**Voting Infrastructure Checklist + Campus Action Plan Template**

**Executive Summary:** The following document aims to provide a checklist of major steps that Harvard schools can begin to take to establish a voting infrastructure on their campus through the Harvard Votes Challenge (HVC). Harvard schools will have the opportunity to work 1-on-1 with their coaches from the university-wide HVC steering team and take a deep dive into their approach to cultivating a civic culture on their campus.

The following voter infrastructure checklist is divided into a series of “minimum” and “next level” for institutionalizing voter engagement on your campus, among students, staff and faculty. Minimum checklist items will ensure a baseline level of support for implementing your voter engagement strategy and the next level recommendations outline commitments that will help scale and sustain the strategy on your campus. Use this document as an inventory of your voting infrastructure to date and major areas that you aim to improve upon.

On **page 5**, you will find a campus action plan template that will allow you to translate your checklist items into a strategic plan for rolling out voting engagement efforts in the lead up to the 2020 US elections.

The deadline for submitting your school’s Voting Infrastructure Checklist + Campus Action Plan is **Monday June 1st, 2020 by 12:00 pm**. For any questions, please reach out to your HVC coach.

**I. Creating Your School’s HVC Voting Team**

**Minimum**

* + Designate one student, administrator, and faculty advisor to help lead the efforts on your campus
  + Meet with a Dean-level administrator to obtain institutional buy-in to support your voting team and programmatic efforts
  + Establish a monthly meeting time and location for your voting team
  + Designate representatives to participate in a voter readiness training by the HVC Central team
  + Designate representatives to participate in HVC university-wide coalition meetings
  + Identify administrative counterparts to partner with in your school’s communication office to disseminate important information and promote HVC across your community

**Next Level**

* + Incorporate additional administrative units and staff (civic engagement centers, communications professionals etc.)
  + Expand your student, staff and faculty volunteer base (For students: 1 organizer per 50-100 students; For staff/faculty: 1 organizer per 100 staff and faculty)

**II. Institutionalizing Voter Registration and Absentee Ballot Request Processes**

**Minimum**

* + Integrate TurboVote into student online check-in through *my.harvard.edu* or a related virtual process in collaboration with your campus registrar’s office
  + Provide a link/promotion of the university-wide HVC Site ([https://voteschallenge.harvard.edu](https://voteschallenge.harvard.edu/)) on your Harvard school website and related civic engagement webpages
  + Hold at least two in-person voter registration and absentee ballot request events for National Voter Registration Day (September 22nd) and another in mid-October for all eligible voters on your campus
  + Establishing and advertising a central voting Hub on campus with voting resources: stamps, envelopes, voter registration forms and absentee ballot request forms by state

**Next Level**

* + Integrating an “[ask every student](https://www.studentvoting.org/)” student voter readiness strategy into an existing student affairs process such as new/incoming students orientation and/or welcome week that touches 100% of students
  + Implementing an individualized student-led, staff supported peer-to-peer system for voter registration, education and participation within each graduate program cohort to achieve 100% participation
  + Securing a list of US eligible voters from your registrar’s office to develop targeted outreach for student voter readiness and track voter registration
  + Make voter readiness + participation announcements at all staff and faculty meetings
  + Ask your school’s Human Resources Office to incorporate TurboVote and voter readiness reminders into their newsletters, emails and central websites
  + Working with faculty to promote HVC and voter readiness information within course websites, lecture slides, class emails, office hours and related programming.

**III. Voter Education and Community Engagement**

**Minimum**

* + Developing a campus communications and outreach plan (with considerations around potential COVID-19 scenarios)
  + Periodic email reminders leading up to election day to be sent out by student organizations, student affairs and degree program offices
  + Integrating HVC and voter Information into existing school community-wide events (for example tabling at large events and promoting the HVC website)
  + Promoting opportunities to learn about election candidates through the Harvard Votes Challenge website and other online resources/voter guides
  + Providing HVC swag to campus community and placing voting materials in strategic locations (for ex: posters)
  + Bridge voter readiness strategies with larger civic engagement efforts on campus to involve ineligible voters (i.e. international community + undocumented students)

**Next Level**

* + Organize voter education events on democracies around the world, candidates, or major issue areas to elevate conversations around voting
  + Create a signature campus-wide voter engagement event
  + Develop a campus-wide faculty engagement effort
  + Develop a campus-wide student organization engagement effort with a focus on communities with lower voter turnout rates as identified by Harvard’s [NSLVE Reports](https://www.allinchallenge.org/campuses/harvard-university/)

**IV. Scaling Voter Turnout / Get Out The Vote (GOTV)**

**Minimum**

* + Establishing a centralized voting hub for your school community with stamps and envelopes, advertise the resources widely
  + Election Day walk to the polls and related programming
  + Organize a submit your ballot day and periodic tabling sessions to answer common questions about submitting absentee ballots

**Next Level**

* + Develop individualized voter turnout organizing efforts for students, staff and faculty

**V. Fiscal Resources**

**Minimum**

* Provide a sufficient quantity of stamps & envelopes for students based on your school’s US eligible voter population
* Provide a sufficient quantity of printed voter registration forms and absentee ballot request forms at a centralized voting hub based on your school’s US eligible voter population and their breakdown by state

**Next Level**

* Provide stipends to at least 2 Student Leaders ($1,000 each, $2000 total)
* Provide funding for school HVC swag (stickers, t-shirts, posters etc.)
* Provide funding for events (food & supplies)

**VI. Developing a Campus Action Plan**

**Minimum**

* Draft and submit a campus action plan with a programmatic timeline for increasing and institutionalizing student voter participation (See HVC template for Harvard Schools below)
* Incorporating a strategy to increase voter readiness and participation amongst faculty and administrators within your campus action plan

**Campus Action Plan**

**Purpose:** This document aims to capture your school’s comprehensive voter engagement plan for the 2020 election cycle. The following template has been adapted for the purposes of the Harvard Votes Challenge from the document, [*Strengthening American Democracy: A Guide for Developing an Action Plan to Increase Civic Learning, Political Engagement, and Voting Rates Among College Students*](http://apps.naspa.org/files/StrengtheningAmericanDemocracyGuide.pdf), of the All IN Campus Democracy Challenge Action Planning Resource page.[[1]](#footnote-1)

* For sample plans from other universities, please review [this link](https://www.allinchallenge.org/resource-hub/action-plan-examples/).
* We will share sample Harvard School plans as schools submit their documents.

**I. Executive Summary**

***Description:*** *This section provides a summary of the action plan. it should be clear, concise, and allow the reader to easily understand what the campus is doing and why. It distills the plan into just a few pages so that the reader can rapidly become acquainted with the action plan without having to read it all.*

***Guiding Questions:***

* *Who developed this action plan?*
* *What is this action plan for and what does it seek to accomplish?*
* *Where will this action plan be implemented?*
* *Why was this action plan developed?*
* *When does this action plan start and end?*
* *How will this action plan be implemented?*

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**II. Campus Leadership**

***Description:*** *The leadership section of a campus action plan describes the team that is responsible and accountable for the institution’s efforts to increase civic learning and democratic engagement among its faculty, staff and students. Designating leaders and establishing a working group that includes a variety of stakeholders increases the likelihood of success, long-term sustainability, and the institutionalization of civic learning and democratic engagement efforts on campus.*

*Including representatives from on-campus departments and student groups, as well as off-campus organizations, ensures efforts are collaborative and coordinated, and that a variety of perspectives are taken into consideration. The working group should reflect your campus and community, with intentional inclusion of diverse voices.*

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| **Voting Team Members** | **Faculty/Student/Administrator** | **Role & Responsibilities** |
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**Guiding Questions:**

1. *Who are the working group members and how are they involved?*

* *What academic departments and which faculty within academic affairs are involved? (e.g., political science professor(s), fine arts department)*
* *What units within student affairs are involved and which administrators are involved? (e.g., office of new student involvement, director of student life)*
* *Which students and student organizations are involved? (e.g., student government, issue-based student orgs)*
* *What staff and faculty groups are involved?*
* *How will your Harvard School and its leadership demonstrate commitment to improving civic engagement through the Harvard Votes Challenge? Is there an explicit, visible commitment on the part of senior leadership?*

*2. Who (individual and/or office) is coordinating and overseeing the institution’s work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement?*

*3. If you’re not already working together, how will you recruit or select working group members?*

*4. How is the working group inclusive of different campus and community stakeholders?*

*5. Does the working group have the support of upper administrators who can help advocate on behalf of the working group?*

*6. What other offices on campus need to be involved? (e.g., website or portal management, registrar, university relations)*

*7. How often will the working group meet or communicate through the 2020 US elections (consider summer planning as well)?*

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**III. Goals**

***Description:*** *This section describes what the institution hopes to achieve. By setting goals, the institution can plan activities to achieve results and assess impact. It is suggested that prior to setting goals, there should be a clear vision of what the institution wants to accomplish and what it wants students to learn. With a clear vision, goals can be set to achieve the desired outcomes. Long-term goals help the institution achieve its vision – what impact does the institution seek to have? Long-term goals should be tied to the institution’s mission and learning outcomes. Short-term goals break long-term goals into manageable parts. Goals should be S.M.A.R.T.I.E. – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound, inclusive, and equitable. Goals should reflect the number of people involved and the resources available.*

***Guiding Questions***

*What is the long-term vision the institution hopes to achieve?*

*What knowledge, skills, and capacities (learning outcomes) does the institution want students to achieve and graduate with in order to be active and informed?*

*What are the outcomes the institution wants to accomplish over the next 10 years? Are the goals S.M.A.R.T.I.E. (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound, inclusive, and equitable)?*

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**IV. Landscape Analysis**

***Description:*** *This section describes the current campus landscape around voter readiness including climate, programming, and student engagement. It also provides the opportunity for the institution to evaluate those efforts and determine areas of strength and those needing improvement.*

***Guiding Questions***

*1- What bright spots exist within your institution around civic and voter engagement?*

*2- What internal barriers (e.g., limited funding, staff resistance, lack of leadership) prevent the institution from being successful?*

*3- What additional resources are needed to help the institution be successful?*

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**V. Strategy**

***Description:*** *The strategy section should describe shorter-term tactics for improving student voter registration, education, and turnout during the semester of an election (e.g., by including elections in a campus calendar of events or increased communication efforts through creative dissemination in light of social distancing due to the COVID19 pandemic). Equally important, however, is to consider and describe long-term strategies for further developing a campus ethos and set of experiences that help students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for full participation in our democracy. Such strategies might consider staffing, curricular offerings, cross-campus collaborations, and ways in which civic learning, political engagement, and voter participation are woven into campus communications and campus-wide events from orientation to convocation and graduation.*

*Please describe your school’s strategy for student, staff and faculty voter readiness in the following four domains****:***

1. **Institutionalizing voter registration and absentee ballot request processes**
2. **Voter education and community engagement**
3. **Scaling voter turnout / Get Out The Vote (GOTV)**
4. **Obtaining fiscal and in-kind resources for voter engagement activities**
5. **Approaches to diversity, equity and inclusion**
6. **Communications Channels**
7. **Any additional strategies to highlight**

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**VI.** **Timeline**

***Description****: Please complete the following table with major dates and activities that will form part of your school’s Harvard Votes Challenge programming. Please note that given the COVID-19 crisis, voting deadlines and protocols are subject to change. Please plan voting efforts well ahead of deadlines with contingency plans that respond to the changes caused by the COVID19 crisis. Please review vote.org’s COVID-19 page for updates:* [*https://www.vote.org/covid-19/*](https://www.vote.org/covid-19/)

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|  | **N A T I O N A L** | **H A R V A R D** | | |
|  | **Voting Calendar** | **Voting Events** | **Key Dates** | **Planned Activities** |
| **Apr** | -[Presidential Primaries & Caucuses](https://www.vote.org/covid-19/) *cont.* |  |  |  |
| **May** | -[Presidential Primaries & Caucuses](https://www.vote.org/covid-19/) *cont.* |  |  |  |
| **Jun** | -[Presidential Primaries & Caucuses](https://www.vote.org/covid-19/) *cont.* |  |  |  |
| **Jul** | -[Presidential Primaries & Caucuses](https://www.vote.org/covid-19/) *cont.* |  |  |  |
| **Aug** | **Aug 17-20,** Democratic National Convention, **Aug 24-27**, Republican National Convention |  |  |  |
| **Sep** | **-National Voter Registration Day (Sep 22)** |  | -National Voter Registration Day (Sep 22) |  |
| **Oct** | **-**State-specific [voter registration deadlines](https://www.vote.org/voter-registration-deadlines/)    **--Submit Your Absentee Ballot Day (TBD)**  -Early Voting |  | -Submit Your Absentee Ballot Day |  |
| **Nov** | **-** State-specific [voter registration deadlines](https://www.vote.org/voter-registration-deadlines/)  -State-specific [absentee ballot submission deadlines](https://www.vote.org/absentee-ballot-deadlines/)  -Early Voting  -General Election  **(Nov 3)** |  | -Election Day GOTV (Nov 3) |  |
| **Dec** |  |  |  |  |

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**VII. Budget**

***Description:*** *Please attach a budget of anticipated HVC expenditures for your school.*

1. <https://www.allinchallenge.org/resource-hub/action-plans/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)