



College of DuPage
All In Campus Democracy Challenge
Action Plan 2020



Prepared by members of the COD Votes leadership team, a cross-institutional group of College of DuPage students, staff, faculty, and community members working to increase nonpartisan civic learning and engagement in the democratic process.

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Executive Summary

The All In Campus Democracy Challenge action plan is a summary of the collaborative effort to unify and coordinate civic engagement activities at College of DuPage. College of DuPage has a long history of serving students and the surrounding community with a focus on being a center for excellence in teaching, learning, and cultural experiences. The institution does this through championing the values of integrity, honesty, respect, responsibility, and equity.

This proposal lays the foundation for an ongoing commitment to make plans and to take action to increase nonpartisan student civic learning, political engagement, and – especially – voter participation.

Here we formalize our commitment to:

- Establish a team dedicated to increase nonpartisan civic learning and engagement in the democratic process
- Ensure College of DuPage has an annual plan with short and long term goals for increasing voting rates among the student body
- Provide ongoing opportunities for College of DuPage students who wish to fulfill service-learning requirements through the civic engagement of their peers

At the heart of this action plan is the goal of educating, empowering, and supporting students, faculty, staff, and community to become active participants, seek to appreciate and understand other perspectives, and make conscious decisions to have a positive impact in their communities.

Leadership

COD Votes Leadership Team

- Alexander De Guzman - Student Leadership Council President
- Samiha Syed - College of DuPage Student Trustee
- Chuck Steele - Manager of Student Life
- Stephanie Quirk - Coordinator of Student Life
- David Swope, Sr. - Manager of Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion
- Melissa Mouritsen - Political Science Faculty
- Maureen Heffern Ponicki - Political Science Faculty
- Lauren Morgan - Speech Communication Faculty
- Jim Allen - English Faculty
- Karin Evans - English Faculty
- Sharon Jones - Music Archivist
- Joan DiPiero - Community Relations
- Christine Kickles - Reference Librarian
- Leslie Salyers - Library Assistant & League of Women Voters, Glen Ellyn
- Roberta Wheatley - League of Women Voters, Glen Ellyn
- Thomas Armstrong - Just a Foot Soldiers Journey Inc., Naperville

Student Team Members Earning Service-Learning Credit in Fall 2020

Maria Grimaldo	Filip Reduta	Catherine Williamson
Evelyn Frias	Jordan Hulsey	Connor Bowe
Tim Barranco	Luciana Ligammari	Evelyn Deaquino
Saira Mohammed	Lexie Ausland	Morgan Cosillo
Tom Gordon	Elizabeth Huml	Annie Jones
Ray Makowski	Marisol Perez	Hannah Smith
Taylor Till		

Commitment

College of DuPage's institutional philosophy is clear: we are wholly committed to facilitate and support student success in learning and we affirm our role as a catalyst for promoting dialogue and tolerance on issues supporting the common good. An institutional level commitment to civic engagement sends a message to all students and the campus community that Chaps live out the core values of integrity, honesty, respect, responsibility, and equity when they are civically engaged and vote.

Landscape

The Student Leadership Council and Office of Student Life have a long history of encouraging students to become civically engaged. The Three Tenets of Leadership Philosophy, developed in the Office of Student Life in 1991 speaks directly to this effort to align our definition of leadership with positive impact in the community. The three tenets are:

- Active participation in life and in communities
- Appreciation and understanding of multiple perspectives
- Conscious decision-making

Practicing these three tenets to have a positive impact in the community is leadership and is how civic engagement is centered in the work of Student Life and the Student Leadership Council.

In addition to these efforts, there are a number of other areas of the college facilitating programming, hosting co-curricular activities, and faculty teaching courses with learning outcomes aligned with enhancing students' civic literacy and encouraging civic and political engagement. Although great work is being done across campus, this is the first attempt to unify and coordinate our efforts. There is room for improvement and this plan can serve as a foundation for the future as we look to expand on campus programs and partnerships with the community.

Goals

1. Enroll in the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) and work with Institutional Research to create measurable engagement goals based on the data
2. To create a centralized information resource that serves as a clearinghouse for COD Votes information and houses resources for students
3. To commission a committee of the Student Leadership Council dedicated to encouraging students to civically and politically engaged
4. To provide a variety of programs such as panel discussions, conversation circles, film showings, and leadership trainings that prepare students to be civically and politically engaged in the community
5. To provide opportunities for students participating in service-learning courses to join in planning, facilitating, assessing, and evaluating COD Votes activities.

Strategy

Annual Planning

In order to keep momentum year-round, this action plan will be revised annually. The standing committee within the Student Leadership Council will also author an annual plan each academic year.

National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE)

- The NSLVE offers colleges and universities an opportunity to learn their student registration and voting rates and, for interested campuses, a closer examination of their campus climate for political learning and engagement and correlations between specific student learning experiences and voting
- NSLVE's goals are to provide a service to colleges and universities interested in learning about their students' voting habits and build a national database for research on college student political learning and engagement in democracy
- Student Life is currently processing the enrollment form to join the study for fall 2020 and beyond

Democracy Works - TurboVote Engaged Community College Program

- The TurboVote Engaged Community College (TECC) Program is an affiliated initiative of the TurboVote Campus Partnerships Program. Focused exclusively on the unique needs and opportunities of America's community colleges, TECC provides eligible institutions the opportunity to become TurboVote partner campuses and receive additional support over multiple academic years with the aim of increasing student voter turnout.
- Student Life is currently processing an agreement to join the program through 2022

Public Service & Civic Engagement Survey

- This survey is housed at Stanford University and College of DuPage faculty are members of the official [survey working group](#)
- The survey is being rolled out in a limited number of academic courses and within the Student Life Living Leadership Program in fall 2020
- Survey results show students where their interests align with the 6 areas of public service and civic engagement and encourages them to think critically on how they can make a positive impact
- Annually, College of DuPage will have access to the aggregate data from the survey and the COD Votes leadership team will be able to use it for future strategic planning

Service-Learning Opportunities

- Students enrolled in service-learning courses will be invited to join the Student Leadership Council COD Votes committee.
- Students will work in teams under the supervision of the Student Leadership Council advisors to fulfill their service requirements through active participation in planning,

marketing, facilitating, assessing, and evaluating activities that contribute to the COD Votes mission.

- **Service-learning Project Ideas**

- **Election Night Event**

This brainstorm is related to assisting with the planning, promotion, hosting, and reporting (post-event sharing) of an event on election night (Nov 3) from 7pm-9pm. This event will be sponsored by the Living Leadership Program. We brainstormed having it be a relaxing art-centered virtual event like a paint night where students will be provided materials and we would have someone lead the painting. The idea would be to create something that represents why we vote / participate in the democratic process. So answering the question “what brings us to the polls?”

- **First Time Voter Outreach & Engagement**

This project would focus on connecting with non-registered students in local high schools and creating a series of mini-education pieces walking them through the basics on how to register, how to early vote, how to request a mail in ballot, how to find your polling place, how to fill out a ballot, what to expect if you vote in person, etc. (these are just examples – the team may decide on different topics or additional).

- **Virtual Parade to the Polls**

Borrowed idea from ChicagoVotes. This year COD is a designated early voting location from Oct 19 to Nov 2 which means if you want to vote early, you can come to the Institutional Resource Center (IRC) building on west campus and vote early in person. Idea would be to create a marketing campaign inviting people to take videos of themselves going in to early vote and submitting them to a social media account (creation of account is another brainstorm below) that would put together a virtual “parade to the polls” story encouraging others to also join the parade. This could also be targeted to first-time voters who do not want to vote by mail.

- **Information Hub Creation**

This project would work to identify the best resources for students to get informed about local candidates and everything voting related from getting registered to casting a ballot. Ultimate result will be a COD website with all the curated information like a one-stop-shop for students. It will also have an easy way to

register to vote via our new TurboVote registration link that will provide us metrics.

- **Host a Conversation Circle (Attachments)**

<https://www.askbigquestions.org/> is a movement to get people talking about BIG questions through guided conversations. The website explains the mission and the conversation topic for COD Votes would be “How do you decide who to vote for” – anyone interested in this project would be using the resource guide to plan and lead the conversation. COD students have done similar events in the past and they have gone really well – they don’t have to be large conversation circles, just spaces to bring people together and make a connection.

- **Social Media Account**

This project would be to create a dedicated social media account that is all about nonpartisan voter engagement and education at COD. This account would be directly managed by a small team of 2 or 3, but everyone working on all the projects on this list would be creating content that would be shared through it. The account could have a variety of campaigns and promote events and connect students to resources.

Scheduled Events

Date	Event	Time	Sponsoring Area
9/17/20	Dialogue Over Distance Series - Constitution Day Panel Discussion	12pm - 1:15 pm	Constitution Day Committee & Community Relations
9/22/20	National Voter Registration Day Panel Discussion & Virtual Voter Registration Drive	2pm - 3:30pm	Student Leadership Council & Student Life
10/7/20	Conversation Circle: How do you decide who to vote for?	3:30pm - 5pm	Forensics Team
10/13/20	Dialogue Over Distance Series - Donkeys in Top Hats and Elephants in Tuxedos: Politics in Cartoons	7pm-8:15pm	Community Relations
10/16/20	National Student Issues Convention	12pm-3pm	National Student Issues Convention

11/3/20	Election Night Virtual Event “What Brings us to the Polls”	7pm - 9pm	Student Life
11/17/20	Dialogue Over Distance Series - Long Lines, Mail-In Ballots and Election Outcomes	7pm-8:15pm	Community Relations
12/15/20	Dialogue Over Distance Series - Coattails or Chasms: Local Impact of National Elections	7pm-8:15pm	Community Relations

Reporting

This action plan will be shared with College of DuPage administration and available on the forthcoming COD Votes webpage. The plan will be annually reviewed and results or event summaries from the events and activities will be evaluated to either be continued or discontinued. Findings will be shared with the leadership team and reported to the administration and other stakeholders.

Evaluation

By participating in the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE), College of DuPage will receive a customized report that will allow us to better understand our students’ voting habits and use that information to set goals with guidance from Institutional Research.