

SPC Votes:
Civic Equality

2024+

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SPC Votes: Civic Equality is an expression of St. Petersburg College's (SPC) institutional commitment to increasing access to civic health & community action. The **purpose of this action plan** is to promote **civic equality** and **increase student voter** participation rates on all eleven campuses across Pinellas County.

As the first community college in the State of Florida, St. Petersburg College (SPC) was founded on an effort to use equity in education as the conduit to end cycles of poverty and increase economic & civic efficacy.

Cultivating a campus and community culture invested in democratic and global citizenship is a priority for SPC.

SPC's Voter Engagement Action Plan is a collaborative plan **developed by SPC's Center for Civic Learning and Community Engagement (CCLCE).**

As an open-access institution whose hallmark is its commitment to individual and community building we have built civic health into the lens through which SPC operates. In that spirit, the CCLCE is collaborating with college and community partners with the **clear goal of increasing non-partisan voter engagement and voter turnout on all 11 campuses across Pinellas County.**

This plan is designed to be implemented during the 2023-2024 academic year.

SPC is the very heartbeat of our community. **Listening to our neighbors, responding with innovative and reciprocal initiatives, in coursework, curating campus and community events through collaboration with the individuals and communities we serve, will help us implement our plan** and increase access to democratic ideals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMITMENT FROM OUR LEADERS

The Board of Trustees and the President have pledged “**We will invest** in the well-being and growth of our community by serving as a **leader**, a **convener**, and a **catalyst** for positive change.”

President Williams has pledged her commitment to working toward 100% voter registration for the last three years. SPC's Board of Trustees has evidenced their commitment to civic health by adopting community engagement, which often includes civic education, as part of SPC's **three** visionary commitments; **Academic Excellence, Economic Mobility and Community Engagement.**

We maintain these commitments by creating strong partnerships, participating in civic learning and community engagement, and cultivating a community of care.”

SPC's value statements further institutionalizes this commitment by having a community focus & integrity statement that “We cultivate trust, transparency, and equity through personal and institutional ethics, empathy, and compassion.” And “We foster and model the principles of inclusion, service, partnership, and **social responsibility** through community engagement to build strong relationships locally and abroad.”. These Commitments are guiding principals for our strategic plan, measured and reported to our Board of Directors twice a year, and are part of our legislative performance based funding metrics.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

We will provide a high-quality education for our students by creating an innovative and engaging learning environment within a supportive, collegial culture.

ECONOMIC MOBILITY

We will provide opportunities for our students to be prepared for high-wage, high-need careers and professional growth, which will contribute to their economic success and improve the quality of life within our community as well as assist in ending generational cycles of poverty.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We will invest in the well-being and growth of our community by serving as a leader, a convener, and a catalyst for positive change. We will maintain this commitment by creating strong partnerships, participating in civic learning and community engagement, and cultivating a community of care.

COLLABORATION & LEADERSHIP

SPC's Voter Engagement activities are informed and implemented by a cross section of college partners including:

Internal Partners

Student Groups: Student Government Associations, Women on the Way (women of color mentor and service organization), Brother to Brother (men of color mentor and service organization), Alpha Phi Omega, college wide service fraternity for students with do not have a GPA over 3.2, Phi Theta Kappa, college wide service fraternity for students with over a 3.2 GPA, Collegiate High school's National Honor Society, SPC Athletic Teams (Women's & Men's Basketball Teams, Volleyball team, Baseball team); Individual students who serve as civic influencers or civic fellows.

Academic Affairs: Social & Behavioral Department; Political Science, Psychology, Health & Human Services; Ethics Institute; Biology; Natural Sciences; Arts & Humanities; Music and Recording Arts; Hospitality & Tourism, Mathematics; First Responder/EMT/Police/Firefighter program; Public Policy; and Paralegal Studies.

Student Affairs: Student Life & Leadership Coordinators (all college) & Office of Student Engagement

External Partners

Community & National Coalitions: City of St. Petersburg, City of Clearwater, City of Seminole, City of Tarpon Springs, City of Largo, Pinellas County Commissioners, League of Women Voters, Arts Arehouse District, Campus Election Engagement Project, Civic Influencers, Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) & Campus Vote Project and various local faith based organizations/leaders.

Local Elections Office: Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections staff

The Center for Civic Learning & Community EngagementThe President Advisory Council, the Strategic Planning Committee, SPC Student Government Association, Dean's Council, Provost Council, the Honor's College, Learning Resources, Online Learning Services, SPC Collegiate High School & SPC's Early College, International Studies, Student Life & Leadership, SPC's Ethics Institute, SPC's Institute for Policy Solutions, Phi Theta Kappa SPC chapters, Alpha Phi Omega, and the Board of Trustees.

This plan is the continuation of SPC's annual voter engagement Initiatives to increase voter education and voter registration. This year, SPC Votes will place a special emphasis on increasing access to voter ready resources.

This plan includes SPC's commitment to strive toward 100% voter registration and increase access to non-partisan voter education.

The development of this plan has been informed by resources from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge and its partners in the Students Learn Students Vote (SLSV) Coalition rubric. It has also supported by best practices identified in the Carnegie Classification's application for Community Engagement and collaborative support organizations like Turbo Vote, Campus Vote Project and Civic Influencers.

UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE & MEASURING PROGRESS

The wide range of economic conditions coupled with the reality of Pinellas County being Florida's first and only built out county poses unique challenges and economically limited opportunities. SPC is compelled to work with the economy and social challenges we have and connect student's community & civic engagement to professional development.

The changing demographics of Pinellas county reflects a growing population of Latino, eastern European and Asian Americans and is in part why we have developed a nimble and responsive approach to civic & community engagement- trying to meet the myriad of needs that exist in our population and within our socio-economically varied service area. SPC's average student age is 28 years old.

Key Indicator	Activity / Project	Data / Outcome
Voter Engagement	Voter Education & Registration	<p>Quarterly voter registration events on all campus ranging from NVR Day, Donuts for Democracy; Taco About Democracy and classroom visit; online voter registration; TurboVote data</p>
Target Marginalized Voters	Voter Registration & GOTV	<p>To inform its election engagement effort, and join the national conversation around this issue, SPC participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE).</p> <p>NLSVE data comparing both voter registration and turnout among eligible SPC students in 2014 and 2018 show that the launch of the CCLCE the adoption of community engagement as a formative and guiding foundational goal contributed to a voter registration increase of 11.5% from 34.1% to 45.6%.</p> <p>SPC's Voter Rate is significantly higher than the 2019 national average of 39.1%. SPC's voter registration efforts are 76% of the student population and the voting rate of registered students is 60%.</p> <p>Overall, while all ethnic/racial groups have consistently increased their voting rates since 2014, a lot of work remains to increase the voting participation of nonwhites. Rates for Asians and Hispanics (48 and 59 respectively) are substantially lower than Whites (69). Blacks are also somewhat lower than Whites by a 69 to 63 margin. Age and gender demonstrates little difference in voting rates.</p>
Voter Confidence	Voter participation in community committees; city council presentations; student lobbying efforts	<p>With the advent of a legislative challenges that have effect voter registration in the state State of Florida SPC is working toward reducing barriers to challenged populations and creating innovative strategies to increase voter registration, voter education and voter turnout.</p> <p>We are working smart to increase by 10%:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -# of SPC Student voters -# of SPC student, faculty and staff who serve on local Boards, & Community Organizations

Where do we go from here?

SPC has both long term & short term strategies that create pathways toward **increased access & robust voter efficacy**.

SPC has **3 clear goals** for our **voter engagement action plan**. Below each priority below you will see both long term & short term priorities, strategies & tactics to advance each priority,

This action plan **will be available** on_SPC's Center for Civic Learning & Community Engagements website (<https://www.spcollege.edu/friends-partners/community-resources/center-for-civic-learning-and-community-engagement>) as well as shared with the SPC family in our Blue & White Publication and the CCLCE's blog.

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Priority #1 Voter Registration

LONG TERM:

- Advocate for mandatory voter registration when students register for courses.

SHORT TERM:

- Host Supervisor of Election, LWV & local/national 3rd party voter registration organizations across all 11 campuses once a quarter; more during election years
- Use innovative QR codes to bypass Florida state laws that affect 3rd party registrations
- Continue providing online access to voter registration (CCLE website, Institute for Policy Solutions website and D2L all students interface
- Quarterly voter registration reporting; promote civic holidays on learning platform; Voter registration QR codes/TurboVote and Vote 411 /State Voter

02

Priority #2 Voter Education & Engagement

LONG TERM:

- Embed learning objectives in each Career & Academic community on how that discipline can inform voter education

SHORT TERM:

- Host diverse and easy to access voter education events within all 10 career & academic communities during their annual recruitment weeks; increase additional frequency on the Downtown & Midtown campuses, that target marginalized communities (disenfranchised voters and

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Priority # 3 Voter Efficacy & Community Action

Long term:

- Students accept and act on the power of their agency to vote; serve on and off campus, contribute to community and civic organizations, including city or county or neighborhood committees, volunteer in campaign work or non-profit work and most importantly vote.

Short Term:

- GOTV efforts including students serving as peer to peer GOTV advocates .serve as election watch workers, poll watchers, phone banks, couch texting parties, Rock the Vote with MIRA program, Rock the Vote with SPC Athletics (warm up t-shirts)

EVALUATION

SPC's Voter Engagement plan is part of SPC's 3-year Strategic Plan. **Progress & challenges** are reported quarterly to the Board of Trustees. The data is also included in the President's Annual Evaluation & shared in our legislative reporting. Raw data, narrative analysis, & partnership feedback from community partners is all included.

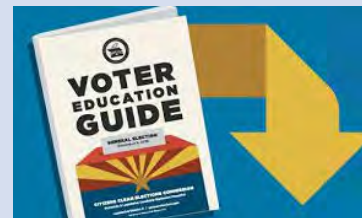


Voter Registration

- Frequency & diversity of voter registration events (F2F each campus, 24/7 online on student LMS), community & civic events reported every quarter.
- NSLVE data informs specific targeted student populations
- REQUESTED voter registration pay wall for upcoming year

Voter Education

- CCLCE report that details Civic & Community Engagement events and hours by students, faculty & staff.
- Report will drive following semesters efforts in targeting marginalized populations.



Civic Efficacy

- NSLVE Data
- Campus polling data
- Voter pledge data
- SPC Student/Faculty/Staff service on city, county state civic organizations

Description of Work/Timeline

2024 Election Cycle

March 19th Republican primary election

November 5th Presidential Election

Activity Description Timeline

Now-November 5th ELECTION DAY!

Paid Voter Engagement Interns

Paid for via external partnerships, non-partisan voter engagement/voter education/voter registration internships to receive \$500 stipend

January-November

- **Civic Influencers**

Interns (goal 2 positions; North & South county), 10 hours a week commitment.

January-November

- **Campus Vote Project**

Interns (goal 2 positions; North & South county) 10 hours a week commitment.

January-November

Center for Civic Learning & Community Engagement Website:

Internally created and administered comprehensive election-ready site for all SPC students, faculty, staff (and the community).

Includes voter registration, address check, registration status, poll worker signup, election timelines, sample ballot access, issue/candidate information, why voting is important, who to contact with questions, election reminders signup, make a “plan to vote,” request a vote by mail ballot

Ongoing

- **SPC VOTES Online Learning Platform Integration**

Promote online access to voter resources

Now-November

- **Be a Poll Worker Hero!**

Recruit students, faculty & staff and be conduit to poll working opportunities

January – November

- **LWV Election Watch**

Recruit students, faculty & staff and be conduit to election watch opportunities

January – November

- **Course, Campus, Career & Academic Communities Integration**

The CCLCE advocates in both campus and online modalities service-learning and civic engagement—voter registration and voter education opportunities; course integration and campus emphasis is highlighted in our internal publications and public facing blogs and social media accounts.

Ongoing

- **Encourage Vote by Mail, Early Voting & Host Polling Places**

Will provide encouragement online, email messaging and campus opportunities to engage in early voting and provide safe location for two polling places at Allstate Campus & Seminole Campus

March & November

- **Celebrate Civic Holidays**

All college celebration of U.S. Constitution Day (voter registration materials handed out & voting encouraged; NVRD celebrated on all campuses with local partners like LWV, Supervisor of Election PIRG, Promotion of National Voter Education week, push toward Vote Early Day & honor students, faculty & staff in Election Hero Day; and of course ELECTION DAY. Voting timeline will be advertised and promoted and online resources will be available

Now-November

- **SPC Voter Equality**

Innovative student outreach thru SPC Athletics department warm up shirts encouraging voting; Music & recording Arts program to host community voter ready concerts; Art exhibits like “Jones’n to Make a Difference” with voter engagement messages

NEXT STEPS

SPC's **CCLCE** will prepare a comprehensive report on each of the actions listed in our voter engagement plan, with quantitative and qualitative data to assess our success, lessons learned, and next steps.

Specific goals include:

- Increase NSLVE registration rates and voting rates by 10% as compared to our 2022 rates, with a targeted goal of increasing marginalized populations by 15%
- Integrate Civic Health & Readiness as a professional development priority for SPC's Discovery Day (October) & Spring Training (February) for all faculty & staff
- Recruit students and staff to serve as poll workers
- Social media campaign with President & Executive Leadership about importance of voting, how to find resources and GOTV efforts
- SPC application or registration to connect with voter registration process

For more information, please contact:

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<https://www.spcollege.edu/friends-partners/community-resources/center-for-civic-learning-and-community-engagement>

