



Civic Engagement Action Plan

2020

Executive Summary

The mission of the Inver Hills Community College (IHCC) Civic Engagement Action Plan is to create a strategy to ensure civic learning and voter engagement and education efforts are an intentional year-round process 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. The primary focus is community and civic engagement, increasing voting rates and civic participation rates among IHCC students, and educating students, staff, and faculty about the political process and their ability to affect it. 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
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.
- Jenni Yamada, Student Life Coordinator
The Student Life Coordinator will advise the Student Senate Advocacy committee and assist with the planning and implementation of co-curricular civic engagement programming.
- Current 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.
- Shannon Williams, Community-Based Learning (CBL) Coordinator
The CBL Coordinator will serve as the primary point of contact for faculty and will plan classroom activities that promote civic engagement. The CBL Coordinator also organizes the campus census mobilization workgroup that will contribute to the civic engagement plan.

Commitment

Voter education and engagement must be a yearlong effort at Inver Hills Community College. The [IHCC Strategic Plan, vision and values](#) provide guidance through which initiatives may 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 NSLVE Data
IHCC will receive the first set of results regarding voter engagement of students during spring semester of 2020. 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 2020 work plan will complement the Civic Engagement Action Plan.

New Ongoing Initiatives

- 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.
- Continue Efforts to Become an Early Voting Site
Past efforts to become an early voting site have not been successful, IHCC will continue to work with the county to understand early voting site needs
- Voter Registration Links on D2L and Campus Website
Beginning in the summer of 2020, 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.
- Complete Count / Census Education Drive
A variety of events and programs will be created to help educate the IHCC community about the 2020 census, and why it is important. Students will create outreach programs to local traditionally under counted communities. The campus census mobilization workgroup will complement the students' efforts by providing faculty development for incorporating the census into spring curricula and co-sponsoring awareness events.

Spring Semester 2020 Initiatives

- Precinct Caucus Education Campaign
Precinct Caucuses in Minnesota are 2/25/20. 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, educational posters, social media campaigns and on campus events will be planned.
- Primary Election Education Drive
Minnesota primaries will be held March 3. 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.
- Student Advocacy Efforts
 - Student Advocacy Day at Minnesota Legislature will be February 17 and 18, 2020: a team of students will meet with Minnesota lawmakers about issues pertaining to higher education and student financial aid.
 - DC Summit March 7-10, 2020: 2 students and an advisor 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.
- Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP)
IHCC receives a paid fellowship position through the Campus Election Engagement Project. The fellow is supervised by the Community-Based Learning Coordinator, and is required to hold four voter registration and education events during the spring semester.
- Census Education/Mobilization
 - Student Senate will hold a pizza party/census education event for students.
 - Student Senate will ask students to pledge to be counted and engage campus by creating a visual thermometer with pledge numbers.
 - Students, faculty and staff will table at various student events with census information.
 - At least one workshop/dialogue about the census will be held.
 - The census workgroup will hold a “Census Day Party” on April 1.

Summer and Fall Semester 2020 Initiatives

- 2020 Election Communication Plan

The leadership team will create a targeted comprehensive communication plan for the 2020 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.

- Fall Voter Registration Campaign

The pre-registration deadline for the general election is October 15. Registration materials will be handed out in classes by faculty, at student senate registration events, tabling efforts, and classroom talks. Registration drives will be incorporated into Student Life and Community-Based Learning events. In addition to these ongoing efforts, there will also be a dedicated effort on National Voter Registration Day.

- 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.

- Fall Candidate Forums / What's on the Ballot Party

Candidate forums will be presented 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 will be invited to 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.

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 2020 and will use this data to assess the 2020 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.