

Northern Arizona University 2022 Action Plan

Introduction

Background

Northern Arizona University is a public university with a student population of about 28,000 at its main campus in Flagstaff and at 26 sites across the state. Popular majors include nursing, psychology, biomedical science, criminology and criminal justice, and education, and the school is known for its programs in forestry, environmental studies, hotel and restaurant management. NAU is a Hispanic Serving Institution and includes commitment to Native Americans as one of its key strategic goals. Other objectives of NAU's strategic plan, relevant to our Civic Action Plan, are to integrate community engagement into academic curriculum and university policies and practices.

Coalition

During the 2019-20 academic year, NAU joined the All-In Democracy Challenge. In anticipation of the 2020 elections, the NAU Votes! Coalition was formed in June 2020 to create a unified, campus-wide civic engagement effort. Our primary goal is to increase voter registration and participation and to integrate civic engagement into aspects of the university. The effort was spearheaded by the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, with leadership from the Civic Engagement Minor in the Sustainable Communities Program. In June 2020, this truly became a campus-wide effort. This action plan was created in collaboration with and will be implemented in collaboration with NAU Votes Coalition partners:

- All Voting is Local
- Arizona Students' Association
- Associated Students of Northern Arizona University (ASNAU)
- Black Student Union
- Campus Ministry Connection
- Center for Ecosystem Science and Society (ECOSS)
- Civic Engagement Club
- Civic Influencers
- Community Engagement Minor
- Cline Library
- Departments of Anthropology, Astronomy and Planetary Science, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Communication, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Politics and International Affairs, Psychological Sciences, Social Work, and Sociology
- Episcopal Canterbury Fellowship
- Leadership, Engagement, Activities and Peer Mentoring Office (LEAP)
- NAU Young Democrats
- Student PIRGs New Voters Project
- Office of the Dean of Students

2020 Efforts

In the Fall of 2020 the NAU Votes! Coalition increased its efforts to register and educate voters and encourage voter participation. The efforts utilized included emails to professors, classroom

visits, voter registration phone and text banks, integration of voter registration links into University websites, voter registration announcements, all-campus emails from the president's office, push notifications on the NAU GO app, and voter education events.

Leadership

Faculty/Staff Leadership

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Landscape

The NAU Votes Coalition demonstrates the breadth of NAU partners dedicated to enhancing civic engagement on campus. Beyond the coalition, civic engagement is fostered through the Community Engagement Minor. In this program, students acquire a broad education in democracy, power, and the skills that bring about change to enhance the commonwealth from the local level, to national and transnational scales through a series of intentional and sequenced learning experiences.

The 2020 National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) Campus Report shows a 16.4 point increase in NAU's voting rate, jumping from 45.9% in 2016 to 62.3% in 2020. Moreover, 82.3% of voter-eligible NAU students registered to vote in 2020 compared to 77.3% in 2016 and above the national average for comparable student voters. The voting rate for registered students was 75.8%, up from 59.4% in 2016.

We realize that it will be difficult to maintain these gains in the midterm elections in 2022. Voter turnout was significantly lower in 2018 than in 2016, with 33.6% of all students and 45.9% of registered students voting in the midterm elections. Nonetheless, there will be at least one ballot initiative attracting significant attention: SCR 1044, which would permit students who have attended and graduate from Arizona high schools to pay in-state tuition at public colleges and universities, regardless of their immigration status.

Short Term Goals

For the 2022 midterm elections, we utilized data from the 2018 midterm election as the baseline for setting our goals. The goals are:

- Increase total voter turnout rate from 33.6% to 48%
- Increase voter registration rate from 73.3% to 78%
- Increase the voting rate of registered students from 45.9% to 60%

Long Term Goals

- Secure a commitment from NAU President Jose Luis Cruz Rivera to sign on to the All In Democracy Challenge Presidential Commitment and to make this commitment public.
- Continue to engage faculty in incorporating both voter registration information and civic engagement into their curriculum and class activities
- Increase dedicated staff/faculty/student worker time to voter registration and engagement efforts

Strategy and Tactics

Northern Arizona University, and the NAU Votes Coalition, will continue to improve voter access and provide information to students about elections. Three key areas of focus are:

- **Voter Registration:** Voter registration information will be focused on communicating state-specific information such as Arizona's vote by mail Permanent Early Voter List (PEVL) system. The Coalition also aims to communicate to out-of-state students that they have the opportunity to vote in Flagstaff, while they are living at and attending NAU. Members of the Coalition are trained to answer questions about acceptable addresses and forms of ID. In order to register voters and increase registration rates on campus, we will implement the following:
 - Work with Arizona Students Association and AZPIRG Campus Action to provide easy online voter registration to students. Ensure that voter registration links continue to be integrated onto the NAU Go App, Cline Library Website, and LOUIE (class registration and student accounts).
 - Work with faculty to integrate registration into their courses by
 - Including voter registration on syllabi and course pages
 - Allowing NAU Votes! Coalition members to make non partisan in-class announcements
 - Emailing students on and around key dates in the election cycle
 - Putting a voter tool link in their email bios
 - Make non-partisan registration announcements at club meetings and outreach to RSO leadership to email members
 - Utilize push notifications on the NAU Go App and implement a permanent widget with voter registration links and information on the app
 - Email the entire student body through ASNAU and the President's Office to encourage students to register to vote.
 - Hold In-person registration events during key moments of the term, including but not exclusive to Welcome Week events, National Voter Registration Day and other related civic holidays, and the week leading up to the voter registration deadline.
 - Coordinate w/ Residence Hall Association to include voter registration in their Fall 2022 Housing Move-in
- **Election Information**
 - Conducting a faculty survey to gather further insight on best practices and implementation strategies

- Integrating information into Freshman and Transfer Student Orientation and Resident Assistant (RA) training
 - NAU Votes Coalition has created a website with voter information for students. The website includes FAQs, student voter ballot information, and instructions to vote.
 - NAU Votes Coalition and Civic Engagement Club will continue to sponsor election information events at NAU, including a discussion of voter suppression, a campus debate among state legislative candidates, and a Know Your Vote night to explain propositions and offices on the ballot.
 - Create social media posts to be shared by coalition members and student groups with information on when, where, and how to vote.
 - In Spring of 2020, local candidates, as well as the candidate for Senate, Mark Kelly, were hosted by the NAU Young Dems and NAU Young Republicans. We are expecting several candidates to hold events geared towards NAU students in the Fall 2022 semester.
- Voter Participation
 - Have a vote center at the NAU Skydome to make voting in person easy for students.
 - Work with Coconino County Clerks to maintain a ballot drop box on campus.
 - Publicize NAU Votes Coalition website to provide information for NAU students who need to vote in one place to make voting easier.
 - Work with clubs and outside organizations to visit classrooms and clubs to promote student voting.
 - Use data collected from www.arizonastudentvote.org to encourage students to vote on campus. ASA and AZPIRG Campus Action will coordinate GOTV efforts with student leadership.
 - Create a voter pledge competition among athletic teams, fraternities/sororities, and other clubs and organizations.

Tentative 2022 Calendar

February 14 Hobbs	AZ Statehood Day Town Hall with Arizona Secretary of State Katie
July 5	Registration deadline for primary elections
August 2	Primary elections
Sep/Oct	Big Sky conference athletics voter registration challenge
September 17	Constitution Day
September 20	National Voter Registration Day
October 3-7	National Voter Education Week: election debate
Oct/Nov (TBA)	Early voting events
Late October	Know Your Ballot event
November 8	General elections