



Civic Engagement Action Plan

2018

Executive Summary

The mission of the newly created Inver Hills Community College (IHCC) Civic Engagement Action Plan is to create a comprehensive plan of action that makes civic learning, voter engagement and education efforts an intentional process that occurs year-round at Inver Hills Community College. This comprehensive, non-partisan plan aims to affect all members of the IHCC campus community, both in the classroom and outside of it. It focuses on community and civic engagement, increasing voting rates among IHCC students, and educating students, staff, and faculty about what lawmakers do and what they vote for, as well as how the political process works. IHCC will begin to receive data about the voting rates of IHCC students during the spring semester of 2018, and will use this data to create benchmarks and measurable goals for future plans. Above all else, it is the goal of this plan to encourage and assist students, faculty, and staff to become active, educated, and intentional members of their own communities.

Leadership

The leadership team of the Civic Engagement Action Plan at IHCC will consist of Nichelle Bottko, Associate Director of Student Life, Zachary Sullivan, Professor of Political Science and the current standing Student Senate Legislative Director. The Legislative Director of the Student Senate will work with the Student Senate Advocacy Committee to create student planned and lead advocacy and civic engagement activities throughout the year. They will serve as the student advisory committee for the plan and will seek out student feedback whenever the plan is reassessed. Professor Zachary Sullivan will take primary responsibility for all curricular aspects of the plan. They will advise the Advocacy committee, serve as the primary point of contact for faculty and will plan classroom activities, which promote civic engagement. The Associate Director of Student Life will be the primary contact for the IHCC Civic Engagement Action Plan. They will document and submit the plan, will be responsible for reporting successes and opportunities to the campus as a whole. In addition, they will coordinate with the Student Life department to create ongoing co-curricular annual civic engagement programming, and will maintain a calendar of voter engagement efforts.

Commitment

Voter education and engagement must be a yearlong effort at Inver Hills Community College. While the [IHCC Strategic Plan, vision and values](#) do not specifically mention voter education and engagement, they do provide guidance through which initiatives can be created. Strategic goal 1.1 is to “Strengthen commitment to high-quality and innovative learning experiences that prepare students for transfer, employment, and lifelong learning.” The leadership team of the Civic Engagement Action Plan and the Student Senate believe that becoming an engaged community member and voter is one of the most beneficial and critical lessons that students can learn while in college. The team will actively seek out additional partnerships to increase this learning both inside and outside of the classroom. This plan will work to increase commitment to civic engagement campus wide.

Landscape

Civic learning and democratic engagement is a programming focus area for Student Life and is supported strongly by the Student Senate and by faculty throughout the campus. Campus learning outcomes such as “learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view”, and “learning to apply knowledge and skills to benefit others or serve the public good” can and often do allow for these types of learning opportunities in the classroom. Despite these facts, and the support of many individuals on campus, this plan is the first comprehensive Civic Engagement Action Plan for the campus. It is the hope of the leadership team that this will pave the way for an ongoing plan that is annually updated and evaluated.

Goals

1. Review first report of data collected from the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) and create measurable engagement goals based on data
2. To encourage students to be civically and politically engaged
3. To provide trainings that will aid students in becoming civic and political leaders on campus and in their communities
4. To encourage staff and faculty to become civically and politically engaged
5. To expose students, faculty and staff to civic issues that are relevant to their daily lives
6. To create an environment on campus where civic engagement efforts occur year-round

Strategy

Yearlong Planning Efforts

- Participation in the [All In Campus Challenge](#)
The IHCC Civic Engagement Action Plan will be reassessed regularly throughout the year, and it is the goal of the leadership team to continue efforts each year with the creation of a new annual plan.
- Review of NSLEV Data
IHCC will receive the first set of results regarding voter engagement of students during spring semester of 2018. This will allow for the establishment of measurable goals related to the data received.
- Creation of Student Senate Work Plan
The annual Student Senate work plan is created during the summer of each academic year. It includes civic engagement activities and events. The 2018 work plan will complement the Civic Engagement Action Plan.

New Ongoing Initiatives

- Implementation of [TurboVote](#) for GOTV programs and events.
To be used during registration and voter education programs and events, TurboVote provides students with automatic reminders to vote via email or text to vote.
- [Distribution of Minnesota Voter Fact Sheets](#)
A variety of bipartisan factsheets are available through the Minnesota Secretary of State website. These will be used civic engagement events and programs and will be made available in the Student Life Office and given to faculty for distribution in classes.
- Becoming an Early Voting Site
The Student Life department will work with representatives from the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) Union and other Minnesota State colleges to investigate possibility of becoming an early voting site in the 2018 and subsequent elections.
- Voter Registration Links on D2L and Campus Website
Beginning in the summer of 2018, leadership of the Civic Engagement Action Plan will work with marketing, IT, and system wide administrators to advocate for the permanent addition of voter registration links where students are most likely to see them.

Spring Semester 2018 Initiatives

- [Precinct Caucus Education Drive](#)
Precinct Caucuses in Minnesota are 2/6/18. A variety of methods will be used to educate staff, students and faculty about what a caucus is and what to expect when they arrive. Precinct Caucus workshops will be presented by POLS classes. Educational posters, social media campaigns and on campus events will be planned by Student Life and Student Senate.
- State of the State Party / Legislative Session Opening Event
The 1st day of Minnesota State Legislative Session is February 20, this event will be used to promote campus awareness of the Minnesota session and will be used by Student Senate to promote awareness of student issues such as funding for TRIO, financial aid and other issues.
- Student Advocacy Efforts

- Student Advocacy Day at Minnesota Legislature will be February 19 – 20, a team of students will meet with Minnesota lawmakers about issues pertaining to higher education and student financial aid.
- DC Summit March 17-19, 2 students will travel to Washington DC for advocacy training and to meet with US lawmakers about issues pertaining to higher education and federal financial aid.
- Student Story Collection
Student stories are collected in Spring Semester and again in November and December. These stories are used as part of student advocacy work.
- Spring Semester Candidate Forums
Candidate forums will be presented as part of POLS classwork and will be open to the entire campus. Student Senate and Student Life will help promote.

Summer and Fall Semester 2018 Initiatives

- 2018 Election Communication Plan
The leadership team will create a targeted comprehensive communication plan for the 2018 general election. This will include utilizing the Student Bulletin, a bi-weekly email which is already sent to all students, campus digital messaging systems, and low tech communication such as posters and sidewalk chalking.
- [Primary Election Education Drive](#)
Minnesota primaries will be held August 14. The Student Senate and Student Life department will create a primary election plan to ensure students know where to vote and what to expect at primaries.
- Fall Voter Registration Campaign
The pre-registration deadline for the general election is October 16. Registration materials will be handed out in classes by faculty, multiple student senate registration events, tabling efforts, classroom talks and other efforts by Student Senate, registration drives incorporated into Student Life events.
- Celebration of Constitution Day
Free apple pie and pocket constitutions are given out. In addition, voter education and registration materials will be available and promoted.
- [Early voting](#) and [vote by mail](#) education campaign
Relatively new in the state, vote by mail and early voting options will be available to voters in the state of Minnesota September 21 – November 5. This will be promoted heavily during civic engagement events, and the leadership team will work with faculty to ensure these options are also promoted in the classroom. Activities will vary depending on results of campaign to become an early voting site.
- Fall Candidate Forums / What's on the Ballot Party
Candidate forums will be presented as part of POLS classwork during fall semester and will be open to the entire campus. All voting options, including early registration, early voting and day of registration will be promoted.
- Election Day Party- Showoff Your Sticker

Promotion of day-of registration and computers to find polling places will be available to all. Free food, music and candy will be available and students, staff and faculty will be encouraged to show their “I voted” stickers.

- **Tour of Minnesota Capital and State Senator Meeting**
Students in POLS classes will make visits to the Capitol building to take a tour and meet with lawmakers. This will be opened up opportunity for the campus community as a whole and will take place in November, after the election.
- **Leadership Academy Session- Civic Engagement (December Session)**
The existing Leadership Academy is a not-for-credit, yearlong workshop series where students may earn a leadership certificate. It does not currently include a civic engagement session. This will be a permanent addition to the annual program.
- **Student Story Collection**
Stories will be collected in November and December to prep of 2019 advocacy work. This collection will be completed by Student Senate.

Reporting

The IHCC Civic Engagement Action Plan will be shared internally with faculty and staff and will be made available on the IHCC website. The plan will be discussed in detail with the advocacy committee, Student Senate and other student groups. The results of each initiative will be reported to the administration, Student Senate and other stakeholders, and those results will impact future Civic Engagement Action Plans. It is not determined whether there will be public distribution of data received from the NSLVE report, but it is the hope of the leadership team.

Evaluation

IHCC has requested data through the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) Report, which will allow IHCC the opportunity to better understand student voting rates. IHCC will begin to receive data in the spring of 2018 and will use this data to assess the 2018 Civic Engagement Action Plan at the halfway point in the plan as well as for future Civic Engagement Action Plans and to measure success. Nichelle Bottko will provide stakeholders with assessment of initiatives throughout the year.