

# Marist VOTES

## Civic Action Plan

### 2024

---

Marist College's submission to the  
ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge



# Contents

**01 — Executive Summary**

**02 — Mission**

**03 — Leadership**  
Current Leadership  
Leadership Succession Plan

**04 — Commitment**

**05 — Landscape**  
Marist College  
New York

**06 — Goals and Strategy**  
Short Term  
Long Term

**07 — Self Assessment and Evaluation**

**08 — Timeline**

# Executive Summary

This ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Action Plan was developed by the leadership team of MaristVOTES, a student-lead, non-partisan campus organization that is dedicated to educating, registering, and mobilizing Marist College students to participate in local, state, and national elections.

This action plan outlines the future coordination efforts that we will take during the 2024-2025 academic year. We hope to continue to increase our student voting percentage in the 2024 elections, and increase overall campus civic participation. We hope to integrate aspects of civic education into Marist College curriculum that will help to educate a new cohort of student voters.

This will be done by emphasizing voter education through the creation of multiple “toolkits” and voting curriculum, providing students with information about and access to absentee ballots, and overall assisting students with any voting-related concerns they may have.



# Mission

**The mission of Marist VOTES is to promote access to the electoral and democratic processes through voter education and engagement.**

# Leadership

## Current Leadership

MaristVOTES is the lead campus entity for participation in the ALL IN Democracy Challenge. This group is a branch of the Marist College Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership (CCEL), directed by Melissa A. Gaeke, Ph.D., Senior Professional Lecturer in Political Science. Student leaders, Caleb Davis and Sylvia Wysor co-direct MaristVOTES along with members of the MaristVOTES board. In addition, student leaders from Marist Democrats, Marist Republicans, Marist Moderate, Marist SEED (Students Encouraging Environmental Dedication), Marist Circle, Marist Model UN, and Student Government Association will be involved in the implementation of the MaristVOTES Action plan.

We hope to work with the office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and athletics department with the implementation of the plan and look forward to future partnerships. We would like to continue to build out relationship with the First Year Program coordinators, including the First Year Seminar Program coordinator and faculty.

We also hope to form a stronger relationship with campus administration, including President Kevin C. Weinman, by asking him to make the ALL IN Campus Democracy President's Commitment. In addition to coalition building on the Marist campus, we look forward to continuing our partnership with other campuses in the Hudson Valley through the Hudson Valley Student Voting Coalition. Our relationship with Elections at Bard and the Bard Center for Civic Engagement have been a supplement to the success of MaristVOTES. We look forward to expanding this coalition to involve Vassar College once again, as well as other colleges in the region.

# Leadership

MaristVOTES will also ask the Dutchess County Board of Elections if they would like to participate in any of our activities and planning meetings, and determine how Marist College students can serve the Board. Our hope is that this relationship can be mutually beneficial and bring an element of joy back into the voting process. This year, we will continue to reach out to groups on campus, including, but not limited to, affinity groups, STEM societies, and Greek life organizations to get their insight on how best to serve their communities.

# Leadership

## Leadership Succession Plan

Faculty leadership will continue within the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership, while student organizers will continue to work on recruiting students to the MaristVOTES team. If a Director chooses to step down, they will inform the MaristVOTES team a semester prior to their resignation, so that an Assistant Director can be selected and use the semester to become oriented, before stepping into the Director role. In the first semester that a student serves as Director, unless circumstances do not allow for it, the previous Director will act as a mentor and remain available for guidance.

In the case that a student leader or board member must take a leave of absence due to a study abroad commitment, they will prepare a delegate to act in their stead before returning the semester afterwards. The student abroad will spend time the semester before their travels preparing the delegate with all materials and information that they may need. All functioning of MaristVOTES should continue smoothly, regardless of whether student leaders are located at Marist College, or spending a semester at another institution.



# Commitment

Marist College is dedicated to helping students develop the intellect, character, and skills required for enlightened, ethical and productive lives in the global community of the 21st century. The college executes this work in part through the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership (CCEL). The mission of the CCEL is to promote the principle that civic engagement and Community Based Learning (CBL) empower students to connect their academic work to their wider interests. Ultimately, the work of the CCEL is to strengthen civil society at Marist College, and beyond, by forming civically educated citizens. MaristVOTES plans on further integrating civic involvement through developing a curriculum that can be adopted by First Year Seminar Programs, and taught to first year students during their first semester at Marist.

The Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership at Marist College is committed to connecting students with their community. Marist students are encouraged through the CCEL to create an impact on their local community and beyond. MaristVOTES will remain committed to setting the framework for student voter programming and engagement at Marist College and in the surrounding community. MaristVOTES is committed to the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

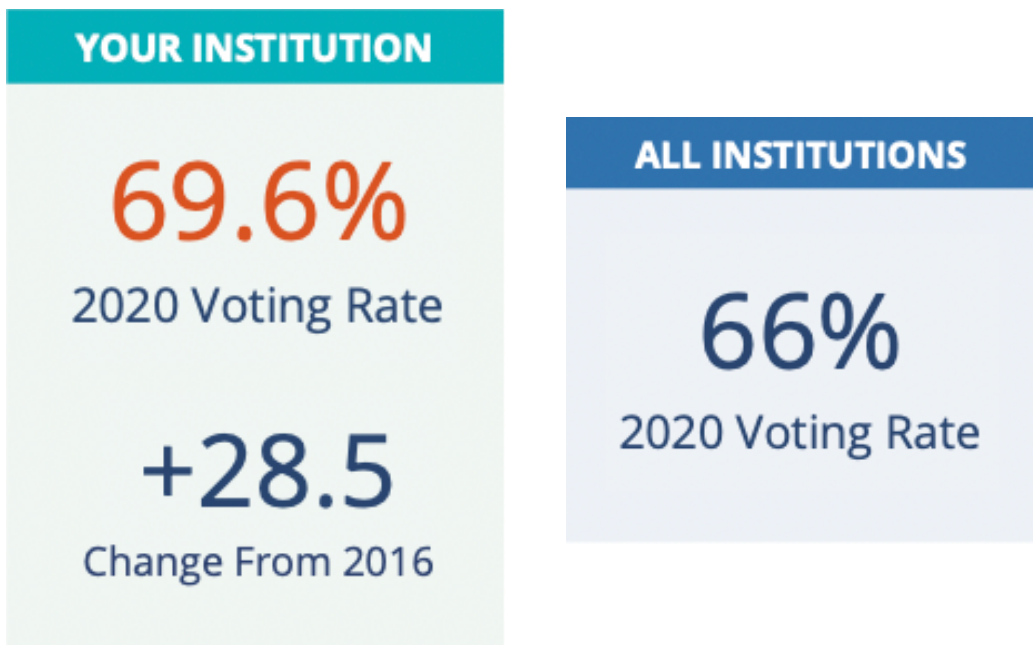
MaristVOTES is also committed to increasing engagement with student groups at Marist College in addition to partnerships with non-profits. MaristVOTES looks forward to strengthening connections with election officials, members of the League of Women Voters, National Student Vote Coalition, campus partners across the nation, and others. Furthermore, MaristVOTES would like to establish relations with the Marist Abroad office to ensure that students studying abroad have the resources they need made available to them so that they are not excluded from the voting process.



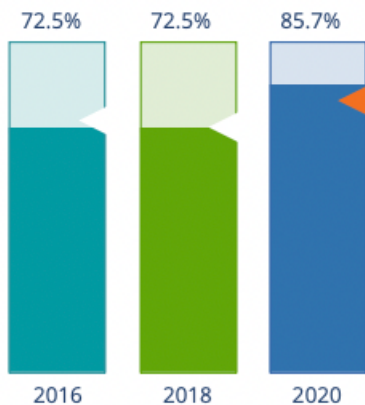
# Landscape

## Marist College

Thanks to the work of Julia McCarthy, who started MaristVOTES as her Honors Thesis in 2018, MaristVOTES has seen significant increase in Marist's voting rates. We hope to continue in this trend for the 2024 election cycle.

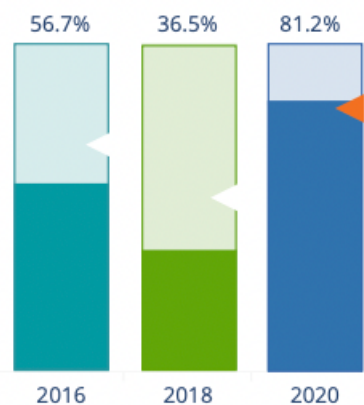


### REGISTRATION RATE



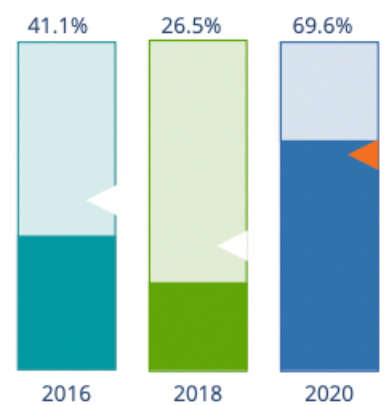
The **Registration Rate** is the percent of your voting-eligible students who registered to vote.

### VOTING RATE OF REGISTERED STUDENTS



The **Voting Rate of Registered Students** is the percent of registered students who voted on Election Day. We often refer to this as the "yield" rate.

### VOTING RATE



The **Voting Rate** is the percentage of eligible students who voted on Election Day. The voting rate is also the product of the registration and yield rates.

# Landscape

## By Field of Study

FIELDS	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020 RateChange (p.p)
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, and Gender Studies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	305	119	39	309	70	23	371	257	69	↑ 30
Business, Management, and Marketing	1,807	664	37	1,806	365	20	1,700	1,105	65	↑ 28
Communication and Journalism	931	393	42	819	202	25	799	581	73	↑ 31
Computer and Information Sciences	639	228	36	652	170	26	528	316	60	↑ 24
Education	100	45	45	82	19	23	266	203	76	↑ 31
English Language and Literature	76	36	47	77	31	40	67	54	81	↑ 33

## By Field of Study

FIELDS	2016			2018			2020			2016-2020 RateChange (p.p)
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	Enrolled	Voted	Rate	
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, and Gender Studies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	305	119	39	309	70	23	371	257	69	↑ 30
Business, Management, and Marketing	1,807	664	37	1,806	365	20	1,700	1,105	65	↑ 28
Communication and Journalism	931	393	42	819	202	25	799	581	73	↑ 31
Computer and Information Sciences	639	228	36	652	170	26	528	316	60	↑ 24
Education	100	45	45	82	19	23	266	203	76	↑ 31
English Language and Literature	76	36	47	77	31	40	67	54	81	↑ 33

The 2020 NSLVE data demonstrates that MaristVOTES has work to do to increase the population of student voters in Computer and Information Sciences majors. We have plans to explore specific messaging to engage with this group of students specifically, in order to increase the voting rate in upcoming election cycles.

# Landscape

## **New York State**

While Marist College has remained open to participation in local, state, and national elections, MaristVOTES believes that there is more that can be done. In the past, Marist College has hosted congressional and local debates that have been open to students. MaristVOTES hopes to work to facilitate more of this type of involvement in the upcoming semesters. Furthermore, MaristVOTES remains open to hosting election officials, office holders, and non-profits from the Poughkeepsie and New York area.

# Goals and Strategy

**MaristVOTES' general goals are to promote civic engagement through implementing campus-wide voter education, increase voter registration, and increase voter turnout in the 2024 election year.**

## **Short Term Goals**

- Participate in campus wide activities fair to increase student engagement
  - Recruit at least ten students on an interest form to involve with upcoming MaristVOTES meetings
- Work with campus security to create a Marist College Student ID that would serve as both a valid voter identification, and campus ID card
- Create voter education presentations that will be presented in First Year Seminar Classes
  - Create voter education toolkits that MaristVOTES representatives can use to ensure all presentations are presented in some way
- Work with the center for social media to create a social media campaign to encourage voter registration
  - Create messaging for specific groups (ex: STEM students and computer science students)
- Create social media toolkit with messaging that will be used during the Fall 2024 semester
- Increase campus and community partnerships to increase civic engagement work (Dutchess County Board of Elections, Marist Athletics, Marist College Greek Life)
- Work in partnership with the Marist Abroad Office to ensure that students have access to absentee ballots while they are abroad during fall semester
- Establish student leaders for the fall 2024 semester

# Goals and Strategy

## **Long Term Goals**

- Using empathy and coalition, foster a sense of joy in the electoral and democratic processes to create a more civically engaged campus environment
- Continue to develop lasting relationships with campus administration, campus groups, non-profits, and coalition members
- Establish a succession plan that encourages new students to join MaristVOTES and step into leadership roles within the organization that allows the organization to continue to operate even after its current student leaders graduate

# Goals and Strategy

## Strategy

**In order to accomplish the above goals, MaristVOTES will continue to push for more student engagement on campus. This will be facilitated in the following methods.**

- Participation with other campus clubs, teams, and groups
- Hosting joint events with other campus groups
- Reaching out to faculty members and staff who might have an interest in supporting the work of MaristVOTES

**Furthermore, once these relationships are established, MaristVOTES will remain committed to hosting recurring team meetings and campus-wide events.**

- The MaristVOTES board will meet once a week and participate in an open “office hours” sort of arrangement where students will be encouraged to “drop by” during the designated times to have their voices heard and questions answered
- In addition, MaristVOTES will continue to invite students across campus to participate in MaristVOTES events and events co-hosted with MaristVOTES

**MaristVOTES hopes to establish itself as the accepted student voter organization at Marist College that encourages student participation in a way similar to how an organization like Student Government Association might function.**



# Self Assessment and Evaluation

This plan will be shared with campus administration and will hopefully be pushed out to students at Marist College. This plan will be published on the MaristVOTES website, in addition to posted on social media channels. We are hoping that Marist College social media channels will assist us in pushing out this plan to the student body, and that the administration will be receptive to publishing this plan on the Marist College website. We would also like to explore the possibility of this plan's publication in the campus wide newspaper, The Marist Circle, in addition to any faculty newsletters that the campus might publish.

We anticipate that evaluating the success of this plan will be an ongoing process. We look forward to getting feedback from campus administration, faculty, and students. In addition, we look forward to sharing our NSLVE reports with these groups to encourage further participation and involvement in the implementation of this plan across campus. We anticipate using the NSLVE data from 2024 to evaluate the success of this plan, and look forward to sharing this data with the Marist community as a part of our messaging strategy.

# Timeline

## January 2024

- Host brainstorming meetings with all members of the MaristVOTES in order to establish clear goals of voter education curriculum and social media campaigns
- Participate in campus-wide activities fair to generate interest in MaristVOTES

## February 2024

- Host meeting of the Hudson Valley Student Voter Coalition with Bard College to discuss election day celebrations
- Communicate with necessary staff to create a campus ID that would serve as valid voter identification (That can be given to students beginning with the class of 2028)
- Work with center for social media to create social media campaign to encourage voter registration, with messaging at specific groups

## March 2024

- Have clearly established voter education and social media toolkits that will set up MaristVOTES for Fall 2024, when current student leaders will be abroad
- Start to consider future student leaders/possible delegates for the Fall 2024 semester
- Work in partnership with the Marist Abroad office to ensure that students have access to absentee ballots while they are abroad

# Timeline

## April 2024

- Establish future student leaders/delegates for the Fall 2024 semester, and have them “shadow” their respective board position
- Train student presenters in presenting to First Year Seminar Classes using the voter education toolkit

**MaristVOTES anticipates changes and further explanation of this timeline once a clear group of students has been identified to lead MaristVOTES during the 2024 Fall semester. We expect this to occur sometime during the Spring 2024 semester, hopefully towards the beginning of February after the campus-wide activities fair has taken place and student interest has been gauged.**

**Throughout this time period, MaristVOTES will remain committed to forming relationships with groups across campus, and will foster these relationships through attending and promoting events, speakers, and other activities.**