



Middlesex Community College Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2022-2023 academic year

This plan was created using the Votes & Ballots Action Planning Form. We highly recommend editing and expanding upon this draft before submitting for review.

Throughout this document, we mention the Strengthening American Democracy Guide as a resource for your review. We encourage you to turn to that resource for guidance and support as you complete your action plan!

I. Executive Summary

This action plan was developed by Kelly Bowes, Coordinator of Civic and Service-Learning to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Middlesex Community College. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2022-2023 academic year, on and around our campus in Bedford, Massachusetts.

The following groups will be leading this work at Middlesex Community College in order to accomplish our goals and further institutionalize our commitment to civic learning, democratic engagement, and youth participation in elections:

- Undergraduate Students
- Faculty
- Civic/Political/Community Engagement Center
- Student Affairs Staff
- Academic Affairs Staff

How can you improve this section? Visit the Strengthening American Democracy Guide and review the Guiding Questions to ensure your Executive Summary includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

II. Leadership

Kelly Bowes, Coordinator of Civic and Service-Learning will be overseeing our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- Rebecca Newell, Associate Dean of Students
- Phillip Sisson, President
- Steve Rossi, Director, Student Engagement
- Student Government Association
- Maria McDuffie Clarke, Coordinator, International and Multicultural Affairs
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- I would like to get more faculty involved, as well as academic deans

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership, Representation from different perspectives and areas of expertise, Trusted leaders and organizations who support communities that are historically underrepresented in democracy, Leaders who can help with outreach and power building by bringing more people across campus in to our work

Our group plans to meet twice a semester at TBD (virtual)

In the event that our leadership leaves campus or is no longer involved in this work, we have a succession plan in place. Identifying another person from the division that can assist, and onboarding new members quickly

We are also partnering with the following organizations from the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition to support our efforts on campus:

- ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
- Andrew Goodman Foundation
- Association of American Colleges & Universities
- Campus Compact of New England
- Campus Vote Project
- Democracy Works
- IDHE at Tufts
- MASSPIRG
- NASPA
- Rock The Vote
- Vote Early Day
- When We All Vote

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your Leadership Section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

III. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrates commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. We also see this same commitment reflected in our institution's values. They state, “Not specifically, but one is "Diversity and Equity - Advocating for equality of access and opportunity, fostering appreciation of our diverse communities, and securing resources to support multicultural and global education for students, staff, and faculty”

In addition, our campus has mentioned civic learning and democratic engagement in their strategic plan, stating III.5: Promote civic engagement and social responsibility through community dialogue and program development with private and public sector organizations. We also have had a senior leader commit to civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.

On campus, we've seen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs or student organizations
- Campus leaders promoting voting
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- Voter registration tables
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- Signage promoting Election Day
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On campus, we've experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
- Political speakers
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- Registering to vote
- Civic Holiday events (such as National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day)
- Deliberative dialogues
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The emphasis on civic learning and democratic engagement could be increased.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your Commitment Section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

IV. Landscape

The following tables provide a brief overview of the landscape of our campus. This information is based on data collected from unsure - fairly recent when our total student enrollment was 6855.

Enrollment Data:

Undergraduate	Graduate	Full Time	Part Time
6,885.00%		72.00%	28.00%

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents	Commuter
98.00%	2.00%		0.00%	100.00%

Gender Demographics:

Men	Women	Non-Binary	Transgender
38.00%	62.00%		

Age:

18-21	22-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50+

Racial Demographics:

Asian	American Indian / Alaska Native	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	2 or More Races
13.00%		8.00%	16.00%		56.00%	2.00%

Our institution has also utilized the following data gathering tools:

- Ask Every Student First Step Form
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They help to inform our institution's civic learning and democratic engagement efforts by unsure - I'll look into this!

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Landscape Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

V. Goals

Before setting our civic learning and democratic engagement goals on campus, we took the following information into consideration.

We know our campus faces following challenges internally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

- Our institution's mission statement, values, and strategic plan do not mention civic learning and democratic engagement.
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- We don't have processes in place for registering large percentages of our students.
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- The voter engagement work on our campus is very siloed within one office.
- We don't have sustainable or consistent funding.
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- We have trouble engaging student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.
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We also know our campus faces the following challenges externally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

- We don't have a working relationship with our local election office.
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With that said, we know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:

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- We have someone whose job responsibility is to foster civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- We have a coalition of people who are positioned to implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
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- We have ways in which we communicate voting information to our students.
- We use the resources readily available to develop and implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
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- We have working relationships with community partners who are invested in civic learning and democratic engagement.
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With this in mind, we have set the three goals that we would like to achieve over the next academic year:

Increase mid term voting rates at least 3% over 2018 (36.3%)

Highlight local and state elections and issues for our students by hosting at least 3 events that discuss them

Increase student leadership on coalition (have at least 1 student at our meetings)

We have also set three goals that we would like to achieve over the next five years:

Create civic engagement focused first year experience course

Hire additional staff to support civic engagement efforts

Start reporting race and ethnicity demographics to clearinghouse for NSLVE data

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Goals Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

VI. Strategy

Below, we have outlined a strategy describing how we will bring this vision to life in the coming months and years.

These are tactics that we **are already doing** in the **short term** (within the next year):

- Voter Registration drives/encouraging students to register at orientation
- Voter education resources and events
- Current events information sharing

These are tactics that we **plan to do** in the **short term**:

- Better infuse civic engagement into academic coursework, engage community leaders and partners

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **short term**:

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These are tactics that we **are already doing** for the **long term** (beyond the next year):

- in-person voter registration drives In-person voter education events (e.g. film screenings, debates, lecture series, etc.) Classroom voter registration presentations (in-person or virtual) Virtual voter registration drives (e.g. Couch party text banking events, etc.) Virtual voter education events (e.g. film screenings, debates, lectures series, etc.)

These are tactics that we **want to do** in the **long term**:

- create civic engagement courses on campus

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **long term**:

- increase voter registration and turn out rates

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Strategy Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

VII. National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)

Our campus has access to our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) data for 2020. In 2020 our registration rate was 74.9. In comparison to the data from four years prior in our NSLVE report, this rate increased.

In 2020, our voting rate was 55.6 and our voting rate among registered students was 74.2. During this year, our voting rate was lower than the national average.

our voting rate matched both associate level institutions and public institutions Our education students voted highest (61%), our Computer and information systems students voted lowest (43%)

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your NSLVE section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

VIII. Reporting & Evaluation

We plan to share this Action Plan internally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Email to members of our campus coalition
- Email to campus administration
- Email to the President
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We plan to share this Action Plan externally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Post on the campus website
- Release in a public statement
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We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Sending a post-election survey to students
- Sending a post-election survey to faculty
- Regrouping with campus coalition to debrief and reflect
- Integrating feedback collection into individual campus efforts
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We plan to evaluate our success by:

- Reviewing our NSLVE data and looking for improvements year over year
- Seeking out feedback throughout the action planning process from people outside of our action planning team
- Revisiting our goals, identifying goals achieved and not achieved, and adjusting our short and long-term goals accordingly
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How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Reporting & Evaluation Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.