2024 ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge and Voter Friendly Campus Designation Action Plan

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Prepared by Student Life and Leadership – December 2023

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 ALL IN and Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been developed by Natasha Young (Student Life and Leadership), Te'aja McCoy (Student Leadership Coordinator), Gared Wong (Student Leadership Coordinator), and Kayla Cooper (Student Leadership Coordinator) with input and contributions from the Civic Engagement Working Group and Promote Democracy Initiative. The Civic Engagement Working Group (CEWG) is a coalition of student leaders across campus engaging in civic engagement work, and the Promote Democracy Initiative is composed of faculty and staff across campus advancing the Chancellor's Strategic Initiative, *Promote Democracy*, from Carolina Next. The purpose of the 2024 Action Plan is to outline and articulate plans for advancing civic engagement initiatives during the Spring 2024 North Carolina Primaries, as well as the Fall 2024 general elections, to work towards overarching goals that encompass year-round voter engagement, enhancing voter education, and increasing voter turnout. Additionally, the Action Plan will outline the steps UNC intends to take in achieving Voter Friendly Campus Designation for 2024-2025. The plan will be implemented at UNC Chapel Hill, located in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Orange County is the county UNC is located in and therefore referenced.

The 2024 Action Plan has been developed for a variety of reasons: Involvement in the DemocrACCY Challenge with ALL IN and the ACC, acceptance into the Voter Friendly Campus Designation cohort in 2022, and alignment with Strategic Initiative #5 (Promote Democracy) from the UNC Strategic Plan, Carolina Next. Particularly due to the alignment with Carolina Next, this Action Plan serves a dual purpose on and off campus to guide campus leadership in establishing strategies to meet the objectives outlined in Carolina Next, and advocate for continued support and resources on campus. The action plan outlined includes initiatives from preparing for the 2024 North Carolina Primaries and ending after the November 2024 Election. Therefore, the short-term duration of the plan is January 2024-January2025. There are long term goals outlined in the plan that encompass prospective issues for the next three years (2024-2027)

The Action Plan will be implemented predominantly by leadership outlined from the Civic Engagement Working Group and Promote Democracy Initiative, which are coalitions that include faculty, staff, graduate/professional students, and undergraduate students. The Promote Democracy Initiative (chaired by Jason Roberts, UNC Political Science Faculty) was created to advance the Chancellor's Strategic Initiative, Promote Democracy, and consists of faculty and staff across campus who work to advance civic engagement at the faculty, staff, and student level. The Civic Engagement Working Group (advised by Natasha Young, Student Life and Leadership Staff), which has some overlap in leadership to the Promote Democracy Initiative, is a coalition of student leaders and staff members who primarily

advance civic engagement initiatives on a student-facing level. These two groups are typically seen as leaders on campus with implementing the Action Plan and facilitating efforts across Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. There are a variety of student organizations, offices, and academic departments involved in civic engagement throughout UNC's campus, as we do not have a single office dedicated to civic engagement, which provides a lot of opportunity for cross-campus collaboration.

In looking towards the 2024 General Election, we are excited at UNC to continue the great work being done on campus around voter engagement and outreach, resulting in 82% of eligible UNC students voting in the 2020 General Election. We hope to outline specific and targeted strategies towards working with historically underrepresented voters on campus, as well as groups of students who are less likely to vote at similar rates as the campus average. We look forward to having our first year fully back on campus during a General Election year so that we can continue to find ways to be innovative in our approaches to get students excited about voting and learn from different methods of student engagement that came out of the pandemic.

SECTION II: LEADERSHIP

There are two main groups of leadership around advancing the 2024 Action Plan and civic engagement on campus: The Civic Engagement Working Group, which predominantly consists of student leaders and Student Affairs staff that are student-facing, and the Promote Democracy Initiative, which predominantly consists of faculty and staff across UNC's campus committed to civic engaged inside and outside of daily work. Individuals involved in the Promote Democracy Initiative group were identified by the Chancellor's and Provost's Offices with the intention of aligning with the UNC Strategic Initiative, Promote Democracy.

Faculty and Staff involved in the Promote Democracy group have more regular contact with Executive Leadership at UNC (Provost, Vice Chancellors, etc.), and therefore have taken on the role of advocating for institutional support on various initiatives and passing along necessary information to people in Executive Leadership. For example, the Chancellor's Commitment was submitted to the UNC Chancellor's Office, and our Promote Democracy Captain and staff in the Provost's Office have been able to facilitate follow up to ensure that the Chancellor's Commitment is signed and returned for ALL IN.

Additionally, there is overlap in membership between the CEWG and Promote Democracy Initiative to cultivate cross campus collaborations among students, faculty, and staff, as well to account for higher rates of turnover among student leaders on campus. Student Life and Leadership is the office on campus that hosts and oversees all student organizations, the Civic Engagement Working Group, and Student Government, and therefore, most initiatives coming out of SLL are related to work being done in congruence with student organizations across campus.

The Promote Democracy Initiative typically meets monthly, and the Civic Engagement Working Group meets on a bi-weekly basis, except during university holidays or breaks.

To streamline efforts around civic engagement, the Promote Democracy Initiative has identified areas where respective offices/departments around campus will take the lead on sections outlined in the ACC Democracy Challenge Card, allowing partners involved in the Promote Democracy Initiative to have a more defined understanding of how respective offices may engage in some of the initiatives outlined by ALL IN. Those lead offices for each section look like:

- **Voter Registration:** Student Life and Leadership (Includes student organization, student government association, etc)
- **Voter Outreach:** Carolina Center for Public Service, Student Life and Leadership
- **Access:** Provost's Office, University Communications,
- **Student Involvement:** Student Life and Leadership, Campus Y, Residence Hall Association
- **Voter Education:** Student Life and Leadership, Provost's Office,
- **Communication:** University Communications, Student Government, Graduate/Professional Student Government, University Athletics, Carolina Housing
- **Collaborations:** Civic Engagement Working Group (Student Life and Leadership), Promote Democracy Initiative (Provost's Office)
- **Alumni Outreach:** General Alumni Association* (Collaboration in progress)
- **Sustaining Engagement:** Center for Public Service, UNC School of Law, University Communications
- **National Campus Partnerships:** Provost's Office, Student Life and Leadership, Carolina Center for Public Service, Campus Y

This year, the Promote Democracy Initiative is hoping to establish further connections with UNC General Alumni Association as we have typically struggled in the realm of alumni engagement, as well as the Office of the Registrar to create more opportunities for voting information to be posted and shared out on course registration platforms. The Civic Engagement Working Group will be doing intentional outreach to student organizations that typically serve unrepresented student groups on campus, as well as Greek-letter organizations in order to advance goals around more comprehensive voter registration efforts for students on and off campus.

A list of individuals involved can be found below, and is subject to change:

Civic Engagement Working Group Leadership:

Natasha Young, Student Life and Leadership, (Staff Advisor)

Jordan Davis, Graduate Coordinator for Leadership Development

SLL Student Leadership Coordinators (3)

- Te'aja McCoy (Graduating December 2023)
- Kayla Cooper (Graduating May 2026)
- Gared Wong (Graduating May 2026)

Micah Mangot, NCPIRG

Samuel Hiner, NexGen

Gabriel Charniss, NextGen

Cedra Ali, Residence Hall Association

Christopher Everett, Student Body President, Student Government Association

Maryam Khan, Undergraduate Student Government, State and External Affairs

Lauren Hawkinson, Graduate Student Body President, Graduate & Professional Student Government

Michael Beauregard, Director of Local Relations, Graduate & Professional Student Government

Sarah Smith, Campus Y (Staff)

Jaya Dayal, Student Dialogue Ambassador, NC Campus Engagement

Valeria Orozco Rico, Student Dialogue Ambassador, NC Campus Engagement

Robert Clay, Carolina Center for Public Service

Ryan Nilsen, Carolina Center for Public Service (Staff)

Promote Democracy Initiative

Chair: Jason Roberts, Professor, Political Science (Faculty)

- Orange County Board of Elections Secretary

Brian Lackman, Student Life and Leadership (Staff)

Natasha Young, Student Life and Leadership (Staff)

Ryan Nilsen, Carolina Center for Public Service (Staff)

Sarah Smith, Campus Y (Staff),

- Orange County Board of Elections Poll Worker

Roxana Keesler, Interim Director of Community Relations, Assistant Director of Federal Affairs (Staff)

Kylie Seltzer, Carolina Public Humanities- Zietlow Postdoctoral Fellow

Kala Bullett, Carolina Housing (Staff)

Cricket Lane, Carolina Athletics (Staff)

Quintyn Bobb, Chancellor's Office (Staff)

TBD, Stone Center Faculty/Staff

- As the Stone Center is an on-campus Election Day voting site, a point of contact was established with the Stone Center for the Promote Democracy coalition. Our most recent contact has left their role, so we will identify a replacement in 2024. This person also typically serves as a liaison with the Chief Judge, which was Richard Bradford in 2023.

Local Partnerships

Town of Chapel Hill: Our Promote Democracy Coalition got connected more intentionally with Town of Chapel Hill staff to learn more about the [Chapel Hill Peoples Academy,](#) which inspired the creation of the [UNC Peoples Academy](#) in 2022. The UNC Peoples Academy is an opportunity for Chapel Hill staff to

come to campus, talk with UNC students about local government, and foster genuine connections between campus and the community. Our primary contacts within the Town of Chapel Hill include:

- Sarah Poulton, Senior Project Manager, Town Manager's Office
- Sarah Viñas, Director of Affordable Housing and Community Connections
- Rebecca Buzzard, Community Connections Manager

Orange County Board of Elections: Most of our Coalition connection to the BOE has been around connecting with campus programming (Election Hero Day, UNC Peoples Academy), but has been more transactional rather than longitudinal. Our primary contacts typically are:

- Jason Roberts, Board of Elections Secretary (and UNC Faculty)
- Rachel Raper, Director

You Can Vote: YCV is a local nonpartisan organization UNC has partnered with for programming, educational events, educational materials, and general consultation on initiatives. YCV has regularly facilitated Voter Empowerment Trainings for us on campus, helped us analyze Orange County voting data, and supported our process of approving UNC student/employee ID cards to be approved as photo IDs that can be used to vote. We intend to partner with YCV in 2024 to help create informational graphics/materials and to continue supporting campus programming around voter education. Our primary contact typically is:

- Jennifer Thomas, Field/Data Director

Succession Planning

UNC is currently in a position of changing leadership with the recent announcement of a new, Interim Chancellor, and the potential to shift strategic initiatives. As it relates to institutionalizing our civic engagement work, Sarah Smith (Assistant Director for Global Civic Engagement, Campus Y), Ryan Nilsen (Senior Program Officer, Carolina Center for Public Service), and Roxana Kessler (Federal Affairs/Community Relations) probably have the most written in their job descriptions around civic engagement and voting work. Natasha Young's (Leadership Development Program Coordinator, Student Life and Leadership) job description is currently being re-written to include the voter education and civic engagement work she works with, as well as to formalize the connection of her position with ALL IN. Natasha's supervisor, Brian Lackman (Associate Director for Leadership Development) is included on ALL IN communication to be in the loop on communication, and support succession as needed. Quintyn Bobb from the Chancellor's Office also has a more formalized connection to the Promote Democracy Initiative as his role encompasses supporting the Chancellor's Strategic Initiatives; as we move through a change in leadership, Quintyn's role in the Promote Democracy Initiative may shift depending on the priorities of new leadership.

Section III: Commitment

External Commitment: Commitment to the 2024 Action Plan is predominantly connected to Carolina Next, UNC's strategic plan. Our Promote Democracy team has access to edit and update our online homepage: https://democracy.unc.edu/. Promote Democracy and https://democracy.unc.edu/ are linked and referenced through every email/University communication related to voting and local

elections. UNC's mission and values outline a commitment to public service, which is regularly referenced when communicating the importance of voter engagement.

As of now, commitment to civic engagement and intentional voter engagement tends to be predominantly communicated when an election is upcoming. Increasing the visibility of UNC's true commitment to Promote Democracy will be one of the goals expanded on throughout this action plan.

Within the Town of Chapel Hill/Orange County, UNC's commitment to civic learning and democratic engagement is reflected through the Good Neighbor Initiative and the UNC Peoples Academy, two recurring initiatives each year. The Good Neighbor Initiative connects students and community members through the goal of cohesive cohabitation and facilitates regular programming off-campus for students and community members. The UNC Peoples Academy has been created as a smaller version of the Chapel Hill Peoples Academy, as an intentional opportunity for UNC students to learn more about engaging in local government and connecting with Town employees. These are two examples that highlight the commitment UNC has with engaging in the town and county around campus, and helping students think critically about the role they play in the larger community.

In co-curricular settings, the Campus Life Experiences outcomes and requirements for programming highlight topics of "Civic Engagement, Public Service, and Philanthropy", as well as "supports students to reflect on or think critically about social, economic and/or political differences". Because important topics related to civic learning and democratic engagement are included in the Campus Life Experience rubric that every incoming student to UNC engages with, this allows students to access campus programming that aligns with our ALL IN Action plan.

Currently, the UNC Chancellor is a signatory on the ALL IN Presidential Commitment, which has been promoted through campus-wide messaging and the ALL IN website. Our Promote Democracy group will be in communication with the Chancellor's office in 2024 to learn what the next steps may be for continuing this with the upcoming shift in leadership.

Internal Commitment: The ALL IN Campus DemocrACCy Challenge is one of the largest internal commitments UNC engages with related to civic learning and democratic engagement. The campus challenge card that is scored by ALL IN is shared with students who facilitate programming, communication, and learning, to help guide the work they do in congruence with University offices/departments. Additionally, the goals outlined in our Action Plan are centered in the work being guided by our Promote Democracy Initiative.

Most of the offices and departments that are a part of our Promote Democracy Initiative employ students who work to advance our ALL IN goals, the Promote Democracy objectives, and general campus climate around voting and voter education. Many departments who employ Federal Work-Study students benefit from federal funding that covers wages for students who do civic engagement work and the commitment to student development in this capacity has been extremely mutually beneficial when it comes to meeting our goals.

Section IV: LANDSCAPE

Assessment Data:

UNC relies heavily on the NSLVE data to determine climate and potential areas for opportunity when considering goals around student engagement. With the delay of 2022 NSLVE reports, we looked more intentionally at local voting data through the North Carolina Board of Elections from 2022 midterms and 2023 municipal elections. The NC Board of Elections publishes great data around voting, the only downside is that we are unable to specifically parse out data related to UNC students, but our coalition felt like local trends in voting can still be relevant to the work we do on campus.

- Voter turnout in North Carolina for the November 2023 municipal elections was 15.9%.
  - 29.2% of voters utilized one-stop Early Voting
  - 69.2% of voters voted in-person on Election Day
  - 1.2% of voters used absentee mail-in ballots
- Orange County had a slightly higher voting rate than all of North Carolina at 18.1% in 2023.
  - 44.3% of voters utilized one-stop Early Voting
  - 53.8% of voters voted in-person on Election Day
  - 1.76% of voters used absentee mail-in ballots
- Voter turnout in North Carolina for the November 2022 midterm elections was 51.14%.
  - 53% of voters utilized one-stop Early Voting
  - 42% of voters voted in-person on Election Day
  - 5% of voters used absentee mail-in ballots
- Orange County had a slightly higher voting rate than all of North Carolina at 59.8% in 2022.
  - 62.4% of voters utilized one-stop Early Voting
  - 30.7% of voters voted in-person on Election Day
  - 6.8% of voters used absentee mail-in ballots

From the 2022 Midterm and 2023 Municipal data, we were able to infer a few trends that may be relevant to UNC students who are eligible to vote:

- Voters in Orange County utilize One-Stop Early Voting at higher rates than North Carolina averages.
  - Promote Democracy and Civic Engagement Working Group prioritize referring voters to One-Stop Early Voting in order to support student schedules and consistent need to update voter registration almost every year, knowing that students move frequently.

UNC was extremely excited about the NSLVE data that was reported around voter turnout for the 2020 election, but of course there is always room for improvement. Large takeaways from the NSLVE report as it relates to determining campus landscape and climate include:

- UNC students are engaged and showed up to vote at significantly higher levels than previously recorded—Our focus now would be to maintain that engagement and ensure students turn out for the 2024 general election.
- Graduate and non-traditional aged students (30-39 years old) only had a 67% turnout rate, compared to the campus average. Historically, students in the 30-39 age group have been assumed to be more engaged in elections, however the data shows we need to make more intentional outreach to students in this age group for the 2024 general elections. Since students in the 30-39 age group are more likely to live off campus or commute, this may mean we make intentional efforts to collaborate with our Office of Off-Campus Student Relations and the Town

of Chapel Hill to find ways to share election information in off-campus student housing units or around town.

Curricular:

Currently, the Promote Democracy Initiative outlines three core learning objectives and strategic initiatives, outlined on the Carolina Next website https://carolinanext.unc.edu/promote-democracy/, and copied below. There are no formal assessment mechanisms in place for executing these objectives, and typically serve as overarching learning objectives for campus.

Quoted from Carolina Next:

Objective 5.1: *Actively engage as diverse citizens responsible for the institutions of American democracy.*

Strategic Opportunities:

- *Coordinate a "Carolina Votes" initiative. Involve Faculty Governance, Employee Forum, Student Government, GPSF, Campus Y and Carolina Center for Public Service, among others, to organize educational events, voter registration and voter education. Emphasize engagement via alternative methods during the pandemic.*
- *Measure student, staff and faculty understanding of and participation in the 2020 elections*
- *Encourage and assess student, staff, and faculty participation in the 2020 Census.*
- *Provide opportunities for students to intern in, or work with, democracy-related community organizations, including electoral campaigns, social movement organizations and government offices through the Carolina Center for Public Service and the Campus Y (Partnership with Strategic Initiative 6: Benefit Society).*
- *Host (virtually or in person) debates and other opportunities for candidates for public office to engage directly with students, staff and faculty.*

Objective 5.2: *Work constructively across differences in society, starting by promoting respect and listening.*

Strategic Opportunities:

- *Provide opportunities for conversations on– and off–campus that bring students, staff and faculty into respectful dialogue with people they disagree with; facilitate campus forums to promote honest, frank discussion and dissent on major campus and public issues; build the capacity to engage constructively across differences with evidence, intellectual humility, and respect. Involve the Institute of Politics, Roosevelt Institute, College Democrats and Republicans, Black Student Movement, Campus Y, Institute for the Arts and Humanities, Philosophy, Politics & Economics, Program for Public Discourse, Southern Futures and other campus units.*
- *Develop a faculty expert response system to provide evidence-based context for visiting speakers, along with mechanisms for audience feedback, to promote greater speaker quality and audience participation (possibly link with IDEAs in Action's General Education Curriculum's Campus Life requirement).*
- *Develop the Communication Beyond Carolina capacity requirement in the IDEAs in Action General Education Curriculum to provide all undergraduates with strong skills in communication and listening with different audiences and publics.*

- *Conceptualize and develop the UNC Program for Public Discourse, emphasizing respectful dialogue in classes and public events.*
- *Develop a Dialogues in Global Democracy series: bring pairs of scholars, leaders or practitioners to campus for 1-2 day visiting events. They would each give public talks in which they engaged with one another's ideas and viewpoints in public. In addition, they would spend time with groups of students and faculty thoughtfully and carefully considering the implications and synergies between their viewpoints (in partnership with Strategic Initiative 7: Globalize).*
- *Provide voluntary mentorship and training for instructors to encourage respectful, evidence-based debate and discussion across major differences in the classroom. (in partnership with the School of Law, Program for Public Discourse, Department of Communication, IDEAS in Action Ideas, Information and Inquiry courses and first-year seminars).*

Objective 5.3: *Explore how humanity's highest purposes and potential can be realized through democracy and can help the democracy thrive.*

Strategic Opportunities

- *Develop and support a Democracy Track in the IDEAs in Action General Education Curriculum to allow students to focus on democratic competencies regardless of major.*
- *Develop and support a Global Democracy Training Program/Certificates available for graduate students across all units. (partnership with Strategic Initiative 7: Globalize)*
- *Develop and support the Center for Information, Technology and Public Life.*
- *Create a Carolina Civic Health Project to collect data about civic engagement, knowledge, opinions, and ideas in North Carolina communities (data will be available for public analysis and will also be the basis for an annual Carolina Civic Health Report published by UNC).*
- *Through the Carolina Civic Health Project, produce high quality resources, policy briefings, reports, recommendations, etc. for the state legislature, and potentially for more national forums with respect to democratic functioning.*
- *Create a Democracy Research Hub to support interdisciplinary, collaborative research on democratic governance, systems, and culture, with the goal of making Carolina the leader in research on democracy and building democracy research teams across schools and involving undergraduate and graduate students alongside faculty. (Partnership with Strategic Initiative 4: Discover; and Strategic Initiative 7: Globalize)*

As of now, these objectives are not currently embedded in mandatory curriculum within Academic Affairs, and faculty are not required to include information about voting in syllabi.

<u>Co-Curricular:</u>

From August 2022 to December 2023, 392 student-run events were hosted on campus specifically categorized as a Civic Engagement, Public Service, or Philanthropy event. This data is gathered from Heel Life and is self-reported by student organizations hosting the events. Events ranged from voter registration drives to candidate forums, to educational events on advocacy-based issues. Of the events that logged attendance numbers, there were a total of 8,193 attendees across those events.

Many departments/offices that host these events include Student Life and Leadership, Campus Y, Center for Public Service, UNC School of Law, UNC School of Government, Center for Public Discourse. Student

organizations also represent a large population of host organizations including NCPIRG, Student Government, politically affiliated groups, and Campus Y student organizations.

Internal Barriers

While UNC has great voter turnout numbers overall, there are some internal barriers that make it difficult to advance other initiatives as it relates to voting. Due to complex levels of bureaucracy and the politicization of voter access, it has been difficult to identify where to begin conversations at times when it relates to topics of voter access, education, and empowerment. While *Promote Democracy* is listed as a strategic initiative for the campus overall, intentional funding has not been allocated to advancing that strategic initiative and the objectives identified. Because of this, the departments and offices involved in the Promote Democracy Initiative group have often had to utilize their own department funding (that is typically already stretched thin) or apply for grants from other entities to secure resources for programming and such.

While Promote Democracy has been an initiative within the Chancellor's strategic plan, there has been conversation on attempting to determine what the future of Promote Democracy may look like, and if the Promote Democracy Initiative will still continue in congruence with support from the Chancellor's Office. While most of this has been speculation, the uncertainty of the future of the Promote Democracy Initiative and the lack of financial support has created a bit of a gray area for staff and faculty involved in the initiative to determine where resources and energy should be focused in meeting the objectives outlined. With a new Interim Chancellor stepping into the role in January 2024, it seems likely that the Promote Democracy Initiative in particular will continue operating in this space of ambiguity when it comes to institutional support, although there is high investment from folks involved to ensure students are prepared for the 2024 General Election.

External Barriers

Continually changing legislation in the State of North Carolina provides external barriers when it relates to communicating information about voting and elections, as staff/faculty regularly have to update information to attempt to keep pace with litigation. In July 2023, Photo ID was implemented to be required for the Fall 2023 municipal elections for the first time in years. This required efforts from our campus coalitions to ensure UNC student/employee IDs were submitted for approval to be used for voting, and to communicate this with the UNC community.

Recently, North Carolina districting maps have been appealed through state courts for 2024 elections. It is not clear right now if the North Carolina primaries will continue as scheduled on March 5th, or if we will have a similar incidence to 2022 where primaries were pushed back to account for pending litigation. Consistent re-drawing over voting districts have often caused confusion among voters when it comes to finding their polling location, as well as forcing many of our student organizations and departments to shift programming that may have been built around the timeliness of primaries happening in the spring.

Resources Available

The intentional effort and commitment to cross-campus collaboration has been the largest resource available from the Promote Democracy Initiative. The individuals involved all care deeply about engaging students in the voting process, and everyone is willing to leverage their positional power to

advocate for the work being done by the Promote Democracy Initiative and the Civic Engagement Working Group.

Collaborations with local and national organizations has also been a helpful resource in establishing the Action Plan and gathering information on continuing to advance civic engagement at UNC. Our most common outside partners are: You Can Vote, ALL IN, NC Campus Compact, Campus Vote Project, NASPA, and Civic Influencers.

<u>Resources Needed</u>

Funding has been the most evident resource identified by campus stakeholders from the Promote Democracy initiative that is needed to meet the objectives outlined in the Chancellor's Strategic Plan. From the student perspective in the Civic Engagement Working Group, many student leaders in that coalition are seeking financial resources to support their organizational initiatives as well.

Section V: GOALS, STRATEGIES & INITIATIVES
Short-term Goals and Strategies (Spring 2024-Fall 2024)

1. Establish connections with the General Alumni Association at UNC to begin meeting ALL IN DemocrACCy Challenge metrics around Alumni Engagement.
    a. Determine if communication already exists around updating voter registration to alumni after they graduate from UNC.
    b. Work with Alumni staff to incorporate voting information to webpage and newsletters.
    c. Identify someone affiliated with GAA to join Promote Democracy coalition or Civic Engagement Working Group.
    d. Assessment: Creating a plan of implementation and tracking progress on when metrics are made. Many of the outcomes in this goal will mainly be assessed on if they are completed or not, as well as by gauging long-term collaboration and commitment between GAA and Promote Democracy.
    e. Campus Partners involved: Promote Democracy Initiatives, University Communications, General Alumni Association
1. Centralize regular communication to all student organizations with information/resources around hosting voter registration drives, voter education events, and being an informed voter for 2024. Prioritize monthly communication and bi-weekly student newsletters.
    a. Identify student organizations that may be affiliated with academic programs/departments with lower campus voting rates (using 2020 data until 2022 NSLVE data is released) to conduct individualized outreach and connections. Academic areas to prioritize:
        i. Mathematics (65%)
        ii. Computer Science (67%)
        iii. Philosophy and Religious Studies (70%)
        iv. Business, Management, and Marketing (71%)
    b. Identify student organizations that serve underrepresented voters or students who may have unique voting circumstances and work to find ways to support voter engagement.
        i. Such as: out-of-state students, students with disabilities, veteran and military-affiliated students, LGBTQ students, and BIPOC communities.

        ii.   Partner with Study Abroad Office to send information to students who study abroad during elections to help access absentee ballots.

    c.   Assessment: Pull event reports from Heel Life after 2024 elections to determine the number of attendees reached through programming, as well as data reports on "click rates" for short links and email newsletters. After 2024 elections, send out surveys to the same listservs/student organizations to get a sense of how resources were utilized and can be improved for the future.

    d.   Campus partners involved: Student Life and Leadership, Campus Y, Carolina Center for Public Service, Promote Democracy Coalition, Civic Engagement Working Group.

1) *Training:* 50% of student organizations/student leaders hosting voter registration drives/events will be trained in conducting voter registration and nonpartisanship.

    a.   When students submit a space reservation via 25Live and select the toggle option that their event will have voter registration, an automatic email will be sent to the host student/organization with a link to complete an asynchronous module on requirements for conducting voter registration in compliance with the State of North Carolina and Orange County Board of Elections.

    b.   In collaboration with our partners in Carolina Union Event Services (which oversees most of the space reservations and events on campus), completing the training will be a required action item for the event to be approved and take place.

    c.   The goal of this initiative is to ensure that every student leader or organization is well-versed and confident in accurately registering someone to vote and having the voter registration submitted in a timely manner.

    d.   In-person workshops will also be offered by Student Life and Leadership on conducting voter registration, as well as continued collaborations with You Can Vote and their Voter Empowerment Trainings.

    e.   The asynchronous module will also be marketed and available on Heel Life for any student interested in learning more about voter registration.

    f.   Assessment: Pulling the results from the post-assessment Heel Life form will be the primary method of assessing how students retained the content, and that data will be aligned with event space request.

    g.   Campus partners involved: Student Life and Leadership, Carolina Center for Public Service, Student Government Association, Graduate and Professional Student Government.

Long Term Goals and Strategies (2023-2026)

1. Work with Academic Affairs and the UNC Faculty Council to provide sample language for course syllabi to include information on voter registration, Civic Holidays, and/or general voter education.

    a.   Early in 2023, some student leaders from the Civic Engagement Working Group began outreach with individuals that oversee the University Thrive 101 courses that every first-year student takes at UNC to begin the conversation around getting voting information in course syllabi. There is still work needed to be done to bridge those connections but beginning with the University Thrive 101 courses have appeared to be a more tangible

entry point to begin institutional conversations around including voting information in the classroom or syllabi for students to easily access.

    b. In the long-term, our Promote Democracy Initiative would like to continue exploring means and avenues for voting information to be included in every course syllabus across campus, or as some type of component in course curriculum. We need to increase the amount of Faculty support and buy-in we have within our Promote Democracy Initiative group, as well as continue working with our leadership to engage with the Provost's Office on these goals. This is a long-term goal for us, as we continue to navigate the tendency for voting issues to become politicized and continued concerns about facilitating democratic engagement in the classroom setting.

2. Increase voter registration rate from 91.6% (2020) to 95% and increase voting rate from 82.4% (2020) to 90% by 2028.

    a. a. In looking at areas for improvement from the NSLVE report, an area of focus to increase voter turnout will be intentional outreach to Graduate and Professional Students at UNC-Chapel Hill.

    b. b. Graduate and Professional Student Government has been a primary source for engaging with graduate and professional students on campus, so this relationship will continue to be expanded on, with additional partnerships established with the Diversity and Student Success program within the Graduate Student Center.

    c. c. Students in Computer Science and Mathematics majors voted at the lowest rates (67% and 65% respectively) on campus in 2020, showing us that there is room for improvement in establishing relationships with students, staff and faculty in these respective departments to work on strategies for increasing voter turnout.

    d. d. Currently, NSLVE data does not include demographic information of student voters at UNC-Chapel Hill (race and gender). Advocating for this information to be shared to NSLVE from the Registrar's Office will also help us better determine where to target voter initiatives on campus.

Initiatives for Spring 2024-Fall 2024

In congruence to the goals and strategies outlined above, there are a few additional initiatives UNC is taking on to prepare campus for the North Carolina Primaries in March 2024, and the General Election in November 2024 that support our work in this Action Plan we wanted to outline:

Continue Partnerships with Local Nonprofits/Community Organizations: Our Promote Democracy Initiative has been proud to continue expanding partnerships and collaborations with You Can Vote around voter empowerment work and the Town of Chapel Hill for our annual UNC Peoples Academy. We intend to increase our number of programming with You Can Vote and continue to grow participation in the UNC Peoples Academy, as well as solidify a pipeline to help students access the Chaple Hill Peoples Academy that occurs every spring.

Alignment with National Civic Engagement Holidays: For Fall 2024, collaborative programming from the Promote Democracy Initiative and Civic Engagement Working Group will take place on the following National Civic Engagement Holidays:

- Voter Registration Day (September 17th)

- Voter Education Week (TBD)
- Vote Early Day (October 29th)
- Election Hero Day (November 4th)
- Election Day (November 5th)

Continued Collaboration and Marketing with on-campus Voting Site: UNC is privileged to have the Stone Center on campus as a voting location on Election Day, and an Early Voting site off-campus but within walking distance. With the upcoming midterms, we hope to continue collaborating with the Stone Center as a Voting Site to create opportunities for students to volunteer as poll workers, establish on-campus signage that more thoroughly directs students to the Stone Center on Election Day, and potentially be utilized more frequently as a space where civic engagement related events take place on campus outside of election season.

Participation in the Voter Friendly Campus Designation Program (CVP): UNC was accepted into the 2025-2026 Voter Friendly Campus Designation cohort. The initiatives and goals outlined in this action plan will be driving factors in our goal to achieve VFC Designation. Our student, staff, and faculty leadership have been extremely excited about the resources available by being in the VFC Designation cohort and look forward to continuing to engage in the available webinars and share those out with the people involved in meeting the goals outlined for VFC Designation.

Section VI: NSLVE

UNC Chapel Hill participates in NSLVE and the report is sent to ALL IN each year. The 2020 NSLVE can also be found here: https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/university-of-north-carolina-at-chapel-hill-the/.

Each year, the NSLVE report is initially sent to the Office for Institutional Research, and then forwarded to staff involved in the Promote Democracy Initiative. The NSLVE report is then shared out with Executive Leadership members, Civic Engagement Working Group leaders, and other relevant groups on and off campus.

Currently, UNC has not yet received the 2022 NSLVE report. We have continued to reference our 2020 report to help establish goals and initiatives across campus and Orange County. Based on our 2020 NSLVE report data, a few priorities we established are:

- Establish intentional outreach plans to attempt to increase voter turnout among non-traditional students, graduate students, and students outside of the 18-21 year old age group.
    - Graduate students voted at lower rates than undergraduate students in 2020 by 8%.
    - The voting rate of 18-21 year olds has gone up dramatically (+30%) since 2016, and all other student age groups have increased at much slower rates (+1%-18% for all other age groups).
    - Campus partners to consult on this would be our Graduate School staff, Graduate and Professional Student Government, and the Dean of Students Office (encompasses transfer student services as well as military-affiliated student support).
    - Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) is fairly involved in the Civic Engagement Working Group, but we currently lack representation from the Graduate School at the faculty/staff level in the Promote Democracy Coalition. We are interested

in putting a call out to faculty/staff that work closely with graduate students/programs to be involved in the group.

- Work to get race and sex data included in future NSLVE reports.
  - o In 2023, Ryan Nilsen and Natasha Young were regularly in contact with the Registrar's Office at UNC to advocate for getting student demographic data (race and sex) released to the National Clearinghouse to be included in our NSLVE report, as currently this data is not available to us. Initially, our request from the Registrar's Office was denied due to claims of FERPA regulations. Ryan and Natasha conducted informal benchmarking of peer institutions, ACC affiliate institutions, and other UNC System institutions to compile a list of schools that reported race and sex data to NSLVE. We found 13 UNC System Affiliates who participate in ALL IN and NSLVE. Of those, 7 report race and sex data to NSLVE, 2 report partial data (one only reports sex data, another had partial race data). We are hoping that submitting this benchmarking and further information to the Provost's Office about why the demographic data in NSLVE is important in continuing our voting efforts that we can advocate for this data to be added to our next NSLVE report for 2024.

Section VII: REPORTING

The Action Plan will be used to guide the work of UNC Chapel Hill as it relates to civic engagement and achieving the Promote Democracy objectives and goals outlined above. The Action Plan will continue to be circulated and discussed in depth with the Promote Democracy Initiative group, the Civic Engagement Working Group, Student Affairs, and the Provost's Office. We do allow ALL IN to publish our Action Plan on their website.

When it comes to sharing our Action Plan with students, we primarily share out the Goals and Outcomes section, as oftentimes our student leaders are the force behind achieving those goals. This often helps our students ideate programming and outreach ideas as well as think critically about what it means to connect their work to larger institutional goals.

Our campus NSLVE report is reported fairly extensively, particularly with students (we realized that most students do not even realize that NSLVE exists and how interested they are in the data). Each fall as the academic year is starting, NSLVE is shared with students at the Civic Engagement Working Group, and Natasha spends time presenting and going through the report at a meeting. The Promote Democracy Initiative also spends a meeting going through and discussing the NSLVE report once it comes out. The NSLVE report is kept filed in our respective Sharepoint files.

We are currently in the process of re-vamping our Carolina Votes webpage; we intend to add a section on "Resources" and plan to include our NSLVE report here as well for faculty, staff, and students to more easily access. The link to our NSLVE report on the ALL IN webpage is linked or shared out to folks as needed but is not currently in a public-facing space.

Section IX: EVALUATION

Evaluating the Action Plan will be vital in determining the effectiveness of new efforts/initiatives being introduced this year. As a lot of focus is on voter registration and outreach, assessing attendance numbers will be a large part of this. Since most voter registration events are sponsored on campus by student organizations, tracking attendance through Heel Life will be the primary evaluation method for

those events, and will be incorporated into the training student organizations go through around voter registration. We intend to holistically evaluate our Action Plan across the following areas:

- Effectiveness of student staff that help move initiatives forward around civic engagement
- Heel Life data around event attendance
- Campus Life Experience data that tracks student attendance at events for credit.
- Local Board of Election data from Spring 2024 primaries
- Annual surveying of students