

Strengthening American Democracy
Pacific University Action Plan
2019-2020
(Submitted December 13, 2019)

I. Executive Summary

Pacific University is committed to strengthening our support of American democracy by enhancing our students' awareness, motivation, and ability to participate in democratic institutions and processes. Although the university has been on a trajectory of institutionalizing our approach to civic education for at least a decade, we are looking to actively increase our electoral education and are in the early stages of doing so in a deliberate and strategic way.

This action plan is the second iteration of our strategy for democratic engagement. It is neither as comprehensive nor as inclusive as we would like it to be, but we intend for it to be a starting point for a long-term approach that is both inclusive and comprehensive--as well as iterative as we learn and adapt over time. The student and permanent staff of the Tom McCall Center for Civic Engagement have drafted this plan with informal input from other offices, students, faculty, and staff and with the intention of establishing a long-term working group in Spring 2020.

After crafting our first action plan for the 2018-2019 academic year, we experienced some unexpected staffing and resources changes. As a result, we focused our resources in 2018-2019 on implementation, such as designing a new walking guide from campus to the ballot box off campus, over further development of a working group. We therefore plan to spend more time in early 2020 revamping our working group and then tasking that team with further development of the details of this plan. However, as with our first action plan, we target voter education, voter registration, and voter turnout in this plan. These three areas offer opportunities for significant gains with relatively little systemic change for the university, and can be implemented within existing structures and supports. As we progress in our efforts, we may add other areas or elements to deepen our work to strengthen democracy.

II. Leadership

1. Who (individual and/or office) is coordinating and overseeing the institution's work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement?
 - The Tom McCall Center for Civic Engagement is coordinating this effort, under the leadership of its director, Stephanie Stokamer

2. Who is chairing the working group?
 - Stephanie Stokamer, Ed.D., Director of the McCall Center and Associate Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences.

3. What is the role of the working group?

- The role of the working group is to garner the resources and brainpower to create this plan, implement it, and improve it over time.
4. How will working group members be selected?
- 12-15 working group members will be selected from among a variety of stakeholders based on availability to meet.
 - The group will begin meeting in Spring 2020, and seeks to create a more permanent and inclusive body based on:
 - Interest
 - Ability to help us develop and implement a plan that takes equity and diversity into account
 - Ability to connect with and/or represent students across the university
 - Ability to meet and contribute to working group
5. What are working group members' responsibilities?
- Attend regular meetings (approximately every 3 weeks)
 - Discuss action plan items with their various networks
 - Provide input and feedback both as individuals and as liaisons to various networks
 - Take responsibility for one or more sections of the action plan as needed
 - Support implementation of the action plan as possible with their position and ability.
6. How is the working group inclusive of different campus and community stakeholders?
- SOFAR stakeholders (12-15 people total)
 - Students
 1. Undergraduate and graduate representation
 - McCall Center staff (undergraduate)
 - McCall Fellow (undergraduate)
 - TBD graduate student representative(s)
 2. Student senate representation
 3. Club and student group representation
 4. Residence Life representation
 5. Athletics, Greek Life
 - Organizations in Community
 1. TBD
 - Faculty
 1. Jim Moore, Director of Political Outreach, McCall Center
 2. Additional faculty TBD
 - Administration
 1. TBD
 - Residents of Forest Grove / Washington County
 1. TBD
 - Identity-based communities and constituencies

- McCall Center staff will connect with student leaders involved with such groups as the Student Multicultural Center, Hispanic Heritage Student Association, Muslim Student Association, Nā Haumāna O Hawai'i, Rainbow Coalition, Pacific Christian Fellowship, and others for which identity-based political activity may be relevant.
 - We will review the composition of our group as it forms to determine whether there are voices missing from our group or others who may want to be involved.
 - Political diversity
 - College Democrats/Republicans/other political clubs if applicable
 - We will invite individuals with particular political leanings to be involved if there are not active groups on campus that represent them. For example, if there is no active College Republicans club next year, we will put out a call for individual participation.
7. Who are the working group members and how are they involved?
- 2019-2020 Action Plan Draft team:
 - Stephanie Stokamer, director, leader / convener of the effort
 - Morgan Knapp, program coordinator / participant / writer
 - Lauren Maland '20, participant / writer
 - Additional working team members will be added in early 2020
8. What academic departments and which faculty within academic affairs are involved?
- CIV – Civic Engagement: Stephanie Stokamer
 - POLS – Political Science and Government: Jim Moore
 - Others TBD
9. What units within student affairs are involved and which administrators are involved?
- TBD
10. Which students and student organizations are involved?
- TBD
11. What community and/or national (private, nonprofit, government) organizations are involved?
- TBD
12. Is the working group coordinating with the local election office? If so, with whom and how?
- We have begun this conversation. The local election office in our case is the county office, about 25 minutes away in a different town. We have reached out to them and are in touch on topics such as refining our system for getting voter guides to students and ballot drop box locations.

13. How often will the working group meet?

- We met sporadically in Fall 2019
- We plan to meet every three weeks in Spring 2020 and then every other week in Fall 2020

III. Commitment

1. How does the institution and its leadership demonstrate commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement? Is there an explicit, visible commitment on the part of the governing board, president/chancellor, and senior leadership?

- a. Is the commitment communicated within the institution? To whom, specifically, and how?
- b. Is the commitment communicated outside the institution (i.e., to external stakeholders and the general public)? To whom, specifically, and how?

- The institution and leadership currently demonstrate commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement through support of the Tom McCall Center for Civic Engagement, a mission statement in line with these principles (see below), and academic integration of civic learning (especially at the undergraduate level—see below). At the time of submission, the working group for this action plan has not identified additional explicit support for political participation at the level of upper administration, but expects implicit support over the next couple of years at least (i.e., we believe the administration to support this work but they are not actively leading it at this time).

2. Is educating for civic learning and democratic engagement a pervasive part of institutional culture? Is it ongoing, consistent, systematic, and sustainable across programs, departments, and the entire institution? How do you know?

- Educating for civic learning is a significant, if not pervasive, part of the undergraduate institutional culture, but is not yet consistent and systematic across the entire institution.
- The McCall Center primarily serves and supports the undergraduate experience at Pacific, but there is no counterpart unit for each of the graduate colleges or other campuses.

3. How is the institution's commitment reflected in existing statements and documents (e.g., mission statement, vision, core values, strategic plan)?

- The institution's commitment is implied but not explicit in existing communications:
 - The mission statement: "A diverse and sustainable diverse and sustainable community dedicated to discovery and excellence in

teaching, scholarship and practice, Pacific University inspires students to think, create, care and pursue justice in our world.”

- Core values: “Serving the Global Community”
 - Accreditation objective: “Prepare students for engaged, responsible citizenship and community service”
 - The institution’s commitment is made explicit via the McCall Center
 - McCall Center mission: “The Tom McCall Center for Civic Engagement at Pacific University fosters an engaged campus that connects students, faculty, and staff with community partners to serve the common good, revitalize our community, and facilitate learning within a community context. The Center promotes the value of life-long active citizenship, building a sense of empowerment to effect meaningful social and political participation, while cultivating the development of critical thinking skills and the capacity to reflect on one’s own set of values.”
 - Operating definition of civic engagement (included in multiple marketing materials): “Civic engagement addresses a significant social, political, or environmental issue in the community through actions that can make a difference on those issues, including service, advocacy, awareness-raising, activism, action-oriented research, electoral participation, and political involvement.”
4. What are the institution’s overall civic, democratic, and/or political learning outcomes? Is there a process in place to ensure that outcomes are measured and met?
- The institution does not have overall civic, democratic, or political learning outcomes, but does have objectives related to the core theme of Serving the Global Community and accreditation progress.
 - Percentage of graduates who, as part of their degree program, participated in civic engagement, service learning, and other community-based learning, as measured in our Alumni Survey.
 - Degree to which students embrace a pluralistic orientation, as measured by the Diverse Learning Environments (DLE) survey.
 - Percentage of recent graduates reporting participation in civic activities at least once in the previous year, as measured by Pacific Survey of Recent Graduates.
 - The College of Arts and Sciences does have learning outcomes for the civic engagement component of the core curriculum (see below). These outcomes state that through completion of the civic engagement (“CE”) requirement, students will be able to:

1. Apply disciplinary knowledge (facts, theories, experiences, etc.) to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government;
 2. Effectively communicate (e.g., express, listen, and adapt to others) in a civil manner (i.e., courteous and respectful regardless of differences);
 3. Demonstrate attitudes of social responsibility (i.e., individual and collective obligation to act for the greater good).
- The College of Arts and Sciences requires assessment for the civic engagement core requirement. The college assessment plan hinges on a rotational cycle of planning, collecting data, analyzing evidence, and revising accordingly. As part of this cycle, civic engagement is scheduled to begin data collection in Spring 2020 for the first round of formal assessment since the creation of the requirement.
5. How is educating for civic learning and democratic engagement included in the general education curriculum?
 - The general education core for the College of Arts and Sciences (which serves most undergraduates at the university) includes a civic engagement requirement, most typically met through a "CE"-designated course of 2 credits or more.
 - Most graduate programs at Pacific meet national accreditation standards for specific professions, and often include service-learning or community-based learning as part of their programs. While many of these field experiences (such as social work or education practicum placements or clinical training in health professions) serve community needs, they are not typically grounded in specifically *civic* learning outcomes.
 6. How is educating for civic learning and democratic engagement included in the co-curriculum?
 - Co-curricular civic learning is promoted through the McCall Center's programming, such as GIVE projects (Get Involved Via Engagement) and Pacific Votes.
 - We have work to do outside of the McCall Center to promote civic and democratic learning in other areas, such as through clubs.
 - We do not have college- or institution-wide goals for co-curricular programming at all, let alone for civic learning, and these are not likely forthcoming soon.

IV. Landscape

1. Are civic learning and democratic engagement overall campus learning outcomes?

- No.
2. What does assessment data show about the political climate and democratic engagement on campus? How does this data compare to that of peer institutions?
 - 2016 NSLVE data indicates 51.2% voting rate compared to 50.4% nationwide; this is an increase of 3.2% from 2012, but falls short of the rate for master's institutions (52.9%) and other private institutions (51.5%).
 - More than two thirds of undergraduate (77%) and graduate (69%) alumni reported volunteering in the past year.
 - 77% of recent undergraduate alumni and 69% of recent graduate alumni reported participating in civic activities at least once in the previous year.
 3. How is civic learning and democratic engagement present in the curriculum?
 - a. In which courses is it taught?
 - b. In which courses is it listed as a learning outcome?
 - Civic learning and democratic engagement is taught with specific learning outcomes in the 50+ courses designated to meet the CE requirement for undergraduates.
 - We do not know whether or how civic learning is taught at the graduate level as of this plan.
 4. How is civic learning and democratic engagement present in the co-curriculum?
 - a. In which departments is this included?
 - b. What initiatives, programs, and activities focus on this?
 - See III.6 above.
 5. What internal barriers (e.g., limited funding, staff resistance, lack of leadership) prevent the institution from being successful?
 - Civic learning and democratic engagement are championed from the McCall Center, and supported by administrators, but not led by administrators.
 - The institution does not have a pervasive *political* culture, i.e., not a strongly activist student body, meager Democrat/Republican clubs, etc.
 - Learning outcomes for civic engagement are relatively new and as of yet, unassessed (planned for Spring 2020).
 - The university has several colleges and campuses that operate relatively autonomously and are not centralized with respect to civic or community engagement. Coordination of our efforts will likely be difficult across university entities, and institution-wide initiatives will be challenging.
 6. What external barriers (e.g., election laws, voter ID laws, lack of proximity to polling location) prevent the institution from being successful?

- The university is situated in a small town on the outskirts of the Portland metropolitan area, so is not the heart of local or regional political activity.
 - Oregon votes by mail, so understanding that process and implications for students is a barrier (although vote by mail itself is relatively easy and generally facilitates participation).
7. What resources are available to help the institution be successful?
- The McCall Center is staffed, funded, and committed to this effort.
 - Oregon has a strong vote-by-mail system and helpful elections offices.
 - The university has excellent political expertise within the POLS faculty.
8. What additional resources are needed to help the institution be successful?
- The answer to this question will need to emerge over time; we have the resources we need to get going.

V. Goals

1. Long Term Goals

a. What impact is desired?

- We have not articulated specific impacts grounded in baseline data. Our general goals are:
 1. Increase voter registration among students
 2. Increase voter education / understanding of campaigns and candidates
 3. Increase voter turnout.
- Setting additional goals or adding specificity to those above will be a task of the working group in the future.

b. What knowledge, skills, and capacities (learning outcomes) does the institution want students to achieve and graduate with in order to be active and informed?

- We still need to determine whether we *want* institution-wide outcomes. However, if we move forward in that direction, the existing College of Arts & Sciences learning outcomes (see III.4 above) will be our starting point. These outcomes state that through completion of the civic engagement (“CE”) requirement, students will be able to:
 1. Apply disciplinary knowledge (facts, theories, experiences, etc.) to one’s own participation in civic life, politics, and government;
 2. Effectively communicate (e.g., express, listen, and adapt to others) in a civil manner (i.e., courteous and respectful regardless of differences);

3. Demonstrate attitudes of social responsibility (i.e., individual and collective obligation to act for the greater good).

- c. What does the institution want to accomplish over the next 10 years?
 - This has not yet been determined as an institution beyond what individual departments (such as the McCall Center) want to accomplish.

2. Short-Term Goals

- a. What does the institution want to accomplish in the next year or two? What needs to be accomplished in order to move towards the achievement of long-term goals?
 - Create and sustain a working group on political engagement that crosses internal university boundaries and helps us look at our democratic engagement more holistically.
 - Create and implement a train-the-trainer model of peer-to-peer voter registration housed in the McCall Center.
 - Create and implement teaching modules for political engagement that can be adapted in orientation programming, first year seminars (FYS), and CE courses, as well as other areas of campus.
 - Pilot voter education opportunities such as candidate forums or “explainers” for ballot issues.
 - Actively promote voter turnout for 2020 primary and presidential elections

VI. Strategy

1. What is the work? What are the planned activities?
2. Who will do the work? Who is responsible for implementing each planned activity?
3. Who is the work for? Who is the audience for each activity?
4. When will the work happen? When will each activity occur on campus?
5. What is the purpose of the work? Why is each activity being implemented and what is the goal for each activity?

Activities	Purpose	Who is the audience	Who will do it	Timeline
Voter registration				
University-wide voter registration email	- To meet federal mandate - To institutionalize communication on basic registration facts	- All students	- McCall Center Staff	- Already occurring, with ongoing refinement. - Annually in Fall Semester, additionally in spring for May elections.

First year student outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To reach students who may be new to voting and new to the area - To enculturate new students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First year students - Transfer students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CE leaders, via FYS, Orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Already occurring, with ongoing refinement. - Annually in Fall & Spring semesters. - Opportunity exists for expansion into other Orientation programs.
CE courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To capture the “low-hanging fruit” of faculty and students primed for political engagement via CE course material - To support achievement of SLOs for CE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students in CE courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CE leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Already occurring, with ongoing refinement. - Annually in all semesters.
Peer-to-peer training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To empower student leaders to register others to vote - To increase the capacity of the McCall Center to reach students across the university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student leaders - McCall Center staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pacific Votes student leaders and McCall Center staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Already occurring, with ongoing refinement. - McCall Center initiated in Spring & Fall semesters - Ad hoc at request of student leaders
Peer-to-Peer voter registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To facilitate voter registration across campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student leaders - CE leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Already occurring, with ongoing refinement. - Annually on National Voter Registration Day (Fall semester) and ad hoc at request of student leaders. - Opportunity exists for expansion to Spring semester.

Voter education & empowerment				
Continue voter education opportunities such as candidate forums or “explainers” for ballot issues.	- To facilitate voter awareness and understanding prior to casting a ballot	- Undergraduate students on Forest Grove campus	- CE leaders - McCall Center staff	- Ad hoc as opportunities arise. - Multiple already scheduled for Spring and Fall 2020.
Continue to improve access to voter education materials online	- To compile and share resources for independent voter education efforts	- All students, faculty, and staff - Community members	- McCall Center staff	- Already occurring, with ongoing refinement. - Special projects scheduled for Spring 2020.
Student voter empowerment events	- To empower students to complete their ballots through the provision of resources (e.g. voter guides, stamps) and encouragement	- Undergraduates on the Forest Grove campus	- McCall Center staff	- Annually on Make Voting Less Scary (Fall semester). - Opportunities exist for expansion to Spring semester.
Voter turnout				
Actively promote voter turnout for Spring and Fall elections	- To remind campus and community of election dates and ballot return timelines, methods, and locations	- All students, faculty, and staff - Community members	- McCall Center staff	- Already occurring, with ongoing refinement.
Long-term planning				
Create and sustain a working group on political engagement	- To engage in more comprehensive and inclusive long-range planning for political engagement	- Cross-section of students, faculty, staff, and community members	- McCall Center staff	- Convened Spring 2020 - Meetings scheduled with increasing frequency through Spring and Fall 2020
Get better baseline data on existing civic learning and democratic engagement practices	- To better understand ourselves as a university system in order to make	- Various offices and units across campus	- Working group	- Spring 2020

	informed plans and decisions			
Set institutional goals	- To advance our political engagement as a university with institution-wide goals	- Various offices and units across campus	- Working group	- Spring 2021

VII. Reporting

1. How will the plan be shared, internally and externally? Please state where the plan will be shared.
 - At a minimum, the plan will be made available on the McCall Center website for both internal and external audiences, and shared with all known community partners and internal stakeholders via email newsletter distribution.
 - Other venues for distribution will be explored with the next stage working group.
2. Will the plan be made public? If so, how?
 - The plan will be publicly available, but at this stage will not be promoted via press release as we are in the early stages of developing our work in this area.
3. Will the data used to inform the plan be made public? If so, how?
 - The data used in the report is already public, primarily via documents available on the Pacific University web site.

VIII. Evaluation

1. What is the purpose of the evaluation? What does the institution want to know and be able to do with the information gathered?
 - The purpose of our evaluation is to improve our understanding of what we do and could do better so that we have a basis for sound decision-making and planning.
2. Who is the audience for the evaluation?
 - The audience is primarily internal, including program administrators (e.g., McCall Center staff), university administrators, students, and faculty.
 - There may be opportunities for external audiences of the evaluation, but we may not know that until we have the data.
3. Who will carry out the evaluation?
 - Working group members, led by McCall Center staff
4. When will the evaluation be carried out and completed?

- We will review this action plan in Winter 2020 once the working group is established, and then again in Spring 2021 after the 2020 election.
5. What information (data, evidence) must be collected and how will it be collected?
What are the performance measures and indicators of success?
- The evidence collected will be based on the strategy articulated in section VI.
 - For most action items, the data will include names/types of activities and their quantity, frequency, and/or duration. When possible, we will also track additional data points, such as number of students registered to vote with peer-to-peer registration system.
6. How will information (data, evidence) be analyzed?
- The working group will analyze the results.
7. How will the results of the evaluation be shared?
- The results of the evaluation will be folded into the next iteration of the plan.