

Preparing for the 2024 Elections Elon University

Report and Recommendations

July 26, 2024

The Elon University mission proclaims that the campus “embraces its founders’ vision of an academic community that transforms mind, body, and spirit and encourages freedom of thought and liberty of conscience.” Among the tenets that support this commitment is the goal to “integrate learning across the disciplines and put knowledge into practice, thus preparing students to be global citizens and informed leaders motivated by concern for the common good.” Faculty and staff continually offer curricular and co-curricular learning in support of these outcomes, with particular focus during pivotal election years.

In preparation for the 2024 election, President Book convened an ad hoc committee to develop a comprehensive strategy to enhance Elon’s election engagement and support. The working group’s goals had three prongs. First, we addressed what Elon offered during previous election years to determine what gaps needed to be filled. Second, we looked at the civic engagement opportunities we regularly offer to determine how we could use resources to build greater capacity. Third, we asked how we could best prepare our community for active citizenship not just for the 2024 election, but for a lifetime of civic engagement.

The committee’s membership included:

Naeemah Clark, *co-chair*, Associate Provost for Inclusive Excellence
Jon Dooley, *co-chair*, Vice President for Student Life
Jeff Clark, Executive Director of Cultural and Special Programs
Owen Covington, Assistant Vice President for Strategic Communications and Media Relations
Carrie Eaves, Associate Professor of Political Science and Policy Studies, Faculty Fellow for Civic Engagement
Bob Frigo, Assistant Dean of Campus Life and Director of the Kernodle Center for Civic Life
Britt Mobley, Executive President, Student Government Association
Kari Taylor, Deputy Chief of Staff for Campus Engagement, Office of the President
Josh Tillotson, Captain, Campus Safety and Police

Additionally, President Book assigned representatives from across campus to serve as consultants to the core committee. These consultants were:

Jessica Carew, Assistant Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Elon Core Curriculum and Associate Professor of Political Science and Policy Studies
Vanessa Drew-Branch, Interim Associate Director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning and Associate Professor of Human Service Studies
Jason Husser, Director of the Elon Poll and Associate Professor of Political Science and Policy Studies
Alex Luchsinger, Assistant Professor of Journalism
Jodean Schmiederer, Dean of Student Development

The chairs of the committee also gathered information from the Council on Civic Engagement, the President’s Student Leadership Advisory Council, a university-wide Campus Conversation, the Joint Academic and Student Life Deans, and a town hall among administrators with faculty rank. In each of these sessions, participants were asked the following:

- What are some of the lessons learned from 2016 and 2020 we should incorporate into our planning?
- What existing efforts should we be including and/or enhancing through these plans?
- What new opportunities or considerations should we be thinking about for these plans?

The [responses](#) and input of the committee members and consultant led to the following seven recommendations that will help prepare our campus to be informed about and engaged in the national, state, and local Election 2024. The recommendations are designed to educate our campus while maintaining our values for inclusivity and liberal arts values including asking questions, creative and critical thinking, and ethical, evidence-based decision making.

Recommendation 1

The University should implement well-branded, easily accessed, and widespread communication about the 2024 election cycle, including a centralized communication hub with information about related events and resources

Recommendation 2

The University should design and implement faculty and staff development opportunities to support election-related conversations and content in fall courses, the Elon Core Curriculum, and experiential education opportunities

Recommendation 3

The University should sponsor robust campus programming opportunities about the 2024 election, including issues forums, speakers, dialogue programs, debate watches, and student organization sponsored activities (including those by the Student Government Association and Elon Votes!)

Recommendation 4

The University should implement highly visible voter registration and education initiatives, including an on-campus early voting site and process for students to access a special Phoenix Card that can be used as an approved North Carolina photo ID for voting locally

Recommendation 5

The University should convene, host, and co-sponsor programming initiatives for members of the local community, including sponsoring local candidate forums for ABSS Board of Education and Alamance County Board of Commissioners elections

Recommendation 6

The University should undertake a review of demonstration, safety, communication and other relevant policies and protocols, including a table-top exercise to test those measures

Recommendation 7

The University should provide one-time grants for campus departments or organizations that would like to sponsor initiatives that relate to these recommendations and/or respond to the university's mission to prepare "global citizens and informed leaders motivated by concern for the common good."

RECOMMENDATION 1

The University should implement well-branded, easily accessed, and widespread communication about the 2024 election, including a centralized communication hub with information about related events and resources

With so many undergraduate students who will be participating as voters for the first time in their lives and so many members of the university community who may be new to Elon since the last election, the University has a unique opportunity to frame community participation in the election process through the lens of institutional mission and values. Fostering a dedication to civic engagement and dialogue, encouraging freedom of thought and liberty of conscience, and promoting a commitment to the common good are all animating ideals that can be expressed through a communications campaign that sets the stage for activity across the campus. With regard to the communication campaign, three essential elements are recommended:

Communications

The committee recommends a robust series of articles and social media content on Today at Elon and the university's social media channels to promote upcoming events related to the 2024 elections. This would include an initial announcement on Today at Elon of the concerted effort to foster engagement with the election process this year that would detail upcoming events and resources for faculty, staff, students and the community. Additional content would include event coverage, feature articles and videos highlighting the benefits of voter engagement and social media campaigns that foster civic engagement.

Additionally, the committee is recommending the exploration of a regular email to the campus community highlighting upcoming events and opportunities for engagement with this year's election. Finally, the committee recommends that explicit connection of active citizenship to the university's mission and values be conveyed at key university events such as Opening Convocation, New Student Convocation, College Coffee, etc.

Branding

To enhance the visibility of election participation efforts and events on campus, the committee recommends the creation of an Election 2024 mark by the Office of University Communications. This mark would draw upon traditional elements and colors related to democracy and elections and incorporate elements unique to Elon.

The mark would be deployed broadly on platforms, content, and communications related to Election 2024 and would serve to increase awareness about individual events and efforts and to create a recognizable connection between separate events and efforts. The mark would be developed over Summer 2024 and be ready to be revealed with the announcement of Election 2024 efforts at the start of the 2024-25 academic year.

Online Election Information Hub

To increase awareness about Elon's election-related events and activities and to provide easy access to valuable information to Elon students, faculty and staff, the committee recommends creating an online resource within www.elon.edu – one that would augment, but not replace, the Elon Votes! voter awareness/engagement site, www.elon.edu/vote.

This standalone web page (landing site) would be a central hub for information about the election. It would include introductory text explaining the importance of civic engagement and participation in the electoral process and include

elements such as a news feed featuring Today at Elon articles related to civic engagement and the election and a calendar highlighting upcoming events and important dates.

The page also would include a resources page that includes links to resources within the university community as well as those external to the university related to voter registration and education, polling places, local resources and other pertinent information. The page would be promoted in various ways with several possibilities including a static button on the Today at Elon homepage and within the weekly This Week at Elon newsletter.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The University should design and implement faculty and staff development opportunities to support election-related conversations and content in fall courses, the Elon Core Curriculum, and experiential education opportunities

As faculty and staff prepare their courses and co-curricular programming for the upcoming year, the Election 2024 Planning Committee has created opportunities for faculty/staff development to deepen student learning about active citizenship and democratic practice. Elon continues to have significant campus expertise, including in the Department of Political Science and Public Policy, Kernodle Center for Civic Life, Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, and in academic and administrative departments across campus. Elon is also the host institution for North Carolina Campus Engagement, which sponsors conferences, workshops, webinars, and other programming to foster dialogue and civic/political engagement. In designing faculty and staff development opportunities, we hope to invite Elon staff and faculty to share their expertise and experience with the campus, alongside visiting scholars and facilitators.

Summer 2024 Faculty Development Workshop

On Friday, June 14, fifteen faculty/staff attended a half day workshop focused on incorporating the 2024 election into their courses with [Nancy Thomas](#), Special Advisor to the President at AAC&U and Director of the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education (IDHE). The workshop helped attendees frame some of the key themes in the election, civic and engaged learning, and techniques to handle challenging political polarization in the classroom. Thomas will visit with participants closer to the beginning of the semester to assist in putting what they've learned into practice.

Planning Week Workshop

During Planning Week 2024, the new Faculty Fellow for Civic Engagement Dillan Bono-Lunn, will familiarize faculty with campus resources for civic engagement and offer tips for teaching during politically divisive times. The session will help faculty think through approaches to incorporating discussion of the election, as well as strategies for responding in the moment when these issues arise. All disciplines are invited to attend.

Ongoing Election Issues Expos

On the second Thursday of the semester (September 5), Elon News Network will sponsor a town hall session where students can share their thoughts, concerns, and hopes regarding the 2024 election. Brooks Fuller, a former Elon journalism professor and current research director for American Oversight, an organization dedicated to holding our government accountable through open records requests and court transparency, has been asked to moderate the session. The information gathered through the town hall will inform political Professor Thomas Kerr's POL 1120 - North Carolina State Legislature course. Students will prepare political expos based on the topics that surface in the town hall. Students in the class will present their research about the topics three times during the Fall semester. Then in the days before the election, Dr. Kerr's class will present a debate on issues connected to the national election.

Visiting Democracy Scholar-in-Residence

As part of our ongoing commitment to robust civic engagement within our academic community, having specialized expertise on campus would set Elon apart during this election year. A Democracy Scholar-in-Residence in a visiting role was created to help spark conversations connected to democracy, reimagine the power of citizenship, and prepare faculty to have challenging course discussions. [Nancy Thomas](#), Special Advisor to the President at AAC&U and Director of the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education (IDHE) has agreed to fill this role for 2024-2025. Thomas will be on

campus at least three days per month through the entire academic year and will live in residence in the new East Neighborhood Commons when she is here.

Faculty, staff, and student organizations will be able to invite her to offer conversations about democracy and lead workshops focused on facilitating challenging and sensitive discussions. She also will be scheduled to meet with students interested in citizenship such as the Changemakers, ElonVotes, and Student Government Association.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The University should sponsor robust campus programming opportunities about the 2024 election, including issues forums, speakers, dialogue programs, debate watches, and student organization sponsored activities (including those by the Student Government Association and Elon Votes!)

The Council on Civic Engagement, Political Engagement Working Group, Elon Votes!, and related campus departments have been working on developing a calendar of events for next academic year. Events planned thus far include:

Fall 2024 Events

Student Issues Forum (co-sponsored by SGA and ENN)

Thursday, September 5, 6 p.m., East Neighborhood Commons, Forum (102)

Active Citizen Series: North Carolina Trusted Elections Tour

Panel presentation sponsored by the Carter Center

Tuesday, September 10, 6:30 p.m., East Neighborhood Commons, Forum (102)

Active Citizen Series: Presidential Debate Watch

Tuesday, September 10, 9 p.m., Moseley Center First Floor

Active Citizen Series: Bridging Political Divides with Artificial Intelligence

Featuring Dr. Christopher Bail, Director of the [Polarization Lab](#), Duke University

Wednesday, September 18, 7 p.m., McKinnon Hall F, Moseley Center

Active Citizen Series: Deliberative Dialogue

Topic: Anxiety and Elections

Monday, September 23, 4:30 p.m., Lakeside 212

ABSS Board of Education Candidate Forum

Moderated by Dr. Ann Bullock, Dean of the Dr. Jo Watts Williams School of Education, Elon University

Monday, September 30, 7 p.m., Paramount Theater, 128 E. Front St., Burlington

Co-sponsored by Elon University, Impact Alamance, the Alamance Chamber of Commerce, Elon News Network, and the City of Burlington

Bus transportation from Elon University to the Paramount Theater will be provided

Alamance County Commissioner Candidate Forum

Moderated by Ryan Blackledge, Director of Governmental Affairs, Cone Health

Tuesday, October 1, 7 p.m., Paramount Theater, 128 E. Front St., Burlington

Co-sponsored by Elon University, Impact Alamance, the Alamance Chamber of Commerce, Elon News Network, and the City of Burlington

Bus transportation from Elon University to the Paramount Theater will be provided

One Stop Early Voting

Thursday, October 17, 2024 – Saturday, November 2, 2024, South Gym

Active Citizen Series: Tracking Money in U.S. Politics and its Effect on Elections and Public Policy

Featuring Hilary Braseth, Executive Director of [Open Secrets](#)

Thursday, October 17, 4:30 p.m., East Neighborhood Commons, Forum (102)

Big Political Data in our Local Community: Gerrymandering, Social Media, and the Election

Featuring Dr. Maggie Macdonald '15, Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of Kentucky

Wednesday, October 23, 4:30 p.m., Lakeside Meeting Rooms, 214

General Election

Tuesday, November 5

Shuttle will run from the Center for the Arts to local polling places from 8:00am-8:00pm

Active Citizen Series: Election Night Watch Event

Tuesday, November 5, 8 p.m., Global Neighborhood Commons Great Hall

Hope for the Future: Public Art Project

Wednesday, November 6, Time and Location TBD

Active Citizen Series: After the Vote

Faculty Panel Sponsored by the Department of Political Science

Tuesday, November 12, 4:30 p.m., East Neighborhood Commons, Forum (102)

Finding Unity Across Difference: A Democratic Dialogue

Thursday, November 14, 4:30-6 p.m., Lakeside Meeting Rooms 212-214

Spring 2025 Events

Presidential Inauguration

Monday, January 20, 2025

(Note: Elon University is closed this date due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday)

Events Still in Development

Active Citizen Series: Political Polarization with Dr. Adi Wiesel

Featuring Dr. Adi Wiesel, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Elon University

February event to be determined

Lee Rainie, Director of Elon's Imagining the Digital Future Center has offered to talk about how this year's election compares with others based on data gathered from the Pew Research Center. For example, a conversation about how consumers can critically think about polling could be an excellent lunchtime flash session.

Mathematics professor Todd Lee has offered to share what he's learned from years of studying gerrymandering and methods for creating voting districts and global election processes with the campus community.

Democracy Dialogue Collaborative

To deepen the campus community's capacity for discourse focused on citizenship and democratic practice, the Election 2024 Planning Group created a 1-year Democracy Dialogue Collaborative to spearhead those efforts. Three faculty members have been selected to lead the collaborative during the upcoming academic year:

Dave Gammon, Professor of Biology

Julianne Liebenguth, Assistant Professor of Political Science & Policy Studies

Matthew Young, Assistant Professor of Political Science & Policy Studies

This Collaborative will coordinate with the Faculty Fellow for Civic Engagement, the Kernodle Center for Civic Life, and the Office of Inclusive Excellence Education to create opportunities for the entire Elon community to engage in meaningful discourse related to the election, active citizenship, and living in a democracy. Among their responsibilities:

- Facilitate at least three campus dialogues focused on pre and post-election issues
- Provide development for faculty and staff interested in facilitating democracy dialogues
- Create interactive venues (for example social media, coffee talks, salons, public art, poetry nights) where students can connect in dialogue about democracy

As of this writing, the Collaborative has planned the following:

- A weekly booth for College Coffee to breakdown some of the challenges to political self-expression that students shared in meetings as we were gathering information for this report. At the booth, the DDC will have simple activities (e.g., using stickers to answer yes-no questions), and we will also have open-ended questions to stimulate a deeper dialogue. Participants can post publicly (e.g., using large blank whiteboards) or anonymously (e.g., scan QR codes to submit online).
- Finding Unity Across Difference: A Democratic Dialogue. This campus-wide event is scheduled for Thursday, November 14, 4:30-6 p.m., Lakeside Meeting Rooms 212-214. It is planned for post-election discussion about making connections after what is forecasted to be a fraught time.
- Additionally, the Collaborative will work with Andrew Moffa, Assistant Director of the Kernodle Center, to represent Elon in the [Re/Designing Democracy Project](#) in partnership with AAC&U's Institute for Democracy & Higher Education. This research project will gather student voices about what democracy means to them in challenging political times, which will include organizing focus groups and interviews with 50 students who will consider what a more perfect union could be.

RECOMMENDATION 4

The University should implement highly visible voter registration and education initiatives, including an on-campus early voting site and process for students to access a special Phoenix Card that can be used as an approved North Carolina photo ID for voting locally

Launched in 2014, the Elon Votes! campus initiative was created to help Elon students engage in our democracy by registering to vote and casting their ballots in elections. The Elon University Political Engagement Work Group, Council on Civic Engagement, and Kernodle Center for Civic Life will collaborate to prominently publicize this initiative which provides students with the resources and tools to register to vote using either their permanent or university address and vote in person or using an absentee ballot. This initiative incorporates the Elon Votes! comprehensive website and utilizes the TurboVote platform given the fact that Elon students come from across the country. TurboVote helps students manage voter registration and absentee ballot forms, along with corresponding deadlines, for all 50 states.

As of 2023, North Carolina voters must now show an acceptable photo ID when they check in at their voting site during early voting or on Election Day. The Elon Votes! initiative will also be used to publicize the special Elon Phoenix Voter Card to students. This card, developed to reduce barriers to voting, was approved by the North Carolina State Board of Elections and can be utilized throughout the state. In an additional effort to minimize barriers, the Alamance County Board of Elections and Elon University will host a One Stop Early Voting Site in South Gym. This site was launched for the 2022 midterm elections and was most recently used for the 2024 primaries.

Fall 2024 will involve a comprehensive advertising campaign focusing on the following priority areas: voter registration, voting (in person and absentee ballots), Phoenix Voter Card, and the South Gym One Stop Early Voting Site. This campaign will involve a combination of social media, emails, print media, and tabling across campus. Specific outreach will include communication to current students, incoming students, law students, and study abroad students. The Elon Votes! website will be prominently featured in all advertising efforts as it serves as the primary location for student voting information and houses the TurboVote platform. The Kernodle Center for Civic Life will be promoted as the location where students can visit for assistance with all voting related forms and questions this election season.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The University should convene, host, and co-sponsor programming initiatives for members of the local community, including sponsoring local candidate forums for ABSS Board of Education and Alamance County Board of Commissioners elections

Elon University, in partnership with Impact Alamance, the Alamance Chamber of Commerce, the City of Burlington, and the Elon News Network (ENN), will host candidates seeking election to the Alamance Burlington School System's Board of Education and Alamance County Commission in two public forums. The Elon Express will transport students to the Paramount for each forum.

The Board of Education forum will be Monday, September 30 and the County Commission forum is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1. Both events are 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Paramount Theater, 128 E. Front St., Burlington NC 27215. ENN will live stream the event on its social media platforms. The independent, non-partisan moderators will present questions, and will ensure candidates receive equivalent amounts of time to present their views.

ABSS Board of Education Candidate Forum

Candidates: Sandy Ellington-Graves Seneca Rodgers
 Tameka Harvey Corrie Shepherd
 Peter Morcombe Avery Wagoner
 Tara Raggett Donna Davis Westbrooks
Moderator: Ann Bullock, Dean of the Dr. Jo Watts Williams School of Education, Elon University

Alamance County Commission Candidate Forum

Candidates: Carissa Graves Ed Priola
 John Paisley, Jr. Christopher Smith
 Anthony Pierce Pamela Thompson
Moderator: Ryan Blackledge, Director of Governmental Affairs, Cone Health

In addition to these candidate forums, many of the events in the calendar of activities listed under Recommendation 3 will be open and advertised to residents of the local community. The early voting site at South Gym is supervised by the Alamance County Board of Elections and available to all Alamance County voters.

Finally, the Elon Poll will be conducting three polls of North Carolina voters leading up to the November election and one additional poll after the election. Final dates and details for the polls have not been set at this time. The faculty with the Elon Poll also work extensively with media throughout the election cycle on voter education stories and how to help the general public understand and interpret breaking news and election-related events.

RECOMMENDATION 6

The University should undertake a review of demonstration, safety, communication and other relevant policies and protocols, including a table-top exercise to test those measures

Elon has already established existing policies that cover the election-related activities that are expected to occur in the upcoming year. These include, but are not limited to three sets of guidelines/commitments that can be found on the Council on Civic Engagement website and also referenced in relevant university handbooks:

- [Guidelines for Political Activities](#)
- [Guidelines for Demonstrations](#)
- [Statement of Commitment to the Values of Freedom of Expression and Inclusivity](#)

These guidelines and statements are supported by additional policies and protocols for campus operations, event planning, student organization management, and emergency response. While most of these policies and protocols remain updated and relevant, when the student handbook is updated during the summer, any policies related to event planning, demonstrations, and organization activities should be reviewed to ensure they are current and responsive to issues and concerns raised through national political activism on college campuses during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Pre-Event Planning

To enhance safety and security of political and election-related activities on campus, the following topics should be considered when reviewing policies and protocols:

- How information is gathered about the type of event (i.e. political debate, political speaker, educational program, awareness activity, etc.)
- How the activity is assigned an appropriate venue, based on factors such as location, proximity to other activities, estimated number of attendees, etc.
- For larger events, or those that involve external organizations and individuals, the process used to assess safety risks and needs such as traffic patterns, road signage and cones, parking, security screening, demonstration locations, etc.
- For demonstrations, how information will be gathered to assess any potential risk to members of the Elon community, university property, or campus operations
- How support staffing levels will be determined, especially for those activities that may require support from Campus Safety and Police (including assistance from local agencies)

Event Disruption Plans

The university should also update protocols for how to address different forms of disruption that may occur at an event, supporting organizers' ability to anticipate and prepare for potential disruption, protect the safety and well-being of participants, and uphold the integrity of the event. Disruption planning should include strategies to enact specific plans, protocols, and training to prepare for situations that may arise.

Caravans or Campus Disruption

During the 2020 election cycle, the university experienced and developed strategies to address caravans or other similar disruptions to campus, especially by non-members of the university community. Those protocols remain relevant to plan, assess, mitigate risks, and notify the campus community. Current protocols include the following topics:

- Gathering intelligence and assessing safety risks, including advance planning for adequate staffing
- Creation of operational plans to include:
 - Traffic routes, possible road closures
 - Collaboration with Elon Town Police
 - Chain of Command
 - Hours of operation
 - Medical needs
- Radio and other forms of internal communication
- Creating messaging to provide notice of disruption to the campus community and an ‘all clear’ after normal operations have been restored

Table-Top Exercise

The planning team recommends conducting a table-top simulation exercise to test current policies, procedures, and protocols, identifying opportunities for strengthening systems prior to the start of the academic year. An exercise has been scheduled for early August.

National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities Guidance

On June 20, 2024, NAICU hosted a webinar, *Preparing Your Campus for the 2024 Elections*, to offer nuts and bolts policy information for university administrators working on their institution’s civic engagement efforts. While much of the information is woven into Elon’s guidelines for demonstrations, political activities, and freedom of expression, NAICU offered additional reminders that Elon’s faculty and staff should consider in their interactions with students during this campaign season. For example,

- The Higher Education Act requires colleges and universities to make “good faith” efforts to help students register to vote as a condition of Title IV eligibility, distribute a mail voter registration form, and make these forms widely available to students. Elon University does this through our ElonVotes! initiatives and the website www.elon.edu/vote.
- The Internal Revenue Code prohibits all § 501(c)(3) organizations from participating in any political campaign activity.
 - Federal Work Study funds can be used to employ students to work on nonpartisan voter registration efforts.
 - Faculty and staff are entitled to participate or not, off-hours, as they see fit, in the election process, provided that speaking or acting in the name of the institution is prohibited.
 - Faculty and staff should refrain from endorsing, expressly or impliedly, a candidate for public office using university resources (e.g., submitting reimbursements from the university, making statements in university publications, hanging campaign signs on university property).
 - Faculty and staff should refrain from wearing campaign buttons, t-shirts, hats, etc. while teaching, advising, or counseling students.

For more guidance from the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, their *Preparing Your Campus for the 2024 Elections* webinar is available to the public on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/963580150/20138fdf61>.

RECOMMENDATION 7

The University should provide one-time grants for campus departments or organizations that would like to sponsor initiatives that relate to these recommendations and/or respond to the university's mission to prepare "global citizens and informed leaders motivated by concern for the common good."

The Election 2024 Planning Group has offered full time, ongoing faculty and staff the opportunity to submit applications for up to \$1,000 in funds to purchase materials, webinars, speaker honoraria, or other resources that could support their teaching topics connected to the importance of being active in local or national elections, the role of voting in a participatory government, the democratic process, or a related topic. These grants are designed to support inclusive topics that offer students from all political persuasions an opportunity to meaningfully engage in the course content.

Grants will be allocated through an application with a rolling deadline. As of July 1, four grants have been awarded:

- Journalism faculty member Israel Balderus and Policy Studies faculty member Jill Auditori were granted \$500 to support honoraria for their Alumni Voices - Conversations with Political Insiders on the 2024 Elections conversations. They will host three conversations with Elon alumni who are political insiders (communications, policy, journalism).
- Sylvia Muñoz, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of the CREDE, was awarded funds on behalf of the CREDE to organize town halls for the entire campus to facilitate discussions on the key issues at stake for ALANAM-centric communities during the election season.
- Charles Evans from Counseling Services received funding support to provide workshops and materials that aid students with maintaining mental health and well-being during a tense election. Evans will offer workshops on mindfulness and positive coping mechanisms and equip students with tools to manage election-related stress and anxiety. Evans will also offer discussion groups about the connection between mental health and civic engagement.
- Bob Frigo, on behalf of the Kernodle Center, received necessary funding to support transportation to and from voting sites on Election Day.

Another push for grant applications will be distributed just before the beginning of the fall semester.

Concluding Thoughts

In keeping with Elon's focus on its Boldly Elon goals, university programming around the election is an institutional priority for 2024-2025. This public commitment signifies the importance of civic and political engagement for all corners of campus and highlights that active citizenship will be ongoing throughout the year. For example, faculty and staff will continue to request funds for election-related activities throughout the fall semester. The Elon Poll plans to gather information about the state of North Carolina elections and the findings will come alive in classroom discussions. The election results will provide opportunities to practice the essential skills for having dialogue and connections across difference.

Additionally, as the world becomes more engaged in the U.S. Presidential contest, discourse of all types will emerge. Helpful discourse will provide greater opportunities for critical thinking and evidence-based decision-making. Harmful discourse will ask that we call on campus mentors to restore calm, and, in the worst cases, we will rely on our bias reporting protocols and conduct processes to address any harmful speech and conduct.

This report and accompanying recommendations are, in no way, intended to be the sum of Elon's election season activities. Its contents merely attempt to illustrate that the university has a plan that draws on learning from previous experiences, examines the present political moment, and lays a foundation for our community members be the citizens and leaders that will ensure a bright future. Elon's divisions, departments, programs, offices, and individuals are encouraged to think of ways to use the recommendations and examples in this report to inspire active citizenship that aligns with their priorities, expertise, and talents.

Resources and References

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