



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

SAN ANTONIO

Texas A&M University-San Antonio

2022 Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Paws Up, Votes In: Preparing Jags for the 2022 Texas Election and Beyond

Developed by: Denique Escobedo





Executive Summary:

The Democratic Engagement Action Plan 2022 for Texas A&M University- San Antonio (TAMU-SA) was written and developed by Denique Escobedo, Democracy Engagement Manager, with the oversight and aid of strategic goals by Clarissa Tejeda, Director of Employer Relations and Community Outreach and Aaron Guerrero, Civic Engagement Coordinator- all of which are in association with the Mays Center for Experiential Learning & Community Engagement at TAMU-SA.

This action plan will be implemented in San Antonio, Texas, at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Our set ordinance of democratically engaged goals for deliverance to TAMU-SA students, faculty, and staff, will be placed in hopes to accomplish a stronger democratic pillar in our university and community. Each goal is strategically created, organized, and developed by staff, students, faculty, and community, to be put into action immediately in hopes to pillarize democratic engagement for future students, faculty, and staff.

The Mays Center for Experiential Learning & Community Engagement is a department located in TAMU-SA, which will spearhead and facilitate the effort in implementing the set action plan for the year and years to come. The Mays Center is a professional development center for students and alumni which promote career building, civic engagement, and professional development. Since 2021, the Mays Center has created a student worker position, Democratic Engagement Manager, which is dedicated to democratic engagement and leadership on campus; Currently, this position is held by Denique Escobedo, former Democracy Fellow (2020-2021) for TAMU-SA and current All In: Student Honor Roll 2022. This position is dedicated to creating, implementing, and enforcing our developed action plan for this year and years to come.

Leadership:

Our leadership includes the following:

President of Texas A&M University-San Antonio...	Dr. Cynthis Teniente-Matson
Vice President for Student Success and Engagement...	Dr. Mari Fuentes- Martin
Dean of Students and Associate Vice President...	Zeak Naifeh

Mays Center of Experiential Learning and Community Engagement:

Associate Vice President & Executive Director...

Dr. Adriana Contreras

Director, Employer Relations and Community Outreach...	Clarissa Tejeda
Civic Engagement Coordinator...	Aaron Guerrero
Democracy Engagement Manager...	Denique Escobedo
<i>Office of Student Involvement & Activities:</i>	
Director, Student Activities...	Joseph Pickering
Assistant Director, Student Involvement...	Jarrick Brown
Assistant Director...	Cristina Dominguez
<i>Student Organization and Club Leadership:</i>	
Move Texas, South-Regional Coordinator ...	Dylan Villaion
Ignite National, President...	Selena Martinez
Student Government Association (SGA), President...	Jacob Goldstein
Student Government Association (SGA), Vice President...	Kirstan Garcia
Asian American Association (ASA). President...	Faye Suficiencia
Black Student Union (BSU), President...	Dmarkus Floyd
Mexican American Student Association (MASA), President...	Natalie Vargas

Commitment:

Institution Commitment:

Established as a standalone university in May 2009, Texas A&M University-San Antonio (A&M-SA) is the most recent addition to the eleven institutions of the Texas A&M University System. As a brand new member of a prestigious network deeply entrenched in tradition and common values, A&M-SA is a university on a mission; a mission to not only rise to the basic needs and expectations of the greater San Antonio community today, but to grow to deeply understand and undertake the actions necessary to lead the population of Texas to a brilliant tomorrow. A commitment to audacious growth and high impact practices guides the university in its journey to become a national model of service, student success and community engagement.

Our President, Dr. Cynthis Teniente-Matson, and Vice President, Dr. Mari Fuentes- Martin, are dedicated to including all students of all background, religion, and race of our community both ensure that the Mays Center is equitable in including our community’s diverse audience.

Strategic Plan:

Texas A&M University is in the process of implementing our “All In Campus Action Plan,” as its latest strategic plan, “Paws Up, Votes In”. As part of this plan, the institution has chosen to

emphasize, promote, and involve voter engagement and civic engagement as one of the areas of institutional development and growth.

Landscape:

In August 2016, A&M-SA made its first steps towards achieving its overarching vision of far reaching and comprehensive growth by undergoing downward expansion and welcoming its first ever freshman class. With the addition of underclassmen on campus, the university's enrollment quickly shot up from 5,500, to nearly 7,000 students by the year 2018. The campus currently offers over 40 diverse degree plans with a student faculty ratio of 20 to 1. Over the next several years the institution is on track to grow to over 12,500 students, with a 2017 Master Plan in place to accommodate the anticipated total future growth to 50,000 strong.

Originally established to provide for the historically underserved population of the South Side of San Antonio, the demographics of the university still reflect our initial student population. Texas A&M University-San Antonio is a Hispanic Serving Institution that self identifies as 70% Latino/a and 73% first generation college students. Over 81% of students receive some form of Financial Aid, and over one in six are military connected. It is a Purple Heart designated institution, recognized for the strength of its service toward veterans and military affiliated students.

Goals:

Long-Term Goals:

- I. Achieve Gold Campus status for Presidential Election for 2024*
 - a. Promote presence on campus, through strategic events and involvement with other student organizations.
 - b. Achieve 100% student voter registration
- II. "Institutionalize" our civic engagement initiatives by developing civic engagement traditions/event: that will be a part of our culture; institutionalizing a task force, and linking our work to institutional core learning objectives.*
 - a. Creating a relationship with our professors that promote our democratic engagement events and Texas Election days.
- III. Create and build a relationship with TurboVote for voter registration for New Student Orientation, New Student Orientation (NSO), during Campus Housing Move-In*
 - a. Throughout miscellaneous fall and spring semester registration campaigns.
 - b. Continue to partner with community organizations and promote their efforts while on campus to register students to vote.

Short-Term Goals:

- I. Re-build our interactive website*
 - a. <https://www.tamusa.edu/mays/students/jaguar-voter-engagement.html>
 - b. Bring in pictures and videos that promote student democracy engagement involvement at TAMUSA.
- II. The Texas General Election 2022*
 - a. Continue our efforts toward 100% full student voter participation.

- b. Build our Voting Rate to the all institution average of 66% from our current 62.5%- which is a total of an additional 3.5%.
- III. Blackboard & Social Media*
- a. Build a relationship with our JagWire Blackboard, a homepage for students and faculty members, therefore we can post about upcoming election and days in which we will be a polling site to all of our students and faculty.
 - b. Create an individualized social media account for all social media platforms that are solely dedicated to democratic/ civic engagement both on our campus and community.
- IV. Implement a dedicated Jaguar for voter engagement*
- a. Each of our department has a dedicated “General the Jaguar” (our school’s mascot), i.e. Sports General the Jaguar, Volunteer General the Jaguar, and many more. We are currently in the process of releasing our own General the Jaguar for Voter Engagement.
 - b. We will use this mascot for future flyers, posters, stickers, and so much more. It will be a symbol of voter engagement being truly a part of our university.
- V. Build Coalition*
- a. A campus coalition with TAMUSA student organization, student leaders, staff, and faculty to encourage and dedicate to student engagement in democracy.

Strategy:

Voter Education:

- I. TAMUSA/ Mays Center Voter Information Website*
 - a. We will create an improved and update our website that students can visit for civic engagement at TAMUSA. We plan to update this site to provide information about voter registration, information for voting, sample ballots, non-partisan candidate issue guides, upcoming events, and other resources that may prove helpful to students.
- II. Voter Information Flyers*
 - a. We plan to regularly distribute voter information flyers with non-partisan details from our partners- League of Women Voters, and distribute their LWV: Voters’ Guide on candidates, voter registration, and promotions for early voting and local polling sites.

Voter Registration:

- I. Faculty Involvement*
 - a. We plan to coordinate and build relationships with faculty members to encourage their students to register to vote in the first weeks of classes.
- II. TurboVote:*
 - a. Build a relationship with Turbo Vote, so students can have quick access to registration, in order to raise our student voter registration towards 100%.

Voter Participation:

- I. JagSync/ Bulletin Boards
 - a. We plan to continue to post weekly events and reminders on our virtual and in-person bulletin boards which are student-heavy in-person and virtual locations around the university.
- II. Flyer Distribution
 - a. In the days leading up to Election Day, we will post and distribute flyers encouraging students to get out and vote: Encouraging students to “Paws Up, Vote In.”
- III. Election Day
 - a. Texas A&M University- San Antonio will be an Election Day voting site on November 8th, 2022.
- IV. Election Results Watch Party
 - a. We will host a watch party to reveal the election results on campus
- V. Social Media
 - a. We plan to organize social media campaigns to get students active and voting on campus. We want to build our own social media account solely dedicated to democratic engagement for students across all platforms. This would involve sending regular updates through various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and multiple accounts to remind students of important deadlines and other pertinent information regarding the elections, deadlines, and the candidates. This will be current, around the clock preparation for Election day- filled with both entertainment and voter education.

NSLVE:

Our campus instantly used the results from our 2020 NSLVE report, so that we utilized a more in-depth observation of our efforts and what areas of improvement we need to focus on. Initial observations have shown us that the collaboration, focus, and structure of the Voter Friendly Campus Plan has created a positive impact on the engagement levels of the institution, but we would like to perform a deep dig to target our efforts even further. Upon receipt of the data, we will work to create a year-long engagement plan that reinforces the positive aspects of the fall 2022 structure, and provides support to the areas of our community that need targeted growth.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio has authorized NSLVE of 2020 and 2018.

Reporting:

This plan will be shared with all members of our newly organized and dedicated civic/ democratic engagement coalition, posted on our dedicated voter engagement website (<https://www.tamusa.edu/mays/students/jaguar-voter-engagement.html>) and incorporated into reports to upper administration. We will also share the NSLVE data/report on the Student Leadership & Activities Office. Where applicable, we will also share updates and information through social media channels and official University news outlets.

Evaluation:

Texas A&M University- San Antonio will use several methods to evaluate our progress which include, but are not limited to:

- I. TAMUSA will be using our 2020 National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report & our All In Campus Challenge Action Plan to develop voting registration goals and constant continuation on evaluating our voter participation progress and goals.
 - a. The 2020 NSLVE report will be able to assist us in identifying any additional areas for improvement on our campus.
- II. Data collection & participation rates for voter registration numbers and events will be counted each time there is a tabling or other voter registration event.

Evaluations will be collected and analyzed by the Civic Engagement Manager- Aaron Guerrero & Democratic Engagement Coordinator- Denique Escobedo, and our newly formed coalition; this will be used to inform our future efforts.