



ALL IN-Campus Democracy Challenge

Action Plan

Fall 2023

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of South Carolina (USC) in Columbia, SC, is the state's capital. The state legislature is in the university's backyard, just a block from the center of the main campus. USC has seized many opportunities afforded this unique setup through intentional partnerships and educational initiatives. Despite previous attempts, this has not yielded as high voter turnout as desired.

The Tufts University National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) campus report reveals information about USC's voter engagement that has shaped this action plan. When analyzing the data, we received for our 2014 and 2018 Midterm Election Data, we gathered the following: USC has significantly increased registration and voting rates since 2014. Additionally, USC is slightly higher than the national average for registration rates, confirming our hypothesis that students showing up to the polls is the primary election engagement issue we face on our campus. Absentee ballots are still the most popular method of voting at USC (increased by 6.9%). There are significant increases in voting rates for all class standings, genders mentioned in the survey, all ethnicities, and all reported fields of study except one (Ethnic, Cultural, Gender, and Group Studies). Black students on our campus had the highest voting rate of any race/ethnicity in 2014 and 2018 by at least 15%.

Self-Comparison (2019 vs. 2022)

Increases seen in registration rates (7.5%), voting rates of registered students (19.4%), and overall voting rates (+16.9%)

- Number of students who registered increased by 4,067
- Number of students who voted increased by 5,955

Note: total populations at USC also increased in four years by 2,651

Institutional Comparison (2020 vs. 2022)

- USC rates lower than Public Research Institutions by 6%
- USC rates lower than All Institutions by 4.4% (which is a larger gap than the 1.9% lower in 2014)
- USC is slightly higher than the national average for registration rates

Additionally, when comparing the 2016 voting data with that of 2012, it is evident that USC is making progress in terms of increases among students registered to vote, as well as those voting in elections. In the 2016 presidential election, USC had a 53.5% voting rate which was 3.1% higher than the national institutional average. Additionally, the voting rate of USC students in 2016 was a 7.7% increase from the previous presidential election in 2012.

Overall, NSLVE data reveals that most college students nationwide are not exercising their right to vote during presidential elections. Although USC is on par with its peer institutions, the university will seize the opportunity to address this national issue through its commitment to civic education. We will implement the programming outlined in this action plan to grow USC's voter registration and voter turnout numbers for the 2024 presidential election.

PURPOSE AND MISSION

This action plan is designed to serve as a catalyst for student-led, year-round, nonpartisan civic and democratic engagement at the University of South Carolina. This action plan aims to:

- 1) Improve students understanding of civic engagement processes;
- 2) Increase voter registration and voter turnout numbers
- 3) Enhance student's civic competencies through respectful dialogue and consideration of diverse viewpoints

This action plan will be revised again at the start of the Spring 2024 semester. Implementation and revisions will be spearheaded by the Leadership and Service Center in collaboration with campus and community partners at University of South Carolina (Columbia Campus).

University of South Carolina's Civic Engagement Action Plan was developed by:

- Audrey Ashburn, Leadership and Service Center, Coordinator for Leadership and Programming
- Emily Boardman, Leadership and Service Center, Graduate Assistant for Community Engagement
- Ambra Hiott, Leadership and Service Center, Director
- Emma Ormond, Leadership and Service Center, Assistant Director of Student Governance
- Dylan Peddemors, Elections Commissioner, Office of the President
- Marc Shook, Dean of Students and Deputy Title IX Director
- Kira Suttles, Leadership and Service Center, Graduate Assistant for Student Government
- Natalie Trimble, Elections Commission, Office of the President
- Kell Runion, Elections Commission, Office of the President
- Abigail Poag, Elections Commission, Office of the President

This action plan will be implemented by enacting the programming and strategies outlined in this document to achieve the defined goals.

SECTION II: LEADERSHIP

The Leadership and Service Center (LSC) at University of South Carolina will coordinate and oversee the institution's work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement. The Leadership and Service Center equips students to positively impact their communities through involvement in student

organizations, leadership development, service, and civic engagement. The LSC works towards a vision that students will be engaged, lifelong leaders committed to positive change in the world.

Stronger emphasis on civic engagement initiatives will assist the LSC in achieving its mission by guiding students to become responsible and engaged citizens in their local, national, and global communities. Students will become more aware of social issues, take diverse perspectives into consideration, and connect their current leadership and service efforts to a deeper meaning. Carly Zerr, Coordinator for Service and Civic Engagement, Emma Ormond Associate Director of Student Governance, Audrey Ashburn, Coordinator for Leadership and Programming and Kira Suttles, Graduate Assistant for Student Government, will primarily be responsible for the implementation of this plan with the Civic Leadership Education Action Team.

Additionally, collaboration with campus and community partners will occur. As of now the following groups and individuals have been identified as ongoing partners for the working group:

- Student Government
 - Student Body President, Emmie Thompson
 - Student Body Vice President, Abrianna Reaves
 - General student government members
 - Elections Commission
- Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity
 - Director of Student Conduct, Maureen Derrick
 - Carolina Judicial Council (a group of students who uphold and promote the standards of the Carolina community through the Carolinian Creed)
- Safely Engaging & Expression Delegates (SEED)
 - Dean of Students, Marc Shook
 - Director of the Russell House University Union, Kim McMahon
- Community Partners and Local Representation
 - Richland County Voter Registration and Elections, Travis Alexander, Director
 - Mayor of Columbia, Daniel J. Rickenmann

The working group's role is to provide feedback on the mission and programs outlined in the action plan and support programming as it arises. The working group pulls together students, staff, faculty, and community partners who collectively work to implement the programming outlined in this action plan.

Additional Partners

On-campus partners:

- Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support
- Department of Student Life
- Student Government (Elections Commission, City Advocacy Commission, Legislative Action Network, Congressional Advisory Board)
- Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity
- Political Science Department
- Off-Campus Living and Neighborhood Relations
- Office of Multicultural Student Affairs

- Voter Registration Coalition (currently composed of students representing 15 different student organizations)
- Registered Student Organizations

Off-Campus partners:

- Richland County Elections Commissions
- Civic Nation
- #VoteTogether
- National Voter Registration Day
- Constitution Day
- TurboVote
- Campus Labs
- Local politicians

Our internal collaborators serve as partners in programming and resource cultivation. Student voice has and will continue to help determine and implement initiatives and serve as voter advocates. The off-campus partners have agreed to offer their support to the university's civic engagement initiative through helping with voter registration drives, helping students obtain free voter identification cards, and/or educating students about policy issues. Our external partners also provide various helpful resources to help plan and cultivate best practices.

SECTION III: COMMITMENT

The University of South Carolina values diversity and inclusion of all identities and thoughts. The university's Carolinian Creed states, "I will discourage bigotry while striving to learn from different people, ideas, and opinions." USC has a rich history of helping students develop their multicultural competencies through a variety of programs, both curricular and co-curricular. This civic action plan is an attempt to both continue and further such tradition. In recent political events, the nation has witnessed Americans becoming increasingly less civil toward one another as they discuss their political views. USC believes that civility and education about voter engagement and political issues can happen simultaneously. Because of USC's proximity to the state capitol, the university is fortunate enough to have access to many campus and community partners with a personal stake in civic engagement which aids the mission outlined in this action plan.

The institution demonstrates commitment to improving civic learning in many ways. From a staff development perspective, the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support have provided multiple professional development opportunities focusing on this topic, including a division meeting centered on Viewpoint Diversity, a Student Life Lunch & Learn centered on Free Speech on Campus, as well as informal discussion with the Vice President of Student Affairs around civic and democratic engagement at his roundtable discussions.

- National voter registration day
- Constitution day event
- Faculty event
- SEED trainings

- Carolina Day

Additionally, the University of South Carolina has contributed monetary support in this area. Primarily, we have signed multi-year contracts with organizations such as TurboVote, and Campus Labs that are primary drivers in our voter registration efforts. The Leadership and Service Center, supported by the Department of Student Life, has also added civic engagement programming as a primary job function to an employee’s job description, as well as added a specific budget line for civic engagement programming.

The civic learning outcomes that have been outlined are the following:

- Students will understand the voting process and the resources available to them
- Students will gain a better understanding of political processes
- Students will engage in meaningful dialogue to cultivate civil deliberation and increase issue-based knowledge
- Students will understand what it means to be an active citizen in their community

These four learning outcomes align with our four goals for programming outlined in Section V of this document.

SECTION IV: LANDSCAPE

University of South Carolina Demographic Breakdown

Undergraduate Enrollment

Graduate and Professional Enrollment

Demographic	South Carolina	United States	UofSC Columbia	UofSC System	Demographic	South Carolina	United States	UofSC Columbia	UofSC System
White	63.9%	62.6%	76.7%	69.1%	White	63.9%	62.6%	65.3%	65.4%
African American	27.9%	13.2%	10.2%	15.9%	African American	27.9%	13.2%	11.8%	11.6%
Native American	0.5%	1.2%	0.2%	0.3%	Native American	0.5%	1.2%	0.1%	0.1%
Asian	1.5%	5.3%	2.3%	1.9%	Asian	1.5%	5.3%	2.1%	2.1%
Hispanic	5.3%	17.1%	4.0%	4.0%	Hispanic	5.3%	17.1%	2.7%	2.7%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Two or More Races	1.7%	2.4%	3.2%	3.1%	Two or More Races	1.7%	2.4%	2.3%	2.3%
NR Alien			1.6%	1.5%	NR Alien			12.6%	12.2%
No Response			1.7%	4.2%	No Response			3.0%	3.5%

Source: Charts taken from USC Office of Access and Opportunity

Student Engagement Overview

NSLVE data suggests that University of South Carolina students were slightly more engaged in registration and voter turnout than other four-year public institutions and the national average in the 2016 election. Despite this success, USC lagged their peers for registration and voter turnout for the 2014 midterm election.

Table 1. USC Student Voter Registration and Turnout Rates, 2016-2021

ASSESSMENT OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMING

In the Leadership and Service Center blueprint (strategic planning document) the following is listed out:

Goal Statement: Students that participate in LSC events will become committed to enhancing their civic competencies and their understanding of civic engagement processes.

Linkage to University Goal: Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities.

Achievements:

Voter Registration

All structured voter registration efforts referenced in this action plan took place during Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters. The Leadership and Service Center partnered with TurboVote to register students, faculty, and staff. We received the Voter Friendly Campus designation and renewed our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) participation.

- 123 people registered to vote so far, this academic year

ANALYSIS OF BARRIERS

Internal Barriers

Balancing new programming: CLEAT is a new student group being advised by the Leadership and Service Center at USC. Balancing new organization culture and programming with prioritized projects occasionally comes with challenges.

Maintaining Nonpartisan programming during an election year: With South Carolina having had a lot of national attention in our February primary election, most Presidential Candidates reached out about hosting events on campus. Determining the best group on campus to host such events to maintain our nonpartisan mission has been challenging when trying to fully capitalize on programming that could benefit the student body.

Student confusion/procrastination: While electronic voter registration is allowed in the State of South Carolina, absentee ballots require students to mail in forms. Some counties allow electronic commissions to be emailed or faxed, but not all have this option. Due to confusion and/or procrastination on behalf of students, absentee ballots may not be turned in by the deadline of 7pm on Election Day. We anticipate this confusion to grow as different voter registration methods are being discussed as options during this COVID-19 pandemic.

General student apathy: Student priorities are pulled in multiple directions, especially USC being an SEC football centered institution. Students do not always care to know what is going on politically despite being offered programming to increase their awareness.

External Barriers

Election laws: Registration deadlines, ID Requirements, Early Voting Restrictions

- Early voter registration deadline is 30 days before the election, which requires heavy efforts on the cycle's front end.
- Voter ID requirements enforce students to present a government-issued photo ID when voting. A student ID is often not an accepted form of ID.
- Despite absentee voting being allowed prior to Election Day in some South Carolina counties, South Carolina does not allow early voting without legitimate excuses. This automatically makes engaging in Vote Early Day and other programs geared towards early voting more difficult. To take advantage of absentee voting, voters must report to the election office in the county in which they are registered, providing a further barrier.

Transportation to Polls: Being able to provide enough reliable transportation for students to make it to the polls is a challenge. Furthermore, efficient advertisement of such transportation is critical.

Available Resources

The Leadership and Service Center has identified the following resources to further our action plan despite the previously listed barriers:

- Staff member focused on Civic Engagement Initiatives in the LSC: after shifting job responsibilities among coordinators in the office, a Coordinator for Service and Civic Engagement will be dedicating significant time to implementing this action plan in conjunction with the Associate Director in the center. This Coordinator for Service and Civic Engagement will work with the members of CLEAT to help develop programming from both educational and action perspectives to create a year-long civic engagement culture on USC's campus.
- Group of engaged students and traditional programming: The Leadership and Service Center is a premier space at USC in the campus hub. The variety of programming that stems from the center provides an effective outlet to implement civic engagement into. The students who are involved in programming from the Leadership and Service Center are often very engaged on campus with a great deal of social capital. Utilizing these students as advocates and sources of feedback will help cultivate the culture we are seeking to promote.
- Higher-level administrative support: The LSC falls within the Department of Student Life, which is in the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support at USC. Our center's work, specifically civic engagement practices, has significant support from higher-level administration that simplifies conversations of resources and credibility

Additional Resources Needed

SECTION V: GOALS

The long-term goal of this action plan is to create a culture of civic engagement on campus, and to create and implement sustainable programming that is year-round, nonpartisan, and student led. A ten-year goal would be to increase student voting rates by 14 percentage points from 2016 to 2024.

As mentioned above, the civic learning outcomes that have been outlined are the following:

- Students will understand the voting process and the resources available to them
- Students will gain a better understanding of political processes o Students will engage in meaningful dialogue to cultivate civil deliberation and increase issue-based knowledge
- Students will understand what it means to be an active citizen in their community

This action plan seeks to increase student engagement in civic efforts through the following:

Area One: Voting

- **Increase number of students registered to vote**
 - Specific: CLEAT is aiming to register at least 1801 students to vote before the presidential election. 1801 represents the year USC was founded.
 - Measurable: The admin side of TurboVote makes it easy to track the number of students we have registered.
 - Achievable: The largest number of students CLEAT has registered in one semester has been 1165 during the midterm election cycle, making 1801 an achievable goal.
 - Realistic: Given the additional attention Presidential elections receive, this should be realistic. “1801” is meant to build culture and school spirit around voter registration. We will push to register students beyond that number if possible.
 - Timely: CLEAT will register 1801 student before the voter registration deadline
- **Assist students in understanding their options of what voting method is right based on their situation and disseminate absentee ballot information**
 - Specific: Holding at least 4 face-to-face opportunities (either in-person or via digital platforms) for students to ask questions and receive real-time answers.
 - Measurable: Able to track participation in these opportunities with participation count on virtual platforms or scanning Carolina Cards for in-person events.
 - Achievable: We held 3 in-person events while registering folks to vote for the midterm elections. Adding one additional event should be achievable.
 - Realistic: Given the additional attention Presidential elections receive and the added confusion around how COVID-19 affects voting, we are confident students will take advantage of these opportunities.
 - Timely: All events will take place prior to the voter registration deadline
- **Assist students in verifying they are registered, and their information is correct**
 - Specific: Ensure website, advertising, and voter information cards have up to date links for students to verify their information.
 - Measurable: Track social media attention and number of voter information cards given away
 - Achievable: Able to easily add this information to what we already disseminate

- *Realistic*: Students are often registered incorrectly or do not know if they are registered – helping them check this could help increase voter turnout rates by catching issues early. This is easy to accomplish given our resources
- *Timely*: All work around this goal will be completed prior to voter registration deadline.
- **Provide education on voting coordination**
 - *Specific*: Provide resources for students to look up their polling location, learn about transportation options to the polls, and check their sample ballot in advance
 - *Measurable*: Track social media attention and number of voter information cards given away
 - *Achievable*: Able to easily add this information to what we already disseminate
 - *Realistic*: Students ask these questions all the time; putting the information in a place to make it clear would be extremely easy to accomplish.
 - *Timely*: All work around this goal will be completed prior to and on Election Day.

Area Two: Civic and Information Literacy Education

- **Provide programming focused on helping students understand the political process and to check the validity of their political news sources**
 - *Specific*: Provide two speaker series events a year that provides clarity on political processes such as positions involved in elections, general purpose of midterm elections, and a deeper understanding of the effects the results could have for both the short- and long-term political climate, etc. Additionally, add information to our website about information literacy and checking your sources when gathering information about political or societal concerns.
 - *Measurable*: Assessments given out after speaker series events to gauge student learning
 - *Achievable*: We have money set in our budget specifically for our Speaker Series events. Additionally, we have access to editing our own website, making it a simple task.
 - *Realistic*: We have held five Speaker Series events in the past that prove the successful nature of this goal
 - *Timely*: We spread this information out over the year to achieve our overarching goal of providing year-round, student-led, nonpartisan programming.

Area Three: Dialogue & Deliberation

- **Provide opportunities for students to engage in meaningful dialogue to cultivate civil deliberation and increase issue-based knowledge.**
 - *Specific*: Host at least 4 smaller group deliberations (in student orgs or classrooms) in both the fall and the spring (i.e., at least 8 per year). Additionally, host at least 1 public deliberation open to anyone at the university.
 - *Measurable*: Easy to track how many deliberations have been facilitated. We will also assess student learning at the end of each deliberation with a survey.
 - *Achievable*: We have all the resources and partnerships prepared to carry out 8 deliberations.
 - *Realistic*: We completed 3 deliberations this past spring (prior to COVID-19 cancelling a few programs) making our goal realistic to accomplish.
 - *Timely*: We spread these programs out over the course of the year to achieve our overarching goal of providing year-round, student-led, nonpartisan programming

Effective deliberation can help students gain development in civic literacy, active listening, humility, non-dualistic thinking, grit, and a variety of other skills. Additionally, this type of dialogue can increase student's understanding of local and national social/political issues.

Area Four: Civic Action

- **Assist students in turning ideas into action by increasing students' capacity and commitment to participate constructively with others and working collectively to address common problems**
 - *Specific:* Provide spaces and opportunities within our office's programs to have these conversations through trainings, individual meetings, and group-development models such as our Service Cohort and Close Family Emerging Leaders Program
 - *Measurable:* Easy to track through curriculum plans
 - *Achievable:* The Leadership and Service Center has begun to slowly add these conversations to our current curriculum plans over the past two years and have the capacity to expand
 - *Realistic:* We have a committed staff who sees the value of incorporating these conversations into our programming and peer leader development
 - *Timely:* We spread these programs out over the course of the year to achieve our overarching goal of providing year-round, student-led, nonpartisan programming

The above-mentioned goals and initiatives will occur in the 2020-21 school year and will be implemented by the Leadership and Service Center and CLEAT students with support from campus and community partners. The primary audience for said programming is University of South Carolina undergraduate and graduate students living both on and off-campus. All programs aim to be as inclusive and equitable as possible, welcoming all into our spaces, and providing accommodations where necessary to have everyone be able to comfortably participate.

SECTION VI: NSLVE

The landscape section of this document (referenced below) compares the past four main elections in terms of voter registration and turnout for our student population. This comparison shows that USC's voter registration rates increased 7.9% between the 2012 and 2016 Presidential elections. Additionally, it outlines that USC's voter turnout rates increased 7.8% between 2012 and 2016 Presidential elections. Our specific goal for both voter registration and voter turnout rates is to match this increase for the 2020 Presidential election. This would bring our goal rates to 91.4% of students registered to vote and 61.3% voter turnout rate. Additionally, the information depicted in our student voting data by ethnicity on Table 2, helps us understand where the gaps are on our campus so we can aim to be more inclusive in our efforts to promote voter engagement. The strategy outlined in Section VII explains how we plan to accomplish these increases.

Table 1. USC Student Voter Registration and Turnout Rates, 2018-2022

Table 2. USC Student Voting Data by Ethnicity, 2018-2022

SECTION VII: STRATEGY

Area One: Voting

Strategy: Continue utilizing TurboVote to track voter registration

- Helps students register to vote either online or by paper
- Helps students vote by sending election reminders via text or email to stay in touch with local elections
- Helps students vote by mail via absentee ballot request forms

Strategy: Engage in the Ask Every Student movement to increase our reach on campus

Strategy: Pull in partners across campus to increase social capital and reach within our scope

Initiatives:

- Student Voter Registration Coalition: A program piloted in Fall 2019 to engage more people in voter registration. The coalition is composed of representatives from different student organizations and departmental programs that come together to register their peers to vote. This group will run two “challenges” this year to increase voter registration rates:
 - 1801 Challenge – Register at least 1801 students to vote. 1801 represents the year USC was founded and is meant to promote pride and tradition among Gamecocks engaging in active citizenship
 - Student Org Voter Registration Competition – Student organizations will compete to see who can register the largest percentage of their organization to vote. We use TurboVote referral codes to track how many people have registered. The winner will receive a prize for catering for one of their events.

The Student Voter Registration Coalition will engage in the following to register people to vote:

- Complete student org visits (either virtually or in-person) to educate student orgs on our competition, as well as information about voting and our TurboVote site
- Complete classroom visits (either virtually or in-person) to educate about voting information and our TurboVote site
- Hold office hours in the Leadership and Service Center for students to individually stop by to have their questions answered by one of our team members (social distancing, PPE, and sanitation will all be practiced)
- Utilize signage outside the Leadership and Service Center and on our student union digital display signs to provide QR codes to easily access our TurboVote page and SC Votes website to check registration

- Utilize social media to update people on our 1801 goal, links to voter registration materials, and information about any upcoming events
- Participate in National Voter Registration Day by hosting a social distant in-person registration drive or digital drive depending on the state of COVID-19 at that time
- Establish a user-friendly website page that houses voting information and logistics, as well as advertising voter registration events
- Partner with Richland County Elections Commission for voter registration volunteer training

Area Two: Civic Literacy Education

Strategy: Streamline civic literacy and information literacy resources

- Comprehensive and coherent information to help students better understand the political process

Initiatives:

- Speaker Series Events: Civic Engagement centered keynote and subsequent events to further dialogue
- User-friendly website page with links to civic literacy information and advertisement of related events
- Add a section of our website that is dedicated to information literacy resources to assist students in understanding the difference between reliable and unreliable sources
- Provide this information during tabling events, voter registration drives and digital formats

Area Three: Dialogue & Deliberation

Strategy: Continue to use National Issues Forum model for deliberation programs

Strategy: Cultivate partnerships across campus to increase involvement and visibility

- Potential partners include Office of Multicultural Affairs, Off-campus Living and Neighborhood Relations, Greek Life, and Student Government

Initiatives:

- Better promote these resources to classes such as U101, political science department, public health, etc., to student organizations, and departments within the Division of Student Affairs as a training option
- Host a Public Deliberation open to all of campus focused on Free Speech on Campus

in partnership with Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity and Carolina Judicial Council as our 2020-2021 Civility Series Event

Area Four: Civic Action

Strategy: Incorporate civic action into existing Leadership and Service Center programs to create more cohesive understanding of how leadership, service, and civic engagement work together

Initiatives:

- Incorporate trainings around active citizenship and social justice into our annual All Leadership and Service Center Peer Leader Training
- Incorporate social issue and advocacy specific trainings into our Service Cohort curriculum
- Incorporate brainstorming/reflection of civic action concepts in Alternative Break curriculum, specifically regarding reorientation
- Incorporate conversations of civic action into leadership programming such as Student Leadership Diversity Conference, and Close Family Emerging Leaders Program
- Constitution Day Event: Create a video or Instagram Live stream interviewing various people on campus about what the Constitution and active citizenship means to them. Additionally, CLEAT is looking into hosting an art display (either digitally or in-person) to give people creative freedom to answer the question what does active citizenship mean to you?

Summary of 2023-24 Programming:

Fall 2023 Events:

- Constitution Day
 - The event included remarks from community partners, and facilitated small group dialogues that navigated a range of topics that may be controversial, polarizing, or garner differing opinions. The group discussed the limits of the First Amendment, one student and one faculty or community member facilitated each table.
- Tabling for Voter Registration
 - At our Voter Registration Drive Tabling Event, members of the USC Community have the opportunity to register to vote, update their voter information, and learn about the importance of civic participation. Our volunteers were on hand to assist the community through the registration process, answer any questions they may have, and provide information on upcoming elections.
 -

Spring 2024 Events:

- MLK Voter Registration Drive
- Free Speech Video

- Polling Location
 - In the beginning of the year the University President, Michael Amiridis, signed a commitment to have full voter participation for the 2024 election. In this commitment President Amiridis stated that he wanted the University of South Carolina (USC) to become a polling location to provide access to students, faculty, and staff. Working closely with the Richland County Voter Registration and Elections Commission, USC has been established as a polling location for the 2024 Primaries.
- Voter Tool Kit
- Carolina Day
 - Carolina Day is a full day event where USC alumni, students, faculty, staff and South Carolinians from around the state will come together in a concerted effort to support higher education. Students from all USC campuses come together to connect to their legislators through letters and conversations.
- Congressional Advisory Board (CAB)
 - Every year, members of this non-partisan student research team travel to our nation's capital to meet with members of the South Carolina Congressional Delegation. They gain immense political research experience as they prepare for the completion of the CAB report. The report includes 3-4 issues chosen by members and then surveyed the student body for a student opinion. The data is compiled in the report and presented to persuade members to vote, support, or disprove within the congressional agenda. This experience has also included visits to the Department of Education, White House, and National Mall.
- Legislative Action Network (LAN)
 - The Legislative Action Network (LAN) is a non-partisan advocacy entity, communicating with the South Carolina General Assembly. This communication is on behalf of the constituency of the University of South Carolina student body to share concerns with state officials. LAN members can look forward to increasing the awareness and presence of LAN with the members of the general assembly by attending legislative sessions and various committee meetings.
- City Advocacy Commission (CAC)
 - The City Advocacy Commission (CAC) is a non-partisan advocacy group tasked with being the liaisons between city council-members of Columbia and students.
- Tour to the State House

All programming is held on campus and open to all students, staff, faculty and sometimes community members unless otherwise specified.

Long-Term Goal Strategies: USC is currently entering its third year of intentional civic engagement programming. That said, our strategy to move closer to our long-term goal of creating a culture of this type of programming on campus is simple. Our strategy is to continue developing the Civic Leadership Education and Action Team by bolstering membership, adding diversity to our team, solidifying our internal and external partners (specifically connecting more to the academic affairs side of our campus), and pushing to create name recognition on campus. The before mentioned programs will assist in implementing these strategies.

SECTION VII: REPORTING

This action plan will be used as an internal document that can be shared with Leadership and Service Center staff and Department of Student Life at University of South Carolina. That said, our action plan will be publicly available on the Leadership and Service Center website's civic engagement section. As a partner of ALL In Democracy Challenge, our NSLVE data and previous/current action plans are published publicly on their website.

Internally at USC we complete blueprints (strategic planning documents) to set goals for our units and report on this information at the end of each year. This action plan informs the civic engagement section of our blueprint tracked through assessment measures throughout the year.

SECTION IX: EVALUATION

Quantitative Measures:

- TurboVote and NSLVE data
- Number of and attendance at election-related events in 2020-2021
- Number of and attendance at Public Deliberation Program events in 2020-2021
- Number of students engaged with Student Voter Registration Coalition
- Number of partnerships both internal and external to the university

Qualitative Measures:

- Feedback from staff and students working on civic engagement initiatives
- Feedback from other stakeholders on campus
- Surveys collected from Public Deliberation Program assessing student learning
- Surveys collected from Civility Series assessing student learning

Evaluation will occur before, during, and after each academic year and correlates with the civic action planning cycle. The Leadership and Service Center Staff will use previous year's data to create our next civic action plan and inform our goals. The bulk of the evaluation will be carried out during the assessment cycle of the department which occurs quarterly with two deep dives at the end of each semester. The results will be shared with the department in the annual blueprint.

SECTION X: CONCLUSION

The Leadership and Service Center understands that this civic action plan is a living document that will be updated as necessary throughout the year. Overall, this document will guide our programming and future planning as we commit to enhancing student-led, year-round, nonpartisan civic engagement on our campus.

