



Grayson College 2024 Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Developed by: Dr. Molly M. Harris & Shantee Siebuhr

Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Grayson College in Texas for the 2024 election. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education and turnout in the 2024 election.

Ben Hovland, Engaging College Communities in Elections Commissioner, contends that “voting is habit forming and it is critical to engage young voters.” Grayson College will impact potential community college student voters in November 2024 using a three-step platform:

1. Increase the number of students registered to vote.
2. Secure a baseline number of student who voted in the November 2020 election and improve that metric by 2.5%.
3. Create an enriched campus culture that promotes civic engagement.

Leadership:

Our leadership team includes the following campus groups and organizations:

- Dr. Molly Harris, Vice President of Community Engagement
- Shantee Siebuhr, Director of Student Life and Development
- Mary Linder, Government Professor
- Dr. Jeremy McMillen, President
- Dr. Dava Washburn, Vice President of Instruction
- Dr. Logan Maxwell, Vice President of Student Services
- Mike McBrayer, Athletic Director
- Grayson College Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Officers

Commitment:

At Grayson College, we believe that active participation in the democratic process is a fundamental right and responsibility of every citizen. As part of our mission to foster informed, engaged and responsible members of society, we are proud to support non-partisan initiatives that encourage democratic engagement for the upcoming November 2024 election.

Grayson College is committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment where students, faculty, staff and community members can engage in thoughtful discussions about the issues that matter most to them. We firmly believe that voting is a critical way to ensure that all voices are heard, and we are dedicated to empowering our community to participate fully in the democratic process, regardless of political affiliation.

In support of these efforts, Grayson College will:

- Provide resources and information on voter registration and deadlines to ensure that all eligible students, staff and faculty can register to vote in a timely manner.
- Host non-partisan voter education events, such as forums and workshops, that provide balanced, factual information about candidates and issues on the ballot.
- Collaborate with local organizations to facilitate access to voting, including helping students and employees identify polling locations and providing information on early voting and absentee ballot procedures.
- Encourage civic discourse in a respectful, non-partisan manner, ensuring that all members of the College community feel supported and empowered to participate in the democratic process.
- Sign the Presidents' and Coaches' Commitments to full voter student participation.

We are committed to fostering a campus culture where democratic engagement is valued and where every individual can exercise their right to vote with confidence. As we approach the November 2024 election, we will encourage everyone in the Grayson College community to stay informed, get involved and make their voices heard in this vital civic process.

Together, we can build a more engaged and informed society that reflects the values of democracy and inclusivity.

Landscape:

Grayson College is a public community college and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2024.

In January 2020, Grayson and Fannin Counties reported a combined voter registration of 109,149. In the 2020 national election, only 15% of those eligible voters cast a ballot. In a May 2024 local election featuring a \$456.5 million Grayson College bond, barely 1% of registered voters were considered students. This figure was lower than anticipated given the volume of publicity regarding bond merits and its direct impact on the student and their peers.

Student Demographics:

66% White	4% American Indian	62% Female
22% Hispanic	3% Asian	38% Male
9% Black		

Grayson College sits on the Texas-Oklahoma Border. Nearly 200 students reside outside of Texas.

Nearly two-thirds of students are enrolled part-time.

Nearly 1,400 students (31%) are under 18 years old. Nearly 1,700 (38%) are 18-21 years of age, over 1,100 students (26%) are 22-39 years old, and almost 300 (6%) students are over the age of 40.

Key Dates:

- October 7 – Last Day to Vote
- October 21 – First Day of Early Voting
- October 25 – Last Day to Apply for a Ballot by Mail
- November 1 – Last Day of Early Voting
- November 5 – Election Day!

Goals:

Our institution's nonpartisan democratic engagement goals are:

- 1) Increase the number of students registered to vote in Grayson and Fannin Counties (the College service area) from 1.1% 2020 to 3.5% in 2024.
- 2) Secure a baseline number of Grayson/Fannin County students who voted in the November 2020 national election and improve that metric by 2.5% in November 2024.
- 3) Grayson College will create an enriched campus culture – attuned long-term to student participation in civic engagement. Grayson College hopes to expand the number of student voters within the span of ages, genders and ethnicities. However, the most realistic strides in voter registration will coincide with our existing student body metrics - gleaned from an unduplicated institutional enrollment in FY 2023-2024 totaling 5,246 students.
- 4) Have the College president sign the All IN Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation by October 1, 2024.

Strategy:

Grayson College will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation.

Activities to promote/prompt action for voter registration

- Include student Voter Registration documents and information in Housing Move-In Packets
- Offer voter registration during Grayson College Campus Cookout Activities Fair
- Create a competition among students and community members to design an "I'm registered to vote" sticker. The winning design will be printed and distributed upon registration.
- Host a voter registration week in partnership with Constitution Day where faculty will distribute rack cards that provide important dates and information for both in-state and out-of-state students.
- Collaborate with Phi Theta Kappa to host Presidential Duck Hunt on Constitution Day.

Activities aimed at educating students about the voting process and understanding issues

- Using social media, have students and employees create short Reels with the prompt- “I vote because.”
- Host Burritos and Ballots with Brainiacs to introduce students to key issues on the ballot.
- Design and display posters to place strategically in high-visibility areas around campus that display important election dates.

Activities occurring the Week Before and on Voting Day

- Organize a Get-Out-the-Vote (GOTV) operation on campus, asking faculty to distribute a print piece with the location of the polling place(s), hours and what kind of identification is required. Have faculty repeat all facets of student reminders (f2f and online) about taking action to vote.
- Ask the President to create a video and send a message to all students about their last opportunities to vote. Share via email, social media and other student-focused platforms.

Actualizing results of voter registration and celebrating success

- Host Vikings Rock the Vote event in the general vicinity of the polling location. The event will include special event stickers, stuff-a-plush and Pizza with the Prez.
- Coordinate a celebration event in the Grayson College Life Center on Voting Day to watch the results come in.
- Work with Marketing and Communication to create a social media post on Grayson College social media that celebrates the increase in voter registration and the number of ballots cast.

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

- Use NSLVE data as evidence of student voter turnout.
- Coordinate with Grayson County Elections Office to understand foot traffic at polling locations on the Denison and Van Alstyne locations.
- Using focus groups, evaluate student interest in civic engagement and the events/activities used during this election cycle.

Reporting:

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

Additionally, this action plan and the results of our evaluation will be shared with key stakeholders listed above in addition to College Executive Leadership.