



Voter Friendly Campus 2018

LU Action Plan to Increase Civic Learning, Political Engagement, & Voting Rates

About Lincoln University

According to our website, "Lincoln University of Missouri is a historically black, 1890 land-grant, public, comprehensive institution that provides excellent educational opportunities including theoretical and applied learning experiences to a diverse population within a nurturing, student-centered environment." Founded by black Union soldiers at the end of the Civil War (1866), it was designed for the special benefit of freed African-Americans. In 1890 Lincoln became a federal land-grant institution to further agricultural study. With these two designations, it seemed a natural consequence that after desegregation, a different underserved population would come to Lincoln: whites from lower socio-economic strata. We have stayed true to the soldiers' dream of access and opportunity by educating for the democratic ideal; serving ethnic minorities, the economically disadvantaged, and those who were not adequately prepared for college work earlier in their education.

Lincoln possesses two primary assets with which to advance civic engagement. The first is our location. We are situated in the state capital of Jefferson City, Missouri. Our proximity to the capitol provides us the unique and fortuitous opportunity of bringing those from disadvantaged backgrounds together with those who hold the most political influence in our state.

Secondly, Lincoln is a small school, approximately 2500 students, with a meaningful history. Our small class sizes facilitate interaction and community building. The relationships that are borne here create a vast network of citizens locally, state-wide and internationally. The ethnic diversity of our students, roughly 50% Caucasian and 50% African-American, also sets the stage for meaningful exchanges that further those traits we deem important for 21st-century citizenship.

Our campus is well-situated for improvement. Our NSLVE data for 2016 showed voter turnout amongst students at 40.7%; yet the percentage of registered students was 77%. These rates are unsurprising in that many student organizations sponsor voter registrations drives throughout the year; however, this effort does not carry over into voter turnout efforts. This particular area will be the primary focus of our efforts this year.

Campus and Community Coalition

Primary Contact:

Amy Gossett, Professor Political Scientist

gossetta@lincolnu.edu

573.681.5220

409 Martin Luther King Hall

812 E. Dunklin Ave.

Jefferson City, MO 65101

Members:

Associate Provost for Enrollment Management and Strategic Academic Initiatives
Director of the Honors College
Assistant Dean of Students
Campus and Community Liaison
Office of Recruitment and New Student Engagement
Office of Student Activities
Career & Academic Support Services
KJLU Campus Radio Station
Pre-Law Student Organization
Pi Sigma Alpha, Political Science Honors Fraternity
MO Secretary of State Office
Cole County Clerk Office
MO League of Women Voters

Tentative Coalition Members:

Let America Vote President
Grote & Associates Consulting Firm

Action Plan

Voter Registration

- During Student Orientation Week, August 20-24, we will include voter registration opportunities and information for all incoming freshmen.
- The weekend before classes start, August 25-26, we will offer registration opportunities and information for all students as they move into the residence halls.
- September 4-12, we will visit classrooms across campus to offer registration opportunities and information, particularly for students who do not reside on campus.
- September 13 is Lincoln's Opening Convocation where our campus-wide messaging will begin; including memes, social media posts, television monitor messages and announcements on the learning management system regarding voter registration and upcoming mobilization events on campus.
- Our Constitution Day presenter will be focused on Lincoln's important history in the Civil Rights Movement and our students' ability to make a difference this election day.
- The approximate week between Constitution Day and National Voter Registration Day will be a campus-wide challenge: majors, student and Greek organizations, residence halls, athletic teams, and students, staff and faculty will all compete to see who has registered the most members of their respective groups. Dependent upon funding and potential community donations, there will be various prizes awarded.
- In addition, during September, students who wish to use their campus address to vote will be given registration assistance in each residence-hall lobby.
- We will post the deadline of October 10 for general election registration as the "drop dead day" for Blue Tiger Voices.

Voter Education

- We will hang civic engagement boards with attached markers where students can respond to important questions related to political, economic or social current events.

- Our debate team will host 3-4 issue forums in September and October and invite the Lincoln and Jefferson City communities to attend/participate.
- Similarly, we would like to host candidate forums as the election nears and people are willing to commit to events. Lincoln houses our community public-access channel and KJLU Radio where we may televise and stream these forums.
- Our Honors College will assist in the construction of Local Nonpartisan Candidate Guides which will be circulated via our library, learning management system, and around campus via departmental offices.

Ballot Access

- Place “What’s At Stake?” signage around campus with QR codes that link to nonpartisan voter education websites and a sample ballot.
- In October, we will host debate-watch parties where students may also ask questions of political science faculty when context is needed.
- Because a large portion of our residence hall students are from out-of-state, we will assist with absentee ballot acquisition and mailing via tables in each residence-hall lobby bi-weekly in September and October.
- We will offer commuter students the opportunity to sign up for polling location and hours that will be sent to them via email and text.
- On Election Day, we will run shuttles from residence halls and the student union to the student activity center polling place.

Getting out the vote

- Student and organization registration challenges will also be used as a similar competition on Election Day.
- Utilize student leaders as poll workers on Election Day.
- Memes and placards all over campus with reminders regarding precinct hours and a link to finding your polling place if you are a commuter student.
- Text and social media chains will advertise the Party at the Polling Place on Election Day.
- Because we have precinct at our student center for the first time, we will host an Election Day party adjacent to the actual polling space. Democracy games, food, and drink will be provided. Included in the festivities will be an Instagram white board “I vote because” photo opportunity.
- At Poll Party, we will also help commuter students identify the hours and locations of their polling places.

Timeline

July 1-Aug 20:	Building coalition ties and solidify campus arrangements, gather needed resources
August 21-24:	Week of Welcome Freshmen Orientation Activities
August 25-26:	Residence Hall Welcome Activities
August 27-31:	Finalize Classroom Visits
September 4-12:	Classroom visits across campus
Sept 13-Oct 10:	Messaging campaign regarding registration and mobilization events
September 17-25:	Constitution Day to National Voter Registration Day Events as mentioned above
Sept 26-Oct 19:	Issue forums on campus
Oct 22-Nov 2:	Candidate forums & debate watch parties
November 6:	Party at the Polling Place

Success Measures

Short-term measures:

- NSVLE participation matrices increase
- Tally turnout at events prior to and on Election Day

Long-term measures:

- It will be interesting to note whether the activities scheduled during Freshmen Orientation Week will have a long-term participatory impact with the Fall 2018 cohort.
- We hope to increase collaboration of Student Activities and Academic Affairs. Traditionally, there has been little coordination or co-programming across these two campus sectors.