

## UCSD's 2019-20 Action Plan

### **Executive Summary**

This action plan was developed by the Student Organized Voter Access Committee (SOVAC) on behalf of the Associated Students of the University of California San Diego (ASUCSD) to communicate UC San Diego's strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at UC San Diego for the 2020 primary. This plan will be implemented by SOVAC in conjunction with a new workgroup charged by the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Life to accomplish our goals and institutionalize UC San Diego's commitment to civic learning, democratic engagement, and youth participation in elections. This plan focuses on short-term goals. As such it will be updated in the spring for the general election.

### **Workgroup members**

**Mark Holton**, Director of SOVAC (student leader)  
**Heather Belk**, Director, Associated Students Administration  
**Alexis Plazola**, (Co-President of Triton's VOICE)  
**Divya Bhatia** (Co-President of Triton's VOICE)  
**Rey Lautenschlager**, Principal Member of Triton Voice (student leader)  
**Benjamin Mendoza**, Community Programs Advisor, Student Promoted Access Center for Education & Service; Board Member, City Heights Town Council  
**Catherine Lettieri**, Community Service Program Coordinator, Center for Student Involvement  
**Chloe Leal**, Greek Life Advisor, Center for Student Involvement  
**Christian Walker**, Associated Students Administration  
**Divya Bhatia**, Member of Triton Voice (student leader)  
**Emily Trask**, Executive Director, Center for Student Involvement  
**Giselle Zarate**, Member of Triton Voice (student leader)  
**Kafele Khalfani**, Dean of Student Affairs, Warren College  
**Priscilla Ju**, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Sixth College  
**Rachel Flannagan**, President, Graduate Student Association  
**Rey Lautenschlager**, Member of Triton Voice (student leader)  
**Sonia Rosado**, Acting Director of Residence Life, Muir College  
**Valentina Chan**, Member of Triton Voice (student leader)  
**Victor Wang**, Vice President External, Graduate Student Association

Our workgroup lacks representation from the following community partners:

- San Diego County Registrar of Voters
- City Council Representation
- State and Government Relations
- Alumni
- RISE San Diego
- Andrew Goodman Foundation

We have identified points of contact for each of these partners and are in the process of

inviting each to participate in our Workgroup.

Our workgroup lacks representation from the following campus partners:

- Academic Affairs
- Office for the Vice Chancellor, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Off Campus Housing
- Commuter Student Services

## **Commitment**

In regards to civic learning and democratic engagement our campus mission statement mentions engaging in public service, our campus values include public service, but our campus strategic plan mentions no commitments. Overall, there is not a clear mention of civic learning and democratic engagement yet. The commitment to civic learning and democratic engagement comes from the student government, resource centers, and the Center for Student Involvement. It does not come from the language used by the majority of the senior leadership.

General education requirements at UCSD's six colleges do not include democratic engagement or civic learning. The lack of democratic engagement is reflected in the campus culture.

Noting that a hallmark of civic engagement is impact on community, we are committed to engaging the local community. In an effort to bridge our institution with the surrounding San Diego region, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Life is working with the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs to incorporate Civic Engagement and Community Impact to the Student Affairs Strategic Plan.

The Associated Students and Graduate Student Association Presidents are collaborating to encourage the UC San Diego Chancellor to sign the Chancellor and President's Commitment and we intend to post that on our growing Civic Engagement resource page.

## **Landscape**

There has been an increase in democratic engagement from our student body despite its absence from our campus culture. UCSD participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement. Our 2018 NSLVE report indicates that our voter registration rate has remained consistently high for the last two elections. Our voting rate in 2018 has also for the first time was within 0.5 percentage points of the average for colleges.

UCSD has the resources available to increase democratic engagement. We already have a large quantity of on-campus polling locations and a mail ballot drop-off location. Student run political organizations work with SOVAC on our voter registration drives. UCSD's residential life office and main library work with SOVAC to provide opportunities to register students. SOVAC also has access to tools such as TurboVote to facilitate voter registration.

However, our student body's lack of understanding of the election process and politics results in many not thinking they are educated enough to vote. Many students don't know when they need to re-register or how California's primary works. The challenge in reaching many of these students with information is that they live off campus. Unlike on campus students we don't have as many ways to reach them.

To further promote democratic engagement we need to promote civic learning. This requires us to get support from faculty and college administrators. This has been difficult since democratic engagement work has historically been left up to the students. The new workgroup aims to change that.

## **Goals**

Long-term:

1. By 2028 all colleges will incorporate civic learning into their general education requirements.
2. The workgroup will secure a yearly satellite office for the ROV on campus for the elections by 2028.
3. Make the promotion of civic engagement a part of UCSD's values and campus strategic plan by 2030.

Publically post NSLVE

Short-term:

1. The workgroup will create yearly plans for civic engagement and take a more active role in promoting civic engagement.
2. By the end of 2020, there will be faculty representation in the workgroup.
3. By the end of 2020, the university will increase the turn out rate of registered voters to 70%.
4. By the end of 2020, UC San Diego will have their NSLVE reports publicly posted on a dedicated Civic Engagement resource page.
5. By 2022, SOVAC will have a consistent volunteer base for our efforts the two weeks before school starts.

## **Strategy**

UCSD's strategy for registering students starts with our participation in the on-campus move-in of students. After move-in our efforts focused on on-campus students relies on going door to door our winter academic quarter. We will be going to each of UCSD's 6 sub-colleges twice during the first six week of the quarter. All other events and efforts target both on and off campus students. We will be tabling in our library, sports games, and resource center events. We will be using social media to promote our TurboVote link which students can use to register to vote and sign up for election day reminders. We will be working with athletics and Greek life to register all of their members.

Our signature event for increasing voter turnout will be our party at the polls events. We will be setting tables up 100 ft from the polling locations in accordance with state law. At these tables we will be promoting the polling location and providing food to students. The goal is to make waiting in long polling lines more bearable, promote its election day, and direct on-campus students to their correct polling location. Other efforts will also include flyering around campus, social media, and promotion to students through SOVAC's partners.

To inform students on what is on the ballot SOVAC will be distributing nonpartisan voter guides and giving talks at our resource centers about every ballot initiative.

With the impact of COVID-19 in the forefront of our minds, we are quickly developing voter registration opportunities other than move-in and orientation. Examples of these new strategies include:

- TurboVote announcements will be included in online orientation for new students
- TurboVote announcements will be included on Canvas.
- Voter Registration competitions between student organizations, greek organizations, colleges, and athletic teams using TurboVote
- We will be doing a social media "Voter Pledge Card" campaign

With the knowledge that all registered California voters will receive a mail-ballot, we are collaborating with our the San Diego County Registrar of Voters and Residence Life to make mailing address information for on campus residents available sooner than normal.