

Executive Summary

Regis College was founded in 1927 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston. The founding women instilled in its mission four core values: gracious hospitality, love and service to the Dear Neighbor without distinction, peaceful resolution of conflict, and care for all of God's creation. It is in this vein that Regis is inspired to promote civic engagement among its students, faculty and staff.

The mission makes this sentiment clear: We educate the whole person, preparing our students to pursue excellence, to become change agents in their own communities, and to serve and lead as advocates for a more just and compassionate global society.

Leadership

- Walt Horner, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs
- Bridget Buoniconti, Dean of Students
- Jeff Joseph, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs
- Gerena Walker, Director of the Center for Student Engagement
- Erin Wisniewski, Senior Director of Planning and Operations
- Elise Yonika, Assistant Director of Communication

Commitment

Regis has devoted resources, both through curricular and co-curricular opportunities to engage the campus community in civic engagement. Some examples of this have been debates on pertinent ballot questions for the state of Massachusetts, the hosting of a live national radio broadcast of Dan Rea's Talk the Vote show, voter registration drives, and the development of courses specifically geared toward generating civically engaged minds. This all relates back to the mission of the institution, where Regis strives to encourage students to become advocates for a more just and compassionate society.

Landscape

Regis currently has approximately 3,000 students. Approximately 1,000 of those students are at the undergraduate level; 1,000 are graduate students; and 1,000 are online. With such diverse learners, it remains important that the task force focuses on all student constituencies. It is imperative that the task force focus on this immediately to ensure that all students, faculty, staff, and alumni that come to Regis feel comfortable being their true, authentic selves.

Short-term Goals

- Create opportunities for Regis students to engage in meaningful conversations that respect other's views.
- Make Regis a welcoming environment that encourages student voice on controversial topics.

- Engage staff and faculty on political issues and encourage participation in curricular and co-curricular settings.
- Host voter registration drives on campus to encourage engagement.
- Intentionally engage with campus community through social media channels.

Long-term Goals

- Inspired by the mission of the institution, creating a legacy of student political engagement beyond their four years at the institution.
- Ensure incorporation into the curriculum of most courses.
- Incorporate civic engagement into the core curriculum.
- Create a culture of acceptance so as not to alienate anyone based on political views.

Challenges

- We don't have someone whose job responsibility is to foster civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- We don't have processes in place for registering large percentages of our students.
- We don't have a working relationship with our local election office.
- We don't have working relationships with community partners who are invested in civic learning and democratic engagement.

Strengths

- 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.
- Voter engagement efforts on campus are nonpartisan.
- We are able to engage student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.

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

In 2020, Regis students voted at a rate of 70.4%, which was an increase from 2016 of 13.2%. The report is attached to this document.

Strategy

- **January 2024**-Action planning team will meet bi-weekly to map out goals for spring semester and how the institution will achieve those goals. CC 105-a one credit course designed for political discourse will return in the fall semester.
- **February, March, April 2024**-Events surrounding debates and voter registration drives will occur. Social media will ramp up during this time. Candidate information will be available. Voting in the democratic primaries will take precedence during this time.
- **Summer 2024**-Action planning team will meet regularly throughout the summer to map out goals for fall semester. Engagement initiatives will begin at summer orientation (June) and extend throughout the summer for all students.

- **September & October 2024**-Voter registration drives will continue until the last date possible. Debates on key legislation votes will occur on campus, and presidential debates will be aired and discussed.
 - **September 17-National Register to Vote Day--** Instagram Post: Today is National Voter Registration Day and Regis is ALL IN to celebrate this day and to ensure that we're all #VoteReady. How can you participate?
Register to Vote: It's simple, it's free, and it's secure. Link in bio.
 #REGISterToVote #RegisRockstheVote
 Here is the link: <https://allintovote.org/register/>
- **Celebrate Voter Education Week (dates TBD)**
 - Monday-#VoteReady
 - Tuesday-#MailReady
 - Wednesday-#VotePlanReady
 - Thursday-#BallotReady
 - Friday-#WeReady2024
- **Host Presidential and VP Debate Watch Parties with activities** (Bingo)
- **November & December 2024**-Ensure that all students feel welcome and that discussion is respected and heard.
- **2025 and Beyond**-Continue to develop ways in which civic engagement is incorporated into the curriculum and co-curriculum and making Regis a place for all students to feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas.

Reporting

All members of the task force are expected to bring plans and report back on events and initiatives to their respective campus constituencies. In addition to being part of NSLVE, the institution will strive to report information out to the campus community through the weekly e-publications that are sent from the Marketing and Communications department. Finally, we will continue to utilize social media outlets for promotion of initiatives and success.

Evaluation

Student voice is of utmost importance in this process. We will not only have student input in all of our activities, but we will also hold focus groups to discuss what we have done well and can do better. We hope to be able to see beyond the NSLVE report to see if our efforts are effective.

Re-assessment will occur continually, and should there be a need, new goals will be developed with the civically engaged student in mind.

