

# UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE®

**Office of Student Involvement**

**#CardsVote**

2024 University of Louisville Vote Everywhere Action Plan

Submitted to:

ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge

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## **Section 1: Executive Summary**

This action plan was developed by the UofL Vote Everywhere Ambassadors and their Campus Champion to develop goals for the improvement of Vote Everywhere's impact on the University of Louisville's campus in the 2023-2024 academic year. Updates have been included from the recently inducted 2024-2025 Vote Everywhere Ambassadors to reflect their goals and tactics for the upcoming academic year.

The primary goals are to increase voter turnout, improve Vote Everywhere's reputation on campus, and increase voter accessibility through different policy and programmatic initiatives. In the short-term, Vote Everywhere will develop a committee, establish collaborations, and reach out specifically to the freshmen class on campus. In the long-term, Vote Everywhere will focus on making institutional policy changes to ease and/or remove barriers to civic participation. These policy goals include creating a polling place on campus or having guaranteed transportation for all students to visit their local polling location, changing policy in the mailroom so that students are contacted when their ballot arrives in the mail, and providing a day off of classes for election days in addition to the presidential elections to encourage voting.

The plan will be implemented by the Vote Everywhere Ambassadors and their committee of other civic-minded students with the assistance of the Campus Champion. This plan will be evaluated and updated at the end of every semester.

## **Section 2: Landscape**

### Leadership

Some of the different organizations at the head of civic engagement are the Political Science department, the Anne Braden Institute, the Student YMCA organization, the Cultural Equity Center, the League of Women Voters, Student Activity Board's Emerging Issues Committee, the Student Government Association (SGA), and several locally elected officials such as Keturrah Herron and Cassie Chambers Armstrong. Many of these organizations have a consistent interest in collaborating with an organization dedicated to civic engagement. In the case of locally elected officials, contacts in the political science department and students within the Engage Lead Serve Board with connections can provide an avenue of communication with new or consistent officials.

We would like to get more connected with other academic departments on campus and form connections with faculty and staff members that we can count on as campus supporters. Additionally, we would like to consolidate some of the organizations that do civic engagement work so they are all in the loop and aware of each other's presence on campus.

### Commitment

The President of UofL has outlined student success, inclusion and equity, and coordinated community engagement as three of her top eight priorities. Research shows that civic engagement "is a powerful fulcrum for leveraging multiple degrees of achievement across spectra of people and places [revealing] a simple but elegant educational formula: academic learning + civic engagement = student and community success." (Cress, 2016). We intend on

working with the President and her office to further specify civic engagement as a positive, measurable outcome to gauge success in her priorities.

UofL does not have a commitment to Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) and has classes scheduled on election days that are not presidential elections. CLDE education is not a part of the curriculum or Cardinal Core requirements. As of now, the Office of Student Involvement sends an email each fall encouraging students to vote and the Office of Admissions emails students when they turn 18 to encourage them to register to vote. Other than these yearly reminders, there are no further major commitments to civic engagement on campus.

#### NSLVE

Our most recent NSLVE report is from the 2020 election, which is unique in some ways because of its presidential election status, which often results in a higher turnout at the polls. Nonetheless, we experienced a higher rate of voter turnout in the 2020 elections than the 2018 mid-terms. The rate of turnout for ethnic groups was relatively the same, all within the 60% percentile. We would love to continue to raise these rates of voter turnout.

One interesting section is the one that analyzed voting methods used on campus. Not only did the percentage of “unknown” voting method decrease, but there was also a high percentage of people voting early and through absentee ballots. This is likely due to efforts to promote alternative methods of voting for college students with fewer barriers than in-person voting. We hope to continue to promote these methods of voting so our voter turnout can continuously increase in ways most accessible to students.

## Resources

At this point in time, Vote Everywhere at UofL is made up of two consistent ambassadors designated from the Andrew Goodman Foundation and one campus champion who actively and consistently dedicates their time to civic and community engagement. Through the Engage, Lead, Service Board on-campus we are allotted \$1000 in funds for our events per fiscal year.

## Institutionalization

Voter engagement is not embedded into the student experience. It is through RSOs and outside organizations that students are encouraged to be civically engaged. We are actively working for our President to sign the ALL IN President's Pledge.

## Programming

In the past, Vote Everywhere has successfully hosted voter registration drives on campus and held a Rock the Vote party. Additionally, SGA and Vote Everywhere have previously partnered on a Fancyville event and a push to have students vote in SGA elections.

## Achievements, Challenges, and Opportunities

*Achievements:* We are an established organization on campus that is known for promoting voter registration drives & is well-known for their involvement on campus during National Voter Registration Day.

*Challenges:* We were primarily focused on voter registration for a very long time and since our reputation is established in that sector, it is harder to receive the support in order to exceed those expectations and expand into other programming ventures. We also want to bring together a community of civic-minded individuals for future events, but that is difficult when we are not as well-known outside of voter registration drives.

*Opportunities:* The next presidential election will be held in fall of 2024 and will cultivate interest and passion in voter education and participation.

### Section 3: Goals

Long-Term Goals:

Long-Term Goals are defined as being achieved within the next 5 academic years (by the end of June 2029).

1. We want to establish Vote Everywhere as a well-known RSO on campus that promotes voter education, voter mobilization, and civic participation beyond the ballot box. We want a big turnout (marked at over 100 students at each event) at our events and for students to see us as an accessible resource for all things voting related.
2. We want to change voting accessibility on campus through policy changes. We want to get election day off for students, establish a polling location on/near campus, and develop a system in which students can get transported to early voting locations.
3. We want to increase the voting turnout of those registered to vote on campus until it is over 90% participation from the undergraduate class.

Long-Term Smartie Goals

<b>Goal:</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>I / E</b>
1	We desire to grow our RSO by creating a team of dedicated member volunteers and have members of the student body attend our events.	>100 students at each event  >10 students in group chat/are members of Vote Everywhere	For good events, we have 90-100	With a record-breaking freshman class size, this will be realistic for us to assume more students will attend our events	Measured from August-June of 2025	Events are posted on Engage which all students have access to

2	Specific policy changes we'd like to see on campus for student voting accessibility	Policy changes or not	Over time as we build our coalition and staff support, we believe this can be attainable	Other universities have established on-campus polling locations; there is no reason we shouldn't have one	Measured each academic year for progress	The nature of this goal is inclusive- we want more access for students to vote.
3	Specific desire for voter turnout- not just registration or knowledge, but actual turnout	90% turnout or higher to presidential elections, 30% or higher turnout to mid-term and primary elections	According to our last NSLVE report in 2020, we had 65.5% voter turnout. 90% is attainable long-term	This may be the least realistic of our goals, but we're aiming high!	Measured each election through NSLVE	This goal will be inclusive and equitable as we provide more resources for students to be knowledgeable about elections, have the tools they need to vote, register them to vote, and provide transportation to vote and a day off of school so they aren't missing anything to vote.



## Short-Term Goals

Short-Term Goals are defined by being achieved within the next academic year (by the end of June 2025).

1. We will establish a committee of civic-minded individuals who participate in civic service in our own community. Members of our coalition we intend to seek out are:
  - Member from the Office of the President
  - Faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences (A&S)- Political Science, Social Change; Kent School of Social Work; and Brandeis School of Law
  - Member of Housing/Resident Experience
  - Students from RSOs about civic engagement, politics, community participation
  - Member from the Anne Braden Institute (ABI)
  - An employee from Athletics
  - A student from the Student Government Association (SGA)
  - A local councilmember from Louisville Metro Council
2. We will successfully inform and register the incoming Freshman class to vote through speaking with the professors and administrators of the required GEN 100 courses to implement CLDE tenants in their syllabi including making it a required assignment to register to vote (if eligible) and talking about why voting is important.
  - Perceived barrier: Honors students, engineering students, music students, and many other students in specific schools do not take GEN 100
3. We will reach out to our partner organisations both within and outside of campus at least once per semester to build a more active network.

4. We commit to growing our social media to 500 followers by May 2025 (an increase of 105 followers) and to develop our marketing through flyers in dormitories and apartments, marketing on SAC and BAB TVs, and posting regularly on Instagram so we are well-known on campus.

Short Term SMARTIE Goals

<b>Goal:</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>I / E</b>
1	We have already begun seeking out members, we currently have a shortlist with a representative from the ABI who can further connect us with A&S	Measured as successful with at least 5 members, highly successful with 7-10	With our contact at ABI, it is attainable to have 2-3 members in the upcoming semester. We believe we can get 5 within the next academic year.	Many campuses utilize coalitions to achieve their civic missions; it is a realistic expectation that our campus will do the same.	Time-oriented by measured end date of June 2025	We are seeking members from across campus, including faculty, staff, and students. We are inclusive of all party affiliations and welcome diversity.
2	We hope to have a direct implementation within the GEN 100 freshman course syllabi for students to register to vote if able.	Measured by percentage of students per freshman intro course who register to vote	With our contact at the ABI and IEEP in A&S, we believe we will have direct contact with GEN 100 course professors and materials	We already send message reminders when any student turns 18 to vote, we can take this 1 step further and implement it into their course work.	We aim to accomplish this by Fall 2025. Accomplish as in 50% implementation into GEN 100 courses.	All freshman students are required to take a GEN 100 Introduction to College course. We aim to reach all incoming freshman this way.

3	We will regularly reach out to our partners in our network.	Number of messages sent to partners	We plan to have a meeting quarterly with our network, so reaching out to partners once a semester will be achieved.	It is realistic to set communication standards to at minimum once a semester.	Once a semester	We will reach out to all partners once a semester, excluding none.
4	Specific numeric growth on Instagram account from 395 to 500.	Measured by # of followers	Through consistent posts and marketing materials at tabling events, we will work to get to 500 followers.	105 followers over the next 12 months amounts to 9 per month. It is realistic to expect to reach 10 new students per month.	This goal is set to be accomplished by May 2025.	Our Instagram account is not a private account and is accessible to all. Each of our posts are also ADA compliant, with our captions explaining our posts.

## Section 4: Strategy

### Long-Term Goal Strategies

- Collaborating with other large RSOs on campus including SGA, ELSB
- Utilizing our marketing and merchandise evaluations to continue growing our audience
- Organizing events that appeal to our university populations
- Providing consistent information to students about early/absentee voting

### Short-Term Goal Strategies

- Marketing to groups that will be interested in our mission (political science students, social change students, social work students, law students)
- Tabling at events where freshmen are the targeted audience
- Tabling at a wide variety of events on campus
- Reaching out to different stakeholders in voter accessibility issues
- Developing lists of aligned organizations and reaching out to them to make connections
- Evaluating what marketing is most engaging and accessible to students based on social media interaction & event turnout

### Tactics and Timeline

- **Events:**
  - Tabling at Welcome Week, football tailgates and other athletic events, dining locations, and around housing locations that freshmen primarily live in
  - National Voter Registration Day and National Voter Education Week events
  - Service with Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and the Fairness Campaign

- “Rock the Vote” Party with goal to get different RSOs pledging to vote
- Panels with local government leaders to discuss civic engagement, local issues, and ways to get involved
- Providing buses for students for early voting
- **Actions:**
  - Collaborate with Kentucky Democracy Project on the voter restoration petition
  - Create a media campaign based around taking steps to be aware of the voting process & who is on the ballot
- **Partnerships:**
  - Kentucky Democracy Project
  - Kentuckians for the Commonwealth
  - The Fairness Campaign
  - UofL Student Activities Board
  - UofL Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
  - SGA External Affairs
  - Local representatives and Metro Councilmembers
  - Student Government Association Top 4
- **Digital Organizing:**
  - Vote Everywhere website QR code on all tabling events
  - Develop virtual voting action plan form
  - SimpleTexting for important deadline reminders.

## 2024-2025 Events and Important Dates Timeline

Month	Major Task
<b>April</b>	New VE ambassadors are officially in 22- Last Day to Register to Vote for primaries!
<b>May</b>	21- Primary Election Day
<b>June</b>	28th- Athlete Ally Summit - Friday Night Rights event
<b>July</b>	
<b>August</b>	Welcome Week - Tabling at SRC, Icebreaker GEN 100 classes- getting freshman registered to vote + make a pledge to vote w/ ALL IN
<b>September</b>	17- National Voter Registration Day 19 - Table at Good Morning Commuters to get students to register to vote 20- National Black Voter Day
<b>October</b>	7-11: National Voter Education Week (see below) 7 - Last Day to Register for Election! 29 - Vote Early Day - Don't Wing it! Make a plan to vote! (Free wings event)
<b>November</b>	5- Election Day! Roll to the Polls with SGA and Athletics and Election Results Watch Party 6 - Post-Election Event with Counselling Center, Cultural Center (big feelings)
<b>December</b>	
<b>January</b>	Something about bills in state legislation
<b>February</b>	5 – the Honourable Sonia Sotomayor visiting campus 14 - For the love of the vote: make a valentine's day pledge to vote SGA elections Something about bills in state legislation
<b>March</b>	Panel with legislators about an issue Serve with the Fairness Campaign

### National Voter Education Week Events:

7th: Tabling Donuts & Democracy - Register to Vote! Last Day to Register!

8th: Chip, Dips, and Ballot Tips (who/what's on the ballot, what do they stand for)

9th: Watch Party - 3rd Presidential Debate

10th: Community Service opportunity - door knocking with KFTC

11th: Lunch Celebration - End of Voter Week

## **Section 5: Reporting**

### Sharing Your Plan:

This plan will be distributed between the two Vote Everywhere ambassadors, our campus champion, and our AGF representative. We will also share this plan with our future ambassadors in the case that we leave our position. This action plan can also be shared with the Executive Director of Student Involvement, the Student Affairs Chief of Staff, and VP for Student Affairs.

### Reporting NSLVE Data:

We would like to more publicly share NSLVE data so it can become clearer the importance of voter registration and funding organizations that promote civic engagement or removing barriers to voting.



## **Section 6: Monitoring and Evaluation**

To track progress toward achieving goals through strategies and tactics, ensure regular communication with stakeholders and track quantitative and qualitative data.

### Meetings:

The ambassadors will meet once a week and every other week with their champion. They will start planning events at least 1 month before the event and consider how the events align with their goals.

### Event Reports:

The ambassador will submit information to the program tracker form for AGF and also fill out the post-event summary form for future evaluation. They will also create a reflection document for notes for future ambassadors.

### NSLVE:

Ambassadors will review the results for the NSLVE reports together and create a document relaying some of the most important statistics from the document & goals for improvement. This document can be used in future conversations with university governments or collaborators and will be posted on social media to share updates with the campus community.

### Continuous Evaluation:

We will evaluate how we have met or not met goals from the action plan at the end of every semester and consider adjusting goals at the beginning of every semester.