



SUNY Oswego 2022 Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Developed by: Allison Rank

Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by SUNY Oswego in New York 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 SUNY Oswego for the 2022 election are:

Goal 1: Hold our voter registration rate at 80%

Goal 2: Increase our student voter turnout rate to 33%

Goal 3: Identify 3-5 meaningful interventions that could be put in motion in CY23 in order to strengthen our programming for Fall 2024

Leadership:

Our Fall 2022 leadership team, relevant for this plan & its implementation, includes the following:

Allison Rank - Associate Professor, Department of Political Science

Kelsey Jones - Program Coordinator for Civic Engagement and Community Services, Department of Student Leadership and Engagement

Currently, our campus works with these following nonprofit partners: American Democracy Project, Ask Every Student, Campus Compact, Turbo Vote

In the wake of Officer-in-Charge Dr. Mary Toale signing the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation earlier this summer, we have also begun the work of putting together a leadership team to develop an action plan that covers Summer 2023-Fall 2024. While that leadership team has had limited impact on this particular plan, members have supported short-term brainstorming activities as well as some aspects of the implementation of the work this fall. The following table includes the full roster for the Civic Engagement Coalition in AY23-24.

Name	Email	Area of Campus
Allison Rank (Chair)	allison.rank@oswego.edu	Vote Oswego and CLAS - Political Science
Karen Archibee	karen.archibee@oswego.edu	Extended Learning –

		Academic Planning Coordinator
Michelle Bandla	michelle.bandla@oswego.edu	EXCEL
Katelyn Barber	katelyn.barber@oswego.edu	CLAS – Meteorology
Mallory Bower	mallory.bower@oswego.edu	First Year Experience
Laura Brown	laura.brown@oswego.edu	CLAS – Human Development
Kristi Eck	<u>kristi.eck@oswego.edu</u>	President’s Office
Emily Estrada	emily.estrada@oswego.edu	CLAS - Sociology
Terrian Garvis	Terrian.Garvis@oswego.edu	James A. Triandiflou Institute for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Transformative Practice
Jane LeBlanc	jane.leblanc@oswego.edu	SoE – Counseling Services
Kathleen Locklear	kathleen.locklear@oswego.edu	School of Business - Risk Management and Insurance
Chris McEvoy	christopher.mcevoy@oswego.edu	SCMA - Art
Jessica McGiff	jessica.mcgiff@oswego.edu	Registrar
Wendy McManus	Wendy.McManus@oswego.edu	Athletics
Mangala Nanthakumar	mangala.nanthakumar@oswego.edu	Facilities Services
Mike Paestella	<u>Michael.Paestella@oswego.edu</u>	The Point – Campus Life

Sahar Rajput	sahar.rajput@oswego.edu	Admissions
Miranda Traudt	<u>miranda.traudt@oswego.edu</u>	ARTSwego
Zachary Vickery	zachary.vickery@oswego.edu	Library
Leigh Viscomi (per Sara R.)	Leigh.Viscomi@oswego.edu	Residence Life and Housing
Jackie Wallace	jacqueline.wallace@oswego.edu	Career Services
Kelsey Jones	kelsey.jones@oswego.edu	Student Engagement and Leadership

Commitment:

The following statement outlines our mission:

“ SUNY Oswego’s central mission is to foster learning essential for our students to live productive and rewarding lives; to meet challenges of a diverse and technologically sophisticated world; and to engage as responsible and effective members of society.”

Civic engagement clearly fits within this mission. Since 2016, the primary civic engagement program on campus has been Vote Oswego. And, over the last three national election cycles, the Vote Oswego program has become an established entity on the SUNY Oswego campus. The curriculum-based model allows for students who want political experience to have significant control over the campaign strategy and decision-making. Additionally, thanks to work from Rebecca Mushtare and her design class over two separate election cycles (‘18 and ‘20), Vote Oswego has a strong brand identity along with a variety of digital and physical assets. It is easily recognizable and distinct from other campus projects.

That said, up until 2022, the project has suffered a number of limitations that indicate a lack of campus-wide commitment to the project including but not limited to the following:

- Only active every two years: Voting is an every year, every election event and we need to treat it that way to develop a community-focused orientation around voting with our students.
- Voting outreach disconnected from other civic engagement projects: Ideally, we would present voting as one part of a range of civic activities that help students understand the relationships among community-service, policy making, voting, and more.
- Driven by a central figure: While we’ve increasingly had positive responses from a range of campus departments, a strong program must have collective ownership. Right now,

much of what happens is routed through Allison Rank which inherently limits the program as it is linked to her capacity. Collective ownership will be needed to get beyond the two limitations listed above AND make sure we are reaching students who otherwise might not stop for Vote Oswego.

I am pleased to report that our campus is in the process of solidifying its commitment to civic engagement through the following steps:

- SUNY Oswego signed the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation in 2022.
- Our newly established Department of Student Engagement and Leadership (housed in Student Affairs) includes a Program Coordinator for Civic Engagement and Community Services. In the previous organization of the division, no staffer had specific responsibility for civic engagement programming. Dr. Allison Rank led a successful search for this position.
- The President's Office actively recruited members of relevant campus constituencies to join the AY23-24 Civic Engagement Coalition which is the first step in building collective campus ownership of civic engagement programming on campus.
- The most recent revision to SUNY-wide general education includes an update to the U.S. History gen ed; the new category is U.S. History and Civic Engagement. While this gen ed does not take effect until Fall 23 and the "combination category" may be an initial deterrent for departments outside of history and political science to put courses into the category, it does provide an opportunity to build our curricular civic engagement programming.

Landscape:

SUNY Oswego is a public 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2018.

The following demographic data is drawn from SUNY Oswego's 2021 Fact Book:

In Fall 2021, our overall student population including graduate students was 7,058. Approximately 2% of our students are international students and 72% are non-URM. Our overall student population is 10% Black or African American, 12.5% Hispanic/Latino, and .1% American Indian or Alaska Native. Close to 40% of our students are Pell recipients.

SUNY Oswego has authorized NSLVE.

Our institution had a 2020 campus voting rate of 58.2%.
Our institution had a 2020 voter registration rate of 81.3%.

Our institution had a 2018 voter turnout rate of 23.1%.
Our institution had a 2018 voter registration rate of 73.3%.

Our institution has been recognized in the past by ALL IN for these awards: 2018 Standout Faculty - Allison Rank

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

Goals:

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:

Goal 1: Hold our voter registration rate at 80% in 2022 and increase to 85% in 2024

Goal 2: Increase our student voter turnout rate to 33% in 2022 and 70% in 2024

Goal 3: Integrate TurboVote into a campus “sticking point” that touches all students during AY23-24

Goal 4: Identify 3-5 meaningful interventions that could be put in motion in CY23 in order to strengthen our programming for Fall 2024

Strategy:

SUNY Oswego will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation.

National Voter Registration Day: Through a two day tabling event we sought to register as many eligible students as possible. The campaign also sought to teach students about the voting process and help them request absentee ballots. The event included:

- Successful collaboration with Wonzones Calzones
- “Swag” such as stickers and candy, as well as games like lawn connect four, were available for students in order to get their attention to come to the tables
- Created “double sided” clipboards with a Turbo vote QR code on one side and absentee ballots on the other, clip side. That way, after registering to vote, we could immediately hand people absentee ballot requests.

Class Announcements: Completed announcements in 12 classes to direct students to TurboVote. Notably, more faculty were interested in having students make announcements than what we were able to cover.

GST 104 Presentations: Approximately half of all first year students at SUNY Oswego take a quarter course, GST 104, that introduces students to college life. One week of the course focuses on civic engagement and values. Sixteen different instructors invited Vote Oswego staffers to take over a class period during this week to run a Kahoot on the voting process, walk students through TurboVote, and answer any questions about the upcoming election.

Residence Hall Programs: All residence halls offer monthly programming and, during the month of October, that programming must have a connection to civic engagement. Vote Oswego ran the programs in four halls (a voter education Jeopardy); unfortunately, the turnout at each was little to none.

Last 72 Hours Tabling: Tabled across campus locations within the last 72 hours before the voter registration deadline to get students registered to vote and help them request absentee ballots. Tabling took place at locations spread across campus including the Library, Fusion Cafe (to hit STEM students), and Pathfinder (west campus dining hall).

Absentee Ballot Party: The Absentee Ballot party gives students the opportunity to drop off their absentee ballots. We provide students with stamps as well. The ABP's main purpose is to ensure that students submit their ballots after requesting them.

PSA for WNYO and WTOP: Recorded and aired PSA's for WNYO 88.9 FM and WTOP-10

- WNYO: Ran the PSA from 10/6/2022 through the Voter Registration Deadline on 10/14/2022
- WTOP
 - Ran the Voter Registration PSA on every Newscast and Original Production from 10/11 through 10/13.
 - We plan to run an Election Day PSA in each Newscast from 10/24 through 10/17, and during each Newscast and Original Production from 10/31 through 11/7.

General Tabling: Took advantage of conferences, club meetings, LGBTQ+ history month, open houses, etc. happening on campus to host voter registration tables.

Bump, Set, Vote: Volleyball event targeted specifically for Greek Life where teams could build their plan to vote between games. This Substance Free Event included four Greek orgs.

Communication/Visibility:

- Campus-wide Email: The Office of Communication & Marketing worked with the President's Office to send out a campus-wide email in advance of the voter registration deadline emphasizing the deadline, how to request an absentee ballots, our signing the commitment to full student voter engagement.
- Social Media: Our social media presence improved significantly this year with regular posts/stories on Instagram to promote events and deadlines. During Last 72 we also included a number of polls and were able to do a "take over" of the official SUNY Oswego instagram account.
- "I vote because/ _____ votes because" yard signs: Created yard signs with phrase "I vote because" and a large blank space for individual students to be able to show why they plan to vote. Clubs & Orgs used the _____ votes because signs for the same purpose. These yard signs were put out along major campus walkways in advance of the absentee ballot party.

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

- Use the TurboVote platform to determine the effectiveness of different asks
- Track engagement with our social media posts
- Use the NSLVE data to look at overall results

Reporting:

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

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

We will work with the Communications and Marketing Office on our campus as well as our campus-outlets to publicize the results of our NSLVE report when they become available in 2023.