

VOTER ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

UNC GREENSBORO - 2018



UNCG



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNC Greensboro is a 4-year public research university in Greensboro, North Carolina that serves approximately 20,000 students each year. Community and civic engagement are central to UNCG's mission and vision of preparing students "for meaningful lives and engaged citizenship" and serving as "a source of innovation and leadership meeting social, economic, and environmental challenges in the Piedmont Triad, North Carolina, and beyond" (UNCG Mission Statement, 2018).

An administrative unit within the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Leadership & Service-Learning serves as a catalyst for experiential curricular and co-curricular leadership development, civic engagement, and service-learning initiatives that empower students to effect positive change and serve as citizen leaders in a global community.

The Office of Leadership & Service-Learning developed this action plan to further its UNCG Votes initiative, which serves as an important feature of the office and university's civic learning and democratic engagement efforts, and to communicate this work to both internal and external partners and constituents. This action plan will address the context, goals, and strategies of UNCG's voter engagement plan for the 2018 midterm election.



LEADERSHIP

Core Team:

Kristina Gage - *Assistant Director, Office of Leadership and Service-Learning*
Vacant - *Assistant Director, Office of Leadership and Service-Learning*
Reese Smith - *Student, Democracy Fellow*
Brody Johnson - *Student, Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow*
Tyler Horn - *Student, Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow*

Collaborators:

Nikki Baker - *Director of Federal and External Affairs, Office of the Chancellor*
Cathy Hamilton - *Director, Office of Leadership and Service-Learning*
Samaya Roary - *Student Government President*
Carla Fullwood - *Assistant Director, Office of Intercultural Engagement*
Amanda Kozlow - *Coordinator, Campus Activities & Programs*
Juliann Losey - *Coordinator, Housing and Residence Life*

The UNCG Votes coalition consists of an active core team of staff and student fellows, affiliated with the Office of Leadership & Service-Learning, and a larger coalition that supports and advises as needed. The core team is led by Assistant Director for Community Engagement, Kristina Gage, and is responsible for the planning and implementation of non-partisan voter engagement activities. The core group met weekly to plan for midterm elections beginning in February 2018 and will meet weekly beginning mid-August when students return for the fall semester.

The core team brought the larger coalition together in April 2018 to discuss plans and collaborations and will meet again at the beginning of the fall semester in August to review commitments and ensure the group is on the same page before regular programming begins. These support members assist with activities by co-sponsoring events, promoting initiatives, and/or institutionalizing voter registration in their areas.

The Director of Federal and External Affairs, Nikki Baker, serves as the university liaison to the Guilford County Board of Elections Director. In this role she works to find locations for the on-campus polling place and early voting, if UNCG is able to host an early voting site, and assists in clarifying formatting for voter registrations with on-campus addresses and what counts as proof of residency for on-campus students.

Ms. Baker also ensures programming aligns with state and university policy regarding non-partisan political activity and is leading the development of new university policy for groups hosting political events or speakers on campus.

Unlisted as coalition members, a few national, state, and local organizations play an important role in supporting election engagement work at UNC Greensboro. Campus Vote Project, NASPA's CLDE Lead Initiative, North Carolina Campus Compact, the Campus Election Engagement Project, the SoCon Votes Competition, and the All In Democracy Challenge provide innumerable resources, ideas, opportunities to network with colleagues at other institutions, and grant and funding opportunities.

Thank you to our partners!



COMMITMENT AND LANDSCAPE

The University motto since 1893, "Service" continues to be a guiding principle put into practice through all aspects of university life. UNCG's commitment to civic learning and democratic engagement are primarily understood through the institution's sense of public purpose, and connectedness to place. The mission and vision statements, provided below, both implicitly and explicitly highlight this commitment. Additionally, the University's new strategic plan echoes this identity through its inclusion of regional transformation as one of three main areas, with vibrant communities and global connections as areas of focus within this transformation. This strategic plan and stated goals align the University's motto of service with a commitment to "develop a capacity for active citizenship, ethics, social responsibility, personal growth and skills for lifelong learning in a global society" (UNC Greensboro General Education Council, 2015).

Mission and Vision:

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro will redefine the public research university for the 21st century as an inclusive, collaborative, and responsive institution making a difference in the lives of students and the communities it serves.

UNCG is ...

- **A learner-centered, accessible, and inclusive community fostering intellectual inquiry to prepare students for meaningful lives and engaged citizenship;**
- **An institution offering classes on campus, off campus, and online for degree-seeking students and life-long learners;**
- **A research university where collaborative scholarship and creative activity enhance quality of life across the life-span;**
- **A source of innovation and leadership meeting social, economic, and environmental challenges in the Piedmont Triad, North Carolina, and beyond; and**
- **A global university integrating intercultural and international experiences and perspectives into learning, discovery, and service.**

In 2016 UNC Greensboro Chancellor, Frank Gilliam signed the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Action Statement and an institution-wide Civic Action Plan was developed that reflected goals which supported the new strategic plan. This civic action plan can be found in Campus Compact

National's library. UNCG's institutional commitment goes well beyond the words of its statements and plans. A variety of entities within UNCG speak to its long-standing commitment and cross-sectional approach to community engagement and civic pursuits. These offices, centers and institutes provide students, staff, and faculty many opportunities to develop skills, share research, and promote civic involvement.

- Office of Leadership & Service-Learning
- Institute for Community and Economic Engagement
- Center for Housing and Community Studies
- Center for Community-Engaged Design
- Center for New North Carolinians
- Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships
- Center for Women's Health & Wellness
- North Carolina Entrepreneurship Center

UNCG's co-curriculum similarly reveals a culture of civic learning and democratic engagement. Within the Student Affairs Division, two main offices offer regular civic engagement programming. The Office of Leadership and Service-Learning offers community service, civic engagement, and leadership development programming to students. The Office of Intercultural Engagement offers intercultural engagement and education, dialogue, and community building.

There are few current assessments or points of data that directly speak to the political climate and democratic engagement on campus.

- **National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement** – This study, coming out of Tuft's Institute for Democracy and Higher Education, offers colleges and universities an opportunity to learn their student registration and voting rates. UNCG has data for mid-term and presidential election years beginning in 2014 with rates resting near average or above similar 4-year institutions.
- **Co-curricular Transcript** – UNCG uses Campus Labs to power an online tool called Spartan Connect that allows students to build a comprehensive record of their participation in activities and accomplishments. With a civic category that is attached to applicable programs, this program will allow for a deeper and more thorough picture of what civic programming is happening campus-wide, and who is participating.
- **Collaboratory** – This tool, primarily designed to track an institution's community engagement and public service data, can track and report activities at UNCG in which faculty or staff selected "civic engagement" as a student learning goal.

GOALS

Long Term:

1. Continue to find new ways to incorporate voter registration into first year processes including, but not limited to, move-in, Rawkin' Welcome Week, first-year classes, and electronic on-boarding in order to raise the first-year registration rate by five percentage points by 2022.
2. On-board Faculty Fellow by Fall 2019 to support the incorporation of civic and democratic learning practices and outcomes into the classroom.

Short Term:

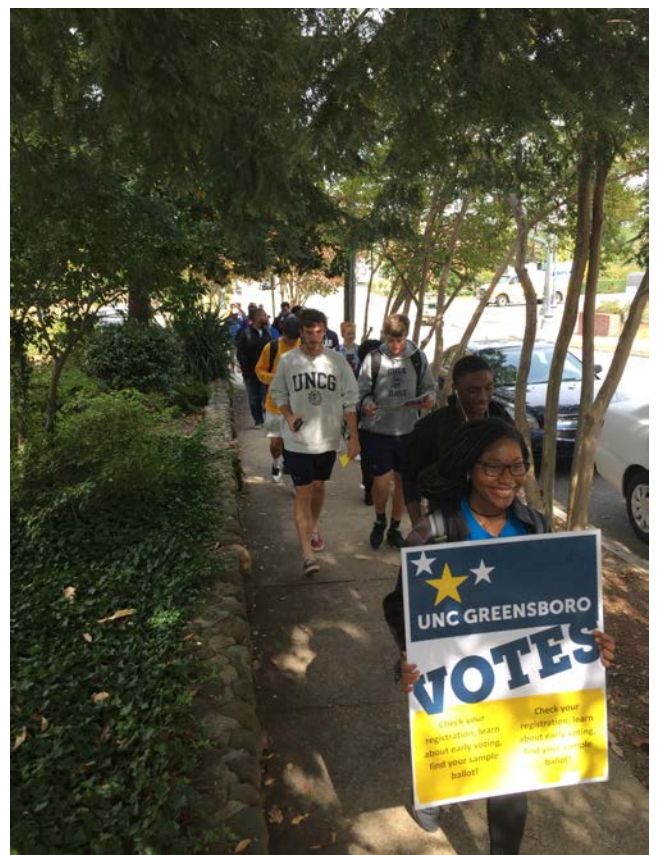
1. Register 300 students to vote for the November 2018 midterm elections.
2. Develop at least two outreach opportunities directed towards faculty to increase awareness of election engagement activities and resources and to develop partners in Academic Affairs.
3. Offer student-oriented voter turnout programs to celebrate voting that are attended by at least 200 students.
4. Institutionalize the practice of the president sending a letter to all students every semester about the importance of being civically engaged and participating in elections.
5. Provide students with an opportunity to engage with their peers about political and social issues to develop dialogue skills, issue knowledge, and practice democracy. There are two planned dialogue programs for the fall and success will be measured by participation of over 60 students in attendance.

STRATEGY

The following list outlines the activities that the institution will implement towards achieving the stated goals.

- **Welcome Week:** Student Fellows will be registering voters and/or providing registration information at several large orientation and First Year events.
- **National Voter Registration Day:** The Office of Leadership & Service-Learning (OLSL) staff, student Fellows and volunteers take over several tables in the student center commons to decorate patriotically and hold a registration drive.
- **Weekly Registration:** Each week Fellows will hold voter registration tabling in a well-used campus building or outdoor space.
- **Resources for External Groups:** Each year a variety of organizations, both partisan and non-partisan, come to campus to register students. The committee's procedure is to identify these individuals and ensure they are provided with a one-page guide for how our on-campus students should list their addresses to correctly register.
- **Election Fest:** This event, co-hosted by OLSL, the Student Government Association, and Campus Activities and Programs, is a fun, visible, and interactive GOTV event that promotes registration and election engagement through giveaways, music, games, and student speakers.
- **Chalking:** Leading up to election day OLSL student Fellows and volunteers will chalk popular sidewalks with information about polling places.
- **#VoteTogether Celebration:** On election day, OLSL staff, student fellows and volunteers will host a celebration and information station.
- **Walk to the Polls:** Depending on the nearest early voting site, OLSL and student Fellows lead a celebratory walk to the polls to raise the visibility of the beginning of the voting period. This event is typically co-sponsored by multiple student organizations.
- **Host Website:** OLSL will continue to host and update its webpage of voting information relevant to students.
- **Voting 101:** This 30-minute, interactive workshop offered by OLSL staff and student Fellows, has variations for staff and faculty groups, student organizations, and classes. It covers the basics of registration, election dates and deadlines, the voting process, and a discussion on why voting is important. First year courses are specifically invited to host this presentation.
- **Dialogues:** OLSL is partnering with the Office of Intercultural Engagement to offer two fall dialogues for students to develop skills around understanding different perspectives, evaluating policy, and civil discourse.

- **Distribute Voter Guides:** Each year a group of non-partisan organizations in North Carolina put out a voter guide that provides a profile of each candidate with their answers to the same questions. OLSL distributes these guides across campus and makes the information more easily accessible.
- **Student Emails:** Each October Housing and Residence Life to ensure that an email is sent out to on-campus students that affirms their residency information. This email serves as proof of residence for NC students who plan on voting locally for the first time. Additionally, the team will request the Chancellor's office to send an email to all students encouraging them to vote and link to our resources.
- **Faculty Fellow:** Develop written position description and application materials for this fellowship around a robust civic learning democratic engagement focused mission.
- **Social Media Campaign:** OLSL student Fellows will create and post regular content on OLSL's social media pages.



REPORTING AND EVALUATION

The final version of this plan will be made public on the Office of Leadership & Service-Learning's webpage for civic engagement. Once the activities outlined in this plan are completed a follow-up report will be made public in the same space. The report will include an evaluation of progress made towards stated goals, data related to student participation in election engagement programming, program effectiveness, and student voting rates (if available).

After November mid-terms data will be collected and documented by OLSL staff and student Fellows. This information will be shared and evaluated with the committee. Once the NSLVE report is available it will be compared to previous year's reports to establish any student voting patterns that can be identified as well as serve as an updated voting rate benchmark in relation to other institutions.

Student Participation

- Will be measured by student ID swipes uploaded into Spartan Connect (co-curricular transcript system) and/or head counts as appropriate for each type of program
- Measured because it provides accurate attendance information and demographics to determine if a diverse cross-section of student body was reached by program

Program Effectiveness

- Will be measured by student evaluations and after-action reviews
- After-action reviews provide a written overview of the event by planning team with recommendations for future efforts, while program evaluations ask students to self-report growth along the program's learning outcomes.

Voting Rate

- Will be measured by the NSLVE report
- Determines the percentage of UNCG students that were registered and/or voted, including rates for areas of study, classification, and demographic groups, and method of voting, provides valuable information that can direct future election engagement efforts