

RowanVotes - ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
2020 Rowan University Action Plan

Executive Summary

The Rowan University ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Action Plan was developed through collaboration between Rowan University Administration, Rowan University Student Affairs, Chamberlain Student Center & Campus Activities, the Student Government Association, student leaders from the Rowan Republicans and the Rowan Democrats, the Faculty Senate, the Rowan Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship (RIPPAC) and the Department of Political Science and Economics. The action plan outlines the coordination efforts between these different organizations to make voter registration, education and participation a seamless and integrated part of the student experience at Rowan University. As we learn about our institution through data from the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE), we will update our plan to continue our successes and identify areas for improvement.

Working Group

Our working group consists of representatives from Rowan University Administration as well as leaders from the student body. In addition, the Rowan Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship, the Department of Political Science and Economics, Student Affairs and Chamberlain Student Center & Campus Activities as well as various centers on campus will be playing key roles in implementing initiatives that are planned by the group as a whole.

Current members of the group include:

Steve Weinstein, Executive Vice President for Policy and External Relationships/Partnerships
Rory McElewee, Ph.D. Vice President, Student Affairs
Bill Friend, Ph.D. President of the Faculty Senate
Drew Tinnin, ED.D. Associate Vice President, Student Life, and Interim Dean of Students
Joseph Lizza, ED.D. Director of Chamberlain Student Center & Campus Activities
Ben Dworkin, Ph.D. Director of the Rowan Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship
Kathy Javian Ph.D. Faculty, Department of Political Science and Economics
Santino D'Agostino President of the Rowan Republicans
Hafiza Kazi President of the Rowan Democrats.
Kevin McCarthy AVP of Government Relations, Student Government Association

As we continue to develop this program we will be reaching out to various campus groups for their participation.

Commitment

Rowan University places engagement and student centeredness as central pillars of its core operational values¹. Increasing participation and civic engagement among the student body and the broader community is a critical goal for any 21st century research university. Politics and public policy are uniquely linked to student opportunities at Rowan. As a result, a more engaged campus will benefit the Rowan community as well as the state of New Jersey. A more engaged citizenry is the goal of any democratic nation. One way for Rowan to increase civic engagement and participation is to join the All In Campus Democracy Challenge. The challenge requires universities to prioritize voter registration as well as promote and encourage participation in the electoral process. Below is our action plan for the year 2020.

Rowan University

Rowan University is ranked one of the top ten fastest growing doctoral universities in the country². Rowan's student population is almost 20,000, with most students attending Rowan's Glassboro campus. In addition to the Glassboro, NJ campus, Rowan has a campus that serves undergraduates in Camden, NJ. The student body is diverse, with 32% coming from underrepresented groups. Rowan has seven colleges and five schools³. Rowan's influence in the South Jersey region is increasing as the university continues to grow.

This is Rowan's first year participating in the challenge and as such, we will be joining the NSLVE for the first time. This will allow us to set a baseline for future registration and mobilization goals as we continue this initiative. Rowan's student body are a mix of students who begin their college careers at Rowan and those who come to Rowan after attending one of the local community colleges. As such, students are entering Rowan at different stages of their academic careers. In addition, we have many students who are commuting to campus rather than residing here. According to *U.S. News and World Report*, 63% of Rowan students live on campus⁴. These data suggest that we will need to be prepared to register and mobilize students throughout the mid-Atlantic region. Luckily, the state of New Jersey now has a Vote By Mail option, which will allow students to easily vote regardless of their home address or residence.

According to *U.S. News & World Report*, 35 percent of Rowan's student population are first generation college students⁵. Research suggests that parental education is correlated with a propensity to vote⁶. First generation students are therefore less likely to participate in politics. However, the research also shows that holding constant these background variables, college

¹https://www.rowan.edu/home/sites/default/files/sitecontent/landing_page/officialmissionstatementandoperationalcontext.pdf

² https://sites.rowan.edu/fastfacts/_docs/at-a-glance-2018-19.pdf

³ Ibid.

⁴ <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rowan-university-2609/student-life>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Perrin, A. J., & Gillis, A. (2019). How College Makes Citizens: Higher Education Experiences and Political Engagement. *Socius*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023119859708>

education, that focuses specifically on civic engagement makes students more likely to participate⁷. Our approach to addressing Rowan University student participation will focus on best practices based on research. Because Rowan has a large number of students who experience barriers to participation, the ALL IN Challenge is needed and necessary.

Goals

As part of the Campus Democracy Challenge, Rowan University will promote democratic engagement through three pillars: Registration, Education, and Mobilization. In order to achieve the broader goal of increased participation and engagement, we have identified a number of action items that we will be implementing beginning in the Spring of 2020 through the 2020 federal elections and beyond (see Attachment A). In addition, Rowan will follow the evidence-based practices to improve participation and engagement from the Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP). Our main goal for the first year of this challenge is to institutionalize opportunities for voter registration, education, and mobilization.

In addition, a number of students will receive 2-3 experiential learning credits to be campus wide leaders in organizing registration and mobilization efforts, as well as assisting in educational initiatives. Research shows that this type of experience creates the skills necessary for active political participation and civic engagement⁸. Further peer contact is a key way to get potential voters registered and increase their likelihood of participation. This is why we will encourage students to be at the center of this campaign by training student resident life leaders and creating a team of #RowanVotes leaders who will be present at events around campus.

Voter Registration

- Meeting students where they are. We will make an effort to have voter registration as an option for students during check in when they come to Rowan, either as a first year student or as a transfer student.
- Student clubs: Many student clubs and organizations already conduct voter registration efforts. Clubs are required to complete a certain number of service hours in order to receive funding from the Student Government Association. We already have representatives in our working group from the Student Government Association (SGA), the Rowan Democrats, and the Rowan Republicans. In addition, we will reach out to heads of the Greek Life organizations as well as other clubs. We will provide training to clubs who are interested in doing this, as well as create a system for clubs across campus to track voter registration.
- Resident Student Life: One of our goals is to train student life representatives including Resident Assistants to register people to vote and circulate relevant voter information.
- Commuter Student Life: Work with the Office of Volunteerism, Civic Engagement and Commuter Services on helping our commuter students register to vote and make a plan to vote.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Brady, H., Verba, S., & Schlozman, K. (1995). Beyond Ses: A Resource Model of Political Participation. *The American Political Science Review*, 89(2), 271-294. doi:10.2307/2082425

- National Voter Registration Day Campus Wide Event (9/22/2019).

Education

- Voter and Civics Education: We plan to work with university partners including the Rowan Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship (RIPPAC), the Department of Political Science and Economics, Chamberlain Student Center & Campus Activities, and the Office of Community Engagement, Civic Volunteerism and Commuter Services to organize several events to highlight the importance of the election including teach-ins on gerrymandering, and elections. In particular, we have several events on campus surrounding Constitution Day as well as a spring kick off event teaching about the importance of primaries.
- Rowan University and in particular, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is emphasizing experiential learning. We have several options for students who would like to get involved in the ALL IN Challenge through participating in voter registration, mobilization and supporting the educational initiatives. We have in place mechanisms where students can receive 2-3 credits for this type of experiential education. First, we offer a class entitled *Social Movements and Political Activism*, which is an experiential class. In the class, students will create a non-partisan #RowanVotes guide for students to be distributed at our events. Students can choose to participate in the ALL IN Challenge as part of this class. In addition, the College of Humanities and Social Science's Center for Professional Success provides ways for students to earn credit for volunteer experience and civic engagement.
- We will encourage college administrators and leaders to promote voter engagement through email reminders to register to vote and participate in the election. We will have those emails link back to a point person working on the ALL IN challenge who can help students who are experiencing problems with registration or figuring out where to vote.
- We will also use social media to field student questions about the elections from our local experts and to troubleshoot any problems students are encountering.

Mobilization

- In order to help students get to the polls on election day, or vote by mail, we will host a number of events to encourage participation. One such initiative will be having students post "why I will vote" in the Student Center on a large board in a central location.
- Another mobilization tactic will be to host a vote by mail event, where students can mail their ballots at the Post Office on campus and get an "I Voted #RowanVotes" sticker.
- Students will be encouraged to vote through email blasts and social media takeovers.
- Rowan University will host a Get Out the Vote concert or event through a national organization such as *Rock the Vote* or *Headcount.org*.

Self Assessment

The Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP) has a tool for assessing which nonpartisan election engagement practices are being implemented on campus. We will use this to guide our approach. There are many practices that are already underway and some that can be implemented easily. We will use this tool to assess our progress as we implement and review the initiative. In particular, we will focus on several items that have been adopted from the CEEP self assessment.⁹ Below are a list of self-assessment items that were adapted from the CEEP that we will work on in the coming year(s):

- We will continue to build our coalition of faculty, staff and students.
- We will formalize and institutionalize processes for updating students about key dates and deadlines for voter registration and turnout. We will use the official calendars and email blasts, and official social media platforms for this purpose.
- We will work on creating resources for supporting the ALL IN initiative.
- We will create opportunities for students to register to vote as they begin to matriculate at Rowan.
- Rowan University is actively working to increase experiential learning opportunities on campus. We currently have one class that will use experiential education to “foster student’s political learning and culminates in a project that registers, educates and empowers their fellow students to vote.” (*PS 07327 - Social Movements and Political Activism*). This class will also create non-partisan voter guides for the Rowan Community.

Timeline, Budget, and Announcement

We have created a grid of our proposed events and initiatives by semester and month for the year 2020. This will serve as our working timeline. The grid is attached (Attachment A). We have also created a budget request (Attachment B) for this initiative, which will need resources in order for it to be successful. Finally, the initial announcement to the university is attached (Attachment C).

⁹https://campuselect.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2017_electoral_engagement_assessment_final.pdf

#RowanVotes / ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Proposed Initial Calendar

Goal: To advance civic learning and voter participation among Rowan students.

Spring 2020	Possible Activities		
	Registration	Education	Mobilization
Jan - Feb	Register students to vote at SGA Org Fair		
Feb	Add registration banner to Proflink		
Feb - May	Recruiting of 2020 #RowanVotes Team Leaders (select students charged with assisting efforts to register students & get them to vote) Kathy and hopefully others		
Feb - May	Registering/recruiting students during Debate Watch parties	Debate Watch parties throughout the semester	
Feb - May	Registering students during interdisciplinary Teach-Ins	Interdisciplinary Teach-In on Presidential Primaries.	
Feb - May	Coordinating Fall voter registration competition through SGA and campus clubs		
March 3	Registering students during Super Tuesday Results Watch party	Super Tuesday Results Watch party SGA	

Attachment A

March 5	Registering students during the Centennial celebration of Women’s Suffrage – Gail Collins speech	Centennial celebration of Women’s Suffrage – Gail Collins speech	
April	Add registration materials to packets	Add voter information to registration packets	
April 13 or 15	Registering students during Gov. Tom Kean RIPPAC event (speaker is tentative)	Gov. Tom Kean on Citizenship – RIPPAC event (speaker is tentative)	

Summer 2020	Possible Activities		
	Registration	Education	Mobilization
June – Aug	Identify all current students who are registered in Glassboro. This list might include people who graduated, so we’d have to clean it up ourselves.		
June – Aug	Through series of emails, promote VBM option for primary voting in June. These emails would go to only those with partisan registration.		
June – Aug	Ongoing coordinating Fall 2020 voter registration competition through SGA and campus clubs (Greek, orgs, dorms), etc.		
June – Aug		Training of RAs and other student leaders in how to register voters.	

Attachment A

June – Aug			Create #RowanVotes web site with information and links regarding registration, VBMs, calendar of #RowanVotes-affiliated events, etc.
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Fall 2020	Possible Activities		
	Registration	Education	Mobilization
Aug-Sept	Voter registration drives at student orientation, within RA groups, freshman seminars, and dorms.		
Sept. 17		Constitution Day lecture – focus should be on voting issues Kathy will reach out to Emily Blanck and CHSS	
Sept 22	#RowanVotes Kickoff Event, coincides with National Voter Registration Day. Host a registration fair, including food, tshirts, Uncle Sam on stilts, tables for campaigns, etc. SCCA, SGA, PSEC		
Sept. 22	Launch voter registration competition among student orgs: who can register largest percentage of their members? PSEC/RIPPAC SGA? Clubs?		
Sept. 29		Presidential Debate Watch Party – 1 st debate	

Attachment A

Sept-Oct			Republican / Democratic congressional candidate GOTV rallies
Sept-Oct	Design and place walk-and-walls on well-traversed sidewalks throughout campus with voter registration message. SCCA		
Oct. 7		Vice Presidential Debate Watch Party	
Oct. 7 – 13	Red, white, and blue ribbons tied around trees on campus, as a reminder to register to vote.		
Oct. 9	Coinciding with RIPPAC Campaign Volunteer Fair, final voter registration push before NJ’s Oct. 13 th deadline		RIPPAC Campaign Volunteer Fair
Oct. 15		Presidential Debate Watch Party – 2 nd debate Rowan Dems/Reps	
Oct. 20			Announce winners of voter registration competition among student organizations. Provide celebration of #RowanVotes success for all participants.
Oct. 22		Presidential Debate Watch Party – 3 rd debate	
Oct. 24			RIPPAC “straw poll” and GOTV promotion at Homecoming 2020.
Oct		Annual debate between Rowan Democrats and Rowan Republicans. Rowan Dems/Reps	

Attachment A

Oct		Pre-election Panel of Rowan professors on the dynamics of the election PSEC and anyone else who wants to be involved	
Oct		Distribution of “NJ voter guide” – produced by students and overseen by faculty member. Kathy will do this with her class	
Post-Oct. 13			Promote VBM opportunities through direct email to registered students and tables throughout campus.
Post-Oct. 13			Provide voting location and VBM information on website. Site can also provide pictures and updates on the calendar of events.
Post-Oct. 13			GOTV rally/concert in partnership with Rock the Vote
Post-Oct. 13			Create large “Why I Will Vote” display in CSC – with students allowed to affix Post-It notes explaining why they will vote on the display. SCCA
Post-Oct. 13			#RowanVotes selfie challenge. Students take a selfie in front of a #RowanVotes banner and post on social media that they pledge to vote, and challenge 2 friends on campus to do the same.
Post-Oct. 13			Vote by mail day in the student center near the post office. Students

Attachment A

			will receive an "I Voted #RowanVotes" sticker.
Nov 3 – ELECTION DAY			Provide shuttle busses to polling places that cover campus.
Nov 3 – ELECTION DAY			SGA to host a watch party

**ALL IN Challenge / #RowanVotes
DRAFT Budget as of 12.10.19**

Costs are educated estimates. With review and input from others, we certainly can amend this initial proposal.

ALL IN COORDINATOR

This person will be the primary coordinator for the ALL IN challenge from February 2020 through November 2020.

Though there will be several campus offices and organizations engaged in this effort, there needs to be someone to facilitate and coordinate these efforts, as well as handle action items that do not fall neatly into someone else's lap.

This person will:

- Help select and oversee the activities of the ALL IN Advocates (the #RowanVotes version of "Rowan Ambassadors") throughout the timeframe.
- Administer different aspects of the registration, education, and mobilization efforts that do not have someone else to take the lead. This could include:
 - training Rowan staff and student leaders (RAs and others) on procedures and rules for voter registration and casting ballots,
 - handling social media (email blasts with information and reminders, maintaining the website of information, etc.),
 - arranging for necessary marketing materials (working with University Communications on logo, ordering items from Print Center, etc., getting voter registration forms, VBM request forms from Division of Elections and County Clerks,
 - ordering food, photographer, entertainment, etc., as necessary, for events, and
 - serving as the point person for any student who has a question, etc.
- Collect public records of current voter registration data for Rowan students and then monitoring increases as the university goes through its Action Plan.

Assuming this is a NON-faculty/staff member, this person could be paid an hourly rate.

Feb 3 – Nov 13 20 hours/week 40 weeks \$20/hour \$ 16,000

A faculty member who takes on this role, may require 1-2 course releases, as well as some kind of remuneration over the summer.

Attachment B

ALL IN STUDENT WORKERS

This is a team of perhaps 15 students who will gain experiential learning experience and 1 to 3 academic credits through their participation. Like Rowan Ambassadors, they will require a certain amount of swag.

ALL IN Student Worker Polo shirts	15 shirts x \$22	\$ 330
ALL IN Coordinator Polo shirt	1 shirt x \$22	\$ 22

MATERIALS FOR ALL IN COORDINATOR / ADVOCATES

Table covers (6' table) with logo	2 x \$225	\$ 450
Pop-ups (5') with #RowanVotes logo	2 x 275	\$ 550

CAMPUS PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Walk-and-walls – 3' x3' (voter reg)	8 x \$38.25	\$ 306
Walk-and-walls – 3' x 3' (GOTV)	8 x \$38.25	\$ 306

Door hangers for dorm rooms (voter reg)	5,000	\$ 845
Door hangers for dorm rooms (GOTV)	5,000	\$ 845

Wallet cards with basic info on registering and voting, to be handed out to all students by ALL IN student workers.	10,000	\$ 450
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#RowanVotes t-shirts for distribution to all students	10,000 x \$6	\$ 6,000
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Red, white, and blue 4" ribbon to tie around trees throughout campus	4 rolls	\$ 52
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Small lapel stickers – “I voted! #RowanVotes”	10,000	\$ 600
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Targeted social media advertising		\$ 1,000
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FOOD IN SUPPORT OF VARIOUS EVENTS

Summer 2020

2-day training session for ALL IN Ambassadors, and other invited student leaders on campus. Breakfast and lunch. Dinner on their own.	30 pple x 4 meals	\$ 2,500
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Attachment B

Fall 2020

Political Science Teach-In	2	\$ 200
Super Tuesday Debate Watch		\$ 100
Constitution Day lecture		\$ 100
Presidential Debate Watch #1		\$ 100
Presidential Debate Watch #1		\$ 100
Presidential Debate Watch #1		\$ 100
Vice Presidential Debate Watch #1		\$ 100
Rowan GOP/Rowan Dems annual debate		\$ 100
#RowanVotes Kickoff event		\$ 800
Rock The Vote event		\$ 800
VBM party		\$ 800

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR MAJOR EVENTS

#RowanVotes Kickoff event - Washington, Lincoln impersonators, Uncle Sam on stilts, or some other celebratory gimmick		\$ 300
#RowanVotes Kickoff event – photographer		\$ 400
Rock The Vote dance party – entertainment (e.g., DJ, band)		\$ 2,000
Rock The Vote dance party – photographer		\$ 400
Prizes (TBD) for student organizations that win campus-wide voter registration competition		
Highest % of member who are registered		\$ 200
Biggest % increase in voter registration among members		\$ 200
Shuttle Buses for students who want to access Glassboro voting locations		\$ 875

MISC

Office supplies, other misc. and unanticipated items		\$ 1,000
Cell phone reimbursement for Coordinator, etc.	\$64/month	\$ 640

With the hiring of a part-time Coordinator: TOTAL \$38,571

Without the hiring of a part-time Coordinator: TOTAL \$22,571

Attachment C

Headline: "Want to register voters? Rowan enters national competition"

Rowan University will be joining a national competition to register, educate and mobilize voters. The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge is a nonpartisan nationwide effort to get colleges and universities to prioritize voter engagement and participation. Rowan is committed to an engaged student body and our goal in the challenge is to make civic engagement a core part of the Rowan experience. Participation in the challenge is a university-wide effort where students, faculty, staff and administration can participate and plan and host events. All are welcome and encouraged to engage in this effort and ***students who would like to participate can earn 2-3 credits for their work***. The effort is being coordinated by the Department of Political Science and Economics, Rowan Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship, Chamberlain Student Center & Campus Activities, Student Affairs, the Student Government Association and the Rowan Republicans and the Rowan Democrats. If you would like to host an event, or get involved, please reach out to Kathy Javian at javian@rowan.edu.