



Millersville University

**All In Campus Democracy Challenge  
Action Plan Fall 2019**



## **Fall 2019 Action Plan**

### **Introduction**

#### **Choosing and the Work of the Steering Committee**

Definitions, background and examples

Reflection on MU community engagement activities and best practices- such as ADP, Constitution Week, Congress to Campus, Election education and Election Day assistance  
Community perceptions

#### **Vision and Mission Statement for Community Engagement**

**Community Engagement:** “describes the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.”

**-From the *CARNEGIE ELECTIVE CLASSIFICATION IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT***

#### **University – Community Engagement Strategies**

##### **Action Steps and Learning Outcomes**

1. Formally recognize MU strengths
2. Communicate MU current events, programs and success story
3. Support faculty interest and new ideas
4. Encourage curricular engagement with communities’ current organizations

#### **Strategies and Action Steps for the Future**

## Introduction

Being in the **ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge** affords Millersville University an opportunity to have our campus be recognized for its commitment to improving democratic engagement, increasing student voter participation rates, and graduating students with a lifelong commitment to being informed and active citizens prepared to engage in society.

*Preparing graduates for their public lives as citizens, members of communities, and professionals in society has historically been a responsibility of higher education. The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge recognizes those postsecondary campuses committed to improving democratic engagement, increasing student voter participation rates, and graduating students with a lifelong commitment to being informed and active citizens. It also awards exemplary efforts in these same areas.*

## Definitions, background and examples

**By joining the 2019-2020 ALL In Challenge our campus commits to:**

- Improve democratic education and engagement, and meaningful dialogue, increasing student voter participation rates, and graduating students with a lifelong commitment to being informed and active citizens.
- Convene a campus a campus-wide committee that includes members from academic affairs, student affairs, and the student body. This committee will develop and implement an action plan that will be submitted to Civic Nation, to be shared publicly on its website.
- Participate in the [National Study on Learning, Voting, and Engagement \(NSLVE\)](#) in order to our measure our student voter participation rates. NSLVE is a part of Tufts University's [Institute for Democracy and Higher Education](#) which studies student political learning and engagement in democracy. Create a unified campus voter education and registration clearing house, to gain useful data, and protect students' information.
- Share our campus' 2019 NSLVE results with Civic Nation in order to be eligible for a recognition seal and/or award and allowing those rates to be shared publicly.
- Ensuring a vigorous discussion and timely analysis of major public policy issues affecting the nation and the world through our annual conferences, debates and other events.
- Sustaining a public policy leadership program for highly talented and civically engaged juniors and seniors who show a deep commitment to the ideals of the **All In** Democracy Challenge.
- Set goals, plan events, and create marketing plan announcing programming and goals.
- Run blast email campaigns and social media coordination
- Meet (monthly) to assess events, gauge participation and areas for growth.

## Steering Committee

- The steering committee on Millersville's campus is comprised of Faculty, Staff and Students in collaboration with Student Affairs on campus as well as our Student Senate.

### Faculty and Staff:

**Dr. Adam Lawrence**, Acting Chair, Government and Political Affairs,

Coordinator, Robert S. and Sue Walker Center for Civic Responsibility and Leadership

Acting Coordinator, The Harrisburg Internship Semester (THIS)

**Ms. Lori Leaman**, Programs and Events Coordinator Civic and Community Engagement

**Elizabeth "Bitsy" Sanders**, Graduate Assistant

### Student Representatives:

Our Student representatives on campus are a cohort of 10 students selected annually to be Walker Fellows.



## MU Steps and Recent Best Practices and Learning Outcomes

- **Constitution Week**
  - Millersville University plans multiple events for Constitution Week. We have lectures given by professors on the modern day importance of the Constitution and the historical importance of the Constitution. We have giveaways such as t-shirts and pocket Constitution's for students when they come to the events, free candy and snacks. We also had a week long voter registration drive where we got seventy new students to register to be able to vote. We created a MU constitution board where students committed their support to the US Constitution and signed it with an authentic quill pen. We created a social media presence and photo opportunity outlet for all students.
- **Voter Registration Tabling**
  - Help students register to vote, understand the process, determine where to find additional party information and provide them with absentee ballot forms if they need them. We have had many students register to vote. We have themed days to encourage participation as well and give away items to students who are registered to vote.
- **Voter Van transporting students to local polls**
  - As our university is spread out among three potential polling locations, we encourage students to educate themselves to their correct poll location, and provide transportation on Election Day.
- **Debate night**
  - Host watch party and Debate live stream. Roundtable discussions with Campus party representatives.

- **Election Night/Super Tuesday Watch Party**
  - Games that relate to politics/ elections
  - Live stream the election/primary coverage
  - Get students involved in the election process
  - Get students to understand why the election process is important to them and the country
  - Discuss why the issues are important to discuss and why it is important to be civically engaged
  - Invite local legislators and policy makers to greet students on campus in a casual atmosphere
- **Legislative Speaker Series**
  - Pennsylvania Legislators are invited to campus to speak with students on what they do as legislators, their aspirations, and their recommendations for those aspiring to public service careers, and to give students a better idea of how legislating and legislators impact their lives.
  - “So You Want to Be an Elected Official” educational event bringing local constituents to campus to guide us through the process.
- **Congress to Campus**
  - Two former members of Congress, one representing each major party, come to campus and speak to students in their classrooms during the day and then speak to students, faculty and the campus and regional community in the evening. These former members of Congress discuss what they did while in Congress and what it was like to be in public service and to represent their constituents. Students also have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have of the former members of Congress.

### **Learning Outcomes**

The Learning outcomes for all of these engagement events assure that all students:

1. Understand the formal actors in the public policy process (executive, legislative, and judicial branches)
2. Be registered to vote locally or with absentee ballots, and understand all party implications
3. Understand the external actors in the public policy arena (lobbyists, media, interest groups, parties)
4. Examine the careers and experiences of professionals in the policy arena
5. Disseminate this information to make responsible decisions that will affect their future career, familial and life goals.

### **Strategies and Action Steps for the Future**

This is Millersville’s fourth year with NSLVE. Its will be our ongoing goal to use the information that we are provided to gain insight to needs of students in forthcoming years. We will continue to monitor and measure these successes, and as such, grow the program with the data.

Millersville will continue to engage students in the process of voter registration, as well as education and engaging their peers. We will stream line the process across campus, keeping abreast of numbers and potential outside threats to securely registering. Outside organizations will work with an approved MU department to collaborate on a fair, seamless process.

Millersville will continue to collaborate with curricular, and co-curricular programs campus wide to encourage voting and student engagement within the political arena.

Our University will continue and expand our commitment to educating and engaging all of our students and the members of the MU community to participate in the democratic process. It is our hope that all students will graduate actively engaged, productive citizens who are willing to face challenges, and to create solutions, to improve themselves and our global society.