

2024 Action Plan – UC Riverside

Overview

This action plan outlines the strategies for strengthening voter engagement on the UCR campus leading up to the November 2024 elections. This action plan will need to be revisited after the election to sustain and expand civic engagement on campus. This plan serves as a foundation for voter engagement on campus to build upon the results of the 2020 election with regards to voter turnout at UCR.

Leadership

The Office of Student Life at UC Riverside has historically led voter engagement on campus through the development of coalitions, voter engagement events and activities, voter registration drives, the development and maintenance of the vote.ucr.edu website, the hosting of polling places and vote centers on campus, and the general marketing and communications around elections. Recently, in the lead up to the 2022 November midterm election, Government and Community Relations at UCR has also taken on a leadership role as the managers of UCR's Vote Center, working closely with Riverside County's Registrar of Voters.

Alignment with VCSA Strategic Plan

Many of the initiatives and activities of the Civic Engagement Workgroup have a direct connection to the 2025 Strategic Plan for the Division of Student Affairs:

- Strategic Theme #1: Transform the Student Experience
 - Objective 1.1: Reduce/remove barrier that obstruct student development
 - Objective 1.3: New/reimagined events, campus traditions, and sources of campus pride
 - Objective 1.6: Implementation and assessment of high impact practices
- Strategic Theme #2: Creating Collaborative Partnerships
 - Objective 2.1: Establishing meaningful campus/community partnerships
 - Objective 2.2: Holistic approach to the student experience
 - Objective 2.3: Develop partnerships nationwide, and move from best practices to evidence-based work
 - Objective 2.6: Collaborate with Government Relations to advance student success
- Strategic Theme #4: Fostering and Advancing Social Justice
 - Objective 4.1: Enhance diversity, inclusion, and social justice on campus
 - Objective 4.2: Identify and implement best practices in social justice
 - Objective 4.3: Identify barriers to inclusion and equity
 - Objective 4.4: Develop a long-term diversity, inclusion, and social justice plan
 - Objective 4.5: Develop collaboratively across the division to identify core principles of diversity, inclusion, and equity

Goals

There are some limitations to our voter engagement efforts on campus. The main obstacle is that our campus does not have a Civic Engagement or Voter Engagement center. Also, there isn't a permanent budget for these types of activities.

With these limitations in mind, we do have a few goals:

- Host a Vote Center this November 2024
- Launch a campus-wide voter registration communication plan
- Surpass (or at least maintain) our 2020 midterm election voter turnout

Long term, we hope to:

- Make civic/voter engagement a priority for our campus
- Increase the size, reach, and impact of our Vote Coalition
- Surpass the national average in voter turnout for all colleges and universities for all elections
- Secure a permanent vote-by-mail collection box on campus

Landscape

UCR is a participating campus in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)—a national study by the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education at Tufts University. Our participation in this study gives UCR critical insight into its current level of voter engagement and shows how UCR stacks up against comparable universities.

Since 2012—the first year that data is currently available—UCR has performed below the national average in major categories including registration rate, voting rate of registered students, and overall voting rate. Through hard work, many great strides have been made in the last six years. A look at the promising upward trend is available below:

Presidential							
2012		2016		Change	2020		Change
Registration Rate	68.60%	Registration Rate	69.40%	+.8	Registration Rate	81.30%	+11.9
Voting Rate of Registered Students	56.70%	Voting Rate of Registered Students	57.60%	+.9	Voting Rate of Registered Students	84.50%	+26.9
Voting Rate	38.90%	Voting Rate	40.00%	+1.1	Voting Rate	68.70%	+28.7
National Average	46.90%	National Average	50.40%		National Average	66.00%	
Difference	-8	Difference	-9.3		Difference	2.7	
Midterm							
2014		2018		Change	2022		Change
Registration Rate	52.80%	Registration Rate	66.20%	+13.4	Registration Rate	71%	+4.8
Voting Rate of Registered Students	17.20%	Voting Rate of Registered Students	52.30%	+35.1%	Voting Rate of Registered Students	31.10%	-4
Voting Rate	9.10%	Voting Rate	34.60%	+25.5	Voting Rate	22.10%	-11.4

For the first time since the campus has been a part of the NSLVE, UCR has surpassed the national average in voter turnout in the 2020 presidential election. At 68.7% voter turnout, UCR saw a jump of +28.7 percentage points from the 2016 election, and it surpassed the 66% national average for all colleges and universities. UCR also saw great increases in registration rate (81.3%) and voting rate of registered students (84.5%).

As noted in the chart above—UCR has seen increases in registration rate, voting rate of registered students, and overall voting rate since 2012 in both midterm and general/presidential elections. It is worth noting that we saw a dip in these areas in the 2022 midterm election—but, of course, midterm elections must be evaluated slightly different than general/presidential elections given that this is a trend in all age demographics across the country. Though the 2022 numbers are lower than 2018, we still see them trending upwards—the registration rate in 2022 was greater than that of 2018. We hope to continue this trend going into the 2024 election.

Activities

Programmatic Efforts

1. Wednesday, October 2, 2024
 - Voter Registration Drive at the Bell Tower
 - Partners: TODEC Legal Center
2. Wednesday, October 9, 2024
 - Voter Registration Drive at the Bell Tower
 - Partners: Riverside County Registrar of Voters, ASPB, and WRC
3. Saturday, November 2 to Tuesday, November 5, 2024
 - Vote Center at the Alumni Center
 - Organized by: Governmental and Community Relations
4. Tuesday, November 5, 2024
 - Election Watch Party at 6pm, Location: TBD
 - Partners: African Student Programs, Residential Education
5. Wednesday, November 6, 2024
 - Election De-Stress Event, 1-3pm, HUB 265
 - Partners: Women’s Resource Center, Counseling and Psychological Services, Middle Eastern Student Center, Undocumented Student Programs, The WELL
6. Tuesday, November 12, 2024
 - Election Reflections: Post-Election Debrief, 12:30pm-2:30pm, HUB 379
 - Partners: Women’s Resource Center

Marketing/Information Campaign

- Updates to vote.ucr.edu
- Working with University communications to develop social media assets
- Working with ASPB to develop activities for their *Quarter for a Cause: Civic Engagement*
- Leveraging the social media power/reach of campus partners. This includes marketing through the social media accounts of the following groups:
 - Student Life
 - Residential Life
 - Governmental and Community Relations
 - Center for Social Innovation
 - Civic Engagement Student Coalition
 - ASUCR
 - ASPB
 - University Communications
 - Departments who join the Civic Engagement Coalition
- Including Civic Engagement/Voter Engagement information in programs around campus where it is possible and makes sense (e.g. orientation, Student Organization Seminars)