



# Pennsylvania College of Technology Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2022-2026

*This plan was created using the Votes & Ballots Action Planning Form. We highly recommend editing and expanding upon this draft before submitting for review.*

*Throughout this document, we mention the Strengthening American Democracy Guide as a resource for your review. We encourage you to turn to that resource for guidance and support as you complete your action plan!*

## I. Executive Summary

This action plan was developed by Meghan Delsite Coleman, Assistant Director of Student Engagement to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Pennsylvania College of Technology. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2022-2026, on and around our campus in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

The following groups will be leading this work at Pennsylvania College of Technology in order to accomplish our goals and further institutionalize our commitment to civic learning, democratic engagement, and youth participation in elections:

- Student Affairs Staff

The mission of our initiative is:

- Pennsylvania College of Technology strives to educate its student population on the importance of civic engagement each year.

The Student Affairs Division is focused on two strategic initiatives for the 2022-2026 cycle. First, to provide students context for the impact of current events in real-time, and second, to promote the engagement of students in civic life and citizenship by emphasizing opportunities to support change through partnership and being an informed citizen.

**How can you improve this section?** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Executive Summary* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## II. Leadership

Meghan Delsite Coleman | Assistant Director of Student Engagement will be overseeing our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- Allison Bressler Grove | Director of Student Engagement
- Elliott Strickland | VPSA
- Faculty representatives
- Student Government Association Designee

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership, Representation from different perspectives and areas of expertise, Leaders who can help with outreach and power building by bringing more people across campus in to our work

Our group plans to meet Once per month at

In the event that our leadership leaves campus or is no longer involved in this work, we have a succession plan in place. The new assistant director would take over, with support from the director of student engagement.

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your Leadership Section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

### III. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrates commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. We also see this same commitment reflected in our institution's values. They state, "Students are thoughtfully immersed in experiences that invite exploration of diverse subjects and perspectives, promote critical thinking, and ignite lifelong learning."

On campus, we've seen:

- Voter education resources
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- Voter registration tables
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On campus, we've experienced:

- Political speakers
- Town halls
- Registering to vote
- Civic Holiday events (such as National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day)
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The emphasis on civic learning and democratic engagement could be increased.

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Commitment Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## IV. Landscape

The following tables provide a brief overview of the landscape of our campus. This information is based on data collected from 2021 when our total student enrollment was 4240.

**Enrollment Data:**

Undergraduate	Graduate	Full Time	Part Time
96.80%	1.06%	4.00%	96.00%

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents	Commuter
89.70%	10.30%	0.50%		

**Gender Demographics:**

Men	Women	Non-Binary	Transgender
63.25%	36.75%		

**Age:**

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

**Racial Demographics:**

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

Our institution has also utilized the following data gathering tools:

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- National Survey of Student Engagement
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They help to inform our institution's civic learning and democratic engagement efforts by

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Landscape Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## 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:

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- We don't have a coalition of people who are positioned to implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
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- We don't have ways in which we communicate voting information to our students.
- We don't use the resources readily available to develop and implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- The voter engagement work on our campus is very siloed within one office.
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- Voter engagement is politicized, resulting in administrative reluctance to engage.
- We have trouble engaging student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.
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We also know our campus faces the following challenges externally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

- We don't have a working relationship with our local election office.
- We don't have working relationships with community partners who are invested in civic learning and democratic engagement.
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With that said, we know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:

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- We have someone whose job responsibility is to foster civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
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- We have ways in which we communicate voting information to our students.
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- We have sustainable or consistent funding.
- Voter engagement efforts on campus are nonpartisan.

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

- Increase in institutional civic engagement programming through introduction of new programs
- Develop and implement voter awareness week.

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

- Increase percentage of students who are registered to vote to 80 percent
- Increase the student voting rate to 65 percent

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Goals Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.



## 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):

- Constitution Week, voter registration tables

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

- Annually celebrate Constitution Week, Voter Registration Day, civic engagement educational presentations, routinely work with faculty on hosting roundtables, and seek opportunities to partner across campus and with local government when possible

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

- Annually celebrate Constitution Week, Voter Registration Day, civic engagement educational presentations, routinely work with faculty on hosting roundtables, and seek opportunities to partner across campus and with local government when possible

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

- None.

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

- To increase the percentage of registered to vote students, the Office of Student Engagement will begin offering at least two signature programs each academic year – one in the fall and one in the spring. Additionally, OSE will offer continue to offer programs throughout the year such as Constitution Week, voter registration week, and faculty roundtables. OSE will also develop a portal page with information about voter registration, including information about absentee voting, links to nonpartisan candidate reports, and more.

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

- To increase the percentage of registered to vote students, the Office of Student Engagement will begin offering at least two signature programs each academic year – one in the fall and one in the spring. Additionally, OSE will offer continue to offer programs throughout the year such as Constitution Week, voter registration week, and faculty roundtables. OSE will also develop a portal page with information about voter registration, including information about absentee voting, links to nonpartisan candidate reports, and more.

**How can you improve this section?** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Strategy Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## 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 2020. In 2020 our registration rate was 75.4. In comparison to the data from four years prior in our NSLVE report, this rate increased.

In 2020, our voting rate was 77.6 and our voting rate among registered students was 58.5. During this year, our voting rate was lower than the national average.

***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your NSLVE section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

## VIII. Reporting & Evaluation

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

- Email to members of our campus coalition
- Email to campus administration
- Email to the President
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We plan to share this Action Plan externally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Post on the campus website
- Release in a public statement
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We will collect feedback on this plan by:

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- Regrouping with campus coalition to debrief and reflect
- Integrating feedback collection into individual campus efforts
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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
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***How can you improve this section?*** Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Reporting & Evaluation Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.