

I. Summary

This action plan is designed to lay out the process of engaging students, faculty, and administrators regarding the registration, education, and turnout of potential voters at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and the surrounding community. The goal of this plan is to create an environment and infrastructure that can measure and hold the campus responsible for encouraging active citizenship. With an eye towards the 2022 Midterms, the organization's aim is to increase student voting rates from the 2020 Election and 2018 Midterms, as well as local elections.

II. Leadership Team

In order to capture different communities and aspects of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, a committee of faculty and students must be formed. The student input will primarily arise from the student organization known as "Vols Vote." Vols Vote was formed as an offshoot of a student program known as Baker Ambassadors, where students would assist and help create events at the Howard Baker Center for Public Policy. In terms of faculty guidance, much of the assistance for this action plan will come from the Baker Center for Public Policy. The Associate Director of the Center and Director of the Leadership and Governance Program, Dr. Katie Cahill, has worked on campus-wide initiatives that emphasize student voice and is a prominent advocate for students. Dr. Cahill as well as the Director of Student Programming, Dr. Jonathan Ring, will provide assistance in hosting events, workshops, and engaging with other faculty to reach as much of the student population as possible.

The Executive Board of Vols Vote is the main student leadership team. The Board is made up of three Committee Directors and the Secretary. The Board meets weekly, separately from general body meetings. The organization is divided into three committees: communications, outreach, and programming. The Communications Committee is responsible for the marketing and message spread of Vols Vote through social media, posters, newsletters, and other forms of

communication. The goal of the committee is to develop a consistent media presence within the campus community. The Outreach Committee is responsible for all external relationships, such as with student organizations and academic departments. The Outreach Committee aims to build relationships with community organizations, while also recruiting new members. The Programming Committee is responsible for the internal planning and facilitation of community and campus events aimed at increasing voter registrations, turnout, and education. The Secretary's main role is to maintain meeting minutes and to manage the content in the shared Google Drive. The Secretary also maintains financial orders for the organization and meets with the Director for Programming of the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy, which houses the organization.

The core mission of the Vols Vote Coalition is to establish a network of partnerships within the campus and wider Knoxville community. The Coalition works together with liberal, conservative, and non-political student organizations to facilitate voter registration drives and civic engagement events. Vols Vote maintains a strong belief in non-partisanship and instilling civility into University of Tennessee students.

In addition to Vols Vote, the Government Affairs Committee within the Student Government Association will participate in achieving the goals laid out within the action plan. As the student body's representation to local and state lawmakers, the Government Affairs committee commits itself to lobby on behalf of voting accessibility and will encourage the drafting and passage of legislation that benefits students at the numerous higher education institutions across the state of Tennessee.

III. Strategy

The short term goal of this team will be to build a coalition that represents the campus and uplifts portions of the campus that do not feel empowered or do not have the means to vote. This will be critical in developing the long term goal of this team, which is to establish the infrastructure necessary to have empowered students with the resources necessary to engage with

their peers about issues at a local, state, and federal level. That being said, the overarching goal of increasing voting turnout among students will be to reach 75% voting rate, in comparison to the 66% measured in 2020 via the NSLVE report. The University of Tennessee: Knoxville has had an upwards trend of voter turnout rates with 15% (2014), 45% (2016), 36% (2018), and 66% (2020).

The leadership team at the University of Tennessee, in the wake of social distancing measures designed to protect students and faculty from becoming infected with COVID-19, will be best served to facilitate multiple forms of events, either online, in-person and social media campaigns, to engage with students between now and November 2022. In order to reach underrepresenting voting populations as shown in the NSLVE 2020 report, the team will need to cater engagement with Engineering and Business students, while also reaching out to POC men, who vote at lower rates than POC women. Partnerships with professional and multicultural greek organizations will be crucial in both reaching these populations and also understanding how the team can best work with them in order to increase voter turnout.

IV. Timeline

A. Fall 2022

1. Vols Vote Kickoff Event at Student Engagement Fair- August 26
2. 2022 Tennessee vs. Florida Voter Challenge
3. National Voter Registration Day - September 20
 - a) A beginning event for the fall semester is National Voter Registration Day on September 20. That entire week Vols Vote, with partner organization volunteers, will be tabling on active parts of campus to register individuals on campus as well as provide helpful voter information.
4. First Year Outreach via Residential Halls
 - a) Under normal circumstances, Residential Assistants are required to meet with their students on a monthly basis. As part of this process, we hope to encourage RA's to help educate their residents

about voting processes, particularly for students who are not from the Knoxville area or from out of state. This will increase adequate registration and hopefully turnout via absentee ballots.

5. Engagement with Panhellenic and Greek Life Community

- a) Panhellenic organizations value community service and civic engagement. As a way to foster this relationship and shared belief, Vols Vote and Panhellenic organizations on campus are partnering to help run voter registration drives on campus leading up to the deadline to register for the midterm election.

6. Registration Deadline - October 8th

- a) This will be the first date that we will be working towards. To secure as large of eligible students to vote as possible, we will need to work to inform them of the necessary forms, information and requirements to register to vote in their district. That being said, by focusing on registration, we hope to encourage students to plan how they will vote in November, especially if their home state requires a ballot to be cast in person as their first ballot.

7. Get Out the Vote! - October through November

V. Reporting

Data collection will be administered at each aspect of the action plan in order to track progress. To track voter registration and outreach, Vols Vote will ask the students to share their contact information to help with GOTV efforts for the Fall. Also, the leadership team will rely on the information provided by the upcoming NSLVE 2022 report to determine whether or not goals were met.