

**UNIVERSITY OF
BALTIMORE**

Votes

**University of Baltimore
Campus Action Plan
2020-22**

Submitted by

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OVERVIEW

The University of Baltimore has historically had industry-leading student registration and participation in national elections. According to NSLVE (National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement), UBalt saw 70.9% participation in the 2016 presidential election and 59.1% participation in the 2018 midterms. With the recent release of the 2020 NSLVE Reports, UBalt once again saw favorable participation, with a participation rate of 72.6% (up 2.9% from 2016) and a registration rate of 86.9% (up 1.4% from 2016).

The Rosenberg Center for Student Engagement and Inclusion has a long history of providing democratic engagement opportunities and voter education resources to the campus community.

This plan outlines current efforts by campus stakeholders to ensure students register to vote and participate in elections during the 2020-22 election cycle.

UBALT VOTES GOALS

Long-term Goals

1. Continue to support The University of Baltimore's mission and serve as an engaged university and regional steward for both the campus and surrounding communities.
2. Educate students, staff and faculty about the importance of local, state, and federal elections, and how they impact our community and society as a whole.
3. Encourage collaboration across the institution with a focus on the importance of civic engagement and establish reputation as an institution that emphasizes informed and engaged citizenship.
4. Establish an early voting location on campus.

Short-term Goals

Academic Year 2020-21

1. Prepare for November 2020 election through classroom visits, social media posts, text communications, e-mail and other engagement.
2. Build energy and enthusiasm around election through a countdown clock, engaging events, e-mail/text blasts and outreach, culminating in an Election Day celebration.
3. Reinforce educational themes and maintain momentum around civic engagement post-election, gather information about what students want to know more about, and provide educational opportunities through events and outreach. Emphasize the importance of local engagement.

Academic Year 2021-22

1. Deliver a series of educational programs around the importance of the right to vote, including outreach tables, classroom visits, and campus conversations. Focus strongly on the importance of free and fair elections in a democracy and what citizens can do to ensure the right to vote is secured for all.
2. Educate the campus community on how students can get involved as citizens, including local democratic engagement opportunities, communicate with local officials, and join neighborhood associations, boards, and run for office within local government. Leverage UBalt staff, students, faculty, and alumni who are in elected office to discuss their story and how they got involved.
3. In partnership with Black Girls Vote, deliver a college tour program in Spring 2022 to bring attention to the importance of voting and engage the broader campus and coalitions.

PARTNERSHIPS

Campus Partnerships

The Rosenberg Center for Student Engagement and Inclusion is working with a coalition of various members of the campus community to provide better communication and collaboration around voter engagement initiatives. While the coalition membership may fluctuate or evolve over time, we are currently communicating with the following office/departments:

- Office of Government Affairs
- College of Public Affairs - Schafer Center for Public Policy
- School of Law
- Diversity and International Services
- Bob Parsons Veterans Center
- Student Government Association

Regional and National Partners

To ensure this work is aligned with regional and national efforts, UBalt partners with the following organizations:

- [The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement \(NSLVE\)](#)
 - <https://idhe.tufts.edu/nslve>
 - [2016 NSLVE Report](#)
 - [2018 NSLVE Report](#)
- [ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge](#)
 - <http://www.allinchallenge.org/>
- [Voter Friendly Campus](#)
 - <https://www.voterfriendlycampus.org/>
- [The Andrew Goodman Foundation](#)
 - <https://andrewgoodman.org/>
 - Hosts Vote Everywhere Student Ambassadors Annually
- [NASPA Lead Initiative of Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement](#)
 - <https://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/groups/lead-initiative>

- [Black Girls Vote](#)
 - <https://blackgirlsvote.com/>

OUTREACH METHODS

UBalt Votes Web Site: Our landing page for UBalt Votes includes a variety of voter education resources, a link to the other tools described here, information on election dates and deadlines, a calendar of events, and links to additional resources. The page also includes a “Beyond Voting Page” with information about how to differentiate media sources and how to become a more active citizen in a variety of ways.

State of Maryland Voter Registration Website: The University of Baltimore currently maintains a link to the State of Maryland voter registration website, which is available on MyUB, UBalt’s portal for students, staff, and faculty. During election cycles, this link is shared widely with the campus community.

[my.VoteEverywhere](#) – in partnership with the Andrew Goodman Foundation, this platform was added to the www.ubalt.edu/vote page in May 2020 and will be recommended for inclusion to the UBalt student portal for easy access to a number of voter resources, including checking voter registration, finding polling places, and learning about other important election facts relevant to students.

Social Media Channels: UBalt Votes communicates through the @ubaltinvolved channels on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Here, students receive information about important deadlines, key dates and events, voter education initiatives, and more.

E-mail Communication: A series of targeted e-mails are delivered around important election dates and deadlines, sent from the UBalt Votes team to all students, as well as to targeted groups such as student leaders and student organization officers, veterans, student employees, and other interested groups.

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

Classroom visits: UBalt’s Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassadors coordinate a variety of classroom visits each semester. Each ambassador coordinates with the faculty and staff in those schools to complete a series of visits. Because UBalt has such a high number of registered voters, the visits typically focus on generating awareness about voting resources, voter’s rights, and important dates and deadlines.

Early Voting: Students are encouraged through intentional outreach to take advantage of early voting options. Dates, deadlines, drop-off locations, and other information about early voting is shared at www.ubalt.edu/vote and [my.VoteEverywhere](#), as well as through classroom visits and social media channels.

Get Out the Vote: The UBalt Votes teams execute a coordinated campaign to get out the vote in the weeks and months leading up to each election. This outreach includes information tables, events, classroom visits, and digital promotion.

Democratic Engagement and Voter Education: Each year, the UBalt Votes team creates a variety of engaging programs to delve deeper into issues of democratic engagement and voter education. The Vote Everywhere Ambassador leads programs on a variety of themes. For the 2021-22 academic year, these programs will focus on the right to vote and the ways in which citizens can act locally to create positive change in their communities. The UBalt Votes teams also leads signature democratic engagement programs each year, including a panel with legislators and a “day in Annapolis” to learn about the legislative process.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Academic Year 2020-21

July-Aug. 2020

- Select and train Vote Everywhere Ambassadors.
- Include Vote Everywhere Ambassadors in Fall orientation outreach efforts.
- Begin promoting campus events throughout the semester supporting civic participation.

Sept.-Oct. 2020

- Release voter guide and resources as well as voter rights documents to students.
- Visit First Year Seminar classes and/or provide information to peer coaches.
- Conduct social media outreach and messaging highlighting resources available through www.ubalt.edu/vote and my.VoteEverywhere.

Nov.-Dec. 2020

- Conduct voter engagement email Campaign.
- Promote and encourage participation in debates and campaign dialogues.
- Advertise important deadlines including early voting, mail-in voting, and in-person voting.
 - Highlight social distancing strategies necessary due to COVID-19
- Host a virtual Election Day Bash to celebrate the right to vote and highlight the importance of free and fair elections.
- Debrief semester, make recommendations for the future and discuss Spring offerings.

Jan.-Feb. 2021

- Co-lead planning of a Night in Annapolis event with College of Public Affairs and Office of Government Relations.
- Continue to participate in Voter Friendly Campus, All-in Challenge, and National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement by submitting interest forms and updated action plans.

- Begin Recruiting Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassadors for 2021-22.

March-April 2021

- Hold voter engagement and education events.
- Develop a post-election forum to provide issue education and resources following election.
- Interview and make selection of Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassadors.

Summer 2021

- Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassadors attend National Summit and campus-based training.
- Bring together Campus Coalition to determine next steps and recommendations
- Plan campus visits, events, and outreach/information tables.

Academic Year 2021-22

July-Aug. 2021

- Select and train Vote Everywhere Ambassador
- Begin promoting campus events throughout the semester supporting civic participation
- Update UBalt Votes web site and collateral materials.

Sept.-Oct. 2021

- Visit First Year Seminar classes and/or provide information to peer coaches
- Conduct social media outreach and messaging highlighting resources available through www.ubalt.edu/vote and my.VoteEverywhere

Nov.-Dec. 2021

- Re-establish campus stakeholder group for voter engagement; ensure all appropriate campus liaisons are invited and create a calendar of regular meetings to create and sustain collaborative partnerships.
- Develop an updated classroom presentation and target key classes to connect with and deliver presentations.
- Begin delivering classroom presentations, starting with First Year Seminar classes.

Jan.-Feb. 2022

- Continue classroom presentations.
- Co-lead planning of a Night in Annapolis event with College of Public Affairs and Office of Government Relations.
- Continue to participate in Voter Friendly Campus, All-in Challenge, and National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement by submitting interest forms and updated action plans.
- Begin Recruiting Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassadors for 2021-22.

March-April 2022

- Hold voter engagement and education events including signature college tour event in partnership with Black Girls Vote.
- Align social media outreach and events to focus on getting involved in civic leadership at the local level.
- Interview and make selection of Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Ambassadors.
- Continue to develop plans for 2022 election.
- Develop outreach materials and collaterals in advance of 2022 election.

Summer 2022

- Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassadors attend National Summit and campus-based training
- Bring together Campus Coalition to determine next steps and recommendations.
- Plan campus visits, events, and communication strategy for 2022 election.

September 2022

- Beginning at orientation, and through first weeks of class, deliver classroom visits and digital outreach to communicate dates, deadlines, and reminders about early voting and voter participation.
- Promote early voting and vote by mail options.
- Continue to promote digital resources such as [www.ubalt.edu/vote and my.VoteEverywhere](http://www.ubalt.edu/voteandmy.VoteEverywhere).

October 2022

- Convene a campus dialogue around the importance of voting and voting rights to highlight the importance of participating in the Nov. 2022 election.
- Feature, and where possible, host a watch party for planned election debates.
- Continue to promote early voting and vote by mail options.

November 2022

- Continue digital outreach on all channels to Get Out the Vote for the Nov. 2022 Election.
- Hold an Election Day Bash (in person or virtual) to celebrate the right to vote and recognize the importance of participation in the electoral process.

ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Achievements

The University of Baltimore is the only campus in the nation to receive the gold seal award from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, for its 70.9 percent voter participation rate.

UBalt also received the platinum seal on Nov. 13, 2019 for its 59.1% 2018 midterm voting rate. UBalt was recognized as "best in class" for having the highest voting participation rate among medium, public, four-year institutions, nationwide.

UBalt's participation in the 2018 midterm elections was also among the highest in the nation at 59.1%. See the full 2018 NSLVE report [here](#) (see the 2012 and 2016 report [here](#)).

With the recent release of the 2020 NSLVE Reports, UBalt once again saw favorable participation, with a participation rate of 72.6% (up 2.9% from 2016) and a registration rate of 86.9% (up 1.4% from 2016).

These outstanding participation rates are indicative of a campus community poised to participate fully in the democratic process. The intentional work of the UBalt Votes team since 2016 has been to build on this spirit of civic duty and provide additional opportunities for engagement. Through targeted programs designed to accommodate adult learners and working students, the efforts of UBalt Votes saw significant participation even during the pandemic and while UBalt operated virtually or in a hybrid fashion.

Challenges

The University of Baltimore specializes in serving the adult learner and students who attend classes in the evening and work full time. Students often face work and family commitments that make it difficult to participate in traditional events. We have developed strategies to engage these difficult to reach populations:

- Passive programs – information tables and distribution of flyers aimed at increasing voter engagement and participation
- Classroom visits – highlighting the resources available at www.ubalt.edu/vote
- Drop-in programs – get information, refreshments, and participate in an activity that can be done quickly between classes or between work and class.

Opportunities

Due to COVID-19 and realignment of institutional resources, the Democratic Engagement Work Group has not met in more than two years. This year, the UBalt Votes team will focus efforts on renewing and reengaging this work group to ensure that institutional efforts are coordinated, well communicated, and collaborative.

Because of its location in Central Baltimore, UBalt is positioned to offer students unique service experiences and opportunities for engagement. We are hoping to grow our presence not just within our own campus but to the greater Baltimore community as well by leveraging partnerships with organizations like Baltimore Votes and Black Girls Vote.

We have also discussed the possibility, in the future, of UBalt serving as a polling place for primary or early voting.