



The College at
BROCKPORT
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Democratic Engagement Action Plan



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Executive Summary

The Civic Engagement Action Plan that follows was created by Kimberly Piatt, Associate Director of Community Development at The College at Brockport, and Harry DeVoe, Graduate Assistant for Democratic Engagement. It represents a compilation of efforts from across the institution for the 2019-2020 Academic Year to promote civic and democratic engagement. This action plan is intended to be a living document that is amended as appropriate through feedback from campus and community partners. In particular, during the 2019-2020 academic year, the American Democracy Project committee on campus will play a large role in reviewing and revising this plan.

Founded in 1835, The College at Brockport is a nationally recognized comprehensive public college focused on student success. Located just 20 minutes west of Rochester, the school is part of the State University of New York system. The 464-acre campus has 67 buildings occupying about one-quarter of the campus, with rolling grassy fields and wooded land. Annual enrollment is approximately 7000 undergraduate and 1000 graduate students, with a majority of students residing on-campus or within the surrounding village.

Each year, The College at Brockport awards approximately 25 percent of all bachelor's degrees in the Rochester area, with many alumni staying in Rochester to work or attend graduate school. Alumni serve in leadership roles in business, government, public safety, health care, the arts, sciences and education.

Civic engagement initiatives occur throughout campus under many different departments. Primary responsibility for voter engagement falls within the office of Community Development, in the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Community Development oversees the national award winning Leadership Development Program, community service initiatives and democratic engagement. The office is also a consulting member of the NASPA LEAD Initiative. The American Democracy Project is a college-wide committee, co-chaired by representatives from the Political Science Department and the office of Community Development. This group meets throughout the year to implement programs that promote an informed and engaged citizenry.

For the upcoming year, our primary goals are:

- To establish an institutional definition of Civic Engagement including outcomes and appropriate assessment measures
- To increase the voter registration and turnout for the midterm elections by strengthening campus-wide efforts including classroom visits, student leader trainings and more than 100 hours of registration events
- To enhance voter education by hosting dialogues and events and providing visual materials that present multiple perspectives and emphasize the importance of informed voting
- To establish voter engagement opportunities that provide ballot access and encourage students to get out to vote, including recruiting student poll workers, reminders about absentee voting and shuttles to local polling sites

Leadership

Primarily, leadership for these initiatives will fall to the Office of Community Development, in the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. This office has primary responsibility for civic engagement initiatives at the college. In this capacity, the office oversees the nationally recognized Leadership Development Program, community service initiatives, and democratic engagement.

Additionally, work is completed throughout campus including many intentional partnerships that support the day-to-day work. These include:

Department of Political Science: The department of Political Science and International Studies seeks to help students develop the skills and knowledge to critically evaluate political issues and analyze the role of the citizen in the political system.

Brockport Student Government (BSG): Student government at Brockport is a vibrant community. The organization seeks to develop students for roles as leaders in diverse and interdependent communities. The director of advocacy position was created to enhance student engagement and activism within their communities. Additionally, several student groups, under the auspice of BSG, are engaged in civic engagement efforts, including:

- 89.1 The Point
- Association of Latinx American Students
- Caribbean Student Association
- Environmentally Conscious Organization of Students
- Eurosims
- Gender Equity Movement
- Political Science/Pre-Law
- Students for Veteran's Outreach
- Talon Television
- The Stylus
- Voices for Progressive Change
- Young Americans for Liberty

Residential Life/Learning Communities (RLLC): Serving more than a third of the campus population, Residential Life represents a major stakeholder in efforts to civically engage students. The thriving Living Learning Community program offers a unique opportunity to connect with students on a variety of related topics including service, sustainability, law and civility and others.

Commitment

The College at Brockport values involvement with its community. As a result, efforts have been made over the last few years to include this aspect of our work in guiding documents for the institution. The college's strategic mission, vision, values and strategic plan have been shared broadly and emphasized among faculty, staff, students, and other community members. The institutional student learning outcomes were passed by the college senate in Fall 2017 and have not yet become widely known in all areas of the college.

College Mission

The College at Brockport is an inclusive learning community that inspires excellence through growth, engagement, and transformation.

College Vision

Building meaningful lives and vibrant communities

College Values

Community • Engagement • Excellence • Transformation

Strategic Plan: Building a Better Brockport

Goal Two: To be a College engaged with its Community

Community engagement offers the opportunity to contribute to the public good by combining the resources of the College with those of public and private sectors. To be a college engaged with its community requires that we promote, support, recognize, and celebrate the service and engagement of faculty, staff, students, and alumni in local, regional, national, and international communities, demonstrating our commitment to leadership, civic engagement, and global awareness.

Goal Two: Relevant Measures of Success

- a. Growth in the number and extent of engagement partnerships with the Village of Brockport, City of Rochester, Monroe County, and local rural communities, through active participation in some or all of the following: community advisory boards and volunteer efforts; Town/Gown meetings and initiatives; collaborative events; community internships and partnerships. This will allow us to explore and assess strong community partnerships around areas of critical need, e.g., the development of a community clinic.
- b. Develop stronger working relationships with bodies with influence, including: the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council (FLREDC), the Greater Rochester Chamber of the Commerce, the Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE), the Rochester Monroe County Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI), and state and national bodies of relevance to the College.
- c. Work to achieve Carnegie Foundation Elective Community Engagement Classification or a similar external measure.

Relevant Institutional Student Learning Outcomes

Intercultural Competence: Brockport graduates will be able to demonstrate an understanding of multiple worldviews and experiences as well as of relationships between diversity, inequality, and social, economic and political power, both within the United States and globally.

Critical Thinking and Information Literacy: Brockport graduates will be able to identify issues clearly, synthesize and contextualize relevant sources to achieve specific purposes, and make connections across experiences and disciplinary perspectives to generate well-reasoned and imaginative approaches to historical and contemporary issues, problems, and challenges.

Civic Engagement: Brockport graduates will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of civic engagement and civic responsibility through knowledge and experience gained in their academic field(s) of study and co-curricular explorations.

Landscape

Curricular Efforts

General Education

Within the General Education requirements and structure, several course tags may connect with civic learning and democratic engagement, however it is difficult to discern to what extent a specific course connects to this work. All students must take a course that fulfills one of these tags, with a wide variety of options from which to choose. These course tags include:

- Perspectives on Gender (one course, “W”): Demonstrate knowledge of scholarship on women within a relevant knowledge area. Scholarship on women is broadly defined as a critical awareness of gender issues.
- Diversity (one course, “D”): Demonstrate an ability to analyze social conflicts, prejudices, and/or intolerance relevant to a contemporary setting, and arising from such issues as racism, ethnicity, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, class, etc.
- Contemporary Issues (one course, “I”): Demonstrate an ability to analyze a major issue with contemporary and enduring human significance, bringing in perspectives that have an important bearing on the issue(s) from more than one of the Knowledge Areas.

Additionally, all first-year students take the Academic Planning Seminar. This course is taught by many different instructors from all over campus and has an overarching curriculum with room for individualization. During Summer 2019, members of the office of Community Development will be creating a lesson outline for instructors who would like to facilitate a class on civic engagement. This workshop, entitled “Reading Between the Lines,” teaches students to understand the biases and assumptions found in academic sources as well as the media.

Co-Curricular Efforts

Brock the Vote Campaign

Throughout the year, the office of Community Development implements the following initiatives to promote voter registration, education and turnout. These include the following:

Voter Registration (note: this list is not exhaustive):

- Promotion of voter registration at Summer Orientation “Connecting to Your New Community” Session and Information Table
- Email sent to on-campus students with housing assignment and voter registration information
- Voter Registration information and forms available during move-in
- Voter Registration information and forms handed out to off-campus students by Good Neighbor Relations Team during Saturday of Service
- Voter Registration Tabling throughout campus
- Presentations and voter registration in Freshmen Academic Planning Seminar
- Trainings for student leaders on how to register to vote so that they can educate their peers (Resident Assistants, Peer Mentors, Community Ambassadors)
- Campus-Wide Email sent to all students from Vice President’s Office
- Instructions sent to all Faculty through the Daily Eagle
- Presence at Naturalization Ceremony
- National Voter Registration Day Event

Voter Education (note: this list is not exhaustive)

- Naturalization Ceremony

- Constitution and Citizenship Day
- Our Community, Our Voice
- “Understanding Monroe County” Speaker Series
- Debate Watch Parties
- Bulletin Boards throughout Campus
- Community Ambassador Democratic Topics Tabling
- Monthly Deliberative Dialogues
- American Democracy Project Speakers
- “Electing to Lunch” Weekly Lunch Discussions

Voter Mobilization (note: this list is not exhaustive)

- Monroe County Election Fellows Program – collaborative effort between local colleges and the Monroe County Board of Elections to recruit Elections Inspectors
- Providing Transportation or Ride Shares to polling locations
- Absentee Ballot Drive
- Posters and flyers throughout campus reminding students to submit absentee ballots
- Provost email to faculty encouraging support and flexibility for students needing to travel home for election day
- Opportunities to practice casting a vote to eliminate discomfort as a deterrent
- Email from the president encouraging participation in the election
- Flyers and advertising throughout campus promoting election day and building excitement
- Video on website encouraging students to get out and vote on election day
- Election Day Watch Party
- “I Voted” Party

Leadership Development Program

The college hosts an award-winning Leadership Development Program that is grounded in the Social Change Model of Leadership. Emphasis in each level of the program is placed on civic learning and democratic engagement. Students participate in Deliberative Dialogues about community issues, attend local governance meetings and advocate for community change.

Barriers

Internal Barriers

Human capital remains one of the most significant barriers. Democratic engagement is not the dedicated responsibility of a full-time staff or faculty member. A graduate assistant focuses on this work, but without full-time attention, it is difficult to move the bar. Additionally, there may be a perception that the efforts are geared to promote a specific party or agenda. The impression on campus is that the majority support liberal values, making an environment in which many conservative students struggle to discuss their political beliefs.

External Barriers

Several significant barriers exist in New York State. The state does not have an effective way to register online. An individual may only register online if they possess identification from the DMV and are choosing to register to vote using the address listed on that identification.

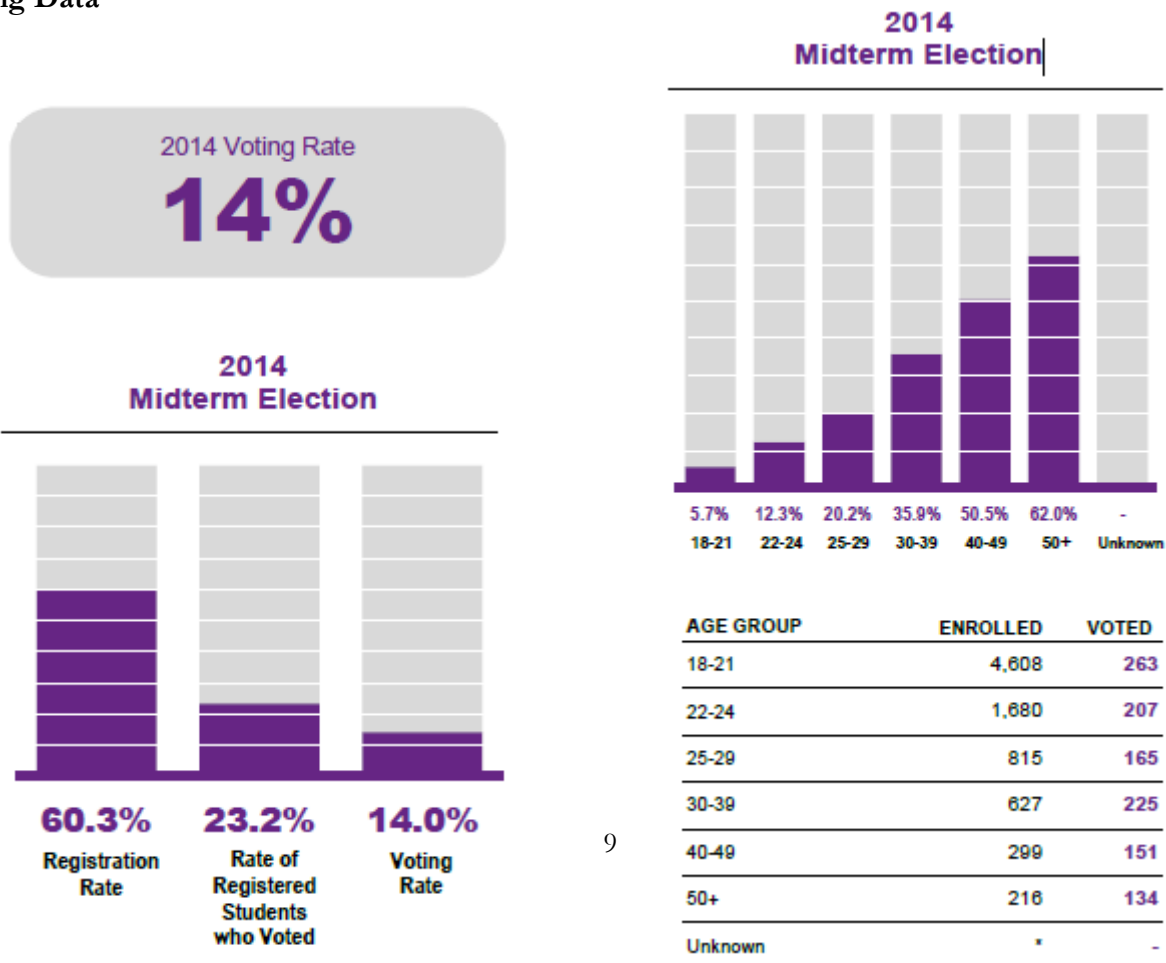
Available Resources

- American Democracy Project
- Graduate Assistantship for Democratic Engagement
- 10 Community Ambassador student employees
- Funds for speakers, events and promotional materials from Community Development, American Democracy Project, and collaborating partners

Additional Resources Needed

- Additional funds for large-scale events and speakers
- Reserved parking space for guest speakers
- Mechanisms to allow for transportation to multiple polling sites

Polling Data

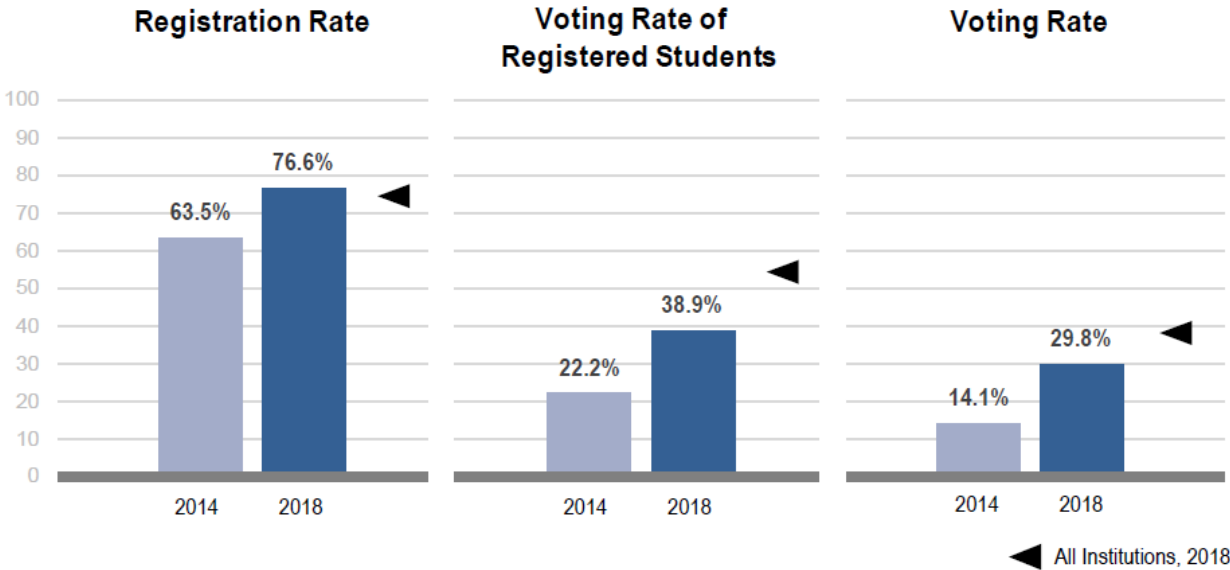


Voting and Registration Rates

2018 Voting Rate
29.8%

CHANGE FROM 2014
+15.7

2018 VOTING RATE FOR ALL INSTITUTIONS
39.1%



Voting and Registration Rates

2016 Voting Rate

46.5%

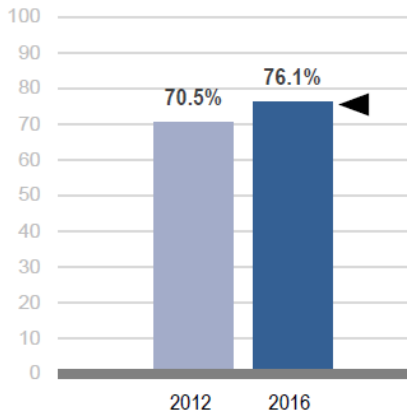
CHANGE
FROM 2012

6.6

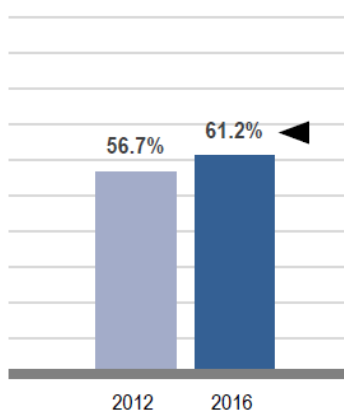
2016 VOTING RATE
FOR ALL INSTITUTIONS

50.4%

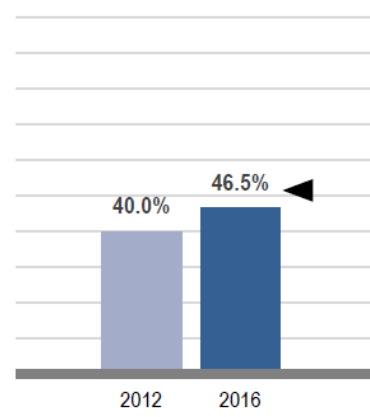
Registration Rate



Voting Rate of
Registered Students



Voting Rate



◀ All Institutions, 2016

	2014			2018			Change
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, Gender, and Group Studies	18	*	n/a	18	*	n/a	n/a
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	809	68	8.4%	606	114	18.8% ↑	10.4
Business, Management, and Marketing	1,158	110	9.5%	1,033	230	22.3% ↑	12.8
Communication and Journalism	356	42	11.8%	310	97	31.3% ↑	19.5
Computer and Information Sciences	218	27	12.4%	242	76	31.4% ↑	19.0
Education	1,153	195	16.9%	1,245	395	31.7% ↑	14.8
English Language and Literature	265	36	13.6%	283	102	36.0% ↑	22.5
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	36	*	n/a	27	11	40.7%	n/a
Health Professions	753	63	8.4%	1,176	305	25.9% ↑	17.6
History	255	52	20.4%	209	91	43.5% ↑	23.2
Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Protective Services	468	35	7.5%	393	82	20.9% ↑	13.4
Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Humanities	316	40	12.7%	202	51	25.3% ↑	12.6
Mathematics and Statistics	115	14	12.2%	104	34	32.7% ↑	20.5
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	48	*	n/a	33	14	42.4%	n/a
Natural Resources and Conservation	0	0	n/a	156	53	34.0%	n/a
Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Fitness Studies	396	20	5.1%	456	79	17.3% ↑	12.3
Philosophy and Religious Studies	13	*	n/a	*	*	n/a	n/a
Physical Sciences	137	19	13.9%	127	46	36.2% ↑	22.4
Psychology	438	34	7.8%	447	125	28.0% ↑	20.2
Public Administration and Social Service Professions	499	128	25.7%	482	241	50.0% ↑	24.4
Social Sciences	207	41	19.8%	211	87	41.2% ↑	21.4
Visual and Performing Arts	294	22	7.5%	273	97	35.5% ↑	28.1
Unknown	293	183	62.5%	84	59	70.2% ↑	7.8

	2012 Presidential Election			2014 Midterm Election		
	Enrolled	Voted	Turnout	Enrolled	Voted	Turnout
Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences	-	-	-	-	-	-
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	-	-	-	809	68	8.4%
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support	-	-	-	1,158	110	9.5%
Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs	-	-	-	356	42	11.8%
Computer and Information and Library Sciences	-	-	-	218	27	12.4%
Education	-	-	-	1,153	195	16.9%
Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	-
Health Professions and Related Sciences, Knowledge, and Skills	-	-	-	753	63	8.4%
Humanities	-	-	-	569	94	16.5%
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities	-	-	-	316	40	12.7%
Mathematics and Statistics	-	-	-	115	14	12.2%
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	-	-	-	66	10	15.2%
Parks and Recreation	-	-	-	396	20	5.1%
Physical Sciences	-	-	-	137	19	13.9%
Professions	-	-	-	499	128	25.7%
Psychology, Personal Awareness, and Self-Improvement	-	-	-	438	34	7.8%
Social Sciences	-	-	-	207	41	19.8%
Technologies/Technicians	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trades	-	-	-	468	35	7.5%
Visual and Performing Arts	-	-	-	294	22	7.5%

	2012			2016		
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, Gender, and Group Studies	0	0	n/a	17	15	88.2%
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	0	0	n/a	861	305	35.4%
Business, Management, and Marketing	0	0	n/a	1,104	404	36.6%
Communication and Journalism	0	0	n/a	349	155	44.4%
Computer and Information Sciences	0	0	n/a	247	94	38.1%
Education	0	0	n/a	1,231	604	49.1%
English Language and Literature	0	0	n/a	240	134	55.8%
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	0	0	n/a	24	14	58.3%
Health Professions	0	0	n/a	916	366	40.0%
History	0	0	n/a	239	139	58.2%
Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Protective Services	0	0	n/a	426	146	34.3%
Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Humanities	0	0	n/a	148	48	32.4%
Mathematics and Statistics	0	0	n/a	98	45	45.9%
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	0	0	n/a	47	22	46.8%
Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Fitness Studies	0	0	n/a	419	123	29.4%
Philosophy and Religious Studies	0	0	n/a	*	*	n/a
Physical Sciences	0	0	n/a	130	58	44.6%
Psychology	0	0	n/a	445	214	48.1%
Public Administration and Social Service Professions	0	0	n/a	579	385	66.5%
Social Sciences	0	0	n/a	205	106	51.7%
Visual and Performing Arts	0	0	n/a	261	140	53.6%
Unknown	8,533	3,389	39.7%	385	324	84.2% ↑

Goals

Long Term Goals

- To increase voter registration rates to 85% by 2024
- To increase voting rate in presidential elections to 60% by 2024 and midterm elections to 30% by 2026
- To establish handbook language regarding Civic Engagement and Voter Engagement and ensure that this language is dispersed broadly

Short Term Goals

- To establish an institutional definition of Democratic Engagement including outcomes and appropriate assessment measures by
- To increase the voter registration rate to 70%
- To increase the voting rate of Criminal Justice students to 30% in the 2020 election
- To enhance voter education by engaging at least 500 students in Deliberative Dialogues and civic learning events
- To establish voter turnout opportunities by recruiting 60 students to serve as Election Inspectors for Monroe County

Strategy

Voter Registration

- Promotion of voter registration at Summer Orientation “Connecting to Your New Community” Session and Information Table
- Email sent to on-campus students with housing assignment and voter registration information
- Voter Registration information and forms available during move-in
- Voter Registration information and forms handed out to off-campus students by Good Neighbor Relations Team during Saturday of Service
- Brock the Vote- On the Go: Voter Registration Tabling throughout campus
- Presentations and voter registration in Freshmen Academic Planning Seminar
- Trainings for student leaders on how to register to vote so that they can educate their peers (Resident Assistants, Peer Mentors, Community Ambassadors)
- Campus-Wide Email sent to all students from Vice President’s Office
- Instructions sent to all Faculty through the Daily Eagle
- Presence at Naturalization Ceremony
- National Voter Registration Day Event

Voter Education

- Naturalization Ceremony (held on Constitution Day)
- Constitution and Citizenship Day
- Our Community, Our Voice
- “I Vote Because” video series
- Debate Watch Parties
- Bulletin Boards throughout Campus
- Community Ambassador Democratic Topics Tabling
- Monthly Deliberative Dialogues
- American Democracy Project Speakers
- “Electing to Lunch” Weekly Lunch Discussions

Voter Mobilization

- Monroe County Election Fellows Program – collaborative effort between local colleges and the Monroe County Board of Elections to recruit Elections Inspectors
- Providing Transportation or Ride Shares to polling locations
- Posters and flyers throughout campus reminding students to submit absentee ballots
- Provost email to faculty encouraging support and flexibility for students needing to travel home for election day
- Opportunities to practice casting a vote to eliminate discomfort as a deterrent
- Email from the president encouraging participation in the election
- Flyers and advertising throughout campus promoting election day and building excitement
- Video on website encouraging students to get out and vote on election day
- Election Day Watch Party
- “I Voted” Party

Reporting

This plan will be reviewed and finalized in the start of the small semester by the American Democracy Project committee. Feedback on the report will be implemented. Once the report is finalized, it will be published on the college website on the page that details voter registration information. Additionally, the NSLVE reports and other relevant data points will be made available as well.

Evaluation

Assessment of efforts will be an integral part of the process. Throughout the year, data will be gathered in a variety of ways, including:

- Voter Registration Rates through Brock the Vote Initiatives
- Voter Registration Rates (NSLVE)
- Voter Turnout Rates (NSLVE)
- Program and event attendance
- Achievement of student learning outcomes at programs and events
- Number of classroom visits
- Number of faculty, staff and community members involved in efforts
- Students reporting learning in the following areas:
 - Awareness of campus, local, state and federal government structures
 - Knowledge of the electoral process
 - Understanding their own values and viewpoints
 - Considering the viewpoints of others
 - Evaluating the platforms of electoral candidates
 - Engaging with representatives
- Student engagement rates various forms of democratic action

Educational programs will also have learning outcomes that will be assessed. At the end of the year, we will compile a report that specifies action throughout the year and the results.

Closing

At the College at Brockport, we are committed to cultivating in our students the skills and knowledge, critical inquiry and creative innovation, intercultural competence and resilience necessary to transform our society. As such, preparing our students to be engaged and educated citizens is fundamental to our work. Our efforts over the coming years will seek to create an informed population of voters.

