



**Democratic Engagement Plan 2020
Piedmont Virginia Community College
Charlottesville, VA**

Disclaimer: In mid-May PVCC announced that classes will resume online in the fall. Therefore, much of the planning already completed needs to be modified for a virtual environment. At this time planning is ongoing. What follows is our first draft.

OVERVIEW

In January 2020 PVCC adopted a new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) *Civic Sense: Engaging students in the Civic Life of our Communities*. Our vision statement is:

PVCC's civic engagement efforts seek to build student leaders who have a strong commitment to democracy and diversity, and who engage in the civic life of their communities through collaborative, creative, and critical problem-solving.

The plan includes three student learning outcomes. The first applies directly to democratic engagement and states that *PVCC graduates will actively participate in civic life by voting in local, state, and federal elections.*

The lead PVCC employee for this plan is Connie Jorgensen, Assistant Professor of Political Science/QEP Director. The QEP Implementation Team will provide advice for this effort. This fifteen-member team includes faculty, administration, and staff.

Our draft plan is as follows:

PVCC VOTES!

In November 2020 Virginia elects all members of the U.S. house and one U.S. senator, as well as the U.S. President.

According to the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report in 2016 PVCC's voter registration rate was 76.9%. ***Our goal is to raise that by 5%.*** We plan to do that by:

- Thanks to Campus Vote Project, PVCC has funds for two Democracy Fellows to devote 10 hours a week to voter engagement.
- A registration link will be put on the PVCC website under Student Life.
- Canvas: The Canvas administrator will post register to vote, absentee ballot, and get out the vote reminders on Canvas.
- Faculty will be asked register students in class.
- A Voter Module will be included in the required Student Development Course.
- We are developing a weekly *Election Update* email newsletter that will include information about absentee voting, polling places, news from both liberal and conservative sources, and other election related information.
- Online Election Fair: Participants may include:
 - Candidates looking for volunteers
 - Localities looking for poll workers
 - Register to vote and absentee ballot information
 - Political book suggestions by the PVCC Library
- PVCC is participating in:
 - Vote Early Day <https://www.voteearlyday.org/>
 - Ask Every Student, a project sponsored by the Students Learn, Students Vote Coalition

VOTER and ISSUE EDUCATION

- Civic Engagement Week: The week between Constitution Day (September 17, 2020) and National Register to Vote Day (September 22) is designated as Civic Engagement Week at PVCC. We plan to host virtual speaker or college town hall
- PVCC's One Book: The PVCC community selected *You're More Powerful Than You Think* by Eric Liu as the One Book for Fall 2020. The book will guide many of our democratic engagement activities this fall.

- In the past PVCC has worked with CBS19 in the planning of a televised debate for candidates running for Congress in the 5th District of Virginia. This is currently under negotiation.
- Free Speech Week, October 19-25. We will host some sort of online event connected to the One Book to commemorate and celebrate Free Speech Week.
- Voter Guide: Students in Journalism and Political Science classes will collaborate with the PVCC library on a non-partisan Voter Guide that focuses on student issues for the elections for the House and Senate.
- We are in the process of improving our social media presence in order to reach more students.
- Election day is now a holiday in Virginia. Classes will not be held. We will use this opportunity to encourage students to work at the polls.

AFTER THE ELECTION

- PVCC plans to host at least one, hopefully more Deliberative Dialogues for the campus community.
- The annual student lobbying trip to the Virginia General Assembly, arranged through the PVCC President's Office. January/February 2021. Approximately 30 students are expected to attend
- A team of students will plan the fourth annual Civic Leadership Conference on a Friday night and Saturday in March/April.
- We will continue to seek funding for a Center for Civic Engagement.

DATA COLLECTION/MEASUREMENT

- PVCC has requested our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report.
- There is a Voting Quiz in the required Student Development Course

- PVCC's Student Satisfaction Survey has added questions to help measure other types of political participation

For more information contact Connie Jorgensen at cjorgensen@pvcc.edu.