



CAMPUS VOTE PLAN 2018-2019

ALL IN DEMOCRACY CHALLENGE

WESTERN STATE COLORADO UNIVERSITY

Gunnison, CO 81231

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NSLVE DATA: we cannot locate the latest report and will complete this section of the report as soon as the data has been located and summarized.

ENGAGEMENT AND STEERING COMMITTEE: Since we have only been members since the winter of 2018, we are in the process of assembling an all-campus faculty and staff committee to help with voting initiatives and develop and short and a long-term plan for increasing student involvement, disseminating information, providing opportunities for students to engage with each other and our community, and motivate them to become leaders in democratic education, stewardship and organizing. We are also looking to engage with a few community partners who can help us think through successful community-University partnerships.

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Overview / Executive Summary:

Western State Colorado University is a four year undergraduate, with some limited graduate programs, liberal arts institution in the heart of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. We have approximately 2,100 undergraduate and about 500 graduate students. We are interested in enhancing our election engagement as well as cross-campus student engagement in democracy education because such initiatives enhance our institutional mission to educate students by “promoting intellectual maturity and personal growth in its students, and graduates citizens prepared to assume constructive roles in local, national and global communities.” Furthermore, democracy education promotes our Diversity commitment as part of the new Western State Colorado University Strategic Plan (2018-2021) and aligns with our values of strong community and citizenship education.

All In Democracy Challenge is currently housed in the Politics and Government program, which is itself committed to developing strong community and leadership skills, reflected in our mission: “Politics & Government students are exposed to different and often conflicting points of view on a variety of important political ideas (e.g., democracy, freedom, equality, development and power). Studying how different individuals have looked at these ideas, as well as how such ideas have been practiced in the contexts of real institutions and political controversies, enlarges the mind, develops the tools necessary for effective citizenship and serves to cultivate critical reasoning. Students rethink their assumptions about the world and their place in it, while learning skills to influence issues that matter to them.” We have a strong commitment and history of student engagement through lectures, round tables and voter registration initiatives that we hope to be able to strengthen through the lens of *All In Democracy Challenge*. We seek to grow our community and campus engagement, especially with relationship to democracy education and voting, and look forward to the opportunity to do so with our many partners on campus, but student organizations, staff and other faculty.

As this is our first annual report, and since our membership in All In Campus Democracy Challenge is only 4 months old, our goals for 2017-2018 only encompass the spring semester of 2018, and were limited to the following:

- Working with cross-campus partners to identify possible avenues for more effective, visible and accessible opportunities for democratic engagement
- Register 50 students to vote
- Hold one campus-wide event on a topic related to the upcoming election, or another topic engaging students with diversity, community building and democracy

Coalition / team members:

- Currently, we are working on identifying interested student leaders to participate in our initiatives. So far, we have reached out to the LEAD office (Leaderships, Engagement and Development) on campus, which is responsible for student engagement, student initiatives and for Freshmen Student Orientation every fall.
- Student leaders in Politics and Government, as part of the Politics Club, have taken on the brunt of work in the spring of 2018.
- Several student groups, including the Women’s Center student leadership, have expressed an interest in participating in our initiative and helping to spread the word and help us enhance our efforts to promote democracy education, engagement and
- The proposed revision of the GE curriculum on campus includes a citizenship seminar for all graduating seniors, which will allow them to see direct links between their education at

Western, democracy, community service projects and our location. We hope to be involved in pushing for this positive change, which includes democracy education at its core.

- Currently, individuals involved are Dr. Maria Struble (Politics Faculty), Dr. Brian Bernhardt (Politics Faculty), Sara Phillips (LEAD director)
- Student members of Politics Club and LEAD are also involved in executing and planning events.

Checklist of what we accomplished in spring of 2018:

1. Voter Registration:

- a. We organized three separate Voter Registration Drives on campus in April of 2018, working with Gunnison Political Revolution, a community group. Two of the voter registration drives were during lunch hour at the University Center (April 5th and 12th), and one was during the DACA informational event that was held on April 18th in the University Center.
- b. Maria Struble, Gunnison Political Revolution and LEAD office helped organize those
- c. Tim Mobley from Gunnison Political Revolution ran all three drives, as he is authorized to do so by Colorado Election Commission.
- d. Maria Struble: e-mail notifications across campus

2. Campus engagement:

- a. DACA information event was held on April 18th
 - i. It was student organized and attracted a large crowd
 - ii. It shared stories of DACA recipients, had a round table of lawyers and other community leaders who were able to answer questions
 - iii. We also mailed 300 Dreamers Act custom-made support cards to all representatives from the State of Colorado to Washington.
 - iv. LEAD office and Politics and Government Program were main sponsors, as the event was entirely student run and organized
- b. We also participated in the community clean up on April 21st
- c. We held two events in the fall of 2017, before we were members with All In Campus, one was on human trafficking and one was a talk about Women Resistance Kurdish Fighters. They both serve as part of our global justice talk series, which we hope to strengthen and target more toward agency development and empowerment.

3. Community wide engagement:

- a. We sponsored participation in the Women's March in January of 2018.
- b. We also participated in the March for our Lives event in March which was widely attended by college students AND community members.
- c. DACA event was attended by a lot of community members as well, and was an excellent opportunity for collaboration between campus and leaders in the Gunnison valley.
- d. Voter Registration drives at the High School
- e. Community Clean-Up

4. Plans/Goals for the future:

- a. Form a working group of cross-campus collaborators in the month of September 2018, at the latest
 - i. Designate a student leader to send monthly updates on the work of the group

- ii. Hold a half-way through the semester planning meeting with some assessment of things accomplished
 - iii. Hold end of year meeting of working group, and potentially form sub-committees to address outstanding issues and how to extend our participation in the wider community
 - iv. Potential for grant writing activities and trips to the capitol in Denver
 - v. Work directly with SGA (have an All In Campus Democracy Challenge SGA representative)
- b. Organize a gubernatorial forum on campus and also sponsor forums for other candidates (we always do that in the fall)
- c. Focus on enhancing student participation in events that celebrate ethnicity, gender diversity and diversity in general, working with our LGBTQ clubs and community, with minority students, DACA recipients, non-traditional students and veterans.
- d. Restart the Global Justice Film Series event on campus
- e. Voting specific activities:
 - i. Use Freshman Orientation as a starting point for voter registration
 - ii. Use LEAD office collaboration for an orientation wide theme
 - iii. Hold bi-monthly registration drives with the League of Women Voters of Gunnison Political Revolution
 - iv. League of Women Voters Blue Book forums (we already do that)
 - v. Rent vans from the University and bus students to the polls
 - vi. March to the polls event
 - vii. Investigate the opportunities for having a polling place on campus
 - viii. Have an after-election party (we already do that for majors, but open up to the campus as a whole)
 - ix. Train students to be able to register people to vote
 - x. Host National Voter Registration Day
- f. Continue observing UN day, World Refugee Day, Constitution Day, World Peace Day with interactive and fun campus events
 - i. We already do that and they are very well received
 - ii. Focus on making this more interactive and even more fun for students to engage with
- g. Community engagement
 - i. Forge partnerships with Mountain Roots (environmental sustainability and education non-profit)
 - ii. Work with Gunnison Arts Center and with Gunnison Mentors on ways of enhancing visibility to what we do through existing community partnerships
- h. Campus wide engagement expansion:
 - i. Work closely with graduate programs on campus to create meaningful projects that provide opportunity for practical engagement and study by graduate students and application and benefit for our undergraduate population
 - ii. Engage with Student Affairs more closely
 - iii. Work with LEAD office
 - iv. Work with multi-cultural center
 - v. Work with Women's Center
 - vi. Forge closer relationships with the library and use their space and campus wide reach to advertise, hold events and educate the student body on issues related to democratic education and participation.

