



Northern Essex Community College

All in Democracy Challenge

2022 Election Engagement Action Plan



For more information, contact:

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History and Executive Summary

In fall 2019, Northern Essex Community College (NECC) joined the All in Democracy Challenge. As part of this commitment, NECC created an action plan that addressed specific election engagement strategies for 2020, expanding on the college's current Civic Action Plan, which was established in 2017. The 2020 plan was created during the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis, and its effect on the college and voting process was considered in its writing. Based on this information, a plan was created with realistic goals and strategies, focusing on voter registration, election education, and voter turnout. NECC has a strong commitment to civic engagement and voting. In order to form that action plan, input was solicited campus-wide.

In fall 2022, NECC welcomes more students on campus than in the last two years. However, NECC is also home to more remote students than before the pandemic. With strong voter registration/turnout rates in 2018, NECC strives to maintain these same rates in 2022. This plan was endorsed by the Civic Engagement and Service-Learning Committee.

Leadership

Northern Essex Community College (NECC) has an established Civic Engagement and Service-Learning Committee that provides oversight and direction to civic engagement efforts on the campus. Committee membership is open to any student, faculty, and/or staff. This committee consists of over 35 staff and faculty from all college divisions and both campus locations, including the Vice President of the Lawrence Campus and Community Relations. The Coordinator of Civic Engagement and Service-Learning chairs the committee. This dedicated group outlined strategies for engaging the campus in the 2020 elections.

The Civic Engagement and Service-Learning Advisory Committee is comprised of community leaders, NECC faculty/staff, and students who are always welcome to participate.

Commitment

Northern Essex Community College is committed to graduating active, engaged citizens. In 2015, the college hired its first Civic Engagement and Service-Learning Coordinator. The same year, NECC agreed to participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to learn more about NECC students' voting participation. The college has been using the results of this study to inform strategies for student voter engagement since 2015.

In 2016, NECC President Lane Glenn signed the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Statement of Presidents, reaffirming the college's commitment to civic engagement. As part of this pledge, NECC committed to creating a college civic action plan within the year.

In spring 2017, NECC adopted its first [Civic Action Plan](#). NECC's Civic Action plan embraces the college's vision by preparing our students to be active, informed citizens; by empowering the NECC community to pursue partnerships to benefit local and global communities; and to contribute institutionally to the health and strength of our local communities. This plan has helped NECC live out its mission "to educate and inspire our students to succeed" and "to create vibrant and innovative opportunities that encourage excellence and enhance the cultural and economic life of our region" ([NECC Mission Statement](#)).

In spring 2017, NECC established a Civic Engagement Award for a graduating student who has demonstrated a commitment to civic engagement during their tenure at the college. In 2018, NECC nominated a student to be a Newman Civic Scholar through Campus Compact for the first time.

The college continues to have a strong dedication to civic engagement. In fall 2019, the Civic Scholars Program was established to provide a pathway to civic engagement. The program awards points to students for engagement in a wide variety of co-curricular, community, and curricular offerings focusing on civic participation, service to their communities, and/or social justice.

In fall 2019, Northern Essex Community College joined the *All in Democracy Challenge*, committing to create an action plan specific to election engagement. NECC was also recognized with a Silver Seal for Voter Excellence for the college's 2018 voting rates.

Goals

The overarching goal for NECC is to increase voter registration, voter education, and voter turnout among its students.

Northern Essex Community College has voter registration and turnout data from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement. NECC, like other colleges, saw an increase in registration and voting rates between the 2014 and 2018 elections, as well as the 2012 and 2016 elections. NECC saw an increase in the registration rate amongst its student between 2016 and 2020, but a slight drop in the voting rates.

Year	Registration Rate	Voting Rate of Registered Voters	Overall Voting Rate of Student Body
2020	70.9%	65.7%	46.6%
2018	64.1%	49.4%	31.6%
2016	66.7%	73.2%	48.8%
2014	59.00%	34.8%	20.6%
2012	64.9%	73.1%	47.5%

NECC's voting rate in the 2018 midterm elections was strong. In light of continued current challenges around COVID-19 and that more NECC students are now engaging remotely with the college, NECC strives to maintain similar voting registration and voting rates as the 2018 elections for 2022.

By 2024, NECC strives to increase its voting registration rate by 5% and the overall voting rate of the student body by 5%.

2022 Strategy

Goal: NECC students register to vote.

Activities	Responsible	Timeframe
<p>In-person and/or online voter registration: Potential activities/weblink locations include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tabling on both campuses • NECC events • Classrooms • Orientation • Navigate • Blackboard • Email to all students • Link on main student-facing NECC website pages • Constitution Day Event • Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Engagement Office/Civic Scholars • Faculty • Coordinator of Orientation and Student Transitions • Volunteers • Student Life • Academic Centers • Assistant VP of Student Affairs • Office of Institutional Effectiveness 	<p>Summer and Fall 2022 Constitution Day: 9/17/2022</p>
<p>Voter Registration forms are available on campus, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NECC Library • Student gathering locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NECC Library • Civic Engagement Offices 	<p>Summer and Fall 2022</p>
<p>National Voter Registration Day Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Civic Engagement 	<p>9/20/22</p>

Goal: NECC students are educated on the election issues and candidates.

Activities	Responsible	Timeframe
<p>Academic election assignment- Request faculty to bring the election into the classroom in the form of an assignment.</p> <p>Provide support (remote and/or in-person) for this through the Blackboard Elections Community site and one-on-one consultation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty • Civic Engagement Office • Civic Engagement Office 	<p>Summer and Fall 2022</p>
<p>Campus election educational events (remote and/or in-person): Potential events include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballot question(s) event • Guest speakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Engagement Office • Civic Engagement and Service-Learning Committee 	<p>Summer and Fall 2022</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other events • Workshops • Debate watches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student clubs • Student Government Association • Faculty • Academic Centers • Students • PACE and SOAR • Academic Centers 	
Promotion of public election events: Events include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local forums/debates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Engagement Office 	Summer and Fall 2022
Create and/or share online resources available for students and/ faculty about the election: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Engagement and Library social media pages • NECC Library Election Lib Guide • Election Teach-In Blackboard Community • NECCVotes webpage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NECC Library • Civic Engagement Office 	Summer and Fall 2022
Election educational articles appear in the Observer (the student newspaper).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NECC Observer staff • NECC faculty, staff, students • NECC Civic Engagement Office 	Fall 2022

Goal: NECC students vote!

Activities	Responsible	Timeframe
Promote #NECCVotes Campaign Potential ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute buttons • Create and hang posters with past voting statistics • Promote #NECCVotes video 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Engagement Office • Campus Community • NECC Observer • Service-Learning Students 	Fall 2022
Educate on how to vote (early, absentee, and in-person): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly emails • Social media • Blackboard and Navigate messaging • Tabling on Election Day • Classroom announcements/presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Engagement Office • Assistant Director of Student Success Management Systems • Faculty • NECC Observer 	Fall 2022

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of Institutional Effectiveness 	
<p>Election Day Reminders: Send election day reminders to students.</p> <p>Potential methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campus-wide email Social Media Faculty Yard signs around campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic Engagement Office Faculty Student Life NECC Observer Blackboard and Navigate messaging 	<p>Fall 2022</p> <p>Election Days: September 6, 2022 November 8, 2022</p>

Accessibility

As part of this plan, the college commits to creating all possible election-oriented materials with accessibility and universal design principles in mind. The college’s Center for Instructional Technology, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, Learning Accommodations Center, and Marketing and Communications have all committed to assist in this process.

In addition, the college will strive to have as many printed materials as possible printed in English and Spanish.

Reporting

This action plan will be available to all members of the Civic Engagement and Service-Learning Committee, college administration, and all offices directly named in the strategy section of the plan. The plan will also be available by request. The Executive Summary will be included on the new *#NECCVotes* webpage, as well as a link to the full plan on the *All in Democracy Challenge* website. Updates to the plan and its progress will be shared on this webpage also.

Evaluation

Assessment will happen annually in the late spring.

First, NECC will evaluate if the activities identified occurred within the timeframe and collect outputs for these activities. These will provide the basis for updating the plan for the future, including target outputs.

Second, utilizing the NSLVE data we will determine if the goals were achieved for voter registration and turnout. This data will help inform the strategy for the subsequent election engagement plan.

Third, students will be prompted with three quick poll questions through NECC’s EAB Navigate system in late November/early December regarding whether they voted, if not the reason why, and if they encountered any NECC-sponsored election information. This assessment will inform the creation of the strategy for the following election teach-in.