



JAYHAWKS VOTE

2024 University of Kansas Campus Action Plan ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge

Last Updated: September 30, 2024

Executive Summary

This ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge campus action plan was developed by staff members in the Dole Institute of Politics and the KU Center for Service Learning with the goal of increasing civic participation by students at the University of Kansas.

KU's Chancellor, Dr. Douglas Girod, has signed onto the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge's [President's Commitment to full Student Voter Participation](#). [Jayhawks Rising](#) strategic plan working groups speak to various aspects of civic engagement, from individual to institutional.

This plan has been developed for the 2024 election and will be updated leading up to the 2026 general election.

Leadership

Civic engagement initiatives at the University of Kansas are primarily led by two entities: the Dole Institute of Politics and the Center for Service Learning. This campus action plan has been put together through a partnership between these two entities, with support from a variety of collaborators.

Barbara Ballard, Senior Associate Director of the Dole Institute, and Kate Kemper, Education Program Manager for the Center for Service Learning, lead the respective civic engagement groups below and both participate in ALL IN's Big XII Votes Challenge on behalf of KU.

In addition to their diverse portfolio of educational programming and Archives, the Dole Institute oversees three student-focused efforts related to civic action, voter engagement, and community involvement. Since 2004, the Dole Institute has sponsored KU Civic Engagement and Leadership month, which includes three to four weeks of programs, speakers, and activities including voter registration and Get Out the Vote activities.

Hemenway Civic Engagement Team: In May of 2009, the Dole Institute established the Robert Hemenway Public Service Award to honor KU's 16th Chancellor. This award is given annually to a junior KU student who demonstrates a commitment to making a difference for KU students- the primary requirements for the awardee are a commitment to public service and demonstrated leadership. The Hemenway recipient and finalists make up the newly created Hemenway Civic Engagement Team, which works with the Dole Institute and the KU Civic Engagement and Leadership Council to execute the Campus Action Plan.

Civic Engagement and Leadership Council: this collaborative group promotes voter registration and Get Out the Vote activities in the month leading up to each general election. Organizations/groups invited to participate include:

Association of Residence and Scholarship Halls	KU ROTC
Center for Community Outreach	KU Young Democrats
Dole Institute Student Advisory Board	Loud Light (community organization)
Hemenway Civic Engagement Team	Sabatini Multicultural Resource Center
KU Alternative Breaks	Sorority and Fraternity Life
KU Athletics	Student Senate
KU College Republicans	Student Union Activities

The Dole Institute sponsors programs such as *Pizza and Politics* and *Discussion Groups* that help bring experts face-to-face with students on various political topics. Additionally, the Dole Institute Student Advisory Board (SAB), a



student volunteer group from diverse academic disciplines of over 100 members, plays a major role in Voter Registration and GOTV.

COVID-19 has changed the way the Dole Institute functions on the KU campus. KU was a closed campus in 2020 but resumed in-person classes in 2021. The Dole Institute continues to look at digital opportunities/possibilities including social media and maintains their work with Douglas County Clerk’s Office to accomplish their stated goals.

The Center for Service Learning oversees KU’s Civic Engagement Hub and convenes a Civic Engagement Ambassador program.

The *Civic Engagement Hub* serves as a “one-stop shop” for all things civic engagement, from resources about voter registration and the census to guides on discussing political topics in the classroom and processing election results.

Civic Engagement Ambassadors meet twice per semester, and include representatives from offices and units across KU’s campuses:

Center for Orientation and Transition Programs (Academic Affairs)	Office of Civil Rights and Title IX- Impact and Belonging
Center for Service Learning (Academic Affairs)	Political Science Department
The Commons	School of Business
Dole Institute of Politics	School of Professional Studies
Emily Taylor Center for Women and Gender Equity (Student Affairs)	School of Social Welfare
Graduate Studies	Student Conduct and Community Standards (Student Affairs)
Institute for Policy and Social Research- Kansas State Data Center	Student Involvement and Leadership Center (Student Affairs)
Jayhawk Academic Advising (Academic Affairs)	Sorority and Fraternity Life (Student Affairs)
KU Alumni Association	University Honors Program
KU Libraries	

In the fall of 2021, the Civic Engagement Ambassadors engaged in a process to determine priority change levers related to civic learning and democratic engagement within these five theme areas:

- Co-curricular educational programming related to civic engagement, voter registration, advocacy, etc.
- Institutionalization of civic engagement practices and recognition of civic engagement efforts
- Integration of civic education into the new student experience
- Enhancement and coordination of communication and outreach initiatives related to civic engagement topics
- Integration of civic engagement themes into course curriculum across the university

Commitment

KU Mission: The mission of the University of Kansas is to lift students and society by educating leaders, building healthy communities, and making discoveries that change the world.



KU Dole Institute of Politics Mission: The Dole Institute of Politics programs, events, and volunteer opportunities have been an annual event for over twenty years. Civic engagement and public service are included in the Dole Institute's mission statement:

The mission of the Dole Institute of Politics is to promote political and civic participation as well as civil discourse in a bi-partisan, balanced manner. By providing a forum for discussion of political and economic issues, fostering for public service leadership and encouraging participation in the political process, we emphasize that politics is an honorable profession and that only through political and civic participation can citizens redirect the course of our nation.

The Student Legislative Awareness Committee (SLAC) was created by KU Student Senate to give the student body a platform to voice their opinions and protect their interest. SLAC aims to foster a civically engaged student body by, but not limited to: registering student voters, lobbying the Kansas Legislature for higher education, and collaborating with the other Kansas Regents Institutions and informing students on the most recent issues affecting them, and ultimately holding elected officials accountable for their actions.

Thanks to a partnership between the Dole Institute and student organizations at the University of Kansas, KU possesses a strong commitment to furthering the political awareness and participation of students.

KU Center for Service Learning Mission: The Center for Service Learning collaborates with community and campus partners to develop students into engaged global citizens through experiential learning and civic engagement.



KU's Chancellor, Dr. Douglas Girod, has signed onto the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge's [President's Commitment to full Student Voter Participation](#).

[Jayhawks Rising](#) working groups for Strengthening Service to Local and Global Communities and Improving Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging speak to various aspects of civic engagement, from individual to institutional.

KU Core: The [KU Core 34](#) is designed to yield fundamental skills, build a broad background of knowledge, generate capacities and opportunities for blending and creating ideas, strengthen an appreciation of cultural and global diversity, and cultivate ethical integrity.

KU students are required to complete the KU Core in order to graduate. Core requirements that may expose students to civic engagement-related topics and themes may include:

- Creative Inquiry and Discovery: Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Ethical and Professional Responsibility: Social Responsibility and Ethics (encouraged, not required for graduation)
- Social Awareness and Cultural Understanding: US Culture and Global Culture

Student Organizations: According to [Rock Chalk Central](#), KU's student organization hub, there are over 115 registered student organizations focused on social change/advocacy and/or political themes. These include organizations that are partisan in nature, those focused around specific social issues or causes, etc.



Landscape

The University of Kansas' flagship campus is located in Lawrence, with additional campuses in the Kansas City area and other parts of the state. A majority of KU's student population are in-state residents, but there is a significant out-of-state and international population at the institution as well.

Across the board, KU's student voting rates increased from 2016-2020. The voting rate of 18-21 year-old Jayhawks increased significantly to 69%. This subset of the student population voted at a higher rate than 22-24, 25-29, 30-39, and 40-49 year-old students. While it is encouraging to see new voter engagement rates increase this significantly, we know that typically student voting rates, along with those of the general population, dip during mid-term years.

Goals + NSLVE

KU's voter engagement goals are set with consideration of the two most recent NSLVE reports.

Category	Voter Registration	Voting (of Registered Students)	Voting
2016	76.7%	66.7%	51.2%
2018	79.4%	57.0%	45.3%
2020	86.6%	82.0%	71.0%
2022	82.6%	40.1%	33.1%
2024 Goal	87%	84%	73%

Considerations:

In fall 2023, KU announced that the freshman class was the largest in university history with 5,300 students. KU's fall 2023 overall enrollment was 29,355, over 3,000 students higher than in 2020. 2024 will be the first presidential election in which many of these students are eligible to vote. *KU's fall 2024 first year enrollment numbers are not final as of the completion of this plan but they are projected to be similar to, if not slightly higher than, fall 2023.*

In 2020, KU's 18-21 year-old student population voted at a rate of 69%, an increase of 27 points from 2016. Targeting first-year and sophomore courses/student groups will be critical in encouraging our newer students to participate in voting as a habit-forming activity.

Our 2020 NSLVE report tells us that few KU students voted on election day. This is likely a result of the pandemic and the reality that many students choose to vote in their home communities rather than KU. For this reason, early voting and other not-in-person voting strategy resources will be promoted to students as options for engagement.

Strategy

Dole Institute Strategies

- Increase tabling at Mrs. E's (Campus Dining facility for several residence halls) in order to reach on-campus students, most of whom are 17 or 18 year-old freshmen.
- Register students to vote at the Dole Institute's Constitution Day Event.



- KU football game – Constitution Day at Memorial Stadium (Chancellor leads the Preamble to the Constitution).
- Partner with the All Scholarship Hall Council (ASHC) and Association of University Residence Halls (AURH) to promote civic engagement.
- Promote National Voter Education Week.
- Attend or send materials to sorority and fraternity chapter meetings to promote civic engagement and encourage Greek life students to register to vote.
- Voter Registration on Wescoe Beach (a high traffic area for students).
- Register students to vote on campus at primarily the Kansas Union and other campus locations.
- Increase voter registration among Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native American students.
- Create a unified social media effort across student organizations to encourage voting.
- Host an event at the weekly Student Union Activity *Tea at 3* to reach students who live off-campus.
- Increase turnout at 2024 KU Civic Engagement and Leadership events, specifically *Pizza and Politics* and *Discussion Groups*.
- Sponsor “Presidential Debate Watch” at the Dole Institute, Residence Halls, and the Memorial Kansas Union. Dr. Diana Carlin, Co-founder of “Debate Watch” will help facilitate.

Center for Service Learning and Other Campus Partner Strategies

ALL IN to Vote: The Center for Service Learning has acquired an ALL IN to Vote site for KU. This site is used throughout Orientation, Hawk Week, and other opportunities to engage with students and encourage them to vote. Other offices and departments will be made aware of this resource and encouraged to use it as well.

Civic Engagement Canvas Module: The Center for Service Learning has rolled out an open-access Canvas module with voter registration and education resources before the start of the fall semester. This resource will be communicated to course instructors through the CSL’s newsletter platform and through the Civic Engagement Ambassadors.

National Volunteer Week (April 21-25, 2024)

The Center for Service Learning will uplift students and other members of the KU community who engage in service and civic action throughout the year during National Volunteer Week. This will include content about upcoming ways to engage in community, including voting in the 2024 primary and general elections.

Orientation (June-July 2024)

The Center for Service Learning will be tabling at each orientation session throughout the summer. At the table, they will have information about students’ voter registration options.

Hawk Week (August 2024): The Center for Service Learning will be tabling at a variety of student-facing events throughout Hawk Week, KU’s welcome week. At the table, they will have information about students’ voter registration options, including information about the ALL IN To Vote platform.

Educate and Act Series: This series features experts on different aspects of US democracy, and centers opportunities for civic engagement. It is intended to help demystify elements of the systems and processes at work in the US democracy. It is co-led by The Commons, the Center for Service Learning, and the Emily Taylor Center for Women and Gender Equity. Programs in this series are hosted at least twice per semester and feature campus researchers as well as specialists beyond the University.



National Voter Registration Day (September 17, 2024): The Center for Service Learning and Dole Institute of Politics participate in voter registration promotion on National Voter Registration Day. *During the week of NVRD 2023, promotional efforts yielded 59 clicks to KU's custom ALL IN to Vote platform.*

National Voter Education Week: In celebration of National Voter Education Week, the Center for Service Learning will promote civic action across social media platforms to encourage students to educate themselves about candidates and issues on the ballot in November. NVEW ends just before Kansas' voter registration deadline. *During NVEW 2023, promotional efforts yielded 40 clicks on KU's custom ALL IN To Vote platform.*

KU Parent and Family Connection: The Center for Service Learning will share voter registration to KU students' parents and families through the KU Parent and Family Connection email newsletter. *In fall 2023, this communication yielded 32 clicks to KU's custom ALL IN To Vote platform.*

Jayhawk GPS: The Center for Service Learning will coordinate with KU's Success Technologies staff to incorporate a push notification about voter registration to students through Jayhawk GPS, a program students use to view their class schedule, set up meetings with their academic advisor, and connect with various academic resources. *In fall 2023, this prompt yielded 43 clicks to KU's custom ALL IN To Vote platform.* New in fall 2024, CSL will implement an automated email to any student that indicates interest in voting through a Jayhawk GPS intake form.

Ask Every Student Implementation Grant: In Summer 2024, CSL received a \$3500 grant to help implement the Ask Every Student voting promotion method, which will allow the employment of two Federal Work Study students to support many of the above strategies.

Class, Student Organization, and Residence Hall Visits: CSL staff will facilitate visits to classes, student organization meetings, and residence hall floors to share information about voting and participating in civic activities.

Drop-In Office Hours: The CSL is offering drop-in office hours every Tuesday afternoon to help students navigate finding volunteer opportunities, requesting absentee ballots, etc.

Big XII Civic Engagement Week: KU Athletics will take part in a civic engagement week developed by student athletes across the Big XII Conference. This week will incorporate voter education, voter registration, and community service.

Polling Locations: The Douglas County Elections Office has secured an early voting location on Campus (Lied Center of Kansas) and an Election Day polling place (Burge Union). The Election Day polling place is in the precinct specific to Daisy Hill, a location that encompasses many of KU's residence halls.

Reporting

KU shares our campus action plan and NSLVE report publicly on ALL IN's website. We typically share a press release when we receive our NSLVE results to celebrate the work done in the previous election year, which is sent to all KU faculty, staff, and students and can be picked up by local media (examples: [KU Earns National Voter Engagement Recognition, Prepares for 2020 Midterms](#); [KU earns ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Silver Seal](#)). ALL IN's page with KU's reports and plans is linked in those press releases, as well as on the [KU CSL's website](#) for public access and review.



Evaluation

Both the Dole Institute of Politics and the Center for Service Learning will engage in post-election program evaluation and reflection.

The Dole Institute will conduct a reflection and satisfaction survey of Civic Engagement Leadership Council members to better understand student participation in CELC activities, perceived interest and participation by the student body, and satisfaction of student leaders. Additionally, the Dole Institute will compare voter registration and program participation data to determine success related to internally set goals.

The Center for Service Learning will conduct a similar survey of Civic Engagement Ambassadors and departmental users of ALL IN To Vote to determine whether their program/voter registration outcomes met their internally set goals. The CSL will also perform assessment and evaluation as part of the Ask Every Student Implementation Grant.

The Center for Service Learning supports KU's Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement. KU was last reclassified in 2020 and will go up for reclassification in 2026. The ALL IN Campus Action Plans and NSLVE data between 2020 and 2026 will be used to inform the civic engagement and voting portions of the Carnegie Classification application.

