

University of Michigan - Ann Arbor 2024 Action Plan



Executive Summary

The UMICH Votes Coalition spearheads the University of Michigan's nonpartisan democratic and voter engagement efforts. This multidisciplinary coalition of campus leaders contributes their specific expertise and shared passion to activate and facilitate student civic engagement. The coalition works closely with stakeholders across the university to execute the mission of the coalition. Campus stakeholders include: central administration, the schools and colleges of the university, active and emeriti faculty members, staff, student organizations, and, of course, graduate and undergraduate students.

This action plan will guide our work for Winter 2024 and academic year 2024-25, as we look to the 2024 primaries and fall general election. Our action plan will serve as a guidepost for our multi-modal approach to voter registration, education and turnout efforts, which will include in-person events, a broader digital and social media presence, and key participation from Student leaders and students trained on voter registration best practices. The members of the UMICH Votes coalition will be responsible for implementing the plan on the Ann Arbor campus, and will work collectively with colleagues at the U-M Dearborn and U-M Flint campus. In addition to our direct efforts to increase voter registration and voter engagement, the coalition will continue to develop its best practices as it builds a sustainable institutional structure.

The members of the UMICH Votes Coalition Steering Committee contributed significantly to this plan, with primary writing by the Steering Committee co-chairs. The UMICH Vote Coalition Steering Committee roster is included below.

Leadership

After ad-hoc success in 2020, an expanded coalition on U-M's campus was convened by the Ginsberg Center and began working under the umbrella of UMICH Votes to broaden the non-partisan voter registration and mobilization efforts across campus for the 2022 Midterm election.

UMICH Votes is a non-partisan campus coalition whose mission is to improve the accessibility of voting, foster the confidence necessary to navigate the voting process successfully, and help students understand why their votes matter, for students of all three University of Michigan campuses. The plan that follows details those aspects of the Coalition work on the Ann Arbor campus.

The UMICH Votes Coalition is comprised of the following U-M groups: Creative Campus Voting Project, Democracy & Debate, the Ginsberg Center, the Office of Vice President of Government Affairs, Turn Up Turnout (TUT), the University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA), and other campus partners. The planning for 2022 began in summer of 2021 with weekly meetings and frequent (monthly, then biweekly as 2022 progressed) conversations with the Ann Arbor City Clerk's office to implement two satellite clerk's offices on campus. Ginsberg and TUT also began training a new cohort of voter-registration volunteers and collaborated with other U-M partners on events that would engage U-M community members more broadly.

Key to our efforts for 2022 was the strong partnership with Ann Arbor City Clerk Jackie Beaudry built in the 2016 and 2018 elections to offer on-campus in-person voter registration and ballot dropoff sites through the satellite offices. We continued building upon the Clerk's willingness to establish voting sites on campus, accept UMID and provide voting location information tailored to resident students to offer more services to student voters at two Satellite Clerk's Offices on campus. Bringing these offices to fruition required critical partnership with the Office of the Vice President for Government Relations and the Ann Arbor City Council. More details about these offices are highlighted below.

Coalition structure and meeting cadence

The coalition currently consists of a general body open to anyone interested in contributing to a particular area of the work of student voter engagement. A Steering Committee of members representing the breadth of our approach guides this work. For Fall 2023, the coalition has had an AB cadence: Steering committee (group A) meets biweekly as a group and the full coalition (group B) joins every other meeting for sharing of updates and implementation of planning. Working groups, each led by one or more Steering Committee members, have a targeted focus and meet separately as needed. They are organized around: Campus Outreach, Campus Tabling, Clerk's Offices/Voting Sites, Communications/Branding, Events/Programming,

Research & Evaluation, Staffing/Student Support, and System of Materials, Events/programming.

UMICH Votes Coalition steering committee (in alphabetical order):

- Sarah Alanis, *Project, Boards, and Commissions Coordinator, City of Ann Arbor Clerk's Office*
- Jacqueline Beaudry, *Ann Arbor City Clerk*
- *Catherine Carver, Ph.D., *Lead, Democracy & Debate*
- Jared Cory, *Ph.D. candidate, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy*
- Jessica Gadow, MPP, *Communications Assistant, Democracy & Debate*
- Edie Goldenberg, *Professor Emerita of Public Policy, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, and Political Science, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts; Faculty Advisor, Turn up Turnout (TUT)*
- Phoebe Henninger, *Ph.D. candidate, Department of Political Science, College of Literature, Science, and Art*
- Elizabeth Netcher, M.A., *Democratic Engagement Manager, The Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning*
- Hillary Poudeu Tchokothe, BA '26, *Vice President, Turn Up Turnout*
- *Rose Reilly, BA '24, *President, Turn Up Turnout*
- Stephanie Rowden, *Associate Professor, Stamps School of Art & Design; co-lead, Creative Campus Voting Project*
- Hannah Smotrich, *Associate Professor, Stamps School of Art & Design; co-lead, Creative Campus Voting Project*
- *Dave Waterhouse, *Associate Director, The Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning*

*Co-chairs of the UMICH Votes Steering Committee

Campus Contributors and Stakeholders (current and recent):

- Student Groups:
 - a. Voter Engagement Lead Organization: Turn Up Turnout (TUT)
 - b. Collaborative Partners (examples):
 - i. Black Student Union
 - ii. Central Student Government
 - iii. Michigan Voting Project at MLaw
 - iv. Student Sustainability Coalition
 - v. WeListen
- Creative Campus Voting Project, Stamps School of Art and Design
- Democracy & Debate
- Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning
- James and Anne Duderstadt Center Gallery
- Michigan Athletics
- Office of Government Relations

- Office of New Student Programs
- Office of the Provost
- Office of the Registrar
- Office of the Vice President for Communications
- Office of the Vice President for Student Life
- University of Michigan Libraries
- University Museum of Art (UMMA)
- University Housing and Dining
- Wallace House Center for Journalists
- All 19 Schools and Colleges at the University of Michigan

Andrew Goodman Foundation Ambassadors

- Maurielle Courtois, BA '25, *Vice President for Registration and Turnout, Turn Up Turnout*
- Bavani Vijay, BA '27, *Turn Up Turnout*

Campus Vote Project Fellows/representatives to the Michigan Secretary of State's Student Advisory Task Force:

- Maurielle Courtois, BA '25, *Vice President for Registration and Turnout, Turn Up Turnout*
- Naomi Garcia, *MPP '26, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy*

Nonprofit and Government Organizations:

- ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
- Andrew Goodman Foundation
- Ann Arbor City Clerk's Office
- Ann Arbor League of Women Voters
- Campus Compact
- Michigan Secretary of State and staff
- Voters Not Politicians (VNP)
- Voter Friendly Campus/Campus Voting Project (CVP)
- Students Learn Students Vote Coalition (SLSV)

Commitment

The University of Michigan's mission is to to serve the people of Michigan and the world through preeminence in creating, communicating, preserving and applying knowledge, art, and academic values, and in developing leaders and citizens who will challenge the present and enrich the future. Below are some ways that the University demonstrates this civic commitment.

In 1997, the president and provost created the Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning, a community and civic engagement center with a mission to cultivate and steward equitable partnerships between communities and the University of Michigan to advance social change for the public good. Based upon this mission, its vision is for inclusive democracy; thriving, diverse communities; and equity and social justice. The Ginsberg Center's mission and purpose are premised on spanning organizational and institutional boundaries in service to civic engagement and social change. Recognizing three strategic areas of focus, the Ginsberg Center is positioned within Student Life, reflecting a commitment to student education and development; and is formally connected to the Office of the Provost, reflecting a focus on faculty and academic partners, and to Government Relations, reflecting a community engagement beyond campus.

University of Michigan's former president helped launch the Big Ten Voting Challenge in 2017. Noting a lack of a coordinated campus effort prior to the 2016 election cycle, and with the support of the Vice President for Student Life, the Ginsberg Center addressed this challenge and demonstrated its commitment to student voter engagement and education by creating a staff position and supporting several student interns focused on this work. Ginsberg partnered with Edie Goldenberg, Professor of Political Science and Public Policy, and the Turn Up Turnout (TUT) student organization to begin weaving voter registration into the fabric of the University's culture. The approach included: working with the Office of New Student Programs to engage students during new and transfer student orientation sessions; collaborating with Housing and Dining to host voter registration events and share information on digital and table-top signage; and developing relationships with the deans of our Schools and Colleges to enlist their support and involvement in registration, education, and turnout initiatives that reach the University of Michigan's undergraduate, graduate, and professional student populations. We also collaborated with the University Registrar's Office in support of a TurboVote presence in Wolverine Access, a high-traffic digital domain as the primary student administrative portal. This presence has facilitated thousands of students creating a TurboVote profile since September 2017. (As we transition to our own UMICH Votes web presence, this presence in the student portal is being pivoted to our govote.umich.edu website.)

In 2018, Creative Campus Voting Project (CCVP), based in the U-M Stamps School of Art & Design, began exploring how art and design can support and expand student voter engagement. Their current work centers on designing welcoming civic spaces for new voters with clear messaging and a vibrant spirit. Working in close collaboration with the Ann Arbor City

Clerk, Ginsberg, TUT, and the University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA), CCVP piloted in 2020 their first design and coordination of a large-scale voter engagement exhibition at UMMA, which included a satellite office for the Ann Arbor City Clerk. They expanded their efforts for the 2022 midterm election, creating two exhibitions and satellite offices of the Ann Arbor City Clerk, in collaboration with coalition partners, and a cohort of UMich Votes fellows to staff the sites, with support of Democracy & Debate. This unique partnership could not be successful without close collaboration with the Ann Arbor City Clerk, the University of Michigan Museum of Art, the James and Anne Duderstadt Gallery, and the Office Vice President of Government Relations. CCVP continues to develop their visionary arts-based model for non-partisan voter student voter engagement with the design and implementation of Satellite Clerk's offices on campus in 2024.

In 2020, the former president of the University of Michigan signed on to the ALL IN Presidential Commitment. In addition, the president and provost provided support for the hosting of a 2020 Presidential Debate. Recognizing the importance of elections and civic engagement for all facets of the university, the efforts for 2020 did not center only on the debate event itself. Under the leadership of the dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and the vice president of Government Relations, an interdisciplinary cross campus committee drawn from faculty, staff - including the director of the Ginsberg Center - and students convened to create a campus-wide theme semester and suite of educational and programming events to encourage participation in our democratic processes. While the College of Literature, Science and Arts has utilized the theme semester model many times over the last 20 years, with many of the topics including opportunities for civic learning and engagement, this was the first university-wide theme semester coordination with this focus.

Although the advent of the COVID and public health concerns led to the University to withdraw from hosting the debate itself, the university implemented the Democracy & Debate 2020 "theme semester" which actually spanned academic year 2020-21. This theme semester encouraged students to explore the exchange of ideas and free speech, the responsibilities held by members of a democratic society, structural inequalities in our democratic systems, the power of the individual voter's voice, and democracy from a local to a global perspective. Courses from disciplines and departments across the University touched on this theme, allowing students to consider these issues in the context of their particular area of study. The theme semester extended beyond the classroom, and included public facing collaboration with the Center for Academic Innovation, Clement's Library, and Michigan Publishing. The broad suite of public programming did not focus solely on politics and public policy, but ranged from arts to engineering and all disciplines between.

Recognizing the success and importance of the Democracy & Debate Theme Semester, the University has continued its support for the programming and engagement efforts of Democracy & Debate through 2024-25. In fall 2024, the Office of University Development will launch its next multi-year campaign, with Exercising Democracy as a key campaign pillar.

The University's commitment to student voter education and participation extends beyond the Ann Arbor campus alone. In 2022, the UMICH Votes team partnered with students, staff, and faculty at the U-M Dearborn and Flint campuses to ensure greater collaboration, particularly across digital platforms. We will continue to use the UMICH Votes name to unite branding, materials, and a digital presence for voter engagement across the three campuses. In addition, with external foundation funding, TUT supports student leaders and programming on the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses.

Since 2017, the UMICH Votes Coalition has grown to include stakeholders and contributors across the university. Vice President for Student Life Martino Harmon and Vice President for Government Relations Chris Kolb are actively supportive of our democratic engagement work. As we look to 2024, we look to formalize our work beyond and with the University. We are working to secure the commitment of President Santa Ono, new in his role, for the Presidential Commitment. Moreover, the significance of the work of the UMICH Votes Coalition has led to efforts to provide the coalition formal structure and central budget.

Landscape

Collaboration across the University of Michigan Ann Arbor campus, the University of Michigan system, the State of Michigan, and the Big Ten Conference is highly encouraged by U-M's central administration. Our landscape of partners is thus rich and reciprocal, spanning the U-M campuses themselves, community partners, community colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies.

Our work recognizes the current political climate, particularly given the view of Michigan as a purple state, and concerns regarding the appearance of partisanship. The UMICH Votes Coalition firmly believes that supporting student voter registration and fostering student participation in democratic processes is critical to a thriving democracy. Our efforts remain strictly nonpartisan. We aim to encourage all students, regardless of political preferences, to be curious about the democratic process and to actively engage by seeking out fact-based information, educating themselves about the candidates and issues on the ballot, getting out to vote, and developing habits of engaged and participatory citizenship.

The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor offers a robust series of resources around democratic engagement. We have highlighted some below.

Campus Efforts

On campus, Coalition members have been involved in a number of initiatives to bring people together across ideological difference:

- Bring it to the Table involved two-top tables on the University of Michigan "Diag" with scripted conversation starters, and encouraged students to sit down with someone they didn't know to talk. The program culminated with a documentary film about this national effort.
- WeListen is an organization that aims to bridge the political divide - at the University of Michigan, and other campuses - through a student created non-profit. WeListen hosts events in which attendees listen to a neutral or two-sided presentation about a political topic and then break out into small, politically diverse groups where they can discuss (but not debate) the topic. There is also a staff- and faculty-focused WeListen initiative, originally coordinated by staff from the Ginsberg Center, the Program on Intergroup Relations (IGR), and the Office of Student Conflict Resolution (OSCR).
- Phillipa Hughes, a social practice artist in residence at UMMA, has created multiple opportunities for people with different perspectives to engage with and learn from each other in advance of the 2022 Midterm Elections and will continue these efforts into 2024.
- Democracy & Debate partners with the Gerald R. Ford School on Conversations Across Difference, which brings politicians from diverse political perspectives into conversation, such as former Representatives Andy Levin (D-MI) and Peter Meijer (R-MI).
- As co-leads of the Big Ten Collaboration: Democracy in the 21st Century, each semester, Democracy & Debate facilitates a Big Ten Collaboration Virtual Policy

Simulation for students of all disciplines across the country, who role play senators moving a bill, such as the Vote at Home Act, out of committee.

Individual Coalition Member Efforts

The Creative Campus Voting Project (CCVP)'s voter engagement exhibitions feature creative, educational resources for student voters and aim to clarify some of the most common points of confusion that voter engagement groups on campus have identified.

Democracy & Debate continues to focus on ways to support programming to hear from prominent experts and inform campus of the context and research related to elections. The programming ranges from individual speaker events to the "Democracy in Crisis" series, a speaker series that brings noted journalists to campus developed and executed in close collaboration with the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and Wallace House Center for Journalism. In anticipation of 2024, it is working with partners across campus, including the Arts Initiative, Center for Academic Innovation, Central Student Government, Michigan Publishing, and the Penny Stamps Speaker Series to create collections and events tied to voting. Democracy & Debate also maintains the Democracy & Debate website that serves as a repository for the democracy activities across campus.

The Ginsberg Center utilizes the Pathways to Civic Engagement and Community Change framework, a framework adapted from Pathways of Public Service, in partnership with the Haas Center for Public Service, Stanford University. Ginsberg integrates Pathways into its academic partnerships and core co-curricular work to help students recognize and select ways to be civically active beyond just a direct service model.

Currently, civic learning and democratic engagement are not overall campus learning outcomes, yet many individual colleges, departments, and programs utilize such learning outcomes. Ginsberg shares the Pathways framework with these campus partners engaged in civic learning.

Turn Up Turnout (TUT) leads student efforts on voter registration and voter participation across all three U-M campuses. TUT's outreach committee partners directly with Central Student Government, the Rackham Graduate School student government, and point persons from all U-M schools and colleges to share UMICH Votes messaging and engagement opportunities with students across campus.

TUT also hosts many nonpartisan workshops on a variety of issues throughout the school year. Their Dinners for Democracy program, which began in 2021, is a student-led series of workshops held on all three UM campuses both in-person and via Zoom. The dinners, developed and delivered by students (with faculty oversight), aim to increase factual knowledge about issues that students care about, make connections between these issues and down-ballot elections clearer for students, and provide basic information about the mechanics of the voting process to attendees. Each dinner offers an opportunity for small group discussions. This

approach is designed around social science research that demonstrates the effectiveness of peer-to-peer influence in promoting student civic participation.

TUT sponsors a tri-campus, all-day initiative on National Voter Registration Day every year. Students on the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses host voter registration events. In 2023 event, TUT students interacted with over 2,000 students and registered about 170 students among all campuses. TUT also participates in National Voter Education Week, National Vote Early Day, and National Election Hero Day.

Students and staff from the Coalition attended the 6th annual statewide Michigan Student Voting Summit in October, sponsored by Campus Vote Project and the Michigan Department of State, and hosted at Oakland University. TUT students, along with coalition members, had a significant presence, and the Ginsberg Center sponsored transportation for students to attend. U-M organized and hosted the first statewide summit, in 2018.

In addition to partnering on the Satellite Clerk's Office, the University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA) is also developing programming to encourage civic participation.

Curricular Opportunities

Schools and colleges across the university offer courses focused on civic engagement and outcomes. For example, the Stamps School of Art and Design currently offers a course titled "ArtDes 317: Creative Campaign for Voting" focuses on the role of design and the possibilities it offers in furthering civic learning and democratic engagement. The College of Literature, Science, and the Arts' Departments of History and Political Science and the Ford School of Public Policy offer coursework on Election Law and Democratic Theory. The offerings expand to other departments, and often represent interesting collaborations, such as a course between Public Policy and Film Studies that culminates in videos to inform students about voting and encourage registration and turnout.

As we move into 2024, the University is exploring a coordinated, institution-wide holistic approach to integration of civic learning and democratic in the curriculum and experience of students.

Faculty & Staff Resources

The UMICH Votes Coalition has collaborated with campus partners to develop and distribute a suite of resources for faculty and staff:

The Ginsberg Center partners with U-M's central faculty training and support center, Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT), and the National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID, housed at U-M) on a community of practice for faculty & staff to Enhance Pedagogy, Facilitate Dialogue, and Promote Civic Engagement.

The Ginsberg Center and CRLT, with contributions from other campus partners, have designed and refined resources for faculty and staff to utilize to help educate students around democratic processes and encourage their participation. These include: voter education slides for use in class to promote student voter registration and turnout; civic learning activities for classroom use; applications of the Pathways to Civic Engagement for faculty and staff; and support and resources for dialogue across differences and leading difficult discussions. Materials also address ways that specific disciplines and courses can connect to democratic practices and to politics and policy; election slide decks that provided historical and factual information to contextualize election processes; and an election prep series of workshops that allowed participants to try out these different resources.

The resources also serve to clarify for faculty and staff what is not allowed (being partisan or advocating for a particular candidate) and what is allowed (being political or discussing political implications for higher education, disciplines, or a host of issues).

Data

The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor campus serves over 50,000 students: enrollment numbers for Fall 2023 show 33,730 undergraduate students and 18,335 graduate and professional students. There are also over 30,000 faculty, staff, and supplemental staff plus medical interns, residents, and fellows, that help make-up the University of Michigan community. Below you will find data that help to provide campus context for our non-partisan efforts.

Undergraduate Students

Michigan residents account for 52% of all undergraduate students, according to the Office of Budget and Planning's *Student Body Snapshot, Fall 2022* (most recent available). 9% of the student body is international - hailing from 65 different countries. 52% are male and 48% are female (how gender is categorized for this is not declared for the 2022 data set). 17% are first-generation college students. 32% reported having a disability or condition that significantly affected their student experience. 53% work while in school, with 23% working more than 10 hours per week. 79% participate in student clubs & organizations. Just over 1 in 4 students live in University of Michigan housing. 96% of students are enrolled full-time. Upon graduation, 2022 seniors reported that 50% had a civic engagement experience.

This data includes non-US-citizen and international students, populations included in our work. We strive to educate all on the process of elections in the United States. We also provide focused programming for international students with events such as Dinners for Democracy and workshops on American Democracy, as we recognize the engagement of democratic principles can be an important part of their campus experience.

First-Year Undergraduate Students

7,466 first-year students entered University of Michigan in Fall 2023, and the constitution of the entering class exemplifies the diversity of the campus population that our efforts seek to engage

(data in the section from *Division of Student Life Fall 2023 First-year Foundations Study*). 85% report a single race or ethnicity, with 15% reporting more than one. 5% of incoming students report an identity outside the gender binary and 23% report an LGBTQ identity. 16% identify as first-generation college students; 26% live in a ZIP code with a median income that is below the national median. 57% of survey respondents intend to work 6-10 hours per week, with 33% intending to work 11+ hours per week. 5% report a single disability, with 4% reporting multiple disabilities. 71% of the cohort are members of two or more traditionally minoritized populations.

Specific to civic engagement and civic identity, 90% of respondents of the *Foundations* survey reported that they intend to vote in the 2024 election cycle. Of the survey respondents, when asked to describe their political views 29% identified as consistently liberal, 30% selected lean liberal, 32% identified that they were conservative on some issues/liberal on others, while a combined 9% selected lean or consistently conservative. Of survey respondents, 56% reported being comfortable with discussing the meaning of free speech and the exchange of ideas.

Graduate and Professional Students

There are 15,606 graduate students and 2,729 professional students enrolled for 2023. Approximately 40% of all graduate students are international - hailing from 122 countries. 51% are male and 49% are female (how gender is categorized for this is not declared for the 2022 data set). 19.15% of domestic graduate students are defined as “underrepresented minorities”.

NSLVE Data

All three University of Michigan campuses participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), compiled by the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life, at Tufts University. The Ann Arbor campus uses this NSLVE data to set goals for student voting rates in major elections. With students from all fifty states, our team supports voter registration according to individual students’ preferences based on where they want their voice and vote to be counted. Our volunteers are trained to help students with the registration process, regardless of whether the student chooses to vote locally or at their permanent address.

Though the 2022 data still has not been released, the UMICH Votes Coalition continues to use the 2020 NSLVE data to inform our efforts. In 2020, 88.5% of voting-eligible UM students registered and 78.1% voted, for a yield rate (percent of registered students that voted) of 88.2. While this was a modest 4.1% increase in the registration rate from 2016 to 2020, it was a significant increase of 17.7% in the voting rate. Our 2024 goals include maintaining or improving on the registration rate, while increasing the yield rate: getting more registered students to exercise their vote. We believe that, with a greater in-person student presence on campus than in 2020 (which was heavily COVID-impacted), a suite of recent new state legislation to make it easier to register and vote in Michigan, and a more coordinated campus effort through the UMICH Votes Coalition, these are realistic goals.

These reports, including the University of Michigan NSLVE reports, are available through the University of Michigan Office of Budget and Planning (obp.umich.edu).

Summary of 2022 Turnout Data

While a more precise account of student voting in the 2022 election will come with the release of University's 2022 NSLVE Report, UMICH Votes analysis of precinct-level data suggests some patterns to consider. In 2022, 11 precincts in Ann Arbor contained university-affiliated housing. The average turnout rate in those precincts was 32% in 2018 and 27% in 2022, suggesting a decrease in voter turnout rate. This apparent decrease, however, calls for qualification. The decrease in the turnout rate is largely due to the fact that there were approximately the same number of ballots cast in those precincts in 2018 and 2022, but an increase in the number of registered voters. This increase in registered voters is likely traceable to the implementation of new election laws between 2018 and 2022 (notably online registration and Election Day registration), making it much easier for students to get registered to vote in 2022 than it was in 2018.

It is also important to note that despite the decrease in turnout percentage, the precinct-level data suggests that actual voter turnout was more similar to the record-high levels seen in 2018, than the lower turnout typically seen in midterm elections, such as the 2014 election. A decrease in the turnout rate percentage was evident city-wide and was not limited to precincts that contain student housing. Importantly, these statistics include only students who chose to vote locally—those who chose to vote by mail in another state, or elsewhere in Michigan, are not included in an evaluation of the precinct-level data.

Down-ballot participation was strong in 2022. City-wide, in both student and non-student precincts, 99 percent of voters participated in Michigan's Proposal 3 (Reproductive Health) vote. This is a dramatically high rate of participation for a down-ballot race. More than 90 percent of voters in all precincts participated in all three ballot proposal races and in the University of Michigan Regents election. This indicates an electorate that was not only motivated to turn out to vote at the top of the ballot, but also in down-ballot races where participation is typically lower.

Goals

Broad Coalition goals for 2023-24 include:

- adapting campus practice to leverage new voting laws in Michigan, such as nine-day early voting
- mobilizing campus for both the 2024 primaries (now February 27, 2024 for Michigan) and the November general election, as well as relevant primaries and special elections
- improving the UM-AA student registration rate to 95%, while increasing the turnout rate to 85% for the November 2024 general election
- institutionalizing the UMICH Votes work through sustained funding and central administrative support

Strategies

Student voter registration, education, and turnout will be the UMICH Votes coalitions' three primary areas of focus and work leading up to Election Day 2024.

1. UMICH Votes Website

In the summer 2022, the UMICH Votes website offering accurate, nonpartisan election information (govote.umich.edu) was redesigned with financial support from Democracy & Debate to make it more user-friendly for U-M students and the broader U-M community. Hosted and maintained by Ginsberg, this website features tri-campus (Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint) voting resources as well as information about the satellite offices on the Ann Arbor campus. Between August 22 and November 9, 2022, the UMICH Votes website received approximately twelve thousand visits from ten thousand unique visitors, accumulating twenty thousand page views.

The website is now undergoing a robust user-testing process to further reimagine this resource for 2024. Currently, this resource provides simple pathways for students to register to vote: in Ann Arbor; elsewhere in Michigan; or in the home state of their permanent residence. This site also provides information on the Ann Arbor satellite city clerk's offices, and resources for civic learning.

2. Campus-wide Tabling

Turn Up Turnout and the Ginsberg Center support tabling across campus to meet students where they are and help them register to vote. These tabling events provide students an in-person opportunity to register to vote at a location that works best for the student, along with educational materials on civic learning events coming up. Staffed by

trained TUT students and Coalition members, these tabling stations assist with online registration for those who are eligible and provide paper forms for those who wish to or must register by paper. For those that choose a paper form, tabling members assist with registration by ensuring all information necessary is provided, answering any question a student might still have, and providing stamped envelopes, with clerk addresses, as needed. These on-going events occur in schools and colleges across campus, in student support spaces, and in high-traffic public areas.

The tabling schedule for 2024 includes regular tabling at libraries, all the unions of all three U-M campuses, and dining halls. Our partnership with each of the schools or colleges enables us to be present at each school's orientation events, as well as other events hosted throughout the year. TUT has developed a defined scheduling process, and tablers have the option to be paid for this work through the Ginsberg Center.

3. voterregquestions@umich.edu

Turn Up Turnout provides a 24-hour voter question hotline via email. The hotline is staffed with student leaders trained in election law and is used by U-M community members to get fast, accurate answers to their questions about registering to vote, requesting an absentee ballot, voting early, and other questions.

4. National Voter Registration Day Events

For 2024, UMICH Votes will use National Voter Registration Day to promote voter registration, and to highlight campus resources and early voting opportunities. TUT will plan events for all three of the U-M Campuses, and other members of the Coalition will develop parallel programming and a coordinated social media campaign with campus partners.

5. Satellite City Clerk's Offices on the Ann Arbor Campus

Following the success of the 2020 satellite City Clerk's office at UMMA, UMICH Votes expanded to two satellite offices for the 2022 midterms: one on Central Campus at UMMA, and one on North Campus at the Duderstadt Center (a north campus Union space). 3114 people registered at UMMA and 791 registered at the Duderstadt. 3727 dropped their ballots at UMMA and 881 at the Duderstadt. All told, over 8500 people were served directly at these sites, and hundreds more were able to learn about the voting process and get information on voter registration and voting processes in locales beyond Ann Arbor and across the country. We are again planning for two satellite clerk offices for both the 2024 spring primaries and the fall general election.

Designed by the Creative Campus Voting Project team, led by Stamps School of Art and Design professors Stephanie Rowden and Hannah Smotrich, these offices are open for several weeks before election day and staffed by trained UMICH Votes student fellows,

TUT students, and staff from the Ann Arbor City Clerk office. Individuals from campus and the local community can register to vote, request an absentee ballot, and complete and submit an absentee ballot to vote in Ann Arbor, at either satellite office.

This year, we will also feature an “Out of State Voter Lounge” which will include specific resources and support for students hoping to register and vote out of state.

6. Emphasizing Early Voting Opportunities

With legislation passed in 2022, Michigan will now have early voting locations open at least 9 days before any election. This will allow voters to run their ballots through a tabulator as if it were election day, rather than vote only absentee ballots. UMICH Votes anticipates these changes to affect both the spring 2024 and fall general election. The Coalition is working closely with the Ann Arbor City Clerk to implement these new changes into the proposed Satellite Clerk’s Office locations. There are still many moving parts outside of the coalition and the Clerk’s control that will determine how this new legislation will impact our efforts. Ultimately, the Coalition views these new changes as beneficial and will work to ensure all changes positively benefit students and local voters.

7. Communications Strategy

The UMICH Votes Coalition is developing a holistic, unified communications strategy with three goals: increase voter engagement – motivate and facilitate voter registration and turnout among the UMICH community; promote civic responsibility - encourage informed civic participation; and educate student voters - collaborate with campus partners to education students on mechanics of the voting process and voting issues. Messaging will seek to address: accessibility – establish clarity and ease regarding voter registration, ballot information, and voting practices; empowerment – illustrate the impact of each vote in shaping the future; and community engagement – foster a sense of community responsibility and action.

The tactics will employ physical and digital platforms. Print ads/information will be used to reach students in multiple areas of campus, including the Diag on Central Campus and the Grove on North Campus (central gathering spaces), dining and residence halls, campus buses, and campus computing sites.

We will partner with the central UMSocial and communications teams for each school and college on the development of targeted posts, student takeovers, and reposting. Sponsored social media posts will allow the Coalition to engage with students via the @umichvotes Instagram, using a mix of in-feed posts, stories, and reels to attract followers while spreading our nonpartisan message. The new Instagram algorithm prioritizes reels and stories (which disappear after twenty-four hours), and our team will focus on these methods moving forward for 2024, along with several (static) in-feed posts per week.

Digital content will include the Ten Tuesdays campaign used to count down to Election Day, with a post each Tuesday about what students can do to prepare to vote and engage their peers.

Social media posts focused on ballot measures and other key political issues will provide insights on topics that drive voters to the ballot box. One series of graphics, for example, focuses on “How your vote can impact...” a variety of policy issues, to inform students about how specific elected offices that could be on their ballot, impact certain issues - and their everyday lives. Topics will include climate change, immigration policy, housing policy, the criminal justice system, and education policy.

8. Standardized Messaging - System of Materials

The UMICH Votes Coalition is designing and refining a cohesive system of materials for use through all UMICH Votes channels (events, digital, consultations, etc.) and across stakeholder groups. With design led by CCVP and content verified by TUT research, the system of materials will employ design strategies to structure clear and precise presentation of complex information in a form accessible to students and the broader community.

9. Programming Collaboration with the University of Michigan Arts Initiative

Recognizing the need for an engagement strategy that leverages a multi-modal and multifaceted approach to student voter engagement, UMICH Votes is partnering with the University of Michigan’s Arts Initiative to create a suite of programming for all three campuses to promote voting engagement and support arts-inspired engagement projects.

10. Arts-Based Voter Education Strategy- the Ballot Wayfinder

In 2022, the Creative Campus Voting Project piloted the Ballot Wayfinder, a 40’ interactive installation on our North Campus. This creative intervention invites students to ‘walk through’ a ballot and learn how to connect their vote to the issues they care about. In 2024 CCVP will build on the potential of this resource 1) to make the project more visible to students across campus and 2) to allow deeper exploration of the content via a digital companion. A set of nimble, delightful sculptures situated in multiple locations will act as an entry point to a digital interface that will guide students through the ballot so they can prioritize their limited time to research candidates and proposals. Together, the physical and digital components of the Wayfinder help students connect the offices on the ballot to the issues that matter most to them, increase their confidence — and even prompt some civic joy!

11. Voter Education Example - Dinners for Democracy

Turn Up Turnout (TUT) hosted more than 65 nonpartisan Dinners for Democracy on a variety of issues of importance to students leading up to the 2022 election. The early evaluation of the program, which is designed around social science research that demonstrates the effectiveness of peer-to-peer influence in promoting student civic participation, indicates student learning about issues and voting, including why voting at the state and local levels is important. TUT will continue to host Dinners for Democracy through the 2024 November election, focusing on policy issues of interest to students including renewables, abortion, gun safety, racial justice, voting access, and the judicial system.

12. Campus Collaborations Example - Athletic Department

Partners of the UMICH Votes coalition are collaborating with Athletics in the promotion of student voting. These collaborations include: leveraging the Michigan Stadium video scoreboards and external video billboard, a potential halftime show with the Marching Band, coaches' visits to the Satellite Clerks Offices, collaborating with athletes on civic engagement, and Dinners for Democracy designed for athletes.

13. Campus Collaborations Example - Marching Band

One of the Andrew Goodman Foundation Ambassadors is a member of the Marching Band. This has allowed TUT to organize tabling after Michigan Marching Band rehearsal to connect with marching students to get them registered to vote. The AGF Ambassador is also working with the administrative staff to build voter registration into the annual training camp that happens before the season.

UMICH Votes and the Arts Initiative are collaborating on efforts to advocate for a half-time show at a Fall 2024 football game that promotes student voting, as was presented in 2020.

14. Campus Collaborations Example - Trotter Multicultural Center

TUT has established a strong connection with the Trotter Multicultural Center through collaboration on Trotter's Distinguished Leadership Series, such as a speaker event on gerrymandering. Through this collaboration, TUT has provided regular tabling within the Center.

Moving into the primary, the Coalition will leverage this connection to create Walk to the Polls events with Trotter Affiliated organizations.

15. State and National Partnerships

Members of the UMICH Votes Coalition work closely with the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, and Students Learn Students Vote. The Andrew Goodman Foundation provides funding and support for two student Ambassadors who work as part of the coalition. The Campus Vote Project is another close partner, and they provide support for two U-M student fellows who serve on the Secretary of State's Collegiate Student Advisory Task Force. UMICH Votes is in frequent communication with the Secretary of State's office, and is exploring collaborative programming opportunities.

U-M Tri-campus collaboration continues to be an important facet of our work, with shared branding and resources, including TUT-supported student interns on all three campuses, with funding support from Ask Every Student (Flint and Dearborn), and from the Mellon Foundation (Ann Arbor). Though the focus has turned to in-person registration and the UMICH Votes website, each UM campus continues to offer a customized TurboVote portal as an online alternative for students, staff and faculty.

16. Institutionalizing UMICH Votes through central support and on-going funding.

In 2022, the partners of the UMICH Votes Coalition worked together closely to support all facets of student voter engagement – registration, voting, and issue education. Currently the coalition operates with no dedicated central budget – each of the coalition members contributes funding where they can, and staffing is all in-kind.

The UMICH Votes Coalition is currently seeking institutional support to ensure the long-term coordination of our efforts. We want to make sure our nonpartisan leadership is strong and sustainable as we assist University community members in developing a culture of voting and civic engagement. To that end, the coalition has put forward a request for an administrative home and budget support from the central administration.

Championed by the dean of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and the dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, the proposal sets out an administrative accountability structure, as well as a two year budget (through FY25). At the time of this action plan's submission, the proposal is being considered by the central administration. We hope to have a resolution early in the new year.

Timeline

May-August 2023

- UMICH Votes Coalition Planning
- Partnered with Office of New Student Programs to provide voter information via virtual orientation modules
- Table at various welcome and orientation events on all 3 campuses
- Connect with faculty around including student voting language in syllabi

September 2023

- UMICH Votes Coalition Planning
- Host campus-wide Voter Registration Week to coincide with National Voter Registration Day
- Celebrated National Voter Registration Day by tabling all day on all campuses
- Leverage communications strategy, including @umichvotes, @ginsbergcenter, and @umturnout social media, and utilize social media account takeovers of main U-M and school/college accounts to expand messaging around student voter registration
- Promote voter registration via digital signage and social media
- Submission of proposed centralized structure and budget for UMICH Votes

October-November 2023

- UMICH Votes Coalition Planning
- Development of system of materials
- Promote Vote Early Day
- Promote National Voter Education Week
- Continue communications strategy, including physical advertising, social media, and digital signage push
- Work across the three campuses to develop messaging for the February primary and 2024 general election
- Support Students Voting Absentee to States with an Election
- Democracy & Debate collaborative programming (Big Ten Policy Simulation and Democracy in Crisis series)
- 14 Dinners for Democracy and other voter registration and education workshops

December 2023-January 2024

- UMICH Votes Coalition planning
- Update the UMICH Votes website with information for the primary, initiate website redesign for June 2024 launch in anticipation of the 2024 General Election
- Prepare and disseminate information about the presidential primaries and special elections
- Outreach to schools and groups to help them develop a plan for encouraging primary voting among their students and members

February-April 2024

- Mobilize for the Primary
 - Set up and assist in the running of satellite Clerk's offices/Early Voting sites
 - Provide tabling consistently in high-traffic areas on campus (Dining Halls, Libraries, Student Unions, etc.)
- Leverage cohesive Communications strategy to encourage primary voting participation
- Follow the Michigan Primary with information on upcoming out-of-state primaries and other special elections

May-August 2024

- Prepare connections and outreach for collaborative events, messaging, and tabling for the start of the school year
- Provide voter registration and other voter information at all New Student orientations, as well as individual school/program orientations
- Launch redesigned UMICH Votes website
- Collaborate with U-M Division of Public Safety and Security and other campus stakeholders to create Campus Safety Plan for early voting sites and election day polling locations

September 2024

- National Voter Registration Day programming
- Celebrate the opening of the voting hub at the UMMA
- Encourage out-of-state voters to request absentee ballots and begin the voting process through the Out of State Voter Lounge, regular tabling, and messaging
- Launch series of collaborative events with Arts Initiative
- Provide tabling in locations around campus daily

October 2024

- Promote Vote Early Day
- Promote National Voter Education Week
- Transition to promoting early voting
- Coordinate and support walks to the polls to connect student groups to early voting opportunities

November 2024

- Encourage early voting through welcoming programming
- Work with the Clerk to manage Election Day voters

Reporting

This action plan will be shared with the President's and Provost's offices, and with the VPs for Student Life, Government Relations, and Communications. Further, the coalition will make this action plan public via the Ginsberg Center and UMICH Votes webpages and will incorporate benchmarking into the quarterly reports which are shared internally with University of Michigan's Executive Officers.

Year-over-year progress toward registration and voter turnout goals can be found in the University's NSLVE reports, linked for public viewing on the Office of Budget and Planning surveys and research page (obp.umich.edu).

Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess efforts and more effectively tell the story of the work happening to support voter engagement on this campus. Civic engagement is integral to institutions dedicated to creating, communicating, preserving and applying knowledge, art, and academic values, and in developing leaders and citizens who will challenge the present and enrich the future.

The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement tracks student voter registration and turnout rates over time, beginning with the 2012 & 2016 elections. NSLVE data will be used to evaluate the University's growth in student voter registration and turnout in 2022 and eventually 2024. Another way is to measure student turnout at various civic engagement events that are held; the value of these numbers are limited, however, because attendance at events does not necessarily translate to active engagement or learning. Other data, including precinct-level turnout reports, participation counts, and surveys of University of Michigan students will continue to be used to evaluate our efforts. Student use of both satellite City Clerk's offices will be tracked and compiled to determine the success rate of the offices. This data was collected for these offices in November 2022, and has been used for planning in 2024.

The audience for program evaluation includes university leadership, external stakeholders, and members of the Coalition. In addition, the audience includes students, faculty and staff, as well as off-campus partners, media, and academic communities.

We expect our 2022 NSLVE data before the end of the 2023 calendar year. Our 2024 NSLVE data, anticipated in Fall, 2025, will help inform efforts for the 2026 midterm election. Evaluations for 2024 efforts beyond the NSLVE will be ongoing and will ultimately be compiled after the November 2024 election when we assess our efforts and compile available data.