

The University of Utah

Student Engagement Plan 2020-2021



THE
ANDREW
GOODMAN
FOUNDATION



Statement Regarding COVID-19

We are closely monitoring the on-going developments regarding the spread of the coronavirus. The State of Utah is working on a color-coded system to assess risk and define health and safety measures. The scale works from red to orange, to yellow, to green (red being high risk, and green being low risk) The state is currently in the yellow zone, with Salt Lake City in the orange zone (this may be updated based on new data). Guidance and protocols for each of these zones can be found at coronavirus.utah.gov.

The University of Utah moved to online classes in late March and has continued with online instruction through the summer semester. However, the U is currently planning on being back on campus for the fall. The Utah System of Higher Education has developed the [following plan](#) that is to be implemented across all of Utah's public education institutions. The University of Utah is developing a specific plan for our campus that we will review and implement when it becomes available. More information regarding current University of Utah specific guidelines can be found at coronavirus.utah.edu

As we continue to adapt to social distancing guidelines and safety measures we will always comply with state, local, and university policies and procedures. We will exercise an abundance of caution in planning and executing events. Student and campus community safety will be our number one priority.

More information regarding our plans for safe social distancing and alternative programming can be found under the Coronavirus Adaptation section.

Landscape

1. NSLVE Data:

We saw a significant increase in the voting rate for our campus for 2018, the voting rate was 44.7% in comparison to 21.3% in 2014. This is almost 5% higher than the national average. The voting rate of registered students was 69%. The voting rate was up in almost every measurable category including gender, race or ethnicity, education status, field of study, and age group. Women voted at a higher rate than men and Hispanic students increased the voting rate from 13.4% in 2014 to 39.7% in 2018.

The most common method of voting is mail-in ballots, which is in line with the state's transition to majority mail-in balloting. This will be an advantage for our campus as we prepare for the

2020 election amid the COVID-19 pandemic. As many states hurry to prepare mail-in ballots, Utah already has the existing infrastructure and bandwidth to conduct the majority of its elections by mail. This in turn will help boost turnout, while protecting the safety and health of our campus community.

In comparison to the most recent presidential election, the NSLVE report states that 56.7% of all students voted in 2016, a 1.2% increase from 2012. However, the voter registration rate dropped from 80.8% in 2012 to 72.8 % in 2016.

2. Vice Presidential Debate:

The University of Utah was selected to host the Vice Presidential Debate on October 7, 2020. This provides an incredible opportunity for voter registration programming and civic engagement for our entire campus. It also helps to gain support for civic engagement programming from university administration since there is an easy tie to the debate.

3. Partnerships:

The Hinckley Institute of Politics: The center for all things politics at the University of Utah. The Hinckley Institute of Politics at the University of Utah is dedicated to engaging students in governmental, civic, and political processes; promoting a better understanding and appreciation of politics; and training ethical and visionary students for careers in public service. As a nonpartisan organization, the Hinckley Institute strives to promote involvement across the political spectrum—specifically through voter registration and turnout efforts, political forums research, and a wide variety of political experience through classes, internships, and volunteer opportunities. The Andrew Goodman team operates out of the Hinckley office. The Campus Champion is a full-time staff member at the Institute appointed by the director to oversee voting initiatives

ASUU: The Associated Students of the University of Utah (ASUU) is the student government organization on campus. It is divided into three co-equal branches similar to federal and state governments. ASUU also coordinates with over 600 student groups and clubs to offer more ways for students to connect with other students that share their interests. The ASUU Government Relations board is a cabinet-level committee within the executive branch and engages in various aspects of local, state & national politics; is committed to informing, involving, & connecting students with any civic opportunities available to them.

Salt Lake County Clerk - Elections Division: The Salt Lake County Clerk oversees all elections for the Salt Lake County area. We have worked with them in the past to establish an on-campus polling location at the main campus library.

Marriott Library: We work with library administration to host on-campus polling location in the main auditorium of the library.

Other partnerships:

- Labs for Liberty
- Voto Latino
- Voterize
- TurboVote

Potential/New Partnerships

Office of Admissions: Registering to vote is also a requirement to gain in-state residency for tuition purposes, so we feel this partnership will be mutually beneficial. This would be a joint effort with Admissions and Housing.

Office of Orientation and Transition: OOT conducts new student and transfer student orientations throughout the summer and before the start of the spring semester. We hope to work with them to institutionalize voter registration across campus for all new students.

David Eccles School of Business: During the spring semester of 2020 we began coordinating with the Business School to host voter registration events in the business buildings on campus. We had also talked about cross-promoting events and supporting civic engagement efforts for the student group “Women In Business.” Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 our spring events with the Business School were canceled, we are working on re-planning them now.

Department of Athletics: During the spring semester of 2020 the Athletics Department reached out to us wanting to coordinate voter registration/education efforts for student-athletes. Because many student-athletes come from out-of-state they are often unfamiliar with voter registration requirements, or the process of requesting an absentee ballot.

4. Resources:

Financial

- AGF Annual budget
- Hinckley budget
- ASUU Student Group funding
- ASUU Government Relations Board - The partnership with AGF and the Government Relations Board also provides an additional source of funding. An MOU must be signed by both parties.

Material

- Hinckley office space
- Hinckley Forum Room - multipurpose room with a seating capacity of 150
- University Union Building offices and space if rented beforehand
- AGF tabling materials

Human Resources

- AGF ambassadors and volunteers
- Campus Champion - Kyle Tucker

- Jason Perry – Vice President, Government Relations; Director, Hinckley Institute

5. Institutionalization:

We have worked with the Office of the Registrar to host a temporary link to TurboVote. This link generated a lot of traffic for the 2019 municipal elections and we hope to use it again leading up to the 2020 election.

The Andrew Goodman Foundation has a presence on the Student Engagement Subcommittee for the Vice Presidential Debate. We are working with other campus partners on that subcommittee including Housing and Residential Education, the University Union, Hinckley Institute, Student Government, and University Communications and Marketing to plan student engagement events, volunteer opportunities, and other programming surrounding the VP debate in October.

As part of our planning, we are working with various colleges and departments to incorporate various civic engagement components into university courses across multiple disciplines with a tie-in to the debate.

6. Programming:

- Welcome Week (tabling in main campus plaza first week of school)
- National Voter Registration Day (Marriott Library)
- Campaign Carnival (Date TBD)
- Vice Presidential Debate (Week of October 5th)
 - Watch Parties
 - Voter Registration
 - Forums/Panels
- UMFA Women's Suffrage Exhibit Events (currently being rescheduled/replanned due to COVID-19)
- Hinckley Forum discussing youth voter turnout and impact of COVID-19
- Election Night Watch Party
- Election Debrief Forum/Panel (Day after election day)
- Spring Forum

7. Achievements, Challenges, and Opportunities:

We have had continued success in hosting a polling location on campus. The polling location was expanded to include the presidential and state primary elections for 2020. The site has been one of the most used polling locations in Salt Lake County outside the county offices.

We have also achieved our goal of establishing new partnerships that we hope to capitalize on for our fall programming (see Potential/New Partnerships section). We plan to co-host tabling sessions and have new partners co-sponsor events leading up to the election. This will help us reach more of the students on campus.

The size of the campus continues to be a challenge. There are a lot of students spread across the campus and it is difficult to interface with all of them. Our link to TurboVote on CIS helped to reach a broader audience but in-person interaction is always preferred. The COVID-19 pandemic will also create a unique challenge for this upcoming year as we try to follow social distancing protocols and maintain campus safety. However, it is a general election and census year, so the upcoming election has major implications for the future. As such, we want to make sure we are doing all we can to be prepared to boost voter turnout.

Goals

1. Long-term goals:

- Organize a PAC-12 Voting Challenge
- Have voter registration as a permanent part of the new student orientation process
- Build on-campus social media following and texting platform subscriptions

2. Short-term goals

- Increase voter turnout for the 2020 election by 13%
- Increase voter registration rate by 8%
- Register 500 voters by election day 2020
- Build texting platform subscriptions to 250 by end of October
- Host weekly tabling sessions from the start of the fall semester through the end of October
- Meet with the Orientation Office to discuss integrating voter registration into the new student orientation process.

Strategies and Tactics

Long-term strategies:

Organize a PAC-12 voting challenge

- Currently working with PAC-12 coalition and ALL-IN Democracy Challenge

Have voter registration as a permanent part of the new student orientation (NSO) process

- Meet with Orientation Office to discuss the feasibility of integrating voter registration component of NSO
 - Demonstrate to Orientation Office the uses of TurboVote

- Discuss NSLVE Data
- Research best practices from other universities

Build on-campus social media following and texting platform subscriptions

Short-term goal strategies:

Increase voter turnout by 13%

- Increase use of TurboVote and explain the election reminders tool
- Use social media to increase awareness on-campus polling location, mail-in balloting, and absentee balloting.

Increase voter registration rate by 8%

- Conduct weekly tabling at Union Building
- Table at major events such as Plazafest, move-in day, National Voter Registration Day etc.
- Host link to TurboVote on CIS starting fall semester leading up to the election
- Conduct targeted tabling at different colleges/departments
- Utilize new partnerships with UMFA, Business School, and Athletics to host events and use their resources (building space, social media following, etc.) to boost awareness of voter registration

Register 500 new voters by election day

- Host link to TurboVote on CIS
- Promote NVRD Tabling via social media and campus partners
- Weekly tabling
- Keep track using TurboVote data and counting paper ballots

Build texting platform subscriptions to 250 by end of October

- Display signs with texting subscription info at tabling sessions
- Place posters across campus
- Utilize social media and campus partners to boost outreach

Host weekly tabling sessions from the start of the fall semester through the end of October

- Set up a weekly time for tabling at University Union
- Schedule additional targeted tabling sessions with campus partners and other departments on campus

Meet with the Orientation Office to discuss integrating voter registration into the new student orientation process.

- Reach out to Sydney Magana at Office of Orientation to schedule meeting
- Best to conduct meeting late fall semester or early spring
- Plan and prepare presentation about TurboVote and NSLVE to discuss importance of voting

Timeline

Events

- Weekly Tabling (held each week in University of Union, day TBD)
- Welcome Week (week of August 24)
- Plazafest (August 26)
- NVRD (September 22)
- Business School Tabling (date TBD)
- Voter registration with Athletics (date TBD)
- Campaign Carnival (Date TBD, likely in October)
- Panel on voter turnout and COVID-19 (Date TBD, likely end of Sept)
- Events with UMFA (dates TBD, likely late October)
- VP Debate (October 7, and week leading up to)
 - Forums
 - Watch Parties
 - Volunteer work
- Election Day Watch Party
- Election Day Debrief Forum

Meetings

- Meet with government relations board of ASUU to discuss fall events at beginning of fall semester
- Meeting with Orientation office late fall early spring
- Follow-up meetings with UMFA, Business School and Athletics
- Continue to participate in VP subcommittee meetings
- Continue to participate in PAC-12 planning calls

Digital Communication

- Focus on building social media following and building texting platform
- Work with campus partners to promote content online
- Host TurboVote link on CIS

Monitoring and Evaluation

Meetings

- Weekly team meetings (day and time TBD, based upon class schedules)
- Texting and emails

Events Reports

- Jonas Warner will report and track events

Voter Registration and NSLVE

- We will be watching for the NSLVE report for the 2020 election to monitor progress
- TurboVote will track number of sign-ups and we will keep a log a paper ballot registrations

Research

- Study and research best practices for implementing voter registration into New Student Orientation from other campuses.

Coronavirus Adaption and Planning

The changing and fluid nature of the COVID-19 pandemic requires us to be flexible in planning and cautious in the steps we take to ensure the safety of our student team and the campus community. As stated above, we plan to strictly follow all government and university policies. The Utah System of Higher Education has developed planning for university functions for the upcoming academic year. The University of Utah is developing a specific plan that we plan to review and implement when it is made available.

We plan to take the following precautionary measures (this list is not exhaustive and may be added to based on best practices and changes in university policy)

- Wear face masks at all times
- Limit large gatherings
- Host tabling sessions in large open areas, preferably outside
- Organize to have more than one table for voter registration so that students can be separated during the registration process
- Wash hands regularly and provides sanitation (hand sanitizer, wipes, and disinfectant spray) for tabling and events
- Any student who feels sick should stay home, whenever students sign up to work events or tabling sessions we will work to have an alternate in place

As a precaution to in-person events, such as forums and watch parties, we will work to ensure that proper safety and social distancing measures are observed. If the situation regarding coronavirus warrants the cancellation of in-person events we will work to host virtual events.

We have enjoyed great success in hosting an on-campus polling location which has provided easy ballot access to students, faculty, and staff from across the university. However, to limit large lines and large numbers of people in a confined space, we plan to heavily promote mail-in balloting. Despite misinformation being spread about mail balloting, we strongly believe this is the safest and most efficient way to cast ballots amid a global pandemic, especially with the prospect of a spike in cases coinciding with the flu season. We will work with campus partners to promote awareness of mail balloting and provide education about how to properly complete a mail-in ballot.