



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**

**ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge  
Action Plan  
Spring 2022**

**SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

The Tufts University National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) campus report reveals information about UofSC's voter engagement that has shaped this action plan. When analyzing the data we received for our 2016, 2018, and 2020 election data, we gathered the following:

UofSC has made significant increases in both registration rates and voting rates since 2016. Our institutional registration rate has increased from 82% in 2016 to 87% in 2020, noting a 5% positive change. Additionally, UofSC is slightly higher (69.1%) than the institutional average for voting rates (66% in 2020). Absentee ballots are still the most popular method of voting at UofSC (increased by 3% comparing 2016 and 2020 data). There are significant increases in voting rates for all class standings, all age groups, and all races/ethnicities (excluding race unknown). Black students on our campus had the highest voting rate of any race/ethnicity in 2020 at 75%, followed by white students at 69%. Despite this, UofSC is close to, if not slightly above, voting rates in 2020 when compared to all institutions.

**Self-Comparison (2016 vs. 2020)**

Increases seen in registration rates (+5%), voting rates of registered students (+14%), and overall voting rates (+15)

- Number of students who registered increased by 3,429
- Number of students who voted increased by 6,289

\*note: total populations at UofSC also increased in four years by 1,369\*

**Institutional Comparison (2020)**

- UofSC rates consistent with public institutional average (69% voting rate)
- UofSC rates higher than all institution voting rate by 3%

Additionally, when comparing the 2020 voting data with that of 2016, it is evident that UofSC is making progress in terms of increases among students registered to vote, as well as those actually voting in elections. In the 2016 presidential election, UofSC had a 53.7% voting rate compared to 69.1% in 2020.

Overall, NSLVE data reveals the distressing reality that the majority of college students nationwide are not exercising their right to vote during presidential elections. Although UofSC is relatively 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 UofSC's voter registration and voter turnout numbers for the 2024 presidential election.

## **PURPOSE & 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 (using our 2016 presidential election and 2018 midterm election numbers as a comparison);
- 3) Enhance student's civic competencies through respectful dialogue and consideration of diverse viewpoints; and
- 4) Strengthen partnerships between UofSC, partisan, and non-partisan community organizations

This action plan was created and began in January 2020 to be implemented continuously through the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years. This action plan will be revised again at the start of the Spring 2022 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:

- Carly May, Leadership and Service Center (*left UofSC in August 2021*)
- Dr. Jabari Bodrick, Leadership and Service Center (*left UofSC in December 2021*)
- Rachel Taylor, Leadership and Service Center

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

## **SECTION II: LEADERSHIP**

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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 their 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.

Rachel Taylor, Service & Civic Engagement Graduate Assistant, is primarily be responsible for the implementation of this plan with the Civic Leadership Education Action Team (CLEAT) through May 2022. Upon her departure, Ambra Hiott, Director of the Leadership and Service Center, will temporarily oversee CLEAT until staffing changes redistribute civic engagement responsibilities accordingly.

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, Alex Harrell
  - Student Body Vice President, Emily Dengler
  - General student government members
- Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity
  - Director of Student Conduct, Maureen Grewe
  - Carolina Judicial Council (a group of students who uphold and promote the standards of the Carolina community through the Carolinian Creed)

The role of the working group is to provide feedback on the mission and programs outlined in the action plan, as well as 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.

### **Civic Leadership Education and Action Team**

Students are crucial to developing and strengthening a culture around civic education and participation at UofSC and in Columbia. The Civic Leadership Education and Action Team (CLEAT) is a group of committed students established to assist in implementation of this action plan. CLEAT is currently composed of twelve student leaders who envision and implement student-led, year-round, nonpartisan civic engagement programming. CLEAT's student leadership recruits and manages student participants to assist with the organization's mission. This organization cultivates collaboration with the above-mentioned groups. CLEAT meetings were temporarily paused in the Fall 2021 semester due to scheduling conflicts, but regular meetings are proposed to continue in the upcoming year .

### **Additional Partners**

On-campus partners:

- Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support
- Department of Student Life
- Student Government (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
- College Democrats, College Republicans, College Libertarians, Young Democratic Socialists, etc.

Off-Campus partners:

- Richland County Elections Commissions
- Civic Nation
- #VoteTogether
- National Voter Registration Day
- TurboVote
- Voter Friendly Campus
- Campus Labs
- Campus Compact

Our internal collaborators predominantly serve as partners in programming and resource cultivation. Student voice has, and will continue, to help determine and implement initiatives, as well as serve as voter advocates. The off-campus partners have agreed to offer their support to the university's civic engagement initiative through educating students about policy issues. Our external partners also provide a variety of helpful resources to assist in planning and cultivation of best practices.

### **SECTION III: COMMITMENT**

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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". UofSC 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. UofSC believes that civility and education about voter engagement and political issues can happen simultaneously. Because of UofSC's proximity to the state capitol, the university is fortunate enough to have access to many campus and community partners with a vested interest in civic engagement which aids the mission outlined in this action plan.

The institution demonstrates commitment to improving civic learning in a myriad of ways. From a staff development perspective, the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support has provided support via informal discussion with the Vice President of Student Affairs around civic and democratic engagement.

Additionally, University of South Carolina has contributed monetary support in this area as well. First and foremost, 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.

Support from the Academic Affairs perspective is present as well. Conversations to broaden student perspectives are often brought into classrooms such as a presentation called "Doing Democracy Differently" into first-year classrooms, and the Public Deliberation Program based on National Issues Forum into various classrooms across multiple disciplines. Voter Engagement presentations are also offered to various classes and student organizations to educate students on the voter engagement process.

The support in our guiding documents, financial resources, and staff development, set our institution up for success when attempting to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.

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

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

#### Graduate & Professional Enrollment

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

Source: Charts taken from UofSC Office of Diversity and Inclusion

### Student Engagement Overview

Table 1. UofSC Student Voter Registration and Turnout Rates, 2012-2018

	Student Voter Registration Rates		Student Voter Turnout Rates		
	UofSC	National	UofSC	4yr Public	National
2016	82%	Unknown	54%	54%	54%
2018	77%	Unknown	34%	41%	41%
2020	87%	83%	69%	69%	69%

Source: National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement, 2020 Campus Report

### ASSESSMENT OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMING

In the Leadership and Service Center's 2021-2022 blueprint (strategic planning document), the following is listed regarding civic engagement programming:

**Intended Outcome:** Provide opportunities for students to enhance their civic competencies

**Linkage to University Goal:** Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities.

#### **CLEAT**

Civic engagement efforts planned through Civic Leadership Education Action Team (CLEAT) primarily focused on voter engagement programming, Constitution Day, and our Public Deliberations Program. Fall 2021 was the pilot semester of the "Doing Democracy Differently" presentation in conjunction with the structure of public deliberations – presentations were given to 22 different University 101 classes throughout the semester.

#### **Public Deliberation Program**

A Public Deliberation Program pilot was started during the spring 2019 semester. We intentionally facilitated to a select few groups to test out our program and have students gain first-hand facilitation experience. Since then, the program is still offered throughout the year – in the 2021-2022 academic year, these efforts were focused in U101 classes. Constitution Day programming titled “Conversation Café” in September 2021 utilized placemats offered through public deliberations to host a roundtable dialogue on three topics – free speech and an inclusive campus, the voting process in the United States, and returning to work amid the pandemic.

- 2018-2019: 63 student participants in Public Deliberations
- 2019-2020: 120 student participants in Public Deliberations
  - Note: Two Public Deliberations were cancelled in Spring 2020 due to COVID-19 and transitioning to online programming
- Fall 2021: 358 student participants in Public Deliberations
  - Note: 22 University 101 classes (approximately 19 per class) participating in the “Doing Democracy Differently” presentation

### **Voter Registration**

CLEAT and student organizations used 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. CLEAT hosted a table for National Voter Registration Day on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021. On a non-presidential election year, we saw less engagement in in-person programming related to voter education.

## **ANALYSIS OF BARRIERS**

### **Internal Barriers**

*Balancing new programming:* CLEAT is a relatively new student group being advised by the Leadership and Service Center at UofSC. Balancing new organization culture, as well as new programming in conjunction with prior prioritized projects occasionally comes with challenges. In addition, while students are initially interested in civic engagement efforts, the toll of the COVID-19 pandemic directly impacted student leader availability along with diminished interest from the general student body.

*Maintaining Nonpartisan programming during a non-election year:* CLEAT remains nonpartisan and does not display support of a particular party, ideology, or candidate. That being said, possible reason for lack of interest is because of popularity of student organizations that provide space for partisan opinion to be expressed. Especially in a non-election year, National Voter Registration tabling saw little to no engagement since presidential elections, rather than local elections, are what students generally associate with a willingness to register and inform themselves on the process of voting.

*Student confusion/procrastination:* While electronic voter registration is allowed in the State of South Carolina, absentee ballots require students to mail in forms. This is a popular format for our out-of-state students who wish to vote in their hometown, so we do provide information on absentee ballot requests via TurboVote. 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 with UofSC 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. Student organizations that are centered on a political party are a common way that students do become engaged;

however, CLEAT rarely collaborates with these groups other than marketing upcoming opportunities. Again, the COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be a challenge with attendance to in-person events, but at the same time, other students are tired of the virtual platform. In short, we are still attempting to decide which model is most applicable for our UofSC students.

## **External Barriers**

*COVID-19 Pandemic:* Entering the Fall 2021 semester, we anticipated still being in the midst of managing a “new normal” during the COVID-19 pandemic presents additional challenges. Additional programming such as our Public Deliberation Program and Speaker Series are done in-person to create an environment of organic discussion that may be difficult to re-create with online platforms. Another challenge we may face is maintaining equity in general. COVID-19 has highlighted inequity issues on our campus and in our local community that we will need to be intentional about combatting to ensure all students have the same level of access to our programs and the ability to cast their vote. In regards to budget allocations, while we had to put programs such as Congress to Campus on pause, we do anticipate some student-led programming in the spring 2022 semester.

## **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 and an Assistant Director in the office, the Graduate Assistant for Service and Civic Engagement advised most civic engagement programming, as well as CLEAT, for the 2021-2022 academic year. Starting in spring 2022, two full-time staff from UofSC Off-Campus Relations are working in the office part-time to assist with these efforts. The pathway is not yet determined for 2022-2023, but at least one LSC staff member 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 UofSC’s campus.
- Group of engaged students and traditional programming: The Leadership and Service Center is a premier space at UofSC that is located in the hub of campus. 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 in 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. The expansion of CLEAT into the Student Government space offers potential for increased involvement and innovation for civic education.
- 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 UofSC. The work of our center, specifically civic engagement practices, has significant support from higher level administration that simplifies conversations of resources and credibility.

## **Additional Resources Needed**

- Relationships with external partners: The LSC is moving into year five of focusing on civic engagement programming and is slowly working on creating and enhancing relationships with external partners such as Richland County Elections Commission. Due to a lot of turnover in that office, further developing this relationship with their newer staff members is an additional resource needed. Furthermore, we see value in external partnerships with

local community partners as well as non-local voter-based organizations, such as Secure the Ballot, to assist with programming.

## **SECTION V: 2022-2023 GOALS**

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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
- 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 UofSC was founded.
  - Measurable: The admin side of TurboVote makes it easy to track number of student we have registered.
  - Achievable: The largest amount 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 2 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 one in-person event while registering folks to vote for the local 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 informational brochures/presentations given
  - 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 logistics**
    - 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 TurboVote statistics
    - 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 very 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 per academic 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 edit 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 course of 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 20 smaller group deliberations (in student orgs or classrooms) in both the fall and the spring. 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 (i.e. University 101 Programs)
  - Realistic: We completed 22 deliberations this past fall (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 others 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 before-mentioned goals and initiatives will occur in the 2022-2023 school year and will be implemented by the Leadership and Service Center and CLEAT students in conjunction 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: STRATEGY**

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

#### **Initiatives:**

- Student Voter Registration Coalition: A program that was piloted in Fall 2019 to engage more people in the voter registration process. 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 UofSC 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 of 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
- Partner with Student Government (also located in the Leadership and Service Center) and Off-Campus Relations to spearhead voter registration efforts with the large student body on and off campus

## **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

- Include social media involvement to reach a larger audience of students (quizzes, giveaways, etc.)
- Update our available “swag items” to include exciting things that students would want to keep and spread the word about civic engagement and voter education

### **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:**

- Continue the “Doing Democracy Differently” presentation to University 101 classes in the fall semester to better inform eligible first-time voters about the steps to register and the importance of participating
- 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 (ListServes, newsletters, social media, etc.)
- 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
- Update placemats annually to allow for a variety of offered dialogue topics

### **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 fall Service Cohort curriculum
- Incorporate brainstorming/reflection of civic action concepts in Alternative Break curriculum, specifically in regards to reorientation
- Incorporate conversations of civic action into leadership programming such as Student Leadership Diversity Conference, Camp Cocky, and Close Family Emerging Leaders Program

- Incorporate roundtable sessions with student organization leaders (both politically-affiliated and not politically-affiliated) to converse on the importance of voting and staying engaged with one's community
- 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.

### **Summary of 2021-2022 Programming:**

#### **Fall 2021 Events:**

- National Voter Registration Day tabling on Davis Circle
- Constitution Day: Conversation Café
  - L
- "Doing Democracy Differently" Presentations – U101 classes (22)

#### **Spring 2020 Events:**

- TBD: Multi Club Student Panel

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

**Long-Term Goal Strategies:** UofSC is currently entering its fifth year of intentional civic engagement programming. That being said, our strategy to move closer to our long-term goal of creating a culture of this type of programming on campus is relatively 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. In addition, we are looking to re-structure CLEAT as an extension of Student Government in order to have a wider reach to the student body, on- and off-campus partners, and established interest in participation at a consistent rate.

### **SECTION VII: REPORTING**

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This action plan will predominantly 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 being said, our action plan will be publicly available on the civic engagement section of the Leadership and Service Center website. As a partner of ALL IN Democracy Challenge, our NSLVE data and previous/current action plans are published publicly on their website as well.

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

Finally, we are hoping to bolster assessment efforts in civic engagement and education efforts beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year. At the conclusion of May 2022, staffing responsibilities will need to shift and priorities in this functional area will need to be reaffirmed, especially with the intention to re-structure CLEAT within Student Government.

### **SECTION VII: EVALUATION**

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Quantitative Measures:

- TurboVote and NSLVE data
- Number of and attendance at election-related events in 2021-2022
- Number of and attendance at Public Deliberation Program events in 2021-2022
- 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

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 to the department in the annual blueprint.

## **SECTION IX: CONCLUSION**

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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.