

# University of Toledo Campus Action Plan

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Calendar Year 2024

## Executive Summary

### Guiding Question #1: Which individuals and/or organizations developed this plan?

This Campus Action Plan was developed by the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership (OSIL) at the University of Toledo. It is intended to be executed in partnership with the University of Toledo Department of Athletics and student Democracy Fellows. It has been compiled and submitted by Becca Wait, Program Manager for Leadership and Civic Engagement in OSIL.

### Guiding Question #2: What is this action plan for and what does it seek to accomplish?

This action plan seeks to provide a framework, action steps, timeline and high-level goals for civic engagement and learning efforts at the University of Toledo during the calendar year 2024.

### Guiding Question #3: Where will this action plan be implemented?

The University of Toledo (Main Campus) is in Toledo, Ohio and falls under the jurisdiction of the Lucas County Board of Elections. Most efforts described in this action plan are intended to be executed in person on Main Campus, however, additional efforts will be made to increase efforts on the University of Toledo's Health Science Campus, which is also located in Toledo. Some initiatives will be executed digitally to increase access for our students and community members that engage in a hybrid fashion with the University.

### Guiding Question #4: Why was this action plan developed? How does this plan tie to broader institutional norms/values/strategic plans?

The University of Toledo is a diverse community of students, faculty and staff committed to improving the human condition and building sustainable futures. We believe that democratic engagement, and particularly voter access, education and turnout, are part of this mission. Through participation in the Campus Vote Project and ALL IN Challenge, and with increased community engagement through coalition building, the University of Toledo can be prepared to meet the needs of our community with recognition to the confusion and frustration that can be a part of the voting process. Recognizing the specific complicating factors that can deter student voting – such as frequent moving, absentee voting and differences between state voting laws for in/out of state students, among others – we believe that seeking the Voter Friendly Campus designation will position the University of Toledo to provide more comprehensive support of democratic engagement for our students and community.

In addition, in 2023, the University of Toledo launched its 5-year Strategic Plan: [UToledo Reimagined](#). Civic engagement and learning contribute to the development of several of the plan's stated values, including community, people-centeredness, and efficiency and effectiveness.

### Guiding Question #5: When does this action plan start/end? Is this action plan focused on short-term and long-term goals? When will it be updated?

This action plan is specifically focused on calendar year 2024 (January – December), with the goal to set the University of Toledo up for long-term and sustainable approaches to civic engagement and learning for the 4-year period of 2024-2028. Updates will be made to this plan quarterly (March, June, September, December).

**Guiding Question #6: How will this action plan be implemented? Who's in charge? What unit/office/division will be facilitating the efforts?**

It is important that students be at the center and leading the efforts described in this action plan. The Office of Student Involvement and Leadership will recruit and provide support to a set of Democracy Fellows and student volunteers, and be the facilitators held accountable for ensuring goals and deadlines described are met.

**Guiding Question #7: How will this action plan be implemented? Who's in charge? What unit/office/division will be facilitating the efforts?**

It is important that students be at the center and leading the efforts described in this action plan. The Office of Student Involvement and Leadership will recruit and provide support to a set of Democracy Fellows and student volunteers, and be the facilitators held accountable for ensuring goals and deadlines described are met. Additional support will be provided by and to coalition member organizations on a project by project basis as determined during monthly coalition meetings.

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## Leadership

### Coalition Structure and Logistics

The UToledo Vote Coalition is a working group made up of faculty, staff and students at the University of Toledo, as well as representatives of local civic-minded non-partisan community groups.

Coalition meetings are held virtually once per month. The virtual format was determined to be the most inclusive for our stakeholders with disabilities and for commuter students and community members that may not be on Main Campus during the day. During the meetings, minutes are taken and distributed to all members within 48 business hours of the meeting. The Office of Student Involvement and Leadership is responsible for setting the meeting times, sending invitations and ensuring that the meeting link is set up and accessible to all invitees.

At the conclusion of each working group meeting, action steps should be identified, including the name of individuals and organizations that are taking things on, and their expected timeline for completion. The student Democracy Fellows will be responsible for initial outreach on accountability to commitments made in meetings, with the support of the Program Manager for Leadership and Civic Engagement.

All outcomes and initiatives decided upon in this working group will be communicated via the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership to the Dean of Students/Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, and onward to the University President. This voter coalition has the express support of the University President, who has also expressed his commitment to civic engagement by signing the ALL IN Democracy Challenge's Presidential Commitment.

## Coalition Membership

Over the course of the 2022-23 academic year, following organizations joined the University of Toledo's ongoing voter coalition.

### Campus Departments - Academic

- Department of Law and Social Thought

### Campus Departments – Student Affairs

- Office of Student Involvement and Leadership
- University Athletics
- Office of Multicultural Student Success
- Residence Life
- Catherine S. Eberly Center for Women+
- Office of Accessibility and Disability Resources
- University Libraries

### Student Organizations

- Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC)
- College Democrats
- College Republicans
- Hillel
- University of Toledo Student Government
- National Panhellenic Council (NPHC)

### Community Organizations and Partnerships

- League of Women Voters
- Toledo Public Libraries

In 2024, the following University of Toledo organizations have been identified as potential partners for coalition.

### Campus Departments - Academic

- Department of Political Sciences and Public Affairs
- Department of Environmental Science
- Department of Sociology and Anthropology
- College of Law

### Campus Departments – Student Affairs

- Recreation Services
- TRIO Student Services
- Army ROTC

## Student Organizations

- URGE at UT
- Panhellenic Council
- Interfraternity Council
- Multicultural Greek Council
- Change Makers
- Disability Student Union
- Global Latinx Student Union
- Black Student Union
- Muslim Students Association

## Community Organizations and Partnerships

- Lucas County Board of Elections
- Monroe County Board of Elections

## National Organizations and Affiliations

The University of Toledo will continue to work with the Campus Votes Project and ALL IN Democracy Challenge as national partners.

## Membership

To join the UToledo Vote Coalition, an individual or organization should contact the Democracy Fellows or Program Manager for Leadership and Civic Engagement to be added to future meetings. Additionally, an individual may seek membership via joining the “Rockets Give Back” organization page on the University of Toledo’s Involvement Network (InvoNet) platform.

After missing 2 consecutive meetings, a stakeholder may be asked to identify another representative of their organization to attend or discuss the level of engagement they/their organization are able to commit to.

## Campus Reporting Structures

### Democracy Fellows

Democracy Fellows are hired through the Campus Votes Project and Office of Student Involvement and Leadership and report to the Program Manager for Leadership and Civic Engagement. Students in this role are financially compensated in two ways:

1. **Stipend.** CVP Democracy Fellows receive a semesterly stipend of \$700 for their first semester and \$900 for subsequent semesters. (Subject to change at the discretion of the Fair Elections Center.)

2. **Scholarship.** Democracy Fellows will additionally receive \$500 per semester in tuition assistance in the form of scholarships through the Levis Leadership UToledo program. Scholarship recipients must be a full- or part-time University of Toledo student in good standing who demonstrate interest in leadership and civic engagement through an application process.

### Student Volunteers

Students who are interested in participating in non-partisan voting initiatives as a service-project, either individually or through participation in a student organization, will be compensated in the form of approved service hours.

### Student Staff

Student staff in the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership may be utilized to assist in staffing and/or marketing civic engagement and learning opportunities. These students will be compensated with their agreed upon hourly wage.

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## Commitment

### Verbal and Written Commitments

The President of the University of Toledo has committed to the signing and upholding the ALL IN Democracy Challenge's Presidential Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation.

Email correspondence will be sent to all registered students via the Involvement Network (InvoNet) messaging system at the start of each academic semester and around key dates and deadlines (i.e. voter registration deadline, absentee voter application deadlines, early voting, etc.).

The Office of Student Involvement and Leadership will also manage a "Voter Resources" webpage on the office's website with the most up to date resources, links, and processes student voters will need to be familiar with to vote in the state of Ohio or to vote absentee in a student's home state.

### Voting Culture at the University of Toledo

Voting and democratic engagement efforts are relatively emerging priorities at the University of Toledo, and therefore more efforts will be made in 2024 to understand the extent of democratic engagement as it happens on the University of Toledo campus. An ongoing challenge has existed around student leadership keeping the student body engaged outside of Presidential Election years, with both the College Republican and College Democrat student organizations going inactive (failing to maintain registered student organization status) in the years between these cycles. The 2024 Campus Action Plan is the second action plan submitted by the University of Toledo, and it will be the first Campus Action

Plan to address the campus during a Presidential Election, and it is our intention to use this high visibility election as a spark to truly empower student leaders, with the support of key administrators in the Division of Student Affairs and beyond, to build and maintain a strong foundation of civic learning, democratic engagement, and student leadership around these topics.

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## Landscape

### Curricular and Co-Curricular Learning

There is not currently a set of official designated student learning outcomes around civic learning or democratic engagement at the University of Toledo in the curricular or co-curricular space. During the first and second quarters of 2024, our working group intends to create and propose a set of learning outcomes that will guide our work in the run up to the presidential election in November of 2024.

### Assessment

Because there are not an official set of SLOs established at our institution, there has not been an official assessment established to assess for these outcomes. In 2022, the University of Toledo participated in the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) for the first time. We eagerly await the results of this study for our campus, but have not yet been given access to the results of this data as of the submission of this action plan.

### Barriers to Voter Engagement

#### High percentage of First Time Voters

Most undergraduate students at the University of Toledo are direct from high school students, meaning that for a high percentage of students, the first time they are eligible to vote in any election is while attending the University of Toledo. First time voters who are not familiar with processes may be especially susceptible to intentional or unintentional misinformation about voting access, rights, and other important matters.

#### Commuter Campus

The University of Toledo student body includes a proportionally large number of commuter students who represent a large number of voter districts, and in many cases multiple boards of elections (including a sizable population of students who commute from Monroe County, Michigan, that have an entirely different set of state laws that apply to them).

#### Multiple Voter Districts for Residential Students

For students who live on campus (“residential students”), there are two voter districts that are represented depending on the Residence Hall that a student lives in. It is possible that a student may move from one voting district to another between the first day of classes and the voter registration deadline and not have time to update their voter registration with the state (or be aware that they

should). Residential students are also less likely to have a reliable form of transportation for in person voting.

### Decentralized Voter Information

Before the creation of the University of Toledo voter coalition in recent years, students were largely left to navigate questions about voter education, access and process on their own, or with the help of staff or faculty that took the task of educating students on these items on their own. Therefore, there has been a history of confusion or lack of clarity around where to seek clear, correct, and concise information about voter education on campus.

### Ohio Voter ID Laws

In the state of Ohio, voters who vote in person are required to provide valid photo ID, which according to state law does not include a drivers license or state ID card provided by another state that the State of Ohio. For out of state students, this means that the individual student would need to either:

1. Plan to vote absentee (either using their social security number in Ohio, or voting for the district associated with their out of state ID)
2. Plan to vote in person in the district associated with their out of state ID during the early voting period or on election day
3. Replace their current out of state identification with an Ohio identification (which requires transportation to a BMV office, time, effort and financial cost)
4. Use another form of acceptable identification (such as a passport, which cost money to acquire if not already acquired).

### Ohio Voter Registration

Voter Registration in Lucas County must be submitted directly to the board of elections either in person or via the postal service. Students who do not have personal transportation may have difficulty getting to the Board of Elections in person (which is located at more than a comfortable walking distance from campus), and/or purchasing stamps.

### Resources and Support Factors

The following factors support and bolster the landscape of voter education and access:

- The Ohio Secretary of State website is easy to navigate and provides relevant and plentiful information at an accessible level for first time voters.
- The League of Women Voters of Lucas County is very active and has shown consistent interest in connecting with the University of Toledo to partner in providing non-partisan voter education materials and registration support.
- University President, Gregory Postel, has been a champion of civic engagement efforts on our campus and has demonstrated commitment through the ALL IN Democracy Challenge Presidential Commitment.



- The State of Ohio does not require a reason to vote absentee, making voting by mail an accessible option for students who do not have access to transportation to early/in person voting sites.
- The Involvement Network (InvoNet), the University of Toledo's student engagement platform, utilizes the TurboVote integration, allowing students.
- Access to student voter resources is provided to Democracy Fellows and the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership through the Campus Votes Project.

### Additional Resources to Begin Utilizing

The following resources are not currently being utilized on our campus, but will be explored by this working group to assess their relevance and applicability to our campus's specific needs.

- Ask Every Student Toolkit
- Beginning of College Survey of Student Engagement
- National Inventory for Institutions on Community Engagement

We are also excited to receive the results of our first election cycle as part of the NSLVE study and understand better the actual participation from our students in the November 2022 general election as a predictor of behaviors and benchmark for participation in 2024.

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## Goals

### Long Term Goals

- By 2028, the University of Toledo will see democratic engagement by over 70% of all students eligible to vote.
- Create and implement, and see consistent adoption of a university-wide set of student learning outcomes in curricular and co-curricular spaces before the 2026 general election.

### Short Term Goals

- By April 2024, publish a comprehensive voter resource page on the University of Toledo's website, where students can be directed at Rocket Launch (orientation) and Welcome Weeks programming.
- By August 2024, the UToledo Votes Coalition will be sustainably student-led.
- By Fall 2024, create a student voting pledge that all students are invited to sign annually.

- Starting Fall 2024, develop and implement recurring co-curricular programs that address and celebrate civic holidays (National Voter Registration Day, Vote Early Day, Poll Worker Appreciation Day, etc.).
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## NSLVE

In 2022, the University of Toledo participated in the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) for the first time. We eagerly await the results of this study for our campus, but have not yet been given access to the results of this data as of the submission of this action plan. We are also excited to receive the results of our first election cycle as part of the NSLVE study and understand better the actual participation from our students in the November 2022 general election as a predictor of behaviors and benchmark for participation in 2024.

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## Reporting

This campus action plan will be shared directly with all members (individual and organizational) of the UToledo Votes Coalition. The plan will also be available digitally on the Rockets Give Back InvoNet page, the Voter Engagement website, and shared with key campus communicators and upper level administrators (Dean of Student/Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, University President, college Deans).

Data from the NSLVE, once available, will also be made public through the institution's website and shared directly with stakeholders.