campaigns feature clips in various languages including Spanish, Creole, American Sign Language and more to further showcase the representation of the diverse populations at FAU. All videos and virtual events also include closed captioning. These best practices plan to be implemented as we make future videos such as for the Democracy Youth Film Challenge and other digital content.

New connections are being explored to plan days of service and civic engagement resources with our Transfer Student population. 33% of Florida Atlantic University students transfer from other institutions. Since they are coming from another institution, they may have been registered to vote in the county of their previous institution and through this intentional partnership, we can provide local voting resources including how they can update their registration.

Partnerships are continuing to be planned with the Office of First-Generation and Student Success. About 30% of students at Florida Atlantic University are the first generation. Many of these students are not only the first in their family to go to college but also the first in their family to vote. Planning days of service with these students will allow them to learn about social issues in the community first hand.

We also work with the Upward Bound program which is designed to help high school students who are academically talented and from traditionally underserved backgrounds. Many students do not know they can pre-register to vote at age 16. By getting them pre-registered to vote they are able to better make future plans to vote and be more informed about social issues as they also participate in service projects addressing the needs of the community.

We also have reached out to Student Accessibility Services to work on planning ways to participate in Disability Voting Rights Week. This year, Disability Voting Rights Week is September 12-16, 2022. In 2020, an estimated 38 million people with disabilities were eligible to



vote. FAU Student Accessibility Services university-wide worked with 1,196 students this past year. FAU works with students with all types of disabilities and it is important that they know their rights such as that all voting sites are required to be ADA compliant. For all events, we will continue to provide accessible options and include an accessibility statement and provide contact information for students to be able to request accommodations if needed to participate.

As a designee of the university president, Dr. Larry Faerman, Vice President of Student Affairs, serves as an advocate for civic engagement and shares efforts of voter registration and pledges to vote throughout the university. With his support we have strengthened the partnership between the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs to further develop a holistic approach of civic engagement. FAU plans to continue to feature voter registration information and voter pledge information on the academic platform Canvas as well as the extracurricular platform Owl Central/Engage.

## **Commitment**

Community and civic engagement is woven into the FAU culture. It is explicitly prioritized within its mission and vision statements, demonstrating its long-term commitment to contributing its resources to collaboratively finding solutions to societal issues. The 2006-2013 and the 2012-2015 strategic plan - “Making Waves: Celebrating and Cultivating Discovery, Diversity, and Distinction” included community engagement in the mission and vision statements and was a primary goal for the two prior FAU presidents and the FAU Board of Trustees.

This current strategic plan was built with substantial input from faculty, staff, students, and community partners. President Kelly and Provost Perry met individually with all 63 academic departments, 17 support units, 12 student organizations, and numerous community leaders and organizations to inform the development of the 2015-2025 strategic plan. This input was crucial to bringing community engagement to the forefront of the university’s day-to-day tasks and in finding the most appropriate ways to operationalize it. The involvement of the community, faculty, staff, students, and the university leadership, in defining and strategizing community engagement at FAU, has produced a significant increase in engaging activities as collaborative partnerships have been made a priority across the institution.

In an age when nearly everything feels politically charged and polarized, it is essential that we come together to dissolve *us vs. them* construct and reaffirm our shared humanity through the fundamentals of civil discourse. An ongoing series called the Breezeway Dialogues was established in the Summer of 2021 with this exact goal in mind: to provide FAU students the opportunity to discuss relevant and controversial topics while learning civil discourse best practices. To ensure all dialogues remain relevant and meaningful, student voices must be the guiding force behind this series. The first step to identify the controversial topics FAU students most want to discuss. More than 400 students completed a University-wide survey to identify the most pressing topics and determine the right time and frequency to hold these important discussions. Each dialogue features a moderator and multiple panelists who present opposing sides of a selected topic. Following the panelist presentations, discussion is opened to the

audience members, who may pose questions for the panelists, offer additional commentary to either viewpoint or share an additional position on the topic.

On the FAU Community Engagement classification application, there is a question on the application that specifically asks: “Does the institution encourage and measure student voter registration and voting”? There is also a sub-question that asks, “describe the methods for encouraging and measuring student voter registration and voting”. FAU does encourage and measure student voter registration and voting, through the Weppner Center for LEAD and Service-Learning, with the official measurement tool being the nationally recognized NSLVE report. In terms of promotion, this takes the form of encouragement of students to vote by staff; however, there is also an opportunity for faculty to continue promoting in their classes, as evidenced by the disciplines that have increased rates of student voter registration and turnout.

The Division of Research, the Division of Academic Affairs through the Office of Community Engagement, and the Division of Student Affairs support staff, faculty and students involved in engaged research by providing individual and group advising opportunities, grant writing workshops, editing services and internal grant money to get the projects started. Examples of these projects include collaborative work with the Palm Beach County, Broward County, and St. Lucie County Public School Boards, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, the City of Dania Beach among many others.

Additionally, this plan serves to support the *Pillars* and *Platforms* of the university's Strategic Plan which strive to “create knowledge that benefits society”. This plan was assembled in alignment with FAU's *A Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence 2015-2025* and live out the Mission of the institution, which states:

**Mission:**

Florida Atlantic University is a multi-campus public research university that pursues excellence in its missions of research, scholarship, creative activity, teaching, and active engagement with its communities.

**Vision:**

“Florida Atlantic University aspires to be recognized as a university known for excellent and accessible undergraduate and graduate education, distinguished for the quality of its programs across multiple campuses and classified as a very high research institution that is internationally acclaimed for its contributions to creativity and research as well as its collaborations with regional partners.”

In 2016, FAU gained the designation as a “Voter-Friendly Campus” and has maintained an action plan yearly. The Voter Friendly Campus designation program was started through a partnership between Fair Elections Center's Campus Vote Project and NASPA LEAD Initiative. The goal of the Voter Friendly Campus program is to help institutions develop democratic engagement action plans that coordinate administrators, faculty, and student organizations in civic and electoral engagement.

ASL Assessment Survey: this mechanism focuses on the effects of student engagement with our community on their academic success through their participation in an ASL course. Since Fall 2014, the survey has been administered every semester. It was designed to assess the impact of ASL practices on student attitudes toward community involvement and the development of practical skills. From the Spring 2018 survey, students report that they "gained/developed/learned" the following through their participation in an ASL course: effective communication (80.56%), effective leadership (69.44%), social responsibility (72.22%), appreciation of diversity (69.44%), enhance self-understanding (72.22%), critical thinking (80.56%).

Collaborations between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs create events that allow students to share different points of view and perspectives on current/trending topics. Examples of some of these programs include hybrid panels/speakers for Constitution Week featuring expert faculty and staff as well as local government officials and national correspondents. In-person and virtual events have been planned on all campuses for National Voter Registration Day. Examples of this event in the past have included distribution of non-partisan vote t-shirts with the QR code on them to register to vote and a virtual event called the Evolution of Voting which featured faculty and staff presenters interactively teaching milestones in voting rights from the 1700s to the present. An assessment from this event showed that as a result of attending the program 97% of attendees strongly agreed to the learning outcomes of increased knowledge of how the right to vote evolved in the United States, the importance of voting and about available resources related to voting.

At the departmental level, community input varies by college. Examples are:

The Department of Civil, Environmental & Geomatics Engineering has a Departmental Advisory Board that is comprised of members of industry, regulatory agencies, and public entities. The Board represents over 20 different organizations that advises and assists the faculty with the continuous improvement process, among other functions. The Board's mandate to advise and assist in curriculum development and improvement is clearly stated in the first two objectives of its bylaws:

1. To advise the Department of the professional requirements of private enterprise and government and the implications of those requirements upon the curriculum; and
2. To provide a forum in which teaching, research, professional development, and academic excellence can discuss the needs of the profession and related industries.

The Board is an active constituency involved in nearly all aspects of the Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering program – from teaching to mentoring, and as such, directly affect and are affected by all four Program Educational Objectives. The Board meets at least twice a year, usually at the end of Fall and Spring semesters. The meeting incorporates final design presentations given by students in the CGN 4804C CECE Design 2 course (an ASL course).

Plans are being made to launch a new civic engagement graduation cord program. This will entail creating a form that students can use to track which civic engagement events they attend with a corresponding co-curricular calendar and ways to earn the cord to wear at graduation. This

will aim to get students to create a plan to participate in civic engagement events and increase the ability to build upon voter literacy and education through consistent engagement.

Through 2021-2022 efforts have been made to expand outreach to community partners utilizing the platform Noblehour. Several pieces of training and workshops have been hosted to teach community partners and students how to utilize Noblehour as a one-stop shop to find volunteer opportunities and log their service hours. Also, through a collaboration with the FAU Career Center to use their Handshake platform to reach out to employers to see if in addition to looking for students to hire they would also be looking for students to volunteer and get connected with civic engagement projects. By expanding our database of community partners, further outreach can be done to invite them to come to campus to participate in events such as the volunteer fair. Through this event community partners are able to showcase their various missions and promote upcoming and ongoing volunteer opportunities and ways students can get involved with their cause.

In addition to ongoing days of service, FAU has an alternative break program known as Owl Breaks. The Owl Breaks program is an immersive experience that takes place during university breaks and offers students the chance to “dive deeper” into a social issue around the state of Florida, and regionally. Past social issues that Owl Break trips centered around included: disaster relief, children’s health awareness, food insecurity, housing affordability, and much more. To increase the number of students who can participate in Owl Breaks, the format has been adapted to allow a series of single day and weekend experiences. By getting more students involved in service relating to their passion areas they will be able to build upon their interest to take civic action.

Additional partnerships are being explored with the FAU College of Business to connect to their Business Mentor Program. The FAU Business Mentoring Program is designed to bring together business students and business professionals that share common professional interests. The Weppner Center is working with the College of Business to expand its outreach to non-profit organizations to be utilized for mentorship, developed as a potential career path, and have students log corresponding service hours on Noblehour. These mentoring relationships will enable business students to be better equipped as they explore varied career paths and make connections in their community as they navigate the early years of professional life.

We plan to continue our partnership with Campus Compact and utilize more of their resources. Some of these resources include submitting our action plan for further review, participating in communities of practice, credential programs, affinity networks, and more. We also plan to explore connections utilizing the Compact2Learn resources such as the syllabus library, engaged scholar initiative, community-based global learning initiative, and more.

## **Landscape**

To facilitate institutional growth in the areas of democratic and civic engagement, the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education at Tufts University in Boston, MA facilitates the National Study of Learning and Voter Engagement (NSLVE) report that is offered to institutions to get a closer look at their student voting habits. From the 2020 election cycle, as evidenced in our NSLVE report, FAU reported a 71.1% voting rate (which reflects an increase of 11% from the

2016 election cycle). This is also 5.1 percentage points higher than the all institution national average for 2020. FAU Increased the voting rate across all race/ethnicity demographics and was awarded the All In Democracy Challenge Gold Seal. According to the NSLVE report, an area where FAU had a decrease by 5% was early voter turnout. FAU plans to emphasize efforts to increase early voter turnout.

Academic service-learning is more than a volunteer activity; it integrates community service with instruction and reflection. It is designed to enrich the learning experience through hands-on activity and to teach civic responsibility. Academic service-learning requires students to apply what they learn in the classroom and to reflect on their experiences by thinking, discussing, and writing about them. It teaches students how to apply academic knowledge to real-life civic issues, promotes teamwork and collaborative problem-solving, develops life skills, and makes learning more personally meaningful.

Courses with civic engagement components span across the College of Arts and Letters, College of Business, College of Education, College of Engineering and Computer Science, Honors College, College of Nursing, College of Medicine, College of Science, and the College of Social Work and Criminal Justice. Below is a link to the full Academic Service-Learning Catalog which lists the specific courses with a learning outcome related to civic engagement.

ASL Course Catalog <https://www.fau.edu/community/student/asl.php>

The Student Activities and Involvement Department houses the Council of Student Organizations (COSO). COSO is the body that oversees and assists registered student organizations on each campus by providing services, equipment, funding, and showcase opportunities. Florida Atlantic University has over 400 student organizations across 5 councils of student organizations including academic, multicultural/spiritual, fraternity & sorority, sports, and special interest. Some student organizations that emphasize civic learning and democratic engagement include Student Government, Be Involved in Government (BIG), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, College Republicans and Young Democratic Socialists of America, and more.

Owl Central Catalog of Student Organizations <https://fau.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations>

Having an accessible voting site on the FAU Boca Raton Campus has been a resource contributing to civic engagement success. Having a voting site on campus removes barriers to voting for students whose busy class and work schedules often make it difficult to vote on Election Day. Florida is also a vote-by-mail state and we promote deadlines and details relating to voting by mail to allow students this option. This is especially helpful for students from partner campuses where there is not a voting site located on campus. Voting habits start early and making early voting accessible to them as they are starting out as new voters and community members is an important part of our civic education goals.

SB 7066, Florida's new voting law, included a new clause regarding the responsibilities of polling locations and election supervisors. It requires that there be "sufficient non-permitted parking to accommodate the anticipated amount of voters" at early voting polling locations.

Florida's college campuses provided early polling access for almost 60,000 voters in the last national election. However, on many college campuses, that kind of parking is unavailable and many student voters live on campus or do not own cars.

According to the 2020 NSLVE Report, FAU increased voting across all demographic groups.

FAU is a Hispanic Serving Institution, according to the 2020 NSLVE report 8,281 students who Identify as Hispanic were enrolled at FAU and 67% of them voted in the 2020 Election. Intentional partnership with the Office of Hispanic/Latina/o/x Initiatives has provided voter information in Spanish as well as other languages. Signature programs such as the Futuros Retreat focus on advocacy for the Latina/o/x voice which includes getting involved in ways to make a difference.

According to the 2020 NSLVE report 5,856 students who Identify as Black were enrolled at FAU and 70% of them voted in the 2020 Election. FAU hosted an event called Black Orgs Rock which brings together various black-led student organizations to amplify their voices and provide resources to promote their involvement on campus and in the community.

Another demographic is age group. According to the 2020 NSLVE data the majority age group was 18-21 years olds to 14,013 students enrolled and 68% of them voted. While this is the majority demographic there were also increases in voter turnout across the 22-24, 25-29, 30-39, 40-49 and the 50+ age groups. FAU has been named a member of the Age-Friendly University (AFU) Global Network. The AFU network consists of institutions of higher education around the globe that have endorsed the AFU principles and committed themselves to become more age-friendly in its programs and policies. Members of the network have a shared challenge to promote an inclusive approach to healthy and active aging through research, enhanced learning opportunities for people across generations, and innovations that address issues affecting older adults. FAU has established Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLI) at its Boca Raton, Jupiter, and Fort Lauderdale campuses that are dedicated to offering intellectually enriching educational experiences. The centers offer non-credit courses and programs, along with concerts and entertainment. The courses are taught by FAU professors and distinguished guest lecturers.

## **Goals**

A long-term goal for Florida Atlantic University is to maintain the prestigious Carnegie Foundation Classification. FAU was named one of 119 U.S. colleges and universities to receive the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification for 2020. This classification is awarded every five years following a process of self-study by each institution, which is then assessed by a national review committee led by the Swearer Center for Public Engagement at Brown University, the administrative and research home for the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.

A long term vision over the next 10 years for Florida Atlantic University to increase from being a Gold Seal institution (currently in the 70%-80% student voter participation range) to becoming a Platinum Seal institution (80%-90% student voter participation range).

To achieve this, we plan to expand outreach to more populations at FAU. A population we can increase civic engagement efforts with is Commuter Students. The iCommute Student Life Program offers a variety of programs and services such as the Commuter Check-In, Lunch and Learn series, Wake Up Wednesdays, and more. By having a table with interactive civic engagement resources and activities we have the potential to tap into one of FAU's largest populations since FAU is a majority commuter campus. In the past, we have provided civic engagement resources to be included in move-in bags for our residential students but we plan to increase our targeted efforts for our commuter population which could lead to increased voter registration and voter turnout.

An additional population we can work more with is our graduate student population. According to the NSLVE Report, there were 4,737 graduate students enrolled at Florida Atlantic University for the 2020 election and 71% of them voted. We will be able to reach more of our graduate student population by working with the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA). GPSA represents FAU's graduate and professional student population. GPSA advocates for the unique voices/needs of graduate-professional students through a unified and representative body with programs such as travel grants, research grants, workshops, social events, networking opportunities, as well as representation on university committees.

We also have reached out to Student Accessibility Services to work on planning ways to participate in Disability Voting Rights Week. This year, Disability Voting Rights Week is September 12-16, 2022. In 2020, an estimated 38 million people with disabilities were eligible to vote. FAU Student Accessibility Services university-wide worked with 1,196 students this past year. FAU works with students with all types of disabilities and they must know their rights such as that all voting sites are required to be ADA compliant. For all events we will continue to provide accessible options and include an accessibility statement and provide contact information for students to be able to request accommodations if needed to participate.

The next three years will include primary and general election years. Maintaining a campus culture of prioritized civic engagement means continuing efforts to register students to vote and make pledges to vote even during times when there is not an election. To stay on track to meet our long-term goal we need to continue year-round non-partisan civic engagement by hosting civic engagement programs at least once a month. This also includes maintaining voter education and engagement across in-person, virtual and hybrid platforms.

## **Strategy**

Efforts to ask every student about registering to vote include new initiatives in partnership with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in which during their intake/initial meeting with their SAS Consultant they will be allowed to register to vote or to update their voter registration (if needed). Students will be able to request accommodations and complete the provided form and SAS sends the form in. A potential future strategy to explore if a similar approach can be implemented when students meet with their academic advisor to be asked if they are registered to vote or need to update their registration. Continued efforts to ask every student about their voter registration will be included during a presentation during orientation. Voter registration and ways to get involved in civic engagement will be featured during virtual and in-person orientation

sessions throughout the Summer as well as during orientations for students joining in the Spring.

Below are some of the events as part of our strategy to celebrate civic holidays and promote deadlines:

- **June 28th- LGBTQ Legislation Instagram Live**  
In honor of the anniversary of the Stonewall riots, the Weppner Center for Civic Engagement and Service-Learning will host an Instagram Live With the Office of LGBTQ+ Initiatives and Allyship to discuss recent legislation relating to the LGBTQ+ Population. We will also discuss ways to overcome barriers such as making sure your voter registration matches the name on your identification card.
- **July 25th Primary Election Registration Deadline**  
The week leading up to the primary election deadline, virtual communication and reminders will be sent out on various listservs and newsletters. (This will be during Summer 3 and will include civic engagement in the various events including the Summer Student Life Showcase a few weeks prior on July 6th)
- **August 8th- 23rd Early Voting and Primary Election**  
For Florida voters to be able to elect a member to the U.S. Senate in November, they must narrow down the candidates for each party through the primary election. We plan to work with our Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellows to raise awareness about the primary election and promote either our on-campus on voting site or the nearest polling location.. .
- **September 12th-September 16th National Disability Voting Rights Week**  
Work with Student Accessibility Services to host an event showcasing resources and laws related to disability voting rights. Below are some of the events we can highlight through a virtual and in-person event showcasing the evolution of disability voting rights
  - The Voters Rights Act of 1965, permitted people who need a reader to bring in a person of his/her choosing to assist them.
  - In 1984, the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act required an alternate voter site to be available if a site is inaccessible.
  - The 1990 Americans With Disabilities Act requires equal access at all polling places in every step of the election process.
  - In 1993, the Voters Registration Act focused on registering more Americans with disabilities.
  - In 2002, the [Help America Vote Act \(HAVA\)](#) addressed more than just equal access, it addressed equal opportunity to vote. This means that people with disabilities have the right to privacy and independence when voting
- **September 15-19 Constitution Day/Week**
  - o Virtual and In-Person Speaker
  - o Breezeway Dialogues: Diverse Viewpoints through Civil Discourse
  - o 9th Annual Robert J. Bailyn Symposium on the First Amendment



- **September 20th National Voter Registration Day**
  - In-Person event on all Campuses
  - Virtual promoting of voter registration and interactive trivia such as a Kahoot
  - “I Vote Because” posters/social media posts
  - Boca- Partner with the Program Board to table next to Bluesday Table. Bluesday is an event every Tuesday where students who are wearing FAU gear receive a free FAU t-shirt. Potentially order voting-related t-shirts or items to promote voter registration
  - Invite representative from the Supervisor of Elections office or do a virtual event with them
- **October 3-7 National Voter Education Week**
  - #Voteready social media challenge to share facts about voting
  - Oct. 5th- Partner with Commuter Student Life to Promote Civic Engagement at Wake Up Wednesday to outreach to students at the parking garage
  - Grad Student Event?
  - Provide Voter Education information at the Domestic Violence Awareness Events/ Service Project
  - Invite a representative from the Supervisor of Elections office or do a virtual event with them
- **October 28 Vote Early Day- “Donut Delay, Vote Early Today”**
  - Order various types of donuts. Each type of donut will correspond to a fact about voting and provide resources to vote early
- **November 8th Election Day- “ The Power of a Vote- Domino Effect”**
  - Create a chain reaction display using dominos- Message that each vote matters and is part of a larger picture

## **Reporting Evaluation**

Florida Atlantic University’s NSLVE Report is public through the All In Campus Democracy Challenge Website. A goal for the upcoming year is to also share our civic action plan with Campus Compact and have it be public through their website. This plan will also be shared at Student Activities and Involvement department meetings as well as with departments from the Broward Campuses and Jupiter Campus. Civic engagement efforts and highlights will be shared on the FAU Lead and Serve Social media page which can be re-shared by various departments and student organizations within the university. In addition, the plan will be shared with Student Government and the Campus Vote Project Democracy fellows so that students are aware of resources and data and have an active role in implementing strategies to create a university-wide culture of prioritized civic engagement to make a difference on campus and in the community.