

**ub** OFFICE OF TRANSITIONS AND  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



University of Baltimore  
All-In Campus Democracy Challenge & Voter  
Friendly Campus Plan

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## Overview

The University of Baltimore is committed to its role as an engaged university and regional steward. It is critical to develop supports and programs that benefit students and build robust partnerships with surrounding neighborhoods.

Because of its location in Central Baltimore, UB is positioned to offer students unique service experiences and opportunities for engagement. The four neighborhoods that make up Central Baltimore include a mix of commercial and residential interests, arts and entertainment venues, and dozens of non-profit organizations that address the needs of some of Baltimore's most underserved citizens.

The UB strategic plan includes objectives and strategies that ensure that community engagement is a collective, institution-wide effort. Community engagement is a hallmark of the student experience, from academic coursework to student affairs offerings. In addition, administrative units offer increased opportunities for local residents and businesses through hiring, purchasing and procurement practices.

The university participates in dialogues about community issues throughout the year as part of through participation in meetings of the Central Baltimore Partnership, government entities, and neighborhood associations.

Each of UB's four colleges and schools offer a variety of community engagement opportunities. Regardless of major, students can choose internships or clinical work in private, non-profit, and government agencies. Classroom learning is paired with compelling experiences to help students understand our neighborhoods and communities. For example, science courses teach students about the environmental impact of pollution on the local ecosystem, and students in the Community Leadership and Non-profit Management program complete field studies at non-profit organizations to learn about their mission and organizational structure. Additionally, writing students connect with elementary school students in north Baltimore conducting reading sessions and creative writing exercises, and faculty teach courses in Jessup Correctional Institution, providing educational outreach to incarcerated individuals.

Students can complement their academic experience by participating in a variety of student affairs offerings. The Rosenberg Center for Student Involvement and Office of Transitions and Community Engagement help students cultivate a sense of civic responsibility through leadership development and regularly-scheduled service activities, and match students who want to volunteer with organizations that fit their talents. The Office of Transitions and Community Engagement also organizes an annual Community Service Day, engaging nearly 200 students, faculty, staff, and alumni at 10-14 sites throughout Baltimore, for a day of service and reflection. Every year, as a part of the Baltimore Collegetown LeaderShape program, six to eight students spend a week with peers from area institutions, working to create powerful community-focused visions to transform Baltimore.

In recent months, the University has renewed its focus on democratic engagement by taking part in the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement and the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, and has applied to become a Voter Friendly Campus. The centerpiece of this plan is

the UB Votes campaign, offering voter education and reminders in the classroom, a branded website, social media campaign and various in person events. The University was honored to receive the Gold Seal from the ALL IN challenge for being the only school in the country to have over 70% of its students vote in the 2016 election at 70.9%.

Finally, the institution has recently created a partnership with the Andrew Goodman Foundation and will be taking part in the Vote Everywhere initiative that will offer two UB students and a Campus staff member the ability to focus additional energy on democratic education on campus.

The impact of this important work resonates both within the UB community and in its surrounding neighborhoods, developing a sense of mutual trust, deeper learning, and respect. Organizations benefit from the time and talents of UB's diverse and growing student population, and students benefit by learning more about local organizations and neighborhoods, expanding their world view and perspective.

### **Top Three Goals for Democratic Engagement**

1. Continue to support University of Baltimore's mission and serve as an engaged university and regional steward for both the campus and surrounding communities.
2. Educate students, staff and faculty about the importance of local, state, and federal elections, and how they impact our community and society as a whole.
3. Encourage collaboration across the institution with a focus on the importance of civic engagement and establish reputation as an institution that emphasizes informed and engaged citizenship.

## **Coalition**

While the University of Baltimore has been successful in the past engaging student leaders in the democratic process, the approach has been largely decentralized, with the work happening in different pockets of the institution. While this method was successful, it does not always lead to a coherent strategy for capturing all of the different work happening around campus. In an attempt to address this, the Office of Transitions of Community Engagement plans to bring together a coalition of different members of the campus community to provide better communication and collaboration around these initiatives. During the summer of 2018, the coalition will be charged with cataloguing all of the events happening around campus, helping co-promote relevant events and programs, and suggesting additional offerings that will foster a community committed to democratic engagement.

While the coalition membership may fluctuate or evolve over time, we currently hope to receive committee members from the following offices or departments.

### **Staff and Faculty Representatives:**

Office of Transitions of Community Engagement  
Office of Government and Public Affairs  
Schafer Center for Public Policy  
College of Public Affairs  
School of Law  
Center for Student Involvement  
Diversity and Culture Center  
Spotlight UB

### **Student Representatives:**

Election Commission Member  
Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Fellowship students

## University of Baltimore Democratic Initiatives

- Voter Registration
  - State of Maryland Voter Registration Website link
    - The University of Baltimore currently maintains a link to the state of Maryland voter registration website which is available on UB website for Students, Staff, and Faculty. We will continue this practice and promote it more widely to the campus community.
  - UB Votes Website
    - The UB Votes Website started as one of the Office of Transitions and Community Engagement democratic engagement initiatives in 2016. The site provided helpful information for getting registered to vote, learning more about ballot issues, determining voting station locations, learning about early voting and absentee ballots as well as democratic participation events being held on campus. During the 2016 election, the site was hosted via the student involvement portal, OrgSync. As we move forward and prepare for the 2018 election cycle, our goal is to update the relevant information and moved it to the University of Baltimore website.
  - First Year-Seminar Classroom Visits
    - As the Office of Transitions and Community Engagement already visits First-Year Seminar classrooms to help promote the campus pantry and strengths-based education, we plan to build the importance of community engagement and democratic participation into our visits.
  - Email Campaign
    - We will advertise important dates via the daily all campus email (Daily Digest).
      - This will include voter registration deadlines, early voting deadlines, and location and reminders for Election Day in November.
    - Work with Center for Student Involvement to send reminder messages to Student Organization leadership.
    - Potentially send one campus wide email promoting the importance of voting. To add more emphasis, we are considering partnering with other offices and exploring if the message could come from the President or Provost.
- Voter Education
  - Legislator Panel
    - Continue to implement annual panel of state and city legislators to help connect legislators with the UB campus community and inspire UB students to become involved in state and city public service opportunities.
  - Voter Preparation Guides

- Work with our Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Fellows to develop resources or guides for UB Campus community that specifically target the three counties with the most representation at UB.
  - Voter Rights Information
    - Create a one page handout and additional page on the UB votes web site that specifically explains rights afforded to voters nationally and within the state of Maryland.
  - Promote Debates
    - Assist in the promotion of debates happening on campus, as well as those televised or available online, for students to be able to learn about local candidates and have the opportunity to engage with them in person.
  - UB Annapolis Day
    - Continue to implement the annual UB day in Annapolis. Students visit the state capitl, create relationships with state officials and learn more about the state government. Event is co-sponsored by the Office of Government and Public Affairs, College of Public Affairs, and the Office of Transitions and Community Engagement.
  - Co-messaging around Democratic Participation
    - The Office of Government and Public Affairs in conjunction with the Office of Human Resources sends an annual message reminding staff and faculty of helpful information surrounding political activities and solicitation. We aim to work with them in the future to incorporate helpful steps into their messaging which would promote democratic engagement and avoid any problematic political participation.
    - Also consider partnering with staff, faculty and student government to help to continue an environment supportive of democratic participation.
  - Create one location where all voter education initiative and events can be listed.
    - The UB Votes website would make an ideal location for this list. Having a central location will assist in advertising different efforts and improve data collection. It may also be worth developing a tangible location on campus for this information to be shared to reach all students.
- Voter Turnout
  - Social Media Campaign
    - Continue UB Votes social media campaign, including voter tips. Primarily focused around the 10 days prior to the midterm elections and concluding with an hourly reminder that UB Votes on Election Day.
    - As a method to increase the impact of this campaign potentially partner with UB marketing to have various staff, students, and faculty appear in the short videos with helpful voter information.
  - Promotion of early voting options
    - An area where we saw a significant increase during the 2016 national election was in the number of students who took part in early voting.

Maryland is fortunate to have a robust offering of early voting locations and times. We will once again seek to advertise these offerings to allow as many students as possible to vote and manage their busy academic, professional and personal schedules.

- UB Votes Celebration
  - On Election Day hold tabling in the Student Center and provide giveaways for anyone that has an “I Voted” sticker, or can show proof that they voted.
  - Consider working with the Andrew Goodman fellows to sponsor an event hosting updates about election returns throughout the day for students to learn about the latest information.
  - Work with on campus vendors to potentially have a discount for individuals displaying their “I Voted” sticker on the day of the election.
- Students as Voter Advocates
  - Andrew Goodman Foundation
    - Our largest area of focus in this area will be the Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere fellows. Through a partnership with this organization, the University of Baltimore is able to offer two students a fellowship to focus exclusively on democratic engagement initiatives. The foundation also offers a budget of \$1,000 to spend on these initiatives. As a part of this relationship, the institution has designated a campus champion who will supervise the fellows and work to empower them to create and refine initiatives.
    - Continue to work to foster opportunities for UB students to have meaningful experiences promoting democratic participation through the UB Votes campaign, hosting events and continued creativity and innovation.
    - Create a method for UB students to recommend events or initiatives that they would be helpful in increasing democratic participation. Work with the coalition and Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere fellows to determine feasibility of current or future implementation of these submissions.
    - Host temporary democracy wall questions throughout the fall semester to help foster engaging environment and allow students to express themselves around civic matters.
- National And Local Democratic Engagement Initiative Participation
  - Continue to participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement
    - Must reaffirm our intention to take part in the study.
  - Continue to participate in All In Campus Democracy Challenge
    - Must provide Campus Democracy Plan prior to March



- Continue to participate in Baltimore Collegetown Network Democratic Engagement Community of Practice
  - Continue to attend cohort meetings.
- Apply and receive Voter Friendly Campus Designation
  - Submit interest form
  - Provide a Campus Action Plan Prior to June
- Establish partnership with Andrew Goodman Foundation and Vote Everywhere initiative
  - Finalize partnership (completed January 2018)
  - Recruit and train Fellows during spring and summer of 2018
    - Fellows attend National Summit and Campus retreat to plan for impact on campus
  - Implement education and engagement initiatives throughout the academic year.

## Timeline

February 2018:

- Host annual Annapolis Day trip for students to the state Capital.
- Ensure continued involvement in the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement
- Submit Voter Friendly Campus Designation interest form.
- Submit All In Challenge Democratic Challenge Campus Action Plan.
- Begin Recruiting Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Fellows.

April 2018

- Interview and make selection of Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Fellows.

Summer 2018

- Submit Voter Friendly Campus Designation Campus Plan (June 2018 or sooner)
- Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Fellows attend National Summit
- Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Fellows attend campus planning retreat with campus champion
- Bring together Campus Coalition and schedule regular meetings throughout year for group to come together, review information and make recommendations.
- Migrate UB Votes web site to official University of Baltimore web site.

August 2018

- Consider Andrew Goodman Fellows having a presence at New Student Orientation
- Begin promoting campus events throughout the semester supporting democratic and civic participation.
- Debut central web site for democratic engagement initiatives.
- Begin implementing temporary democracy wall question monthly through December.

September 2018

- Host legislator's panel on campus
- Work to release voter guide or resources as well as voter rights documents to students
- Visit First Year Seminar Classrooms or provide information to Peer Coaches

October 2018

- Conduct email Campaign
- Advertise early voting days and locations
- Advertise deadline for voter registration

November 2018

- Social Media Campaign
- Promote Election Day
- Implement voter engagement initiatives on Election Day

December 2018

- Coalition and Andrew Goodman Fellows debrief semester, make recommendations for the future and discuss future offerings for the spring.

January 2019

- Submit Voter Friendly Campus report by January 28, 2019

Spring 2019

- Host annual Annapolis Day trip for students to the state Capital.
- Begin Recruiting Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Fellows.
- Promote potential Voter Friendly Campus Designation if received in May
- Receive and analyze National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement results.

## Measures of Success

Establishing a measure for success pertaining to campus wide initiatives always present unique challenges. While individual events occurring throughout the semester may have internal goals or measures of success, it is important that the campus plan reflect a concrete set of goals to measure success. As such, our approach at the University of Baltimore has been developed to be intentional and efficient.

- Meet or exceed total voter participation from the 2014 mid-term election. Comparing our performance versus the previous midterm election represents the best data point for analysis because of the unique differences between the midterm and federal election cycle. This information will be gathered through the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement.
- Measure UB Votes website throughout the semester to better understand usage and trends. While this was done during the 2016 election, a technical error only allowed for us to monitor interactions during the final two weeks of the election. While this information will not specifically be used for a comparative analysis during this campaign cycle it can begin a trend of analyzing our web site's usage and present potential improvements in the future.
- Create a more coherent method for communicating about democratic engagement and participation opportunities throughout this process. This will be measured qualitatively by the reflections of the coalition. Additionally, we will receive tangible evidence of this as we begin to prepare the Voter Friendly Campus report and accurately catalogue the different initiatives and events hosed across campus.
- Develop a meaningful student leadership experience for the Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Fellows, emphasizing campus partnerships, student led democratic participation and significant capacity building. The approach to measure this would be through potential supervisory conversations or exit interviews as a part of the student experience.