

ALL IN Action Plan to Increase Voter Turnout and Engagement at

DRAFT 2022 Plan – May 31, 2022

Executive Summary

This action plan helps support Southern Illinois University Edwardsville's mission to produce leaders who shape a changing world through bringing together student, staff, and faculty stakeholders on campus and building both campus and community partnerships to foster civic learning and civic and political engagement. It contains both ongoing efforts to promote these values and actions at SIUE and strategies specific to the 2022 election. A plan for 2024 will begin to be developed in early 2023.

Leadership

Permanent members

Several permanent members of the working group help provide big picture guidance and insure continuity of efforts.

Carolyn Compton is the Assistant Director of Community Engagement inside the Kimmel Student Involvement Center of the student affairs department at SIUE. Additionally, she serves as SIUE's ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge co-chair. Her professional role at the university includes civic engagement and student voting engagement. She also coordinates with the Madison County clerk's office to support campus voter registration efforts and to make SIUE both a polling place and an early voting location. As co-chair, she also serves as a liaison with other Student Affairs staff, student government, and student organizations and is the university's liaison to the Students Learn Student Vote Coalition.

Dr. Laurie Rice is a professor of political science and coordinator of the civic education project at SIUE. Additionally, she serves as SIUE's ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge co-chair. As co-chair, she serves as a liaison with faculty and Academic Affairs, and serves as the team's liaison to the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, the NSLVE, the Faculty Network for Student Voting Rights, and Science Rising. She is also co-PI of the Student Election Survey, and part of the data analytics team using survey and elections data to help guide and assess team efforts.

Dr. Ken Moffett is Professor and Chair in the Department of Political Science at SIUE. He is co-PI of the Student Election Survey and is a member of the data analytics team that uses election and survey data to support and evaluate the efforts of the ALL-IN Challenge team at SIUE. He also leads the university's observance of Constitution Day.

Sarah Kirkpatrick is an Assistant Director of Residence Life at SIUE and advisor to the Residence Housing Association. She will be serving as a bridge to residential students and student leaders to inform and engage SIUE's on-campus populations.

Dr. Jennifer Erwin is an assistant professor of social work at SIUE. She serves as the faculty advisor for a new student organization, Every Vote Counts.

Rotating members

Our student members change with each new election year. Recruitment of student members happens both through student organizations (via staff members in the Kimmel Student Involvement Center) and classes (via faculty team members). Each midterm and presidential election year, student representatives from student government, athletics, and a wide range of student organizations are invited to join the planning and implementation team to increase political engagement and participation. In addition, a call to participate will also be sent to the list-serve of students majoring in political science and an announcement will be made in several political science and social work classes.

Additional rotating members will be recruited from faculty and staff who are willing to make short term commitments to advancing this issue during particular election seasons.

We do not currently have external team members from the community; however, the co-leaders coordinate with members of multiple external groups, both locally and nationally.

For our 2022 efforts, the permanent members have continued their ongoing work, while the full working group will not begin meeting until August 2022 and a full meeting schedule and further division of responsibilities will be adopted at that time.

Commitment and Landscape

Our institution's commitment to civic learning and democratic engagement figures prominently in its mission and values.

SIUE's Mission: *Southern Illinois University Edwardsville is a student-centered educational community dedicated to communicating, expanding and integrating knowledge. In a spirit of collaboration enriched by diverse ideas, our comprehensive and unique array of undergraduate and graduate programs develops professionals, scholars and leaders who shape a changing world.*¹

One of SIUE's core values is **Citizenship**. At SIUE we define this value as:

¹ <https://www.siu.edu/about/mission-goals-plans/index.shtml>

- *Social, civic and political responsibility — globally, nationally, locally, and within the University*
- *Active partnerships and a climate of collaboration and cooperation among students, faculty, staff, alumni and the larger community*
- *Sustainable practices in environmental, financial and social endeavors²*

At SIUE, we take these commitments seriously.

SIUE has worked to expand opportunities for high impact community engagement practices. Examples of these include the [SIUE Successful Communities Collaborative](#), the [CODES](#) program, and the efforts of SIUE's ALL IN Challenge working group. In addition, the [Kimmel Student Involvement Center](#) fosters co-curricular engagement with a variety of community and student organizations and helps develop leadership skills through programs such as [The Collegiate Leadership Summit](#), [Emerging Leaders](#), the [Leadership Exploration and Development Program](#), the [AmeriCorps Scholarship](#) program, [Service Saturdays](#), our annual large scale service event Cougars In the Community, and [Alternative Spring Break](#).

This commitment also figures prominently in the curriculum. For example, SIUE's objectives for the baccalaureate degree include "As a public institution, SIUE strives to develop students who are well-informed, effective citizens; who provide leadership in civic and community affairs; who appreciate the arts; who have increased capacity for self-reflection, self-assessment and healthy living; and who will pursue life-long learning."³ Our general education requirements are meant to further these objectives. Some academic departments, such as political science, also offer elective classes open to all majors that are meant to further civic skills and values.

While we take these commitments seriously, we also recognize that there is more work to be done. Prior to 2016, when SIUE first joined the ALL IN Challenge, our efforts to achieve this commitment were not coordinated across campus. When we received our first report from the National Study of Voting, Learning, and Engagement, we were disturbed to learn that our election participation rates in 2012 and 2014 lagged behind other master's public institutions.

When SIUE officially joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge on September 27, 2016 we made commitments to:

“Increasing student voting rates, helping students form the habits of active and informed citizenship, and make democratic participation a core value on our campus. Convening a campus-wide committee that includes members from academic affairs, student affairs, and the student body, as well as any other relevant stakeholders.”⁴

² <https://www.siu.edu/about/mission-goals-plans/index.shtml>

³ <https://www.siu.edu/policies/1h1.shtml>

⁴ <https://allinchallenge-civcnation.bsd.net/page/s/join-the-challenge>

These commitments are consistent with our university's mission, vision, values, and practice. Participation in the challenge encourages us to think strategically about advancing these objectives and engage in coordinated action. We have made significant gains in voter registration and voter turnout since then.

In 2022, Dr. James Minor became SIUE's 10th Chancellor. His decision to sign the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge's Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation, further strengthens the institutional commitment of SIUE to promote civic engagement and voter participation.

This plan seeks to build on our past success and bring us closer to the goal of full student voter participation. It includes both short term goals specific to the 2022 election and broader long-term goals.

Our Strategy

Civic education & engagement. We believe civic education and civic engagement go hand in hand. Thus, we emphasize education about the voting process and the benefits of voting as well as spreading awareness about civic duties.

To ensure proper education about the voting process, Integrated Voter Education (IVE) will be key. (Call Hub, Joy 2020) IVE will be essential in training students that volunteer with the All In Initiative as they support voter education and engagement. IVE is achieved by inclusion, outreach and recruitment of on campus student organizations, sororities and fraternities, student athlete organizations, faculty (All departments to be included in outreach efforts – Asks for additional support from these departments and fields - Political Science Department, Social Work Department, HESA Program, Engineering and Engineering Technologies, Business, Management, and Marketing, Natural Resources and Conservation, Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Fitness, Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics, Liberal Arts and Sciences and Humanities, Psychology, and Biological and Biomedical Sciences) and staff supported student departments (ACCESS, SOAR, CSDI, CAB, Student Government, Love Joy Library, Veteran's Affairs and the Kimmel Student Involvement Center) as key collaborators in this process.

Messages matter. Intentional messaging will be key in voter registration and voter process education and engagement. This is specifically tied to the speech and language used when communicating our voter registration messages and our calls to assist in education and sharing messaging. Calls to action rather than messages perceived as passive or strictly educational will be relied on to move the needle, appealing to citizens' sense of action and engagement.

It is also important that participants in the ALL IN Challenge understand the difference between voter apathy and political alienation. This is critical in messaging but stands alone as well as it will also need to be addressed when we work with collaborative

partners. There is a need to ensure we are as inclusive as possible and make no assumptions about groups' level of involvement based on motivations.

The medium matters: social media. It is important to reach students on the mediums they routinely use. Thus, social media will be an important strategy to increase voter registration and turnout amongst students. A variety of social media platforms have been found to help boost young adults' civic engagement, and the ones that are most effective at engaging young adults change over time.⁵

Social media efforts will be coordinated under #siuevotes. This includes accounts on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and Snapchat.

Overcoming structural challenges. In 2021 alone nearly 40 percent of state legislatures passed laws making it more difficult for Americans to vote.⁶ Many of these laws disproportionately impact young people⁷. Further, young adults are less likely to know their states' policies on voter registration.⁸ Restrictive voting laws also disproportionately impact people of color⁹ and people with disabilities.¹⁰ Voter education must help affected populations know their rights and help them address these structural challenges.

In addition, voter turnout in midterm elections averages significantly lower than voter turnout in presidential elections.¹¹ This presents an additional barrier to our efforts to promote participation in 2022. Yet, the Illinois gubernatorial election offers added opportunity to engage students from Illinois.

With the 2022 elections approaching, we adopt the following short-term SMART goals as part of our larger, ongoing efforts to foster civic engagement and democratic participation.

⁵ Moffett, Kenneth W. and Laurie L. Rice. 2016. *Web 2.0 and the Political Mobilization of College Students*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Rice, Laurie L. and Kenneth W. Moffett. 2019. "Snapchat and civic engagement among college students." *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*. 16(2): 87-104.

⁶ Brennan Center For Justice. 2021. "Voting Laws Roundup." <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voting-laws-roundup-october-2021>

⁷ See, e.g., Fearon-Maradey, Sarah. 2014. "Disenfranchising America's Youth: How Current Voting Laws are Contrary to the Intent of the Twenty-Sixth Amendment." *The University of New Hampshire Law Review*. 12(2): 289-315. https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1216&context=unh_lr

⁸ Hill, Charlotte. 2020. "Young People Face Higher Voting Costs and Are Less Informed About State Voting Laws." https://youngamericans.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Hill_BIFYA_Working_Paper_08_08_2020.pdf

⁹ Brennan Center for Justice. 2022. "The Impact of Voter Suppression on Communities of Color." <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/impact-voter-suppression-communities-color>

¹⁰ Berry, Deborah Barfield and Rick Rouan. 2022. "New election laws could create barriers for voters with disabilities." USA Today. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2022/04/25/voters-disabilities-new-voting-restrictions-new-election-laws-voter-rights/7282276001/?gnt-cfr=1>

¹¹ McDonald, Michael P. United States Election Project. <http://www.electproject.org/>

Our Goals

Goal One: Achieve a voter registration rate of over 80% prior to the November 2022 election.

If students are not registered, they cannot vote. Thus, any plan to increase voter turnout needs to start with registration. Our past NSLVE reports show we came close to this level of registration in 2016 and surpassed it in 2020 (presidential election years), which suggests it is attainable, but registration levels were only 75.5% in 2018 (and far lower in 2014), which suggests achieving this goal in a midterm election year will not be met without significant effort.

Strategy One: Getting students registered before voter registration deadlines.

Students cannot vote if they are not registered. Thus, to achieve all three of our goals, we need to get as many students registered as possible prior to registration deadlines.

Registration Deadlines

October 22 by mail or in person

October 23 online

November 8 Grace period registration and voting through Election Day

Action Point One: Have student organization and staff members trained as deputy registrars in Madison County.

Action Point Two: Hold voter registration drives in the student center, high traffic classroom buildings (including buildings that house underrepresented majors identified through the last Student Election Survey and the last NSLVE report), and residence halls as well as at student organization fairs. Use National Voter Registration Day (September 20, 2022) as a focal point for these activities.

Action Point Three: Share voter registration information on various campus list-serves and via social media. Coordinated social media blitz to as many student organizations as possible about online deadlines. Use National Voter Registration Day (September 20, 2022) as a focal point for the first blitz and October 17 or 18 as the second blitz.

Action Point Four: Chalking online voter registration deadlines around campus the week of October 17.

Action Point Five: Encourage the sharing of information about voter registration on learning management systems. If a campus-wide announcement through ITS is not possible, seek cooperation from faculty to place course-specific announcements.

Action Point Six: After registration deadlines, educate about and publicize grace period registration available until Election Day).

Responsibilities: Kimmel Student Involvement Center, student government, and student organizations will coordinate with the Madison County Clerk to get individuals trained to register voters. Student government and student organizations will secure permission through Kimmel Student Involvement center to engage in tabling and will provide staffing for tables. Kimmel Student Involvement Center will facilitate drop-in voter registration and request e-mail to be sent via student list-serve. Liaison from University Housing will secure cooperation of residence hall staff and facilitate e-mails to residence hall list-serves. Representatives from student government and student organizations and other working group student members will work on media blitz (under advice from permanent members) and engage in chalking. Faculty representatives will work on sharing of voter registration information through learning management systems.

Goal Two: Make civic education more accessible to help better prepare students for voting and other civic responsibilities.

Discussions with students enrolled in POLS 112 (Introduction to American National Government and Politics) repeatedly reveal that a major barrier to students voting is feeling like they don't know enough about the candidates or offices. Another barrier identified is confusion surrounding the process of voting.

Strategy Two: Offering as many voter education opportunities as possible, reaching a broad base of students, with multiple events organized during Voter Education Week.

Action Point One: Time course and extracurricular offerings to help prepare students to participate.

- The political science department is rearranging its schedule of course offerings to better fit election cycles, has added a campaign internship, and rescheduled offerings of Introduction to American National Government and Politics so that some sections each semester are offered at times that do not conflict with labs required of students in the hard sciences. The political science department has also removed prerequisites for relevant classes to make them as accessible as possible.

Action Point Two: Political Science department to host educational program for Constitution Day (September 17, 2022).

Action Point Three: Coordinate with [The Hub](#) to hold an inclusive conversation about voting rights, equity, and inclusion during Voter Education Week (October 3-7, 2022).

Action Point Four: Coordinate with [ACCESS](#) to host a conversation on accessible voting for those with disabilities during Voter Education Week (October 3-7, 2022).

Action Point Five: Coordinate with student groups such as the Political Science Association, College Democrats, College Republicans, the Campus Activities Board, Collegiate 100, Honors Student Association, and Student Government, to develop additional election related educational programming or other resources during Voter Education Week (October 3-7, 2022). Encourage intraorganizational engagement through co-sponsored Debate Watch Parties, Debates, Ballot Parties, Registration Drives, and other visible and interesting political events. In the process, increase collaborations between academic departments and student organizations.

Action Point Six: Publicize nonpartisan sources of election information via social media and promote Voter Education Week (October 3-7, 2022) activities via social media.

Action Point Seven: Work with reporters at *The Avesta* to help inform students about the election in series of election related articles. Encourage reporters to write articles about local races.

Responsibilities: Ken Moffett will coordinate Action Point 1 and 2. Carolyn Compton and Laurie Rice will reach out to contacts and work on Action Points 3 and 4. Carolyn Compton and additional working group members will work on Action Points 5 and 6. Laurie Rice will reach out to contacts about Action Point 7.

Goal Three: Increase overall voter turnout rate by at least 5 percentage points over 2018.

Midterm elections suffer from consistently lower turnout than presidential elections, suggesting that increasing voter turnout in a midterm election year may be substantially more difficult. In 2018, our NSLVE report shows our voter turnout rate was only 35.5 percent. Nationally, 2018 may have been an unusual year, as turnout was particularly high for a midterm election year¹². Yet, through gains in voter registration and voter education, combined with get out the vote efforts, we believe this goal, while ambitious, should still be achievable

Goal Four: Increase voter turnout rate to at or above the average for all Master's Public institutions.

In 2018, the NSLVE reported SIUE's turnout rate of 35.5%, 2.5 percentage points below the average for all Master's Public institutions. This is distinct from goal three because with more campuses participating in efforts to increase voter turnout, achieving this goal may require more than a five-percentage point increase. We are encouraged, though, by the results of our participation in the ALL In Challenge in 2020 when we matched the average for Master's Public institutions. We note, however, that we have recently

¹² Krogstad, Jens Manuel, Luis Noe-Bustamante, and Antonio Flores. 2019. "Historic highs in 2018 voter turnout extended across racial and ethnic groups." Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/05/01/historic-highs-in-2018-voter-turnout-extended-across-racial-and-ethnic-groups/>

changed Carnegie classifications to Doctoral Professional, which may change our NSLVE comparison group.

To achieve goals three and four, we plan to pursue the following strategies:

Strategy Three: *Help Facilitate and Publicize Early Voting.*

Some students have all their classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays and go straight from class to work. They don't think they can fit in time to vote on Election Day.

Action Point One: Continue to work with the Madison County Clerk's office to make SIUE a site for early voting and a polling place on Election Day.

Action Point Two: Share information on early voting on social media and in *The E-Today*.

Action Point Three: Ask staff at *The Alestle* to write an article about early voting.

Responsibilities: Carolyn Compton is responsible for Action Point One. Laurie Rice is responsible for Action Point 3. Additional working group members will work on Action Point 2.

Strategy Four: *Getting out the Vote.*

Getting students registered is only part of the challenge. According to the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report, only 47.1% of registered SIUE voters voted in the 2018 midterm election. GOTV efforts are a critical component of our plan.

Action Point One: On the day before the election have Don't Forget to Vote Tuesday placed on electronic messaging boards throughout campus, including those on the main road into campus.

Action Point Two: Have student members spray paint the rock with Vote!

Action Point Three: Social media campaign - reach out to as many students and student organizations as possible with reminders to vote and reasons why people should vote

Action Point Four: Encouragement by faculty to vote

Action Point Five: Reminders to vote in residence halls

Action Point Six: Reach out to Chancellor's office to obtain message from the Chancellor encouraging everyone to vote.

Responsibilities: Student government and student organization representatives handle Action Points 1 and 2 and work with the Kimmel Student Involvement Center on Action

Point 3. Faculty members of team work on Action Point 4. Sarah Kirkpatrick works on Action Point 5. Co-leaders work on Action Point 6.

Goal Five: Increase voter turnout among previously underrepresented groups.

Using data from the 2018 NSLVE, the last midterm election, we noted that there were inequities in turnout rates by: race and ethnicity, gender, and fields of study. Using the NSLVE data, we identified groups whose voter turnout rates were significantly under the mean and developed goals and strategies to help correct this underrepresentation. Our goal is to **Achieve a voting rate of at least 39% in the November 2022 election** among eligible students of **Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Hispanic** backgrounds, eligible students who are **men**, and eligible students of the **Engineering and Engineering Technologies, Business, Management, and Marketing, Natural Resources and Conservation, Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Fitness, Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics, Liberal Arts and Sciences and Humanities, Psychology, and Biological and Biomedical Sciences** fields of study.

Action Point One: Compile a list of specific Advocative/Cultural and Educational Student Organizations and seek representatives from these groups by mid-September 2022. Focus on known points of contact and contacting individual members personally.

Action Point Two: Encourage advocative/cultural and educational/major/career-based student organizations to lead the charge in efforts to increase voter turnout among the groups they represent.

Action Point Three: Reach out to faculty in departments whose students were less likely to use their right to vote in 2018 and ask them to encourage their students to vote.

Responsibilities: Carolyn Compton and other representatives from Kimmel Student Involvement Center will work on Action Points 1 and 2 while faculty representatives will work on Action Point 3.

Our Long-Term Goals

Achieving full voter registration will require organizational, cultural, and policy changes at our institution. These take time, concerted effort, and willing partners to bring about change.

Long Term Goal One: Build additional relationships with supportive Educational/Health/Community Focused Departments (SOAR, ACCESS & CSDI, Mental Health Services, Athletics, Housing and Student Focused Staff led Committees for welcoming events) and seek collaboration in sharing information about voter registration and the importance of voting.

Long Term Goal Two: Incorporate voter registration into one or more of the following programs: Springboard to Success, New Student Orientation, Transfer Orientation.

Long Term Goal Three: Incorporate information on the importance of voting into one or more of the following: First Semester Transition Course, Student Organization Leadership Orientation (SOLO), or the new student Experience orientation.

Long Term Goal Four: Make voter registration an expectation within student organizations and student government

- Compile and maintain a list of active cultural and political organizations and consistently communicate with them.
- To maintain consistent engagement, have student organizations encourage voting in student elections each year, as well as national and state elections every 2 or 4 years.
- Increase perceived importance of student government elections on campus and work with members of student government to build ongoing support for coalition efforts to increase voter registration and voter turnout.

Long Term Goal Five: Campus Climate and Community Needs Assessments. Understanding the climate of our campus and the needs of our community will provide data that can better enable us to build on areas of strength and address challenges. We already have student engagement data from Student Election Surveys dating back through 2008 that helps us identify student needs and participation trends. The following additional long-term goals have been developed to assist with mapping the campus climate:

- Develop and conduct a campus climate assessment for civic learning and engagement.
- Work with the Kimmel Student Involvement Center and academic departments to develop and conduct a community needs assessment in the greater Edwardsville area.

Long Term Goal Six: Conduct faculty education or enrichment aimed at incorporating civic engagement in the classroom across campus. In order to increase student voter engagement in 2022 and beyond, faculty and college educators are an important partner and resource. We have identified two long-term goals to increase faculty capacity, commitment, and involvement in terms of civic learning and election engagement:

- Collaborate with SIUE's Faculty Development office to develop and deliver a training on how faculty can incorporate civic learning and democratic engagement into their courses (across the curriculum).
- Develop content for new faculty orientation on how to incorporate civic and election engagement into their courses across disciplines.

Timeline and Important Dates

Spring 2022

Campus coalition focuses on beginning work on the 2020 Action Plan.

- May 31 – Submit action plan draft.

June and July 2022

Campus coalition considers how to expand the team to best carry out the strategies and achieve goals.

August and September 2022

Campus coalition adds to its members as fall semester begins, with a focus on recruiting representatives from student organizations including: Black Student Union, College Democrats, College Republicans, Greek Life, Hispanic Student Union, Honors Student Association, NAACP (SIUE Chapter), as well as student athletes. Campus coalition refines its action plan in response to feedback.

- Begin focus on voter registration.
- Constitution Day (September 17, 2022)
- National Voter Registration Day (September 20, 2022)

October and November 2022

Campus coalition continues voter registration push through mid-October. Campus coalition then shifts focus to civic education and encouraging voter turnout.

- National Voter Education Week (October 3-7, 2022)
- Student Election Survey – pre-election survey
- Vote Early Day (Friday, October 28, 2022)
- Election Hero Day (November 7, 2022)
- Election Day (November 8, 2022)
- Student Election Survey – post-election survey

Post-Election Day through Summer 2022

Data analytics team assesses data on student participation in the 2022 elections and shares with campus coalition members.

Campus Coalition meets to discuss what the survey data reveal about its 2022 efforts and begins work on the 2024 Action Plan. Election data shared with campus community.

Reporting and Evaluation

In 2020, we used data from the NSLVE and the Student Election Survey (which was an on-campus survey of our undergraduate students) to guide our efforts in that year. In 2022, we make use of updated variants of both data sources, and use peer-reviewed academic research conducted by Drs. Ken Moffett and Laurie Rice to guide our 2022 and 2024 Action Plans.

Conducted by Drs. Moffett and Rice, the 2022 Student Election Survey will allow us to track the effectiveness of current efforts, identify proven practices, and hone subsequent efforts in this area. We will use data from both the NSLVE and the Student Election Survey to measure whether we met our goals and help us assess the effectiveness of specific activities.

Results of SIUE's NSLVE report are shared with SIUE's administration and externally via the ALL IN Challenge. They inform our Action Plan and are shared with campus members through various communications to help inspire action. Findings from the Student Election Survey are also shared both internally and externally with the academic community through peer reviewed publications and with practitioners through research reports, op-eds, and conference presentations.