

**Henry Ford College  
2020 Democratic Engagement  
Action Plan**

Henry Ford College (HFC) supports and promotes democracy and civic literacy and is proud to be a part of the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

HFC's mission is to transform lives and build better futures by providing outstanding education. As a student-centered, evidence-based college, our success is measured by the success of our students. We empower learners through the development of independent, critical and creative thinking, and we foster diversity, inclusion, understanding, and acceptance to prepare learners to succeed in a global society. HFC serves approximately 13,000 students.

This action plan is designed to increase civic and political engagement, as well as voter participation among our students. Students will be encouraged to register to vote, turn out at the polls, and engage in other forms of political participation. The goal is to build election excitement and visibility leading up to Election Day.

**Leadership**

Members of the College work together to coordinate and promote various activities for civic engagement. With the core leadership team, many faculty, staff, and students play a role in the execution of activities. The leadership team is listed below:

Cassandra Fluker, Student Activities Officer and ALL IN Contact

Dr. Anthony Perry, Political Science Instructor & Director, The Michigan Democracy Institute Consortium

Mandy Earl, Student Activities Associate  
Student Council

Dr. Daniel Herbst, Vice-President for Student Affairs

Democracy Institute Consortium is a coalition of college and community leaders who collaborate and execute initiatives to foster civic literacy among students and the community-at-large.

The partners are: Henry Ford College, Oakland Community College, Oakland University, University of Michigan-Dearborn, The League of Women Voters, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Netimpact.org., Michigan Voices, Wayne State University, Next-Gen, and Detroit Community School District.

**Goals**

HFC receives the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) Report. The report is shared with the College and used to create and design activities to increase students' learning and knowledge of the importance of being active participants in our democratic society.

According to the 2018 National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) Report, Henry Ford College's registered voter rate was 57.8% and the voter turnout rate 33.3%. With the 2020 presidential election, a goal has been set to increase both rates by 20%: registered voters 69.36% and voter turnout 39.96%. This goal has been made part of our College's Strategic Plan.

We will engage faculty, staff, and students in this effort, as well as create a campus culture where lifelong democratic habits are developed throughout the academic year.

### **Civic Learning**

HFC will sponsor its Public Service Seminar and the Michigan Democracy Institute Community Student Engagement (MDICE) Conference on February 6 & 7, 2020. It is a non-partisan event featuring various methods to civically engage, educate and encourage students and citizens/members of the community. There will be speakers, panels and activities centered on voting rights/responsibilities/laws, registration, service, and the 2020 census. The speaker selection will include local mayors, judges, senators, and state representatives.

Local agencies and organizations will also set-up to promote volunteer opportunities for the engagement of students in the community and service projects.

As part of the conference, HFC will host the Social Venture Challenge (SVC) in partnership with the Resolution Project. The SVC is a Fellowship opportunity for undergraduates looking to address a societal issue or make an impact in their communities. Attendees of the conference will have the opportunity to present their ideas for change for the chance to win a [Resolution Fellowship](#). The Fellowship comes with seed funding, mentorship, networking, resources, and access to a community of like-minded peers to help take an idea from conception to reality.

### **Political Engagement**

Students of the MDICE will coordinate Student Lobby Days during the spring term to rally support for voter turnout and education for the primary elections. Lobby Days will also be held before Election Day.

Regular engagement events will be coordinated during the fall semester to educate and inspire students to get involved. There will be guest speakers and participatory activities such as poster and/or video competitions, political trivia games, and other learning opportunities. Music, poetry, and refreshments will also be part of the festivities.

### **Voter Education Sessions**

The Office of Student Activities (OSA) will host voter education sessions to educate students on issues, political candidates, proposals, voting laws, the importance of voting, and the actual act of voting. Sessions will be facilitated by knowledgeable leaders in the community.

### **Voter Registration**

The OSA facilitates a voter registration drive each year to encourage students to register and vote. The service is marketed as a convenience for students to register on campus, opposed to going to

the Secretary of State and the service of mailing the applications to respective city clerks' offices. Applications are also available year-round in our OSA and Campus Safety building for students to complete and take as needed to friends and family members.

In support of the Presidential Primary, an email with the link to the state's website will be sent to the student body encouraging them to register to vote. Early registration will be promoted during class presentations about student activities and at campus events.

An aggressive Get Out the Vote campaign will begin in late August at the start of the Fall 2020 semester. The campaign consists of Student Activities staff and volunteers strategically covering the campus with table set-ups and structured strolls to encourage new students to register and registered students to exercise their right to vote. At that time, students are asked to complete "HFC Votes" pledge cards that are mailed to their homes as a reminder to cast their vote on Election Day. Additionally, volunteers will set up in various campus buildings with laptops to inform registered student voters of their poll place sites. HFC will partner with local groups and participate in National Voter Registration Day for greater coverage of the registration activity and awareness of democracy.

### **Other Registration Coverage**

Voter registration will also be set-up at new student orientation and student body activities. Class presentations are currently made by the Student Activities staff and students.

### **Faculty Involvement**

Instructors (full-time and adjunct) provide encouragement in their classrooms for students to complete the Michigan Voter Application and encourage students to vote. They are given the applications from the OSA and asked to return the completed applications for mailing. Faculty also encourage students to vote and educate themselves on candidates and their positions.

### **Resources**

Henry Ford is a member of the Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP) and has a representative that provides tools, resources and ideas to help engage students in democracy. Under this program, we will accept the offer to provide a student a fellowship position for additional assistance with democratic engagement. Henry Ford College also joined the Voter Friendly Campus Designation for additional support and resources. Two or three interns will be hired to assist with the coordination of registration and voter engagement activities.

### **Marketing and Promotion**

The following are used to market all programs and activities: Campus digital boards, LED message center, flyers, lawn signs, WHFR radio station, The Mirror News (student newspaper), social media, email, campus calendar, Student Bulletin publication, class announcements, and website. Our Marketing and Communications department also creates press releases, as needed, and contact other communications channels.

### **Reporting**

Copies of the 2020 action plan and the NSLVE will be posted to our College's website for viewing by the campus community.

**Evaluation**

The civic learning activities will be assessed by the Michigan Democracy Institute Consortium and improvements will be made based on the review of information. The voter registration and education sessions will be assessed by the staff of the OSA for improvements and the evaluation of the voter participation rates, the College will rely on the 2020 NSLVE report, review the data and then, make improvements and/or implement new programs for the engagement of students.