

# 2022 ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Action Plan

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Prepared by the Office of Student Life and Leadership – January 2022

## Contents

- Overview ..... 2
- History ..... 2
- Goals ..... 2
- Initiatives..... 3
  - Office of Student Life and Leadership (SLL) ..... 3
  - University Communications ..... 3
  - Carolina Athletics ..... 4
  - Promoting Democracy Faculty/Staff Group..... 4
  - Institute of Politics Civic Engagement Action Coalition (CEAC) ..... 4
  - Carolina Center for Public Service..... 4
  - Undergraduate Executive Branch of Student Government..... 4
  - Graduate and Professional Student Federation (GPSF)..... 5

## Overview

The UNC-Chapel Hill Office of Student Life and Leadership prepared this plan to summarize the goals and actions of our partners across campus to mobilize voters in advance of the 2022 midterm election.

“Promoting Democracy” is one of the eight strategic initiatives identified in *Carolina Next; Innovations for the Public Good*, which is the university’s strategic framework for the next decade. Key components of this strategic initiative are voter education, registration efforts, and reporting on student engagement during the 2022 election cycle.

UNC participates in monitoring of student voting through the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement to monitor and report on student election engagement. Building off a 28.5% percentage point increase in student voting during the 2018-midterm elections to the 2020 general election, leaders across campus hope to see significant student turnout for the 2022 midterm elections to create a stronger culture of voting in every election.

## History

As a campus with a long history of student activism and advocacy, energy for participation in the democratic process is consistently high. Students also benefit from a variety of academic and co-curricular resources dedicated to public service and advocacy.

However, along with other North Carolinians, college students have historically faced a variety of barriers to voting. As a transient population, students can find it confusing to register, navigate voter ID and proof of residency requirements, and find their polling place. Until the 2020 primary election, the Orange County Board of Elections did not consolidate students living on campus into a single precinct. Students were required to travel significant distances from campus to vote on Election Day.

The COVID-19 Pandemic added an additional set of barriers to democratic participation for the 2020 cycle as students were moved off campus and navigated mail-in ballots, early voting, or pandemic restrictions during Election Day voting. With the ever-changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and new emerging variants, it is likely that the voting cycle for 2022 will consist of many of the same pandemic restrictions as we saw in 2020.

## Goals

With the pandemic forcing changes in voter engagement methods, goals for the 2022 election cycle center around activating students for midterm primaries and education around early voting.

1. Maintain 2020 student voting rates for the November midterm elections
2. Ensure all students have access to information on registering to vote, early voting, and requesting an absentee ballot
3. Create an environment of election engagement that fosters a culture of civic engagement that extends beyond national election years

## Initiatives

The efforts listed below represent the most prominent efforts by campus units and student organizations to engage student voters. Many of these efforts are in partnership with non-partisan outside organizations, including You Can Vote, ALL IN, Civic Influencers, Campus Compact, and the Campus Election Engagement Project. This list is not necessarily exhaustive list of all voter engagement efforts on campus.

### Office of Student Life and Leadership (SLL)

The Office of Student Life and Leadership has focused on providing support to voter engagement efforts of student organizations and creating content for voter education through the following activities:

- **TurboVote** – Students can register to vote and receive important voting-related reminders through TurboVote on Heel Life, which is the university’s online platform for managing student involvement. Students receive a pop-up every time they log into Heel Life asking students to register to vote, and directing them to local election information.
- **Civic Engagement Working Group** – a group of student leaders in UNC’s civic and election engagement efforts that meets biweekly. SLL launched the group in the 2019 spring semester to create a coalition of student organizations that can coordinate their civic engagement efforts, share resources and best practices for voter engagement, and lay the groundwork for a culture of civic engagement that extends beyond elections. Working group meetings also include updates from staff and faculty on institutional voter engagement efforts.
- **The Carolina Podcast** – Each week, SLL releases a civic engagement-related episode of “The Carolina Podcast.” For the Fall 2021 semester, episodes focused on creating an impact on and off campus, and episodes would alternate between individuals/organizations making a difference in the campus or Chapel Hill community. For 2022, the episodes will operate in a “mini-series” fashion around related topics month-to-month.
- **Content for social media and campus newsletters** – SLL is creating graphics for Instagram and twitter, and election-related email blurbs that can be shared on campus social media channels and on listservs that reach thousands of students. The office is also working to aggregate information on events and election-related social media assets developed by others on campus.
- **Student Leadership Coordinator for Civic Engagement Initiatives:** SLL employs three undergraduate students in SLC roles related to Civic Engagement Initiatives. The student staff members produce and host The Carolina Podcast, lead the Civic Engagement Working Group, and will continue to be responsible for new initiatives related to civic engagement, particularly around supporting student organizations.

### University Communications

University Communications manages the university’s relationship with the Orange County Board of Elections. For the 2022 cycle, UNC is hosting Election Day polling locations at the Stone Center, Friday Center, and Finley Golf Course Country Club. The Stone Center was a new polling location for 2020 that represents a consolidated precinct for all students living on campus. The 2020 primary election was the first election in more than a decade in which students were able to vote conveniently on campus on Election Day.

University Communications has also developed a Voter Engagement Communications Plan that includes long-form content on [unc.edu](http://unc.edu) and *The Well* and content for institutional social media channels.

### Carolina Athletics

Carolina Athletics announced a goal of 100% voter registration for student athletes in September. In support of that goal, and to inform students and the public, the Athletic Department has engaged in a variety of voter registration and education activities including:

- Voter registration drives at athletic training facilities
- Creating a “Heels Vote” campaign on social media to highlight voter registration and commitments to vote from community members
- Sharing voter registration information on GoHeels.com and across email newsletters to student, staff, alumni, and fans

### Promoting Democracy Faculty/Staff Group

Promoting Democracy is a group of 30 staff/faculty members charged with encouraging students to vote as part of the university’s strategic plan. They have created a website at <https://democracy.unc.edu/> to provide a centralized home for information and language encouraging students to vote and engage in the community.

### Institute of Politics Civic Engagement Action Coalition (CEAC)

The Civic Engagement Action Coalition, which is an arm of the student-run Institute of Politics, has developed a variety of innovative ways to engage virtually with student voters. These efforts include:

- Offering Summer 2022 Professional Development workshops for student leaders interested in public service/civic engagement professions.
- Offering Summer 2023 Internship program for students to gain experience in public service.
- Developing comprehensive information on voter registration and voting methods that professors can share with students on Sakai
- Creating a coalition of more than 50 organization and student leaders interested in disseminating voting-related information

### Carolina Center for Public Service

The Carolina Center for Public Service is incorporating a variety of voter engagement efforts into their programming and led the charge to recruit 25 students and staff to attend the North Carolina College Voter Summit. Their efforts include:

- Recruiting 25+ students and staff to attend the NC College Vote Summit – resulting in a campus with highest attendance.
- Organizing campus team of staff and faculty to participate in the NC Campus Compact Civic Engagement Initiative
- Working with Employee Forum Public Service Committee around messaging for opportunities related to staff working as poll workers

### Undergraduate Executive Branch of Student Government

The undergraduate executive branch is working with a variety of partners to distribute voter education information and encourage students to create a plan for voting. These efforts include:

- Hosting “Voter 101 Sessions” to spread awareness around voter resources and early voting
- Encouraging undergraduates to “Commit to Vote” and opt in to receive voting reminders from [studentsvote.org](https://studentsvote.org)
- Working with Carolina Housing to distribute voter information packets to students remaining on campus
- Developing a training video for student organizations working to register students on campus
- Creating a “Student Organization Voter Information Kit” that includes non-partisan social media graphics, scripts, and deadline reminders to amplify ongoing civic engagement work on campus

### Graduate and Professional Student Federation (GPSF)

GPSF has created target messaging for graduate and professional students and prioritized ensuring that students have access to election information along with non-partisan candidate information. These efforts include:

- Creating a social media and email messaging campaign with reminders for voter registration, absentee requests, and early voting weekly through the fall semester
- Creating an Outlook calendar with important election-related dates
- Providing non-partisan information on how candidate’s positions directly impact graduate students and their work
- Partnering with the Stone Center and WRAL-TV to host a set of town halls for US Senate candidates