

# **UNC Chapel Hill 2018 Campus Plan**

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## Overview of Action Plan

NCPIRG organizes the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's All in Challenge, believing that mobilizing young voters is crucial to the success of our democracy. UNC Chapel Hill participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement to help track the civic participation of its students as measured by voter registration and voting. To tackle the issue of low voter turnout in our age demographic, we are engaging our campus through the New Voters Project (NVP), hoping to mobilize student voters and increase turnout on our campus.

## History

North Carolina has had unique statewide threats to voting throughout its history. This problem by at large continues today. The pinnacle of this problem is manifested in the racially gerrymandered congressional districts that were struck down in the State Supreme Court last year. Beyond extreme cases like this, however, getting registered to vote and the act of voting itself is rather difficult for many North Carolinians, especially young people like those on college campuses. UNC and the state of North Carolina have both created many challenges over the years for young voters on our campus.

UNC used to make a stronger effort to make engaging in our democracy easier for students. The university used to have more voting locations at Fetzer Gym, Ram's Head Dining Hall, and Hillel Synagogue. Today, there is an early-voting location at Chapel of the Cross, which is not on campus, but close enough that we work to keep it there for institutional memory. We want the university to take make it easier for people to participate and vote.

## Goals

The 3 overarching goals of the New Voter Project are registration, education, and getting out the vote -- all with the goal of improving student voter turnout to 60%.

- 3,000 pledges to vote
- 3,000 voter registrations
- 15,000 GOTV contacts
- Hold a successful, large voter registration event with a variety of student organizations.
- Implement voter registration through on-campus housing as a permanent initiative.
  - Get 1,000 students living on-campus registered through housing, in this pilot year.

# **Initiatives**

## **Department of Housing and Residential Education (DHRE)**

DHRE has agreed to work with NCPIRG in their efforts to promote a voting culture on UNC's campus. The resident advisors (RA) employed by DHRE will encourage their residents to register to vote at their opening floor meetings by providing them with voter registration forms, explaining how to register, and providing a box to turn in forms at each dorm front office. NCPIRG will provide the trainings and training material for the community directors to in turn train their RAs to register their residents to vote. NCPIRG will also provide DHRE with the necessary amount of VR forms (about 10,000), in addition to a drop box for each dorm. NCPIRG will empty these boxes to turn in the forms to the Board of Elections office after the initial floor meetings and weekly until registration closes.

## **Forming a campus-wide voter coalition**

NCPIRG will also work to create a cohesive voter coalition on campus including other political groups, minority associations, and more. This coalition already includes undergraduate Student Government, CUAB, Campus Y, Young Democrats, College Republicans, NAACP, the Black Student Movement and Pan-Hellenic Council, and more. The goal is for these groups to be in constant contact with one another regarding our voter registration and turnout efforts to make them as exciting and effective as possible. We will also be in greater contact with the graduate student government to promote voter engagement through the graduate and professional programs at the university.

## **Student Life And Leadership Civic Engagement Leadership Conference**

UNC's Student Life and Leadership is looking to partner with groups like NCPIRG to bring together groups working in the coalition discussed above. This will help consolidate efforts within the coalition and get the university involved in these efforts.

## **Get students involved in Voter Registration Efforts**

Organizations in the coalition discussed above will publicize ways for students to get involved in their voter registration drives and their organizations as a whole. This will help increase the reach they can have and help us to reach our voter registration goal.

## **Housing Emails**

Community directors will include voter information in their monthly emails sent to the residents in dorms. This information will involve reminding students that they can register to vote through the dorms, how to do so, and when they have to do it by. They will also include voting dates and locations.

### **Digital Information through DHRE**

Information included in the community director emails (outlined above) will also be displayed on dorm TVs, serving as another reminder for students.

### **SGA Make an Impact Website**

The Civic Engagement Committee is set to launch a new website called Make an Impact. This will be a platform for students to get connected to volunteer opportunities and discover new and engaging ways to get involved on campus. The website will include podcasts, news, and other media content. The hope is for this to be a medium for more students to get involved in voter engagement efforts. NCPIRG is planning on advertising ways for students to work with their New Voters Project, expanding voter registration.

### **National Voter Registration Day**

The groups mentioned above that are working on building a campus-wide voter coalition will be hosting an event on National Voter Registration Day (September 25).

### **Party at the Polls**

NCPIRG will be holding the third annual Party at the Polls at Chapel of the Cross. This event is an opportunity for community members and students to come together and have fun at this polling location. We hold this party in conjunction with 100 other communities across the country to experiment the idea of holding parties to increase turnout. The party will have games, music, free food, and a chance for Chapel Hill residents to mingle and have fun.

## Methods

- Recruitment for Volunteers
  - Class announcements
  - Listserv email blasts
  - On-campus tabling
  - Fall Fest tabling
  - On-campus events
- Registration & Education
  - On-campus tabling
  - Dorm Registration through RA meetings
  - Fall Fest registration tabling
  - Campus organization/club outreach registration events
    - Club special events
    - General body meetings
  - Class Announcements
  - Non-Partisan Voter Guides to hand out at tables
- Get Out the Vote (GOTV)
  - Tabling in the Pit and on South Campus
  - Class Announcements
  - Communications
    - Op-eds, LTEs
    - Social media
    - Other media outreach
- On-campus events
  - March to the Polls
  - Non-partisan candidate education
  - Party at the Polls

## Resources

- NCPIRG resources
- Democracy NC resources
- Student Government resources
- Student Life and Leadership resources
- DHRE outreach

## **Anticipated Challenges**

The newest problem we will face is enforcing the pilot program with DHRE. A core challenge will be making the RAs feel comfortable and confident in this task. To mitigate this, we will make trainings as comprehensive and thorough as possible. Additionally, NCPIRG will provide sample VR forms that are highlighted with the most important areas to remind residents to complete. Another challenge is the follow through and future implementation. We want DHRE to commit to doing this again in future election years. Some of the other challenges we anticipate for the coming semester are in recruitment, coalitions, and institutional factors. In order to make the biggest effect in our community, we want as many hands on deck as possible - so we are going to be challenged to recruit as many new team members as possible. Because we are still a relatively new chapter of NCPIRG, this growth is especially important and especially challenging as we test new recruitment methods. The challenges we may face in coalition building are in maintaining our close relationship with student government despite changes in leadership from last year, bringing other student organizations into the campaign (political or not), keeping in relatively constant contact with all these groups, and staying on message if so many organizations get involved. Additionally, we are still working out how to organize civic engagement and student voter turnout institutionally on campus. These challenges usually show themselves in learning how to best communicate with, and keep track of our many volunteers. We have faced some of these challenges before and have made a lot of progress, so we are optimistic that we will continue to do so in order to meet our goals for the November election. Another challenge surrounding the Midterm Election is the excitement of voting for these positions. There are few federal races for NC, which means less media coverage. We will have to make up the information and excitement gap through fun events and candidate guides.

# Timeline

## July:

- Prep all materials to be given to DHRE for RA registering first week (Reg form boxes, # sorted reg forms, voter pledges, training guides for RA's)
- Train community directors on how RA's will register students.
- Create an NCPIRG semester plan for the NVP campaign.

## August:

- **Aug 18-20: Registration of new students at RA floor meetings**
- Aug 19, 8pm: Fall Fest table to recruit volunteers
- Aug 21: FDOC large table (recruitment and registering)
- Follow-up on DHRE voter registration (Collect forms, Email to Housing Listserv, etc)
- Class Rap announcements to pledge voters and get volunteers
- Organization outreach to begin building voter coalition
  - Create a groupme/ Slack for all organizations interested in or working on voting
- Schedule and finalize all food orders for tables for rest of semester

## September:

- Tabling on campus to register and pledge voters
- Sept 8: NCPIRG Kickoff event -- big recruitment event
- Professional trainings -- train team members and coalition partners on volunteer management, grassroots tactics, communications, social media, outreach, etc.
- **Sept 25: National Voter Registration Day event-** Coalition Event

## October:

- Oct 12: Voter registration Deadline
  - Big table day of to get last push
- Pledging to Vote after registration deadline
- **Oct 18: Early Voting Starts**
- Oct. 27: **March to the Polls** -- Pups to the Polls
- Party at the Polls

## November:

- **Nov 3: Early Voting Ends**
- **Nov 6: Election day**