

**UNIVERSITY OF
BALTIMORE**

Votes

University of Baltimore
Campus Action Plan
2020-2021

Coalitions

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 Rosenberg Center for Student Involvement is working with a coalition of various members of the campus community to provide better communication and collaboration around these initiatives.

While the coalition membership may fluctuate or evolve over time, we are currently communicating with the following office/departments.

Staff and Faculty Representatives:

Rosenberg Center for Student Involvement

Office of Government and Public Affairs

College of Public Affairs - Schafer Center for Public Policy

School of Law

Diversity and Culture Center

Student Representatives:

Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassadorship students

Democratic Engagement 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's 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 (www.ubalt.edu/vote) started as a democratic engagement initiative in 2016. The site provides 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.
- my.VoteEverywhere – in partnership with the Andrew Goodman Foundation, this platform was added to the www.ubalt.edu/vote page in May 2020 and will be recommended for inclusion to the UB student portal for easy access to a number of voter resources, including checking voter registration, finding polling places, and learning about other important election facts relevant to students.

Classroom Visits

- UB's Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassadors coordinate a variety of classroom visits each semester. Each ambassador is assigned two of UB's colleges/schools and coordinates with the faculty and staff in those schools to complete a series of visits. Because UB has such a high number of registered voters, the visits typically focus on generating awareness about voting resources, voter's rights, and important dates and deadlines.

Email and Social Media Campaign

- Vote Everywhere Ambassadors promote important dates via the daily all campus e-mail (Daily Digest) and social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
 - These include voter registration deadlines, early voting deadlines, and location and reminders for Election Day in November.
- The Rosenberg Center for Student Involvement sends reminder messages to student organization leadership.
- Rosenberg CSI sends additional messages campus-wide to remind students about voting and voting resources.

Programming

Adapt programming in response to COVID-19

- The 2020-21 Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassadors will be tasked with developing program to meet social distancing guidelines. University of Baltimore is expected to hold classes virtually in Fall 2020 and so a variety of electronic and social media approaches must be used to communicate with the student body.
- For the 2020 election, our team will prepare to message about mail-in ballots how students can participate at polling places while maintaining safe social distancing.

Promote early voting options

- An area where we saw a significant increase during the 2016 and 2018 election cycles was in the number of students who took part in early voting.

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

Continue the UB Votes Election Day Bash

- This was a successful and well-attended event in November 2018. Our team will consider how to adapt this event to take place virtually and meet social distancing guidelines, while still serving as an opportunity to champion the importance of voting and celebrate the right to vote, while encouraging turnout on election day and recognizing those who participated through mail-in balloting.

Promote Debates

- Explore ways in which our team can promote and encourage participation in 2020 debates, through live watch parties and forum discussions/follow-up reflections.
- Connect with UB constituencies such as the Office of Government and Public Affairs and the Schaefer Center for Public Policy to assist in promoting any debates that are hosted by University of Baltimore, if an.

UB Annapolis Day

- Consider how the annual University of Baltimore Day in Annapolis, usually held in Feb. or March, can be adapted to meet social distancing measures. Consider an online forum with key legislators or a topical discussion with state capitol representatives to examine the importance of the legislative process and constituent voice. This event is typically co-sponsored by the College of Public Affairs, Rosenberg Center for Student Involvement, and Office of Government and Public Affairs.

Achievements, Challenges, and Opportunities

Achievements

The University of Baltimore is the only campus in the nation to receive the gold seal award from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, for its 70.9 percent voter participation rate.

UB also received the platinum seal on Nov. 13, 2019 for its 59.1% 2018 midterm voting rate. UB was recognized as "best in class" for having the highest voting participation rate among medium, public, four-year institutions, nationwide.

UB's participation in the 2018 midterm elections was also among the highest in the nation at 59.1%. See the full 2018 NSLVE report [here](#) (see the 2012 and 2016 report [here](#)).

Challenges

University of Baltimore specializes in serving the adult learner and students who attend classes in the evening and work full time. Students often face work and family commitments that make it difficult to participate in traditional events. We have developed strategies to engage these difficult to reach populations:

- Passive programs – information tables and distribution of flyers aimed at increasing voter engagement and participation
- Classroom visits – highlighting the resources available at www.ubalt.edu/vote
- Drop-in programs – get information, refreshments, and participate in an activity that can be done quickly between classes or between work and class.
 - Will need to be redeveloped with social distancing in mind.

Opportunities

The University of Baltimore is committed to its role as an engaged, urban university and regional steward. Because of its location in Central Baltimore, UB is positioned to offer students unique service experiences and opportunities for engagement. We are hoping to grow our presence not just within our own campus but to the greater Baltimore community as well by leveraging partnerships with organizations like Baltimore Votes. We have also discussed the possibility, in the future, of UB serving as a polling place for primary or early voting.

Goals

Long-term

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.
4. Establishing an early voting location on campus.

Short-term

1. Increase turnout at voter education events and drop-in/virtual programs.
2. Continue to grow the Andrew Goodman Foundation presence on campus through campus and classroom outreach.
3. Continue to engage discussions with the larger coalition of offices and centers on campus with an aim to achieve shared goals of voter engagement and education.
4. Include the [my.VoteEverywhere](#) platform on the UB student portal for easy access.
5. Expand voter education efforts to include issue guides that focus on highlighting important issues for Baltimore and Maryland residents.

Timeline

July-Aug. 2020

- Select and train Vote Everywhere Ambassadors
- Include Vote Everywhere Ambassadors in Fall orientation outreach efforts
- Begin promoting campus events throughout the semester supporting civic participation

Sept.-Oct. 2020

- Host legislators panel on campus to provide a forum for discussion on local issues
- Release voter guide and resources as well as voter rights documents to students
- Visit First Year Seminar classes and/or provide information to peer coaches
- Conduct social media outreach and messaging highlighting resources available through www.ubalt.edu/vote and my.VoteEverywhere

Nov.-Dec. 2020

- Conduct voter engagement email Campaign
- Promote and encourage participation in debates and campaign dialogues
- Advertise important deadlines including early voting, mail-in voting, and in-person voting
 - Highlight social distancing strategies necessary due to COVID-19
- Host a virtual Election Day Bash to celebrate the right to vote and highlight the importance of free and fair elections
- Debrief semester, make recommendations for the future and discuss Spring offerings

Jan.-Feb. 2021

- Help organize a virtual legislative engagement event for students to learn about the legislative process and citizen voice (to replace the Night in Annapolis event if social distancing dictates)
- Ensure continued involvement in the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement
- Continue to participate in Voter Friendly Campus and All-in Challenge by submitting interest forms and updated action plans.
- Begin Recruiting Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassadors for 2021-22.

March-April 2021

- Hold voter engagement and education events
- Develop a post-election forum to provide issue education and resources following election
- Interview and make selection of Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassadors.

Summer 2021

- Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassadors attend National Summit and campus based training
- Bring together Campus Coalition to determine next steps and recommendations
- Plan campus visits, events, and outreach/information tables