

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

- Kelly Golden, Associate Dean and Executive Director of Regis North
- Walt Horner, Dean of Students
- Ed Hunt, Assistant Professor
- Dan Leahy, Director of the Center for Ministry and Service
- Kirk Lee, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs
- Michael Lynch, Senior Director of Communication and Content Strategy
- Denise Mashmasarmi, Coordinator for Multicultural Student Success
- Ariana McCormack, President of the Student Government Association
- Erin Wisniewski, Senior Director of Planning and Operations
- Elise Yonika, Assistant Director of the Center for Student Engagement

Commitment

Over the past few years, 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. Additionally, a campus climate survey from 2018 noted that students that hold differing political views from the majority of students, faculty, and staff reported unease when it came to their own political beliefs. 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.

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

In 2018, Regis students voted at a rate of 43.2%, which was an increase from 2014 of 21.6%. The report is attached to this document.

Strategy

- **January 2020**-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 begin in the spring semester.
- **February, March, April 2020**-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 2020**-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. All of the summer initiatives have been moved to an online format due to the COVID-19 crisis.
- **September & October 2020**-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. Virtual opportunities for these events will be created should the campus not be open due to the COVID-19 crisis.
- **Election Day 2020**-Presidential election live coverage. Create an "I Voted" campaign contest.

- **November & December 2020**-Ensure that all students feel welcomed and that discussion is respected and heard.
- **2021 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

Each quarter, the task force will evaluate progress with regard to goals. There will be a rubric established for events to ensure student learning objectives have been reached, and student evaluations will be given to ensure satisfaction. The NSLVE data will remain important as well, as that will be our best indicator of voter engagement success.

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