



HEARTLAND  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# 2020 DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

Since opening its doors in 1991, Heartland Community College has served as an unwavering source of accessible, innovative learning opportunities, and resources that enrich our community. This 2020 Democratic Engagement Plan acknowledges our current engagement of students, our community, and the world while guiding the improvement of our existing efforts and serving as a framework for the launch of new voting and civic initiatives.

Heartland's history, vision, mission, values, priorities, goals, essential competencies and engagement efforts align with Campus Compact's commitment of:

1. Empowering our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus – nearby and around the world.
2. Preparing our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.
3. Embrace our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contribution to the health and strength of our communities – economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.
4. Harness the capacity of our institutions – through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice – to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.
5. Foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

### **Our Vision**

Leading our community to lifelong learning and success.

### **Our Mission**

Heartland provides accessible, innovative learning opportunities and resources that enrich our community.

### **Value Statements**

We are learner-centered, focused on creating a personalized path to success for each holistic learner.

We inspire an upbeat, can-do attitude, empowering our students, our communities, and each other to fully actualize our potential.

We support professional development of all employees so that we may continually adapt and improve.

We are all partners in the success of the organization, boldly embracing current and future options that will empower our students and communities.

We respect all individuals; civility, collegiality, and the highest standards of professionalism characterize Heartland's daily environment.

We are proud of our College's quality but always seek improvement.

We practice ethical decision-making and responsible use of environmental, financial, and community resources to promote a sustainable future.

## LEADERSHIP

---

The 2020 Democratic Engagement Plan falls under the umbrella of Heartland Community College's Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Team which promotes civic engagement and service-learning on our campus and beyond while finding ways to learn about and respond to current issues and challenges including voting efforts. This is done through:

1. Community service
2. Community engagement
3. Embedded course service projects
4. Professional Development certificate for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement
5. Service-Learning independent studies
6. Service-Learning Civic Engagement campus team
7. Collaboration with local universities, Illinois State University and Illinois Wesleyan University.

Heartland Community College does not have a full-time, year-round civic engagement office. Instead, the core democratic engagement team is made up of full-time employees with jobs in administration, staff and faculty. Additional faculty, staff, and student government and club members join the team as appointed per semester.

### **Core Campus Team**

This team is charged with coordinating and overseeing Heartland Community College's work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement.

#### **Sarah Diel-Hunt**, Vice President, Enrollment and Student Services

As a vice president and member of the HCC Cabinet, Dr. Diel-Hunt has the ability to lead the team and provided educated guidance with her intimate understanding of Heartland's goals and resources.

#### **Skylar Guimond** - Director of Student Engagement

Mr. Guimond has a pulse on student engagement as the Director of Student Engagement. In addition to overseeing student clubs, activities and student government, he is creating and overseeing a group of students dedicated to service learning, and civic and democratic engagement.

**Gena Glover** - Associate Director, Community Engagement

Ms. Glover serves as a bridge between Heartland Community College and community organizations in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois as well as in our satellite towns of Pontiac and Lincoln.

**Karla Huffman** - Faculty Coordinator of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement and Professor of Communication

Professor Huffman serves as the liaison between the Service Learning and Civic Engagement team and faculty at Heartland Community College. She helps faculty develop their own democratic engagement course projects and provides all faculty with appropriate civic engagement resources to share with students.

Faculty, Staff, and Student Government and club members as appointed per semester

**Campus Voter Registration Contacts**

Heartland Library Staff (all)

Kerry Urzuizo, ESL Programs

Janet Beach-Davis, Faculty

Karla Huffman, Faculty

Jean-Marie Taylor, Faculty

Sarah Diel-Hunt, VP Enrollment and Student Services

**Internal Partners**

Student Government Association

Political Science Club

Heartland Marketing and Public Information

Heartland Student Engagement Office

IT, website and LMS offices

**Community, State, and National Partners**

Illinois State University

Illinois Wesleyan University

McLean County Cultural Leadership Program

Western Avenue Community Center

Boys and Girls Club of Bloomington Normal

League of Women Voters McLean County

WGLT, National Public Radio Affiliate

Project Oz

Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Bloomington-Normal YMCA

YWCA of McLean County

YouthBuild

NAACP

Prairie Pride Coalition

Home Sweet Home Mission

Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council



Greater Livingston County Economic Development Council  
 Logan County Economic Development Partnership/Greater Peoria Economic Development Council  
 McLean County Chamber of Commerce  
 Pontiac Area Chamber of Commerce  
 BNAdvantage  
 Career Link – Region 15  
 GLK Workforce Development Board – Region 11  
 Land of Lincoln Workforce Alliance – Region 20  
 Campus Compact  
 ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge  
 ALL IN President Commitment  
 ASK EVERY STUDENT Commitment Campus

## COMMITMENT & STRATEGY

---

### College-Wide Priorities & Goals

Heartland Community College strives to foster a culture of data-informed continuous improvement to attain its priorities and goals.

#### Promote Student Success

Increase percentage of students progressing toward and completing their educational and career goals.

Improve student satisfaction.

Increase student achievement of the College's Essential Competencies

#### Ensure Resource Stewardship

Improve employee satisfaction.

Maintain or increase the College's financial health.

Maintain or increase value of the College's physical assets.

#### Serve as a Community Resource

Meet emerging workforce needs through education and training programs.

Fulfill unmet community demand for personal enrichment and professional learning.

#### Model Effective Communication, Collaboration and Transparency

Intentionally obtain and incorporate employee input.

Improve internal dissemination of information.

Share resources, responsibilities and results to achieve college-wide goals.

#### Heartland Community College Essential Competencies

Communication: Students develop and present an effective message using various modalities suitable to the topic, purpose and audience.

**Problem Solving/Critical Thinking:** Students identify and interpret problems to engage in thinking that is informed by evidence; or students apply strategies and procedures to arrive at a workable solution.

**Diversity:** Students recognize their own attitudes and values as well as those of others and demonstrate respect for others with diverse perspectives, behaviors and identifies.

**Ethics/Social Responsibility:** Students ethically engage with or respond to academic, civic, social, environmental, technological, or economic challenges at local, national or global levels.

**Technology:** Students appropriately use technology to solve problems, complete tasks, or accomplish goals; or students demonstrate effective adaptability to various technologies.

## **DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT**

Heartland Community College (HCC) aspires to promote civic engagement and service-learning on our campus and beyond.

2018 HCC's Political Engagement Project was revived and revamped as a Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Team. The team consists of HCC administration, faculty, staff and students.

Created a Service-Learning and Civic Engagement webpage

Engagement began with voting efforts with the ALL IN voter registration challenge, community partnerships and candidate forums.

Representatives from administration, staff and faculty attended the 2018 Democracy Commitment Conference and collaborated to create SMART goals for HCC's Service-Learning and Civic Engagement efforts

HCC joined [Campus Compact](#)

HCC partnered with Illinois State University and Illinois Wesleyan University to share student service opportunities

2019 Attended Campus Compact's Midwest Regional Conference in Minneapolis, MN

Adopted "Engagement" as a year-long campus theme

Revived tabling event for Constitution Week

Established a core campus Engagement team consisting of the Vice President of Student and Enrollment Services, the Director of Student Engagement, the Associate Director of Community Engagement, and the Faculty Engagement Coordinator

Created a Census promotion team through Student Engagement

2020 Participated in the ALL IN training webinar

Attended Illinois Campus Compact's Civic Action Plan training workshop in Romeoville, IL

Engaged in Census promotion activities in partnership with Campus Compact

HCC Political Science Club organized tabling events to educate students on the 2020 primary elections and registering to vote

Attended Campus Compact's 2020 Virtual Gathering

Created Heartland Community College's first Civic Action Plan

## ENGAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

We have established the following plan to engage our students, campus and community. Our efforts are supported by the College president, Administration, Faculty and Community partners. We believe these efforts align with Campus Compact's five commitments.

**Ongoing Projects** – The following projects take began in 2018 and will continue on a regular basis. Coordinators include: Service Learning and Civic Engagement team, Student Government Association, Political Science Club, Student Engagement, faculty, staff and administration.

1. **Voter Registration:** In 2018 HCC took part in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. Tabling events, classroom presentations, posters, and social media encouraged students to take the ALL IN Challenge, register to vote, and vote. HCC was named a Silver Campus with a 30-39% voting rate and excellence in student voter engagement in the 2018 midterm election (up from 15.9% from 2014). HCC is registered to participate in the ALL IN Challenge again in 2020 and has signed the 2020 Presidential Commitment.
2. **Candidate Forums:** HCC partnered with The League of Women Voters, Illinois State University, and WGLT, the local National Public Radio station to host local and state candidate forums in the 2018 midterm election. This partnership continues and candidate forums are anticipated for the 2020 general election.
3. **Constitution Week:** In 2019 HCC revived a Constitution Day tabling event from prior years to help students learn about the Constitution and reflect on how it applies to their everyday lives. Tables were placed around campus with a Constitution reflection prompt and large sheets of paper for students to share their answers or comments. Prompts included information and questions about abortion rights, gun control, education, climate change and more. Faculty and staff took turns monitoring the tables and changing out the paper as needed. HCC Political Science Club collected the responses

and reported to the Service-Learning and Civic Engagement team. This is slated to be a yearly project.

4. **Service-Learning Certificate:** In January of 2020 a self-placed online faculty certificate program focusing on incorporating service-learning and civic engagement into the classroom was launched. The course topics related to Service-Learning and allows faculty opportunities to reflect and apply what they have learned through the modification or creation of a “product” for use in the classroom. This is an ongoing program.
5. **Citizenship and Sandwiches:** As part of a “Dine & Discuss” program, HCC Political Science Club regularly plans and hosts “Citizenship and Sandwiches” in the cafeteria where special guests and HCC students discuss current political issues. Topics have included constitutional issues, news literacy, and candidate positions.
6. **Campus Compact Partner:** In 2018 HCC joined Campus Compact, a national coalition of over 1000+ colleges and universities committed to the public purposes of higher education. They assist HCC in building democracy through civic education and community development. Members of the Service Learning and Civic Engagement attended the Midwest Campus Compact Regional Convention in Minneapolis, MN, multiple Campus Compact webinars and were registered for the 2020 national convention in Seattle, WA.
7. **Boxes and Walls:** Boxes and Walls is an educational event to raise awareness about what some students experience getting to, and in college. The goal is to plant seeds of openness, understanding and respect for oppressed and marginalized groups.
8. **Heartland Food Share:** HCC’s Food Share is located on campus and sponsored by Student Counseling Services. Students are encouraged to take what they need and give what they can. Information about other community food sources is available and updated regularly.
9. **Heartland Student Emergency Fund:** The fund is used to support students who may be adversely affected by unforeseen emergencies.
10. **“Suiting Up”:** Sponsored by Phi Beta Lambda, “Suit Up Closet” is a resource for students to grab the business-appropriate attire they might be lacking for an interview or internship opportunity.
11. **Civic Engagement Curriculum Sequence:** Students completing this curriculum sequence will develop civic skills in order to become more fully engaged in local, state, national, and/or international civic affairs. After completing the sequence, students will develop and carry out a civic engagement project. This sequence also prepares students for transfer into the Civic Engagement Minor at Illinois State University.
12. **Service-Learning 101:** Introduction to Service-Learning is a course that introduces students to service-learning through engagement in a defined service project within a community. Students will examine their own various identities as it relates to service (for example: identity as a student, a community member, a citizen); learn about the importance of service and carry out a service project. At the conclusion of the project, students will critically reflect and respond to their experience. Because the experience(s) offered will change each semester, SVL 101 may be repeated up to 3 times with a different experience.



**One Time Projects** – These projects took place during the 2019/2020 school year

1. **Children at the Border:** HCC partnered with a local nonprofit called Not In Our Town to host a presentation by Illinois Wesleyan University Professor Dr. Kathleen O’Gorman on her direct experience interviewing children at U.S. Border detention camps. Local students helped share Dr. O’Gorman’s experience by reading testimony of detained children.
2. **Campus Theme 2019/2020:** HCC adopted “Discover Community” as the campus theme for the 2019/2020 school year. Campus engagement opportunities such as faculty forums, professional development and campus kickoffs focused on community, and civic engagement, and service learning.
3. **2020 Census Promotion:** Led by HCC’s Student Engagement Office and a student Census Fellow, students were informed on the importance of the 2020 Census and instructed on how to participate.

**Developing Projects** – These projects are currently in the implementation or planning state.

1. **Ask Every Student:** HCC is registered as an Ask Every Student Commitment Campus in which we will incorporate and implement voter registration practices into our existing strategies.
2. **Campus Compact AmeriCorps VISTA Application 2021/2022:** HCC’s Service Learning and Civic Engagement leaders are working to complete the 2021/2022 Host Site Application to become an AmeriCorps VISTA campus.
3. **Heartland Community College Day of Service:** Prior to the moving online due to COVID-19, HCC had a campus-wide Day of Service scheduled for April 24, 2020. The College intends to reschedule this event and continue to work with our community partners to provide service to our campus and community.

## LANDSCAPE & STRATEGY ---

The Service-Learning and Civic Engagement core team reviewed key areas related to the college’s commitment to Civic Engagement. Data came from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), ALL IN, and reporting from administration, staff, faculty and students.

### VOTING

National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE): Heartland Community College participated in NSLVE data collection comparing 2012 and 2016 general elections and 2014 and 2018 midterm elections.

The reported voting registration and voting rates reflect the percentage of HCC students who were eligible to vote and who voted in the 2012 and 2016 general election and 2014 and 2018 midterm elections.

2016 Voting Rate	48.2%
Change from 2012	+7.9%
2018 Voting Rate	35.7%
Change from 2014	+15.9%

**ALL IN:** HCC was named a Silver Campus with a 30-39% voting rate and excellence in student voter engagement in the 2018 midterm election (up from 15.9% from 2014). HCC is registered to participate in the ALL IN Challenge again in 2020 and has signed the 2020 Presidential Commitment.



In addition to becoming an ALL IN Campus, Heartland Community College participated in a friendly competition with Illinois State University to see who could get the highest percentage of students to commit to the ALL IN challenge. Heartland won that challenge resulting in a pizza party for Heartland's student government association.

## CURRICULUM

Heartland Community College incorporates civic learning and democratic engagement into our curriculum in the following ways:

**Service-Learning Certificate:** In January of 2020 a self-placed online faculty certificate program focusing on incorporating service-learning and civic engagement into the classroom was launched. The course topics related to Service-Learning and allows faculty opportunities to reflect and apply what they have learned through the modification or creation of a “product” for use in the classroom. This is an ongoing program.

**Civic Engagement Curriculum Sequence:** Students completing this curriculum sequence will develop civic skills in order to become more fully engaged in local, state, national, and/or international civic affairs. After completing the sequence, students will develop and carry out a civic engagement project. This sequence also prepares students for transfer into the Civic Engagement Minor at Illinois State University.

**Service-Learning 101:** Introduction to Service-Learning is a course that introduces students to service-learning through engagement in a defined service project within a community. Students will examine their own various identities as it relates to service (for example: identity as a student, a community member, a citizen); learn about the importance of service and carry out a service project. At the conclusion of the project, students will critically reflect and respond to their experience. Because the experience(s) offered will change each semester, SVL 101 may be repeated up to 3 times with a different experience.

## **Individual Courses**

COMM 101 Introduction to Oral Communication: Students work in groups to research voting practices among college students and then present persuasive speeches to classes across campus informing other students about voting practices, local, state and national races, voter registration and voting procedures. Persuasive language is used to convince them to register and vote.

ENG 102: A Heartland professor tasks students with identifying community problems and proposing solutions, all through the lens of course learning objectives.

SOAR (Special Opportunities Available in Recreation): A Heartland professor gives social work and sociology students the opportunity to work with local children in the SOAR program while connecting to course learning objectives.

COMM 125 Small Group Communication: Students work in small groups to plan and executive fundraisers to help local nonprofit organizations.

## **INTERNAL BARRIERS**

1. No centralized office of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement: Organized democratic engagement efforts are run through a committee of administration, staff and faculty. This team is in the process of writing an AmeriCorps Vista grant with the hopes of opening a campus office.
2. Limited Funding for personnel and engagement efforts.
3. Time: As a community college, many students are only on campus for two years limiting the amount of time they have to get involved with democratic engagement projects.

## **AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

ALL IN

Campus Compact

Ask Every Student

NSLVE

Illinois State University Community Engagement and Service-Learning office

## **NEEDED RESOURCES**

Funding

Full-time Democratic Engagement office and staff

## GOALS & STRATEGY

---

This 2020 Democratic Engagement plan acknowledges our current engagement of students, our community, and the world while guiding the improvement of our existing efforts and serving as a framework for the launch of non-partisan civic learning, democratic engagement and voter participation among students, faculty and staff at Heartland Community College.

### SHORT-TERM GOALS (VOTING)

In the 2016 Presidential Election, HCC student voting rate was 48.2% (65.8% for registered voters). In the 2018 mid-year elections, HCC participated in the ALL IN to Vote Challenge, developed a civic action plan, and increased its midterm student voter rate 35.7% (up 15.9% from 2014).

Having learned from our experiences in the last two national election cycles, HCC is setting a goal of 55% student voter rate for the 2020 Presidential Election. Below is the Action Plan for that goal.

1. Enhance Voter Registration Information Available to Students
  - a. HCC will enhance its webpage materials to include specific directions/deadlines for registering to vote online; through mail-in; and same day registration at the polls.
  - b. Web link will be sent to all faculty, staff, and students clubs and organizations
  - c. Student-led Voter Information Drives will be conducted with tabling around main campus and at the HCC-Lincoln and HCC-Pontiac Centers.
2. Conduct Voter Registration and ALL IN Voting Pledge Drives
  - a. The Political Science and SGA will conduct voter registration/ALL IN Pledge to Vote Drives.
  - b. COMM 101 courses will incorporate project work on campaigns to increase student voter registration/voting rates.
  - c. SGA will work to get all student clubs/orgs to take the ALL IN Pledge to Vote.
  - d. Political Science Club and SGA will develop “toilet talk” flyers in restrooms around campus register and vote.
3. Provide Election/Candidate Information
  - a. Political Science Club will develop election/candidate information guides for distribution.
  - b. HCC will work with Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, the League of Women Voters, and WGLT (local NPR station) to host a variety of candidate Forums/Open Houses and encourage students to attend.
4. Establish and Leverage New Faculty Liaison for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement
  - a. Faculty liaison will coordinate efforts between WGA, Student Engagement, community and faculty.
  - b. Faculty liaison will assist in engaging and involving faculty in the Civic Action Plan.

### **SHORT-TERM GOALS (GENERAL)**

1. Complete Campus Compact's AmeriCorps Vista Application with the goal of receiving the grant and using the Vista to help us establish an office of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement.
2. Adapt our democratic engagement plan accordingly depending on the state of the college during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **LONG-TERM GOALS**

1. Establish a sustainable office of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement that would include Democratic Engagement.
2. Increase democratic engagement in learning outcomes in the HCC curriculum.
3. Strengthen our partnership with local universities, Illinois State and Illinois Wesleyan by conducting joint democratic engagement activities.
4. Increase curriculum based democratic engagement

### **NSLVE**

---

Heartland Community College will continue our partnership with the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement. We will read, study and implement the recommended resources for understanding and leveraging our NSLVE data.

### **REPORTING**

---

This Democratic Engagement plan will first be shared with administration at Heartland Community College. Upon approval, the plan will be shared with key stakeholders within the college and community including, the Service-Learning and Civic Engagement team, faculty and community partners. Additionally, the plan will be shared with Heartland's Marketing office to be used in marketing efforts when appropriate. Last, highlights from the plan will be placed on the HCC website within the Service-Learning and Civic Engagement pages. NSLVE data is already on the HCC website.

### **EVALUATION**

---

The goals and strategies outlined in this plan will be evaluated using a variety of methods including:

1. ALL IN data collected after the 2020 elections
2. NSLVE data collected after the 2020 elections
3. Attendance and participation in the various on-campus student centered events
4. Number and attendance of partnership events on campus and in the community.
5. Number of faculty incorporating democratic engagement into classroom curriculum
6. Increased movement in opening a service-learning civic engagement office
7. Feedback from action plans and grants received