



Andrew Goodman Foundation Campus Action Plan

SUNY Geneseo 2022-23

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Executive Summary

The Geneseo AGF team would like to accomplish some institutionalization and systemization of our voter registration and election education process to lay the groundwork for long term success following the disruptions and changes made in the college during the past few years of the pandemic, starting with a strong showing in the Fall 2022 elections. Future Geneseo AGF Ambassadors will have the tools provided to be successful in registering students and producing higher turnout in all elections with a clear system in place for any new Ambassador to be successful right from the start of their tenure, and with as few obstacles to their efforts as possible, allowing for room to adapt to changing circumstances.

We have identified that the lost institutionalization in registering students during orientation has opened up chances for registration at other events during new student orientation and the weeks of welcome programming, and we have seen that individual residence halls and their staff provide an opportunity for registration and basic voter education at a granular level for students on campus. We have also identified obstacles for student participation in local elections in Geneseo, with village elections frequently occurring during spring break when students are generally not allowed to be on campus. These elections are opportunities for students to be elected to office locally, which has occurred twice in recent years, and all students deserve equal access to participate in these elections. We propose to undertake the process of changing all future election dates through the democratic process as allowed under New York State law.

Landscape

- **Leadership:** Geneseo Votes Coalition, Center for Community, Office of the Assistant Dean for Leadership and Service. Geneseo Undergraduate Student Association (executive board and subcommittees), Livingston County Board of Elections Commissioners, Geneseo Democrats, Geneseo Republicans.
- **Commitment:** Civic engagement is part of SUNY Geneseo's mission statement, being one of the five values that comprise the college's stated values. Our job is to make sure the college is held to account in keeping civic engagement a high priority.
- **NSLVE:** In 2020, SUNY Geneseo had a 68.2% voting rate from all eligible voters. 77.7% of registered students voted, and 87.8% of students were registered. This is compared to a 66% voting rate among all US institutions studied.



- **Partnerships:** GOLD (Geneseo Opportunities for Leadership Development) Mentors provide volunteers for AGF programming, Center for Community and Student Association leadership provide campus support.
- **Resources:** Student Association Civic Engagement officer dedicated to volunteering their time, energy, and funds to help us with our mission
- **Institutionalization:** New voter registration boxes installed in all dorm buildings incorporate the registration process into the residence life sphere. AGF voter registration has been incorporated into all new student programming, including the club expo, volunteer fair, and new student resources expo held in the first two weeks of the semester.
- **Programming:** Tabling during aforementioned events early in the semester, with a semi-permanent table to act as a central point of contact for students to register and receive information on voting and elections in the centrally located College Union in the weeks running up to the voter registration and absentee ballot application deadlines. Proved extremely successful in the leadup to the 2020 election, with requests for registration and voting assistance increasing with the introduction of the table. The 2022 Election Day event will be catered with food and drink to remind students to vote, make them aware of the new polling place on-campus. This mirrors similar past rallying events on Election Day to get students motivated to vote.
- **Achievements, Challenges, Opportunities:**
 - **Achievements:** Secured new on-campus polling place in centrally located College Union Ballroom, enabling students to easily cast ballots during an otherwise regular day of classes. Over the summer of 2022, we have installed voter registration boxes in all residence halls, and will soon serve as a one-stop place for students to register to vote and access information within their dorm building.
 - **Challenges:** Consistent and equitable access to voting in local elections. Timing of village elections in Geneseo falls mostly during spring break, where students are not on campus and have to comply with a more stringent absentee process to cast a ballot. Institutionalization of the registration process has been difficult since the reforms made to the college's new student orientation programming since the Covid-19 pandemic (namely, the length of orientation being slashed has meant fewer in-person presentations and activities for new students)
 - **Opportunities:** We can increase the number of local registrations over time with the newly introduced infrastructure and a robust education and visibility campaign to be present at all our campus tabling events, and have information easily accessible and in front of students.



Objectives

- **Long-term:** Restore institutionalization in the registration process, whether it be orientation or the residence life staff (RAs, ARDs, RDs) including registration during introductory floor meetings and RA training. Increase turnout in all elections, with a focus on the lowest turnout local elections. This includes Geneseo village and town elections on off-years. Solidify a post Covid framework for future AGF teams at Geneseo so they can hit the ground running when they start and work from there, completing the rebuilding process since the challenges posed by the pandemic.
- **Short-term:** Produce strong turnout in Nov 2022 by students on and off campus, particularly with the new polling place now in use for its first federal election. Educate students on their registration and voting options, be visible, and provide assistance when registering or filling out absentee ballot applications. This will lay the groundwork for systemization of AGF election efforts and have a framework for all future AGF campaigns at Geneseo to build off of

Strategy

- **Long-term goal strategy:** Receive college commitment to implement voter registration into the student experience early on, whether it be orientation or the move in process into residence halls. Create a handbook for future AGF ambassadors at Geneseo
- **Short-term goal strategy:** Move the date of Geneseo village elections away from spring break and permanently change the election date to November. Prepare student voters for the 2022 Midterms with a coordinated education and registration program.

Tactics

- **Events:**

For the Fall 2022 Midterms, we will undertake a constant tabling program in the College Union lobby which will be a one stop place for registration and educational materials through the registration and absentee ballot application deadlines, starting on National Voter Registration Day. This table will be on occasion serviced with food. Closer to Election Day, we will provide an equal table opportunity for local political parties to table on their own and interact with students. On Election Day, we will hold a get out the vote event, serviced with food, to get out the vote and inform students about the importance of the day.

In the Spring, the focus will be on student involvement in future local elections. We will seek a referendum, the only mechanism which would allow for the election date to be fused with November elections. We will have to collect signatures on petitions and rally students and local residents around the issue, focusing on equity in access to voting in these elections. Additionally, we will create an ambassador handbook specific to Geneseo's AGF program to complement the general AGF ambassador handbook to provide all resources and information on how to run basic



programming and utilize existing infrastructure for future success. We will also codify regular meetings with the various civic engagement student positions on campus, including the Student Senate Geneseo Community Representative and the SA Director of Student Affairs, and seek out the holders of those positions to fill AGF ambassador positions when they open up.

- **Actions:** Secured a spot in the student newspaper for an article alerting students about deadlines and the upcoming election and directing them to us for help with registration. Will seek petitions to trigger a referendum in the village of Geneseo to change the date of village elections after the midterms.
- **Meetings:** Weekly meetings of the Geneseo AGF team to keep tabs on current projects and coordinate next steps on an ongoing basis, as well as delegate tasks and responsibilities. Meet with Student Association subcommittees and executive board members when seeking broader student support for our initiatives.
- **Digital Organizing:** Utilize the geneseovotes instagram account and the vote.geneseo.edu website to quickly disseminate information. Text Banking as needed for reminders to vote, change of registration toward the end of year for graduating seniors.

Reporting

This report will be made available to all stakeholders of the AGF Geneseo program. NSLVE Data is published on the Geneseo Votes website (vote.geneseo.edu).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Weekly meetings take place with all Geneseo AGF ambassadors and the staff advisor on updates to the progress of the plan, and from there tasks are delegated to the team and constantly tracked through internal communications throughout the week. AGF program trackers are updated as the semesters progress.