

Use Your Vote!  
Voter Engagement Campaign 2016  
Chatham University

## **Context**

Chatham University, a dynamic, evolving institution located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, continues traditions of community engagement beginning with the 1869 inception of the Pennsylvania Female College. Today, the University maintains a historical commitment to women's education even as we have transitioned into a co-educational institution. At the core of our mission is serving our communities and graduating engaged citizens.

Chatham University "prepares women and men to be world ready," defining world readiness as "being an informed and engaged citizen in one's communities; recognizing and respecting diversity of culture, identity and opinion; and living sustainably on the planet." Chatham's mission creates an expectation for all students, and the university community, to collaboratively address issues of public concern on local and global levels.

## **University Mission Statement**

Chatham University prepares women and men to be world ready: to build lives of purpose and value and fulfilling work.

In addition to appropriate professional skills and liberal arts learning, Chatham believes that world readiness means being an informed and engaged citizen in one's communities; recognizing and respecting diversity of culture, identity and opinion; and living sustainably on the planet.

## **Overview of Voter Engagement Campaign**

The Office of Student Affairs and the Pennsylvania Center for Women and Politics have partnered to implement a campaign to increase voter engagement for the 2016 presidential election and beyond. The slogan of this campaign, Use Your Vote, will be branded on all efforts of the campaign including giveaway items and promotional materials. Through this campaign, we plan to foster greater awareness of the importance of engaging in our country's democratic processes. Widespread engagement by students, faculty, and staff will generate an increase in awareness, dialogue, and action. In order to achieve this goal, we will implement a series of programs and events designed to provide voter education, voter registration, and ballot access. This campaign will launch at the beginning of the fall 2016 semester and conclude after the presidential election; however, efforts to continue to foster democratic engagement on campus will be ongoing.

As part of our efforts to become a Voter Friendly designated campus, we have signed on to be a part of the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) so that we can track our student registration and voting rates. We have also agreed to be a partner for National Voter Registration Day which we plan to promote on campus. In addition, we've committed to meet the requirements of the American Democracy Project's ALL IN Challenge. We hope to enrich our voter engagement campaign through the support and guidance of these various endeavors.

## Coalition

The coalition for our campaign primarily consists of professional staff, faculty, and students who work with and for the Office of Student Affairs and the Pennsylvania Center for Women and Politics. We also plan to utilize the Chatham Student Government in the promotion and implementation of the campaign.

- *Office of Student Affairs*

The area of civic learning and democratic engagement is housed under the Office of Student Affairs at Chatham. As such, the Office of Student Affairs provides the campus with a variety of programs and initiatives to engage students in our local community and beyond. Such opportunities include but are not limited to the Emerging Leaders Institute, Alternative Spring Break, Chatham Student Government, monthly service opportunities, and the Bonner Leaders Program. Subsequently, all efforts related to our participation in the NASPA Lead initiative are also housed in the Office of Student Affairs.

- *Pennsylvania Center for Women and Politics*

The Pennsylvania Center for Women and Politics (PCWP) at Chatham University is a non-partisan center devoted to fostering women's public leadership through education, empowerment, and action. The first to focus on women's political involvement in Pennsylvania, the Center integrates disciplinary knowledge, civic education, and coalition building while examining the intersection of women and public policy. The Center conducts candidate and advocacy trainings, offers educational programs in applied politics, and provides timely analysis on women's issues. The Center is also home to the University's membership in Project Pericles – a select group of liberal arts colleges and universities that have made institutional commitments to promoting participatory citizenship and social responsibility.

## Action Plan

### *Pre-Election Day Events*

- **Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, Women's Equity Day:** Voter registration tables will be available in the dining hall.
- **Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, Orientation:** Our voter engagement campaign will launch during our New and Transfer Student Orientation with a session devoted to Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. All of our orientees will be required to attend this session. During this session, we will explain the fundamentals of CLDE and also remind students of important dates for the upcoming election such as the voter registration deadline. We will explain how to register via Turbovote and the benefits of utilizing this service.

- **Tuesday, August 30th, Student Activities Fair:** We will set up a voter registration table at our annual Student Activities Fair. We will attract students to the tables with campaign giveaways and frozen treats. Flyers promoting upcoming events will be posted at the table.
- **Tuesday, September 6th, Absentee Ballots Info Session:** An informational session will be held to provide all students from outside of the local area with the process of receiving an absentee ballot.
- **Friday, September 16th, Constitution Day:** Voter Registration will be available all day as we celebrate Constitution Day in the dining hall and other areas around campus.
- **Monday, September 26th, First Presidential Debate Watch Party:** A debate watch party will be held in the student center on campus. This event will feature a thirty minute faculty-led discussion about viewing the debate through a gendered lens before the debate begins.
- **Tuesday, September 27th, National Voter Registration Day:** Promotional materials will be posted around campus to advertise registering on this day. We will provide registration tables in high traffic areas on campus.
- **Monday, October 3rd – Friday, October 7th, Voter Registration Tabling:** We will be utilizing different tabling and promotional materials during this week to remind students that the deadline to be registered to vote for the presidential election is October 11th.
- **Tuesday, October 4th, Vice Presidential Debate:** A debate watch party will be held in the student center for the vice presidential debate. This event will feature a thirty minute faculty-led discussion about the role of the vice president prior to the start of the debate.
- **Sunday, October 9th, Second Presidential Debate Watch Party:** A debate watch party will be held in the student center on campus. This event will feature a thirty minute faculty-led discussion about the main topic of the debate will be held before the debate begins.
- **Wednesday, October 19th, Third Presidential Debate Watch Party:** A debate watch party will be held in the student center on campus. This event will feature a thirty minute faculty-led discussion about the main topic of the debate will be held before the debate begins.
- **Monday, October 24th, First Year Experience Course CLDE Session:** All first year students at Chatham are required to take a first year experience course. The students will have been required to watch one of the presidential debates so that this session can revolve around discussing rhetoric used during the debate and fact checking. Students will also be provided with information about where to vote on Election Day during this session.

*Election Day Events*

- **Tuesday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, Election Day:** We will be turning our student center into Election Headquarters for Election Day. Activities, snacks, and novelties will be offered in the student center all day in order to energize the campus about the election. A first time voters parade will be led by the president of the university and will begin at the student center and end at the polling station located on campus. The day will culminate with an election results party in the evening.

*Post-Election Day Event*

- **Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, Thinking Bigger: PCWP Post-Election Panel:** During this event, panelists will analyze the results of the election and discuss how special interest groups and swing states impacted the election. The panel will also include information on how attendees can continue to be involved in democratic processes.

*Other Campaign Initiatives*

- **Social Media Campaign:** A social media campaign will be utilized during the months leading up to the election. Students will be encouraged to post Snapchats, videos, pictures, tweets, and statuses to explain why they plan to vote and/or why others should also vote. These posts will be accompanied by #useyourvote. We will also use our university Snapchat account to create “stories” of students explaining why they plan to vote. We’ll also use this media to promote events, voter registration opportunities, and important deadlines.
- **Poster Campaign:** A variety of posters will be hung around campus leading up to the election. Topics covered by the posters will include how to register to vote, how to vote, and why you should vote. We also plan to have a series of posters that feature quotes from historical figures about the importance of participating in democratic processes.
- **Use Your Vote Giveaways:** We will be purchasing Use Your Vote branded t-shirts, buttons, stickers, etc. to pass out to students at registration tables and other events in order to increase excitement about the campaign and upcoming election. These items will also help us to promote the election on campus.

**Goals**

Through our voter engagement campaign, we hope to achieve both measureable and immeasurable goals.

1. Encourage students to be active participants in our democracy by fostering civic learning and knowledge in democratic processes.
2. Encourage more students to be engaged in local and national elections.
3. Demonstrate that the percentage of students at Chatham University who are registered voters and who have voted in local and national elections has increased. Data provided by NSLVE should help us to determine this.

**Calendar of Events**

# August 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Women's Equity Day Voter Registration	27
28	29	30	31			

# September 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	Absentee Ballots Info Session	7	PLEN Info Session	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16 Constitution Day	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26 1 <sup>st</sup> Presidential Debate Watch Party	27 National Voter Registration Day	28	29	30	

# October 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4 Vice Presidential Debate Watch Party	5	6	7	8
9 2 <sup>nd</sup> Presidential Debate Watch Party	10	11 Voter Registration Deadline- Tabling in Anderson	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 3 <sup>rd</sup> Presidential Debate Watch Party	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

# November 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Election Day! Election HQ	9	10 Thinking Bigger: PCWP Post- Election Panel	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Sample Poster

**USE YOUR VOTE!**

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**Phase 1: Get Ready to Vote**

**Register**

Head to [www.Chatham.TurboVote.com](http://www.Chatham.TurboVote.com)  
or head to the registration tables that will pop up in  
Anderson.

**Already Registered?**

Double check your registration and polling  
station at [headcount.org/verify-voter-  
registration](http://headcount.org/verify-voter-registration).

**Changing Parties?**

Head over to [USA.Gov.org/register-to-vote](http://USA.Gov.org/register-to-vote)  
and follow the simple steps.

**Need an Absentee Ballot?**

Visit the absentee ballot info session!  
9/6 at 4 P.M. in the Women's Institute conference room  
(Braun, 2nd Floor)

 [ SPOILER ALERT: IT'S REALLY EASY! ]