



Regis College Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2022-2023 Academic Year

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 Erin Wisniewski, Dean of Academic Support Services to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Regis College. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2022-2023 Academic Year, on and around our campus in Weston, Massachusetts.

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

- Student Affairs Staff
- Academic Affairs Staff

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

Erin Wisniewski, Dean of Academic Support Services will be overseeing our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- Walt Horner, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
- Bridget Buoniconti, Dean of Students
- Jeff Joseph, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs
- Gerena Walker, Director of Center for Student Engagement
- Anjelica Velazquez, Assistant Director of Center for Student Engagement
- Ed Hunt, Assistant Professor

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Leaders who can help with outreach and power building by bringing more people across campus in to our work

Our group plans to meet Monthly 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 Center for Student Engagement typically will lead this initiative with the Dean of Students and the Dean of Academic Support Services to take over as necessary.

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, “Gracious hospitality Love and service of the Dear Neighbor without distinction Peaceful resolution of conflict Care for all God’s creation”

We also have had a senior leader commit to civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.

On campus, we’ve seen:

- Voter education resources
- Campus leaders promoting voting
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- Voter registration tables
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- Signage promoting Election Day
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On campus, we’ve experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
- Political speakers
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- Registering to vote
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- Deliberative dialogues
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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

We do not have access to comprehensive demographic information about our student body at this time.

Our institution has also utilized the following data gathering tools:

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- Higher Education Research Institute and Cooperative Institutional Research Program
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They help to inform our institution's civic learning and democratic engagement efforts by We have not yet utilized.

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:

- Our institution's mission statement, values, and strategic plan do not mention civic learning and democratic engagement.
- We don't have someone whose job responsibility is to foster civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
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- We don't have processes in place for registering large percentages of our students.
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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 a coalition of people who are positioned to implement 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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- Voter engagement efforts on campus are nonpartisan.
- We are able to engage student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.



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

Keep our numbers consistent.
Create on campus conversations.
Generate student activism.

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

Incorporate into curriculum for most classes (where appropriate)
Make part of core curriculum
Foster activism on campus

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):

- Conversation in First Year Seminar courses and Political Science courses; voter registration drives; on campus ballot discussions

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

- Encourage curricular and co-curricular conversations

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

- Intentionally engage with campus community through social media channels.

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

- Incorporate Civic Engagement throughout the year

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

- Ensure incorporation into the curriculum of most courses.

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

- Incorporate civic engagement into the core curriculum

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 85.2%. In comparison to the data from four years prior in our NSLVE report, this rate increased.

In 2020, our voting rate was 70.4% and our voting rate among registered students was 82.6%. During this year, our voting rate was higher 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
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- 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
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- 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.