



ALL IN Democracy Challenge

Civic Engagement Action Plan



Fall 2020 – Fall 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mission of the Student Life Office at Arapahoe Community College (ACC) is to foster development, leadership, and engagement of our students through activities, services and experiences. Our programs, services, and facilities focus on creating opportunities for students to make connections, improve their well-being, build character, develop leadership skills, and elevate their learning experiences at ACC. As the primary office for student engagement efforts beyond – and in partnership with – the classroom, the Student Life Office oversees campus activities, student clubs and organizations, student leadership development, and aspects of Veterans services. As part of our programmatic model, our office embraces the principles of civic engagement and incorporates civic engagement in our programmatic endeavors.

In order to further our work with civic engagement, the Student Life Office joined the ALL IN Challenge in 2016. Since then, we have created multiple opportunities for students to get connected, be informed, and become involved. We continue our participation in the ALL IN Challenge as we seek to continue to make progress in our goals – explained further in this document: to both educate and mobilize our students to vote, engage and sustain collaborations, and increase engagement from our student body. This document was drafted under advisement of ACC's Civic Engagement Coalition, and covers work to be done between the start of Fall 2020 semester and the end of Fall 2021 semester.

LEADERSHIP

Led by the Student Life Office, the Civic Engagement Coalition consists of various representatives from administration, faculty, and students. These members strategize, coordinate, and promote our civic engagement programming efforts. The Coalition will connect on a quarterly basis to evaluate progress made on all goals and subsequent strategies.

Civic Engagement Coalition

- Director of Student Life, National Society of Leadership & Success Advisor, Dan Balski – *Civic Engagement Coalition Chair*
- Coordinator of Student Activities, Sarah Lindahl
- Coordinator of Student Organizations & Wellness Programs, Brian Bator
- Service Learning Center Coordinator, Communication Faculty, Diana Hornick
- Career & Transfer Services Director, Shari Culver
- Faculty Member, *TBD – See Strategy Section*
- Marketing: Digital Content Administrator, Jess Horning
- Student Access Services: Elevate at ACC Coordinator, Jen Woegens
- VISTA: Veteran Student Success Facilitator, Dominic Pillitteri
- Student Government Representative, Kim Johnson
- Student Life Student Representative, Zachary Vultao

Civic Engagement Coalition Leadership Team Liaison

- Dean of Students, Javon Brame

Civic Engagement Coalition Community Partner

- *TBD – See Strategy Section*

COMMITMENT

Within [ACC's Strategic Plan](#), two of ACC's strategic directions are 'Collaborative Partnerships' and 'Student Success'. In alignment with this strategic plan, Student Life combines our efforts with student leadership development, student organization participation, and volunteerism to create a more engaged student body, enhancing students' academic and social experiences. We also work to cultivate relationships with local businesses and community organizations in the spirit of community engagement and responsibility. We strive to "impact student's personal growth and development through relevant and meaningful co-curricular retention and completion endeavors."

The Civic Engagement Coalition continues to utilize the American Association of Community Colleges definition of civic responsibility to inform our practice. Civic responsibility is the "active participation in the public life of the community in an informed, committed, and constructive manner, with a focus on the common good." Civic responsibility is cultivated through an engaged community. The community engagement initiatives at ACC connect students with the world beyond a potentially passive classroom setting and encourages them to be an active participant for the greater good of our society.

As part of our commitment to civic engagement activities, we have participated in the ALL IN Challenge since 2016. ACC was awarded an ALL IN Challenge Best in Class Award for having the overall highest voting rate for a medium-sized community college. We have collected data via the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) since 2014, and have renewed through 2023. We have also sought the Voter-Friendly Campus Designation since 2016, and are currently renewed through 2020. We just submitted our request to extend that designation.

In order to ensure proper awareness is generated, this commitment to civic engagement efforts will be added to our Student Life publications, both electronic and in print.

LANDSCAPE

At ACC, Civic Engagement is encouraged on a curricular level through our [Service Learning Center](#). The Service Learning Center encourages faculty to utilize service projects to enhance our students' educational experience. By volunteering in their communities, partnering with local non-profits, and applying all they learn from the classroom, students develop skills in leadership, critical reflection, civic responsibility, and community engagement, making them more marketable and prominent citizens in the real world beyond college. Courses at ACC currently enhancing their curriculum with Service Learning projects or assignments include: Communication, English, Physical Therapy Assistant, Criminal Justice, and Psychology.

ACC also has a Volunteering To Learn (ViTaL) Team, created by faculty and composed of members of the ACC community. ViTaL reaches out to neighborhood organizations, and provides volunteer opportunities for our employees so that they can collaborate with local partners prior to sending students out into the field on their own.

ACC is a member of [Campus Compact of the Mountain West \(CCMW\)](#), an organization devoted to promoting civic learning and elevating higher education engagement in the region.

On a co-curricular level, the Student Life Office partners with members of the Civic Engagement Coalition to provide various programs, explained further in the Strategy section of this document. These programs align with Student Life’s programmatic model, which embraces the principles of civic engagement.

Statistically speaking, the student body at ACC is civically engaged in the democratic process to a large degree. Assessment information taken from the NSLVE shows the following rates for ACC:

- 2012, Presidential Election: 60.9% of students voted; Associate Institutions rate: 44.8%
 - 78.0% Registration Rate, 78.2% of registrants voted
- 2014, Midterm Election: 38% of students voted; All Institutions rate: 18.8%
 - 61.8% Registration Rate, 62% of registrants voted
- 2016, Presidential Election: 65.5% of students voted; Associate Institutions rate: 47.3%
 - 78.1% Registration Rate, 83.9% of registrants voted
- 2018, Midterm Election: 53.4% of students voted; All Institutions rate: 39.1%
 - 78.6% Registration Rate, 68% of registrants voted

Based on this data, our election rates improved between 2012 and 2018. Information from the next NSLVE report will determine whether or not our numbers remain high, which we would like to see.

GOALS

The Civic Engagement Coalition would like to continue progress on these goals, which are:

1. We are interested in utilizing best practices to both **educate and mobilize our students to vote** and to find their voice in the democratic process whether at the local, state, or national level. We would like to see an increase in student voter turnout to 90% for the next election.
2. We seek to both **engage in and sustain collaborations** for civic engagement opportunities with community partners.
3. We desire to **increase engagement from our student body** in service to their community, to include voter registration and election education initiatives.

STRATEGY

In order to fulfill the intentions of each of our identified goals, various strategies have been put in place. Below, you will find the strategies for each goal, the responsible individual(s), our timeline, and any progress made of the last update of this plan.

GOAL ONE: EDUCATE AND MOBILIZE OUR STUDENTS TO VOTE

Provide Campus Opportunities for Voter Registration

Provide Voter Registration Awareness

Responsible Individual(s): Dean of Student’s Office, Registrar

Timeline: Ongoing

Progress: Voter Registration forms are made available to students in our Student Engagement Center. Forms are available in English and Spanish.

In compliance with the Higher Education Act, the National Voter Registration Act, and Colorado law, ACC distributes voter registration information to students via e-mail each September.

Host Voter Registration Events

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office

Timeline: Ongoing

Progress: We will continue to participate in National Voter Registration Day in September of each year. Student Life will also provide voter registration at one major campus event each Fall and Spring semester.

Coordinate Voter Turnout Activities

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office

Timeline: Complete by end of Summer 2020

Progress: We will develop education for students on the ballot boxes located on campus as of Spring 2020, as well as for polling stations in the region.

Participate in National Civic Engagement Programs

Maintain Voter-Friendly Campus Designation

Responsible Individual(s): Director of Student Life

Timeline: Complete by April 1st, 2020

Progress: We have sought the Voter-Friendly Campus Designation since 2016, and have renewed through 2020. We will continue our participation.

Continue Participation in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)

Responsible Individual(s): Director of Student Life

Timeline: Ongoing

Progress: We continue to collect and review student voting data via the NSLVE. We have reports for 2012-2018. We have renewed our participation through 2023. As we receive a report, we will share the data with the college's Leadership Team.

Investigate Ways to Increase Awareness of Voting

Develop Website Presence Proposal

Responsible Individual(s): Director of Student Life, Digital Content Administrator

Timeline: Complete by end of Summer 2020

Progress: Our website underwent a major overhaul. We will look into the possibility of posting voting information and civic engagement representation under student engagement opportunities on the website.

Develop Content for First Year Experience Programs

Responsible Individual(s): Director of Student Life, First Year Programs Manager

Timeline: Complete by end of Summer 2020

Progress: We will discuss how we can promote civic engagement and voter education throughout our First Year Experience programs.

GOAL TWO: ENGAGE IN AND SUSTAIN COLLABORATIONS

Work with Community Partners to Register Voters

Partner with Community Organizations for Voter Registration

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office

Timeline: Ongoing

Progress: As part of our programming, we have partnered with the American Association of University Women (AAUW). We will continue to partner with community organizations for upcoming programs.

Work with Community Partners to Provide Campus Programming

Coordinate Programming with the Political Science Department

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office, Political Science Department Faculty

Timeline: Ongoing

Progress: Within the last year, our Political Science Chair retired, and we are seeking to build new relationships with the new hire in this department. We will reach out to connect about Fall 2020 programming before the end of the Spring 2020 semester. Currently, there are civic engagement programs on the Spring 2020 schedule that we will promote to students.

Participate in the Colorado Student Voting Summit

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office, Campus Election Engagement Project, ALL IN

Timeline: Annually

Progress: In the Fall 2019 semester, the Director of Student Life attended the first Summit. In Spring 2020, ACC will be hosting the second Summit. We will encourage students and employees, institutionally and state-wide, to attend. One of our students will also serve as the Campus Election Engagement Project fellow, assisting with this Summit.

Identify a Community Partner to Serve on our Civic Engagement Coalition

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office

Timeline: Complete by end of Spring 2020

Progress: We will seek out a representative from a community organization to serve as a member of our Civic Engagement Coalition.

Work with Community Partners to Engage Students in the Community

Provide Educational Programming on the Census

Responsible Individual(s): Director of Student Life

Timeline: Complete by end of Spring 2020

Progress: The Director of Student Life is part of the City of Littleton's Complete Count Committee. As part of that committee, he will be providing both active and passive education for the students at ACC. Programming is currently scheduled for the end of February.

Provide Programming to Connect Students to the City

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office
Timeline: Complete by end of Summer 2020
Progress: The Student Life Office will be coordinating the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 programming calendar during the Summer. This will include opportunities for students to engage with the City of Littleton.

GOAL THREE: INCREASE ENGAGEMENT FROM OUR STUDENT BODY

Provide Educational Civic Engagement Events for Students

Continue Constitution Day Programming

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office
Timeline: Complete each September
Progress: Constitution Day is observed each September. Mini Constitution booklets are given out, and additional engagement is included. We will continue to maintain this programming.

Provide Election Programming

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office, Student Government Association
Timeline: Plan by end of Summer 2020; Implement by November 2020
Progress: We will implement educational programming for the 2020 Presidential Election to ensure students are familiar with candidates, well-informed on ballot measures, and aware of resources to learn more. We will distribute voter education packets to students at campus event. We will also provide programming to view the election results. We have partnered with our Student Government Association for such voter education.

Coordinate Service Opportunities for Students

Participate in Project Homeless Connect

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office, Service Learning Center
Timeline: Complete each Fall semester
Progress: Student Life began a partnership in Fall 2017 with faculty in our Serving Learning Center to get students involved in the Mile High United Way's Project Homeless Connect in Denver, including members of our student honors societies attended, along with several ACC employees. College commitment and student participation has increased each year.

Coordinate Spring Service Event

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office
Timeline: Complete each Spring
Progress: Student Life will continue to coordinate service projects each Spring semester to engage students in the broader community.

Support Service Learning Efforts of our Honors Societies

Promote Community Service to members of the National Society of Leadership & Success (NSLS)

Responsible Individual(s): NSLS Advisors

Timeline: Ongoing

Progress: ACC started a chapter of NSLS in August 2017, advised by 1 members of the Student Life Office and 1 faculty member. As part of membership, NSLS students can participate in service opportunities. We provide recognition for these students at our Fall and Spring Induction Ceremonies.

Support Phi Theta Kappa in their Honors in Action Project

Responsible Individual(s): PTK Advisors, Student Life Office

Timeline: Ongoing

Progress: Our chapter of Phi Theta Kappa strives to achieve 5-star status each year. As part of that accolade, our chapter participates in an Honors in Action (HIA) project each year that combines academic research, problem solving, and action-oriented service to address real-world challenges in our communities. We continue to support them in these efforts.

REPORTING

Progress made on strategies within this plan will be tracked and documented by the Chair of the Civic Engagement Coalition. This progress will be reviewed by the entire Coalition when we connect on a quarterly basis. During that time, the Coalition will evaluate progress made on all goals, reflect on successful strategies, and reevaluate any strategies for which we are not finding ourselves to be successful. At any time, progress on this plan will be made available to the campus community through the Chair of the Coalition.

Our NSLVE results will continues to be shared with the Civic Engagement Coalition, with the Student Affairs Leadership Team, and with the President of ACC. Results will also be published on campus for students to see, in an effort to encourage continued voter engagement. These results will inform future strategies of the Coalition.

EVALUATION

At the end of the Fall 2020 semester, the Coalition will convene to address the extent to which this plan was and was not successful. For efforts which were successful, the Coalition will discuss the reasons for such successes in order to try and replicate those results. Such strategies will be considered for the next version of this plan. For efforts which were not successful, the Coalition will discuss potential reasons for lack of success. If a plan was not successful, and additional resources and/or organization could lead to possible successes, that particular plan will be considered for the next version of our plan. If the Coalition determines an unsuccessful plan to be unnecessary and/or unwanted in the next round of our planning, it will not be added again. The reasoning for such decision-making will be documented in our formal evaluation of this plan.

After we have evaluated the efforts specifically outlined in this plan, the Coalition will address the overarching goals for our plan. If we continue to maintain our pre-existing goals, we will discuss the strategies we want to maintain, whether in a similar fashion or with adjustments. If we change one or

more of our goals, we will discuss potential strategies for any new goals. At this point, the potential for new strategies will be discussed and documented. Such strategies will be added to the pre-existing strategies to formulate a new plan.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions on this plan should be addressed to:

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