



The College at
BROCKPORT
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Democratic Engagement Plan



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Overview

Founded in 1835, The College at Brockport is a nationally recognized comprehensive public college focused on student success. Located just 20 minutes west of Rochester, the school is part of the State University of New York system. The 464-acre campus has 67 buildings occupying about one-quarter of the campus, with rolling grassy fields and wooded land. Annual enrollment is approximately 7000 undergraduate and 1000 graduate students, with a majority of students residing on-campus or within the surrounding village.

Each year, The College at Brockport awards approximately 25 percent of all bachelor's degrees in the Rochester area, with many alumni staying in Rochester to work or attend graduate school. Alumni serve in leadership roles in business, government, public safety, health care, the arts, sciences and education.

Civic engagement initiatives occur throughout campus under many different departments. Primary responsibility for voter engagement falls within the office of Community Development, in the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Community Development oversees the national award winning Leadership Development Program, community service initiatives and democratic engagement.

In summer 2015, several campus offices were restructured. As a result, democratic engagement became a priority for Community Development, and the college. Over the past year, Brockport has implemented new programs and initiatives to support students' involvement in the political process. Voter registration through campus efforts increased by 600%. However, there is still much work to accomplish and the Voter Friendly Campus Designation reflects the direction in which Brockport is headed. By being named a Voter Friendly Campus, we will be able to recognize and further promote our efforts to engage students. Additionally, the campus plan and application process provides a platform and resources to utilize as we strengthen this work.

Currently, our top three goals for democratic engagement for fall semester are:

- Increase voter registration by establishing campus-wide efforts including classroom visits, student leader trainings and more than 100 hours of registration events
- Enhance voter education by hosting dialogues and events and providing visual materials that present multiple perspectives and emphasize the importance of informed voting
- Establish voter engagement opportunities that provide ballot access and encourage students to get out to vote, including recruiting student poll workers, reminders about absentee voting and shuttles to local polling sites

While the coalition is currently being established, several long term goals have already been established. These goals include:

- Establishing The College at Brockport as a polling location
- Creating a culture of democratic engagement across campus including active participation and campus dialogue
- Increasing participation in mid-term elections and local and state governance

Coalition

Voter registration, education and actions are what democratic engagement is all about, not only in the Brockport and greater Rochester communities, but bringing the knowledge and skills gained to the future communities in which our students may live. To achieve these efforts, we have assembled a coalition of individuals representing the following areas:

Community Development: The office of Community Development, housed in the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, has primary responsibility for civic engagement initiatives at the college. In this capacity, the office oversees the nationally recognized Leadership Development Program, community service initiatives, and democratic engagement.

American Democracy Project (ADP): This college-wide committee of faculty and staff seeks to inform students about a variety of civic engagement topics through a robust speaker series and other programs.

Brockport Student Government (BSG): Student government at Brockport is a vibrant community. The organization seeks to develop students for roles as leaders in diverse and interdependent communities. The director of advocacy position was created to enhance student engagement and activism within their communities.

Department of Political Science: The department of Political Science and International Studies seeks to help students develop the skills and knowledge to critically evaluate political issues and analyze the role of the citizen in the political system.

Residential Life/Learning Communities (RLLC): Serving more than a third of the campus population, Residential Life represents a major stakeholder in efforts to civically engage students. The thriving Living Learning Community program offers a unique opportunity to connect with students on a variety of related topics including service, sustainability, law and civility and others.

Marketing and Web Team: The college recently went through a major update to its website. As a result, there is great potential for having a strong web presence for democratic engagement and TurboVote. Additionally, with the increase in events and promotional fliers, greater connection to the college communications office will be vital.

League of Women Voters (LWV): The college has developed a strong relationship with the League of Women Voters in the Rochester Metropolitan Area. Several registration events have been established in collaboration with the organization.

Academic Affairs: Faculty from a variety of departments and disciplines are invited to join the coalition. Having faculty buy-in and support will allow greater access into the classroom and will promote cross-divisional collaboration.

Programs and Initiatives

Brock the Vote

To get students excited about the democratic process and establish a clear brand and presence on campus, we have created the Brock the Vote Campaign (BTV). Its purpose is to ensure that our students are knowledgeable, engaged and excited about the electoral process. Events and programs are aimed at voter registration, education, and turnout.



Voter Registration

Exercising the right to vote begins with understanding the process. By encouraging our students to register to vote, we are creating a culture that not only values the importance of the engaged citizen, but the impact of the engaged citizen. Registration rates at The College at Brockport saw a 600% increase in the academic year of 2015-2016, and will only continue to rise when engaged citizenship is at the forefront of our initiatives.

The following programs and initiatives may be implemented to increase **voter registration**:

- TurboVote online registration tool
- Link to TurboVote prominently featured on college's myBrockport platform
- Promotion of voter registration at Summer Orientation "Learning to Soar" and "Connecting to Your New Community" Sessions
- Email sent to on-campus students with housing assignment and voter registration information
- Voter Registration information and forms available during move-in
- Voter Registration information and forms handed out to off-campus students by Good Neighbor Relations Team during Saturday of Service
- Voter Registration Tabling throughout campus
 - Student Union
 - Residence Halls
 - Athletic Buildings
 - Academic Buildings
- Presentations and voter registration in Freshmen Academic Planning Seminar
- Trainings for student leaders on how to register to vote so that they can educate their peers (Resident Assistants, Peer Mentors, Community Ambassadors)
- Campus-Wide Email sent to all students from Vice President's Office
- Instructions sent to all Faculty through the Daily Eagle
- Presence at Naturalization Ceremony
- National Voter Registration Day Event
- Voter registration materials made available at various campus events

Voter Education

Voter Education is considerably the most crucial aspect to democratic engagement on college campuses. It is essential to provide well-rounded education that broadens the mind of our students. Voter education initiatives that bring forth the value of the voting systems, its candidates and elected officials of all parties shed light on the many ways that the system is intended to work.

The following programs and initiatives may be implemented to increase **voter education**:

- Constitution and Citizenship Day Deliberative Dialogue
- Our Community, Our Voice Interactive Blind Voting Simulation
- Debate Watch Parties
- “You’re Disconnected, But Are You?” Deliberative Dialogue
- Bulletin Boards throughout Campus
- Electing to Lunch Weekly Lunch Discussions

Ballot Access

The Brock The Vote Campaign takes access to voter registration and ballots off of the paper and into the reality of our student’s everyday lives. By providing registration to students in largely populated campus areas and residence halls, as well as postage for registration forms and absentee ballots via TurboVote or postal mail. Students not only have access, but are informed of such access.

The following programs and initiatives may be implemented to increase **ballot access**:

- Exploring the opportunity to become a polling location
- Providing Transportation or Ride Shares to polling locations
- Posters and flyers throughout campus reminding students to submit absentee ballots
- Provost email to faculty encouraging support and flexibility for students needing to travel home for election day
- Opportunities to practice casting a vote to eliminate discomfort as a deterrent

Get Out To Vote

This aspect of Brock The Vote is more than meets the eye. It means not only are our student voters getting to the polls, but that are taking value in their own political action. BTV encourages the educated, informed and pride in voting. Where students are moved to stand up for their beliefs and understand the perspectives of others.

The following programs and initiatives may be implemented to encourage students to **Get Out To Vote**:

- Email from the president encouraging participation in the election
- Flyers and advertising throughout campus promoting election day and building excitement
- Video on website encouraging students to get out and vote on election day
- Recruiting students to become poll workers
- Election Day Watch Party
- “I Voted” Party

Assessment of Resources

Available Resources

- TurboVote voter registration online tool
- American Democracy Project
- Graduate Assistantship for Democratic Engagement
- 10 Community Ambassador student employees
- Funds for speakers, events and promotional materials from Community Development, American Democracy Project, and collaborating partners

Partners and Other Resources

	<p>As part of the NASPA Lead initiative, the college has been able to gain a community of colleagues who offer suggestions and best practices for promoting democratic engagement.</p>
	<p>In the past two years TurboVote has continued to help our students stay engaged with election reminders and services. Moving into this election season we are excited to continue the use of their services.</p>
	<p>The NSLVE report has been a great tool for voter registration, turnout and projection. Additionally, we have been able to use make adjustments and identify areas of weakness to generate progress.</p>
	<p>The partnership with our campus American Democracy Project has helped tremendously in the support and marketing areas. Together we have been able to promote voter engagement, education and mobilization for our students.</p>
	<p>NYS allows for (optional) Organ Donation Registration and Voter Registration on the same document. Because of this we have been able to partner with representatives of Donate Life and register record numbers of students as organ donors and voters.</p>
	<p>Last year we were able to partner with the League of Women Voters to table in the student union and host several different events that not only helped students register but also helped them become more educated about the democratic process.</p>
	<p>Brockport Student Government plays a huge role in student engagement on our campus. We will continue to collaborate for the Our Community, Our Voice event, and others. Additionally, presence on the coalition will allow for increased student buy-in.</p>
	<p>Residential Life has not only provided spaces to BTV On The Go, where voter registration tables are set up inside of residence halls, but they have encouraged provided opportunities for Resident Assistants to mobilize and get students registered to vote.</p>
	<p>Student Union and Activities continues to aid in all of our democratic engagement initiatives. Where spaces are needed for registration, events, and watch parties, the SUA has been an incredible ally for BTV.</p>
	<p>Brockport Athletics has also been an ally for space and activity. Where the philosophy of Division III athletics fosters and environment of well rounding students and student athletes, our athletics department takes pride in emphasizing the role of citizenship for all.</p>

Additional Resources Needed

- Additional funds for large-scale events and speakers
- Mechanisms to allow for transportation to multiple polling sites

Anticipated Challenges

- Campus-wide buy-in and support for initiatives
 - By establishing a coalition from a variety of areas, we hope to address this challenge. Additionally, by garnering support from high-level college administrators we hope to send a message that this is an important topic and warrants time and support from all areas.
- Perception that the efforts are geared to promote a specific party or agenda
 - By partnering with a variety of platforms and ensuring that educational initiatives present multiple viewpoints we hope to alleviate this challenge.

Coalition Timeline

Summer 2016

- Establish coalition and meet at least once to formulate goals for the fall semester
- Begin planning 2016 Election events and initiatives

Fall 2016

- Coalition meets bi-weekly to discuss and plan events and initiatives from multiple areas
- Focus will be on the fall presidential election
- Fall wrap-up report of all events and initiatives will be completed to be shared with the coalition in the spring semester to determine an appropriate course

Spring 2017

- Coalition meets monthly to establish long term guiding principles and strategic goals
- Emphasis will be on engaging students in the democratic process at all times, not just when a big election is taking place
- Fall initiatives will be discussed

Summer 2017

- Coalition continues to meet once a month to discuss and plan fall initiatives

Fall 2017

- Coalition meets monthly to discuss long term goals and initiatives, along with events and programs
- Coalition begins working towards long term goals by dividing into sub-committees
- Education programs and initiatives to encourage democratic involvement

Fall Events Postcard



<p><i>Elect to Lunch Series</i> An open, informal discussion about the election. Food provided! Wednesday, September 14 12:15 – 1:15 pm in Union 220 Thursday, September 22 12:30 – 1:30 pm in Union B116 Wednesday, September 28 12:15 – 1:15 pm in Union 220 Thursday, October 13 12:30 – 1:30 pm in Union B116 Thursday, October 27 12:30 – 1:30 pm in Union B116 Wednesday, November 2 12:15 – 1:15 pm in Union 220</p>	<p><i>Brock the Vote Events</i> Deliberative Dialogue: Citizenship and You Friday, September 16 3 – 5 pm in Union 185 Voter Registration Party Tuesday, September 27 (National Voter Registration Day!) 4 – 8 pm in Union 185 Interactive Dialogue: You're Disconnected, But Are You? Thursday, October 20 6 – 8 pm in Union 185 Engaging the Election Wednesday, October 26 6 – 7 pm in the Liberal Arts Building, McCue Auditorium</p>	<p>Our Community, Our Voice Monday, October 31 3 – 5 pm in Union 185 Debate Watch Parties Monday, September 26 9 – 10:30 pm in Union Main Lounge Tuesday, October 4 9 – 10:30 pm in Union Main Lounge Sunday, October 9 Virtual discussion: #CitizenB Wednesday, October 19 9 – 10:30 pm in Union Gallery <small>Programs sponsored by the American Democracy Project and the Office of Community Development.</small></p>	<p>How can we help? What questions can we help answer about the election? Cut off this tab and turn it in to any of our boxes around campus, or hand it in to Kim Piatt or Susan Orr.</p>	<p>Want to win some fabulous stuff? Write your email address to be entered into our weekly drawing!</p>
<p>The voter registration deadline in New York is Friday, October 14. If using an absentee ballot, you must request one by November 1 and postmark your return by November 7.</p>				
<p>Questions? Contact us! Kim Piatt, Assistant Director Office of Community Development (585) 395-2987 kpiatt@brockport.edu</p>		<p>Susan Orr, Associate Professor Department of Political Science and International Studies (585) 395-5676 sorr@brockport.edu</p>		
<p>www.brockport.edu/life/community/engage2016</p>				

Fall 2016 Timeline

July

- Presentations at Summer Orientation for new students about voter registration
- Initial project layout and planning of events
- Begin discussing coalition membership and recruitment
- Voter Friendly Campus Application Due

August

- Summer Housing Assignment email sent with link to TurboVote registration tool after August 1
- Materials available during move-in and provided to off-campus students through Good Neighbor Relations house visits on August 27
- Fall events scheduled and rooms reserved
- Assignment and location planning of voter registration tabling
- Deliberative Dialogue outlining
- Promotion and visual production planning
- Coalition formed
- Opportunities for faculty to allow classroom presentations advertised and scheduled

September

- All In Campus Democracy Challenge Application Due
- Naturalization Ceremony – September 16
- Constitution & Citizenship Day – Deliberative Dialogue on September 17
- National Voter Registration Day – Celebration & Registration on September 27
- Begin Voter Registration Tabling – Approx. 55 hours
- Visits to Freshman Academic Planning Seminar and other classes
- Debate Watch Parties
- Electing to Lunch weekly events begin
- Promotional materials placed around campus

October

- You're Disconnected, But are You? – Deliberative Dialogue
- Our Community, Our Voice – Interactive, Blind Voting Simulation
- NYS Voter Registration Deadline – Oct. 14th
- Continue Voter Registration Tabling – Approx. 45 hours
- Debate Watch Parties and Electing to Lunch continues
- Shuttles to polling locations advertised along with reminders about absentee ballots

November

- Get Out To Vote Initiatives – shuttles, email reminders, etc.
- Election Day – Nov. 8th
- Closing the Loop/Semester Assessment of initiatives

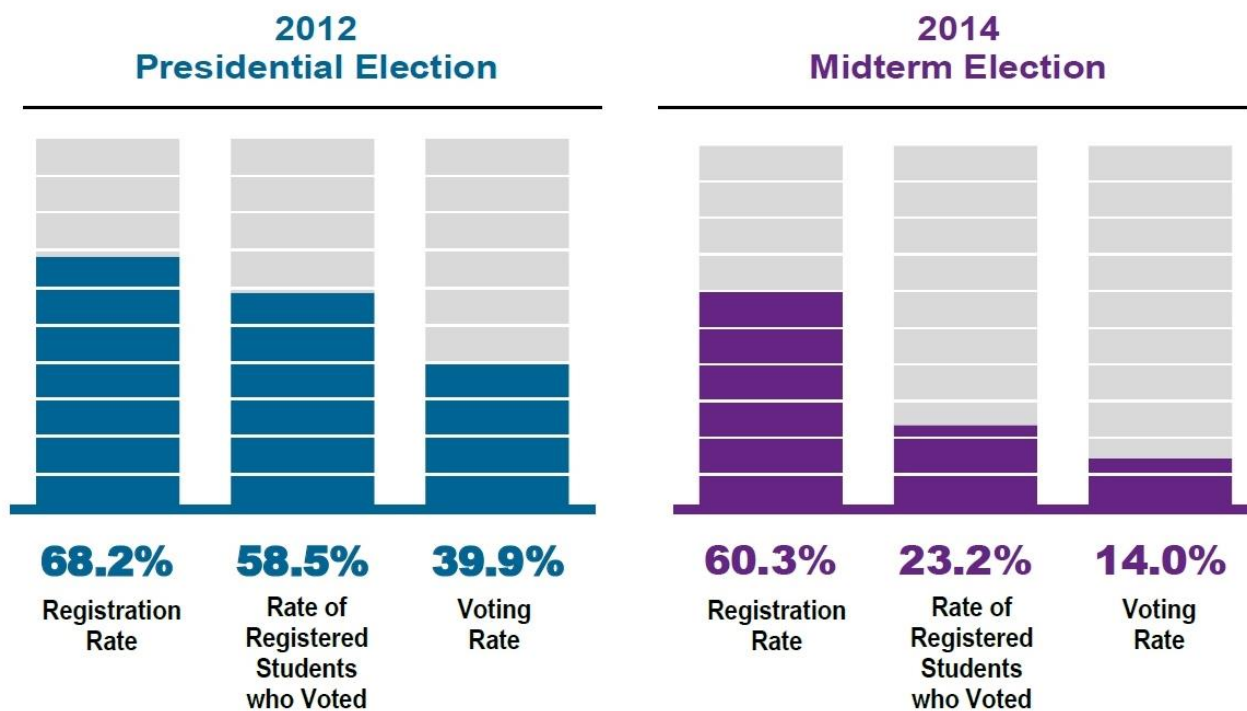
Evaluation of Success

What does success look like for our campus?

At Brockport, democratic engagement initiatives have been largely spread across campus in a variety of pockets but predominately relied on the individual or department to be responsible. We did not have one specific area that brought together a campus-wide effort. In 2015, Community Development was reorganized to make it the home of the campus' civic engagement activity. As a result, democratic engagement efforts are relatively new to Brockport. But what we lack in history, we make up for in motivation.

Initially, success at Brockport will be largely related to how well we are able to engage students, faculty and staff from across campus in our efforts. To what extent are we impacting the campus culture? This will be measured by participations rates and attendance at events, but also by the level of campus collaboration.

A tool that has been immensely helpful in understanding voter engagement on our campus has been the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement out of Tufts University.



In looking at voter turnout results from the last presidential election, the college is close to the national average of 45%, but there is still work to be done. This year, our goal is to have at least 50% voter turnout.

Additionally, success will be measured not only in voter registration and turnout, but also in the education of our students. To what extent are Brockport students prepared to make informed decisions and engage in the democratic process? Successful initiatives would mean that students know how to be involved and connected and have the skills to consider multiple perspectives and critically reflect on their own positions.

Assessment measures

Success will be evaluated using the following assessment measures:

- Voter Registration Rates through Brock the Vote Initiatives
- Voter Registration Rates (NSLVE)
- Voter Turnout Rates (NSLVE)
- Program and event attendance
- Achievement of student learning outcomes at programs and events
- Number of classroom visits
- Number of faculty, staff and community members involved in efforts
- Students reporting learning in the following areas:
 - Awareness of campus, local, state and federal government structures
 - Knowledge of the electoral process
 - Understanding their own values and viewpoints
 - Considering the viewpoints of others
 - Evaluating the platforms of electoral candidates
 - Engaging with representatives
- Student engagement rates various forms of democratic action

Closing

At the College at Brockport, we are committed to cultivating in our students the skills and knowledge, critical inquiry and creative innovation, intercultural competence and resilience necessary to transform our society. As such, preparing our students to be engaged and educated citizens is fundamental to our work. Our efforts over the coming years will seek to create an informed population of voters.

