



Netter Center
for Community Partnerships
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

PENN LEADS
★ THE VOTE ★



Penn OGCA
Office of Government & Community Affairs

2024 Campus Action Plan: University of Pennsylvania

I. Executive Summary

Penn Leads the Vote (PLTV) is Penn's student-led, non-partisan university-wide program that increases voter engagement and voting among students, staff and faculty while advancing Penn's role of supporting the democratic and civic engagement of Penn students.

This action plan is based on several years of success. As described below, it is informed by and also will help realize Penn's founding mission – and indeed the founding mission of American higher education institutions. It is also informed by and will help realize Penn's current strategic framework, In Principle and Practice.

Moreover, by being a student-led initiative integrated with and supported by an array of university-wide academic and administrative partners, including the firm support of University leadership, the implementation of PLTV's action plan aims to be a model of democratic process and product. The democratic process will be realized by soliciting and incorporating feedback from all members of the Penn community on an ongoing basis. The democratic product will be realized by increasing the levels of democratic and civic engagement, including but not limited to all aspects of voter engagement.

1) Who developed this plan

This plan was developed by Penn Leads the Vote. The leadership team worked with a broad range of Penn partners over the past year and incorporated their feedback into this plan. The leadership team also incorporated their reflections on and data from activities implemented over the last couple of years.

Penn Leads the Vote (PLTV) is a student-run, non-partisan program. PLTV is university-wide and includes students from both the undergraduate and graduate student bodies. Penn Leads The Vote (PLTV) was established in 2004 and operated by Fox Leadership until 2014. PLTV was re-established in 2018 in the Netter Center for Community Partnerships. PLTV works in collaboration with the Office of Government and Community Affairs, which also oversees Penn's on-campus voting in conjunction with the Philadelphia Commissioners.

PLTV connects the Penn community with the resources needed to register and check registration, to be informed about the ballot, and to cast a vote. Throughout the year, PLTV encourages students to learn about and engage with current issues and politics at the local, state, and national level.

PLTV is committed to supporting the democratic and civic engagement of all Penn students, including those not eligible to vote, and creating an overall Penn culture of civic engagement.

(Brief example of PLTV's commitment to working with all students: two students on PLTV's leadership team in 2023-2024 were international students.)

PLTV is based on the following ideas:

- Civic engagement is vital to fully realizing the potential of democratic society.
- Colleges and universities have both an opportunity and a responsibility to support students' democratic development and civic participation, including but not limited to voting.
- PLTV can advance student learning and civic engagement not only by working with Penn students but also by supporting voter engagement across Penn (including staff and faculty) and with Penn's local community. PLTV will encourage students, faculty, and staff to engage with, learn from, and support the Philadelphia community on issues related to voter and civic engagement.
- PLTV will catalyze and work with academic research partnerships, such as Academically Based Community Service (ABCS) courses, that can help develop, implement and evaluate PLTV strategies and programs.

2) The purpose of the plan

Creating the plan has been an opportunity to

- Set SMARTIE goals based on specific successes and challenges over the last few years
- Incorporate the feedback of many partners across campus, and
- Identify new partners that PLTV will connect with in the coming year.

The plan itself will be PLTV's foundation for its weekly meetings, overall calendar of activities, and program strategies. The plan demonstrates that this is a student-led initiative integrated with and supported by an array of university-wide academic and administrative partners, including the firm support of University leadership. Specifically, the implementation of PLTV's action plan aims to be a model democratic partnership process with students incorporating feedback and support from a wide variety of offices, faculty and courses across Penn.

The plan is informed by and also will help realize Penn's founding mission. Benjamin Franklin's [founding vision for Penn](#) was to develop "an Inclination joined with an Ability to serve Mankind" and "this should indeed be the great Aim and End of all Learning." Indeed, all institutions of higher learning have a critical role in advancing democracy and democratic citizenship.

The plan is also informed by Penn's current strategic framework, [In Principle and Practice](#). By engaging students, faculty and staff across the University, the plan will help realize all four principles:

- The Anchored University
- The Interwoven University
- The Inventive University
- The Engaged University

And several practices, including

- Democracy, trust, and truth: Position Penn as a global leader in driving conversations about and promoting democratic values and institutions.
- Cultivating leaders who serve.

3) Where the plan will be implemented

The plan will reach all Penn students where they are. Based on OGCA's work with the Philadelphia Commissioners to implement voting on campus, Penn is very fortunate that students who live on campus can vote on campus. But not all students live on campus or vote on campus. So implementation will include a variety of digital communications (e.g., email, social media, official University communications, Thrive at Penn modules (described below), New Student Orientation activities, etc.) that will reach all active Penn students as well as various on-campus and face-to-face communications.

PLTV also connects with off-campus partners through the [High School Voter Project | Netter Center for Community Partnerships \(upenn.edu\)](#). This program, also housed at the Netter Center, helps local high school students become active leaders in school and community voter engagement. PLTV and the High School Voter project have shared strategies and materials.

4) The goals of the plan

This action plan will help PLTV advance the following goals:

- Voter registration
- Voter education
- Voter mobilization
- Full participation, including
 - Eligible US voters
 - All Penn students (e.g., international student participation reflected on board)

- Institutionalization

These are described in more detail below.

5) The duration of the plan

PLTV will reevaluate its action plan each semester to ensure that the team is still on-track with its goals and to update the plan as appropriate in light of developments with campus and community partners.

6) How the plan will be implemented

- PLTV leadership team meets weekly throughout the academic year to implement the plan.
 - The meetings include reflections on recent activities and specific recommendations for the future; checking in on the calendar of activities in the action plan and assigning responsibilities using SMARTIE goals; soliciting feedback and new ideas from the team, etc.
 - The leadership team consists of officers with defined jobs and roles created specifically to implement the action plan. These jobs are described below (e.g., on-campus partnerships, website, social media coordinators, etc.).

II. Leadership

Penn Leads the Vote 2023-2024 Student Team that developed this plan:

- Sarah Alkhafaji (C'24), *Co-Director*
- Alyssa Antonian (C'25), *Co-Director*
- Julia Levine (C'25), *Research & Analytics Coordinator*
- Chelsea Bunay (C'26), *Volunteer Coordinator*
- Leah Elesinmogun (W'26), *Wharton Coordinator*
- Bryce Hall (C'25), *Athletics Coordinator*
- Sherry Li (E'24), *Design Coordinator*
- Henry Li (C'27), *Program Manager*
- Elena Paz (C'25), *Events Coordinator*

Each team member is responsible for certain tasks and for a certain network of outreach, such as with our Wharton and Athletics coordinators. In fall 2024, we expect to hire a Graduate Student Coordinator, a position we have filled in several previous years. Directors attend additional

leadership meetings, help recruit, train and supervise volunteers, and collaboratively identify tasks for the other members of the team.

Members of this team are determined by an application process at the beginning of each semester. The directors work in conjunction with other members of the team to determine new members. Role descriptions are advertised and placed on Workday, where prospective members can apply. PLTV leadership positions are paid, and often supported by our national partners. At the end of each year, the team director(s) identify 1-2 continuing members of the team to serve as a “deputy director.” That member will most likely succeed the existing director. In the event that that is not the case, the team will collaborate to identify a dedicated member to serve as the next director. This fall, with the graduation of one director, PLTV expects in August to promote another existing team member to deputy director in order to set them up for leadership succession.

PLTV has several current partners and has identified several new ones to help realize this plan. Partners assist in recruiting diverse members, reverse door-knocking, volunteer recruitment, and advising on our goals for the year.

Partners listed below will be engaged in the implementation of this plan. PLTV will share this plan with all contacts mentioned in the plan so that they are aware of the goals and can help further develop them. We expand on several of these partnerships in the sections below.

National organizations

- The Andrew Goodman Foundation
- Campus Vote Project/National Voter Friendly Campus Project
- Students Learn Students Vote Coalition
- All In Democracy Challenge

Student Groups

- Undergraduate Assembly (UA) — Xavier Shankle (23-24 President), Ria Ellendula (24-25 President)
- Daily Pennsylvanian — Diany Wang C’26 (Politics Editor), Jasmine Ni C’27 (Politics Beat Reporter)
- Student Activities Council (SAC)
- Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA)
- Social Planning and Events Committee (SPEC)
- Class Boards

Cultural Resource Centers

- Greenfield Intercultural Center (GIC) — Valerie De Cruz (director), Kia Lor (Associate Director)
- Penn Women's Center (PWC) — Elisa Foster (Director), Hitomi Yoshida (Program and Operations Coordinator)
- Pan-Asian American Community House (PAACH) — Vicky Aquino (Associate Director), Daniel Hoddinott (Associate Director)
- Makuu: The Black Cultural Center — Brian Peterson (Director), Michelle Gilliard Houston (Associate Director)
- LGBT Center — TBD pending new leadership
- Spiritual and Religious Life Center (SPARC) — Steve Kosher (Senior Associate Chaplain and Director)
- Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs

Academic Programs and Centers

- Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships — Cory Bowman (Associate Director)
- Fox Leadership Program — Stephanie Perry (Executive Director)
- Penn Program on Opinion Research and Election Studies (PORES) — Dan Hopkins (Professor)
- Wharton Behavioral Lab — Mary Spratt, Associate Director
- Falk Communication Neuroscience Lab — Emily Falk (Director), Dani Cosme (Research Director)
- Penn College of Arts and Sciences — Dr. Molly McGlone, Associate Dean and Director of Academic Affairs
- Penn Engineering, Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion — Laura Stubbs
- Wharton Student Life — Eddie Banks-Crosson, Director of Student Life
- Penn Nursing — Monique Howard, Senior Director of Community Engagement at Penn Nursing

Administrative Offices

- College Houses and Academic Services. — Jen B. Ciaccio (Executive Director), Deven Patel (Faculty Director), Licinia "Lulu" Barrueco Kaliher (Senior Director for Housing Operations)
- Netter Center for Community Partnerships — Cory Bowman
- New Student Orientation & Academic Initiatives (NSOAI) — David Fox (Director), Troy Majnerick (Associate Director) Andrea Naughton (Assistant Director)

- Office of Government and Community Affairs (OGCA) — Jeffrey Cooper (Vice President), Dawn Maglicco Dietch (Executive Director), Rachel Kurlander (Associate Director)
- Student Registration and Financial Services — Margaret Kip (University Registrar)
- Division of the Vice Provost for University Life (VPUL) — Hikaru (Karu) Kozuma, Vice Provost for University Life
- Office of the President — Leah Popovich
- Office of the Provost — John L. Jackson Jr. (Provost), Karen Detlefsen (Vice Provost for Education), Laura Perna (Vice Provost for Faculty)
- Penn Athletics and Recreation — Alanna Shanahan (Athletic Director), Emma Springer (Coordinator for Student-Athlete Success)

Professional Assemblies and Faculty Senate

- Weekly Paid Professional Staff Assembly (WPPSA)
- Paid Professional Staff Assembly (PPSA) — Chair Tonya Bennett, Director of Educational Technology, Penn Vet
- Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) — Chair, Eric A. Feldman, Professor of Law

Community & National Organizations

- High School Voter Project — Nina Wang C'26 (Director)
- Campus Vote Project — Kassie Phebillo (Curriculum & Research Manager), Lauren Schueler (Curriculum & Research Associate), Joseph Olah (PA State Coordinator)
- The Andrew Goodman Foundation — Caroline Smith (Director of Programs)
- Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND) — Hillary Kane, Director
- Pennsylvania Student Voting Coalition
- Students Learn Students Vote (SLSV)
- All-In Democracy Challenge
- Philadelphia Satellite Election Office (4029 Market St)

Voting on campus is coordinated by the Office of Government and Community Affairs in partnership with

- Pennsylvania Department of State
- Philadelphia Office of City Commissioners

PLTV is housed in the Netter Center and works closely with the Office of Government and Community Affairs. Funding over the last two years has been provided by Penn offices – the

Netter Center, Fox Leadership, the Office of Government and Community Affairs, and national organization partners, particularly the Andrew Goodman Foundation.

Founded in 1992, the Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships brings together the resources and assets of both the University and the wider community to help solve universal problems such as poverty, health inequities, environmental sustainability, and inadequate, unequal education as they are manifested in the University's local geographic area of West Philadelphia and Philadelphia at large. The Netter Center develops and helps implement democratic, mutually transformative, place-based partnerships between Penn and West Philadelphia that advance research, teaching, learning, and service. These partnerships help improve the quality of life on campus and in the community. The Netter Center works with and serves as a model for other higher education institutions across the United States and around the world.

The Office of Government and Community Affairs designs and implements advocacy strategies to advance the University's mission and interests with federal, state, and city governments. They connect our campus community to neighbors, civic groups, and nonprofit organizations for meaningful engagement. They coordinate voter registration activities and organize campus polling places. At a time when communication, connectivity, and collaboration have never been more important, they link Penn's partners in government and in the community with the critical thinkers, innovators, educators, and learners who power our nation's first university.

III. Commitment

President & Leadership Support

Penn's leadership has consistently shown strong support for voter engagement initiatives, reflecting the University's commitment to democratic participation. [In 2021](#), former President Gutmann signed the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation for the ALL-IN Campus Democracy Challenge. Since then, both Penn's current and interim presidents have upheld this commitment, ensuring continuity in support for student voter engagement.

Over the past three years, despite changes in leadership, PLTV has received unwavering support from the President's office. This includes attendance at voter registration events, regular communication, and university-wide messaging in advance of elections. This shows the University's overall commitment to voter engagement, rather than being specific to a single leader. We hope to build upon this partnership and grow. In addition, the PLTV website (vote.upenn.edu) has been housed on Penn's official domain since 2020. This support from the highest levels of leadership shows Penn's dedication to building a culture of civic participation.

Support from Campus Organizations

Penn's commitment to democratic engagement extends beyond the administration, with various campus organizations playing vital roles in supporting PLTV's initiatives:

College Houses: Residential services have assisted in placing voter registration forms and educational pamphlets on the beds of every student moving into a dorm, and agreed to do the same for future move-ins. They also consistently host voter registration floor events and promote all PLTV activities through their newsletters.

Athletics: The athletics department has allowed PLTV to host registration and educational events during team practices and games. Notably, we have worked with the Men's and Women's Basketball teams and aim to expand this partnership to all 33 athletic teams. Our main athletics contact, Emma Springer, as well as several of the coaches, such as Steve Donahue, the Head Men's basketball coach, have shown support for these initiatives.

Cultural Resource Centers (CRCs): Penn houses five main cultural resource centers—GIC, Makuu, LGBT Center, PWC, and PAACH. Each of these centers assists in advertising PLTV events and recruiting volunteers. We have also established a tradition where members from CRCs and athletic teams "sponsor" an hour of tabling during our election day and tabling events. This sponsorship involves bringing memorabilia and signage from their organizations, volunteering to recruit, educate, and assist students with registrations. In the past election, GIC and the Women's Center each sponsored an hour of tabling, providing pens and informational pamphlets to distribute to passersby. This culture of collaboration and non-partisan voter recruitment underscores Penn's growing culture of civic engagement and voting.

Daily Pennsylvanian (DP) & Penn Today: PLTV collaborates with the Daily Pennsylvanian, the school newspaper, and Penn Today, the official Penn news source, to promote voting and engagement on campus. Through these partnerships, we regularly publish articles that promote election day events, highlight the importance of voter participation, and provide essential information on registration and polling locations. The DP and Penn Today feature stories that showcase the impact of student voting, share personal narratives of civic involvement, and report on PLTV's initiatives and successes. This strategic use of campus media not only raises awareness but also encourages a campus-wide culture of democratic participation.

Class Boards and Undergraduate Assembly (UA): The Class Boards and UA, as the primary student government bodies, play a crucial role in amplifying PLTV's outreach. They advertise PLTV events by posting on their social media and email listservs. Through this partnership, the student government assists in sending information about

upcoming voter registration drives, educational workshops, and election day events via their extensive network of undergraduates. They promote using social media platforms, email newsletters, and campus-wide announcements. Their support ensures visibility, and that our messages reach a broad student audience.

Academic Curriculum

Academically Based Community Service (ABCS) courses, hosted by the Netter Center for Community Partnerships, PLTV's parent organization, play a crucial role in advancing our goals by integrating academic learning with civic action. This past fall, PLTV advised an ABCS Course titled "URBS 3140: Participatory Cities." The course attempted to design a strategy, implement a tactic, and collect community input from the CRCs' participants on how to enhance engagement in PLTV initiatives. It included five student groups, each focusing on a different CRC, to gather information on their needs and interests in voter engagement. PLTV partnered with this course and advised throughout the course. We received the feedback that the students gathered and assisted in organizing the research workshops. Students in this class learned about campus voter engagement in general, as well as PLTV's specific initiatives, and the research methods in understanding the overlap between voting behavior and cultural and group identity. The course was taught by visiting professors Sylvia García-García and Marisa Denker, and TA'd by Faith Applegate C'25. The feedback and data collected from this course will serve as a foundation for future ABCS courses on voter engagement. Potential future professors are being identified to continue this work. We hope to use this past iteration as a foundation for future ABCS courses on voter engagement.

Holidays and Annual Events

PLTV hosts certain "holidays" on campus and organizes events for them. At each of our major events (election days, NVRD, and Valentines Day), we design and give away T-Shirts that advertise Penn Leads the Vote and include a voting slogan on the back. Past slogans have included "You(th) decide the future." Students are encouraged to wear these shirts year-round, and volunteers must wear one to table at events. Local businesses like Lil Pop Shop and LaColombe have also agreed in the past to sponsor/provide free merchandise for our events in exchange for advertising and as a gesture of commitment to civic engagement. During these giveaways, PLTV does not sway or incentivize people to vote, but instead draws them towards our resources and serves as a reminder of the importance of voting.

Fall & Spring Election Days — for each of the fall and spring PA elections, we organize 2-4 tables outside of the main on-campus polling location. In advance of these elections, in the two weeks before the voter registration deadline, we also organize voter-registration tabling events in coordination with the college houses, CRCs, and dining halls. During the election day events, we organize giveaways, distribute

non-partisan voter guides and polling location maps, recruit volunteers, and register any unregistered voters. In the past we have tabled outside of Houston Hall, the location where the majority of Penn students living on and near camps would vote. This past spring, we tabled outside of the Arch voting location, which hosts some Penn students (mostly freshman, our most target demographic) as well as Drexel and off-campus affiliates who may be less familiar with Penn campus and the address of that polling location. We found it useful to be located there because we were able to direct people to Arch, and because we were located just off Locust Walk, the campus hub where most students will be passing through and walking to class. We hope to table there for all future elections.

National Voter Registration Day — Every year, we participate in National Voter Registration Day. We gather a similar-sized crowd that we would on election day, and table on Locust Walk. In the past we have given away HipCityVeg sandwiches, LaColombe coffees, Lil Pop Shop popsicles. During this event, we organize giveaways, distribute educational materials, and register voters. Each year, PLTV sets a new goal to beat last year’s registration numbers.

Penn Loves the Vote — This year (February 2024) PLTV began a tradition of celebrating *Penn Loves The Vote*, which will become an annual Valentine’s Day event. We hosted the event at the Love Statue on Penn’s campus, hung banners on Locust Walk, and advertised across student groups, CRCs, residential services, and the UA. This year we gave out food, coffee, and plushies, and let participants write valentines about their commitment to voting. We also hosted the Quaker (school mascot), Penn Band, and Interim President Jameson to stop by some hours of the day. In future years, we hope to keep those three partners involved in the tradition.

In the next year, PLTV also hopes to celebrate and acknowledge other holidays, including Vote Early Day. Future events we plan to incorporate in the fall include political panels, alumni panels, voter-education workshops, and debate watch-party in collaboration with our partnered student groups.

IV. Landscape

Campus Culture

Student engagement on campus has changed significantly after 2020’s COVID regulations impacted the way that information is disseminated. Rather than students going out of their way to attend in-person events and communicate relevant information with their peers, there has been a greater shift towards social media presentation. It was therefore relevant for us to consider this new digital landscape, and how we could reach the same students in a new way. We have worked

to revamp our website, ensuring all of our information and links are up to date. We have also worked to refocus efforts on posting on Instagram, connecting with students virtually, while additionally ensuring that our in-person events are emphasized. Our aim is to improve our digital presence in order to make the most of our efforts in the digital landscape that many students now find to be equally relevant to the in-person campus experience.

Student Engagement

Focusing just on the in-person on-campus experience, we have seen a general rise in apathy when it comes to voting interest. We are well aware of voting fatigue, where students are introduced to too much information or advertisements and end up losing interest, thus not going out of their way to make sure they are registered or that their ballot is accepted. Our goals are to foster new and unique opportunities for students to engage with voting information and education. This plan connects back to many of our other initiatives mentioned, including Cultural Resource Centers, the Athletics Department, and on social media.

Demographic Factors

In Fall 2022, 13.3% of students at Penn were international. Since these students generally are unable to register to vote, we have included several efforts in our current action plans in order to still support and include them. Our current team consists of two dedicated international students who strive to help make a difference despite their lack of voting ability. We plan to emphasize the importance of voter education and engagement, asking international students to still volunteer their time or share resources with friends and fellow students.

In the past three years, we have started new initiatives with the CRCs. In order to best reach all students on campus. Such initiatives have allowed us to diversify our audience. We have included forms of more “passive” collaboration, such as sharing advertisements and flyers on each other’s listservs, as well as mutual active collaboration, such as co-sponsoring tabling events and educational events. We hope to continue initiatives of active collaboration between each of the five CRCs and PLTV in the coming year as well. This year, we oversaw an ABCS course that researched the needs and interests of various CRCs as they relate to voting and democratic engagement. We hope to utilize some of that data to inform our initiatives for the next year. These are some of our biggest takeaways:

- The CRCs come in different forms and sizes, and should be approached and communicated with uniquely.
- Some CRCs, such as La Casa Latina, house several other umbrella groups that include different Latinx demographics across Penn’s campus. It may be best to find individual groups to reach out to and coordinate within these umbrella organizations.
- Listserv emails, google forms, and google calendar were effective communication strategies across many of the CRCs. Social media such as instagram showed mixed reviews. Other social media such as twitter and Facebook, as well as club websites were

less effective across the board. These observations coincided with our social media hits data.

- Tech strategies such as QR codes were effective in collecting data and were useful in spreading information to other students.
- Some groups, such as focus-group participants from PAACH, suggested wanting consistency, such as hosting a recurring tabling event at the same time and place every month. Consistency builds familiarity and connection, and would allow them to recognize PLTV members and feel more collaborative in the approach.
- Students from GIC, many of whom were international or ESL students, suggested offering flyers in multiple languages and translations for voting materials. This can help those eligible to vote better understand our approach, and provide learning materials for those international students who are not eligible to vote.

We will use this feedback to better inform our strategies for advertising and engaging with the cultural centers.

In the past years, UPenn has not shared demographic information with NSLVE due to an administrative miscommunication. Over Summer 2024 and Fall 2024, PLTV will continue to reach out to the relevant offices in order to ensure that this information is shared and published in the future in order to inform our NSLVE student data. So far, we are in communication with Margaret Kip (University Registrar) and Stacy Lopez (Vice President for Institutional Research and Analysis). We hope to establish partnerships to publish the data in the future.

In the meantime, we will analyze NSLVE data from peer institutions, and our own local data from the Philadelphia City Commissioners Office, in order to inform the most relevant future efforts. The City Commissioners Office publishes general voting data by ward and division, allowing us to gauge the turnout rate of anyone that lives on or near Penn's campus. We have used this data to understand that 8.23% of on-campus students voted in the past primary election in April 2024. This data allows us to better understand who to reach out to. When we see dips in on-campus voterships, as in past years, we expand our outreach to college Houses and Residential Services in order to address this gap.

Election Laws

Pennsylvania voting laws have been a relevant source of information on issues we have seen with voting procedures. Specifically, we have been in conversation regarding issues with mail-in ballots, provisional ballots, and electronic signatures on an online voter registration. The issues and our current efforts/goals are outlined below:

- **Mail-in ballots**
 - *Issue:* Students have been confused about request and return timelines for submitting a mail-in ballot. The procedure is often generally mixed up with regular election day voting procedures, and therefore instances where students attempt to drop off a mail-in ballot at the polls has occurred.
 - *Solution:* We have increased our messaging on mail-in ballot deadlines, especially for elections that occur during the end of the semester, or after many students will be away from the area. We have updated our website information on mail-in ballots as well, making sure we can link to our resources via social media for a more streamlined and representative process.
- **Provisional ballots**
 - *Issue:* Registrations have sometimes been unconfirmed, leading students to believe they are ready to vote on election day.
 - *Solution:* We have been ensuring that provisional ballots are an option in this case, although we would like to implement a checks system so that students are reminded to check their registration before the registration deadline.
- **Electronic signatures**
 - *Issue:* Students who attempt to register online often receive notice of an inaccurate registration, and therefore may not be able to vote in the election.
 - *Solution:* We have moved all of our efforts towards paper registration, also making sure that students fill it out in front of us whenever possible, so we can double check that all sections are correctly filled out.

V. Goals

Guided by PLTV’s research and progress made toward previously outlined goals, the University of Pennsylvania seeks to accomplish the following objectives in both the short and long term.

Short Term (2024-2025 Academic Year)

- Achieve 90% voter registration for eligible Penn voters prior to the 2024 general election, up from 85% prior to the 2020 election.
- Increase voter turnout by 5% from the 2020 general election that achieved 89% voter turnout among registered voters.
- Improve the 2023-2024 system for distributing and collecting voter registration forms for all incoming freshmen by creating a collaboration between PLTV, residential services, and College Houses.
- Conduct voter engagement messaging research with the Communication Neuroscience Lab and determine appropriate outreach strategies using the findings.

- Increase number of accounts reached and accounts engaged with PLTV’s Instagram account, which is the primary social media platform used for outreach.
- Implement API for voter registration into path.at.upenn.edu, the main hub used by students for all things university related.
- Host one election education workshop with each of the seven cultural resource centers on campus prior to the general election.
- Incorporate PLTV programming into New Student Orientation (NSO) events like the Freshman Assembly and Pre-Freshman Programs.
- Update the PLTV Thrive at Penn (TAP) orientation module from the previous year that introduces incoming students to civic engagement and voting at Penn.
- Develop a tiered volunteer program to recruit and maintain a dedicated student volunteer base.

Long Term

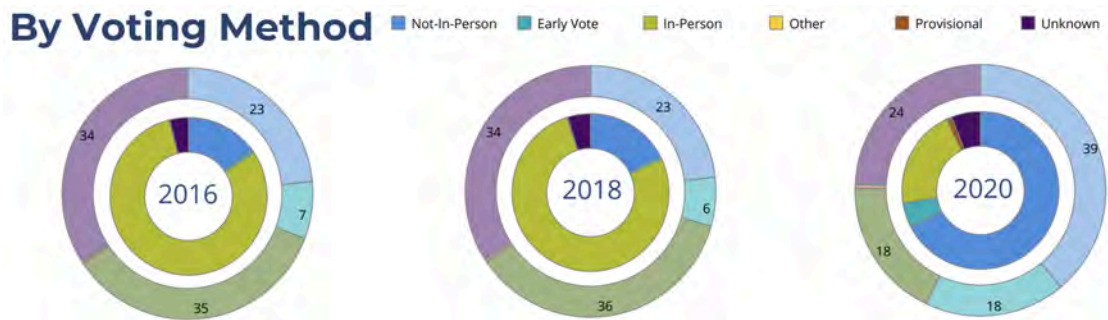
- Achieve 100% voter registration among eligible voters at Penn by 2028.
- Host at least one voter education event per month in collaboration with another campus organization, such as cultural resource centers or student government.
- Incorporate and maintain voter registration as an integral part of fall move-in for eligible freshmen.
- Tailor outreach to different organizations and schools within the university.
- Implement a permanent Pre-Freshman Program centered around civic engagement and voting.
- Maintain a volunteer base of at least 50 active student volunteers per academic year.

VI. NSLVE

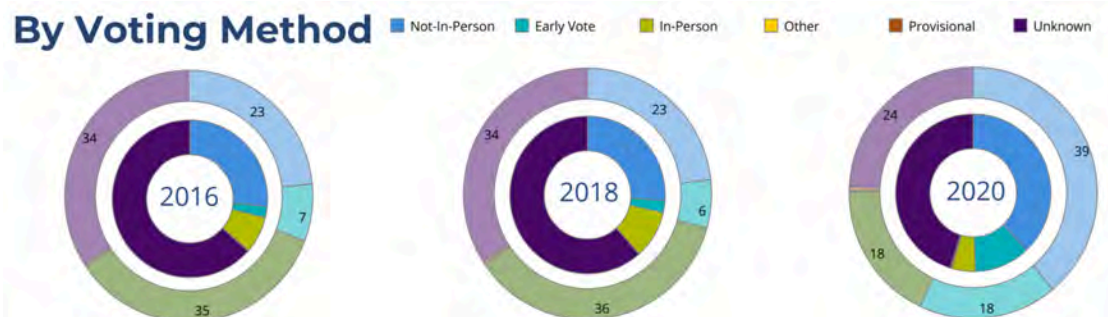
NSLVE reports have not been released in the past few election cycles, however we are striving to create our own sources of data for analysis despite this delay. This includes obtaining registration and turnout information via the Philadelphia County Commissioner’s office, as well as collecting our own demographic data from PennCard readers. We can only analyze what current statistics we can obtain from these sources, which include information about generally lower turnout rates compared to national averages, as well as locational differences in turn out rates associated with certain dorms or off-campus housing.

Our aim is to increase the stretch of data we have access to, in order to hopefully have a great set of comparisons for when the NSLVE reports return. In the meantime, we can analyze what the 2020 NSLVE report has given us, and in the future compare it to our knowledge of the upcoming 2024 general election:

- The registration rate in 2020 has been relatively consistent with the years prior, averaging around 85%.
 - We have seen a significant decline in recent years according to our own data calculations, with some election cycles seeing close to half of that registration rate.
- Similarly, 2020 had a yield rate of 88.6%, which is an unprecedented number that we have not been able to achieve in recent years. Once more NSLVE reports are released, this comparison could be made more accurately.
- 2020 saw an extreme shift towards not-in-person voting methods, which is relevant towards the impact of more recent elections. Some students may be used to obtaining a mail-in ballot, in which case we need to reallocate our efforts towards providing extensive information on the request and return process.



Comparing our data to a peer institution, Harvard University had relatively similar numbers when it comes to registration and yield rates in the 2020 general election. Interestingly, their voting method breakdown has a significant portion of the votes dedicated to an “Unknown” method. This could be a mistake in the data collection or evaluation process, or it could be due to some way that the electoral process is handled on campus. Either way, it could be a relevant avenue to have a conversation with Harvard Votes about how they assessed and tackled this question.



VII. Strategy

Penn Leads the Vote will employ three strategies that support registration, education, and mobilization year-round:

- Institutional and campus-wide outreach catalyzed and supported by PLTV
- Direct outreach and education conducted by PLTV staff and volunteers, and
- PLTV-catalyzed reverse door-knocking by campus organizations.

Together, these bring about institutionalization and full participation in civic processes and create a culture of voting and civic engagement.

Institutional and Campus-wide outreach catalyzed and supported by PLTV

Partnering with **New Student Orientation & Academic Initiatives (NSOAI)** allows PLTV to make registration an integral part of the freshman experience and solidify the importance of voting and civic engagement from the start of Penn students' college experience. NSOAI operates several activities that include substantial PLTV partnerships:

- **Thrive at Penn (TAP)** is an online program administered by NSOAI on Canvas that assists students with their introduction to Penn, and its completion is required of all new students, including international students. TAP prepares students to make healthy choices during their university experience and provides information about resources available to support student success. PLTV has a module in TAP that PLTV will keep up to date, updating the module when appropriate every year by July 15. PLTV's TAP module includes:
 - Voter registration (online and paper options)
 - Ways to get involved with PLTV
 - Sign up link for PLTV's election reminders listserv
 - Direct link to and description of PLTV's vote.upenn.edu webpage.
- **New Student Orientation (NSO)** is a series of activities for new undergraduate students and families designed to help with a successful transition to University life at Penn, including a two-day resource fair. PLTV works with NSO and OGCA during the resource fair to share information about voter engagement in Philadelphia. Additionally, OGCA works with Philadelphia Commissioners to provide resources to students, which has often included bringing a Philadelphia voting machine which students (and parents) get to see.
- **Preceptorials** are not-for-credit, optional educational sessions at Penn that take place throughout the year, with a majority of sessions taking place during NSO for incoming students. Preceptorials cover a wide range of topics and fields and can be facilitated by

any campus organization. PLTV will submit proposals for at least two different preceptorials to take place during the NSO period, where one serves as an introduction to civic engagement at Penn and the other covers the research and data behind PLTV's engagement efforts, specifically focusing on West Philly. PLTV will also consider facilitating preceptorials as able throughout the year exploring topics such as the November general election.

- **Peers Helping Integrate New Students (PHINS)** are NSO leaders who volunteer to assist incoming First-Year, Transfer, First-Generation and/or Limited-Income (FGLI), International, Exchange, and Second-Year Penn undergraduate students with their academic, cultural, emotional, and social adjustment to life at Penn. PLTV intends to train PHINS leaders to help register freshmen to vote during NSO and seeks to incorporate a visit to West Philadelphia's new satellite election office into the mandatory PHINS tour that all new students must attend. Awareness of this office will be particularly valuable given nearly all students are expected to be off campus for 3 of the 8 elections that take place during their time at Penn.
- **Building Community at Penn:** This new mandatory welcome session provides an opportunity for first-year undergraduates to hear from Penn faculty, staff, and students on an array of topics including how to be an inclusive community, support others in the Penn community, and what it means to be a Penn Citizen. PLTV intends to be featured in the session's presentation and will staff a voter registration and engagement table outside the event to engage with new students and answer any questions.
- **Co-sponsorship of National Voter Registration Day (NVRD):** This year, NVRD will overlap with Constitution day which NSOAI will be providing transit passes to National Constitution Center for. Collaborating with NSOAI to host NVRD at a central campus location where students can also pick up transit passes will expand PLTV's reach in both publicizing the event and registering eligible voters.

Penn Residential Services also assists PLTV in reaching the thousands of students who live on campus throughout the year and incorporating voter registration into the move-in process at the beginning of the year. Last year, 6500 registration forms were distributed to every on-campus student upon move in, and PLTV plans to build on this reach by developing and implementing a streamlined process for completing and turning in registration forms. Further, PLTV intends to distribute a small informational sheet with all forms with information regarding the upcoming election and how to get civically engaged on campus with PLTV.

Additionally, PLTV intends to integrate the **Pennsylvania Online Voter Registration Web Application Programming Interface (PA OVR WebAPI)** into the home page of Path@Penn, Penn's hub for university information used frequently by all students. This project will be in collaboration with **Student Registration and Financial Services**. The WebAPI allows organizations to develop custom interfaces for PA voter registration, and was developed by the

PA Department of State in order to expand access to voter registration. With this system, students will be prompted and able to register to vote while they register for classes. Carnegie Mellon University, a peer institution also located in PA, has recently successfully implemented an API into their system. PLTV has been in contact with their team and their developers, and hope to integrate the same system by Fall 2024. PLTV's team has begun integrating contacts between the developers and UPenn's Office of the Registrar. Over the course of Summer 2024 and Fall 2024, the team will continue to implement this project to integrate this system into Path@Penn.

Lastly, PLTV will work toward developing a permanent **Pre-Orientation Program** centered around civic engagement and exploring local policy. Pre-orientation programs take place over the course of several weeks prior to NSO, and allow incoming students to learn about the program's unique themes with other students and upper-class leaders that share interest in the topic.

Direct outreach and education by PLTV staff and volunteers

PLTV and its volunteers will continue to facilitate in-person events year-round dedicated to registering eligible students and distributing voting resources:

- National Voter Registration Day
- Love Your Vote (Valentine's Day)
- Early Voting Day
- Election Day
- College house events

Reaching all university members to communicate election reminders and resources will remain a priority, which PLTV plans to accomplish using the following methods:

- University Notifications to all students, staff, and faculty
- PLTV Election Reminders listserv
- PLTV-authored Daily Pennsylvanian Op-Eds

Lastly, PLTV seeks to continue educating members of the Penn community about civic engagement and local policy both inside and outside of the classroom:

- **ABCS Course:** Academically Based Community Service (ABCS) courses are classes offered by Penn through the Netter Center that connect students with a local school or organization in West Philly to help solve community problems related to areas like health, education, and the arts. Through its continued partnership with the Netter Center, PLTV will develop an ABCS course that will connect students with PLTV to educate

them about local policy and task them with coming up with innovative ways to engage the local community in civic processes.

- **Shareable election resource page:** PLTV will develop a brief document with timely election resources and reminders, which will be similar to the module produced for TAP as mentioned previously. This document will be shared with professors, student organizations, and faculty across the university who will be encouraged to share this document by posting it on a class Canvas page or organization website and send it in their listservs near each election.

PLTV catalyzed and supported Reverse Door-Knocking

PLTV will utilize a [Reverse Door Knocking Strategy](#) for outreach which refers to conducting voter outreach and engagement at places community members frequently visit, such as such as community centers, hospitals, schools, etc., rather than going door-to-door at residences. This allows community members to interact with people they already have a relationship and level of trust with, such as their service providers or members of the same community organization. The personal interactions and existing relationships make the voter outreach more impactful, as research shows these trusted voices are particularly influential for increasing youth voter turnout. In essence, reverse door knocking flips the traditional door-to-door model by bringing the voter engagement to community hubs and spaces where potential voters naturally congregate, leveraging nonprofits' existing community ties and relationships.

PLTV incorporates this strategy by conducting outreach at on-campus locations like college houses and dining halls. However, PLTV will take this strategy further by partnering with important campus organizations and creating partnerships where PLTV not only co-conducts outreach at their activities but the organizations themselves directly share information about PLTV outreach to their newsletters, social media, and general body meetings.

PLTV will focus on the following groups and employ a reverse door-knocking strategy for outreach to them in order to expand reach to all corners of campus:

- Penn Athletics: 10% of Penn students are involved with Penn Athletics, and all student athletes must read a weekly email sent to the entire Penn Athletics listserv. Utilizing PLTV's current athletics liaison, PLTV can send messaging to the athletics listserv that incorporates key messages about voter registration, voter education, and casting your vote.
- Cultural Resource Centers: Similarly with athletics, PLTV intends to maintain current connections and form new ones with members of all seven Penn CRC's: the Greenfield Intercultural Center, La Casa Latina, the LGBT Center, Makuu, the Pan-Asian American Community House, Penn Women's Center, and the Spiritual and Religious Life Center.

Based on successful events co-sponsored by Penn Women's Center and the LGBT centered, PLTV will continue to pursue collaborative outreach events that prioritize reaching the underrepresented communities within each cultural center.

- Individual schools: PLTV seeks to expand the use of liaisons to individual schools within the university from its current use of one liaison to the Wharton business school. Additional liaisons will include those to the School of Engineering and Applied Science, the School of Nursing, and graduate schools.
- Student government: PLTV will continue its collaboration with both the Undergraduate Assembly and all individual class boards to send election reminders to all undergraduate students, and support them in hosting their own engagement initiatives.

VIII. Reporting

The Action plan, data, and NSLVE reports are shared on campus AND are publicly available via the website vote.upenn.edu. Specifically,

- Link to action plan is [here](#).
- Link to NSLVE reports is [here](#).

We also plan to share our Action Plan with our campus Newspaper, The Daily Pennsylvanian, in the fall via social media and PLTV's listservs. Additionally, we would like to share more of the data about our social media impressions and engagement. We believe that social media will be more engaging to students than the website alone. In all places, we will present interesting statistics that provide more education on campus voting behavior.

IX. Evaluation

NSLVE Data

Our current source of voting information comes from the Philadelphia City Commissioner. Here, we can separate the data by Ward and Division to get on-campus numbers for approximate voter registration and turnout rates. However, these can obviously be misrepresented for the student population, as it is impossible to consider how many non-students may be included in those Wards/Divisions. Therefore, we plan to use a combination of the two data sources in our future evaluations, with NSLVE being the primary data source for 2 out of every 8 elections in a 4-year cycle, and the Philadelphia City Commissioner being a relevant data source for all 8 of 8 elections in a 4-year cycle.

Campus Evaluation

We currently notice several strategies that are and are not working on our campus:

- **Working:**

- The University continues to send out University-wide emails about fall and spring elections. We know that these mailings generate the highest totals of website hits of any day of the year.
- Partnerships with student groups and cultural organizations have also generated website hits and social media engagement.
- The in-person activities (such as NVRD, campus dorms, election day) have been successful in generating volunteers, voter registrations, and ballots cast.
- Collecting information about local voter turnout. Often, they have sources of free items or food for students to collect. While this has always been a significant motivator for students to attend our events, we have recently started to ask students to complete research surveys and/or tasks as well before receiving the free items. This has worked wonderfully, as many students promptly completed the task requested in order to get their free rewards.
- Many students have created a culture around collecting our merchandise. Our releases of new styles and colors of t-shirts have proven to attract its own set of students that will attend our events for the main purpose of updating their merchandise collection.

- **Not working:**

- Our messaging has proven to be effective in the past, but we want to improve it. We would like to evaluate exactly what type and style of messaging is optimally effective and why, so that we can make more informed decisions about future communications.
- Our website is not currently being used as an active source of information for students. It is rarely accessed by students, unless they are specifically directed to by us at an event. To solve this issue, we have done a complete website revamp, updating all of the information, layouts, and graphics in order to ensure the website is clean and accurate. We plan to utilize the information on the website more in our social media, in order to create more of an association between voting education and information with our own website.
- Though our events are successful at generating registrations, we do not have a system in place to follow up with students and check that their registration was accepted. At future events, we intend to use Penn card readers for the students that

register with us that will record their contact information. We will follow up with them when their forms are expected to have gone through, and if it was rejected encourage them to submit a new form. Additionally, we can follow up with students near the registration deadline to guarantee they submit a new registration if necessary on time. This will give us a better understanding of which registration forms go through, and make sure that most students are able to successfully register.

Data Collection

PLTV is working with the University of Pennsylvania's Communication Neuroscience Lab at the Annenberg School of Communication to design and implement a research initiative focused on Penn students' motivations behind voting in association with social media messaging. We aim to better understand the barriers facing students in order to optimize our messaging. We will also be looking to gain support from Wharton Behavioral Lab, Program on Opinion Research and Election Studies (PORES), and the Netter Center for Community Partnerships' Interns, to create a more expansive network of research partners.

As we determine more optimal messages, we plan to deploy them beyond our own listserv into email lists and chains like the Class Boards, Athletics Department and University-wide messaging.

In addition, PLTV aims to develop a comprehensive system for data collection that includes setting up more QR codes, PennCard readers, Bit.ly links, and social media posts that have trackable information for us to evaluate how our messaging is being received and responded to by students. By understanding what social media and marketing activities are most engaging, we can increase overall campus engagement. This information will be applied to many different types of outreach via email and social media, including but not limited to:

- Reaching out to past volunteers and emphasizing the importance of future volunteer efforts.
- Following up on voter registration questions.
- Reminding students about election deadlines.
- Sending out virtual non-partisan voter information guides for easier access and reduced paper waste.

In terms of outside data analysis, we have used and will continue to use the Philadelphia City Commissioner's election information page for local Ward/Division Election Results. This will be useful to use in conjunction with NSLVE data. NSLVE data is provided for 2 of 8 elections in a

4-year cycle. On-campus voting data tracks local voting, which is an important indicator, and can be applied to all 8 elections in a 4-year cycle.

Past data collection provided useful information about campaigns that did not work exactly as planned. We reflected on these and made changes, including:

- Facebook Advertisements: These did not generate significant impressions and were not continued. Our student population may not be as represented on Facebook.
- The DP Advertisements: These were not as successful as hoped. While many students see the DP's advertisements, lack of engagement may be an issue of the environment in which they are received (Instagram and thedp.com). Because the DP posts many other advertisements about various other topics, our advertisements may have been getting lost in the mix.