



ALL IN Campus
Democracy
Challenge



Hood College 2024 Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement Action Plan

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Executive Summary

The four pillars that form the foundational values of Hood College are Hope, Opportunity, Obligation, and Democracy. Civic engagement, service learning, and meaningful participation in the democratic process are fundamental parts of both curricular and extra-curricular life at Hood.

Although Hood students have been politically active since the founding of the college, this nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan represents an effort to take a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to voter engagement. Through this plan, we hope to record existing civic engagement efforts, contribute to a culture of cross-campus collaboration, meaningfully assess campuswide efforts toward voter engagement, and identify gaps and opportunities for outreach. This represents a step forward in cultivating an enduring culture of civic engagement that includes all parts of campus.

2024 Action Plan

The primary goals of this initial action plan are as follows:

- Establish a “Hood Votes” coalition composed of faculty, staff, and students.
- Host co-curricular events to increase voter registration and engagement efforts on campus.
- Connect students with community organizations, such as the Frederick County Board of Elections, the Frederick County League of Women Voters, and the NAACP.
- Coordinate with student organizations to host on-campus events designed to educate and engage students from diverse backgrounds.
- Assess and adapt engagement efforts following each electoral cycle using a combination of assessment instruments, including NSLVE data, IPEDS demographic information, student reflections, and a campus-wide survey.

Although this action plan specifically highlights features of the 2024 election, we hope to create a framework that students, faculty, staff, and administrators can use to engage students in democracy for years to come. The committee will use a cyclical assessment process to review, revise, and re-publish this action plan every two years (aligned to mid-terms and presidential elections). The assessment and planning process will include various metrics, including demographic data, survey responses, and data from Hood’s NSLVE report.

Financial support is primarily provided by the Martha E. Church Civic Engagement Center.

Leadership

The Hood Votes coalition includes the following faculty, staff, campus groups, and organizations:

Faculty and Staff		
Name	Title	Hood Votes! Role
Jessica Hammack	Head of Research and Instruction, The Beneficial-Hodson Library	Co-chair; coordinates with community partners; staff council liaison
Carin Robinson	Associate Professor of Political Science	Co-chair; coordinates with academic departments and Maryland Student Legislature; faculty liaison
Suzanne Beal	Instructor, Director of the Frederick County League of Women Voters	Co-liaison to the League of Women Voters
April Boulton	Associate Provost, Dean of the Graduate School	Coordinates outreach to graduate students
Becky Grove	Associate Professor of Education, Director of First Year Seminars	Coordinates outreach to first-year students
Amanda Dymek	Director of Wellness	Coordinates wellness initiatives related to election season
Amy Kilpatrick	Assistant Professor of Special Education, Director of Service Learning	Coordinates service-learning pilot projects
Sue Kolb	Athletic Director	Coordinates outreach to athletes
Sara Malec	Associate Professor of Mathematics, Member of the Frederick County League of Women Voters	Co-liaison to the League of Women Voters
Christine Marconi	Director of Student Engagement and Orientation	Coordinates voter outreach at orientation and with the Campus Activities Board
Gregory Powers	Head Strength and Conditioning Coach	Liaison to Omega Psi Phi
Tammi Simpson	Vice President of Community and Inclusivity	Liaison to Senior Team and Diversity Coalition
Tamelyn Tucker-Worgs	Associate Professor of Political Science and instructor of FYS 101: Democratic Participation	Leading first-year civic-engagement service-learning pilot project
Laurie Ward	Vice President for Marketing and Communications	Marketing and conference services

Students	
Organization or Role	Hood Votes! Role
Black Student Union	Co-curricular programming and coordination with NAACP
Campus Activity Board	Co-curricular programming

Diversity Coalition (Black Student Union, Feminist Student Union, Latinx Student Union, Queer Student Union)	Co-curricular programming
Feminist Student Union	Co-curricular programming (specifically Voter Registration Day) and coordination with the League of Women Voters
Graduate Student Association	Graduate student outreach
Graduate Student Success Coordinator	Graduate student outreach
Maryland Student Legislature	Co-curricular programming (specifically Braver Angels debates)
Resident Assistants and Peer Mentors	Share information about voting with first-year students and campus residents
Student Government Association (SGA)	Undergraduate student outreach
Students in Political Science courses	Assessing voter engagement on campus
Students in SOWK 101	In-class presentations and co-curricular programming, primarily voter registration
Students in FYS 101: Democratic Participation	In-class presentations, voter registration, other service-learning projects

Community Partners
ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
Braver Angels
Frederick County Board of Elections
Frederick County League of Women Voters
NAACP
Omega Psi Phi
Students Learn, Students Vote

Succession Plan

The 2024 Hood Votes coalition is composed of staff from many different campus offices, and includes members of senior administration, student life, the first-year experience, athletics, service learning, the political science department, marketing/communications, the library, and more. Although the co-chairs of this committee will likely change in future election cycles, the composition of offices represented in this coalition should remain consistent. A representative from the Department of Political Science will always serve as chair or co-chair of the committee.

The Martha E. Church Center for Civic Engagement was established at Hood in 2018 with the goal of supporting community-based learning and civic participation. Although the directorship of the Center is currently vacant, in future years, the Director of the Martha Church Center should lead the Hood Votes coalition.

Commitment

A commitment to engaged citizenship is embedded in the [mission](#) of Hood College, which invites students “to lead purposeful lives of responsibility, leadership, service and civic engagement.” The college’s core values, represented by the four ionic columns on Hood’s Alumnae Hall, are Hope, Obligation, Opportunity, and Democracy; these represent Hood’s long-standing commitment to educating and empowering students to be stewards to the betterment of their communities.

The college’s current strategic plan, [For a Greater Hood](#), includes the following goals, which align to the work of this committee:

- Support the establishment of a high-impact learning experience in the curriculum, ensuring that all faculty and students can access and engage in robust learning opportunities (Goal 1, An Enhanced Student Experience)
- Develop diversity, equity, and inclusivity initiatives to advance Hood College’s vision of being an inclusive community that supports the well-being of every member of the campus community (Goal 2: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Initiatives)

The college has recently drafted a statement on free speech on campus that will be discussed with the Board of Trustees and eventually shared with the campus as we navigate the 2024 election in a polarized nation.

Former President Andrea Chapdelaine was a signatory to the ALL IN Presidents’ Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation, most recently signing the commitment in 2023. Interim President Debbie Ricker, as well as other members of the Senior Team, are in full support of the initiative, and aid in campuswide communication of voter education initiatives every election cycle.

Curricular Integration

Hood’s new core curriculum, “Heart, Minds, and Hands,” emphasizes our commitment to an engaged citizenry. The curriculum features a new high-impact practice requirement for juniors and seniors. Courses fulfilling this requirement allow students the opportunity to engage practically and more intentionally with their primary field of study. Additionally, a service-learning component has been added to the required First-Year Experience course. Although the new core curriculum won’t be implemented until Fall 2025, in 2024 our committee will work with the Director of Service Learning and the instructor of FYS 101: Democratic Participation to pilot course-integrated voter education and engagement service learning for first year students.

Service learning and civic engagement are integrated throughout academic departments, as well. Both introductory classes, such as Social Work 101, and capstone internship courses allow students to pursue valuable opportunities with community organizations. Recently, students have worked for such groups as the League of Women Voters, Rank the Vote Maryland, and Common Power, in addition to work with candidates and campaigns at the local and state level.

Students also play a valuable role in assessing voter engagement efforts on campus. Political Science students are required to attend Hood Votes programming and write papers to reflect on and evaluate voter engagement on campus. The exercise will involve students in assessment and allow the coalition to better assess the effectiveness and relevance of our initiatives.

Co-Curricular Integration

Campus clubs and organizations routinely model and foster student-led and student-centered civic engagement. At points, the college has had active chapters of Hood College Democrats and Republicans. We continue to have an award-winning delegation of the Maryland Student Legislature, and members of the campus's Diversity Coalition (composed of the Black Student Union, Feminist Student Union, Latinx Student Union, and Queer Student Union) are consistently engaged in campus and current events. The Graduate Student Association works to engage and connect graduate students to their campus and their community, despite challenges in schedule and off-campus responsibilities. Both undergraduate and graduate students have led protests and other peaceful demonstrations in response to both national and international political issues.

Hood uses a system of shared governance at all levels, which includes Faculty Senate, Staff Council, Student Government Association (SGA), and Graduate Council. These bodies provide opportunities for activism and shared decision-making, as well as effective ways to communicate about opportunities for democratic participation.

Landscape

Founded in 1893, Hood College is a coeducational, independent college located in Frederick, Maryland. As of the Fall 2023 census, Hood enrolled 1,209 undergraduate students and 869 graduate students. Nearly 20 percent of undergraduate students are first generation, 35 percent are Pell Grant recipients, and 40 percent identify as non-white. Ninety-one percent of undergraduates are "traditional age," or 18-24, and 60 percent live on campus. Most of Hood's undergraduate population (74.3 percent) is from Maryland, and 33 percent of undergraduates are from Frederick County. Non-Maryland students

come from 28 states (primarily Pennsylvania (8%), Virginia (4.3%) and New Jersey (3.6%)) and 9 countries; 1.7 percent are international students.

Seventy-five percent of Hood’s graduate student population is from Maryland, and most are from Frederick County. Thirteen percent of the graduate population is international, coming from 20 different countries, primarily India and Saudi Arabia. Seventy-three percent of graduate students are enrolled part-time, and most graduate classes take place during evenings and weekends.

Hood participates in NCAA Division III Varsity Athletics and is a member of the Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC); approximately one in three undergraduates are athletes.

Hood College participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) and has voting data through the 2022 election. Our NSLVE authorization runs through 2033. Below is a snapshot of Hood’s voting and registration rates between 2014 and 2022:

	2014	2018	2020	2022
Registration Rate	80%	86%	83%	84.7%
Voting Rate of Registered Students	40%	57%	83%	48.4%
Voting Rate	32%	49%	69%	41%
Undergraduate Voting Rate	21%	39%	65%	28%
Graduate Voting Rate	45%	54%	68%	46%

Our data do not suggest great disparity across racial groups. Older students and graduate students vote at higher rates than younger students; women vote at higher rates than men. Overall, our turnout remains higher than the national institution average, though we saw a decrease in 2022 in every category except for registration rate. Nevertheless, we received the Gold Campus Seal from ALL IN for an overall voting rate of 41%.

Our approach reflects the needs of our student population.

For New Voters:

- Helping newly eligible first-time voters understand the voting process
- Integrating civic education into the First Year Experience

For Maryland Residents:

- Educating Maryland residents about state and local issues
- Helping students request mail-in ballots (or make a plan to vote in person)

For Residential Students:

- Integrating voter engagement and education into Residential Life

For Out-of-State Students:

- Helping students request mail-in ballots (or make a plan to vote in person)

For Student Athletes:

- Working with coaches and other athletic staff to reach student athletes

For Graduate Students:

- Creating online content and hosting programming in the evenings for graduate student engagement
- Meeting with graduate assistants to better schedule events and incorporate graduate students' perspectives

To increase voter turnout (not just registration):

- Integrating “make a voting plan” or “take a pledge to vote” into voter registration outreach

Goals

Our institution's nonpartisan democratic engagement goals are:

Short Term (2024 Presidential Election)

1. Increase Hood's voter registration/voter turnout rates in 2024:
 - a. Voting Rate: 70% (from 41% in 2022 and 69% in 2020)
 - b. Registration Rate: 90% (from 84.7% in 2022 and 83% in 2020)
 - c. Voting Rate of Registered Students: 85% (from 57% in 2022 and 83% in 2020)
2. Create an easily accessible hub that points users to all voter engagement efforts on campus.
3. Schedule a series of classroom visits in First Year Seminars by fellow students trained in voter registration to integrate voter education into the first-year experience.
4. Designate a week in the spring semester (of election years) to educate campus about the closed primary and make party registration available.
5. Coordinate with the League of Women Voters to host campaign representatives on campus.
6. Include information about voting on physical and digital signs around campus in the fall and spring.

7. Coordinate with the Frederick County Board of Elections to create resources for campus members (both students and staff) interested in volunteering to help with voter education and engagement.
8. Collaborate with the graduate school and counseling services on a workshop on how to cope with election-related anxiety.
9. Collaborate with student-led organizations, particularly those in Diversity Coalition, to host discussions about topical political issues.
10. Require all coaches to take the ALL IN pledge.
11. Host voter education athletic events.

Long Term (End of Strategic Plan: 2026)

1. Increase Hood's voter registration/voter turnout rates in 2026:
 - a. Voting Rate in a midterm election: 45% (from 41% in 2022)
 - b. Registration Rate: 91% (from 84.7% in 2022 and 83% in 2020)
 - c. Voting Rate of Registered Students: 60% (from 57% in 2022)
2. Ensure that all students participate in at least one high-impact experience related to civic engagement (Goal 1, An Enhanced Student Experience).
3. Work with Braver Angels and the League of Women Voters to host biannual events, such as debates, to improve civil discourse and educate students about local and state politics (Goal 2: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Initiatives).
4. Access grants and additional funding for future voter engagement programming.
5. Based on assessment data, revise and resubmit this action plan to gain the designation of Voter Friendly Campus.
6. Use Federal Work Study funds to hire and train student voting ambassadors.
7. Work with the President, the Dean of Students, and the Dean of the Graduate School to designate Election Day as a Day of Democracy: classes cancelled and explicit intent for community engagement and voting.

Strategy

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

Long-Term (End of Strategic Plan: 2026)

Events and Tabling

- Host voter registration training with the local election board every September.
- Designate a week in the spring semester (of election years) to educate campus about the closed primary and make party registration available.
- Coordinate with Athletics so registration material is available at athletic events.

- Host a National Voter Registration Day Event.
- Host a “Let’s Vote” game in the Athletic department in the spring and fall of election years.
- Coordinate with community organizations, such as the League of Women Voters and Omega Psi Phi for outreach events.

Orientation and First Year Seminar

- Work with the Office of Student Engagement to incorporate voter registration and education in new student orientation.
- Conduct an essay contest/a first-year seminary writing assignment related to voter engagement.

Curricular Integration

- Work with the League of Women Voters, the Frederick County Board of Elections, the Core Implementation Group to pilot voter outreach service-learning projects that could be integrated in the core curriculum.
- Identify student liaisons in each academic department to visit classrooms to encourage registration and turnout.
- Use an assessment measure created by Political Science students (PSCI 203: Introduction to US Politics and PSCI 324: Campaigns and Elections) to evaluate voter outreach programming on campus.
- Make voter education a specific learning outcome in Political Science courses.

Student Engagement and Service Learning

- Train student leaders (clubs, RAs, peer mentors, etc.) to assist with voter registration and education.
- Pilot a service-learning project in a section of FYS that requires students to volunteer doing voter outreach.
- Integrate voter outreach as an option for the service-learning requirement for students in SOWK 101.
- Begin discussions with Financial Aid to create work-study positions for student voting ambassadors.
- Meet with the Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs to seek out additional funding for future service-learning projects.

Education and Open Forums

- Host campaign representatives from local and state races.
- Coordinate with League of Women Voters to incorporate student involvement in upcoming candidate debates (e.g. ask students to submit questions). Offer to host debates on campus.
- Host two Braver Angels debates in Fall 2024, relying on student clubs to help organize and participate.

Digital Materials and Marketing

- Create a logo and graphics for messaging.
- Feature key dates on website and Hood Votes communications.
- Work with ALL IN to create a branded voter registration and education site.
- Create a bank of educational and marketing materials that can be used and posted around campus to help students register to vote.

Short Term: 2024 Election Timeline

Spring 2024

- April 1, 2024 - Peep Show “Power to the People”
- Voter Engagement Week (one month before Maryland Primary Election)
 - Coordinate with SPIRES and SAFIRE to host voter outreach tables during poster session in Whitaker Commons
 - 3 athletic events featuring voter outreach tables
 - 1 or 2 academic lectures or Student Life events featuring voter outreach tables
- Maryland Primary (May 14, 2024)

Summer 2024

- Meet with Dean of Students and Vice President of Community and Inclusivity to approve a budget.
- Plan fall events, reserve rooms/locations, solicit volunteers, create flyers.
- Create educational and promotional materials that can be shared digitally.
- Create training framework and update Ask Every Student PowerPoint for student volunteers.
- Update Hood Votes webpage and attend ALL IN webinar on creating a customizable voter registration portal.
- Work with FYS and the Director of Service Learning to develop a pilot first-year service-learning framework.

Fall 2024

August

- Move-in and orientation (August 2024)
- Black Student Union Block Party: Voter Registration with the NAACP

September

- Presidential Debate Bingo (September 10)

- Voter Registration Volunteer Training: Partnership with the Frederick County Board of Elections (September 12)
- Voter Registration Day: Partnership with the League of Women Voters and Feminist Student Union (September 17)
- Constitution Day Film Screening: Partnership with Political Science & Global Studies and Law & Criminal Justice (September 17)
- Braver Angels Debate (Monday, September 30 at 7 p.m.)

October

- HoodTALKS: Elections and Cybersecurity: Partnership with the Graduate School (October 3)
- Candidate Forums: Partnership with the League of Women Voters (October 6 and 20)
- National Voter Education Week (October 7-11)
 - Student volunteers to visit classrooms
 - Athletic events feature voter engagement tables
 - Student volunteers table in dining hall
- Braver Angels Debate (Monday, October 21 at 7 p.m.)
- Vote Early Day (October 29, 2024)

November

- Election Eve Event with trivia and predication games
- Election Day: Walk to the Polls (November 5, 2024)
- Student commentary on election results, Hood College Broadcasting

Evaluation

In addition to collecting NSLVE reports, members of the Hood Votes coalition will collect feedback in the following ways:

Quantitative Measures:

- Use the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement to evaluate rates of student registration and voting (posted as a link on <https://hood.edu/votes>)
- Track participation at all voter outreach tables/events.
- Count website clicks on the Hood Votes portal.
- Track the number of materials distributed.
- Track mail-in ballots taken from voter registration stations.

Qualitative Measures:

- Solicit feedback and ideas for improvements from volunteers (via a brief Qualtrics survey).
- Get action plan feedback from ALL IN and Ask Every Student.
- Reflection papers and other assessment measures by students in PSCI 203: Introduction to US Politics and PSCI 324: Campaigns and Elections.
- Feedback from members of the Hood Votes coalition. We will host a reflection meeting each December of an election year and write a summary report to provide feedback, address resource needs, and propose additional goals for future election years.

Reporting

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website (<https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/hood-college/>), as well as our voter engagement hub, <https://hood.edu/votes>. Hood has given ALL IN permission to publish our past NSLVE reports, which can also be found on our campus page above.

We will share this report, as well as the results of our assessments, with the college president and other members of the senior team, as well as our community stakeholders. We'll also share the action plan and summary report with stakeholders throughout various levels of shared governance: faculty senate, staff council, student government, etc. Information from this report may be included in reports to other internal and external members of the Hood community.

At the end of the 2024 election cycle, the Hood Votes committee will reconvene to reflect and write a summary report. This report will be shared with the senior team. Members of the Hood Votes coalition, which includes representation from athletics, student engagement, the graduate school, student government, and more, will also be able to share this report with relevant constituents.