SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY BOSTON

Suffolk University All-In Campus Democracy Challenge
2018 Action Plan
May 2018

SuffolkVotes 2018

ALL IN

SILVER CAMPUS

Excellence *in*
Student Voter
Engagement

ELECTION 2016

Section 1: Executive Summary

The twin values of access and opportunity are the core of the Suffolk University identity. Suffolk University strives to provide students with access to rich educational opportunities while also promoting and fostering civic engagement to develop responsible global citizens. Suffolk University includes the College of Arts and Sciences, the Sawyer School of Business and Suffolk University Law School. Suffolk University's National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report results show that Suffolk has a student body that participates actively in voting. The Suffolk campus mobilization effort for the 2016 presidential election resulted in a 10-percentage point increase from the 2012 presidential election. Suffolk earned a silver seal from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge for achieving a student voting rate of 64.7 percent, which was between 60 percent and 69 percent required for silver-status. Suffolk students' high voting rates previously were recognized in a national study of learning, voting, and engagement conducted by Tufts University, which classified Suffolk as a "high-voting-rate campus." Only 90 of the more than 900 colleges and universities studied were placed in that category.

For the 2018 election cycle, a university-wide committee, "Suffolk Votes" has formed to strategize and coordinate student voter registration and participation. Suffolk seeks to reach gold status from All-In this year.

The focus in the 2018 election cycle will be to continue the successful strategies used in 2012 and 2016, but also add some additional activities. The efficacy of these efforts will be assessed with surveys and by the 2018 NSLVE report.

Section 2: Leadership

The SuffolkVotes team is comprised of is a university-wide interdisciplinary committee:
- Dr. Rachael Cobb, Associate Professor and Chair, Government
- Sarah Boonin, JD, Associate Director of Clinical Programs and Clinical Professor of Law Suffolk University Law School
- Dr. Rosemarie Dibiase, Associate Professor, Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences
- Tegan George, Academic Coordinator, Government Department
- Dr. Marc Holzer, Distinguished Professor of Public Administration, Sawyer School of Business
- Dr. Christina Kulich-Vamvakas, Instructor, College of Arts and Sciences
- Dr. Elena Llaudet, Assistant Professor, Government, College of Arts and Sciences
- Dr. Robert Rosenthal, Associate Professor and Chair, Advertising and Public Relations
- Adam Westbrook, Director of the Center for Community Engagement, Suffolk University

SuffolkVotes will coordinate voter registration, education and turnout efforts in 2018. The committee is also engaging with student groups across the three schools to assist in these efforts. Suffolk University already has a strong working relationship with the Boston Election

Department through our work on the Suffolk University Pollworkers Project. The Election Department has committed to providing additional assistance during orientation for staffing voter registration tables.

SuffolkVotes will meet once during Spring 2018 to agree on the action plan and then meet regularly in Fall 2018 to organize outreach events and activities.

Section 3: Commitment and Landscape

Suffolk University is committed to civic learning and democratic engagement. The University's mission statement includes, as two of its eight core values, community engagement and social responsibility.

Community Engagement: Suffolk University actively promotes relationships with the community to exchange knowledge and provide pathways for internships, career development, and job placement. We engage with our students, alumni, and the broader community in collaborative relationships that promote local and global connections enhancing learning and scholarship.

Social Responsibility: Suffolk University believes in the integration of civic engagement and service learning throughout the curriculum to foster the development of responsible global citizens. We are committed to acting ethically, professionally, and collaboratively.

The campus climate fosters civic learning and democratic engagement. Multiple majors, degree programs, and other academic credentials incorporate civic learning into their foci. The Center for Community Engagement (CCE) works with the Sawyer School of Business and the College of Arts and Sciences to oversee community engagement opportunities and volunteer opportunities. CEE collaborates with faculty to incorporate service learning into their courses. Suffolk Law School's clinical programs provide experiential learning offerings to its law students and public interest legal fellowships encourage the value of public interest law.

Suffolk's geographic location in the heart of downtown Boston, steps away from the Massachusetts State House, gives students many opportunities to participate in government and public service.

The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) shows that that Suffolk University students are more likely to be registered to vote than their peers nationally. Table 1 summarizes Suffolk student voter registration and turnout rates, 2012-2016. In the most recent presidential election, Suffolk University voter turnout, 64.7 percent, was 16.4 points higher than the national student voting rate of 48.3 percent. The Suffolk campus mobilization effort for the 2016 presidential election resulted in a 10-percentage point increase from the 2012 presidential election. Suffolk earned a silver seal from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge for achieving a student voting rate between 60 percent and 69 percent. Suffolk students' high

voting rates previously were recognized in a national study of learning, voting, and engagement conducted by Tufts University, which classified Suffolk as a "high-voting-rate campus." Only 90 of the more than 900 colleges and universities studied were placed in that category.

Table 1: Suffolk University Voter Registration and Turnout Rates, 2012-2016

	Student Voter Registration Rates		Student Voter Turnout Rates	
	Suffolk	National	Suffolk	National
2012	78.9%	69.0%	54.7%	45.1%
2014	62.9%	62.1%	22.9%	17.9%
2016	87.0%	70.6%	64.7%	48.3%

Source: National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, 2014 and 2016 reports.

Section 4: Goals

Suffolk University's long-term goal is to increase student voter registration rates to above 80 percent and to increase student voter turnout rates to above 70 percent in presidential election years and to increase student voter turnout rates to above 30 percent for mid-term election years.

Section 5: Strategy

Voter Registration Activities
- Expand voter registration efforts to include all new student orientation sessions for all transfer, undergraduate and graduate students.
- Develop FAQ about student voting available at all tables
- Use the Silver-Seal from the All-In Campus Challenge to let students know that Suffolk University students vote at high-rates and invite new students to be part of a community of voters
- Support students' registration and absentee voting by covering the cost of postage to mail forms and ballots
- Publicize and participate in National Voter Registration Day
- Print and distribute "check your voter registration status" cards and flyers
- Publicize key dates and reminders, including voter registration deadlines, early voting information, places to turn for information
- Table-Tuesdays and T-Shirt Tuesdays, in which, beginning in mid-September through October, every Tuesday, students will "table" in high-traffic areas with voter registration information. Budget permitting, students who register to vote will get t-shirts and all members of the campus community will be encouraged to wear their voting t-shirts on Tuesdays.

- Class Visits, in which student volunteers will visit classes and make brief presentations to classes on how to register to vote
- Voter registration video — time and budget permitting, we will create a brief information video featuring Suffolk students, about how to register to vote, how to vote absentee, how to locate a polling location, answer questions about early voting, etc.
- Implement a direct-message Social Media strategy to inform and motivate students targeting networks such as Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, and Facebook.
- Implement a press strategy, making select faculty and student leaders available to campus media (print, online, television, radio) for interviews about the voter registration drive and the election.

Beyond Registration Activities
- Host two campus-wide information forums on important issues shaping the 2018 mid-term elections; publicize widely
- Promote other campus-wide events related to the 2018 election, including speeches, class visits, etc. and ensure publicity and general excitement
- Create booklets with memorable quotes on democracy to educate students about what democracy is and how to ensure its continuation
- Recruit students to serve as poll workers as part of the existing collaboration with the Boston Election Department, the Suffolk University Pollworkers Project
- Assist with ongoing research projects as occurred in the 2016 election in which students engaged in polling-place observations as part of a larger research project led by Dr. Christopher Mann at Skidmore College
- Activity opportunities for students to write down where they will vote, when they will vote, promises to vote, etc.

Section 6: Reporting

The Action Plan will be shared internally with faculty and administrators.

Section 7: Evaluation

SuffolkVotes will evaluate the effectiveness of its strategies.

Quantitative Measures
- Number of activities held and number of attendees
- Number of faculty, staff and students trained
- Number of students participating as poll workers in the City of Boston

Qualitative Measures
- Feedback from the SuffolkVotes team

- Feedback from faculty, staff and students via surveys

- Progress toward our mid-term election goals (80 percent or higher registration rate and 30 percent or higher student voter rate) will be determined by the University's 2018 NSLVE report.

Calendar of Events

JUNE 2018

				1
4 Freshman Orientation | Voter Registration	5	6	7 Freshman Orientation | Voter Registration	8
11 Freshman Orientation | Voter Registration	12	13	14 Freshman Orientation | Voter Registration	15
18 Freshman Orientation | Voter Registration	19	20	21 Freshman Orientation | Voter Registration	22
25 Transfer Advising| Voter Registration	26	27	28	29

AUGUST 2018

		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15 Massachusetts Voter Registration Deadline Primary Election Sep 4	16	17
20	21 Law School Orientation | Voter Registration	22 Law School Orientation | Voter Registration	23 Law School Orientation | Voter Registration	24 Law School Orientation | Voter Registration Transfer Student Voter Registration
27	28 Freshman Orientation | Voter Registration	29	30 Freshman Orientation | Voter Registration CAS Graduate Student Voter Registration	31 Transfer Student Voter Registration

SEPTEMBER 2018

			1	2
3	4 Massachusetts State Primary	5	6	7 Business School Graduate Student Orientation | Voter Registration
10	11 Table/T-Shirt Tuesday Voter Registration	12	13	14
17	18 Table/T-Shirt Tuesday Voter Registration	19	20	21
24	25 National Voter Registration Day	26	27	28

OCTOBER 2018

1	2 Table/T-Shirt Tuesday Voter Registration	3	4	5
8	9 Table/T-Shirt Tuesday Voter Registration	10	11	12
15	16 Table/T-Shirt Tuesday Voter Registration	17 Last Day to Register to Vote for MA State Election	18	19
22 Early Voting Massachusetts	23 Early Voting Massachusetts	24 Early Voting Massachusetts	25 Early Voting Massachusetts	26 Early Voting Massachusetts
29 Early Voting Massachusetts	30 Early Voting Massachusetts	31 Early Voting Massachusetts		

NOVEMBER 2018				
			1 Early Voting Massachusetts	2 Early Voting Massachusetts
5	6 Massachusetts General Election	7	8	9