Building a Faculty Champion Program on Your Campus

A toolkit for faculty to integrate democratic engagement activities into the classroom – both virtually and in-person.
What is a Faculty Champion?
A faculty champion is a professor or lecturer who integrates democratic engagement activities into their classes and helps their students engage with their community through voting and other activities. Faculty Champions serve a vital role in connecting students with existing efforts to promote civic engagement at their institutions.

We encourage you to customize the language and design elements in this guide to fit your campus context.

The 4 Steps to Kick Off the Strategy

1. **Build your menu and prep activities!**
2. **Choose your Champions model!**
3. **Prepare your ask and outreach!**
4. **Create Faculty Champions!**

This Toolkit Includes

- pg 2  Build your menu and prep activities
- pg 4  Design your Faculty Champions model
- pg 5  Decide what your rewards and recognition look like
- pg 6  Prepare your ask template and best practices
- pg 7  Organize your outreach form and back-end process
- pg 8  Resource appendix and partnerships

Ask Every Student is a non-partisan program for higher education institutions to scale, apply, and implement voter registration strategies that reach every student on campus. To learn more about Ask Every Student, please visit [studentvoting.org](http://studentvoting.org).

This toolkit was completed in collaboration with the Ask Every Student Codesigner Campus Cohort, with special thanks to Mesa Community College, University of Michigan, University of Nevada, Reno, Arizona State University and the TX Votes team at University of Texas at Austin.
Build your menu and prep activities

The Faculty Champions Opportunities Menu can function both as a tool to help you refine exactly which democratic engagement activities your team wants to implement in the classroom and to help you easily and efficiently coordinate these activities with faculty.

Each activity is linked to point values that with connect with the Faculty Champion Award levels on the next page. These points are optional, but can be helpful in building a tiered recognition program and creating incentives for faculty to implement higher quality tactics.

Do you want to make your own menu? Take a closer look at the example sheet and customize your own sheet at sls.vote/menu.
Classroom Opportunity Ideas

Passive Activities
Plug and play opportunities that don’t necessarily require class time.

Voter Care Package
Students have the opportunity to request a Voter Care Package that helps them navigate voter registration and participation after completing a form to personalize their experience.
Faculty’s responsibility: sharing provided template language and link with your students through your preferred means (e.g. email, Canvas, etc.)

Communicating Key Information
Students will directly receive all of the information they need to know about voting in the upcoming election straight from the professor.
Faculty’s responsibility: sharing provided template language with your students through your preferred means (e.g. email, Canvas, etc.).

Democratic Engagement Canvas Module
Students will have access to a comprehensive and accessible collection of essential voter and democratic engagement resources readily available through your Canvas course.
Faculty’s responsibility: use the Canvas Commons link provided and add the module to the Canvas course.

How to be a Voter Video
Students will watch a video that comprehensively walks them through what they need to know about participating in the upcoming election.
Faculty’s responsibility: including or embedding the video into your learning management system and sharing it with your students during class time or as an assignment.

Active Activities
Opportunities that require class time or a higher level of engagement by the faculty.

Class Announcements
Make a class announcement about upcoming deadlines or democratic opportunities on campus in the beginning of class each week.
Faculty’s responsibility: verbally relay provided updates about upcoming dates and deadlines related to the election and promote other democratic opportunities.

Classroom Presentation (visit optional)
Students receive a short live explanation of the voting and democratic engagement process and have the opportunity to ask questions and receive advice during a class call.
Faculty’s responsibility: set aside 5 minutes of class time and coordinate with someone from <campus voting organization> to visit your classroom OR give the presentation yourself.

Classroom Visit with Breakout Sessions
Students receive a short live explanation of the voting and democratic engagement process and have the opportunity to ask questions and receive advice from someone from a member of <campus voting organization> during a class call.
Faculty’s responsibility: set aside 5 minutes of class time and coordinate with someone from <campus voting organization> to visit your classroom.

Including Democratic Engagement in your Syllabus
Students will learn about how democratic engagement relates to the content of your class and take part in an assignment to dive deeper.
Faculty’s responsibility: Create or choose an assignment related to democratic engagement to include in your syllabus. Include provided language and links on the syllabus.

These are example opportunities that you can add to your own Faculty Champions Opportunity Menu. While most of these are just ideas to provide inspiration for your own programming, some resources will be housed on the Ask Every Student website as they are developed.
Design your Faculty Champions model

You have some amazing activities and tactics prepped, ready to be integrated into the classroom! Great! Now it’s time to make sure that you have a model ready to engage faculty in the process.

This strategy has two different parts of faculty engagement to consider:

the organizational component and the rewards component.

Organizational Component

Based on your capacity, timeline, and connections, there are a few different ways you can approach faculty engagement from an organizational perspective.

Systematic Outreach
If you have the capacity and enough time, integrating this approach into departments, universal classes, first year experience, or other systematic approaches is awesome! Through this method, you can begin to ensure that your Faculty Civic Champions program is expected to happen on a yearly (or semesterly!) basis.

Within this structure, you can expand the program to include interdepartmental competitions and even look into incorporating Faculty Civic Champion status as part of the tenure track.

Individual Outreach
This organizational model doesn’t provide a very institutionalized approach, but works well for those who currently don’t have much access to work on a departmental level.

If that’s your case, you can do a grassroots outreach tactic by reaching out to as many faculty members as possible and coordinating directly with them. You can use the next parts of this guide to help you through that process!
Decide what your rewards and recognition look like

While the Opportunities Menu gives faculty the ability to choose the activities that work best for them, the tiered system of rewards creates an additional incentive for faculty to choose higher quality options and integrate more components into their classroom.

Rewards can include recognition/status, shout-outs, physical swag, downloadable badges, and anything else that makes sense for your campus context.

Through this system, you can also hold competitions across different departments! Which department has the most points? Which has the most Faculty Champions? Which has the most Level Four Faculty Champions?

You can decide which creative avenues into which you can take your recognition system!

**Faculty Champion Program**
*Point System and Awards (example)*

Each level of democratic engagement opportunity you include in your classroom will allow you to earn Civic Champion Points. The amount of points that you earn will translate to your Faculty Civic Champion tier. Each tier has an associated badge and reward, shown below.

**Level One Civic Champion** 30 points
Reward: Faculty Civic Champion recognition and shout out on our social media.

**Level Two Civic Champion** 70 points
Reward: Faculty Civic Champion recognition, shout out on our social media, and free t-shirt.

**Level Three Civic Champion** 100 points
Reward: Faculty Civic Champion recognition + shoutout on our social media, free t-shirt, and Faculty Civic Champion Enamel Pin.

You can customize the rewards system for your strategy at sls.v/menu.
Prepare your ask

You know the activities and resources you're offering to faculty, you've decided on a recognition system and outreach model, and now it’s time to prepare the ask!

Tips for formulating a convincing and mutually beneficial ask

- Make sure to be explicit that your work is nonpartisan.
- Tie your ask to your campus' mission statement or Carnegie Classification if applicable.
- Share your campus' voting rates from your National Study on Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report if available.
- Align your goals with the faculty’s learning objectives.
- Leverage the social capital of different faculty. Asking a very well-known or respected faculty member who can then share your ask with other faculty is extremely powerful.

Template Email

Click here to view the template in a Google Document

Dear [Faculty's Name],

My name is [Your Name] and I am [role] with [division or voting organization name]. We are [introduce your organization]. We do not endorse any candidates, political positions, or ideologies, [nor do we do any advocacy work]. Our goal is to promote civic engagement among students at [Your School]. To learn more about what civic engagement means and why it is so important to promote you can check out our [video or other resources] here [link to resource]. In 2016, only X percent of voting eligible students at [institution name] were registered to vote and only X percent voted. In order to reach our goal of X percent of the eligible student body being registered to vote and X percent voting, we need your help.

I am emailing you today to ask if you will be a part of our mission by taking part in our Faculty Champions program by choosing any of the civic opportunities outlined in our Opportunities Menu <attached>. Each of the civic opportunities has a number of points associated with it as indicated by the opportunity description. Recognition will be given to faculty members based upon the total number of points they earn from the opportunities they incorporate into their classes as shown in the attached program description <attached>.

We are looking forward to working with you as a Faculty Champion. Once you review the Opportunities Menu and decide which opportunities you would like to include in your classes, please fill out this form [custom form link]. If you have any questions about the program or any of the descriptions on the menu, please contact us at [contact information].

Best,
[Program Coordinator or Student Leader]
Organize your outreach

You’re so close! You have everything prepared, including your ask, and now you just need to be able to organize all of your Faculty Champions who are signing on! It can be overwhelming to juggle it all, so you can use a form like the one below to track everything easily. These include contact info, classroom opportunity selection, and class visit scheduling if applicable.

You can look at our sample form here or you can request access to a copy of the form here.

Back-end process
Google Forms allows you to connect your form to a spreadsheet that keeps all of the information together. Once faculty start filling out the form, you can use that sheet to create a system for following up with their requested resources and build out a calendar for members of your team to conduct class visits. Click here to see an example of the TX Votes Team at UT Austin’s back-end process.

Follow up and evaluation
At the end of the semester or class period, we encourage you to survey faculty and students to receive feedback on their experience with this program and learn how to improve for the next iteration. It’s especially important to follow up with faculty to ensure these activities can happen sustainably every year.
Resource appendix

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**Faculty Champions Opportunities Menu**

View the example sheet and interactive template at [https://sls.vote/menu](https://sls.vote/menu).

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**Faculty Champions Recognition and Rewards**

View the example sheet and interactive template at [https://sls.vote/menu](https://sls.vote/menu).

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**Faculty Champion Outreach Template – Google Doc**
[https://sls.vote/outreachtemplate](https://sls.vote/outreachtemplate)

The National Study on Voting, Learning and Engagement (NSLVE) Report by Tufts Institute for Democracy in Higher Education
[https://idhe.tufts.edu/nslve](https://idhe.tufts.edu/nslve)

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**University of Texas at Austin’s Back-end Organizational Process Spreadsheet**
[https://sls.vote/backendprocess](https://sls.vote/backendprocess)

**Sample Outreach Form**

View the Sample Form at [https://sls.vote/sampleform](https://sls.vote/sampleform)

Request access to a copy of the form at [https://studentvoting.org/classroom-tools](https://studentvoting.org/classroom-tools).

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Ask Every Student is organized in partnership by the following organizations:

- The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
- Fair Election Center’s Campus Vote Project
- The Students Learn Students Vote Coalition
- NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
- Democracy Works
- The Andrew Goodman Foundation
- Tennessee Campus Democracy Network
- Hillel International
- Campus Compact North Carolina
- LeadMN
- Scholars Strategy Network
- Student PIRGs

Learn more about our partners at [studentvoting.org/partners](https://studentvoting.org/partners).

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Explore the full Ask Every Student toolkit at [studentvoting.org](https://studentvoting.org).