



Northern Kentucky University 2022 Democratic Engagement Action Plan

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Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Northern Kentucky University in Kentucky for the 2022 election. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout in the 2022 midterm election. The goals for Northern Kentucky University for the 2022 election are:

- Increase voter registration and participation
- Provide students with opportunities to learn about public issues
- Provide students with opportunities to discuss public issues
- Provide students with opportunities to interact with leaders in our community

Leadership:

Our leadership team includes the following:

- Mark Neikirk - Executive Director, Scripps Howard Center at NKU
- Danny Lovell - Program Coordinator, Scripps Howard Center at NKU
- Melanie Hartzel - Program Coordinator, Scripps Howard Center at NKU

Our campus cultivates partners to amplify our work. Among them are: American Democracy Project, Campus Compact, NKU's First Year Experience and Programs, the three public library districts in our region (Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties), Kids Voting Northern Kentucky, the Associated Press, the Office of the Kentucky Secretary of State, the League of Women Voters of Kentucky, and the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.

Commitment:

Northern Kentucky University's commitment to civic engagement is strategic and organizational. The university's strategic framework includes a commitment to educating students to contribute to the "civic prosperity of the region." Structurally, the university has an office devoted to this work, the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement.

Other highlights:

- NKU has been a signatory to the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation since 2020, and intends to sign it again for 2022.
- We have partnered with our First Year Experience department and woven voter registration into the course for all University 101 courses.
- NKU joined the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement in 2012, and we continue to participate through each election cycle in order to monitor and benchmark our students' voter registration rates and voting rates.
- NKU has over 50 service learning classes each year, and those classes include a civic learning component.

Landscape:

Northern Kentucky University is a public 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2016.

Our campus demographic data:

Northern Kentucky University has 16,211 students; 21% are non-white; at least 30% are first gen students; about 65% are in-state.

Our voting data:

According to NSLVE, our institution had a 2020:

- Campus voting rate of 67.5%, up from 40.1% in 2018.
- Voter registration rate of 88.2%, up from 81% in 2018.

Our institution has been recognized by ALL IN with the following seals: 2018 Gold, 2020 Silver

Goals:

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:

- Increase student voter turnout out to 90% in 2022 and about 90% in 2023.
- Hold at least 25 events in 2023 open to students to boost awareness of public issues.

- Complete (by mid-2023) an assessment of democracy education at NKU and develop an implementation plan for its recommendations.

Strategy:

Northern Kentucky University will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation:

- Partner with the First Year Experience office and visit University 101 classes to discuss voter registration and absentee voting.
- Maintain and promote the Ready Set Vote website for quick access
<http://nku.edu/readysavote>
- Table in the Student Union on National Voter Registration Day with ipads to encourage on-the-spot voter registration
- Printed the Ready Set Vote on umbrellas and partnered with the NKUmbrella Project
- Provide Ready Set Vote swag to be handed out to incoming freshmen during orientation and Fresh Fusion
- Work with NKU's Honors College classes to co-development marketing and outreach to encourage students to register and vote.
- Partner with the Northern Kentucky Forum to provide "town halls" for discussion of public affairs.
- Partner with Student Government to develop programs to encourage students to register and vote.
- Develop and support service learning classes with a civic learning component.
- Partner with the Associated Press to provide real-world experiences covering elections.

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

- We will use our 2022 NSLVE voting data to monitor our registration and turnout.
- We will count and inventory our public events (and their attendance) that focus on issues and education.
- We will track our service learning classes.

Reporting:

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website
<https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/northern-kentucky-university/>.

Our institution has given ALL IN permission to publish our NSLVE reports which are posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website.

Our campus action plan will be shared on our civic engagement website and available for public viewing.