

# Tufts University Campus Action Planning Outline 2019-2020



**vote** everywhere

THE **ANDREW GOODMAN** FOUNDATION



**Tufts**  
UNIVERSITY

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# | Landscape

Describe the state of democratic engagement on your campus using the following categories or other categories relevant to your campus.

1. **NSLVE:**

According to our NSLVE reports, in 2018 the university voting rate was 45.2%, up 26.8% from 2014. The registration rate in 2018 was 77.9%, with a 58.0% voting rate of registered students. The 2016 Tufts University voting rate was 63.2%, a 12% increase from the 2012 election. The voter registration rate was 86.1% and 73.4% of those students showed up at the polls (or voted by absentee ballot).

2. **Partnerships:**

Organizations: JumboVote, Tufts Democratic, Tufts Republicans, Office of Campus Life, Residential Life, Tufts Athletics, Group of 6 Centers (Africana Center, Asian-American Center, F1R\$T Center, Women’s Center, LatinX Center, LGBTQ Center)

Faculty & Staff: Zachary Hertz, Sherri Sklarwitz, Jonathan Garlick, Nancy Thomas

3. **Resources:** The combined JumboVote-AGF E-board includes a position entirely dedicated to producing promotional materials. This position is currently held by a Junior with in-depth knowledge of Massachusetts and local issues. She has cultivated a working-relationship with the Mayor of Medford and has developed several concepts for promotional/educational materials for the 2020 elections, including palm cards that display the electoral college, as well as Senate and gubernatorial races.

#### 4. **Institutionalization:**

Tufts has long prided itself for its status as a nation-wide leader in civic engagement. Tufts students are passionate about issues that define our time, including climate change and justice, criminal justice reform, and economic inequality. The Tisch College for Civic life has empowered students for nearly 20 years to meaningfully act on these passions in order to achieve change both on campus and beyond. AGF Vote Everywhere is one of dozens of groups housed under Tisch College that collaborate with faculty and student organizations across the university system.

In 2017, Tisch College created a position for a Student Outreach Coordinator that acts as a liaison between current students, mostly Tufts undergraduates, and Tisch College. This is a role designed to be held by a Tufts Alumni for the academic year immediately following their graduation, allowing for a less intimidating professional relationship between a University staff member and current students. This role compliments the role held by our campus champion by allowing our AGF ambassadors to work through ideas and proposals before we bring them the campus champion.

Where many Universities may not be able support student activists and organizations, Tufts has long been a leader in the cultivating student activism. This is primarily enshrined in Tisch College; however, the Tufts culture of activism can be seen throughout student life, both in and out of the classroom. There remains room for growth in AGF and Tisch College's partnerships with faculty to develop programming in academic settings. 2018 saw promising developments on this front, particularly in the School of Engineering, where many professors implemented civic science education into their curriculum or expressed interest in doing so.

5. **Programming:** Our programming in the lead-up to the 2020 elections will center our emerging partnerships with the FIR\$T Center (which provides support services to first-generation, low-income, and undocumented students), as well the various affinity groups on campus. One of our goals for the next year is to not only center these students in our programming, but also to make JumboVote/AGF a leadership pipeline for these students.

## 6. Achievements, Challenges, and Opportunities:

### Challenges:

- Tufts is split between 4 polling precincts
- We are beginning the merger of JumboVote and AGF which has been semi-challenging
- Mostly out-of-state students
  - o 50 different sets of absentee ballot laws
  - o Working with TurboVote on improving absentee request interface
- Same crowd comes to every event, always looking to engage new people
- “Busy lane” in civic engagement events at Tufts
  - o Lots of student groups that have similar goals/ strategies

### Opportunities:

- Generous funding and strong partnerships that allows us to work with other student organizations in hosting events
- Institutional memory and strong contingency of first and second-year students in AGF and JumboVote will strengthen our organizing work going into 2020

# | Goals

## **Long-term goals:**

Our goal is to increase student voting rates to 80% by 2020 and sustain rates at that level by instilling a culture of voting and civic participation. Our second long-term goal is to expand our outreach to better include those who are ineligible to vote.

## **Short-term goals:**

Our goal is to make explicit the importance of voting and make the political process more accessible to students through sponsoring campus events and increasing students' access to educational voting materials. In doing so, we strive to provide more opportunities for all Tufts students, regardless of their eligibility to vote, to become civically engaged.

Our work through 2020 will be built off what was accomplished in 2018. Our primary objective, beyond registering as many people to vote as possible, is to target our outreach to those who are detached from democratic institutions, whether by choice or systematic exclusion. Our immediate short-term goals can be broken down into three buckets: organizational, campus outreach, and resource sharing.

The Tufts chapter of AGF Vote Everywhere works alongside many other student organizations with similar, and at time concentric, goals. JumboVote has acted as the umbrella organization for on-campus voter registration and assistance since the 2016 General Election by working with a variety of different student organizations and academic departments across the University. This coalition began with traditional political groups and now include identity-based affinity groups, known as the Group of 6, STEM groups, and the Office of Residential Life. JumboVote also resides in Tisch College and works directly with the Student Outreach Coordinator. While JumboVote and AGF share nearly identical membership, goals, and strategies, the two have often run parallel rather than working in tandem.

Strengthening the organizational structure and capacity of these two groups is a critical short-term goal if the two are to effectively maintain the same student leadership from the 2018 elections through the 2020 General Election.

# | Strategy

## 1. Long-term Goal Strategies:

- Increase our campus' voting rate to 80% in the 2020 General Election
- Work closer with members of Tisch College in bringing speakers to campus by integrating our common goals of expanding the electorate and democratic engagement.
- Strengthen partnerships with local election officials with the goal of ultimately addressing the irregularities of the voting precincts boundaries around Tufts.
- Develop strong working relationships with other Boston-Area colleges and universities.

## 2. Short-term Goal Strategies:

- Register students to vote in their state primaries through tabling and other events
- Through frequent meetings and recruitment, build out structure to prepare for more intense voter registration and mobilization in the summer and fall of 2020
- Maintain and strengthen communication between current AGF ambassadors and the rest of JumboVote
  - o Conference calls as whole teams, as well as smaller team calls that are project specific

# | Tactics

## 1. **Events:**

- Large tabling presence throughout pre-orientation week and orientation week that emphasis the importance of voting for the first time while in college
- Community forums on issues of the day that feature student leaders and organizers from our campus. These events are low cost and allow us to share and exchange organizing skills and best practices from other young activists.
- Speaker panels featuring leaders and experts in a field. These events are higher cost and thus less frequent

## 2. **Actions:**

- Working on partnerships with other Boston-Area and NESCAC colleges and universities through Tisch College
- Building on partnerships with local election officials in Medford, Somerville, and Boston (Also through Tisch College).

## 3. **Meetings:**

- We hope to build on our community forums to act as meeting spaces between AGF and other student organizations
- Regular meetings and communications as part of the JumboVote Coalition

## 4. **Digital Communication:**

We will modify our digital marketing strategy by emphasizing “Vote Everywhere” rather than “The Andrew Goodman Foundation” in order to clarify our mission. While we are always cognizant to share the Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney’s story at our events, we also want to have a recognizable brand on our campus that communicates our primary mission.

# | Timeline

Schedule your tactics by semester.

1. **Spring 2020:** Creating committees that will work throughout the spring, summer, and fall 2020 to be in full cohesion and force. Continue hosting issue-based events, and planning the structure and outreach methods for the 2020 election.
2. **Fall 2020:** Continue hosting voter registration and issue-based events and intensify voter registration and outreach efforts throughout campus. Efforts will culminate in an Election Day strategy similar to our efforts in 2016 in 2018, with rides to the polls and widespread student-led voter support.

# | Monitoring and Evaluation

To track progress toward achieving goals through strategies and tactics, ensure regular communication with stakeholders and track quantitative and qualitative data.

1. **Meetings:** During the 2018-2019 academic year, our AGF meetings were every Sunday where we delve into the details of current and future projects, delegated tasks, and made plans for the week ahead. This year, we will continue to meet weekly to evaluate the week's progress and plan for the upcoming week.
2. **Event Reports:** Alejandra Carrillo, who is on the Events team for JumboVote, will be filling out our event reports throughout the year.
3. **NSLVE:** We will make sure to further analyze our 2018 and 2016 NSLVE data and structure our 2020 plans based on the identified areas of growth and places of improvement.