

# University of Illinois at Chicago Action Plan to Increase Civic Learning, Political Engagement, and Voting Rates for the 2020 Presidential Election

*For the purposes of this action plan, we have made the decision to intentionally reference the 2016 presidential election opposed to the 2018 midterm election – as it is most comparable to the upcoming race(s).*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

Civic and community engagement are values that are deeply rooted in the history and identity of the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC). The university sits on the site of the Jane Addams Hull-House, Chicago's first social settlement and a place where immigrants of diverse communities gathered to learn, to eat, to debate, and to acquire the tools needed to put down roots in their new country. UIC students and faculty are involved in a range of civic engagement projects at international, national, state and local levels, while maintaining partnerships with a large number of Chicago-area agencies and community organizations.

### Coalition

The Civic Engagement Coalition, made up of representatives from student affairs, academic affairs, government and public affairs, alumni, and students, developed this action plan to build on the successes of our 2018 civic engagement efforts. Our aim for the 2020 presidential election is to increase voter registration, education, and participation among UIC students. This is particularly important after the success we saw in the 2016 presidential election and we do not want to lose ground on the progress we have made to date.

### 2016 Efforts

The Coalition's efforts for the 2016 election were very successful, and also revealed opportunities for strengthening and deepening the work. This 2016 election was the first time our campus had put together such a large effort to get students to the polls to vote. Through events and programs put on by members of the coalition as well as other entities across campus, we successfully increased our voter registration and voting rates. The NSLVE report showed that there was a 13.9 point change from 2012 (41.1%) to 2016 (55%) in our student voting rate, which is nearly 5 percentage points higher than the 2016 voting rate for all institutions (50.4%). In addition, UIC had a 7 point change from 2012 (70.9%) to 2016 (77.9%) for our student registration rate, and a 12.7 point change from 2012 (57.9%) to 2016 (70.6%) for the voting rate of registered students. UIC was also recognized as the "Most Engaged Campus" by the All In Democracy Challenge for this increase in voting rates. After the 2016 election our Coalition did a complete review of our Action Plan at that time, which was the foundation in the creation of this new and improved Action Plan.

### 2020 Action Plan

For the 2020 mid-term elections, we utilized data from the last presidential election cycle as the baseline for setting our goals. The goals are:

- To increase our 2016 Voting Rate by 5 points, from 55.0% to 60.0%.
- To increase our 2016 Registration Rate by 5 points, from 77.9% to 82.9%.
- To increase our 2016 Rate of Registered Students who Voted by 5 points, from 70.6% to 75.6%

The action plan has already begun, as our Coalition continues to meet monthly and has already started moving forward on plans for the March primary, including early voting and a voter guide. This plan will continue through the general election in November. In addition, we hope to do post-election events that help students see the importance of civic engagement beyond the election cycle.

## LEADERSHIP

Leader

Spencer Long

Institution: University of Illinois at Chicago

City/State: Chicago, Illinois

Office: Student Leadership and Civic Engagement

Email: [longsa@uic.edu](mailto:longsa@uic.edu)

Phone: (312) 996-0911

Coalition

Mayra Hurtado, Civic Engagement Fellow (Student Leader)

Taylor Holmes (Student Leader)

*UIC Student Advocacy Coalition*

Dick Simpson, Professor

*Department of Political Science*

Joseph Hoereth, Director

*Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement*

Norma Ramos, Director for Marketing and Communications

*Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement*

Maggie Eickhoff, Visiting Research Associate

*Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement*

Michael Crumbock, Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives

*Department of Public and Government Affairs*

Martha Gutierrez, Senior Director

*Department of Public and Government Affairs*

Marissa Brooke, Assistant Vice President

*University of Illinois Alumni Alliance*

Mitch Dickey

*University of Illinois Alumni Alliance*

Leadership Responsibilities within Coalition

Joe Hoereth, Coordinator of the Civic Action Plan

Dick Simpson, Coordinator of Constitution Day, National Student Issues Convention, Speakers on Government and Politics  
Spencer Long and Mayra Hurtado Civic Engagement Fellow, Coordinators of Student Organizations, Voter Registration, Civic Engagement Yearly Calendar, and Debate Watch Parties  
Michael Crumbock, Coordinator of Polling Places and Election Day Activities  
Taylor Holmes, Marissa Brooke, and Mitch Dickey Coordinators of Student Advocacy Coalition and UI Day at the Capitol  
Norma Ramos and Martha Gutierrez, Public Relations and Social Media Team

#### Coalition Meetings

Our coalition has met, and will continue to meet, the first Tuesday of the month throughout the year.

#### Community Partners

Rock the Vote, Illinois Campus Compact, Illinois Connection (University of Illinois Alumni Association legislative advocacy network), Chicago Votes, Illinois Public Interest Group, Hana Center, Indivisible Evanston, Young Invincibles, ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, Civic Nation, and the Chicago Board of Elections Commission.

#### COMMITMENT

UIC's Chancellor Michael Amiridis and a representative working group set four strategic priorities to guide UIC. These priorities are student experience and success, national and international impact and visibility, Chicago and community engagement, and the entrepreneurial university. These priorities are shared frequently in public talks, on the University website, in the University's public five-year strategic priorities document on the Chancellor's page, and other spaces. In written documents and remarks, the Chancellor highlights the role of UIC as not just the University of Illinois AT Chicago, but the University of Illinois FOR Chicago. The Chancellor looks to build upon the institution's history of community engagement and support meaningful engagement with community. In addition, Chancellor Amiridis speaks about the importance of out-of-classroom experiences for student learning, including internships, volunteer experiences, research and civic engagement.

These strategic priorities and the consistent references to them set a tone for campus that real-world partnerships and engagement, including civic engagement, are a core part of the UIC experience, and ones that the Chancellor looks to build on during his time on campus.

#### LANDSCAPE

Civic and community engagement are values that are deeply rooted in UIC's history and identity. The university sits on the site of the Jane Addams Hull-House, Chicago's first social settlement and a place where immigrants of diverse communities gathered to learn, to eat, to debate, and to acquire the tools needed to put down roots in their new country. Today the original home and dining hall have been preserved and serve as a museum and space for dialogues, programs, and guest lectures.

UIC students and faculty are involved in a range of civic engagement projects at international, national, state and local levels, while maintaining partnerships with a large number of Chicago-area agencies and community organizations. The University of Illinois Engagement Portal, a database of public service activities, lists no fewer than 230 programs on the Chicago campus, while UIC maintains 135

partnerships with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) that are showed on the CPS activities database. Additionally, the Community Engagement Core at the UIC Center for Clinical and Translational Science operates 82 clinical health-related programs and is active in all 77 neighborhoods in Chicago. The Great Cities Institute's Neighborhoods Initiatives program has community partnerships spanning decades. UIC's relationships inform and enrich the education offered to its students and provide shared opportunities for learning, collaboration, and discovery. UIC is among the most racially and ethnically diverse campuses in the nation and, as of Fall 2016, boasted an enrollment of 4,397 international students from over 100 countries around the globe.

#### Assessment of Current Work and Outcomes

We submitted this assessment of our current work and outcomes as part of our Voter Friendly Campus designation following the 2016 Presidential Election. The assessment showed that we have a strong civic engagement base at UIC, but that we have room to grow in student participation and in coordinating unified efforts to engage students in the civic process.

Since the submission of this assessment we have received our NSVLE report outlining a 13.9 point change from 2012 (41.1%) to 2016 (55%) in our student voting rate, which is nearly 5 percentage points higher than the 2016 voting rate for all institutions (50.4%). In addition, UIC had a 7 point change from 2012 (70.9%) to 2016 (77.9%) for our student registration rate, and a 12.7 point change from 2012 (57.9%) to 2016 (70.6%) for the voting rate of registered students.

This self-assessment and the results we received from the NSVLE report have informed the development of this Action Plan. We have combined the information from the assessment and the NSLVE report below.

- **Overview:** What were the main goals your campus had for carrying out democratic engagement in 2016 (refer to your campus' Voter Friendly Campus plan)? Did your campus meet these goals? Why or why not?

#### Voter Registration

Our goal was to register as many students as possible to vote. Thanks to the NSLVE report, we were able to see that only 64% of our students were registered to vote in 2014. This was a good starting point to set a realistic goal for our voter registration efforts. This is why we set a goal of having 75% of our overall student population registered to vote in 2016. The NSLVE report revealed that we exceeded our goal, with a student registration rate of 77.9%. We also set a stretch goal to have 90% of our incoming students register to vote during orientation. Our numbers at orientation revealed that we registered 41% of our incoming students at orientation sessions. We registered 658 new first year and transfer students to vote, confirmed 1,228 students were already registered and listed 476 students that were not eligible to vote or did not want to register to vote. This allowed us to make improvements in our efforts which includes full implementation of voter registration or a civic engagement session at future orientation for our incoming students.

#### Voter Education

Our goal for voter education was to make information available and accessible to all students regarding the elections. Through copious planning and networking, we were able to provide students with ample opportunities for voter education through workshops, town halls, watch parties, lunches, and other events on campus.

Student Leadership and Civic Engagement also created a comprehensive non-partisan voter guide to help students find more information on presidential candidates as well as senatorial candidates and judges.

We were happy with the amount of student involvement at our events, which we used as a measure to determine how educated students were regarding the elections and civic engagement. In spring 2018, UIC also participated in the 2018 Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) to get a baseline on student participation and civic engagement, which will help us plan programs/events that are best for students on our campus. In the future, we also want to use civic engagement opportunities to get feedback from students on how our efforts may have shaped their interest in civic engagement.

#### Voter Turnout

The NSLVE report informed us that in 2012, 41.1% of our students voted during that presidential election. Based on these findings, and after signing up to participate in the All In Democracy Challenge, we set a goal to increase voter turnout to 50% of our students voting. To do this, we planned more activities that would encourage students to vote. This was the first time our campus had put together such a large effort to get students to the polls to vote. There were many efforts outside of our coalition to get out the vote including organizations providing free Uber rides to different polling locations, or distribution of free tacos and hot chocolate for students that pledged to vote. From our efforts, the NSLVE report showed that we had a voting rate of 55.0%, which exceeded our goal and was a 13.9 point increase from 2012. Compared to our peer institutions, UIC's voting rates were above those of all public research institutions (51.9%), and above those of all research institutions (public and private combined, 52.3%). In addition, UIC was recognized as the "Most Engaged Campus" by the All In Democracy Challenge for this increase in voting rates.

One of our additional goals was to increase voting on campus. UIC is an official early voting location for the City of Chicago so we encouraged many of our students to take advantage of that opportunity. From our efforts, 1,267 people voted at our early voting location. There were also 114 new registrants.

- **Coalition:** How did your coalition function throughout the fall semester? Why was your coalition effective or not effective? How will it change for continued Democratic Engagement work; particularly focused on mid-term elections
  - What other partners did you work with internally or externally? What was their role?

Our coalition has met the first Tuesday of every month since June 2016. We have scheduled our meetings indefinitely and we plan to continue to meet and use the group to further advance our civic engagement activities on campus. Our focus now is to increase voter education efforts on a local level as well as focus on the midterm elections. We want to use the UI Day at the Capitol to empower students to stay engaged and aware of issues around them.

UI Day at the Capitol is an event that takes place every year in April between the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield campuses. Students from each of the three campuses visit the Capitol to lobby their representatives about school budget cuts, bills, and other issues important to students. It is important that students realize civic engagement

extends beyond the scope of voting, and UI Day at the Capitol provides students with a clear example of why.

Our coalition was effective in that everyone was working towards the same goal. Additionally, individual members of the UIC community had been advocating for a while for a group like this to exist, so it met a need on campus. Having the opportunity to put together a comprehensive, university-wide plan provided the catalyst to bring these various individuals together in one collective group. Our coalition features members from various offices and groups on campus including Student Leadership and Civic Engagement, Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement (IPCE), Public and Government Affairs (PGA), the Political Science Department, and also two current UIC students to ensure new, fresh, ideas from students were included in our plans. Despite being a newly formed group that was only a year old, we were able to use this to our advantage to bring new, diverse ideas to the focus for civic engagement.

Outside of our coalition, we worked with Chicago Votes, Rock the Vote, Campus Election Engagement Project, Illinois PIRG, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change, University of Illinois Alumni Association, Undergraduate Student Government and the Political Science Student Union.

- **Analysis of your work:** For campus plans, we asked you to cover how you planned on fulfilling the four buckets of work for a well-rounded democratic engagement. Please describe how each of these programs were actualized, if they were successful, and what you learned.
  - Voter registration: How did your campus register students? How many students did you register?
  - Voter education: How did you provide students nonpartisan voting information?
  - Ballot access: How did you make sure students had access to the ballot? What were the advantageous and hurdles to students at your institution having access to the ballot?
  - Voter turnout: How did you encourage your students to vote on or before election day?

#### Voter Registration:

Voter registration was a major cornerstone of our civic engagement efforts since the inception of our plan. We worked to register students to vote in various ways on campus, and aside from our own efforts, there were also events sponsored by student organizations and other offices to register students to vote. Our goal was to plan as many events as we could to get students registered to vote which included registering students at orientation, tabling weekly in popular locations on campus, planning a Rock the Vote event, doing voter registration at debate watch parties, and at unexpected events like UIC Convocation, UIC Carnival, Political Science Student Union Grill Out, and also working with Chicago Votes! and Illinois PIRG. Overall, our voter registration efforts were highly effective in getting students registered to vote, with 1,594 students registered at the various events. We will continue to register students to vote at orientation while also educating them about the importance of civic engagement. We will also continue to work with different offices and organizations inside and outside the university to form a more organized group that focuses on civic engagement efforts for the university.

#### Voter Education:

Our efforts ranged from civic engagement focused events like Constitution Day and the National Student Issues Convention to more election focused efforts like our debate watch parties, voter education conversations over dinner (“soup and substance”), and a nonpartisan voter guide

created by Student Leadership and Civic Engagement. Turnout to these events was important in measuring the success of our voter education efforts. We found that we had good turnout at most of our events, however, these students seemed to be recurring students and we did not engage as many students outside the norm as we would have liked. In the future, we would like to reach out to students on all different parts of campus to make sure every student has ample opportunity to be more civically engaged and has access to more voter education opportunities.

#### Ballot Access:

UIC was lucky in regards to our ballot access. UIC is an official early voting site and regular voting site so students that live on campus and in the city had ample access to the ballots. In order to reach our students that were outside the city or state, we pushed to have students submit absentee ballots or change their address to their campus address while registering to vote. We did not want students to miss the opportunity to vote just because they did not live in the area.

#### Voter Turnout:

Voter turnout was really important to our coalition as it shows whether the work of our coalition was successful or not. We hosted a social media campaign called “My Reason Why” to get students to discuss why they were voting. We were also active on social media on Election Day reminding students to vote and to attend our result watch party. During early voting, we planned a parade in the quad called Parade to the Polls to pump students up about voting. In the weeks leading up to the election, we used Chicago Votes! pledge cards to encourage students to pledge to vote in the upcoming election. The Rock the Vote Bus came and also had students use their cell phones to pledge to vote. We ensured that a mass email was sent from the Chancellor himself to all the students, staff, and faculty for early voting that took place on campus as well as had notifications on the Blackboard interface about early voting and voting on Election Day. According to our records, 1,267 people voted in our early voting booths and we had 114 new registrants which was a 38% increase from last year.

#### My Reason Why Videos:

[https://www.facebook.com/allyson.nolde/videos/1063007377152093/?hc\\_ref=PAGES\\_TIMELINE](https://www.facebook.com/allyson.nolde/videos/1063007377152093/?hc_ref=PAGES_TIMELINE)  
<https://www.facebook.com/gerardo.nava.77/posts/1136186299797660>  
[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1268811136494253&id=100000961376635](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1268811136494253&id=100000961376635)  
[https://www.facebook.com/anyh96/videos/1821693841382680/?hc\\_ref=PAGES\\_TIMELINE](https://www.facebook.com/anyh96/videos/1821693841382680/?hc_ref=PAGES_TIMELINE)

- **Successes:** What are your institution's top successes (up to 3) of your democratic engagement efforts in 2016?
  1. Voter registration  
Despite some challenges with voter registration, which included lack of information about other voter registration efforts on campus and not having voter registration officially included in the student orientation, we believe this was our biggest success for our democratic engagement efforts. Thanks to the contributions of the people inside and outside of our coalition, we were able to register just shy of 1600 students to vote.
  2. Education programs surrounding civic engagement  
We are proud of the number of events we held on campus for voter education. Furthermore, our events were exciting and engaged students despite being a mainly commuter campus.

### 3. Building a coalition

Our coalition was new but it was powerful. Our coalition consisted of people from many different parts of campus and this gave us leverage in how much we could do. Additionally, our coalition was committed to accomplishing our goals and extremely hard working despite each member's other responsibilities. The connections we built with the university and other organizations will prove useful for future efforts as well.

### Barriers

We are fortunate that in the state of Illinois, there are relatively few external barriers to voter access and engagement. Though some areas of the state are more rural and may experience long distances or lack for transportation to polling locations, the state does not have restrictive voter ID laws and there are long periods of early voting as well as accessible information for absentee/mail in voting. Since UIC is located in Chicago, there is plenty of access to transportation, and the campus is a polling location for early voting as well as election day. As such, the barriers to our success as an institution around voter engagement, as well as the resources needed, tend to be internal.

#### 1. Lack of sufficient funding

The UIC Votes initiative was extremely successful despite lack of funding to do so. There were many times that it was challenging to figure out how to pay for something without the proper funds, such as renting a room in the University or paying an honorarium for a civic speaker. With better funding, we will be able to present more opportunities for students for civic engagement and education.

#### 2. Lack of Awareness – Globally

During both the 2016 and 2018 elections, we saw a lack of awareness regarding the implemented efforts to help increase campus civic learning and democratic engagement. Although we used several methods of communication, members at all levels of our community were still not sure where to direct people with questions around the election, educational resources available to them, or campus leaders of these various efforts. We will continue to work to make improvements as we approach the 2020 election. This awareness also extends to our off campus community partners in the work they do to register students to vote.

#### 3. Chicago Board of Elections

Navigating and getting data from the CBE was and still is a constant struggle. Problems range from getting students to work at early voting sites to getting data from the voting sites after the elections. We also saw a number of students in this last mid-term election face issues related to their residency, even if they were already registered at their on-campus housing location. This resulted in many students being turned away or choosing not to vote as it was too much hassle presented by poll workers. We are hopeful in this next election to look at options, including having an advocate on hand to assist voters if they encounter troubles.

### Goals

#### Short Term (2020 Presidential Election)

We are excited to build on the momentum from our 2016 civic engagement efforts, and to build on what we have learned. For the short term, we are focused on the 2020 presidential election. The goals are:



- To increase our 2016 Voting Rate by 5 points, from 55.0% to 60.0%.
- To increase our 2016 Registration Rate by 5 points, from 77.9% to 82.9%.
- To increase our 2016 Rate of Registered Students who Voted by 5 points, from 70.6% to 75.6%

## Long Term

UIC's overall long-term goal is to support students in developing as lifelong active citizens. To move toward that goal over the next 10 years, we hope to:

- Increase voter participation to over 70% for eligible voters
- Find ways to engage students who are not eligible to vote
- Provide opportunities for students to stay engaged in the community around them

A few specific action steps we plan to take for the 2020 elections are:

### Registration

We will continue to use TurboVote for voter registration during New Student Orientation, New Student Convocation, during Campus Housing Fall Move-In, and throughout miscellaneous fall and spring semester registration campaigns. We will also continue to partner with community organizations and promote their efforts while on campus to register students to vote. We will also continue our Official Massmail communication that include information on how to register to vote.

### Education

Campus-wide, the Provost's dialogue series will continue to happen as well as Future of Chicago lectures and we will work to bring additional civic related speakers. When it comes to national, state, or local elections, we will continue to work hard to ensure students are educated about candidates and issues that will appear on those ballots. We also aim to provide a comprehensive list of candidate and issue resources, events, and opportunities for students to vote early on campus. We will continue to offer ballot parties and are looking to collaborate with the Chicago Board of Elections to bring in voting machines and host a mock early voting event for students to be able to learn how the voting machines work and what to expect when they vote in the future. We continue to look for ways to create more courses, or highlight current courses offered, that focus on civic engagement and service learning.

### Action

Involvement is just as important as making sure students have access to proper civic education opportunities. We are working to provide students with more internships in offices on the city, county, and state level. We will also make efforts to work with the campus' student coalition that lobbies at the Capitol and increase student involvement in government affairs.

It will continue to be the wish and the work of this coalition to ensure that UIC Votes grows into a university-wide initiative and priority.

## Strategy

### Voter Registration

- Turbo Vote
  - We plan to continue our partnership with TurboVote into the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years. In one year's time, we have registered 2,851 students through the

TurboVote platform. We integrated the platform into the UIC Blackboard Learning Management System, the UIC Portal, and the Campus Labs Engage platform, along with its use in targeted social media and campus wide email marketing campaigns.

- Voter Registration at Orientation
  - In partnership with our New Student Orientation Program, a formalized process has been added to the orientation experience where students have the opportunity to register to vote through the TurboVote platform or sign up to receive election related reminders.
- New Student Convocation
  - During New Student Convocation, we have been able to promote the TurboVote platform before, during, and after the event through a custom announcement/promotion using the venue ribbon board.
- Constitution Day
  - Hosted by the UIC Department of Political Science every September, the Constitution Day program includes a lecture from a distinguished civic scholar, a series of engagement opportunities offered by departments around campus, and the chance to network with students and professionals interested in government, law and society. We will have voter registration booths available throughout the duration of the event.
- National Voter Registration Day
  - We will be hosting an event on campus to get as many students as we can registered to vote on National Voter Registration Day. We are hopeful to collaborate again with Rock the Vote.
  - We are working with several offices around campus to have a unified front along with entertainment to bring students to our event.
- National Student Issues Convention
  - UIC hosts a convention of students from a half dozen universities in collaboration with other universities in the Chicago region and other universities around the country to create an agenda of student issues before the November election to which candidates and government officials respond. About 400 students participate in the half-day event.
- Candidate Debates and Debate Watch Parties
  - During the Spring 2020 semester, students will be able to register to vote at any debates or debate watch parties throughout the semester, prior to February 18 (last day to register regularly in Illinois for the March Primary) or March 1 (last day to register online in Illinois for the March Primary). During the Fall 2020 semester students will have the same opportunities to register, prior to October 6 (last day to register regularly in Illinois for the November Presidential Election) or October 18 (last day to register online in Illinois for the November Presidential Election). We will have staff in attendance walking around asking students to register. There will also be a booth near the door for students to go to register to vote, get more information on voting, and access non-partisan candidate issue guides. After each debate, we will ask students to participate in a short survey regarding civic engagement and whether or not students feel more civically engaged after watching the debates.
- Faculty Involvement
  - We plan to coordinate with faculty members to encourage their students to register to vote in the first weeks of classes.
- Increasing Availability of Information

- We plan to create bulletin boards that have voter registration forms, voter guides, sample ballots, and issue guides that will be showcased in different offices and student-heavy locations around the university.

#### Voter Education

- Candidate Debates and Debate Watch Parties
  - Through hosting of debates and debate watch parties, students will have access to learning about candidates and their various viewpoints related to their candidacy and the election.
- University of Illinois Alumni Alliance UI Day at the Capitol
  - Each year the University of Illinois Alumni Alliance host a UI Day at the Capitol for students from across the system to travel to Springfield to meet with their State Legislators and discuss issues important to them and to the system.
- UIC Voter Information Website
  - We will continue to keep an updated a website that students can visit for civic engagement. We plan to update this site to provide information about voter registration, information for voting, sample ballots, candidate issue guides, upcoming events, and other resources that may prove helpful to students.
- Voter Information Flyers
  - We plan to regularly distribute voter information flyers with non-partisan details on candidate issues, voter registration information, and promotions for early voting.
- University Mass Email
  - We will send a mass email regarding voter information and registration in the beginning weeks of the Spring and Fall 2020 semesters. The mass email will include links to our website and other resources on voting, as well as information for upcoming events surrounding civic engagement.
- Voter Information/Ballot Access Information Lunch
  - We will host a lunch-in to teach interested students the ins and outs of voting. This includes discussing concerns first time voters may have, informing participants of ballot access laws for Illinois, discussing candidate issues and stances (non-partisan), and simulations of polling stations and ballots. We will conclude with lunch and an open forum for students to get questions answered and discuss their experiences.

#### Voter Participation/Ballot Access/Get Out the Vote

- University Mass Email/Targeted Emailing/Election Engagement Strategy
  - Turbo Vote
    - We plan to continue our partnership with TurboVote into the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years. This tool has helped us in communication with students leading up to both the primary and election voting days.
  - We plan to send a mass email regarding voter information and registration in the beginning weeks of the spring and fall 2020 semesters. The mass email will include links to websites and other resources on voting as well as information for upcoming events surrounding civic engagement. On March 4 and October 21 we will send another email to students reminding them about early voting and Election Day and provide information on how they can find their polling place.

- Students will be able to send emails to our office with questions or concerns they have regarding the elections. We will have the Civic Engagement Fellow and staff read and respond to said emails as quickly as they can.
- Bulletin Boards
  - We plan to create bulletin boards that have voter registration forms, voter guides, sample ballots, and issue guides that will go to different offices and student-heavy locations around the university.
- Flyer Distribution
  - In the days leading up to the Primary and Election Day, we will post and distribute flyers encouraging students to get out and vote.
- Social Media
  - We plan to organize social media campaigns to get students active and voting on campus. This would involve sending regular updates through various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and multiple accounts to remind students of important deadlines and other pertinent information regarding the elections, deadlines, and the candidates
- Blackboard
  - We are hopeful to continue our partnership with Blackboard administrators to have reminders on the Blackboard homepage for students and faculty members with information about early voting and Primary and Election Day voting. A permanent link to voter registration, through the TurboVote platform, already exists on the UIC Blackboard site.
- Primary Early Voting
  - Primary early voting will be available at UIC March 11 through March 13 from 10am until 5pm for anyone that is registered to vote in the City of Chicago.
- Primary Day Voting
  - University of Illinois at Chicago is a Primary voting site.
- Early Voting
  - Early voting will be available at UIC October 28 through October 30 from 10am until 5pm for anyone that is registered to vote in the City of Chicago.
- Election Day
  - University of Illinois at Chicago is an Election Day voting site.
- Election Results Watch Party
  - We will host a watch party to reveal the election results on campus.

### **Available Resources**

- We will continue to seek out opportunities for grants from outside groups to be used toward our Civic Engagement efforts.
- We will be co-sponsoring a number of events with other offices across campus, including the Center for Student Involvement and the seven Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change at UIC.
- We will be co-sponsoring a number of events with student organizations across campus, including the Undergraduate Student Government, Political Science Student Union, College Democrats, and College Republicans.

### **Additional Resources Required**

- While additional funding in the form of grants from outside the university would be helpful, we have not had the opportunity to seek funding.

### **Challenges and Navigation**

- UIC is largely an international serving institution with, 15.1% of our students coming from other countries. Without being able to identify who is legally allowed to vote or not in the United States, we find it difficult to target specific resources to students. As a way to combat this, we hope to offer more open-ended, open-dialogue spaces where students can engage in conversation about issues that matter to them. With this, students feel motivated to be interpersonal with their peers, while encouraging those with the power to influence an election to make their way to the polling place.
- Many students at UIC commute to and from the campus and limit their involvement in various organizations because of that. In order to navigate through this issue, we think it would be pertinent to use the students leaders that are actively involved on campus to get other students engaged civically as well as in their own student organizations. Students with the desire and passion to lead also make sure that other students' voices are heard. In the end, we hope a hierarchical, trickle-down effect is effective for peer motivation.
- With the outcomes of the 2016 presidential election leading to polarizing effects on our campus, we find it necessary to remove students from their siloed perspectives. On our campus, we find it difficult to navigate educational events without students remaining open to ideas and stances on the complete end of the spectrum as theirs. In hopes to break the idea of identity-politics and introduce students to more non-biased outlets, we look to offer more spaces for teaching how to properly research and assess validity, while expanding students' concepts of their own beliefs.

### **Tentative Calendar of Events**

- May through August – New Student Orientation Voter Registration
- September 17, 2019 – Constitution Day Event
- September 24, 2019 – National Voter Registration Day Event
- February 1, 2020 - [Official Mass Email] About Voter Registration, Events, and Resources
- February 18, 2020 – Last day to register to Vote (Regular) for Presidential Primary Election
- March 1, 2020 – Last day to register to Vote (Online) for Presidential Primary Election
- March 4, 2020 - [Official Mass Email] Early Primary Voting and Primary Voting
- March 11, 2020 – On Campus Early Primary Voting BEGINS
- March 11, 2020 – Party at the Polls
- March 12, 2020 – On Campus Early Primary Voting
- March 12, 2020 – Party at the Polls
- March 13, 2020 – On Campus Early Primary Voting ENDS
- March 13, 2020 – Party at the Polls
- March 17, 2020 – Presidential Primary Voting
- May through August – New Student Orientation Voter Registration
- September 9, 2020 – [OFFICIAL EMAIL] About Voter Registration, Events, and Resources

- September 16, 2020 – Constitution Day Event
- September 22, 2020 – National Voter Registration Day Event
- October 6, 2020 – Last day to register to Vote (Regular) for Presidential Election
- October 18, 2020 – Last day to register to vote (Online) for Presidential Election
- October 21, 2020 - [Official Mass Email] Early Voting and Election Day Voting
- October 28, 2020 – On Campus Early Voting BEGINS
- October 28, 2020 – Party at the Polls
- October 29, 2020 – On Campus Early Voting
- October 29, 2020 – Party at the Polls
- October 30, 2020 – On Campus Early Voting ENDS
- October 30, 2020 – Party at the Polls
- November 3, 2020 – Election Day
- November 3, 2020 – Election Day Results Watch Party

Events yet to be scheduled:

Debate Watch Parties, Ballot Parties, Voter Information/Ballot Access Information Lunch Additional Voter Registration Events, U of I Day at the Capitol, and National Student Issues Convention. Additionally, we know there will be events that arise throughout the election cycle that will be added as unanticipated events.

## Reporting

This plan will be shared with all members of the core coalition, posted on the website of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement and incorporated into reports to upper administration. We will also share the NSLVE data/report on the Student Leadership and Civic Engagement website. Where applicable, we will also share updates and information through social media channels and official University news outlets.

## Evaluation

We would like to know if our civic engagement efforts are effective in increasing student participation in the areas of voter registration, education, and participation. We would like the evaluation to give us information that will help us continue to improve student civic engagement, build stronger coordination for civic engagement efforts, and help us advocate for this work to become a University-wide priority that is supported with some institutional resources.

The coalition will lead the evaluation process, building on what we have already started. We will continue to consider attendance at events/programs/early voting, implement evaluations at events, and work with NSLVE and our local elections board to get data on numbers for comparison to previous years. We plan to gather information throughout the process, and make adjustments to programming and outreach based on the data as we go along. We will also do an overall evaluation with all data after the 2020 elections, and use this data along with the information we receive in our next NSLVE report to evaluate our success in meeting the goals we have set out in this plan.

We will share the information gathered through the coalition members, reports to upper administration, and social media and University news outlets as appropriate.