Governors State University 2022 Democratic Engagement Action Plan
Developed by: Crystal Harris, PhD and Phyllis West, PhD

Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Governors State University in Illinois for the 2022 election. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout in the 2022 midterm election. The goals for Governors State University for the 2022 election are:

- Engage all FYS classes in voter registration, voter education and early voting campaigns through both in class and co-curricular campus learning activities.
- Build strong interdisciplinary coalitions that build leadership capacity across all colleges and empower students to do outreach with their peers and their local communities.
- Build systems to recruit and retain student voting ambassadors and faculty voting champions that will implement our civic and voter engagement initiatives beyond the mid-term election.

Leadership:
Our leadership team includes the following:
Crystal Harris, PhD Campus Leader, Ask Every Student Campaign and SLSV Coalition
Asst. Professor Interdisciplinary Studies
Phyllis West, PhD Director, Social Justice Initiative

Core Implementation Team:
Latrice Koger, AES Project Research Assistant
Johnsie McCauley Davis, Administrative & Logistics Coordinator
Chasatte Simeon, Student Voting Ambassador
Ciara Noel, Coordinator, Center for Student Engagement

Internal Partners:
- Candice Sewell, Resident Life Director
- Konya Sledge, PhD, Director, Student Life
- Debbie James, PhD, Division Chair, Arts & Letters
- Vickii Coffey, PhD, Faculty Voting Champion
- Rebecca Sieffert, PhD, Faculty Voting Champion
- Novia Pagone, PhD Faculty Champion, Interim Director Center for Community Media
- Vickii Coffey, PhD Social Work Program Faculty Champion
• Jim Vining, PhD Faculty Voting Chamption
• Jason Zingsheim, PhD Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
• Shannon Dermer, PhD Dean, College of Education

External Partners:
• Rebecca Leder, Election Analyst II, Will County Clerk’s Office
• Lady Verleaner Lane, President, Top Ladies of Distinction
• Gregory Chambers, Policy Organizer, LIVE FREE Chicago
• Dr. Robbie Craig, Village of Matteson

Our campus also works with these following national nonprofit partners: American Democracy Project, Ask Every Student, Student Learn Students Vote Coalition and the Student Vote Research Network for funding and student engagement strategy and program development.

Commitment:

Our executive leadership reflects the institution’s mission, learning outcomes, curriculum, and co-curriculum. Dr. Cheryl Green our new president attended and spoke at our Voter Early Day celebration on Oct. 28th.

Governors State University has been a signatory to the Higher Education Presidents’ Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation since 2020.

Landscape:

Governors State University is a public 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2016.

GSU Student Population

Governors State University has a total enrollment of 4,650 with a gender distribution of 33.27% male (1,547 students) and 66.73% female (3,103 students). There are 1,074 male and 1,948 female students in undergraduate school. There are 4 American Indian/Native American, 1,494 White, 1,784 Black/African American, 122 Asian, 691 Hispanic, 2 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 138 students with other races. There are 2,514 full-time and 2,136 part-time students. Additionally, 744 students are enrolled exclusively in online courses and 1,897 students are enrolled in some online courses.

Our campus demographic and voting data:

• Governors State University has 4,650 students.

• Governors State University has authorized NSLVE.

Our institution had a 2020 campus voting rate of 63.6%. Our institution had a 2020 voter registration rate of 84%.
Our institution had a 2018 voter turnout rate of 46.4%. Our institution had a 2018 voter registration rate of 82%.

Our institution has been recognized by ALL IN with the following seals: 2016 Silver, 2018 Gold, 2020 Silver

**Goals:**

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:
- Goal 1: Increase student voter turnout rate to 5% in 2022 and 10% in 2024.
- Goal 2: Increase student voter registration rate to 2% in 2022 and 4% in 2024.

**Strategy:**
Governors State University will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation.

In Fall 2022, we hosted several in class voter education presentations and panel discussions with students. We also celebrated all of the Civic Holidays: National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, or Vote Early Day.

**Evaluation:**

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

In addition to using your future 2022 NSLVE voting data, our voter education coalition will be analyzing data form the pledge cards and our post-election survey and hybrid gathering.

**Reporting:**

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN’s website https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/governors-state-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.

Our campus action plan and NSLVE reports will be shared on the university website and the link will be sent out to our participants, coalition members and external partners with an acknowledgement of their support and contributions to the success of the effort.