



CEDAR CREST
COLLEGE



Democratic Engagement Plan
Election Year 2022

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Leadership	4
Commitment	6
Landscape	8
Goals	10
NSLVE as a Resource for Colleges and Universities	12
Strategy	13
Reporting	15
Evaluation	16

Executive Summary

The Cedar Crest College civic and democratic engagement action plan was developed by the Director of Community Service Programs and Ethical Life Site Coordinator through communication with the leadership co-chair and the Civic Engagement Student Advocates. This action plan is used to communicate the strategy for increasing various forms of civic engagement including, but not limited to, college student voter registration, education, and voting turnout rates.

The planned civic engagement opportunities outlined in this document will be carried out over the year leading up to and following the 2022 election on the Cedar Crest College campus in Allentown, PA as well as throughout the Lehigh Valley through face to face and virtual engagement means. Plans included in this document will be implemented by multiple departments and individuals within the campus community. The co-chairs of the democratic engagement action plan will work to recruit various students, faculty, and staff across the campus to accomplish the goals laid out in this document and further institutionalize Cedar Crest College's commitment to civic and democratic learning, engagement, and participation.

Leadership

The leadership of the civic action plan include individuals and groups from both the campus and local communities. In addition to the leadership listed below, the group will also look to national resources for support and guidance as the leadership team and the campus implement the 2022 democratic action plan.

For the implementation of the action plan, the co-chairs are Tammy Bean, Director of Community Service Programs and Ethical Life Site Coordinator and Dr. Christine Carpino, Assistant Professor of Political Science. These two individuals have been working together to implement civic engaged programming since the 2016 Presidential Election year. During the academic year, meetings happen once a month with the co-chairs and the civic engagement student advocates meet weekly.

Additional leadership and support are provided by the following:

On-Campus

Faculty and Staff Leadership

Name	Title	Department
Dr. Calley Taylor	Vice President for Student Success and Services	Academic Services
Dr. Leon John	Executive Director	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Faculty and Staff Resources

Name	Title	Department
Roxanne Amico	Full Professor, Chair	Performing Arts
Dr. Audrey Ettinger	Associate Professor	Biology
Dr. Scott Hoke	Associate Professor	Criminal Justice
Elizabeth Ortiz	Assistant Professor	Communications
Kaleah Torgerson	Assistant Director	Student Activities and Engagement
Kelsey Shaulis	Manager	Grants and Foundations
Dr. Allen Snook	Director	Athletics
Katy Kresge	Director	Conference Services
Rebecca Seaman	Senior Instructor	Nursing

Student and Student Clubs/Organizations

Name	Organization
Emma Statler	Junior, Lutz Center for Community Service
Corrine McClain	Sophomore, Lutz Center for Community Service
Noor Hussain	First Year, Lutz Center for Community Service
	Center for Diversity and Inclusion
	Student Government
	Resident Advisors
	History and Political Science Club
	Lutz Center for Community Service

Off-Campus

Lehigh Valley League of Women Voters
American Association of University Women
Make the Road PA
PA Student Voting Coalition
Pennsylvania Center for Women and Politics

National Organizations - Resource Support

All In Campus Democracy Challenge
Association of American Colleges & Universities
Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) Knowledge Community, NASPA
Campus Election Engagement Project
Campus Vote Project
CIRCLE
Civic Nation
Ignite
Institute for Democracy & Higher Education
League of Women Voters
National Conference on Citizenship
National Voter Education Week
National Voter Registration Day
Project Pericles
Students Learn Students Vote Coalition
Vote Early Day

Commitment

As a college that was founded to educate women in 1867, Cedar Crest College has long believed in women being able to meet the needs of the community. The mission of Cedar Crest College is

A liberal arts college primarily for women dedicated to the education of the next generation of leaders. Cedar Crest College prepares students for life in a global community by educating the whole student at all stages of life and experience.

The campus foundational principles include Scholarship, Liberal Arts, & Creativity, Women's Leadership, Civic Engagement, Global Connectivity, and Health & Wellness. With one of the foundational principles of the college being civic engagement, the ethic of service and community engagement is strong, which can be seen through over 25 years of the Lutz Center for Community Service.

The mission of the Lutz Center for Community Service, which houses the civic action plan is as follows:

The Lutz Center for Community Service works to provide the campus community with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to recognize, advocate, and effect positive social change in an ever-transforming global society.

The vision of the department is available through the college's civic engagement definition:

The individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern through the development of the necessary knowledge, skills, and values to effect change. Through varying opportunities for community engagement, individuals progress through several stages, beginning with awareness and resulting in action that will propel them to engaged citizenship beyond the Cedar Crest College experience.

As a college that has a diverse student body, a statement that promotes the values of diversity and inclusion was finalized in 2017. This statement is as follows:

Founded under the mission to expand women's access to higher-education, Cedar Crest College values difference in a diverse, inclusive, and equitable learning environment. The College is committed to educational excellence, leadership, and civic engagement in a pluralistic society. We thus embrace an inclusive community that brings together students, faculty, and staff of different racial and multi-racial, ethnic, and multi-ethnic, gender and sexually diverse, economic, religious, and national identities and ages, including students of color, first-generation college students, international students, students of varying ability/disability, and other students underrepresented in higher education.

In addition to the above information, the college is beginning the process for the next strategic plan that will take the college to the 2026 calendar year. Through the brainstorming sessions that were held in the fall 2021, many in the college community listed community and civic engagement as a top priority for the next strategic plan. Programs such as Mayfair Festival for the Arts and community engaged majors such as the Occupational Therapy Doctoral Program and adjustments to the Dietetic Internship are just a few of the connection points for civic and community engagement that continue to help the college show the commitment it has to “educating the next generation of leaders.”

Landscape

Engagement in the community has been a strong component of a Cedar Crest College education with the campus community completing over 100,000 hours of service since the 2014-2015 academic year. During this same time, the campus has also implemented 35 community engaged courses a year with 84 sections. While community engagement is a long-standing part of the Cedar Crest College culture, becoming a campus engaged in civic and democratic opportunities became a newer initiative during the 2016 election cycle. Since 2016 the college has seen this initiative increase opportunities to engage students in voter recruitment, education, and turnout rates. During the fall 2020 election cycle over 30 events were developed and implemented on campus during the ten weeks leading up to the November election day.

Over the last four years the civic engagement work has seen growth in providing voter education resources every year, multiple voter registration tables each semester, and the Cedar Crest College President promoting voting on election day. Because of these efforts and many more, student voter engagement has increased by 22% from 2014 to 2018 and by 10% from 2016 to 2020 based on the data received from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE). Additional student voting and registration rates can be seen in the table below. Since the 2014-2015 academic year, students that list political science as a major or minor has grown from just a few to over 40 students.

Year	Registration Rate	Voting Rate of Registered Students	Overall Voting Rate of Student Body
2016	80.70%	79.40%	64.10%
2020	87.90%	84.40%	74.10%
Change	7.20% ↑	5.00% ↑	10.00% ↑
2014	67.50%	25.30%	17.10%
2018	78.70%	50.50%	39.70%
Change	11.20% ↑	25.20% ↑	22.60% ↑

As civic and democratic engagement opportunities increased for the college, which can be seen through programming, interest, and voter engagement numbers, grant funded financial opportunities have also increased allowing for opportunities to host events like Constitution Day, National Voter Registration Day programming that includes food trucks, and the Allentown Mayoral Primary Debate. Because of all the work that has taken place and the grant funding received over the past four years, the institution made the commitment to institute a dedicated budget line for civic engagement and election year programming for the 2020-2021 academic year. While funding from the 20-21 academic year to the 21-22 academic year was reduced by 20% the commitment of the institution to support the work continues to grow across the various sectors of the institution.

Cedar Crest College has seen a tremendous amount of growth and success in our civic and democratic engagement over the last four years, but there are still some areas of challenge. One of the bigger challenges for the campus community is the mixed messages from faculty members on election day as some give students the day off to participate in voting, some encourage students to vote, but do not relax the attendance policy, and still others schedule tests and quizzes on election day. While not unique to Cedar Crest College, currently one of the biggest challenges that continues for the campus is the impact that COVID-19 has on voter registration, education, and engagement. Plans are being created that will allow for the greatest amount of flexibility for ensuring a robust program of connection to the opportunity to register, educate, and turnout Cedar Crest College voters.

Goals:

Over the course of 2022 the goals for the college's democratic engagement action plan focus on three primary areas: registration, education, and turnout. The goals for each focus area are listed below.

Focus Area #1: Registration

Provide the opportunity for students to take an active role in the democratic process through registering to vote.

- Have 50% of the first-year student cohort become registered voters.
- Increase registered voters in the 18 to 24 age group by 7% over 2018 registered voter numbers.
- Offer three democratic engagement action plan organized voter registration opportunities to all students by the end of September 2022.
- Increase National Voter Registration Day engagement by 10% over 2021 NVRD levels.
- Increase "I Pledge to Vote..." commitment by 10% over the 2021 pledge campaign.

Focus Area #2: Education

Work with students to help them become aware of and ask critical questions about current local, national, and global social justice issues that impact civic and democratic engagement.

- Offer voter education programs by 5 different campus departments through the 2022 election season.
- Offer training opportunities to student groups interested in hosting virtual voter education programming.
- Increase faculty and staff democratic engagement with scheduled campus programming by 10% over 2018 levels.
- Offer voter education programs to departments that had voting levels by field of study below 60% in the 2020 Presidential Election.

Focus Area #3: Turnout

Learn about one's personal sense of community, social responsibility, and active citizenship skills in a democratic society through the development of lifelong habits of democratic engagement.

- Increase voter turnout by 10% for the 18 to 24 age group over 2018 voter levels.
- Increase the voting rate of registered student voters over the 2018 voter levels by 10%.
- Increase voting levels by field of study by 5% for departments below 70% in the 2018 election.

Long-Term Goals: Institutionalization

- Apply to become a Voter Friendly Campus.
- Offer on-going voter engagement course and information in Canvas.
- Begin conversations with administration to list election day on the college calendar each year.
- Develop a Voter Champion program that will engage students in the creation of non-partisan conversations on voter registration, education, and turnout.
- Institute voter engagement material into College Life (first year student transitions course) each year.
- Work with faculty members and administration to develop a campus wide statement on attendance expectations for election day.
- Work with Lehigh Valley Progressive Events to offer programming for college students.

NSLVE as a Resource for Colleges and Universities

The NSLVE Report has been used as a guide to help the democratic engagement leadership team set their plans and goals each year. Voter registration and turnout data has shown an increase when comparing the mid-term and presidential election years, which can directly relate to the opportunities provided to the campus community over the past six years. With all the data provided, it has been important to the democratic engagement leadership team to have the reports be disseminated to the college leadership team and the Board of Trustees. This dissemination of data has also provided a recognition of the tremendous amount of work being done across the campus to increase voter engagement. The areas where the information can be used in a more direct way is with faculty members. While some faculty members connect with the committee on campus, most are unaware of the impact that talking about voting with their students can have on the increase in voter engagement, education, and turnout.

Strategies:

The strategies listed below provide the opportunity to work towards meeting the goals that this action plan has laid out. All strategies are listed based on the focus area that they support. Currently programming is slated to take place face to face though flexibility to move to virtual formats will continue to be necessary as the COVID-19 pandemic continues and evolves.

Focus Area #1: Registration

- Host voter registration information at the Student Club and Organization Fair.
- Institute the Ask Every Student campaign.
- Make voter registration forms available at multiple locations around campus.
- Participate in National Voter Registration Day, September 2022.
- Present to all new students during August 2022 Orientation.
- Provide electronic voter registration material through various campus social media pages.
- Provide voter registration forms at the annual Volunteer Fair.

Focus Area #2: Education

Spring 2022

- MLK Day: Perseverance in the Hope for Justice (January 2022).
 - MLK Movie Night
 - Trash to Treasure Event
- PA Redistricting Map Discussion (February 2022).
- President's Day Trivia (February 2022).
- State of the Union Watch Party and discussion (March 2022).
- Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of PA (AICUP) Virtual Advocacy Week (April 2022).
- AICUP Day on the Hill (April 12, 2022).
- Provide information and education on the Pennsylvania primary date (April 2022).

Summer 2022

- First Year Student Summer Orientation (June 2022).

Fall 2022

- Host a Constitution Day reading of the Constitution (September 17, 2022).
- Educate students on voter registration: Home vs. School (September 2022).
- National Voter Registration Day (September 20, 2022).
- National Voter Education Week (October 3, 2022 to October 7, 2022).
- Social Media campaign on the where candidates stand on the issues (October 2022).
- “Who is Running for Office?” Information sessions on PA Senate Race (October 2022).
- Provide the opportunity for students to learn about various non-partisan and party specific social issues through various political social engagement apps (including Countable and Election Central) (Fall 2022).
- PA Senate Race Debate Watch Party (Fall 2022).
- First Year Friday on civic and democratic engagement (Fall 2022).
- Talking Circles.
- Faculty/staff book club.

- Departmental Lobby Days in Harrisburg
 - Nursing Department – Spring and Fall.
 - Social Work Department – Spring.
 - Criminal Justice Department – Spring.

Focus Area #3: Turnout

- Updated Voter Engagement Canvas course to all faculty members (August 2022).
- Vote Early Day (October 28, 2022).
- Election Day Reminder in Canvas (Week before Election Fall 2022).
- “I pledge to vote” campaign reminders (Week before election – Fall 2022).
- President Meade to send out Election Day voting reminder (Election Day - November 2022).
- Voter Van – rides to the polls (Election Day – November 2022).
- #VoteTogether Celebration at the polls (Election Day – November 2022).
- CCC social media “I Voted Today” picture challenge (Election Day – November 2022).
- Election Day Results watch party (Election Day – November 2022).

Long-Term Goals: Institutionalization

- Establish student leadership to run the voter champion program.
- Work with departments to add election day to the college calendar.
- Work with the First Year Experience Planning Committee to discuss yearly implementation of voter education through the College Life course.
- Work with faculty committees and administration that would be involved in developing a campus wide statement on attendance expectation for election day.

Reporting:

The material in this action plan along with the overall results of the engagement activities will be provided to several stakeholders including the democratic engagement leadership team, the Board of Trustees, President and administrative cabinet, and external organizations including All In Campus Democracy Challenge and Voter Friendly Campus. Some of the goals for this work are part of the Lutz Center for Community Service departmental goals with the information on programmatic implementation reported out through the annual administrative assessment. In addition, the co-chairs will work closely with the campus Marketing and Communications Department to connect the campus, alumni network, and Lehigh Valley communities to the campus accomplishments of the civic and democratic engagement work through press releases, campus website, and social media pages along with promoting civic engagement work through the social media pages of the Lutz Center for Community Service and the Political Science Club.

Evaluation

The democratic engagement action plan will be continuously evaluated through regular and on-going program and event evaluations and attendance records. One of the evaluations used will assess a few of the following objectives: the impact of the experience on the attendees' understanding of social issues, ability to consider others' perspectives, opportunity to critically reflect upon personal values and beliefs, and the likelihood of intent to participate in civic activities after graduation. Additional evaluations on the reach of online and social media messages will also be used to help focus the digital efforts of the team.

Additional evaluations that will be used throughout the year will include the Pathways of Public Service & Civic Engagement diagnostic tool which will provide data on a student's perceived interest, strength, experience, and impact on six areas of engagement including community engaged learning and research, community organizing and activism, direct service, philanthropy, policy and governance, and social entrepreneurship and corporate social responsibility.

Material received from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) will also be used to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the 2022 democratic engagement plan. The results of this report will be used to provide information to the internal Cedar Crest College community as well as the larger community through press release and social media posts created by the campus Marketing and Communications Department.