

# FIU

## FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

### Civic Action Plan 2022



## Overview

Florida International University (FIU) is a Carnegie Classified Institution with the Community Engaged Campus Designation. This classification recognizes institutions that demonstrate a distinctive institutional focus on engagement in local, national, and global communities. The FIU Civic Action Plan will focus its efforts on preparing students and providing them experiences for a life of active citizenship, capacity building, and to become civic leaders long after they graduate. We aspire to encourage student engagement and to continue to lay the groundwork to be selected again as a Voter Friendly Campus. The Civic Action Plan is a representation for FIU to expand civic engagement and leadership on our campus. In putting this plan together, we reflected on our first year participating in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge and secured partnerships with various groups, programs, and partners to continue the growth and collaboration. During our first year participating in the challenge, we developed a solid foundation and increased our campus engagement. We continue to boost civic engagement and voter turnout by enriching the student experience and immersing them in a collection of curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities.

Despite the post-pandemic challenges we face, FIU has developed a solid foundation from its previous year's successes. As an institution, we continue to commit, make a difference, and create meaningful impacts. Our goals for this year are to host a variety of activities focused on voter education awareness, voter turnout opportunities, and engage our students to be civic leaders and advocates. We are deeply excited to collaborate with the Maurice A. Ferré Institute for Civic Leadership, newly launched last year, to deepen the connections with Student Life and Development, plan events that enhance and promote civic engagement, and improve our marketing efforts. Reaching these goals will set the FIU community on a path to attain long-term impact through engaged learning, civic engagement, and awareness.

## FIU Mission Statement

Florida International University is an urban, multi-campus, public research university serving its students and the diverse population of South Florida. We are committed to high-quality teaching, state-of-the-art research and creative activity, and collaborative engagement with our local and global communities.

## FIU Values

Truth — in the pursuit, generation, dissemination, and application of knowledge

Freedom — of thought and expression

Respect — for diversity and the dignity of the individual

Responsibility — as stewards of the environment and citizens of the world

Excellence — in intellectual, personal, and operational endeavors

## Coalition

In 2019, FIU established the Democratic Engagement Committee as part of the Voter Friendly Campus Civic Action Plan. The Democratic Engagement Committee is comprised of campus-wide leaders, administrators, students, and academic units. The committee is led by the Office of Analysis and Information and the Center for Leadership & Service, in the Division of Academic & Student Affairs. This collaboration between the Office of Analysis and Information Management (AIM) and the Center for Leadership and Service (CLS) was established to ensure that there was seamless integration between the actions taken and the data that was collected and analyzed.

The committee will be co-chaired by Hiselgis Perez, Associate Vice President for the Office Analysis and Information Management, and Patricia Lopez-Guerrero, Director of the Center for Leadership & Service. The goals of the committee are to increase voter awareness, registration, and engagement for students at FIU.

- Hiselgis Perez, Associate Vice President, Analysis and Information Management
- Patricia Lopez-Guerrero, Director, Center for Leadership and Service
- Bridgette Cram, Assistant Vice President for Academic & Student Affairs
- Caryn Lavernia, Assistant Vice President, Office of Community Engagement
- Eduardo Merille, Assistant Vice President, Office of External Relations
- Rafael Prohias, Senior University Counsel
- Agatha Caraballo, Director of the Maurice A. Ferré Institute for Civic Leadership
- Valerie Patterson, Associate Professor and Director of African & African Diaspora Studies, Public Policy and Administration, School of International and Public Affairs
- Pablo Menvielle, Project Coordinator, Analysis and Information Management
- Anthony Dick, Professor, Psychology, College of Arts, Sciences, and Education
- Joan Marn, Assistant Professor, Dietetics and Nutrition, Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work
- David Roberts, Senior Digital Designer, Strategic Communications, Government, and External Affairs
- Monica Bustinza, Graduate Student, Public Policy and Administration, School of International and Public Affairs
- Student Representatives from on campus organizations

The Voter Friendly Democratic Engagement Committee is charged with multiple responsibilities: meeting at least once per term, collaborating on their Microsoft Teams site, and capturing campus-wide Civic Learning & Democratic Engagement. As a group, they evaluated FIU's National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report and data on voting engagement to identify recommendations for improvement. The group's analysis of data will allow the team to recognize ongoing initiatives, make recommendations, and attempt to quantify the impact of these initiatives on civic engagement.

According to FIU's NSLVE report, our institution's voting rate in the 2020 U.S. presidential election was 68.2%, which was an +8.8 change from 2016 U.S. presidential election. As a majority minority serving institution, we will continue to focus our efforts in engaging with our students and organizing events dedicated to promoting their participation in our democracy beyond presidential elections. We will also continue to advocate for and educate our students on the three main methods of voting in Florida (Early Voting, Vote by Mail, and in-person on Election Day), particularly in-person Early Voting since FIU's main campus is proud to be an Early Voting location for voters in Miami-Dade County.

## Description of Work

FIU is committed to civic leadership and social engagement. Our students and faculty tackle some of the most difficult issues of our time by producing ideas, creating solutions, and using policy-relevant research to make a real difference in our world today. This Fall we will focus on creating events and experiences for students to be engaged in the four pillars of engagement: Voter Registration, Voter Education, Voter Turnout, and Students as Voter Advocates.

We plan to achieve these goals by leveraging last year's successes and laying the pathway to expose students to the four pillars of engagement. First, the Center for Leadership & Service in the Division of Academic & Student Affairs will work to broaden programs, co-curricular collaborations, and deepen existing relations with partners. The department has already upgraded its subscription tier with our online tracking system to grow its use on campus. The goal is to bring on other units such as Honors College, Athletics, and Campus Life as subgroups and unify the way we track impacts. The Center for Leadership & Service will continue hosting Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) programs. Celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of National Voter Registration Day will be a feature event. Additionally, the Center promotes student advocacy by assisting in recruiting student fellows and Civic Influencers associated with the Campus Vote Project and Campus Election Engagement Project. Aiding the campus fellows provides them with leadership development for FIU students in acquiring the skills and knowledge to become active members in their communities. Some of the work our student fellows will engage in include registering voters, promoting upcoming elections, becoming poll workers, and decoding the ballot. Student fellows will also engage in advocacy to help students become active citizens and socially responsible leaders in our communities.

In addition, the Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs continues to be a leader in academic partnerships. The faculty engagement demonstrates a clear commitment to equip our students to think about the world in unique ways, generate policy-relevant dialogue and research on the most pressing issues facing the world today, including poverty and inequality; economic development and sustainability; security, foreign policy, and governance, among others. The Green School launched the Maurice A. Ferré Institute for Civic Leadership in 2021. The goal of the Ferré Institute is a dynamic department leading in academics, research, and community programs. Highlights include an undergraduate/graduate Certificate in Civic Leadership, Civics Education and Public Service Hub, Research and Policy Analysis, and Public Engagement.

## Timeline

Our timeline and strategy will be addressed by Summer planning and Fall event execution to educate, engage, and mobilize students to cast a ballot in the upcoming 2022 midterm elections. We plan to schedule frequent gatherings that bring students together to promote voter participation in the upcoming elections and engage them with questions about their communities, their struggles, and issues they care about. The outcome of these listening sessions will lead to program development and student buy-in. Several methods will be used to follow attendance and track student interests at these events, so that we can continue to engage them in the future. This will allow us to begin communicating and promoting our efforts in advance and use the NSLVE data to measure if our programs help increase or decrease civic involvement. Eventually, repeat participants who demonstrate a passion for civic issues can eventually take on leadership roles, and we will help give them a platform to further engage with and mobilize other students. This will create a sense of affinity and a way to pass the torch to future student leaders, instill a sense of civic duty, and use their student experience to better shape outreach efforts to their generation. The goal is ultimately to inspire and empower students to take on the responsibility of passing on the sense of civic duty to their fellow peers. These events will be targeting our undergraduate and graduate students and will take place at both the Modesto Maidique and Biscayne Bay campuses. Some specific examples of these events include:

Summer	Fall	Spring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update our vote.fiu.edu website</li> <li>• Program planning and brainstorming</li> <li>• Confirm campus-wide partnerships &amp; collaborations</li> <li>• Recruitment of Student Fellows</li> <li>• Program planning for Civic Holidays with the Ferré Institute and community partners</li> <li>• Create a survey to collect campus-wide events and programs</li> <li>• Planning voter registration drives with non-partisan community partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campus-wide tabling and outreach</li> <li>• Roll out Center for Leadership &amp; Service Initiatives</li> <li>• Campus-wide voter registration drives</li> <li>• Promotion of Civic Holidays through the Ferré Institute                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate the 10th anniversary of National Voter Registration Day</li> </ul> </li> <li>• National Voter Education Week</li> <li>• Early Voting Day</li> <li>• Election Hero Day</li> <li>• SGA Panther's to the Polls Initiative</li> <li>• Curricular engagement events and education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voter registration drives</li> <li>• Curricular engagement events and education</li> <li>• Disseminate campus-wide online event survey</li> </ul>

### Examples of Programs, Events, and Activities:

- **Democratic Engagement Committee:** Updating and revamping our vote.fiu.edu during the Summer, so students have direct access to reliable and trusted information regarding upcoming elections, registering to vote, methods of voting, and becoming a poll worker.
- **Outreach & Tabling:** Collaborate with the Miami-Dade County Elections Office, the League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County, the Campus Elections Engagement Project, and the Campus Vote Project to promote ongoing voter registration.

- **Center for Leadership & Service Initiatives:** The Center for Leadership & Service Office will co-host events for National Voter Registration Day, support campus CLDE fellows, and provide students with the Civic Involvement challenge. The Center for Leadership & Service will also provide opportunities through Engagement Week, Changemaker Week, and National Voter Registration Day Campaign.
- **Maurice A. Ferré Institute for Civic Leadership:** Four programs that will focus on promoting the major Civic Holidays which include National Voter Registration Day (September 20, 2022), National Voter Education Week (October 3-7, 2022), Vote Early Day (October 28, 2022) and Election Hero Day (November 7, 2022). The Ferré Institute will partner with local non-partisan civic organizations including the League of Women Voters, Catalyst Miami, and Engage Miami to plan and implement these four programs for our students.
- **Student Government Civic Engagement Series:** Three events geared toward engaging students on campus to promote voter registration including “Panthers to the Poll”.
- **Student Organization Voter Registration Drives:** The various Greek organizations set up campaigning to increase the voting rates of their members.
- **Academic Partnerships, Curricular Engagement, Guest Lecturers:** Invite politicians, people of influence, artists, and exciting faculty members to present and engage the students at events aimed at fostering an active community. The idea is for the guest speaker to engage the participants on a personal, community level aimed at examining their environment and seeing how and why it takes engagement to make it a better place.

## Success

Success will be measured through the achievement of several outcomes. It is our hope that the next NSLVE data will show continued increase among campus voter turnout. The NSLVE report along with the Civic Action Plan will be made available to the public via [vote.fiu.edu](http://vote.fiu.edu) and on partner links such as the individual webpages of the following FIU units: Analysis and Information Management, the Center for Leadership & Service, and Student Government.

Our partners will wrap up the year by conducting a program evaluation and survey. Data collected will help us understand which civic and/or voter engagement activities students participated in. In doing so, we plan to collect and analyze the following data: event attendance, follow-up surveys, and NSLVE data. FIU will use the information to further enhance efforts to increase student engagement and effectiveness. The data will also serve to prioritize the delivery and timing for future Civic Action Plans Initiatives. Findings will be evaluated by the Office of Analysis and Information Management. Lastly, the NSLVE report will be used as a baseline to benchmark current voter registration and turnout. Results will be shared with the university community.