



ALL IN Democracy Challenge

Civic Engagement Action Plan



Fall 2017 – Fall 2018

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 new student orientation, 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 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 done between the start of Fall 2017 semester and the end of Fall 2018 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 & Orientation Programs, National Society of Leadership & Success Advisor, Sarah Lindahl
- Coordinator of Student Organizations & Wellness Programs, Holly Adinoff
- Service Learning Center Coordinator, Communication Faculty, Diana Hornick
- Career & Transfer Counselor, Phi Theta Kappa Advisor, Shari Culver
- Political Science Department Chair, National Society of Leadership & Success Advisor, Mary Carr
- Marketing: Digital Content Administrator, Jess Horning
- Student Access Services: Elevate at ACC Coordinator, Jen Dena
- VISTA: Veteran Success Coordinator, Jessica Keys
- Student Government Representative, John Sackey

Civic Engagement Coalition Leadership Team Liaison

- Dean of Students, Dr. Dawn Zoni

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 a silver seal from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge for having a student voting rate between 60% and 69%. 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 have renewed through 2020.

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

Based on this data, our Presidential Election rates improved between 2012 and 2016. Information from the next NSLVE report will determine whether or not our numbers improve for the 2018 Midterm Elections, which we would like to see.

In recognition of the voting rates of our students, ACC was awarded a silver seal from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in November 2017 for having a student voting rate between 60% and 69%.

GOALS

In 2016, three areas of interest were included in the action plan for ACC’s ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. The Civic Engagement Coalition would like to continue progress on these goals, which are:

1. We are interested in utilizing best practices to **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 by 10% from our 2014 data, in alignment with the national goal of ALL IN.
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: 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 participated in National Voter Registration Day on September 26th, 2017. A member of the ACC staff was trained to register voters. 20 students registered to vote at our 2017 event. We are signed up to participate again on September 25th, 2018.

Student Life is providing voter registration at our Spring 2018 Campus BBQ in April.

Coordinate Voter Turnout Activities

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office

Timeline: Complete by end of Summer 2018

Progress: We will discuss the potential for bringing a polling station to campus. If that is not a possibility, we will review the locations of the nearest polling stations, and have conversations about the potential of renting a vehicle to shuttle students to a polling station on the day of the election.

Participate in National Civic Engagement Programs

Maintain Voter-Friendly Campus Designation

Responsible Individual(s): Director of Student Life

Timeline: Complete by April 2nd, 2018

Progress: We have sought the Voter-Friendly Campus Designation since 2016, and have renewed through 2020 as of March 28th, 2018.

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

Responsible Individual(s): Director of Student Life

Timeline: Complete by January 2018

Progress: We continue to collect and review student voting data via the NSLVE. We have reports for 2012, 2014, and 2016. We have renewed our participation through 2023 as of January 16th, 2018.

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 2018

Progress: Our website is undergoing a major overhaul. Voting information will be factored in to discussions of civic engagement representation under student engagement opportunities on the website.

Develop New Student Orientation Content

Responsible Individual(s): Director of Student Life, Coordinator of Student Activities & Orientation Programs

Timeline: Complete by end of Summer 2018

Progress: As part of our discussions of content updates for New Student Orientation, we will be discussing how we promote civic engagement at in-person sessions and in our online program.

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 National Voter Registration Day in 2017, we partnered with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to register voters. 20 students were registered. 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 Chair

Timeline: Ongoing

Progress: Each year, Student Life partners with the Political Science to provide “Hot Topic” events for our students. As part of this programming, we bring in facilitators from the community. On January 31st, 2018, our Hot Topic event focused on Free Speech. As part of our panel, we had two members of the faculty on a panel, along with a representative from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). 40 students were in attendance. Fall 2018 programming will be strategized in Summer 2018.

Identify a Community Partner to Serve on our Civic Engagement Coalition

Responsible Individual(s): Student Life Office

Timeline: Complete by end of Summer 2018

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 Develop a Campus Food Bank Proposal

Convene a Committee to Address Campus Needs

Responsible Individual(s): Dean of Students

Timeline: Complete by end of Fall 2017

Progress: A committee was brought together on November 29th, 2017 to discuss food insecurity issues within the ACC campus community. This committee consisted of representatives from faculty, staff, and student groups. The current working group consists of representatives from the

Dean of Student's Office, Student Access Services, Student Life, and Veterans Services.

Develop a Campus Food Bank Proposal

- Responsible Individual(s):** Food Insecurity Committee
Timeline: Complete by end of Summer 2018
Progress: The committee is currently developing a proposal to be presented to ACC's Leadership Team. The intention is to consider the creation of a food bank on campus to support students who are food insecure.

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 was observed on September 20th, 2017. Mini Constitution booklets were given out, and a trivia game was held in the student lounge. Constitution Day will be observed again on September 17th, 2018.

Provide Election Programming

- Responsible Individual(s):** Student Life Office
Timeline: Plan by end of Summer 2018; Implement by November 2018
Progress: We will implement educational programming for the 2018 Midterm Elections to ensure students are familiar with candidates, well-informed on ballot measures, and aware of resources to learn more. We will also provide programming to view the election results.

Coordinate Service Opportunities for Students

Participate in Project Homeless Connect

- Responsible Individual(s):** Student Life Office, Service Learning Center
Timeline: Complete each September
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 on September 19th. 9 individuals from our college participated, including members of our student honors societies attended, along with several ACC employees. We plan to participate in Fall 2018, on and will seek a higher turnout.

Coordinate Spring Service Event

- Responsible Individual(s):** Student Life Office
Timeline: Complete each March
Progress: Student Life planned a service project during Spring Break 2018. On March 13th, 2018, 16 students were taken to 2 locations of Habitat for

Humanity's Restore to assist with various projects. Student Life will continue to coordinate service projects each semester.

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 2 members of the Student Life Office and 1 faculty member. As part of membership, NSLS students can participate in service opportunities. As of April 2018, 56 students have completed a minimum of 5 hours of service for a total of 280+ hours of volunteering.

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 project. The 2017-2018 project has centered around mental health, specifically focusing on bridging connections between senior citizens and our college students in efforts to address high suicide rates in elderly populations. As part of this work, PTK has:

- Partnered with Bessie's Hope, an organization that focuses on bridging generations by bringing at-risk youth into the life of elderly, to initiate opportunities for training, volunteering and fundraising. PTK raised \$500 to sponsor Bessie's Hope.
- Created the Bridging Generations Association, an organization that will reach out to seniors in assisted living facilities, improve seniors' views of their contribution to society, and create relationships that will positively affect our students—a population whose suicide rates is also worrisome. This group hosted "Trick-or-Treat with a Senior" on October 31st, 2017.
- Sponsored Mental Health First Aid Training on campus on March 2nd, 2018. 28 students participated. Due to the popularity of the event, a second training is being hosted on April 20th, 2018.

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.

When we receive our 2018 NSLVE results, they will 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 2018 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.

At the time of the release of the NSLVE report for 2018, the opportunity to consider the impact of this plan, in conjunction with our NSLVE data, will be provided to ACC's Civic Engagement Coalition.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions on this plan should be addressed to:

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