Civic Engagement Action Plan
Census and Voter Registration

Summary
South Central College's (SCC) Student Senators (North Mankato and Faribault) developed this Civic Engagement Action plan in 2019-2020. Student Life continues to adapt this plan to prioritize Student Voting and Civic Engagement at South Central College.

The primary goal of this plan is to increase civic engagement on SCC's campuses. During the 2024 calendar year, civic engagement among college students will be vitally important to the sustainability of the state government, and local elections will affect students' daily lives. This plan will overview how various departments at SCC can engage with and support this critical work. The main objective is to ensure all students are registered to vote in the 2022 election. Student leaders will implement this plan and require support from SCC constituents. Most initiatives will take place between August 2024— November 2024 to increase voter turnout and engagement.

Leadership
South Central College, in its commitment to enhancing democratic engagement, will collaborate with local civic engagement groups to host on-campus opportunities, with the aim of expanding civic engagement among its students. This multifaceted initiative will be led by a leadership coalition representing various sectors:
1. **Students**: Led by representatives from each campus Student Senate
2. **Faculty**: TBD: Coordinated by [Name]
3. **Student Affairs**: Guided by Brian Yingst, Director of Student Success and Nicole Emerson, Assistant Director for Student Life.
4. **Community/National Organizations**: Collaborating with organizations such as the Faribault Chamber of Commerce and Greater Mankato growth. Open to further collaboration with other external agencies, such as the League of Women Voters.
5. **Local Elections Office Coordination**: Ensure communication with the support of Local County election officials who help prioritize voter registration.

South Central College will also ensure that civic engagement opportunities are often communicated to all SCC students through SCC Student Life, encouraging active community involvement. Moreover, SCC will coordinate with Academic Affairs to make MNVotes.org information readily available for each faculty member to include on their course homepages. Academic Affairs and faculty members are encouraged to invite Student Life and Student Senators into their classrooms to discuss voting access and the importance of civic engagement.

To ensure a seamless succession of leadership, these efforts will be spearheaded by SCC Student Life through ongoing collaboration with Student Senates, with support from Lead Minnesota's Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts. This collective approach is designed to foster an environment where students, faculty, student affairs professionals, community and national organizations, and local elections offices work together to promote civic engagement and active participation in our community.

Commitment
South Central College's institutional commitment to enhancing democratic engagement is highly visible and extensively communicated, both internally and externally. This commitment is deeply ingrained in the institution's culture and is clearly reflected in the institution's core competencies. Moreover, South

Central College has allocated opportunities for a student worker on each campus, with a commitment of up to 20 hours per week, focused on the initiatives described within this action plan. These positions were intentionally created to ensure that voter registration and civic engagement remain at the forefront for all students. The encouragement of civic engagement and voter registration aligns seamlessly with the College's institutional core competency of Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility. Students are strongly encouraged to actively exercise the responsibilities expected of engaged community members. This comprehensive approach ensures that democratic engagement is not just a peripheral concern but an integral part of the college experience.

Landscape

During the 2020 Election, SCC saw an 8.6% increase in voting and registration yield rates *(2021 Institute for Democracy & Higher Education).* However, SCC voter turnout was lower than the national average for higher education institutions. In general, the campus climate reflects interest and engagement beyond presidential election years is low. This has informed SCC's Student Senate's response to encouraging people to learn about the differences between national and local engagement. By using local examples of civic community impact, students should develop a stronger connection to local and state-wide engagement.

Important Landscape statistics:
- The average age of SCC's student body is 28.4 years old;
- 21.7% of SCC students are students of color; and
- 46.7% of SCC students qualify as underrepresented (defined as Students of Color, Pell eligible, or First Generation - MN).

Voter engagement among SCC's oldest population of students continues to grow. In addition, there was also a significant increase in voter turnout towards the 18−29 age group during the 2018 election year. While the turnout for this age group significantly increased in 2018, it was still 20% lower than students aged 50+. As voting becomes more accessible, SCC must focus efforts on early registration and use the Secretary of State's online platform to reach the 18−29-year-old population.

Goals

Short-Term Goal 1:
- Specific: Develop a collaborative, institution-wide plan that outlines a comprehensive strategy for offering consistent programmatic efforts related to annual voting opportunities.

- Measurable: The plan should name specific activities, resources, and timelines for implementation.

- Achievable: Ensure that the plan is possible given the available resources and constraints within the institution.

- Relevant: Align the plan with the institution's mission and goals to promote democratic engagement.

- Time-Bound: Complete the plan within the Fall 2024 Academic semester to ensure timely implementation.

Short-Term Goal 2:

- Specific: Encourage student involvement in various community civic engagement opportunities.

- <mark>Measurable: TBD based on NSLVE Data to define our measurable outcomes.</mark>

- Achievable: Make sure that the methods used are practical and within the resources available.

- Relevant: Ensure that student involvement aligns with the institution's mission and goals.

- Time-Bound: Aim to see increased student involvement within the next Academic Calendar year.

Long-Term Goal:

- Specific: Continuously increase participation and engagement among young people in the SCC community.

- <mark>Measurable: TBD based on NSLVE Data to define our measurable outcomes.</mark>

- Achievable: Develop a strategy and distribute resources that will support the long-term growth in participation.

- Relevant: Ensure that increased engagement among young people aligns with the institution's mission and serves the broader community.

- Time-Bound: Continually work towards increased engagement over the next three election cycles as part of a long-term commitment to the goal.

Outcomes
1. By completing the civic engagement initiatives, SCC will increase the college student voting rate for 2024, as reported in the NSLVE report.

Action Steps/Strategy
Below is a rough outline of the planned initiatives for the 2022-23 academic year.

Action Step	Responsible Area	√
Supply syllabus statements to faculty for their fall 2024 syllabus		
Post key voting dates at all campus activities to remind students/ create excitement. Hype key milestones, like early voting, absentee ballot deadline, etc.		
Hang key voting dates in every classroom.		
Host a tabling event to help students know ways to vote and where their polling location is.		
Provide faculty with information about when, where, and how to vote.		
Participate in Vote Early Day. Most voters can cast their ballot prior to Election Day. Vote Early Day makes that process easier by helping all eligible voters understand their voting options while celebrating the act of voting early.		

Partner with local election clerks to recruit students to serve as poll workers on election day. This can engage young students who may not be eligible to vote yet.		
Host Lunch & Learns sessions about legislative issues affecting SCC students.		
Organize a walk/ride to the polls on election day.		
Work with commuter students/distance learners on how to find their polling place.		
Apply to be a voter-friendly campus and send an action plan to the All-In Campus Democracy Challenge.		
Supply voter registration forms in different languages.		
Include voter registration information at all significant campus events.		
Send out regular campus-wide communication with important voting information.		
Decorate the NM (North Mankato) Café to increase voting visibility.		

NSLVE 2020 Report
- SCC saw an increase of 13%in student early voter turnout.
- SCC saw a 13% increase in voter turnout for students ages 18−21. There was a 10% increase for students ages 22−24.
- SCC had a significant increase in voter turnout from BIPOC students. Percentages varied based on identity groups but ranged between -2% to 28%.
- While SCC increased in almost every measure, the College's current voter turnout percentages are 0.3% lower than the all-institution average.

NSLVE 2022 Report: TBD upon release from NSLVE.

Reporting
1. 100% of faculty will include voter registration information on their D2L course page. *(CTLE (Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence)*
2. South Central College will supply voter registration information to the entire student body twice per election period. *(Student Senates)*
3. Student Life will include civic engagement strategies and results in the 2022−23 Student Affairs Co-curricular assessment report. *(Director of Student Success)*
4. Civic Engagement results will be shared to the College's all-employee newsletter, "Connections," to highlight important progress. *(Director of Student Success)*

Evaluation

South Central College's evaluation strategy is comprehensive and aligned with the criteria you've outlined. This strategy extends beyond mere participation in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE). It encompasses both data collection and analysis and focuses on multiple phases

of plan implementation. This approach also addresses several categories of participation from the Leadership Section:

1. **Data Collection and Analysis:** Our evaluation strategy is designed to capture a wide range of data from NSLVE.
2. **Before Plan Implementation:** Prior to implementing our initiatives, we collect baseline data, which includes data from NSLVE. This data helps us set initial goals and aims for our democratic engagement efforts.
3. **During Plan Implementation:** Ongoing data collection occurs throughout the execution of our plan. This process involves monitoring and analyzing data to evaluate if action steps are successful or need to be retooled.
4. **After Plan Implementation:** Our analysis includes NSLVE data to review summative success.

In addition, we are dedicated to achieving the ALL IN Campus Challenge recognition seal. This recognition further underscores our commitment to fostering a vibrant democratic community within South Central College and highlights our ongoing journey to promote civic engagement and inclusivity.