Macalester College 2024 All In Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Executive Summary:
This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Macalester College in Minnesota for the 2024 election cycle. Derek Johnson, Assistant Director of the Community Engagement Center, serves as Macalester's Campus Vote Coordinator. The Community Engagement Center coordinates an effort called Mobilize Mac. Mobilize Mac is a collaborative effort among faculty, staff, and students to cultivate a campus culture that encourages participation by *all* students, regardless of whether they are eligible to vote or not. Our intent is to share about work already taking place, find ways to collaborate if that makes sense to do, and identify any gaps that could use coordinated attention. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout in the election. The goals for Macalester College for the election are:
- Ensure that election and voter registration is integrated into new student orientation
- Ensure that there are a myriad of opportunities for students to learn about the presidential election, learn about candidates and offices on the ballot, and understand the details of the voter registration and voting process
- Increase the number of academic classes that share election/voting information, have student announcements about this topic, or include community-based learning projects related to the election
- Aim for at least 90% of eligible Macalester students to vote in the election
- Continue collaborative work beyond the November election to continually support election and voting engagement

Leadership:
All Macalester students, faculty, and staff are invited to participate in Mobilize Mac. The leadership team consists of people who engage with Mobilize Mac consistently over time. Our leadership team actively involved in Mobilize Mac includes:

- Derek Johnson, Community Engagement Center Assistant Director, and other Community Engagement Center staff. Derek Johnson serves as Macalester College's Campus Vote Coordinator
- Emma Runchey Smalley, Policy and Justice Community Engagement Organizer (student leader) in CEC
- Faculty from Political Science, Sociology, Educational Studies, Environmental Studies, Art and Art History, American Studies, and Geography
- Staff from Academic Affairs, Institutional Equity, and Student Affairs divisions:
  - Center for Student Leadership and Engagement (Laurie Adams, Executive Director of Student Leadership and Engagement)
  - Office of Student Affairs, (Javier Gutierrez, AVP and Dean of Students)
  - Institutional Equity (Alina Wong, VP for Institutional Equity)
  - Lealtad-Suzuki Center for Social Justice (Hana Dinku, Director)
  - Registrar's Office (Timothy Traffie, Registrar)
  - Center for Disability Resources (Shammah Bermudez, Director)
  - Athletics (Devyn Smith, Assistant Athletic Director)
  - Center for Religious and Spiritual Life (Rev. Kelly Stone, Associate Dean for institutional Equity and College Chaplain)
  - Entrepreneurship and Innovation (Jody Emmings, Director)

- - DeWitt Wallace Library (Dave Collins, Research and Instruction Librarian)
  - Residential Life (Kyle Flowers, Executive Director)
  - Sustainability Office (Megan Butler, Director of Sustainability)
  - Center for Study Away (Shanti Freitas, Director)
  - International Student Programs (Luyen Phan, Director)
- Students from Pi Sigma Alpha (Political Science Honor Society), Community Organizing Cohort, and student organizations interested in election engagement
- Macalester College Student Government (Joel Sadofsky, President)
- Interested individual students from each class year

Each semester, Mobilize Mac reviews the invite list and updates it, paying specific attention to transition and ensuring that people new to relevant roles are personally reached out to and invited to attend and participate.

Our campus works with these following nonprofit and government partners:
- Ask Every Student
- Campus Compact
- St. Paul League of Women Voters
- Minnesota Secretary of State's Office
- Ramsey County Election Office
- All In
- Project Pericles

The Macalester President, Dr. Suzanne Rivera, regularly connects with the CEC about Mobilize Mac to coordinate overall college and President's Office communication and leadership on election engagement. The CEC also connects regularly with Sara Sueflow, Chief of Staff for the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees, and Julie Hurbanis, AVP of Marketing and Communications, about the work of Mobilize Mac.

Commitment:
In the Macalester mission, one of three areas of special emphasis is "service to society."

Macalester Statement of Purpose and Belief: We believe that the benefit of the educational experience at Macalester is the development of individuals who make informed judgments and interpretations of the broader world around them and choose actions or beliefs for which they are willing to be held accountable. We expect them to develop the ability to seek and use knowledge and experience in contexts that challenge and inform their suppositions about the world. We are committed to helping students grow intellectually and personally within an environment that models and promotes academic excellence and ethical behavior. The education a student begins at Macalester provides the basis for continuous transformation through learning and service."

Both the Macalester Mission and Statement of Purpose and Belief include an emphasis on civic engagement and responsibility to local communities and the larger society. The Macalester Community Engagement Center supports students to engage in a wide variety of social change work, including direct service, community organizing, public policy, philanthropy, and involvement in elections and political campaigns. Engagement in elections and our democratic system are integrated into a larger body of deep work in community engagement, and this work is a commitment across faculty, staff, and students throughout the institution. CEC data shows

that over 95% of graduates each year have participated in community engagement activities (curricular and/or co-curricular) during their time at Macalester.

Each semester that there is an election in Minnesota, the President's Office and the Community Engagement Center collaborate to send an email message to all students focused on election engagement. Election engagement and voter information is also included in online orientation materials required of all students before arriving at Macalester. This is followed up consistently via co-curricular and curricular pathways so that students are regularly interacting with election engagement information and are invited in to participate in elections in ongoing ways across their time at Macalester College.

Macalester College has been a signatory to the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation since 2022. Macalester also reviews and updates our election engagement plan on an annual basis.

Landscape:
Macalester College is a private 4-year undergraduate institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2016. Our campus demographic and voting data:
Macalester College has 2,142 students. 13% of our students are international students, and we have 50 states and 103 countries represented in our student body. Of domestic students, 34% are US students of color, 20% are Pell Grant recipients, and 17% identify as first generation college students. As noted above, over 95% of graduating students participate in civic engagement (curricular and/or co-curricular) during their time at Macalester. It is important to note that Macalester is located in a core city of a major metropolitan area, and many students select Macalester because of its institution type and location–they want to get involved in community engagement in an urban location.

Macalester College has authorized NSLVE:

- 2020 campus voting rate: 79.1%
- 2020 voter registration rate: 88.2%
- 2018 voter turnout rate: 72.8%
- 2018 voter registration rate: 90.6%
- 2016 voter turnout rate: 81.9%
- 2016 voter registration rate: 93.7%

Macalester has been recognized by ALL IN with the following seals: 2018 Platinum, 2020 Gold

Macalester has not yet received voting data from NSLVE broken down by demographics like race. Mobilize Mac has been working with Macalester Institutional Research and Assessment to share this information with the NSLVE study going forward. This information would be useful for us to identify and address any gaps.

Macalester was at the top data point of the NSLVE study for voting rate in both 2016 and 2018. Our percentage dipped somewhat in 2020, when Macalester's mode of instruction was virtual and most students were not on campus or even in Minnesota. We look forward to receiving our 2022 NSLVE data to see how Macalester did once our campus was back in person.

In general, Macalester has been successful in our election engagement for a couple of reasons. First, we have made election engagement information comprehensive and readily available throughout our community. Second, we have coordinated actors throughout our campus to

engage with students about election engagement so that students receive this information from peers, staff, and faculty that they have a relationship with.

In general, Minnesota has laws that support eligible voters to vote. For example, any eligible voter can vote absentee in advance via mail or at in-person early voting sites. Also, Minnesota allows eligible voters to register and vote at their polling place on election day. One new law in Minnesota makes it easier for Macalester students who are eligible to vote to register and vote on the day of the election. Through this new law, Macalester now provides current address information about all enrolled students to Ramsey County. Ramsey County shares relevant information with specific polling locations, and this allows Macalester students to register and vote at their polling place with the Macalester id on election day. For students living on campus, the voting location is literally across the street from campus–perhaps a 2-minute walk from Macalester's Campus Center. This makes it easy for eligible voters who live on campus to vote on election day.

One complicating factor of our election engagement is that our institution has a relatively large percentage of our study body who are not eligible to vote. While any institution should address this and include students who cannot vote, we feel a particular responsibility to make our election engagement approach open and accessible to all. We do not want students to experience Mobilize Mac efforts as a singular focus on voting as the only goal.

Goals:

Ensure that election and voting information is woven into new student orientation and that all students understand voter registration logistics and have access to nonpartisan information about all ballot questions and candidates.

Work toward integrating election and voting information into First Years Courses (FYC) going forward. Each incoming student is in one FYC (there are approximately 40 each fall semester), and ensuring that election and voting information is included as FYC content creates an additional guaranteed touch point for all students.

Increase student voter turnout rate to 90% in 2024.

Increase student voter registration rate to 95% in 2024.

Increase visibility of pathways to engage in public policy and advocacy work. This includes the Community Engagement Center's Community Organizing Cohort each semester, student organizations with an advocacy goal (like MOCO and Sunrise), public policy internships and fellowships, and the CEC's Day at the Capitol (and similar advocacy and public policy events).

Increase Mobilize Mac involvement of students involved in BIPOC-focused student organizations and identity collectives.

Moving beyond 2024, our goal is for each student to verbally hear about voter and election engagement each school year–in addition to existing emails and college newsletter written information.

Moving forward, ensure that demographic information such as race is included in our NSLVE data. Once we get NSLVE data with demographic information, we will identify any gaps and develop specific strategies to address those gaps.

For 2026, increase voter turnout rate to 85% and registration rate to 93%.
For 2028, increase voter turnout rate to 94% and voter registration rate to 98%

Strategy:
Macalester College will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation:
- Mobilize Mac group meets before, during, and after elections to ensure communication, coordination, and targeted work around collectively identified priorities
- Orientation: Detailed info about elections and voting shared in the online portal as a required part of new student orientation
- Mobile Mac Webpage serves as a comprehensive hub of information around voter education, registration, and voting; Events and important dates are added regularly so that the page serves as a one-stop hub supporting election engagement.
- September 15: Constitution Day event will include voter registration and education around the upcoming election
- Forums: Explore the possibility of hosting a candidate forum on campus during fall election season to engage and motivate students. In addition, support students (communication, transportation, etc.) to attend relevant candidate forums in metro area.
- First Year Courses: Work to include election and voter engagement content into all First Year Courses.
- Engaged student leaders will request permission to make election and voter engagement announcements in all of their classes. Intent is to make announcements in as many classes as possible in a wide variety of disciplines.
- Community-Based Learning Courses: CEC will support multiple courses that do community-engaged learning or research each year that focus on election engagement. In the past, examples include an art class that developed targeted election engagement posters for local nonprofit and government agencies and a cross-disciplinary course including election-related internships during the fall semester.
- October: Congress to Campus event on campus with former federal Congress members; Election/ voter information event done adjacent to event
- Share election/voting information in student cohorts (OCSE and Bonner Scholars) that work in local nonprofits and government agencies. In these workshops, ask students to design strategies to see if they can facilitate election engagement work at their community work site.
- Various September and October dates: Voter Registration and Planning tables at various outdoor spaces on campus–focusing on pre-registration deadline of October 15th and day or registration after October 15th. Utilize "I Will Vote" stickers to support students stating in advance that they intend to vote and have a clear voting plan.
- Coordinated communication with Marketing and Communications and Macalester President's Office to support communication and social media efforts encouraging election engagement
- Election day hotline to assist with any questions, voting issues. Focus on day-of voter registration and voter registration for students living off campus
- Share widely MN Votes and All In resources related to registration, voting, early voting, etc.

- Several relevant student organizations and groups (MOCO, Pi Sigma Alpha, etc.) will organize and support nonpartisan and partisan events to engage in the election off campus
- Weekly Election and Voting Updates in Macalester's daily newsletter and on social media
- Nonpartisan voter guides widely shared
- Specific outreach to international students, DACA students, etc. about election education, issues, and concerns
- Communication to students studying abroad to ensure that they understand absentee voting options in advance of going abroad
- Student-led event and effort to connect students to nonpartisan and partisan GOTV efforts in surrounding communities–focus on last three weeks before election day
- Publicize Voting Rights and Accessibility resources and regulations related to election
- Voter logistics message emailed to all students each semester that there is an election in St. Paul on or right before Election Day
- Student resident list shared with local polling locations (in Ramsey County) to make same-day voter registration simple and straightforward for students living on campus as well as those living off campus in St. Paul.
- Several sports teams participate in the MIAC ALL IN Coaches Challenge. Election tabling in Athletic Center and teams using social media to promote election engagement.
- Faculty will encourage other faculty to share information in classes about election issues directly impacted by election and to point students to the Mobilize Mac hub
- Partner with CSLE to encourage student organizations to communicate with their members about the importance of the election from the viewpoint of the organization.
- Visible election day efforts to energize election engagement outside of Campus Center
- Post-election event organized by faculty and student organizations for students to make meaning of election results locally and nationally

Reporting:
Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/macalester-college/ as well as on Macalester's website (Mobilize Mac page).

NSLVE data will also be shared on the Macalester Mobilize Mac webpage.

The campus action plan and NSLVE data will be shared for discussion and feedback annually with Macalester College Student Government.

Macalester will also share our action plan and NSLVE reports with the Mobilize Mac initiative and will share lessons learned with relevant groups of students, staff, and faculty.

Evaluation:
We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:
The Mobilize Mac group will convene post-election to review all efforts to engage with the election. This conversation will identify strengths to build upon in the future as well as weaknesses that we would like to address in future election cycles.

CEC will track the following data each election cycle:
- Number of election/voting tabling events
- Number of students who register to vote at tabling events

- Number of classes that share election/voting information or have an election/voting announcement by a student leader
- Number of student organizations, departments, and other groups who share election/voting information with the students they engage with.

CEC staff and the CEC Policy and Justice Community Engagement Organizer (student leadership role) will meet with Macalester College Student Government each year to both evaluate election engagement work (utilizing all qualitative and quantitative data that we have) as well as update our Election Engagement plan.

In addition, we will examine our NSLVE data to evaluate progress toward our stated goals for each presidential and midterm election.