

New College of Florida

Strengthening American Democracy

Campus Vote Project Action Plan

2024-2025

I. Executive Summary

Building off the work of staff predecessors and Campus Vote Project Fellows in the Office of Student Activities and Campus Engagement (SAuCE), this action plan was updated by Syria Purdom, Director of Student Leadership and Community Engagement, to communicate strategies for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at New College of Florida. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2024-2025 academic year, on and around our campus in Sarasota, Florida.

Undergraduate students will be leading this work at New College of Florida in order to accomplish our goals and further institutionalize our commitment to civic learning, voter engagement, and youth participation in elections. Undergraduate students will receive support, guidance, and feedback from the following::

- NCF Faculty
- NCF Senior Administration
- NCF Student Affairs Staff
- Campus Vote Project

The mission of our initiative is:

- NCF V.O.T.E. is the name of the voting initiative developed by New College of Florida's Office of Student Activities and Campus Engagement (SAuCE), an office within New College's Division of Student Affairs. SAuCE created the acronym V.O.T.E. to stand for voting, outreach, training, and education, and its initiative encompasses and integrates all of these components to promote and normalize civic engagement into all aspects of campus life.

II. Leadership

Syria Purdom, Director of Student Leadership and Community Engagement, will be overseeing the work to increase civic learning and voter engagement on campus. Civic engagement and voter education is written into Syria's job description and encompass her portfolio of initiatives in the SAUCE Office. Oversight will include support and collaboration with the following:

- **Core Team:**
- Campus Vote Project Fellows (1-2)

- **On Campus Collaborators:**
- New College Student Alliance (NCSA)
- Tyler Fortune, Executive Director of Campus Life
- Gabriela Ott, Coordinator, Student Activities and Campus Engagement
- David Rancourt, Interim Provost
- David Brickhouse, VP for Legal Affairs
- Nathan March, Director of Communications & Athletics Public Information Officer
- Sarah Hernandez, Associate Professor of Sociology and Caribbean and Latin American Studies

- **Off Campus Collaborators:**
- League of Women Voters
- Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections
- City of Sarasota
- Democracy Works
- Ask Every Student
- Build Local Power
- Turbo Vote
- IDHE/National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE)
- Alliance for Youth Organizing
- Students Learn Students Vote
- Florida Campus Compact
- All In
- Vote Early Day

- **Future groups/people to be involved:**
- Richard Corcoran, President of NCF
- Hui-Men, Assistant VP Institutional Effectiveness and Data Governance
- Michael Gorup, Assistant Professor of Political Science

- Frank Alcock, Associate Professor of Political Science and Environmental Studies
- Jack Reilly, Associate Professor of Political Science
- Resident Assistants (RAs)
- New College Foundation (including Alumni)
- Issue-Based Student Organizations
- Dwayne Peterson, Dean of Career Experience and Experiential Learning
- Jennifer Meier- Director, Accessibility Learning Services
- Sydney Sloan, Associate Director Tutoring/Coaching
- Alexandra Islas, Director of Public Policy Events

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Leaders who can help with outreach and power building by bringing more people across campus into our work and representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership and alumni.
- This group will plan to meet once a month or on an “as needed” basis once the coalition is official.

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

- Democracy Works
- All In
- IDHE
- League of Women Voters
- National Conference on Citizenship
- Vote Early Day

III. Commitment

On campus, we’ve seen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs or student organizations
- Voter registration
- Protests / rallies
- Civic engagement opportunities (poll workers)

On campus, we’ve experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
- Political speakers
- Walks / rides to polls
- Town halls

- Registering to vote
- Civic Holiday events (such as National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day)
- Deliberative dialogues
- Voter friendly campus designation
- CVP/VFC Student Voting Honor Roll designation

The emphasis on civic learning and voter engagement could be increased. NCF students are very interested in advocacy for social issues. Commitment at the leadership level (president, board of trustees) is necessary to achieve our goal of civic learning and democratic engagement being a pervasive part of institutional culture, including general education and/or co-curriculum inclusion.

IV. Landscape

The following tables provide a brief overview of the demographic information of our student body. NOTE: 2023-2024 demographic information is not yet available. This information is based on the 2022-2023 academic year when our total student enrollment was 689.

Enrollment Data:

Undergraduate	Graduate	Full Time	Part Time
97.00%	3.00%	99.00%	1.00%

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents	Commuter
84.00%	16.00%	3.60%	72.00%	28.00%

Gender Demographics:

Men	Women	Non-Binary	Transgender
33.00%	67.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Age:

18-21	22-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50+
77.90%	14.70%	4.20%	2.40%	0.40%	0.30%

Racial Demographics:

Asian	American Indian / Alaska Native	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	2 or More Races
4.60%	0.01%	3.90%	16.80%	0.01%	64.00%	5.50%

Historically, NCF students register at a high rate, but there is a challenge to get students involved in civic learning/voter engagement outside of registration. The barriers may be intense coursework, unpaid vs. paid leadership opportunities, and/or general lack of interest.

We are unsure if civic engagement/democratic engagement are overall campus learning outcomes. This would require a deeper dive into Academic Affairs and curriculum. Other than the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) data, NCF does not have assessment data regarding the political climate and/or democratic engagement on campus.

NCF currently faces the following internal barriers which prevent civic learning/democratic engagement from being a pervasive part of institutional culture:

- Limited funding
- Limited staffing
- Lack of staff motivation
- Staff/leadership resistance
- Lack of leadership support (prioritization)

V. Goals

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

We are aware that our campus faces the following internal voter engagement challenges:

- We can't be a voting site because we are too small
- Most students who come to NCF are already registered to vote

- Limited staff and students that focus on/prioritize voter engagement on campus
- Limited funds
- Civic/democratic engagement is not institutionalized

We also know our campus faces the following external voter engagement challenges:

- FL Vote Laws
- Reliable and consistent transportation

Taking the outlined challenges into consideration, we know our campus has the following strengths as we approach our voter engagement work:

- High voter registration & voter turnout
- Students passionate about advocacy/social justice
- Consistent programming in the SAUCE Office that connects civic engagement and advocacy
- Strong dialogic discussions about current issues
- Voter Friendly Campus designation
- Historical award winner for ALL IN Democracy Challenge
- CVP/VFC Student Voting Honor Roll designation

With this in mind, we have set the three goals that we would like to achieve over the next academic year:

- By the end of Summer 2024, we will fill the Campus Vote Project Fellow position to further our voter engagement efforts on campus.
- By Fall 2024, we will improve voter registration during New Student Orientation by having 25% of the new students signed up for TurboVote.
- By Fall 2024, the NCF President will send ongoing messaging campuswide about the importance of civic learning, voter engagement, and voter registration.

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

- Developing a comprehensive *Strengthening American Democracy* program series where students can earn credit/badges that exhibit their civic competencies through events, workshops, and off/on campus leadership opportunities.
- Achieving buy-in of First Year Studies faculty to include voter engagement within their courses (e.g., Adding TurboVote to syllabi).
- Sustaining a team of paid students to lead the NewCo Vote coalition and NCF V.O.T.E. programming on campus.

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):

- Partner with TurboVote to help make the registration process easier throughout the semester
- Participate in NSLVE
- Celebrate the Civic Holidays (NVRD, NVEW, VED)
- Civic Engagement page developed/updated on main New College website
- Designated Voter Friendly Campus
- CVP/VFC Student Voting Honor Roll designation

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

- Fill the CPV Fall 2024 Democracy Fellow position to drive civic/voter engagement on campus
- Intentionally incorporate voter engagement within orientation; continue voter registration education within the first 40 days of the fall semester
- Work with student newspaper to do a segment on TurboVote
- Work with student government to increase civic engagement efforts
- Have a Get Out the Vote (GOTV) week during Midterms & General Elections

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

- Build a robust vote coalition that consists of students, staff, and faculty
- Building out a co-curricular transcript around civic engagement for students

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

- Conducting SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis and adding voter engagement, civic engagement and democratic education needs in the SAUCE Office's annual program review and five year planning process.
- Engage with students on social media platforms using the hashtag #NCFVOTES; have student fellows create voter engagement content to post on social media platforms for the upcoming 2024 election

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

- Have paid student employees that focus on civic engagement and voter education
- Continue the process of institutionalization by partnering with more political-affiliated community organizations, integrating civic, political, and voter engagement initiatives in New College of Florida's existing operations and culture in a sustainable way; for example:

- Add to NCF Political Speaker Series
- Host more Town Halls

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

- Become an early voting site.
- Campus Vote Project Fellows Program Series:
 - **Engaging with the City:** Invite local Sarasota government officials to campus to give students an opportunity to ask general questions about how local government works, and the importance of it.
 - **Do you Have Common Census?:** Coordinate with an existing NCF student organization to create trivia-based questions upon the upcoming Census to get students engaged in the census in a fun way.
 - **VoteFest:** The SAuCE office and Fellows will plan a VoteFest which will include various non-partisan organizations like: Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections, representatives from the census team, League of Women Voters, international students to do a “world of politics” table, student organizations, Democracy Matters Generation Action involvement, and more.
 - **STEMulating Stats:** An event series targeting STEM majors to be more civically engaged with democracy. This will be a presentation/ discussion by a faculty member about how STEM and democracy intersects within the United States. The discussion will be on various topics such as environmental protection, data science/artificial intelligence, public health issues, urban planning, public policy, economic development, public safety, and more. This can be done twice a year or once a semester.
 - **Race Power and Politics :** This will be a series of events that discuss how race, power, and politics intersects. There will be guest speakers invited to challenge students to look at the systems in the United States and what action we can do now to change.
 - **Women in Politics/Leadership:** This will be a panel event inviting women from diverse backgrounds to talk about their experiences within politics on a local & national level. This event will be during the month of March to recognize the importance of women’s efforts in society.
 - **Brewing Over the Issues:** A monthly event in the fall semester to discuss various topics relating to voter education over coffee and snacks.
 - **Popcorn & Politics:** SAuCE and the Fellows will show movies throughout the spring semester with a discussion afterwards. We will use Novoflix to help select movies that will engage students to think critically about how democracy works.

- **Debate Watch Party:** Have students meet in the Hamilton Center to watch the Presidential debate. This will be a collaborative event with other student organizations.

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 Fall 2020. 2022 NSLVE data has yet to be released. In Fall 2020 our registration rate was 92.6. In comparison to the data from four years prior in our NSLVE report, this rate increased.

In Fall 2020, our voting rate was 82.1 and our voting rate among registered students was 88.7. During this year, our voting rate was higher than the national average.

In our NSLVE report, we had racial data for the following groups:

- Asian
- American Indian / Alaska Native
- Black
- Hispanic
- Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
- White
- 2 or More Races

For the racial groups that have recent voter turnout data, we saw the following groups increase in voter turnout compared to four years ago.

- Hispanic
- White
- 2 or More Races

VIII. Reporting & Evaluation

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

- Emailing the core team and coalition
- Emphasizing that the Action Plan is a roadmap and living document; subject to edits as we move through the various implementation phases

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

- Post on the campus website (include 2022 NSLVE data when available)
- Post to NCF Newsletter and/or SAuCE Newsletter (include 2022 NSLVE data when available)
- Share with community partners and stakeholders as needed

We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Regrouping with campus core leadership team and/or coalition to debrief and reflect
- Gathering feedback from community partners and stakeholders via surveys/questionnaires

We plan to evaluate our success by:

- Tracking event attendance on engagement platform, NovoConnect
- Reviewing our 2022 NSLVE data when available and making necessary updates to our Action Plan; looking for ways to improve semester over semester and year over year
- Seeking out feedback throughout the action planning process from people inside and outside of our action planning team via surveys/questionnaires
- Revisiting our goals, identifying goals achieved and not achieved, and adjusting our short and long-term goals accordingly

-End-