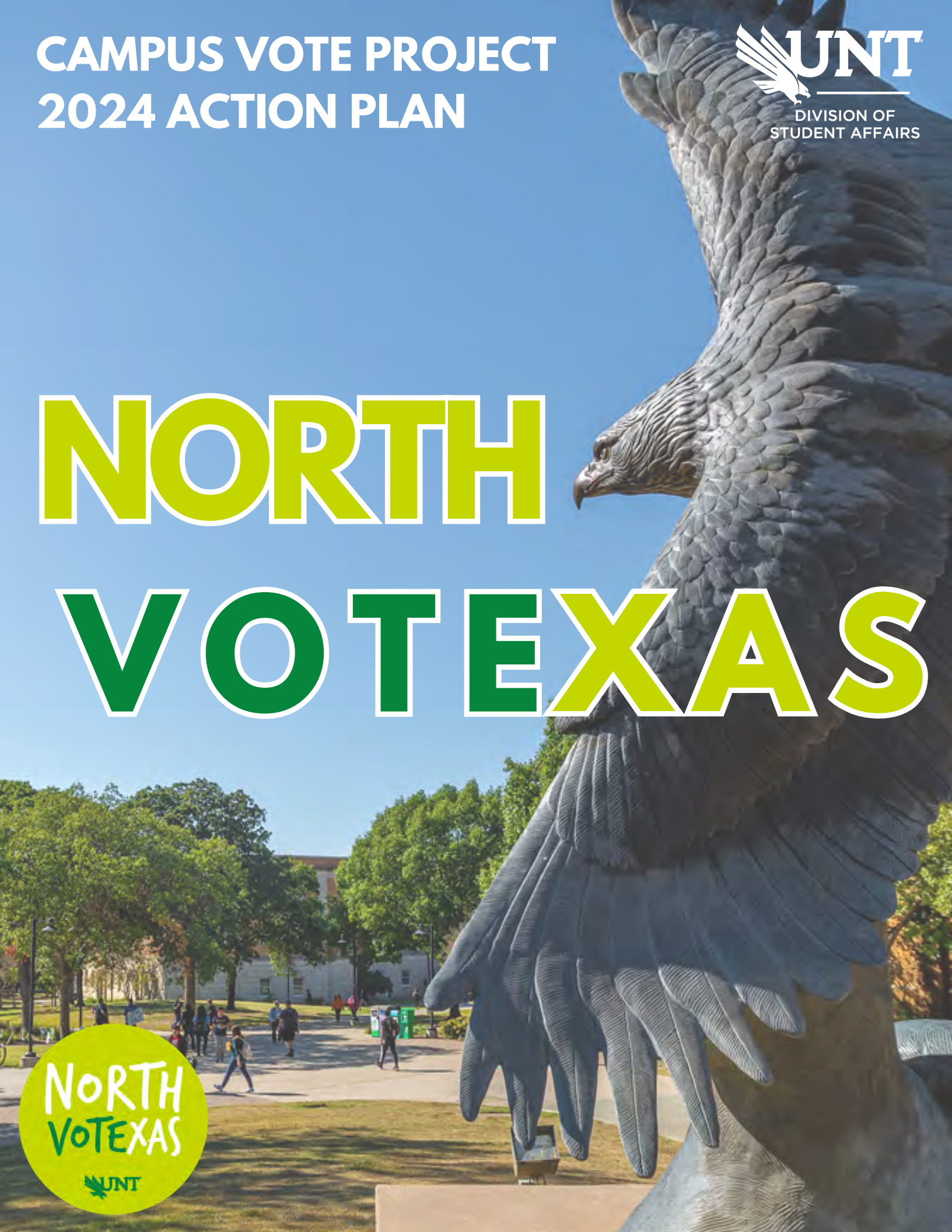


# CAMPUS VOTE PROJECT 2024 ACTION PLAN



# NORTH VOTEXAS



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# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, a Hispanic-Serving Institution located in the Dallas-Forth Worth metroplex is home to almost 47,000 students. The UNT vision is to *“become globally known for collaborative and imaginative educational innovation and scholarly activity that transforms our students and benefits the world around us”*. The Division of Student Affairs contributes to this vision through its mission of *“creating a student experience that supports academic success, social engagement, and personal and professional growth”* to build a foundation for all its students to succeed as contributing members in an evolving global society. The Division of Student Affairs Student Engagement team leads the charges of the *NorthVOTexas* voting initiative on campus which brings together campus and community partners to learn and promote civic engagement, voter education, registration, and voter turnout.

Under the guidance of the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Melissa McGuire, and leadership by the Coordinator of Student Engagement, Erik Sikkema, the goal of *NorthVOTexas* is to create the foundation for a newly executed voter initiative plan, establish a foundation for both the student registration rate and turnout rate of voter as the university has recently revitalized civic engagement initiatives outside of general voter registration initiatives and hosting a polling location for the campus and local Denton community.

The planned activities outlined in this action plan will be carried out from summer throughout the 2024–2025 academic year on the UNT Denton, Frisco, and Discovery Park campuses. This initiative will be assessed at the end of every semester to determine their effectiveness and inform plans for future semesters leading up to the next election.

The following groups will be leading this civic engagement initiative at the University of North Texas to accomplish the plan’s goals and further push the university’s commitment to voter education and participation in elections:

- Division of Student Affairs Leadership
- Student organizations
- Community partners
- Faculty

The mission of the *NorthVOTexas* initiative is to deepen voter education and civic engagement on campus.

The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Special Projects team will take the leadership role in the development, coordination, and implementation of the *NorthVOTexas* voter action plan.



# II. LEADERSHIP

The *NorthVOTexas* initiative 2024 Action Plan was drafted by the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Melissa McGuire, and the Coordinator of Student Engagement, Erik Sikkema. Mr. Sikkema will have direct oversight over the action plan and *NorthVOTexas* with the goal of increasing civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. Mr. Sikkema will build and develop relationships with both internal and external campus partners to ensure the success of the action plan.

The Democracy Fellows under *NorthVOTexas* includes representation from different areas of campus; different perspectives and areas of expertise; leaders and organizations who support historically underrepresented communities; and that help with outreach to bring in more students across campus.

A succession plan will be developed to ensure that the action plan moves forward through staff transitions.

## Internal - Campus Partners

- Division of Student Affairs Student Engagement team: Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Melissa McGuire; Coordinator of Student Engagement, Erik Sikkema; along with the UNT Democracy Fellows will lead the *NorthVOTexas* efforts coordinating meetings, voter deputy registrar trainings, and student outreach and engagement. DSA Student Engagement team staff will be trained and updated to step into leading *NorthVOTexas* efforts on behalf of the DSA Student Engagement team at any point in time. This provides a foundation in which the initiative can continue to build and thrive.
- Senior leadership like President Neal Smatresk is a strong advocate and support of voter engagement on the UNT campus and has even signed the “ALL IN: Presidential Commitment” showing his support.
- Orientation and Transition Programs; Student Activities Center; Center for Leadership and Service; First Generation Success Center; Greek Life; Housing and Residence Life. Each of these offices engage and work with our students and registered student organizations.
- Registered Student Organizations: Student Government Association and MOVE UNT are registered student organizations that have worked with *NorthVOTexas* to register voters, table and promote voter engagement, and distribute voter guides. RSOs greatly help contribute to learning from their peers on how to best meet the needs of our students as it relates to their civic engagement.

## External - Community Partners

- DSA Student Engagement team have established a point of contact with the Denton County Elections office and gains insight on strengthening volunteer deputy registrar training, voter registration efforts, learning about specific changes to voting laws, and encourages opportunities for students to become involved in their local community. The DSA Student Engagement team also partners with the Denton County Elections office to have UNT identified as a polling place during all election seasons.
- DSA Student Engagement teams continues to strengthen their working relationships and partnerships with organizations like Denton Vote Group, ALL IN Democracy, Campus Vote Project, and others.

# III. COMMITMENT

The University of North Texas and campus leadership demonstrate a commitment to improving civic learning and engagement as seen in the work done by faculty and staff. President Smatresk has signed the ALL IN Presidential Commitment and also shares messages on social media about the importance of voting and sharing their voice through their right to vote.

The Division of Student Affairs Student Engagement team is committed to asking student what their barriers to voting are and help meet students where they are. An example of this was when UNT partnered with the Denton County Elections office to become a polling location to ease the burden on students to getting to the polls. The Division of Student Affairs Student Engagement team communicates to UNT students about the hours of operation and location of the UNT polling location in a timely manner so that students have an increased likelihood of voting.

The Division of Student Affairs Student Engagement team is also committed to financially assisting non-partisan community organizations by covering administrative tabling costs, in order to help further voter registration efforts across the UNT Denton, Frisco, and Discovery Park campuses.

On the UNT campuses we've seen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs and/or student organizations
- Campus leaders promoting voting
- On-campus polling location on election days
- Voter registration tables
- Signage promoting each Election Day

On the UNT campuses, we've experienced:

- Walks to the polling locations on campus
- Voter registration events

As we further our action plan and civic programming, we are exploring for ways on how to best integrate civic learning into core-curriculum. We are looking at presenting in classes during election season to further the conversation about the importance of registering to vote, turning out to vote on Election Day, and also Early Voting/Absentee Ballot education.



# IV. LANDSCAPE

The following tables provide a brief overview of the student body population and landscape of the campus here at the University of North Texas. This information represents the data collected during the Fall 2023 semester, where the total student enrollment was approximately 47,000 students.

## Enrollment Data:

Classification	Student Count	Percentage
Undergraduate	33, 513	71.7%
Graduate	13,211	28.3%
Total	46,724	100.0%

## Ethnicity:

Ethnicity	Student Count	Percentage
African American	6,922	14.8%
Amer. Indian	446	1.0%
Asian/Pacific Isl.	3,715	8.0%
Hispanic	11,289	24.2%
Non-Res.	8,936	19.1%
Other	505	1.1%
White	14,911	31.9%
Total	46,724	100.0%

## Enrollment Status

Enrollment Status	Student Count	Percentage
Full-time	34,896	74.7%
Part-time	11,828	25.3%

## Gender

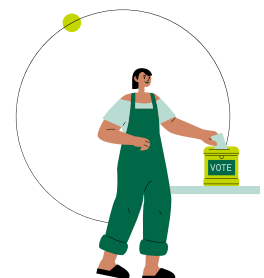
Gender	Student Count	Percentage
Male	21,504	46.0%
Female	25,220	54.0%

## In State vs. Out of State

Residency	Student Count	Percentage
In-State	36,223	77.5%
Out-of-State	10,501	22.5%

The Division of Student Affairs Student Engagement team at the University of North Texas is waiting to receive NSLVE data as the institution has only recently restarted its partnership in gathering this data.

After receiving this data, the DSA Student Engagement team plans to partner with campus and community partners by sharing the data to stress the importance of getting eligible students to participate in the democracy process. The University of North Texas has a large percentage of non-resident students that are unable to vote in the state and federal elections but a plan will be implemented to help increase their participation in other ways so that they feel included in this process.



As the DSA Student Engagement team began setting voter-friendly and civic engagement goals on the UNT campus, the following things were taken into consideration.

## Challenges

Our campus faces the following internal challenges when it comes to getting our students registered to vote and participating in voting efforts:

- Voter engagement work is siloed across campus in various departments (i.e. UNT Libraries, Student Government Association, Division of Student Affairs, and student organizations).
- Student knowledge and awareness of the *NorthVOTexas* initiative is low.
- Students often mistake the initiative for campus-wide elections (i.e. SGA Presidential elections).
- Our campus has a large percentage of commuter students that only navigate certain places on campus.

Our campus also faces the following external challenges when it comes to becoming registered to vote and participating in voting efforts:

- Texas state voting laws make it challenging to support student voter registration efforts. Extra effort is dedicated to educating students about ID requirements and absentee ballot instructions on the [vote.unt.edu](https://vote.unt.edu) website.
- On Election Day, students are only able to vote in their respective precincts. Extra effort is dedicated on educating students about voting in their respective precinct or updating their registration address.

## Opportunities

- The University of North Texas is federally designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution and Tier 1 research institute that focuses on embedding a civic engagement plan as a way to prepare socially responsible graduates.
- The Division of Student Affairs at the University of North Texas has a mission and vision that supports a student's social engagement and "builds a foundation for all students to succeed as contributing members in an evolving global society".
- Faculty, staff, and campus leaders have express interest in increasing voter registration and civic engagement in their respective functional areas.
- Voter engagement efforts on campus are non-partisan.
- UNT currently partners with local, non-partisan, community members to table on campus and promote voter registration and civic engagement opportunities.

## Short-Term Goals (next academic year)

- In Fall 2024, at least 10% of incoming students will participate in the "ALL IN" Challenge by National Voter Registration Day.
- During Fall 2024, at least 250 students will register to vote during or as an extension of one of our outreach programs for the upcoming 2024 election.
- During Fall 2024, at least 500 students will participate in a voter education program during First Flight Week (first-year experience) or programming during National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, or the first week in November 2024.
- Implement a new branding initiative for #ScrappyVotes to promote civic engagement



# V. GOALS

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## Long-Term Goals (next 5 years)

- Create a more cohesive *NorthVOTexas* plan to promote long-term student engagement.
- Enhance promotional items to raise more awareness of the *NorthVOTexas* voting initiative.
- Review voter registration rates from NSLVE over the next few years to evaluate initiative effectiveness.
- Institute a more sustainable Democracy Fellow recruitment process to increase student participation.

# VI. NSLVE

The Division of Student Affairs at the University of North Texas only recently resigned to participate in the NSLVE and does not have any previous information to reference voting data. Once the data is received, Erik Sikkema, Coordinator of Student Engagement will work with Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, Melissa McGuire, to evaluate the data and develop civic engagement opportunities based upon the findings.

This portion will be revised once NSLVE data has been received.

# VII. STRATEGY

The following are action items that the DSA Student Engagement team currently does to increase voter education, registration, and turnout.

- Promote voter registration by tabling during campus-wide programs like First Flight Week, resource fairs, and other events; full-time staff deputized to register students; coordinate volunteer deputy voter registrar trainings for Democracy Fellows; circulate election reminders through email communication and lawn signs.

## Short-Term Action Items

- Publish the submission of our 2024 action plan on the [vote.unt.edu](https://vote.unt.edu) website.
- Create a “Walk to the Polls” event to help bring registered students to the UNT polling location during early-voting to promote civic engagement.
- Promote *NorthVOTexas* information in Fall courses with faculty to increase awareness of voter education resources.
- Update the [vote.unt.edu](https://vote.unt.edu) website to share Early Voting and Election Day information with the UNT community for the Fall 2024 Presidential Election.

## Long-Term Action Items

- Facilitate voter registration drives and provide election reminders for local and state elections.
- Expand and enhance the *NorthVOTexas* initiative and Democracy Fellow program.
- Develop ways of increasing engagement of undocumented and international students in civic engagement efforts across campus through programmatic efforts.

We plan to share this Action Plan internally when it is complete by providing a copy to the following:

- *NorthVOTexas* Democracy Fellows.
- Campus administration and University Relations staff.
- The President and Provost of the University of North Texas.
- Other departments that request a copy of the action plan.

We plan to share this Action Plan externally when it is complete by providing a copy to the following:

- Uploading a copy to the **vote.unt.edu** website.
- City Council officials.
- Community partners.

We will collect feedback on this Action Plan by:

- Surveying students about barriers to voting on a semesterly basis.
- Meet with campus partners to debrief and identify challenges, strategize on ways to enhance program, and brainstorm ways to better coordinate with campus and community partners.
- Re-evaluate and make revisions to the Action Plan as needed.

We anticipate evaluating success in our voting initiatives by assessing the following quantitative and qualitative data:

- The number of students that engaged in our various activities.
- The number of students that registered to vote (whether through our voter drives or other partners’).
- Evaluate our NSLVE data to see if our anticipated metrics were reached in regards to voter registration and Election Day turnout numbers.

Major communications will be directly distributed primarily by the Division of Student Affairs Student Engagement team, except where otherwise noted. All designs for reports have been or will be created by the DSA Communications or Student Engagement team and distributed to others for use, when applicable.

Next year, the DSA Student Engagement team will be:

- Sending a targeted message to on-campus residents to register to vote in Denton to reduce the number of on-campus residents who are registered to vote in other counties, to ease the access to voting.
- Emailing Division of Student Affairs full-time staff about our *NorthVOTexas* initiatives and resources
- Distributing social media graphics for UNT departments to share on their respective pages.
- Displaying lawn signs across campus to promote voting initiatives and Election Information.
- Promoting *NorthVOTexas* initiatives and resources in the Orientation and Transition Programs “Connections” magazine that is sent out to over 15,000 incoming students for the 2024–2025 academic year.
- Announce voting information in the UNT Weekly, centralized student newsletter, during the week of National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and the early voting period.
- Placing information cards in Student Affairs offices, residence halls, and classrooms (per faculty request) with voter education resources and Election Day information.

## Sample Student Email (sent in 2023)

Hello UNT students,

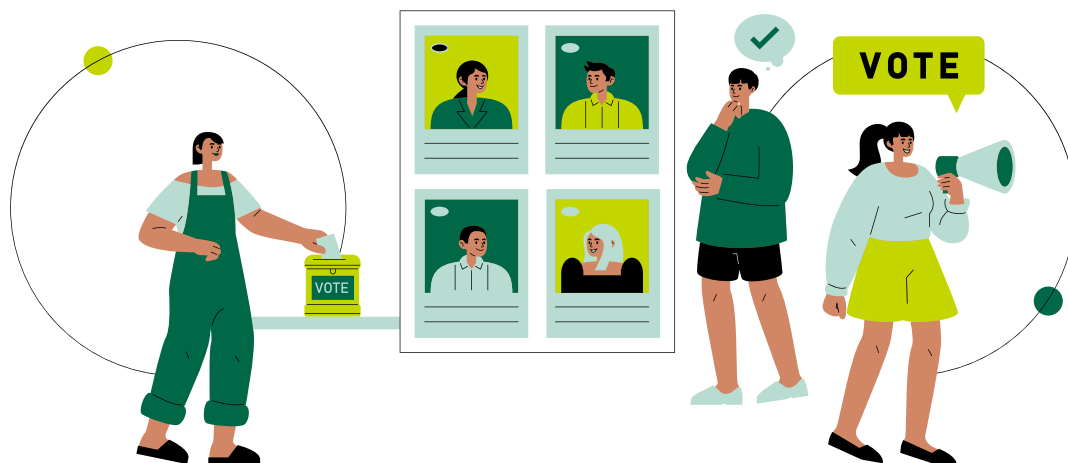
Early Voting for the upcoming general election where we vote on Proposals begins Monday, October 23, 2023! We recognize that many of our students may be new to the Denton County or voting altogether. We want to provide you with some information to ensure that your vote counts.

If you are registered to vote in Denton County, you can vote in the Gateway Center, room 52 on October 23–Nov 3, 2023, during the early voting period. It is also available on Election Day, if you are registered in our precinct. You can look up your specific precinct here.

If you are not registered to vote in Denton County, you have 3 options:

- Plan a trip back to the county you are registered in during early voting or on Election Day.
- Go to the Denton County Election Administration office in person to request a limited ballot. You will have to complete an application to ensure eligibility and they will determine what you are entitled to vote for (likely just the President/Vice President and possibly your senator).
  - 701 Kimberly Drive, Suite A101, Denton, TX, 76208
- Apply for a Ballot by Mail. The last day for an application to be received (not postmarked) is October 27, 2023.

More information on voting can be found at <http://vote.unt.edu>. Exercise your democratic right and make sure that your vote counts!



## Sample Staff Email Sent in 2023



Greetings UNT faculty and staff,

North VOTexas reminds you to register to vote by Tuesday, Oct. 10. UNT will have an election poll location at Gateway 52 for early voting and on election day. Take the pledge to vote and receive reminders on upcoming elections.

Early voting begins Monday, Oct. 23. Election day is Tuesday, Nov. 7.

More information on voting can be found at <http://vote.unt.edu>. Exercise your democratic right and make sure that your vote counts!



[vote.unt.edu](http://vote.unt.edu)

## Sample of Graphics Used in 2023

**NORTH VOTEXAS**

**REGISTER TO VOTE BY:**  
10/10/23

**EARLY VOTING STARTS:**  
10/23/23

**ELECTION DAY:**  
11/07/23

**NORTH VOTEXAS**

**YOUR VOICE MATTERS**

**NORTH VOTEXAS**  
UNT

[vote.unt.edu](https://vote.unt.edu)

**UNT**  
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

**WHAT'S ON THE BALLOT?**

**OFFICES ON THE BALLOT**

**Special State Legislative:** House of Representatives (District 2)  
**School Boards:** 66 school boards across TX have at least 1 seat open  
**Municipal Elections:** 13 cities have mayoral, city council, and/or other positions with open seats

**STATE-WIDE BALLOT MEASURES**

**PROP 1:** Protect the right to engage in farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture, and wildlife management.

**PROP 2:** Allow local governments to exempt childcare facilities from property taxes

**PROP 3:** Prohibit a wealth or net worth tax

**PROP 4:** Increase homestead tax exemption to \$100K and increase state funding for public education

**PROP 5:** Renames National Research University Fund to Texas University Fund; establishes ongoing revenue source from accrued interest of the economic stabilization fund

**NORTH VOTEXAS**  
UNT

[vote.unt.edu](https://vote.unt.edu)

**UNT**  
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

## Sample of Graphics Used in 2023

**NORTH VOTEXAS**  
UNT

**UPCOMING VOTING DATES**

**OCTOBER 10**  
DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE

**OCTOBER 23**  
EARLY VOTING OPENS IN GATEWAY 52

**NOVEMBER 7**  
ELECTION DAY VOTING IN GATEWAY 52

FOR INFORMATION ON HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE & OTHER VOTING RESOURCES, VISIT  
[VOTE.UNT.EDU](https://vote.unt.edu)

**UNT**  
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

**VOTER REGISTRATION DAY**

**NORTH VOTEXAS**  
UNT

SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

TAKE THE PLEDGE TO VOTE

SCAN ME

[vote.unt.edu](https://vote.unt.edu)

[vote.unt.edu](https://vote.unt.edu)

## T-Shirt Design for Staff and Student Leaders



# IX. APPENDIX E

## Decal Design for Student Giveaways

