



UNC Charlotte 49er Democracy Experience Voter Engagement Plan 2022

The [49er Democracy Experience](#) brings together expert faculty and staff, civic-minded students, and community partners to develop educational programming to enhance the understanding of and participation in our nation's democratic process. As North Carolina's urban research university and the Charlotte region's largest higher education institution, it is fitting that UNC Charlotte is a leader in this initiative. UNC Charlotte maintains a particular commitment to addressing the cultural, economic, educational, environmental, health, and social needs of the greater Charlotte region; the 49er Democracy Experience is an expression of that commitment.

Through the 49er Democracy Experience, UNC Charlotte has a three-prong voter engagement strategy for elections: voter registration, voter education, and voter mobilization. At the request of Provost Joan Lorden, a committee of stakeholders from across campus developed the University's strategic approach to campus-wide student voting initiatives.

The key to UNC Charlotte's success in student voter engagement is the involvement of trained student leaders including Campus Election Engagement Project Civic Influencers, Campus Vote Project Fellows, students working with UNC Charlotte's University Professional Internship Program, and students funded through Federal Work Study.

UNC Charlotte's voter registration strategy is centered on the University's partnership with TurboVote. The 49er Democracy Experience staffs voter registration tables in high traffic areas of campus in election seasons. At these sites, students are encouraged to sign-up with TurboVote, register to vote online (if eligible), print out their voter registration or absentee ballot request forms, sign these forms, and turn them in to on-site 49er Democracy student leaders. The 49er Democracy Committee coordinated the transportation and delivery of signed forms to the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections. For students registering to vote in other counties in North Carolina, their forms are mailed to the N.C. State Board of Elections. Student volunteers are trained by representatives of the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections to answer questions about voter registration.

In addition to creating designated voter registration sites, 49er Democracy Experience committee members will present voter engagement information in classrooms, at Student Government Association meetings, in residence halls, and at UNC Charlotte basketball games. We will expand the number of classes and organizations using our virtual voter information presentations.

While TurboVote will send electronic reminders to students, the committee identified additional voter mobilization strategies. The 49er Democracy Committee works through Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and University Communications to remind students of early voting dates via social media and inform them of election-day processes.

The Office of Constituent Relations advocates for on-campus early voting for midterm and presidential elections. For election cycles in which the University is not awarded an on-campus early voting location, the 49er Democracy Experience committee works with Athletics and Parking Services to arrange free shuttle transportation to the early voting polling site for students, faculty, and staff as well as to the election day polling precinct for on campus residents.

The 49er Democracy Experience provides information about acceptable forms of identification for same-day registration, ballot measures, and changes to the voter ID laws. Our outreach targets students who are eligible to vote in Mecklenburg County, however, we also address questions about absentee ballots and voting elsewhere in North Carolina (an overwhelming number of our students who are eligible to vote are registered to vote in-state).

The 49er Democracy Experience holds several voter education events including debate watch parties, expert panel sessions on important democratic issues, and candidate forums.

Members of the 49er Democracy Experience committee

- Director of Engaged Scholarship, urbanCORE
- Assistant Director, Leadership and Community Engagement
- Special Assistant to the Chancellor, Constituent Relations
- Director, University Career Center
- Representative, Office of Identity, Equity, and Engagement
- Faculty Council President
- Faculty in Education, Women and Gender Studies, Philosophy, and Political Science
- Associate Director, Athletics
- Director, University Communications
- Deputy General Counsel, Office of Legal Affairs
- Student Body President
- Civic Engagement Coordinator
- Student Athlete Association representatives
- SERVE and LEAD Team representatives

Areas of Focus for 2022/23

- UNC Charlotte would like to strengthen our voter turnout initiatives. We feel as though students have a number of opportunities to register to vote, but we are working to improve our turnout in local and midterm elections in particular.
- We would like to develop a strategy for developing and connecting students' deep knowledge of local social conversations and issues (public education, affordable housing, social capital, public health, income equality, access to transportation, digital divide, etc.) with student political engagement.
- We would like to explore civic responsibility curriculum development and integration for first year (freshman) seminar courses.

Fall 2022 49er Democracy Experience calendar

Date	Event	Partner/Contact
August		
Week of Aug 15	Move-in weekend -- electronic voter engagement info and tabling	
Week of Aug 22	Goldrush (Week of Welcome) -- voter registration	
late Aug	Recruitment of student team	

September		
Sept 8 - Oct 9	Classroom presentations and voter registration tabling	
Sept 22	National Voter Registration Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donut Forget to Vote • State of Democracy event 	
Late Sep	North Carolina Voter summit at Elon	
Late Sept	Civil Discourse/Deliberative Dialogue trainings	
October		
Early Oct	Digital Literacy Project	
Oct	Last day to register to vote	
Oct	Early Voting	
mid-Oct	Debate: College Dems/College Reps/etc.	
Oct	Hosted Party to the Polls (and info panels): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UREC • Athletics • Greek Life • HRL • Womens' groups • Environmental groups 	
November		
November 8	Election Day	
Week of November 14th	Election Debrief	