



Lycoming College Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 Academic Years

This plan was created using the Votes & Ballots Action Planning Form. We highly recommend editing and expanding upon this draft before submitting for review.

Throughout this document, we mention the Strengthening American Democracy Guide as a resource for your review. We encourage you to turn to that resource for guidance and support as you complete your action plan!

I. Executive Summary

This action plan was developed by Caroline Payne, Director, Office of Community Based Learning & Associate Professor of Political Science to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Lycoming College. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 Academic Years, on and around our campus in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

The following groups will be leading this work at Lycoming College in order to accomplish our goals and further institutionalize our commitment to civic learning, democratic engagement, and youth participation in elections:

- Undergraduate Students
- Civic/Political/Community Engagement Center

How can you improve this section? Visit the Strengthening American Democracy Guide and review the Guiding Questions to ensure your Executive Summary includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

II. Leadership

Dr. Caroline L. Payne, Director, Office of Community Based Learning will be overseeing our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- Confirmed initiative leadership:
- Sophia Stabley, Director of Community Service and Involvement
- Dr. Angela Kurtz, Visiting Professor, Civic Engagement course
- Dr. Jacob Berger, Associate Professor of Philosophy
- Tabitha Giacalone, Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life and Involvement
-
-
- Near Future Additions to initiative leadership:
- Special Advisor to the President on Diversity, Equity & Inclusions (Hire pending)
- 2 Representative from Student Senate (Appointments pending)

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership, Representation from different perspectives and areas of expertise, Trusted leaders and organizations who support communities that are historically underrepresented in democracy, Leaders who can help with outreach and power building by bringing more people across campus in to our work

Our group plans to meet 1 time per month at Time TBD/McKinney Board Room

In the event that our leadership leaves campus or is no longer involved in this work, we have a succession plan in place. Sophia Stabley, Director of Community Service and Involvement will be promoted to lead coordinator.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your Leadership Section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

III. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrates commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. We also see this same commitment reflected in our institution's values. They state, "From our mission statement: "Lycoming College promotes individual growth and community development through a combination of academic and co-curricular programs in a supportive residential environment that seeks to foster self-awareness, model social responsibility and provide opportunities to develop leadership skills." Further, "Through a holistic approach, Lycoming College encourages students to become ethical, informed and engaged individuals."

In addition, our campus has mentioned civic learning and democratic engagement in their strategic plan, stating In the 2021 Strategic Plan: Student Life Strategy 1.11: Develop an office of community service within Student Life and provide more options for volunteer activity with an emphasis on engaging the diversity of the regional community. The College has explored different approaches to community service and civic engagement. This plan recognizes that an excellent liberal arts college offers a broad portfolio of opportunities to its students. Accordingly, we will both establish an office of community service within Student Life and provide the CEAE with the administrative capacity to support curricular based options. Enrollment Strategy 3.1.1. Building on the success of the Wertz and Knights Skeath programs, consider developing additional merit scholarships, including in the areas of leadership and civic engagement We also have had a senior leader commit to civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.

On campus, we've seen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs or student organizations
- Campus leaders promoting voting
- On campus polling place
- Voter registration tables
-
- Signage promoting Election Day
- Social media campaigns promoting voter registration, absentee ballot requests, and election day turnout

On campus, we've experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
- Political speakers
-
- Registering to vote
- Civic Holiday events (such as National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day)
-

The emphasis on civic learning and democratic engagement could be increased.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Commitment Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

IV. Landscape

The following tables provide a brief overview of the landscape of our campus. This information is based on data collected from Fall 2021 when our total student enrollment was 1089.

Enrollment Data:

Undergraduate	Graduate	Full Time	Part Time
100.00%	0.00%	1.00%	99.00%

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents	Commuter
55.00%	44.00%			

Gender Demographics:

Men	Women	Non-Binary	Transgender
45.00%	55.00%		

Age:

18-21	22-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50+

Racial Demographics:

Asian	American Indian / Alaska Native	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	2 or More Races
1.00%	0.00%	13.00%	14.00%	0.00%	59.00%	4.00%

Our institution has also utilized the following data gathering tools:

-
-
- National Survey of Student Engagement
-
-

They help to inform our institution's civic learning and democratic engagement efforts by

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Landscape Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

V. Goals

Before setting our civic learning and democratic engagement goals on campus, we took the following information into consideration.

We know our campus faces following challenges internally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

- Our institution's mission statement, values, and strategic plan do not mention civic learning and democratic engagement.
-
- We don't have processes in place for registering large percentages of our students.
-
- We don't use the resources readily available to develop and implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
-
- We don't have sustainable or consistent funding.
-
-
-

We also know our campus faces the following challenges externally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

-
-
-
-
-

With that said, we know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:

-
-
- We have a coalition of people who are positioned to implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
-
- We have ways in which we communicate voting information to our students.
-
- The voter engagement work on our campus is distributed throughout many offices and areas of expertise.
-
-

- We are able to engage student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.
- We have a working relationship with our local election office.
- We have working relationships with community partners who are invested in civic learning and democratic engagement.
-

With this in mind, we have set the three goals that we would like to achieve over the next academic year:

1. Register 70% of our student body to vote by October 24, 2022 (voter registration deadline for Pennsylvania).
2. Achieve voter registration parity across racial and ethnic groups by the end of the 2022-2023 academic year.
3. Get commitments from 60% of students involved in fall 2022 voter turnout initiatives to future work in future democratic engagement efforts.

We have also set three goals that we would like to achieve over the next five years:

1. Register 85% of our student body to vote by September 15, 2024.
2. Surpass the national college-age turnout average for in the November, 2024 elections.
3. Incorporate voter registration in 80% of first year student seminars by fall semester, 2024.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Goals Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

VI. Strategy

Below, we have outlined a strategy describing how we will bring this vision to life in the coming months and years.

These are tactics that we **are already doing** in the **short term** (within the next year):

- 1. Regularly scheduled voter registration tables with additional assistance for requesting absentee ballots.
- 2. Multiple coordinated, on-campus voter education programs and campaigns that are created and executed by students enrolled in community-based learning courses.
- 3. Utilization of Lycoming College social media accounts and website to promote voter education projects and distribute student-designed educational materials.

These are tactics that we **plan to do** in the **short term**:

- 1. Add more community-based learning courses from a variety of disciplines to contribute to the Challenge.
- 2. Add more co-curricular programs such as debate watch parties and election day celebrations for those who voted.

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **short term**:

- 1. Sustain the conversation on voter turnout and civic engagement more broadly throughout the academic year, not simply during the peak of election cycles.
- 2. Host additional elected representatives, notably Senator Bob Casey, to speak with students who are orchestrating these projects.

These are tactics that we **are already doing** for the **long term** (beyond the next year):

- 1. Continue offering CEAE 220 (Civic Engagement) each fall semester. Students in these courses will be responsible for curricular programming to continue our civic engagement and democratic participation conversations and efforts. 2. Hold voter registration and absentee ballot request tables each fall semester.

These are tactics that we **want to do** in the **long term**:

- 1. Revise our Voter Action Plan in preparation for the 2024 election cycle. 2. Regularly host elected officials for conversations around civic engagement and democratic participation each semester. 3. Include voter registration in new student first-weekend.

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **long term**:

- 1. Add student service scholars who, among other things, will be responsible for coordinating the co-curricular civic engagement projects and events. 2. Partner with local election office for sponsored on-campus programming.

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Strategy Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

VII. National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)

We are not currently enrolled in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE).

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your NSLVE section includes everything that you feel should be addressed.

VIII. Reporting & Evaluation

We plan to share this Action Plan internally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Email to members of our campus coalition
- Email to campus administration
- Email to the President
-

We plan to share this Action Plan externally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Post on the campus website
- Release in a public statement
-

We will collect feedback on this plan by:

-
-
- Regrouping with campus coalition to debrief and reflect
- Integrating feedback collection into individual campus efforts
-

We plan to evaluate our success by:

- Reviewing our NSLVE data and looking for improvements year over year
-
- Revisiting our goals, identifying goals achieved and not achieved, and adjusting our short and long-term goals accordingly
-

How can you improve this section? Visit the *Strengthening American Democracy Guide* and review the *Guiding Questions* to ensure your *Reporting & Evaluation Section* includes everything that you feel should be addressed.