



## Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan



Fall 2022 – Fall 2023

## 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 2022 semester and the end of Fall 2023 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*
- Senior Coordinator of Student Life, Phil Hargrove
- Coordinator of Student Involvement, LaMario Fortson
- Service-Learning Center Coordinator, Communication Faculty, Diana Hornick
- Marketing: Digital Content Administrator, Jess Horning
- Student Government Representative, Isaac Winchester
- Faculty Member, *TBD – See Strategy Section*
- Student Affairs Member, *TBD – See Strategy Section*
- Student Representative, *TBD – See Strategy Section*

### Civic Engagement Coalition Leadership Team Liaison

- Dean of Students, Jen Husum

### Civic Engagement Coalition Community Partner

- New Era Colorado

## 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. We received a Gold Seal for achieving a student voting rate between 70% and 79% in the 2020 elections. We received two awards for the 2020 Colorado Campus Voting Challenge for having the highest registration rate and the highest voter turnout for a community college. We also received the Best Campus Democratic Engagement Action Plan Award for a 2-year institution. 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 2024.

In order to ensure proper awareness is generated, this commitment to civic engagement efforts will be part of 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.

On a co-curricular level, the Student Life Office collaborates with institutional constituencies and external partners 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
- 2020, Presidential Election: 75.6% of students voted; Associate Institutions rate: 56%
  - 86.7% Registration Rate, 87.2% of registrants voted

Based on this data, our election rates improved between the 2016 and 2020 Presidential Election as well as the 2014 and 2018 Midterm Election. Information from the next NSLVE report will determine whether or not our numbers remain consistent or improve, 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 65% for the next midterm election.
2. We seek to **engage in and sustain collaborations** for civic engagement opportunities with campus constituencies and community partners.
3. We desire to **increase involvement from our student leaders** in service to their community and engagement in voter 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 as 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 2022; Refine during Fall 2022

**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:** Submit Campus Report by January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

**Progress:** We have sought the Voter-Friendly Campus Designation since 2016 and have renewed through 2024. 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 2012-2020. 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*

#### **Update Website for Civic Engagement Content**

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

**Timeline:** Complete by end of Summer 2022

**Progress:** We will post voting information and civic engagement content under student engagement opportunities on the Student Life website.

#### **Develop Content for Welcome Week Programs**

**Responsible Individual(s):** Director of Student Life, Coordinator of Student Involvement

**Timeline:** Complete by end of Summer 2022

**Progress:** We will discuss how we can promote civic engagement and voter education throughout our welcome 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) and New Era Colorado. We will continue to partner with these community organizations for upcoming programs.

### *Collaborate with Campus and Community Partners to Provide Campus Programming*

#### **Coordinate Programming with Campus Constituencies**

**Responsible Individual(s):** Student Life Office, Faculty, New Era Colorado

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Progress:** During the last two cycles of ALL IN, both of our Political Science faculty have left the institution. We will be seeking to build new relationships with other faculty, academic leadership and student affairs colleagues in our programming. We will work to recruit potential membership in our Coalition. We will also work with New Era Colorado to promote opportunities for voter education to be brought to classroom environments.

#### **Develop and Promote Co-Curricular Learning Grants**

**Responsible Individual(s):** Student Life Office

**Timeline:** Complete by end of Summer 2022

**Progress:** We will develop, promote, and implement co-curricular learning grants that will allow faculty to partner with Student Life to bring impactful programming to their classes. They will be able to focus on different aspects of programming, to include the category of Civic Engagement.

### *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 2022

**Progress:** The Student Life Office will be coordinating the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 programming calendar during the Summer. This will include opportunities for students to engage with the City of Littleton.

## GOAL THREE: INCREASE INVOLVEMENT FROM STUDENT LEADERS

### *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 2022; Implement by November 2022

**Progress:** We will implement educational programming for the 2022 Midterm Elections 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 events. We will also provide programming to view the election results. We have partnered with our Student Government Association for such voter education in the past and will continue to do so.

### *Engage Students in Civic Engagement Efforts*

#### **Identify 2-3 Student Leaders to Serve on our Civic Engagement Coalition**

**Responsible Individual(s):** Student Life Office

**Timeline:** Complete by end of Fall 2022

**Progress:** We will seek out student leader representatives who have a passion for civic engagement to serve as members of our Civic Engagement Coalition. We will have them assist with implementing programming leading up to and following the Midterm Elections.

#### **Coordinate Spring Service Event**

**Responsible Individual(s):** Student Life Office, Student Leaders

**Timeline:** Complete each Spring

**Progress:** Student Life will work with student leaders to coordinate a service project during the Spring semester to engage students in the broader community.

#### **Recognize Excellence in Civic Engagement**

**Responsible Individual(s):** Student Life Office, Service-Learning Center Coordinator

**Timeline:** Complete by the end of April 2023

**Progress:** The Student Life Office will recognize students selected for their excellent service-learning work during our annual Student Awards Ceremony. Student leaders may also be recognized for their outstanding contributions to the campus community through our Mountain Mover Award selection.

## *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 fellow employee. 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 continue 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 2022 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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*This plan was last updated on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.*