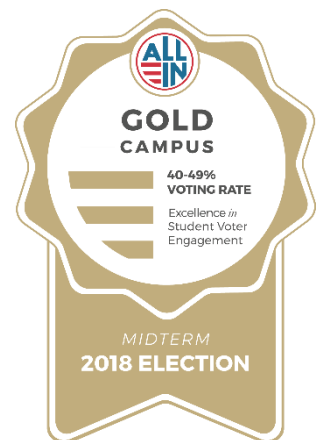
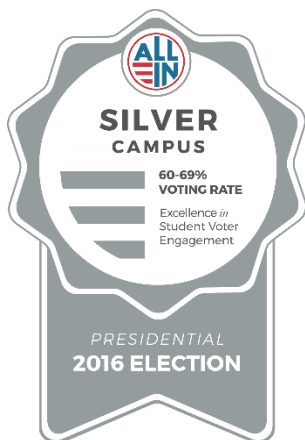


UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN HUSKER VOTE COALITION



VOTER EDUCATION, REGISTRATION, & PARTICIPATION ACTION PLAN

December 2019



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Unless otherwise noted, this Action Plan references the 2016 presidential election rather than the 2018 midterm election because of its relevance to the upcoming election cycle.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) is committed to fostering student civic learning and democratic engagement. Our purpose in developing and implementing this action plan is to increase our students' voting knowledge, registration, and participation in the 2020 presidential election and beyond.

The University's first ALL-IN Action Plan was created in 2012 by senior staff in the Center for Civic Engagement, student officers in the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (ASUN), and key faculty members. The 2020 ALL-IN Action Plan will utilize strategies proven to be effective in previous election cycles while also incorporating new approaches to promote student civility and democratic engagement during this unique period in American history.

UNL is in the midst of significant growth and change, and this action plan reflects that context, energy, and opportunity. In Spring 2020 we will build a diverse coalition of committed students, faculty, staff, and community stakeholders. The Coalition will further refine the plan to include recommendations from Civic Nation and perspectives of involved students, faculty, and staff.

Throughout summer and fall 2020 the Coalition will strategically employ electronic, in-person, and community resources to achieve identified short-term goals and progress in long-term goals. Following the November 2020 elections, we will sponsor a campus wide Peace+Civility event in celebration of democratic engagement.

NSLVE data from 2016 and 2018 has been used to identify three short-term goals which are:

- 1) to increase our 2020 Voting Rate to 70 percent;
- 2) to achieve a 5 percent increase in participation of students in disciplines that had voting rates lower than 50.0% in the 2016 election cycle; and
- 3) to achieve a 10 percent increase in participation of students who identify as racially/ethnically diverse over the 2018 rates.

Recent review of our institutional and community climate yielded three long-term goals:

- 1) to increase student, faculty, and staff collaboration in fostering civic and democratic engagement on our campus;
- 2) to strengthen partnerships between the Husker Voter Coalition and nonpartisan community organizations that promote democratic engagement; and
- 3) to actively role model, educate, and encourage peace and civility in our campus community.

The success of this action plan will be evaluated by members of the Huskers Vote Coalition, UNL students, faculty, and staff. Quantitative and qualitative evaluative measures will be utilized, including careful review of the NSLVE data following the November 2020 elections.

LEADERSHIP

The Husker Vote Coalition exists to lead ongoing efforts for civic engagement at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Within this, we will establish and work with stakeholders to reach the University's goals for the Big 10 Voting Challenge established by the 14 Big 10 Universities.

The Husker Vote Coalition leadership team is currently comprised of:

Tyre McDowell, Jr. (T.J.)

Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs for Student Life and Leadership;

Lesley Esters

Interim Director of the UNL Center for Civic Engagement; and

Jared Long (*student leadership may change following the spring 2020 ASUN election*)

Internal Vice President of the Association of Students of University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

We are committed to creating a coalition that is representative of all aspects of our campus community and which includes individuals from the five suggested categories: students, faculty, student affairs, community/national organizations, and local election officers. Coalition membership recruitment will be completed by January 31, 2020, although student government elections held in March 2020 will impact Coalition leadership.

The Coalition will coordinate efforts in voter education, registration, and participation for the 2020 elections, and will actively promote the UNL Peace+Civility Project. The Coalition will meet monthly during spring 2020 to further develop and begin implementation of this action plan.

In fall 2020, central Coalition members will meet biweekly until Election Day. The full Coalition will communicate electronically on a biweekly basis and will meet monthly during the fall semester. The entire Coalition will hold a debriefing meeting after Election Day to celebrate successes and reflect on opportunities that may be useful for consideration in subsequent action plans.

COMMITMENT

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is committed to democratic engagement and civic learning at the highest level, as reflected in the institution's core value of **"engagement with academic, business, and civic communities throughout Nebraska and the world"**.

Our institutional statement of Beliefs on Diversity and Inclusion further defines our institutional and individual commitment to creating a learning, living, and working environment of respect, dignity, and acceptance. At the University of Nebraska. **"(we) believe in the freedom of speech, and encourage the civil and respectful expression of ideas and opinions"**.

The Office of Student Affairs has identified six values that serve as guiding principles in daily operations and interactions, the first of which is **Collaboration, described as "(initiating) campus partnerships that advance student learning, maximize resources and facilitate civic engagement."** Collaboration is a guiding principle for all departments within Student Affairs, and civic engagement is a foundational component of several programs, including the Center for Civic Engagement, University Housing Residence Life, and the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

The Center for Civic Engagement encourages students to connect curricular and co-curricular learning with opportunities to address critical human need through service, civic-related research, and social change leadership. Center staff invest in students' civic learning and democratic engagement through a number of initiatives including service learning courses, service-study alternative spring break opportunities, free tax preparation assistance, community service activities, the UNL Peace+Civility project, Big Red Integrity ambassadors, and the civic engagement certification program.

Civic responsibility is also a foundational component of the Nebraska Residential Experience model implemented in the residence halls by the University Housing Residence Life staff. Throughout the year, hall programming and residents' experiences focus on five areas of Husker Student POWER (Purpose, Ownership, Well-being, Engagement, and Relationships). In the area of Engagement, students are encouraged to participate in co-curricular opportunities that introduce them to the value of civic engagement, global study, leadership opportunities, working in the Nebraska community, and utilizing resources.

The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life (OFSL) also recognize civic engagement as essential to students' holistic development, and has identified Service as one of the four pillars upon which Greek community is built. Each year the UNL Greek community contributes thousands of dollars through philanthropic efforts and thousands of hours of service to local and national charities/non-profit organizations. Chapters sponsor service projects, fundraisers, and initiatives that impact the campus and Lincoln community, fostering unity and a sense of community. In addition, the OFSL actively promotes Citizenship (engaging in service and community beyond one's self) through its Building Blocks of Integrity initiative.

LANDSCAPE

NSLVE DATA

Data obtained from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) indicates that University of Nebraska students have become more democratically engaged over the past two presidential elections. In 2012, the UNL voter registration rate was 83.5%, which increased to 87.0% in 2016. Voting rates of registered students rose from 63.0% in 2012 to 69.0% in 2016, and the overall voting rate increased 7.4 points (52.6% in 2012 to 60.0% in 2016).

NSLVE data shows that in the 2016 presidential election cycle, UNL students voted at a higher rate than the national average of all institutions (60.0% to 50.4% respectively). NSLVE data from the 2018 midterm elections also demonstrates that UNL students voted at a higher rate (44.2%) than the national average (39.1%).

Students ages 18-21 represent that largest demographic at University of Nebraska, and had a voting rate of 53.7% in the 2016 presidential election. Voting rates for five out of six age groups increased from the 2012 to 2016 elections, with students aged 40-49 showing a slight decrease of 2.6% (71.9% in 2012 to 69.3% in 2016).

NSLVE data from the 2018 midterm election reveals that UNL students who identify as ethnically diverse are less likely to vote than students who identify as white or multiethnic. Voting rates by student race/ethnicity in 2018 were:

Asian	18.3%
Black	26.2%
Hispanic	34.4%
American Indian/Alaska Native	38.6%
2 or More Races	39.4%
White	42.2%

Of those students who voted in 2016, the disciplines with voting rates below the national average for that election cycle were:

Physical Sciences	43.2%
Computer and Information Sciences	45.5%
Philosophy and Religious Studies	46.2%
Liberal Arts/Sciences/Humanities	47.1%
Health Professions	47.3%
Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Protective Services	47.9%
Engineering and Engineering Technologies	49.0%
Mathematics and Statistics	49.4%

RESOURCES AND BARRIERS

Two of the strongest resources are our highly competent and engaged student leaders and the committed Student Affairs staff members who are deeply invested in promoting students' civic and democratic engagement and will commit the human and financial resources needed to support the efforts of the Husker Vote Coalition.

One significant challenge was the recent retirement of the Director of the Center for Civic Engagement which impacted leadership and momentum. A second challenge is the need to swiftly identify and contact potential faculty and community Coalition members in January 2020.

GOALS

Our short-term goals for the 2020 Election cycle include:

- To increase our 2016 Voting Rate by 10 points, from 60.0% to 70.0%.
- To achieve a 5 percent increase in participation of students in disciplines that had voting rates lower than 50.0% in the 2016 election cycle; and
- To achieve a 10 percent increase in participation of students who identify as ethnically diverse over the 2018 rates (first year data was available).

Our long-term goals to promote student civic learning and democratic engagement over the next two election cycles are:

- To increase student, faculty, and staff collaboration in promoting civic and democratic engagement on our campus;
- To strengthen partnerships between the Husker Voter Coalition and nonpartisan community organizations that promote democratic engagement; and
- To actively educate and promote peace and civility in our campus community.

STRATEGY

UNL will employ a number of short-term and long-term strategies to promote voter education, registration, and participation, including:

Reverse Campaign Plan

The University of Nebraska uses previous NSLVE data to identify the least likely voters on the UNL campus by field of study and race/ethnicity, and will develop specific programming to reach these students.

2016 NSLV data identified eight disciplines with voting rates lower than the national average; the three student groups least likely to vote were those studying Physical Sciences, Computer and Information Sciences,

2018 NSLV data indicated that students who identified ethnically as Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, Black, or Hispanic were less likely to vote than those who identify as White.

In addition to our efforts to increase overall voter registration and turnout rates for the 2020 elections, we will work closely with student organizations, faculty, and staff to create and implement programming that may be uniquely relevant to the interests, needs, and perspectives of the student groups described above. The Husker Vote Coalition leadership will have one-on-one and/or small group discussions with individuals who represent and/or serve these student groups and will extend invitations to join the Coalition.

Husker Vote Ambassadors

The Husker Vote Coalition will recruit up to 24 first-year students, sophomores, and juniors interested in civic engagement, voting rights, and elections. Our intention is to establish a diverse group of students who are passionate about civic engagement. They will help by hosting events, sharing social media posts, gauging student responsiveness to messaging, and bringing awareness to various activities held throughout the year. This initiative will enhance student engagement in sorority and fraternity chapters, residence halls, recognized student organizations, and within the colleges.

Husker Get Out and Vote Website

The Husker Get Out and Vote website, affiliated with the Center for Civic Engagement, includes resources on the voter registration process, how to request absentee ballots, voting procedures, ballot education resources, voting etiquette information, and an FAQ.

Campus Wide Communication and Promotion

The Coalition will collaborate with Student Affairs, ASUN, and other interested entities to create a recognizable logo and tag line which can be used on promotional items such as t-shirts, laptop stickers, or stadium bags.

The Husker Vote Coalition will regularly post content about programming, events, and deadlines on digital signage across campus and through existing University social media sites (e.g., Student Affairs, First Gen Nebraska, ASUN, RHA, and colleges).

Students will receive monthly emails from peer leaders involved in the Husker Vote Coalition. Content will include voter registration deadlines, procedures and deadlines for absentee voting, and polling information on Election Day.

Faculty and staff will also receive monthly email from Husker Vote Coalition leaders. The focus of these messages will be to provide information about how to objectively support students' efforts to become educated and engaged citizens.

New Student Enrollment

During New Student Enrollment (NSE), incoming students will watch a video featuring two NSE student leaders emphasizing the importance of being an engaged student and inviting them to register and/or check their registration status online using RockTheVote. UNL's Peace+Civility Project will also be introduced to incoming students and their families during NSE.

Residence Hall Connections

Voter registration information booths will be hosted at residence halls across campus during the fall 2020 semester. Information will include registration deadlines, online registration portals, absentee ballot request processes, polling site locations, and campus events related to democratic engagement. Digital signage and "ready-to-post" bulletin boards will also be employed to provide information, resources, and reminders.

Voter Registration Competition

In fall 2020, Husker Vote Ambassadors will introduce the Husker Vote Coalition at one of the first Monday night Greek student meetings, and in early fall residence hall meetings. A competition during homecoming week will be held based upon what percentage of Greek and residence hall students who have registered to vote.

Spring 2020 Events

•Cooper Community Conversations

Jan. 16	"Rethinking Public Service"
Feb. 4	"Ethical Dilemmas Past and Future"
Feb. 18	"A Night of Listening: Dialoguing Across Differences"
Mar. 3	"Passion for the public good? Social Entrepreneurship in the 21 st Century"
Mar. 21	"Responsible Journalism in a Divided World"

Fall 2020 Events

•Dish It Up and other scheduled facilitated political discussions

The Husker Vote Coalition will collaborate with faculty and student affairs staff to sponsor, publicize, and encourage robust attendance at campus events with a political focus.

•Why I'm a Voter Wednesday

This is a social media campaign featuring testimonies from students at the University of Nebraska. This will stress the importance of voting and civic engagement.

•Constitution Day Event

The Husker Vote Coalition and Ambassadors will plan and hold a campus-wide event in recognition of Constitution Day.

•National Voter Registration Day Event

The Coalition and Ambassadors will plan and hold a voter registration event on this day.

•Candidate Debate Watch Parties

Husker Vote Ambassadors will host debate watch parties to offer students opportunities to learn about candidates and to practice civil discourse with others.

•Election Watch Parties

Husker Vote Ambassadors will host election watch parties, providing a positive communal space to experience and discuss the election process and results.

•Post-Election Peace+Civility Community Celebration Event

Our campus community was not exceptionally well-prepared to support students, faculty, and staff in navigating strong responses during and after the 2016 election cycle. In fall 2019, Student Affairs introduced the UNL Peace+Civility Project, designed to foster respect, inclusion, and understanding through civil discourse. Following the 2020 elections, a campus-wide event will be held to celebrate our community's capacity for peace, civility, and democratic engagement.

CALENDAR

January

- Democratic Party Presidential Debate—Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2020
- “Rethinking Public Service”----Thursday, Jan. 16, 4-6pm

February

- “Ethical Dilemmas Past and Future”—Tuesday, Feb. 4, 5-7 pm
- Democratic Party Presidential Debate—Friday, Feb. 7, 2020
- “A Night of Listening: Dialoguing Across Differences”—Tuesday, Feb. 18, 5-8:30 pm
- Democratic Party Presidential Debate—Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020
- Democratic Party Presidential Debate—Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2020

March

- “Passion for the public good?”—Tuesday, Mar. 3, 5-7pm
- “Responsible Journalism in a Divided World”—Tuesday, Mar. 21, 5-7 pm

April

- Deputy Registrar Training

May

- Finals Week Event
- NSE participation

June-July

- NSE participation

August

- Big Red Welcome -street fair
- We Are Nebraska Performances with Peace+Civility Messaging

September

- Husker Dialogues
- Constitution Day –Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020
- National Voter Registration Day—Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2020
- Business Insider Republican Presidential Challenger Debate—Thursday, Sept. 24, 2020
- Presidential Debate—Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2020

October

- Vice-Presidential Debate-Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020
- Presidential Debate—Thursday, Oct. 15, 2020
- Email Reminder about Nebraska Deadlines—Oct. 16th for online registration; Oct. 23rd for in-person registration
- Presidential Debate—Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020
- Politicon Republican Presidential Challenger Debate—Monday, Oct. 26, 2020
- Forbes Republican Presidential Challenger Debate—Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020
- Homecoming

November

- Election Day Shuttles (to be decided)—Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020
- Election Day Watch Parties (to be decided)—Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020
- Post-Election Day Peace+Civility Community Celebration Event (to be decided)

REPORTING

This Action Plan will be shared with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, senior Student Affairs leadership, and Student Affairs Directors team in January 2020. We will also work with UNL Communications staff on press releases and news articles to make our efforts known to both internal and external audiences.

It will also be used by the Husker Vote Coalition as a preliminary draft on which to build. After review, modification, and approval by the Coalition, the Action Plan will be posted on the Husker Get Out and Vote web site, along with links to NSLVE and NSSE data.

Current and previous action plans and data reports will be available on the All In web site, and during Spring 2020 the interim Director of the Center for Civic Engagement will consult with colleagues from the other B1G 10 institutions on their plans and will share the UNL Action Plan, data, and reports with these and any other interested peers.

The evaluative summary of the 2020 UNL Action Plan with recommendations for improvement will be available for future use through the Center for Civic Engagement.

EVALUATION

Following Election Day 2020, the Husker Vote Coalition will evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies using both quantitative and qualitative measures, including:

QUANTITATIVE MEASURES;

- Number of “Voter Registration” cards and “Voting Absentee” flyers distributed;
- Number of students who register to vote or modify their registration to Lincoln;
- Attendance at civic learning or democratic engagement events held spring 2020;’
- Attendance at civic learning or democratic engagement events held fall 2020;
- Number of absentee ballot request forms and absentee ballots mailed by UNL;
- Number of students using shuttles on election day;
- Number of students, faculty, and staff attending the post-election campus celebration;
- Number of students, faculty, staff, and community members involved in the Husker Vote Coalition;
- Number of students trained/serving as Husker Vote Ambassadors;
- Additional measures as identified.

QUALITATIVE MEASURES:

- Feedback from Husker Vote Coalition members to identify effective strategies and areas of opportunity;
- Feedback from Husker Vote Ambassadors to identify effective strategies and areas of opportunity;
- Feedback from students, faculty, and staff working with targeted student groups on effectiveness and opportunities for supporting these students’ democratic engagement;
- Feedback from colleagues at other institutions and Civic Nation staff; and
- Additional measures as identified.

Progress toward the 2020 voter turnout goals will be determined by the University’s 2020 NSLVE report, specifically:

- Percentage of registered student voters who vote;
- Percentage of students by field of study who vote; and
- Percentage of ethnically diverse students who vote.