



All In Democratic Engagement Action Plan

2024 - 2025

Developed December 2023, Updated April 2024

Executive Summary

This civic engagement action plan was developed by a cross-disciplinary group of faculty, staff, students, and community partners dedicated to promoting and advancing the role of civic learning and democratic engagement as part of the work of Agnes Scott College (ASC). We are calling this working group the Scotties Serve Coalition to provide consistency to the continuum of civic engagement that is inclusive of service, advocacy, voting and all other civic engagement activities and efforts. This plan provides an overview of Agnes Scott College's plan for the 2024-2025 academic year and provides long-term goals stretching as far as 2030.

This plan was developed to strategize a plan for civic learning and democratic engagement efforts in the 2024 - 2025 academic year. Through the coalition's feedback on current programming and input for future programming, it became apparent that while the Center for Leadership, Engagement and Service is already doing a lot to get students involved, students are looking for deeper civic learning and democratic engagement opportunities. For example, one student noted that while ASC holds advocacy events, sometimes they are not well attended. A community stakeholder mentioned that when ASC students are asked about civic engagement opportunities, they may not be interested, but when presented with a specific leadership and civic engagement opportunity, they do show interest. This speaks to our students being involved in so many programs that they want something that benefits and interests them the most. We kept this in mind when thinking about our goals for programming moving into the next academic year. In order to further include students, faculty, and staff in the development of civic engagement efforts, the coalition was created in order to develop an action plan that was inclusive of our campus community's interests and needs. Our priority is to create institutional commitment to inclusive and sustainable

civic learning and democratic engagement through this plan and on our campus.

Leadership

At Agnes Scott College, The Gué Pardue Hudson Center for Leadership, Engagement and Service (CLES), specifically the Assistant Director for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement, is responsible for overseeing Agnes Scott College's work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement. Under the Assistant Director's leadership, a coalition was brought together to address the civic learning and democratic engagement programming on campus. The coalition is co-chaired by Kat Janssen, '24, a current student and Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow.

The primary role of the coalition is to develop the action plan to be implemented by the Center for Leadership, Engagement and Service. Additionally, the working group will help promote civic learning and democratic engagement events during the 2024 - 2025 academic year. Beyond the 2024 election, the coalition will serve as an advisory group in helping determine the direction of civic engagement efforts at the college and review data from our partners including TurboVote and the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE). In addition, the group will assist in selecting students to attend the Spring Lobby Weekend with the Friends Committee on National Legislation in the spring of 2025.

Student members of the coalition were selected based on the students who showed interest in advancing civic engagement efforts and are involved in civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. The Democracy Fellow and Assistant Director for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement identified potential faculty, staff, and community stakeholders to serve on the working group. Emails were sent to the potential members inviting them to fill out a Google Form to contribute to the action plan and provide feedback for our current

programming. In addition to campus representatives, representatives from Dekalb County Voter Registration and Elections, Georgia Equality, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials were invited to join the coalition. Dekalb County Voter Registration and Elections, Georgia Equality, Asian Americans Advancing Justice and Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials have been key partners in previous civic learning and democratic engagement efforts and spent a lot of time at ASC this semester while gearing up for 2024. The responsibilities of the group are primarily advisory in nature, with the student members taking on leadership for some of the student events that have been developed as part of the action plan.

Our working group is comprised of the following individuals:

Kat Janssen '24 (co-chair), ASC Student, Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow, current Delegation Leader for the Spring Lobby Weekend (SLW) with the Friends Committee on National Legislation

EV McGovern '24, Student, ASC Student Government Association Executive Board President, SLW Participant

Victoria Colon Lopez '24, ASC Student, Student Government Association Executive Board Vice President, SLW Participant

Julia Rademacher-Wedd '25, ASC Student, former Delegation Leader for the Spring Lobby Weekend with the Friends Committee on National Legislation

Insherah Qazi '26, ASC Student, Class of 2026 President, SLW Participant

Dr. Chicora Martin, Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Agnes Scott College

LeAnna Rensi Casey, Director of the Gué Pardue Hudson Center for Leadership, Engagement and Service, Agnes Scott College

Blayne McDonald (chair), Assistant Director for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement, Gué Pardue Hudson Center for Leadership, Engagement and Service, Agnes Scott College

Peyton Capehart, Coordinator for Leadership Development, Gué Pardue Hudson Center for Leadership, Engagement, and Service, Agnes Scott College

Dr. Nury Castro, Director of Diversity Education and Training, Agnes Scott College

Halle Vargas-Sullivan, State Outreach Manager, Georgia Equality

Berenice Rodriguez, Civic Engagement and Organizing Director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta

Ramses Jimenez, Dekalb County Community Organizer, Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials

All group members provided feedback related to civic learning and democratic engagement at Agnes Scott College to coordinate the development of the action plan, and we will continue to regularly communicate with group members through 2024 - 2025 to ensure that the plan is effectively implemented. Although we work closely with the Dekalb County Voter Registration and Elections Office, a representative from their office was not available to be a part of our committee. We plan to work towards engaging them further. Our 2020 NSLVE data suggested that science and mathematics students had a decreased participation in voter registration. We plan to combat that by specifically recruiting students from those disciplines to join our student coalition.

Commitment

At this point in time, civic learning and democratic engagement are not explicitly demonstrated by the institution but is threaded more implicitly through things including our strategic plan, student learning outcomes, and mission statement: *Agnes Scott College educates women to think deeply, live honorably, and engage the intellectual and social challenges of their times.* Similarly, a commitment to civic engagement is a part of campus culture, though with limited formalization outside of the Center for Leadership, Engagement and Service. While there are faculty and staff members throughout the institution who are personally dedicated to advancing democratic engagement, it is not manifested in

campus-wide initiatives. However, we are now recruiting new faculty and staff for a Scotties Vote Faculty and Staff Coalition to weave more civic learning and democratic engagement into our curriculum. We have applied for the Ask Every Student Implementation Grant and plan to utilize the Ask Every Student strategies and resources to further engage our campus. Thus far, we have 5 new committed faculty and staff for the committee. The true influence in this culture is our student body. They are passionate about a variety of social issues and are heavily engaged with civic learning, especially as it relates to activism and advocacy work and they are a large driving force behind the work happening in civic learning and democratic engagement. Part of our proposal for our Ask Every Student Grant also includes a stipend for a new student Scotties Vote Coalition that will be recruited for and selected by the end of the school year. The coalition will be composed of student leaders from a wide range of student organizations, leadership programs and our Student Government Association. We will utilize the Transition Management Guides created by Students Learn Students Vote to ensure both the faculty and staff and student work groups have a smooth transition and are able to communicate what is needed for our campus.

The college has a centralized assessment and evaluation process that is overseen by the President's Office and the Office of Institutional Research. Offices have the freedom to choose what they assess each year, but they are required to complete the assessment. The Center for Leadership, Engagement and Service will choose to focus on educational programming, voter registration, institutionalized civic learning and democratic engagement, and implementation of resources as part of our assessment efforts for the 2024 - 2025 academic year. Currently, there is not an expansive awareness of the dispersal of civic learning and democratic engagement in the general education curriculum, but the coalition is planning to use this year to develop an institutional commitment to inclusive and sustainable civic learning and democratic engagement. The CLES regularly posts signage and information

on social media highlighting civic learning and democratic engagement opportunities. Part of our Democracy Fellow's role is to work with the CLES to strategize creative social media ideas to share information about voter registration, voting rights and events highlighting both. We also utilize our daily newsletter, the Irvine, to share information across campus including our ALL IN designation. Additionally, beyond the work of the Center for Leadership, Engagement and Service, mapping needs to be completed for the integration of civic engagement throughout the co-curriculum.

Landscape

Currently, civic learning and democratic engagement are only limitedly represented in our campus student learning outcomes, but the skills necessary are represented very heavily. These outcomes are tied to the Summit initiative, which prepares students to be leaders in a global society. These outcomes include:

1. Identify, explain, and analyze global themes, processes and systems
2. Demonstrate knowledge and skills essential for global engagement
3. Critically examine the relationship between dominant and marginalized cultures, subcultures or group
4. Communicate effectively through writing and speaking, especially across cultural or linguistic differences
5. Recognize, analyze and evaluate arguments
6. Articulate and appraise problems and solutions from multiple perspectives, critically considering diverse sources of information
7. Recognize, analyze, and employ effective teamwork
8. Identify and assess one's values, interests and abilities
9. Practice or interpret creative expression or probe fundamental

questions of value and meaning

10. Interpret quantitative information or demonstrate the methods of inquiry appropriate for investigating the natural world
11. Analyze human behavior or social relations
12. Cultivate and maintain interpersonal relationships and networks
13. Demonstrate confidence and motivation to effect change
14. Practice continual improvement of one's whole person and seek and utilize feedback
15. Identify, evaluate and strategically utilize campus and community resources
16. Demonstrate honorable and ethical behavior and civic engagement

In terms of assessment data, the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement provides the most complete picture of our campus' democratic engagement. In the 2020 election we saw 91.4% of our eligible students were registered to vote and 91.5% of registered students voted on the 2020 Election Day. We are well above national averages, but know that we can still improve these numbers with a more coordinated cross-campus answer. Although this data is a little out-dated, we still believe it is representative of our voter engagement levels on campus.

One of the most interesting dynamics demonstrated on campus is seen in our student organizations - while we do not have student organizations for political parties (such as College Democrats or College Republicans), we do have a large number of groups for advancing specific political issues such as reproductive rights, environmental justice, immigration, voting access, and empowering women to run for office. These group's efforts manifest in various ways including educational and social events, but also activism, protests

and advocacy work with elected officials. The Student Government Association is integrating components of civic engagement into the student perspective of the importance of voting for class representatives and executive boards to be a parallel to our Democratic system in America. In addition, we participate in the Spring Lobby Weekend with the Friends Committee on National Legislation where students learn how to advocate, lobby and work towards a goal greater than themselves. This is an awesome opportunity for students to flex the skills they have learned in our Summit curriculum in the quasi real world.

We, as an institution, are currently unsure of how civic learning and democratic engagement manifests itself within the curriculum. Feedback we received from a colleague is that there is not an institutional definition of civic learning or democratic engagement and that including Belonging, Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (BJEDI) would be significantly beneficial to our efforts. There historically has not been any attempt to track or champion this cause. Because of this, we are including research into the implementation of civic learning and democratic engagement in the classroom as part of our short-term goals. We have anecdotal evidence that some faculty are including it, including the faculty representation on this coalition. For example, Professor of Political Science Enrique Quezada-Llanes is in the process of collecting data for a research study on the relationship between religious identity and democratic engagement on Agnes Scott's campus. Working together and harnessing our efforts will be more beneficial to our students and our campus.

Civic learning and democratic engagement at Agnes Scott College is centered in the co-curriculum and is coordinated by the Center for Leadership, Engagement and Service, and specifically the Assistant Director for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement. This directly manifests in the office's Scotties Vote initiative which has historically included voter registration drives, coordinating rides to polling locations, and paying for absentee

ballot postage, among other things.

We are currently exploring how we can combat barriers to voting access and how we can better implement civic learning and democratic engagement across campus and in the community. We are currently developing a service-learning course that will incorporate the civic engagement continuum based on our inclusive leadership framework - Reflect, Analyze, Act. Within ASC's mission of educating students to think deeply, live honorably and engage the intellectual and social challenges of our times, students exercise leadership through processes of reflecting on individual strengths, identity and power; analyzing evidence, perspectives and systems; and acting authentically, boldly and ethically. We have big ideas but there is only one staff member at the college who has civic engagement as part of their job responsibilities, and those responsibilities exist alongside other responsibilities such as community engagement and service-learning. The CLES is attempting to overcome these obstacles by collaborating with other departments on civic engagement programming, including the Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion and the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life. We are also utilizing our Democracy Fellow as a liaison between faculty and staff to hopefully bridge the gap between efforts in the classroom (Academic Affairs) and efforts in the CLES (Student Affairs).

Being positioned in Georgia, Agnes Scott College faces unique challenges when getting our students to the polls to vote. Due to the exact match policies with voter registration to state records, along with stringent ID requirements, it is difficult for students, especially those from out of state to vote at their campus address. Anecdotal conversations have shown that some students have had to vote via a provisional ballot because their Driver's License was from another state. Additionally, despite having a polling location less than a quarter of a mile from campus (Beacon Hill Middle School), students who register to vote on campus are

assigned to a polling place approximately a mile away from campus (Holy Trinity Parish Episcopal Church). This poses a significant challenge to students who do not have access to transportation, especially since Georgia law prohibits Agnes Scott from paying for transportation to polling locations.

In an attempt to overcome these external barriers, we are doing education work with students about the voter ID requirements. Because of Agnes Scott College's Summit program, each student participates in a global study tour during the spring semester of their first year. This has led to the implementation of passport programs on campus where students can apply, take passport photos, and receive financial assistance to obtain a passport. We are educating students and reminding them that this passport is also a valid form of identification for elections that they already have, regardless of their home state. Historically, with the situation involving polling place distance, the institution has started providing shuttle service to the polling place on election day and hopes to expand to include our early voting site on the Saturdays leading up to the election. In light of new legislation, we are implementing a short-term goal to find new, sustainable solutions for increasing accessibility to polling places.

Overall, the resources Agnes Scott College needs in order to successfully achieve the civic learning and democratic engagement goals outlined in this action plan are ones that we already have. While additional fiscal assistance would be wonderful, what is truly needed is an increase in human resources. Additional staffing would be appreciated, but what would be most beneficial is an overall increase in campus buy-in to civic learning and democratic engagement as something that is everyone's responsibility. We are hoping to continue to collaborate with internal and external partners that can help us create the institutional commitment that is needed to expand and improve our efforts.

Goals

Long-Term Goals

- Create an institutional commitment to inclusive and sustainable civic learning and democratic engagement by 2030
- Increase voting rate to 90% of eligible students by 2030
- Increase voter registration rate to 95% of eligible students by 2030
- Create a culture where skills such as deliberative dialogue, information literacy, and community service are seen as key elements of civic learning and democratic engagement by 2030
- Integrating civic learning and democratic engagement into our Summit curriculum to enhance the learning outcome of the student body by 2030
- Establish a civic engagement standard that will be used to analyze faculty syllabi and their appliance with integrating democratic efforts into class curriculum by 2030
- Develop a relationship with Agnes Scott College Student Government Association to encourage civic engagement in our democratic process by emphasizing their previous roles as college students who elect student representatives
- Expanding our partnerships with external partners and creating a Scotties Serve Fair that is full and robust by 2030

Short-Term Goals

- Regularly update the Civic Engagement Toolkit to support the dissemination of civic engagement resources to students before the beginning of the Spring 2024 semester
- Share updates, information, etc. related to civic and democratic engagement via all social media platforms
- Continue tabling with the Assistant Director for Service-Learning and Civic

Engagement, Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow, and community partners to mobilize civic engagement among the campus community

- Increase voter registration rates of Science and Mathematics students to similar levels as other disciplines by the 2024 general election.
- Host events to mobilize civic engagement and participation among specific affinity groups (ex: Latinx/e students, LGBTQ+ students)
- In lieu of campus wide closure for Election Day in 2024 and subsequent elections, we can advocate for alternatives including excused absences on election day, further advertise paid postage for mail-in ballots, and providing students with resources and assistance in developing individual voting plans well in advance of Election Day
- Provide a safe space for our students to have diplomatic discussions that draw people in rather than call people out
- Involve students in deeper civic learning and democratic engagement including polling, canvassing, advocacy and safe protest
- Provide information about the civic engagement continuum including how service, advocacy, voting, etc. is all connected
- Implement our inclusive leadership framework - Reflect, Analyze, Act in our civic learning and democratic engagement efforts
- Continued programming to target affinity groups who may be interested in specific civic learning and democratic engagement that we can help coordinate and support
- Develop new, sustainable solutions for increasing accessibility to polling places
- Plan and implement the Project Pericles voter suppression module

NSLVE

The National Student for Learning, Voting and Engagement has not released more recent data than 2020. However, NSLVE provides the most complete picture of our campus' democratic engagement. In the 2020 election we saw 91.4% of our eligible students were registered to vote and 91.5% of registered students voted on the 2020 Election Day. As mentioned above, our 2020 NSLVE data suggested that science and mathematics students had a decreased participation in voter registration. We plan to combat that by specifically recruiting students from those disciplines to join our student coalition. This goal is a part of our short-term goals above.

Strategy

We recently applied for the Ask Every Student Grant to utilize the strategies and resources outlined in their toolkit. In our proposal, we asked for funding to include a stipend for both a faculty and staff led working group and student led working group specifically dedicated to civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus as well as 2 Federal Work Study students dedicated to voter registration activities.

Voter Registration

Agnes Scott's coalition's strategy to increase voter registration on our campus includes a series of voter registration events. This includes voter registration tables at both move-in and a community resource fair during New Student Orientation to capture first-year students. During the first few weeks of the semester, we will have a weekly table in the main campus dining hall with resources for registering to vote and voting in the 2024 midterm elections. Community partners including Dekalb County Voter Registration and Elections, Georgia Equality, Asian Americans Advancing Justice and Georgia Association of Latino Elected

Officials as well as expanding our invitation to the Georgia Muslim Voter Project will table and assist with our initial voter registration efforts as well. There will also be tabling events at many major fall semester events to encourage students to register to vote and learn more about upcoming elections. The coalition will also be partnering with Microsoft and Vote Riders to host events on National Voter Registration Day and National Vote Early Day. Microsoft and Vote Riders hosted two events on campus this semester, one in our dining hall and one in our student center to encourage students to vote and get students involved in their voting access efforts.

Educational Programming

The coalition will be utilizing social media campaigns to push educational material to the student population. This includes using traditional social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) as well as campus specific social media (MyAgnes, the Irvine daily newsletter). These campaigns will focus on educating students on Turbovote, the voting platform we currently use, as well as educating students on local politics and voting procedure. These social media campaigns will also include education on national and local voter education resources and how to best utilize them. The content of the social media campaigns will include infographics, interactive polls and questions, student takeovers and other attractive posts to engage students participation.

This educational programming strategy will also include in-person programming during National Voter Education Week and Constitution Day. Programming will be supplemented with educational materials on election laws, students' constitutional rights, and local opportunities for democratic engagement. There will also be programming to target specific affinity groups. This will include collaborating with student organizations that represent affinity groups on our campus and the Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion (CGDI) in

order to create informational events, service projects and other civic engagement opportunities that are directly related to the democratic interests of these affinity groups.

We applied for and were granted funding from the Project Pericles that will include programming during National Voter Education Week to implement a Voter Suppression Module through a historical lens specifically providing education, materials and narrative around voting rights for women and voting rights for people of color. We will also dive deeper into intersectionality, discussing how women of color in particular were left out of the suffrage movement and were not given a voice or the right to vote until much later. We will implement this by tabling in our student center to provide information, resources and discussion as well as a visual representation across the student center highlighting the history of voter suppression, with special acknowledgement of women's voting rights, people of color's voting rights and women of color's voting rights. By providing a historical context, and being there to then discuss, we hope to empower our students to understand the meaning of voting, the importance of it and why we need to continue to let our voices be heard in that way and others. I am hopeful that reminding our students of the history of women and women of color especially, will inspire them to not only vote, but re-engage with political discourse pertinent to their lives.

Community-Based Programming

Agnes Scott College prioritizes partnerships with local organizations in Decatur, including our governmental representatives. We plan to launch initiatives that will encourage students to vote, while also contributing to the voting efforts of our community. We are going to host a Scotties Serve Fair including service partners and bi-partisan groups. This will give students the opportunity to get involved in any stage of the civic continuum and introduce them to the idea that service, advocacy, voting, etc. is all connected. Dekalb County Voter Registration

and Elections, Georgia Equality, Asian Americans Advancing Justice and Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials will all be present to provide voter education materials and voter registration opportunities.

Reporting

This action plan, its results, as well as our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement reports will be made available on both the website and Canvas site mentioned above. Its placement on the public website, along with the internal Canvas site, will ensure that it is available to all ASC audiences and the community.

Evaluation

The faculty and staff and student work groups will meet monthly to discuss programming and evaluate success of events and strategies. This will ensure we are keeping track of our progress throughout the semester and meeting our short-term goals while simultaneously working towards our long-term goals.

Evaluation is a core component of the civic engagement action plan process. This will allow Agnes Scott College to understand our progress towards the goal outlined in this plan.

Evaluative data will be gathered from sources such as the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, as well as data collected from TurboVote, attendance at civic learning and democratic engagement events, and usage of our website and MyAgnesScott page. NSLVE will provide information regarding students who are registered to vote and actually voted, providing demographic breakdowns based on information such as racial identity, gender, and major discipline. Additionally, with the TurboVote referral link process, we are able to create specific urls for different locations (such as social media, website, canvas, campus

newsletter, etc) to see which of our campaigns are most effective at getting students registered to vote.

The Assistant Director for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement will be primarily responsible for the evaluative efforts with assistance from the coalition members. For data gathered that we have baseline information, we will compare results for previous years to determine success. For the other data points being collected, we hope to establish baseline data that can be used to determine future success. Evaluation results will be shared in a summative format via the aforementioned website as well as the MyAgnesScott page.