



**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
CENTER**

AT SAC STATE

connected. engaged. committed.

California State University, Sacramento

All In Democracy Challenge

Action Plan 2016

California State University, Sacramento, is committed to encouraging, developing, supporting and educating students, faculty and staff about civic engagement. This work takes place across campus and through the Community Engagement Center (CEC). This Action Plan focuses on the Civic Engagement work through the CEC.

CEC Mission:

To engage members of the Sacramento State campus through their educational experiences to become aware of and respond to local and global community concerns through Service Learning, Volunteerism and Academic Internships.

CEC Vision:

To create a campus climate that promotes community awareness and involvement and supports students to become civically minded graduates who are actively engaged in making a difference both locally and globally.

Planning Committee – The Community Engagement Center (CEC) works with a cross-section of on and off-campus campus community partners to plan our Constitution and Civic Engagement Week Program Activities. Some of the partners are:

- CSUS Associated Students Inc.
- Office of Governmental Affairs
- CSUS UNIQUE Programs
- Center for California Studies
- CSUS College of Continuing Education
- Foundation for Democracy and Justice
- CSUS History Department
- CSUS Multi-Cultural Center/PRIDE/Women’s Resource Center
- NeighborWorks Sacramento
- Sacramento Area Congregations Together (SACAct)
- CSUS Serna Center
- Faculty from the CSUS Departments of Government, Education, Public Administration

For 2016, these were the activities coordinated by the Community Engagement Center in conjunction with the planning committee:

- **Sacramento State Alternative Break, March 21-25, 2016:**
 - We partnered with Sacramento Area Congregations Together (SACAct), a grassroots mobilizing organization, to conduct door-to-door canvassing in a low-voter turnout community:
 - More than 158 Sacramento State, Sacramento City College and high school students knocked on more than 700 doors to register people to vote.
 - Several faculty members encouraged and supported students to participate in this get out the vote event by

offering students opportunities to write papers about their canvassing experiences.

- **Sacramento State's Constitution and Civic Engagement Week Program (2016):**
 - **Monday, September 12-Friday, September 16th**: Alternative Break Student Recruitment. During this week, we tabled in the Student Union and asked students to respond to a few questions: If you had a week to make a difference in the Sacramento region, what would you do? And, do you want to help us plan Alternative Break for March, 2017?
 - **Monday, September 12**: Challenges and Rewards of being a California Voter – Kim Alexander, Founder and President, California Voter Foundation
 - **Tuesday, September 13**: Hear Us: Sac State Student Leaders Panel sponsored by Student Organizations and Leadership (SOAL)
 - **Wednesday, September 14**: Constitution Quiz Bowl sponsored by: Center for California Studies and Project for an Informed Electorate
 - **Thursday, September 15**: Community and Civic Engagement Resource Fair sponsored by Sacramento State's Community Engagement Center and the Foundation for Democracy and Justice
 - **Friday, September 16**: Challenges, Choices and the November Election sponsored by Sacramento Area Congregations Together (ACT)

- **Saturday, September 17:** Paint the Town – Sac State volunteers recruited to do house painting, landscaping, and minor home repairs in the Oak Park Community
- **Monday, September 19:** Serna Center Forum: ASI Past Presidents Reflect. A panel of former Sacramento State student government leaders reflect on their time at Sac State and the civic engagement work they are currently doing.
- **Wednesday, September 21:** An Evening on National Race Relations in the US Political Drama sponsored by the Sacramento State History Department
- **Thursday, September 29:** Dr. Cornel West: Race, democracy, justice and love

More than **4600** people participated in these events and we received quite a bit of media coverage:

- Sacramento State News
(<http://www.csus.edu/news/articles/2016/8/31/raise-your-voice-for-constitution-and-civic-engagement-week.shtml>)
- Constitution Quiz Bowl
 - Sacramento State News
(<http://statehornet.com/2016/09/students-face-off-for-constitutional-bragging-rights/>)
 - Center for California Studies blog
(<https://californianablog.wordpress.com/2016/09/>)
- History Department Student Panel
 - The State Hornet (<http://statehornet.com/2016/09/we-are-in-perilous-times-in-this-country-panel-discussion-analyzes-race-and-gender-issues/>)
- Dr. Cornel West lecture

- Sacramento Bee
<http://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article105100541.html>
- Paint the Town
 - The State Hornet article
[\(http://statehornet.com/2016/09/sac-state-students-brush-with-volunteerism-during-paint-the-town/\)](http://statehornet.com/2016/09/sac-state-students-brush-with-volunteerism-during-paint-the-town/)

For the past six years, the Community Engagement Center has coordinated a week of activities around Constitution Day. Although some of our events are extremely well attended, some are not quite so popular. While we have used surveys to gather data about participants' experiences and the surveys show that students generally feel positively about these events, we realized that the single largest reason more students do not participate is because there are way too many competing events during the first three weeks of the semester.

Thus, we are developing a different strategy for engaging students. Beginning in Academic Year 2016-2017, we are moving toward developing a program of activities that spans the entire year with the goal of getting more students to participate and be engaged in community and civically-based activities, services and programs.

Evaluation of Community Service/Civic Engagement related activities

This year we are also piloting a survey instrument that incorporates several civic education related measures to evaluate student experiences during our community service events. We will pilot the survey at four events throughout the academic year. The survey questions are noted below:

As a result of participating in this event, I:

1. Think that people should find time to contribute to their community

Not at all Somewhat Moderately Definitely

1 2 3 4 5 6

2. Am concerned about local community issues

Not at all Somewhat Moderately Definitely

1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Plan to improve my neighborhood in the near future

Not at all Somewhat Moderately Definitely

1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Believe I can have a positive impact on social problems

Not at all Somewhat Moderately Definitely

1 2 3 4 5 6

We will also use the data gathered to inform our process of developing and marketing civic and community-engagement related events in the future.

Short and Long-term Strategic Planning Process:

Our campus is in the process of developing strategies for strategic campus/community engagement and civic engagement.

- Our **short-term goal** is to set up an infrastructure to begin to consistently track and measure student engagement and the collective impact of this engagement on the Sacramento region.
 - We are working with Student Affairs to determine the best strategy for tracking student community service/engagement.
- Our **long-term goal** is to create a campus culture of engagement through curricular and co-curricular programs.

Mechanisms to assist us with this planning process include:

- Creating a Presidential Task force on Strategic Campus/Community Engagement.
- Creating a satellite office of Campus/Community Engagement at our new Sacramento State Downtown Office located near the State Capital.
- Working with Student Affairs to begin to track “community service” hours for those who participate in student organizations to help us know more about “what we do” in terms of service as a campus and our collective impact.
- Working with the dean and colleagues in the College of Social Science and Interdisciplinary Studies to create an action plan for student civic education and community/civic involvement.
- Working with the Office of International Programs and Global Engagement to support global engagement.
- Working to connect the activities students participate in through Service Learning with broader civic engagement goals for the campus.
- Working with community partners and school districts to create service learning opportunities that pair Sacramento State students with K-12 students around Civics education
- Working with California State Assembly members who are pursuing work on civic education.

Ultimately, we want civic engagement to be woven into students’ experiences in curricular and co-curricular ways. While our office has, for the past 20 years, provided students with several hundred service learning and community engagement experiences, we have not focused as much attention on educating students directly around civic engagement. The All In Democracy Challenge has provided us an opportunity to more explicitly focus on making these connections.