



SUFFOLK
UNIVERSITY
BOSTON

Suffolk University All-In Campus Democracy Challenge
2024 Action Plan

Suffolk Votes 2024

SUFFOLK *Votes*

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I. Executive Summary

Suffolk University was founded in Boston Massachusetts in 1906 when a young man named Gleason Archer turned the parlor in his simple Roxbury Massachusetts apartment into an evening law school. His first class consisted of nine men who could not attend any of the city's established universities or law schools – not because they lacked talent or ambition, but because they did not come from the proper social class, were not of the right ethnicity, or could not afford to enroll. Archer's accomplishment was not simply to open the door to education, but to do so in a manner that addressed the practical challenges faced by his students. A century later, the twin values of access and opportunity are still at the core of Suffolk's identity.

Access and opportunity are also at the heart of our nation's identity. America's democracy is based on the idea that every eligible American citizen has the right to vote – regardless of skin color, ethnicity, gender, disability, age, or language ability. Yet access to the polls is still very much a work in progress across the country. Suffolk University faculty and students engage in civic learning and democratic engagement activities at the international, national, state, and local levels every day, as they engage in curriculum-based activities that promote engagement with their communities, nurture and respect appreciation for diverse cultures, perspectives, and identities, and nurture partnerships with governmental and non-governmental agencies.

This action plan was developed by Rachael Cobb, Associate Professor and Chair, Political Science & Legal Studies to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Suffolk University. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2024-2025 academic year, on and around our campus in Boston Massachusetts.

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

- Undergraduate Students
- Graduate Students
- Faculty
- Center for Community Engagement
- Staff across multiple university-level offices

Our primary goals are democratic education and voter mobilization. We seek to increase student turnout and help the broader campus community to become more knowledgeable about democratic processes.

II. Leadership: The Suffolk Votes Team

Suffolk Votes Committee

The 2024 Democratic Engagement Action Plan is part of the University's overall commitment to cultivating commitment to the public good and expanding upon and enhancing the good work already happening.

The 2024 Democratic Engagement Action Plan was designed by a University-wide committee, Suffolk Votes, a coalition of faculty, staff, and students from across the three schools on our downtown Boston campus, in addition to campus partners. This network includes leaders from:

The **Center for Community Engagement** (Dr. Trina Bryant, co-chair Suffolk Votes)

The **Political Science & Legal Studies Department in the College of Arts and Sciences** (Dr. Rachael Cobb, chair and associate professor and co-chair Suffolk Votes; Dr. Christina Kulich, instructor; Dr. Elena Llaudet, associate professor)

The **Advertising and Public Relations Department in the College of Arts and Sciences** (Dr. Robert Rosenthal, chair and associate professor)

Suffolk University Law School (Professor John Infranca and Professor Renée Landers)

The **Sawyer Business School** (Dr. Áine Lórié, visiting assistant professor, organizational behavior; Dr. Aroon P. Manoharan, associate professor & director, national center for public performance; Dr. Alexis Montecinos, assistant professor, finance; and Dr. Zhen (Jane) Zhu, chair and professor, marketing; director of international engagement)

Tutoring & Peer-to-Peer Success Services Center for Learning & Academic Success (Jamie Bondar, director)

University Marketing (Kathleen Peets, senior director, creative services)

Orientation (Alexandra Patterson, director)

MassVOTE (Cheryl Clyburn Crawford, Executive Director)

Boston Election Department (representatives)

Suffolk Votes Ambassador Student Leaders

Campus Partners

Suffolk has received the Community Engagement Classification from the **Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education**. Suffolk has participated in three assessments that help with

understanding how well institutional goals and outcomes related to community engagement are being met: the **National Inventory of Institutional Infrastructure for Community Engagement** (since 2017), **National Survey of Student Engagement**, and the **National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement**. Suffolk University was re-classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a “Community Engagement” campus in 2020 for the ways it has deepened and further embedded its commitment to community and civic engagement throughout the institution.

The **Center for Community Engagement (CCE)** works with the Sawyer School of Business and the College of Arts and Sciences to oversee community engagement opportunities and volunteer opportunities. CEE collaborates with faculty to incorporate service learning into their courses.

Suffolk Law School’s clinical programs provide experiential learning offerings to its law students and public interest legal fellowships encourage the value of public interest law. Suffolk’s geographic location in the heart of downtown Boston, steps away from the Massachusetts State House, gives students many opportunities to participate in government and public service.

In 2006, Dr. Rachael Cobb established the **University Pollworkers Project**, a collaboration between Suffolk University and the City of Boston to recruit students to serve as poll workers. More than 18 years later, the partnership is still going strong. Suffolk University was one of the first colleges to help develop materials for the **United States Election Assistance Commission’s College Poll Worker Recruitment Guide**. This year, in 2024, Dr. Cobb is contracting with the United States Election Assistance Commission to revise this guide.

Suffolk University President Marisa Kelly has made Suffolk University a current signatory to the **Higher Education Presidents’ Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation** (signed in any year) between November 2022 and October 1, 2024.

There will be **no classes on Tuesday, November 5, Election Day**. In a message to the Suffolk University campus in February 2024, President Kelly wrote, “we will activate alternative learning plans on Election Day, Tuesday, November 5, so that no one is required to be in class on that date. ***As an institution committed to fostering civic engagement, we want to be sure that we are reducing barriers to your participation***, whether that is voting, working at a polling place, campaigning for a candidate, or taking time to learn about the US political system ... we are taking this step because we believe strongly that elections matter.”

Suffolk University partners with the **National Study of Learning, Voting, Engagement, and Participation (NSLVE)** which helps us identify turnout gaps so that we can focus on under-represented students and mobilize them to vote.

In addition, our partnerships with local election officials and local non-partisan voter mobilization groups is strong. Dr. Rachael Cobb serves on the city of **Boston’s Mayor’s Election**

Advisory Committee and on the board of **MassVOTE**, a non-partisan voter mobilization group serving Massachusetts. Suffolk routinely recruits students from across the University to serve as poll workers and has found that many students stay on as poll workers thereafter. We partner with MassVOTE to conduct voter registration training on campus; we partner with the City of Boston to conduct voter registration on campus.

We have partnered with the **Office of Institutional Research & Assessment** placed a new question on the exit survey for graduating seniors that asks the following question: “Please check all that apply: A. I worked as a poll worker in one election only. B. I have worked as a poll worker in multiple elections. C. I plan to work as a poll worker in future elections.” Further, we will work with them to better understand our NSLVE report.

Today, several centers, institutes, and programs that are outward facing and known well to external stakeholders and the general public work to benefit the public good, including the **Center for Community Engagement**, the **Institute for Public Service**, the **Moakley Center for Public Management**, the **Center for Restorative Justice**, the **Suffolk University Political Research Center** (the Suffolk University Poll, led by David Paleologos), the **Ford Hall Forum at Suffolk University**—the nation’s longest running free lecture series open to the community, along with a robust set of clinical programs at the Law School. The clinical programs provide legal services to underserved populations and experiential learning to students. Eleven clinics are administered by 27 faculty and staff. New clinics include the **New England Innocence Project and the Housing Discrimination Testing Program**, which focuses on eliminating housing discrimination in the Boston metro area. The Office of Professional & Career Development, with five faculty and one FTE, supports students interested in public service, administers government and public interest internship programs, and manages the **Pro Bono Program**.

All of these centers and programs are front and center in public talks, on the University website, and noted in the many media contributions faculty and staff make regularly.

We work with the **Ford Hall Forum at Suffolk University**, the nation’s oldest free public lecture series. The Ford Hall Forum’s mission is to foster an informed and effective citizenry and to promote freedom of speech through the public presentation of lectures, debates, and discussions. Forum events illuminate the key issues facing our society by bringing to its podium knowledgeable and thought-provoking speakers. These speakers are presented in person, for free, and in settings, which facilitate frank and open debate. Multiple-election related fora are presented.

Moakley Center for Public Management: offers graduate certificate programs and community engagement opportunities. It began in 1973 to help with the continued education for public servants and government workers. The Moakley Center has three main goals: to build human capital, to create dialogue about public policy, and to host community programs and activities.

This year we will work with the office of **Financial Aid** to identify work-study eligible Suffolk Votes Ambassadors on the requirements attached to work-study positions.

Every year the **Political Science & Legal Studies** department (25% of students in the College of Arts and Sciences major within this department, ~700 students) organizes the program, **Congress to Campus**, in which a bi-partisan team of former members of Congress visit our campus for two to three days. The former Members of Congress visit, interacting with students through classes, community forums, visits to student groups, meals, and other informal events. The Members discuss their real-life leadership experiences, both in the political and public realms, stressing leadership and the role of government to address the issues we face today, including promoting bipartisanship, civil discussion despite difference, and civic education.

The Suffolk University Political Research Center, established in 2002, conducts statewide and national surveys as well as bellwether polls. It examines political races and analyzes voters' opinions on key issues. Director David Paleologos teaches a class on survey research every spring. The center partners with **USA Today** and other media organizations.

We partner with the following organizations from the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition:
We work with **Nonprofit VOTE** to celebrate **National Voter Registration Day** and we use materials from various organizations to help us develop our materials, including **Students Learn Students Vote Coalition** and **Campus Vote Project; League of Women Voters, When We All Vote, Civic Nation, Scholars Strategy Network, Project Pericles, Young Invincibles, Ask Every Student, Voter Friendly Campus.**

We celebrate **Constitution Day, National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day.**

We partner with local media organizations, including the **Suffolk Journal**. As we did in 2022, we will again partner with the *Journal* to run a series on voting, partnering with classes connected to the election.

Dr. Rachael Cobb and Dr. Shoshana Madmoni-Gerber now run a **podcast, Election Connection** (available on Spotify and Apple podcasts), designed to help listeners understand the “basics” of the electoral process.

III. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrate commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. We see this commitment reflected in our institution's value of **Social Responsibility**: “Suffolk University believes in integrating civic engagement and service learning throughout the curriculum to foster the development of responsible global citizens. We are committed to acting ethically, professionally, and collaboratively.”

Moreover the mission statements of each of the three schools also includes a commitment to civic education:

Sawyer Business School

“The Sawyer Business School provides students a world-class business and **public service education**. Suffolk’s engaged faculty leverages a central Boston location and fosters collaborations with local, national, and global community partners to generate high-quality scholarship and enhance the integration of classroom lessons with experiential learning. In doing so, we graduate global-minded, knowledgeable, and **socially responsible** professionals who embrace innovation and change.”

College of Arts & Sciences (CAS)

The College describes among its goals:

- “To provide opportunities for students to enhance their aesthetic, intellectual, and moral capabilities, and their sense of self-worth, self-confidence, and **civic responsibility**”
- “To attract and maintain an excellent faculty with a commitment to teaching, research and service to the university and the **greater community**”

Suffolk University Law School

Mission: “Suffolk University Law School, located in Boston, is dedicated to welcoming students from all backgrounds and circumstances and educating them to become highly skilled and ethical lawyers who are well prepared to serve in their local communities, across the nation, and around the world...the Law School seeks to develop in its students the skills necessary to serve the profession’s changing needs in an increasingly diverse, global, and technologically dependent society. ... by providing students with a core foundation in legal education, a breadth of courses and programs, and excellent training by a diverse and accessible faculty engaged in scholarship and service to their profession and communities. **Suffolk’s goal is to provide its students with access to an excellent legal education, inspire a commitment to justice....**”

Suffolk University has been a signatory to the **Higher Education Presidents’ Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation since 2020**. Our President, Marisa Kelly, signed the Higher Education Presidents’ Commitment **again in 2022**.

Service and the concept of strengthening communities is an integral part of the University’s identity. The University’s 2025 strategic plan called for “solidifying our historic strengths in civic engagement and public service.” The Strategic Plan called for a major emphasis on civil discourse, civic engagement, and service learning and called upon the university to bring together stakeholders from all three existing schools to develop coordinated programming toward this end.

The Center for Community Engagement offers a variety of community engagement leadership opportunities. Roles include organizing and planning ongoing community service projects,

developing relationships with Greater Boston organizations, supporting service-learning projects, and creating new or improving existing programs. These roles include service scholars, graduate fellows, and project leaders. The CCE administers many of the activities of Suffolk Votes including the **Suffolk Votes Ambassadors program**. Suffolk Votes Ambassadors are student leaders trained in the voter registration process who work to get their peers registered to vote through voter registration drives, class visits and social media, and plan and prepare voter engagement events and programs to raise awareness of the election and its importance. They organized “voter walks” and also served as poll workers themselves.

In 2022, the Suffolk Votes committee helped coordinate several measures to encourage voting and engagement. Students in Rachael Cobb’s course on voting rights collaborated with the school newspaper, the *Suffolk Journal*, to have a series on the election. This included a student op-ed about voting and Suffolk Votes.

In addition to tabling, class visits and other forms of person-to-person contact, Suffolk Votes also sent out three coordinated emails to all Suffolk students in 2022 with voter registration information. This was the first time a major email campaign effort occurred.

Suffolk University also works hard to design programming that supports student mental well-being and provide democratic engagement opportunities. In 2020 we worked with the Office of Student Affairs and Counseling Health and Wellness to have a university-wide town hall to discuss election-related anxiety and how to manage it. We frequently respond to world events with teach-ins, town halls, and other mechanisms that provide accurate, thoughtful information to students.

In addition, the following regular events happen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs and other connected student organizations
- Campus leaders promoting voting
- Voter registration tables
- Signage promoting Election Day

On campus, we’ve experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
- Political speakers
- Walks / rides to polls
- Town halls
- Registering to vote
- Civic Holiday events (such as National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day)
- Deliberative dialogues

IV. Landscape

Massachusetts is a relatively voter-friendly state. It has automatic registration, pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds, and post-election audits. It provides online voter registration, early voting, no-excuse absentee voting and vote-by-mail options. In 2024, the early voting period will occur between October 19 and November 1. People can register to vote 10 days before the election, which means that they can also register on the same day if they participate in early voting pending it is 10 days before election day. Massachusetts does not require any documentation to vote.

The Suffolk University campus is in the heart of downtown Boston. The campus is a block away from the Massachusetts State House (which has a polling location); it is also a few blocks from Boston City Hall (which is an early voting site AND an election-day polling location); finally, there are multiple polling locations within blocks of the campus, less than a mile away. Suffolk University has explored having a polling location on campus and worked hard with the Boston Election Department to assess feasibility; our buildings do not comply with accessibility guidelines for polling locations. Given the proximity of other polling locations in the immediate area, this is not problematic for Suffolk University students who can easily walk or take public transportation to the nearby polling locations, including voting early at Boston City Hall which is .2 miles away from campus.

The following tables provide a brief overview of the demographic profile of students on our campus. This information is based on data collected from 2022 when our total student enrollment was 6800.

Asian	7%	459
American Indian / Alaska Native	0%	8
Black	7%	496
Hispanic	13%	904
International	14%	922
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	3
Unknown	3%	184
White	53%	3597
2 or More Races	3%	219
	100%	6792

Gender Demographics:

Men	Women	Non-Binary	Transgender
38%	62%	0%	0%

We have a diverse student body racially, ethnically, and economically. We also have inclusive admissions practices as called for by our mission and have an 87% admission rate for first-time freshmen. In Fall 2022, 46% of our new first-year undergraduates identified as students of color and 41% were first-generation college students. Since 2021, Suffolk University has been recognized as a First-Gen Forward Institution, one of 58 institutions to receive this designation, by the Center for First-Generation Student Success, an initiative of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the Suder Foundation. First-Gen Forward is the nation’s first recognition program acknowledging higher education institutions for their commitment to first-generation student success.

We are a private university with a sense of public purpose with a large presence in the public sphere. Many graduates go on to serve in careers in public service. Law school graduates are a case in point: 30% of state judges in Massachusetts graduated from Suffolk University Law School; 40% of judges in Rhode Island graduated from Suffolk Law School. 25% of majors in the College of Arts and Sciences major in the Department of Political Science & Legal Studies, majoring in Political Science, Law, or International Relations.

Enrollment Data:

Undergraduate	Graduate	Full Time	Part Time
70.00%	30.00%	17.00%	83.00%

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents	Commuter
58.00%	48.00%	13.00%	~30%	~70%

Though a high percentage of students are from “out-of-state,” 20% of those live in the New England region, just across the Massachusetts border, for example, in Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut and Vermont. Thus, nearly 80% of students hail from the six New England states. Students from the New England region regularly travel home on weekends and even during the week. Some students serve as poll workers in their hometowns out of state on Election Day. We provide information to students about voting in Massachusetts, but not exclusively; all our work includes discussions about variations across states and talk about whether students intend to either register to vote in Massachusetts or in their home state and what the implications of these decisions are.

Of the six New England states, four have same-day registration: Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. As noted, Massachusetts has a 10-day requirement; Rhode Island has a 30-day registration requirement. The New England states have significant variations in their voting rules along a variety of dimensions. Maine and Vermont are the only two states in the country in which individuals convicted of a felony never lose their right to vote, even while they are incarcerated and regardless of the offense. New Hampshire is the only New England state

without some form of Early Voting. Rhode Island (along with 11 other states, all outside New England) has among the longest voter registration requirements of thirty days.

Suffolk Students are active in political organizations and clubs. Because of the location of Suffolk in the heart of downtown Boston and the political epicenter of Massachusetts, much of the work students do is actually off-campus because they have such easy access to meetings and organizations nearby.

V. Goals

We have short-term and long-term goals to increase broad student, faculty and staff democratic engagement.

SHORT-TERM Goals to be accomplished by November 2024

In the short-term, we have the following goals:

By June 2024, we will work with the **Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion**, the **Office for Diversity, Access and Inclusion**, the **Center for First-Generation & Educational Equity (FirstGenEdEq)**, the **Center for Community Engagement**, the **Athletics Department** and the **Office of Marketing and Communications** to develop a marketing strategy in place to **create excitement about voting and civic engagement**; messages about planning to vote, being excited to vote, etc. all in anticipation of the 2024 election cycle.

By June 2024, we will have a formalized plan in place to provide information about voting, making this available to all incoming students through voter registration tables, stickers, handouts, and social media.

By August 2024, we will have a canvas module available to all faculty containing information about voting in the 2024 election and about the importance of voting more broadly. We will promote this module broadly and provide support to faculty wishing to participate. We will track how many faculty use it and how frequently they use it. We will work with the **Center for Teaching and Scholarly Excellence** to send reminders and encouragement.

By August 2024, we will train all **Teaching Assistants for required first-year 1-credit classes (CAS 101 in the College of Arts and Sciences and SBS 100 in the Business School)** in voter registration. They will have a PowerPoint slide deck that they will present and discuss in all their classes so that *every first-year student* will learn about voter registration, its importance, and how to do it. Subsequent follow-up discussions and reminders will also occur.

By August 2024, we will develop our survey instrument for our “Civic Education Impact Survey” to conduct as a brief pre- and post- survey in all first-year 1-credit classes; we

will also pilot this instrument in upper level classes across majors. Our goal is to measure student electoral participation and measure what activities made a difference.

By August 2024, we will develop a website connected to our <https://www.suffolk.edu/student-life/student-involvement/community-public-service/suffolk-votes> site ... The additional site will be less static and updated regularly, providing one-stop shopping for students, faculty and staff that will centralize all of the information needed, including: how to register to vote, how to vote, how to research candidates, links to events, podcasts, webinars, social media, etc. It will also include an FAQ section that will provide real-time answers to questions.

By September 2024, messaging about voting will be ubiquitous on campus, on electronic bulletin boards, regular bulletin boards, faculty doors, at student services locations, etc. This messaging will be used over the months of September, October and November. We will also distribute t-shirts and encourage a culture of t-shirt Tuesdays to remind people about Election Day and build excitement. One of the features we will highlight will be our **“turn it over” campaign**, highlighting the *other* races, and ballot questions that are on the ballot. Because Massachusetts is NOT a swing state, we would like to bring attention to the fact that voting is about more than the presidency.

By November, 2024, we will have held campus-wide events about the election, including debate watch parties, speakers, and webinars.

By November, 2024, we will have had at least 50 students serve as poll workers, we will have increased our **voter registration rate among students (get to at least 70% and even better 75%)** increased our **rate of registered students who voted (get to at least 60% and even better 65%)**, and to have increased our averages across all demographic categories.

LONG-TERM Goals to be accomplished by 2028

Suffolk University’s long-term goal is to increase student voter registration rates to above 80 percent and to increase student voter turnout rates to above 70 percent in presidential election years and to increase student voter turnout rates to above 40 percent for mid-term election years. Moreover, going forward, we want to increase student voting in municipal elections and create a campus where everyone who can vote does vote.

- Gather “Civic Education Impact Survey” data from all incoming first-year undergraduate students 4x a year, at the beginning and end of every semester, to discern the impact of specific classes and co-curricular experiences on student learning and engagement; identify high-impact classes, practices, experiences and then, if possible, expand those experiences where needed.
- Find meaningful ways to engage students who are not eligible to vote in multiple democratic engagement activities.

- Increase the registration rate/turnout rate of students of color equal or above those of their white student counterparts through increased intentional recruitment in voter engagement activities and leadership opportunities including Suffolk Votes Ambassadors program and Suffolk Votes Committee.
- Create a 1-credit “civics” requirement for all students modeled after the elective class already offered, *Rules of Civic Engagement*, a 1-credit class designed to introduce any student to foundational citizenship skills.
- Promote a newspaper reading culture of engagement with facts, information, knowledge of community activities. Work with the *Suffolk Journal*, other departments, and the library and local/national newspapers to develop newspaper reading.

VI. NSLVE

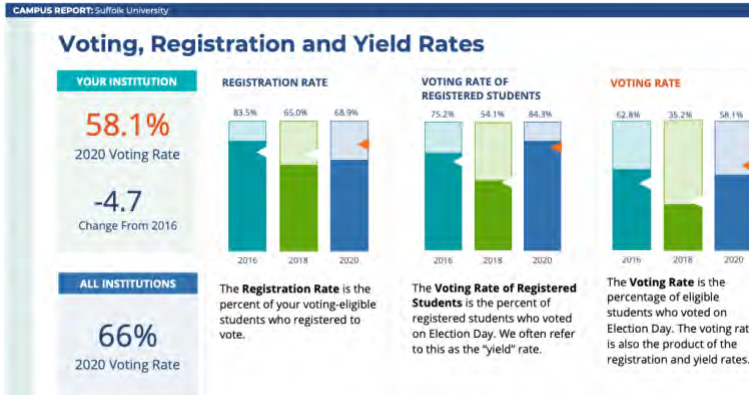
Our NSLVE report outlines a modest increases and decreases in our voting rate during presidential election years and a sizeable increase comparing the 2014 and the 2018 midterm elections. We outline the areas for development below.

Suffolk University Voter Registration and Turnout Rates, 2012-2020

	Student Voter Registration Rates		Student Voter Turnout Rates	
	Suffolk	National	Suffolk	National
2012	78.9%	69.0%	54.7%	45.1%
2014	62.9%	62.1%	22.9%	17.9%
2016*	87.0% <i>69.0%</i>	70.6%	63.0% <i>52.0%</i>	48.3%
2018	65.5%	75.0d%	36.5%	29.1%
2020	68.9%		58.1%	66%

Source: National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018 reports.

* Upon reviewing our data with our leadership team, they noted variance between IDHE data and IPEDS. The italicized numbers are based on updated figures of a total student enrollment of 7461 (not 6184) and non-resident alien population of 1419 (not 1176). We have informed IDHE of this.



In 2020, our voting rate was 58.1 and our voting rate among registered students was 84.3. During this year, our voting rate was lower than the national average. Using corrected data for 2016, our registration rate essentially stayed the same and our voting rate increased. This error, however, means we are not entirely clear on whether the increases/decreases across the majors is correct.



We noted that one of our goals is to increase turnout among Asian, Black, Hispanic and students of two or more races to at least achieve the same level of voting as white students. Of course, we would like to see increases across all racial groups and that is also our goal. By age-group, turnout among all categories of students stated relatively stable between 2016 and 2020, with the exception of the voting rate of students age 50 or older increasing from 78% to 95%. The work of mobilizing turnout needs to focus on our youngest students.

Looking Closer

By Education Level / Undergraduate Class Year

	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Change (p.p)
EDUCATION LEVEL										
Undergraduate	3,965	1,848	47	5,032	1,095	22	4,291	1,848	43	-4
Graduate	2,100	1,230	59	2,069	927	45	2,380	1,442	61	2
Class Unknown	92	51	55	66	29	44	30	13	43	-12
CLASS YEAR										
First Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Second Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Upper Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ENROLLMENT STATUS										
Full-time	5,353	2,613	49	6,390	1,711	27	5,812	2,768	48	-1
Part-time	804	519	65	777	340	44	889	535	60	-4

Our part-time students have a higher voter participation rate compared to our full-time students. This is consistent with our data on age. Our youngest students are also our full-time students.

The data on the rate of voting according to field of study, we highlight areas of study where the rate is under 50%. These include:

- Biological and Biomedical Sciences 45%
- Business, Management, and Marketing 39%
- Communication and Journalism 49%
- Computer and Information Systems 35%
- Liberal Arts and Sciences, Humanities 42%
- Physical Sciences 29%
- Visual and Performing Arts 43%

These are the areas of study where we should put extra energy into increasing the voting rate.

VII. Strategy

Voter Registration and Engagement Activities

- Class raps program, in which student volunteers will visit classes and make brief presentations on how to register to vote at the beginning of each semester; continuing

through the spring, summer, and fall semesters, with the goal of making this a regular practice at Suffolk each semester.

- Strategically target first-year seminar courses, introductory courses, and specific fields of study for maximum impact
- Voter registration efforts, including an online video will be included in all student orientation sessions for all transfer, undergraduate and graduate students. Follow-up with students after such session to ensure that registration leads to voting.
- This year, Suffolk worked with the Registrar to get a voter registration button put onto the course registration page that every student at Suffolk uses to register for classes each semester.
- Faculty involvement, continue to engage with faculty in discussions of civic engagement and ways to incorporate voting information into their classes and activities.
- Develop FAQ about student voting available at all tables
- Support students' registration and absentee voting by covering the cost of postage to mail forms and ballots
- Publicize and participate in National Voter Registration Day, National Vote Early Day, and SLSV's Voter Education Week once details and resources emerge.
- Print and distribute "check your voter registration status" cards and flyers
- Publicize key dates and reminders, including voter registration deadlines, early voting information, places to turn for information
- Table-Tuesdays and T-Shirt Tuesdays, in which, beginning in mid-September through October, every Tuesday, students will "table" in "high-traffic" areas with voter registration information. Budget permitting, all students who come to the voter registration table will get t-shirts and all members of the campus community will be encouraged to wear their voting t-shirts on Tuesdays in the fall.
- Continue to use the SuffolkVotes website (suffolk.edu/suffolkvotes) that contains information on how to register to vote, how to get involved, and other resources for students. This website communicates institutional support for voter engagement and provides a landing place for student voter information and ways to get involved.
- Continue with Social Media strategy to inform and motivate students targeting networks such as X, Instagram, Tik Tok.
- Implement a press strategy, making select faculty and student leaders available to campus media (print, online, television, radio) for interviews about the voter registration drive and the election.

Beyond Registration Activities

- Host at least two campus-wide information forums on important issues shaping the 2024 elections; publicize widely
- Promote other campus-wide events related to the 2024 election, including speeches, class visits, etc. and ensure publicity and general excitement
- Recruit students to serve as poll workers as part of the existing collaboration with the Boston Election Department, the Suffolk University Pollworkers Project, including an additional course offered in the Summer 2020 term.

- Teach classes with specific focus on voting, engaging (e.g. POLS H361 Voting Rights & Election Law; ADPR Elections in Real Time; among others)
- “Make a Voting Plan” activities for students to commit to how they will vote (mail, absentee, in-person) where they will vote, when they will vote, promises to vote, etc.
- Election Day pins/stickers (create virtual pins for this, if university community is still virtual)
- Organized walks to polling places for students in dorms, if safety permits
- Election Results Watch Party

Fall 2024 Events

Orientation

Promotion of voter registration and updating voter information with students and families

Constitution Day Tabling Activity (September 17)

Tabling and engaging students who attend Constitution Day event(s)

National Voter Registration Day (September 17)

Promote voter engagement and registration

Voter Registration Deadline(s)

Remind students about upcoming deadlines in key states; also provide resources and education on ballot initiatives and “down ballot” races

Campus Wide Events:

Debate watch parties

Speakers

Information sessions

Early Voting Begins

Remind students about early voting and promote walks to early voting sites

Election Day

Walk to the polls events

VIII. Reporting

Suffolk University actively shares information about voting initiatives and civic engagement with its campus community. In addition to being shared with All-In Campus Democracy Challenge and posted there, the Action Plan will be shared publicly on our Suffolk Votes website at suffolk.edu/suffolkvotes.

Once submitted, our Civic Action Plan and our NSLVE data will be accessible and advertised to all community and external partners as well as internal faculty and staff stakeholders at Suffolk. We will make it available on our new site, on social media, and in the canvas module. We will announce its posting in our weekly newsletter sent out to the entire Suffolk University community, *Inside Suffolk*. We will also ask the deans of the three schools to announce it in their school specific newsletters. We will ask other offices that send out regular newsletters,

including the Center for Community Engagement to link to it in their newsletters. Finally, we will contact the student newspaper, *The Suffolk Journal*, and suggest doing a story on it.

Additional distribution methods will include:

- email messages to all Suffolk university students
- emails to lists of faculty, staff, and student leader stakeholders, including senior university leaders
- post on our library website, “Civic Engagement Toolkit”
https://suffolk.libguides.com/civic_toolkit/library

To improve our understanding of what works, we will:

- Offer post-election reflection opportunities
- Monitor website views, social media interactions, and email communications

IX. Evaluation

We must invest time enhancing our measurement tools and reporting tools, to capture all that we do and also help us develop more materials and information.

SuffolkVotes will also evaluate the effectiveness of our strategies with some simple measures:

Quantitative Measures

- Number of activities held and number of attendees
- Number of faculty, staff and students trained
- Number of faculty who access our canvas site and use it
- Number of students participating as poll workers in the City of Boston
- Numbers of students registered, and that commit to voting will be collected at each event and program
- Student Voter turnout post-election via NSLVE report. Special attention will be paid to increases in voter registration and turnout for our populations of students of color to inform the following year’s program strategy.

Suffolk Votes will also evaluate the effectiveness of our strategies throughout the period of strategy implementation to obtain continuous feedback on the impact of our strategies.

Qualitative Measures

- Conduct interviews, focus groups, and surveys to gather students’ experiences, learning about whether the messaging and selection of opportunities is enhancing their understanding of voting
- Feedback from the Suffolk Votes team before, during, and after fall programming. The committee will meet at least monthly, starting in June to plan, execute and reflect on

programming operations, successes, and to adjust our strategy to incorporate learnings gained during the process.

- Feedback from faculty, staff and students via surveys after major events/programs.

Broader Measures

Following the 2024 elections, we will conduct a comprehensive evaluation using all gathered data. This, combined with insights from our next NSLVE report, will help us assess our progress towards achieving the goals outlined in our plan.

Additionally, we will conduct ongoing evaluations, both formal and informal, during our events and engagement activities. Our approaches will include informal interviews with event attendees, surveys distributed via Qualtrics, and informal social media polls. Feedback from formal channels like NSLVE will also inform our priorities and goals.

We will disseminate the collected information through coalition members, reports to senior administration members, social media channels, and university news outlets as appropriate. This data will serve as a foundation for brainstorming future improvements. We are committed to sharing this information with advisors, student leaders, community partners, and other stakeholders, ensuring transparency and collaboration throughout the process leading up to, during, and after the 2024 elections.