

New College of Florida Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2022-2023 Academic Year

I. Executive Summary

This action plan was developed by Assistant Director, Jada McNeill and the Campus Vote Project Fellows, to communicate our strategy for increasing and maintaining both the registration and turnout rates of voters at New College of Florida. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2022-2023 Academic Year, on and around our campus in Sarasota, Florida. This plan will be implemented by Student Affairs staff, faculty members, registered student organizations, NewCo Vote Coalition, Campus Vote Project Fellowship, and external community partners in order to accomplish our goals and further institutionalize our commitment to civic learning, democratic engagement, and youth participation in elections.

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 (SA[u]CE). SA[u]CE 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 democratic engagement into all aspects of campus life.

II. Leadership

Jada McNeill- Asst. Director of Civic Engagement will be overseeing the work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. She will be supported in this work by:

- **Core Team:**

- Campus Vote Project Fellows
- NewCo Vote Coalition (when it begins, this group of students and student organizations will help with democratic engagement initiatives across campus)
- Faculty- Michael Gorup, Frank Alcock
- Vice President of Student Affairs- Marjorie Thomas
- Asst. Director of Student Involvement- Lesley Nickels
- Director of Student Activities-Dani McCalla
- Asst. Director of Student Success- Kaylie Stokes (orientation)
- Director of Outreach (when the new person gets hired)

- **Off Campus Collaborators:**
- League of Women Voters
- Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections
- City of Sarasota
- Democracy Works
- IDHE
- Ask Every Student
- Build Local Power

- **Future groups/people to be involved:**
- President of NCF- Pat Okker
- More STEM faculty
- Resident Assistants (RAs)
- New College Foundation (Alumni)
- Issue-Based Student Organizations (People of Color Union, Diversity Collective, Queery, LatinX Club)
- Student Government (New College Student Alliance)

The leadership of the New Co Vote Coalition will be a diverse and inclusive collective 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. The coalition will aim to help bring more student voices into how democratic engagement can increase for students living on and off campus. The Campus Vote Project Fellows will be co-leading the coalition in efforts to support initiatives, programs, or events that contribute to student, voter, and civic engagement. Every year, we get two students to participate in the Campus Vote Project Fellowship. Part of the fellowship for New College would be to lead the NewCo Vote Coalition and report to the Assistant Director of Civic Engagement. Participation in the coalition will be on an ongoing basis throughout the semester.

There will be efforts to increase the use of the tool Turbovote, an online system used for voter registration, to be on more high-trafficked online platforms such as Canvas. The plan will also aim to establish regular messaging around voting from the President Pat Okker to help institutionalize and bring more visibility to democratic engagement efforts on campus.

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

New College of Florida prepares intellectually curious students for lives of great achievement. It offers a liberal arts education of the highest quality in the context of a small, residential public honors college with a distinctive academic program which develops the student's intellectual and personal potential as fully as possible; encourages the discovery of new knowledge and values while providing opportunities to acquire established knowledge and values; and fosters the individual's effective relationship with society.

Our campus is committed to democratic engagement through various voter registration drives, political student organizations, freedom of expression, civil discourse, acknowledging and celebrating the Civic Holidays (National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, Vote Early Day), protest/rallies, civic engagement opportunities (ex: becoming a Poll Worker), student body elections, and its Voter Friendly Campus designation.

However, the emphasis on civic learning could definitely be increased, especially voter education through resources for election information and including civic learning into the educational curriculum. The SAuCE Office is currently working on building pathways on Anthology (Campus Labs) to help fully integrate the co-curricular experience in the classroom. With the launch of the pathways, the Civic Engagement pathway (labeled as NCF V.O.T.E.) can be incorporated into the classroom and it can help collect data to reflect how many programs were hosted under the pathway, and attendance. We will continue and improve on these efforts to display commitment to the campus and broader community.

IV. Landscape

The following tables provide a brief overview of the landscape of our campus. This information is based on data collected from Fall 2020 when our total student enrollment was 675.

Enrollment Data:

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

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents	Commuter
83.00%	17.00%	0.00%	90.00%	10.00%

Gender Demographics:

Men	Women	Non-Binary	Transgender
35.00%	65.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Age:

18-21	22-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50+
97.00%	97.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%

Racial Demographics:

Asian	American Indian / Alaska Native	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	2 or More Races
4.00%	0.00%	4.00%	18.00%	0.00%	67.00%	4.00%

Students at NCF register at a high rate, but there is a challenge to get students involved in civic learning/democratic engagement outside of registration. The barriers may be intense coursework, lack of interest in some of the opportunities, and lack of transportation. Our campus is also mainly residential and it can be difficult to get students off campus.

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:

- We can't be a voting site because we are too small
- Most students come to NCF are already registered to vote
- Limited staff and students that focus on voter engagement on campus
- Limited funds- 100% grant funded
- Voter Engagement is not institutionalized

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

- FL Vote Laws
- Reliable and consistent transportation

With that said, we know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:

- High voter registration & voter turnout
- Students passionate about advocacy/social justice
- Consistent programming that connects democratic engagement and advocacy
- Strong dialogic discussions about current issues
- Voter Friendly Campus designation
- Won awards in the ALL IN Democracy challenge

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

- By Fall 2022, we will have the NewCo Vote Coalition developed to include faculty, staff, and students to further our voter engagement efforts on campus in the Fall 2022 semester.
- By Fall 2022, improve voter registration during Orientation by having 25% of the new students signed up for TurboVote
- By Fall 2022, we will have the president send messaging about the importance of civic learning, democratic engagement, and voter registration on the civic holidays.

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

- Developing a comprehensive democratic engagement series where students can earn credit that exhibits their civic competencies through event, workshop and program attendance
- Buying in First Year Studies faculty to include voter engagement within their courses (ex. Adding TurboVote to syllabi)
- Increasing the visibility of TurboVote on Canvas, Anthology, and internal newsletters beginning in Fall 2022
- Having resources to pay students to lead the NewCo Vote Coalition and NCF V.O.T.E programs on campus beginning in FA 2023

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):

- -Participate in NSLVE
- -Celebrate the Civic Holidays (NVRD, NVEW, VED)
- -Vote Information page developed on main New College website
- Designated Voter Friendly Campus

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

- -Intentionally incorporate voter engagement within orientation and weeks of welcome in the Fall semesters. The plan will include getting voter kits with resources to give to students to help improve and maintain our registration rate of 92.6%.
- -Have a GOTV week during Midterms & General Elections to include voter resources and FAQs. This effort will help increase/maintain a 82.1% voting rate among NCF students.
- -Build and strengthen a vote coalition that consists of students, staff, and faculty to establish NCF V.O.T.E programs and initiatives on campus to help institutionalize democratic engagement

- Work with Identity based student organizations (Black Student Union, People of Color Union, LatinX Club, Disability Advocacy Club, Muslim Club). Based upon our data, we can help increase the number of black students voting for the next election cycle by working with the Black Student Union, and Diversity Collective which is a collective of our identity based clubs.

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

- Work with student newspaper the Catalyst to incorporate TurboVote in their articles
- **Work with student government to increase democratic engagement efforts and TurboVote**
- **Intentional tabling and vote resource during orientation**

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

- Building out a co-curricular transcript around democratic engagement for students
- Engage STEM faculty and students to increase STEM voting rates based upon our low number from NSLVE

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

- Have paid student workers that focus on democratic engagement

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

- Become an early voting site

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. 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 complete by taking the following actions:

- Emailing core team, and coalition

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

- Post on the campus website
- NCF Newsletter

We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Regrouping with campus coalition to debrief and reflect using quantitative and qualitative assessments

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
- Pre & Post feedback surveys after events, programs, workshops that align with NCF V.O.T.E.

***NSLVE data will be on the Vote Info Website on the main New College page for people to reference.