

ALL-IN Campus Democracy Challenge The Chicago School of Professional Psychology: Action Plan to increase Civic Learning, Political Engagement, and Voting Rates for the 2024 Elections

2024 is the Chicago School of Professional Psychology's third time partaking in the Democracy Challenge. We received our NSLVE (National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement) report for 2020; however, we have not received the 2022 NSLVE report. Our goal is to have 70% of our student body participate in the 2024 election.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Background

The Chicago School is a not-for-profit, accredited institution with more than 6,000 students at on ground and on-line campuses across the country (Chicago, Dallas, Southern California, and Washington, D.C.). For more than 40 years, The Chicago School has been a leading nonprofit university dedicated to training professionals for careers in an array of fields, including psychology, health, business, counseling, behavioral sciences, and more.

Central to our transformational impact on students, their communities, and the practice of psychology is The Engaged Professional Model of Education. This groundbreaking approach to training leverages the talents and experience of faculty practitioners, who work with our Community Partnership and Office of Placement and Training teams to provide students a rich spectrum of clinical training in a wide range of community settings. In fact, the school was the first of its kind to be named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for its leadership in service and civic engagement. In addition, The Chicago School has been named to the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement since 2010.

Our graduates emerge with unrivaled skills, ready to make much-needed changes in the communities they serve. They work around the world in hospitals, schools, community centers, agencies, NGOs, private practice, among others. Our graduates blend a sophisticated understanding of the human experience with high-quality practice in fields such as Child & Adolescent Psychology, Applied Behavior Analysis, Clinical Psychology, Forensic Psychology, International Psychology, Business Psychology, Nursing, and more.

The Chicago School educates professionals whose practices exemplify a commitment to understand and respect individual and cultural differences. The application of humane professional judgment is achieved through the integration of psychological theory, scientific research, and professional practice. The curriculum and training opportunities prepare graduates to deliver outstanding professional services, emphasizing the need to understand diversity, inclusivity, and the importance of working with underserved populations. Reflecting the systemic integration of our mission, our logo symbolizes our values: Education, Innovation, Impact, and Community.

The Action Plan was developed by Jill Glenn, Executive Director of Community Partnerships with review by The Chicago School All In Coalition. The group reviewed the plan and identified additional pieces to be included after the first review. The Coalition meets quarterly to review implementation of the plan on each of the campuses and provides ideas and suggestions for one another regarding voter registration and engagement. This plan will conclude at the end of 2024.

Committee

The Civic Engagement Committee will be made up of representatives from each of our campuses including students, faculty, staff, and leaders within The Chicago School. As the majority of our students engage in practicum and internship after their first year, we will focus on adding students who start in the fall semester in September of 2024 to support the plan and continue to engage students with voter registration and engagement. Ana Aviles currently assists in creating flyers and hand-outs to help students with links to voter registration, checking registration, finding polling locations, and researching ballots.

LEADERSHIP

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Coalition

Dr. Nadia Rojas Jones - Department Chair Marriage & Family Therapy, Associate Director
Community Partnerships, Los Angeles
Dr. Richard Kwon, Campus Director Southern California Dr.
LaToya Banks, Associate Director, Campus President Dallas Dr.
Shavonne Moore- Lobban, Campus Director Washington D.C.
Dr. David Sacks - Department Faculty Clinical Psychology D.C.
Deondre Rutues, Chicago Campus Student Org Leadership Ph.D. candidate
Ana Aviles, Chicago Campus Student, master's in forensic psychology candidate
Student from Dallas, Southern California, DC, (recruiting)
Faculty and/or staff from Dallas (recruiting)

Coalition Meetings

Our Campus Group will meet once monthly. Representatives from each campus will meet quarterly starting in January 2024.

Community Partners

Campus Compact, Rock the Vote, ALL-IN Campus Democracy Challenge, Civic Nation, Civic Influencers, NSLVE

COMMITMENT

The Chicago School was founded in 1979 by a group of psychologists and educators committed to advancing the field and providing professional training in a nonprofit setting. President Michele Nealon of The Chicago School is committed to developing professionals for the fields of psychology and related health sciences. The Chicago School strives to build an environment of mutual respect and inclusion where all individuals will be valued for who they are and what they can contribute, and in turn, are expected to be participatory members of an active learning community that promotes cultural awareness, competence, and understanding of diversity. The Chicago School builds upon these values with the goal of encouraging volunteer efforts and supporting students to be socially responsible citizens.

The Chicago School has held a place on the President's Honor Roll for Higher Education Community Service; a distinction it earned in part due to the more than 800,000 hours of low cost and pro bono service students and faculty perform each year in the community. In January of 2020, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching selected The Chicago School to receive the 2020 Carnegie Community Engagement Classification endorsement. We were one of eleven schools in Illinois to receive this endorsement. The endorsement demonstrates The Chicago School's commitment to finding ways to engage with community partners, building on community assets, and addressing a wide array of community challenges.

These efforts combined with our mentorship of students to be service and social justice minded fall in line with the schools' values and goals. This advocacy begins with the understanding of personal responsibility to participate in the democratic systems in our country. Our effort continues through many efforts to volunteer and participate in a variety of initiatives to help all members of our community.

The Campus Dean has signed the ALL IN President's Commitment. The Chicago School Leaders have supported efforts to encourage faculty, staff, and student voting. Dr. Michele Nealon, The Chicago School President, has continued to build relationships with our local politicians, hosting U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, IL State Representative, Yolanda Moore, and California Assembly member, Avelino Valencia, to name a few, to discuss the importance of mental health awareness.

LANDSCAPE

The Chicago School consists of five campuses: Chicago, Southern California – Los Angeles, Irvine, and Anaheim, Dallas, Washington D.C., and on-line. The student body numbers for the entire Chicago School for Fall of 2023 were 6,136. The breakout includes Chicago – 1,244; Southern California – 1,394; DC – 615; Dallas – 198, and Online – 2,663. Each campus will approach the democracy challenge differently to ensure engagement from the student body. The Chicago campus has the longest history with the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, while the D.C. and Dallas campuses have been added on this year. Recognizing that the D.C. campus often is in the center of the political arena, the Campus Director has emphasized the importance of balancing discussions about voter engagement to ensure students do not become overwhelmed and disenfranchised prior to the November 2024 election.

The Chicago School's values are Community, Impact, Innovation, and Education. We live out these values both in the classroom and through the programs and offerings that are made

available to students. The Community Partnerships Department was established in November 2006. This Department provides opportunities for students to serve their community through volunteer experiences. During the 2021-22 school year over 370 students participated in 5,900 hours of service through service-learning courses. In addition, over 130 students engaged in approximately 27,000 hours of service to the community through our community assistantships. In addition, over 215 students across campuses participated in one day service projects. Several of our faculty teach study abroad courses and include both service learning and/or community service days in the work that they do globally.

The Chicago School Chicago campus created the Social Justice Leadership Academy (SJLA) in 2017. The SJLA provides opportunities for students to engage in social justice activities and earn points connected to the school's values. In addition, each SJLA member is assigned a mentor (faculty, staff, administrator, alum) who supports the student in the development and participation in a leadership project. SJLA members are encouraged to engage in civic activities hosted through the school, as well as engage in discussions related to civic engagement and civic learning. Seven students from the Chicago and Los Angeles campuses completed the SJLA in 2021-22 academic school year.

In addition to the volunteer service through the Community Partnerships Department, over 800,000 hours are provided to the community each year through practicum and internship. We serve a wide range of communities throughout the country.

2022 Efforts

The 2022 All in Democracy Challenge committee consisted of faculty, staff, students, and administrators from the Chicago and Los Angeles campuses. The Group met monthly. A focus was placed on voter registration, voter education, and voter access. Weekly emails were sent to students six weeks prior to elections. In addition, the team created flat screen announcements and offered space for students to register to vote at the school's annual Job & Volunteer Fair. Several faculty members made a point to talk about voting within their classrooms and encouraged students to identify issues that were important to them. A baseline of voter participation was established by connecting with NSLVE. Student voting increased from 45.4% in 2018 to 64.5% in 2020. We increased voter registration through encouragement from administration, faculty, and staff. We participated in the National Voter Registration Day. We sent emails to students, faculty and staff with voter registration information, absentee ballot, early voting sites, and non-partisan voter information. Recognizing that some of our students were choosing to vote in their home state rather than Illinois, we also put out information for key areas where our students previously resided. We also informed students of their options to vote in their home state or in the state where they were currently attending school.

In Chicago, we focused on the Mayoral election which was held in February of 2023. We identified several voting sites located near the school and encouraged students to create a voting plan. Non-partisan information was made available to students to learn about each of the candidates running not only for mayor, but other offices.

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

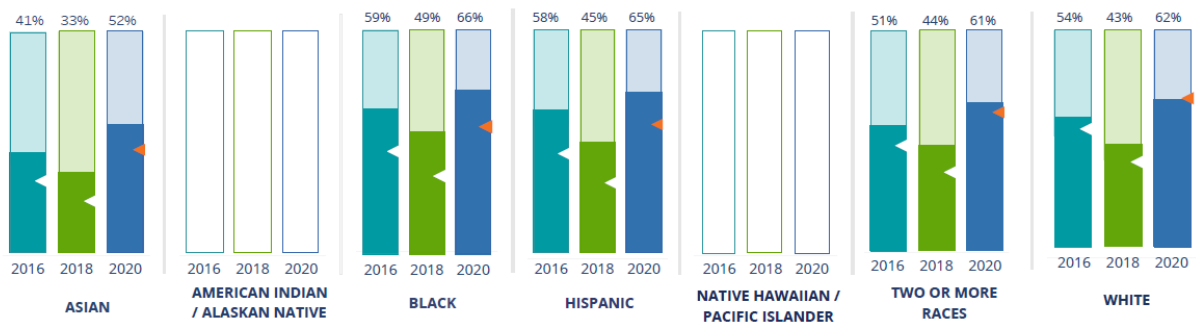
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology joined NSLVE report in 2020. Our 2020 results showed a significant increase in voting rates from 45.4% to 64.5%. However, a better indicator is from the 2016 voting rate of 55.9% to 64.5%, as these two years are from Presidential elections, which tend to show increased voter turnout. This results in an 8.6% increase. We recognize that this is still below the national average of 66%. We have a goal of reaching 70% for the 2024 election.

Our voter registration rate increased by 9.5% from 2016 to 2020. Our voting rate for registered voters increased by 9% from 2016 to 2020. We are optimistic about increasing the voting rate to 70% for the 2024 election. We have recently changed from a Campus model to a College model. We have included the Campus Directors on the committee, and we will work with the College Deans to also put out information about voting to each of their perspective colleges.

Below is the breakout for estimated voting rates based on race/ethnicity. The Chicago School saw an increase for each racial/ethnic group identified from 2016 to 2020. We will pay close attention to students of Asian descent to identify ways to increase their voting rates by identifying issues that are of importance to that population.

CAMPUS REPORT: The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

By Race / Ethnicity



These are estimated voting rates for race / ethnicity groups. These classifications are provided by campuses and are obtained following race reporting procedures* defined by the National Center for Education Statistics of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). Please see our FAQ for more detail on why we cannot report national benchmark for some of the demographic groups: <https://tufts.app.box.com/v/idhe-nslve-report-faq>

If you notice unavailable/missing data in this page, it could mean any of the following for your institution: (i) does not report this data; (ii) did not provide this data in past years; (iii) does not separately submit data for one or more of the demographic groups, or (iv) the data is reported for 10 or fewer students.

Goals

Short Term (2024 Election)

- Increase student attendance with on-campus or virtual voting events (post-debate discussions, conversations about ambivalence and apathy regarding voting, voter registrations, etc.) to 150 students at all campuses.
- Ensure diverse participation across racial/ethnic lines as identified by NSLVE.

- Increase our 2024 voting rate to 70%.
- Increase our 2024 voter registration rate to 83%.
- Increase our 2024 voting rate of registered students to 80%.
- Encourage students to serve as poll workers.

Strategy

- Establish a national working group that will meet quarterly. Plan for campus working groups to meet monthly. Recruit members from diverse backgrounds.
- Provide voter registration information at orientation for all campuses.
- Host Voter Registration Day for all campuses the week of September 15th, identifying the best day, with the highest student attendance, for each campus.
- Utilize the school's social media to promote voter registration and the importance of voting.
- We will continue to provide students on all campuses with the ALLINtoVote.org resource through handouts with QR codes as well as emails that allow for students to easily register to vote in their home state or school state, find their polling location, and research their ballot.
- Provide students on each campus with voter registration information, absentee ballots, early voting sites, voting by mail, and voter guides for the 2024 election.
- Encouraging students engaged with Community Partnerships to engage in supporting voter registration and turnout in their own communities as well as communities that historically have had lower turnout.
- Send out emails, post flyers, and create flat screen announcement for Vote Early Day on October 29th.
- Identify issues that are important to students and provide non-partisan information to learn more about where candidates stand on these issues.
- Put QR code for voter registration on flat screens on each of the campuses.
- Bulletin Boards in Student Lounges will provide voter registration information, voter guides, and announcements regarding civic engagement education events being hosted at The Chicago School and the larger community.
- Identify three early voting sites near the school where students can vote, including dates/times.
- Create power point slides to put on classroom screens in October to remind students to vote.
- Schedule an event on each campus during National Voter Education Week (Oct 7th-11th) focusing on bi-partisan engagement potentially focusing on mental health issues.
- Collaborate with Rock the Vote, League of Women Voters, and Civic Influencers to provide non-partisan voter guides and voting information.
- Provide information to students on each campus regarding how to become a poll worker for the elections.

Long Term

The Chicago School's long-term goal is to create fully engaged lifelong active citizens. To move towards that goal over the next five years, we plan to:

- Continue to Share NSLVE data with all campuses via short, engaging emails.
- Increase campus connections to community non-partisan voting organizations.
- Increase voter registration over the next four years by 2% to obtain an 85% voter registration rate by 2028 through emails, flyers, and voter registration days.
- Increase voter turnout rate by 2% over the next four years to obtain an 82% voter turnout rate by 2028 by continuing with hosting bi-partisan discussions and events, and providing information to students about how to vote in their home state if desired.
- Create a canvas course by August 2026 that provides voter registration, links to bi-partisan voting sites, and voter engagement pieces for students across campuses.

Reporting

This report was created by The Chicago School Democracy Challenge Committee. We will post the final version of this report on the Community Partnerships webpage for The Chicago School. We will also share NSLVE results with The Chicago School campus community. A final report regarding the outcomes of this plan will be distributed to The Chicago School campus community. The Chicago School ALL IN Democracy Challenge and NSLVE reports can be found here: [Positions | The Chicago School Community](#)

Evaluation

The Chicago School will use the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report to help guide our goals for increased student voter registration, voting rates for registered students, and actual voting rates. We will share the 2022 NSLVE report with the student body when this is received. We will identify the number of students that serve as Poll Workers in each of the elections. This information will be shared with the larger Chicago School community. The Chicago School will collect data regarding the number of students that take hand-outs for voter registration and attend voter registration events. We will also look at emails sent to students regarding voting information and open and click rates. In addition, we will track the number of students that attend non-partisan election and civic engagement events held on each campus.