I.   *__Executive Summary__*
In our mission and vision, York College of Pennsylvania explicitly dedicates itself to challenging and supporting our students as they develop and hone the skills critical to being productive and purposeful members of their communities. To that end, we work to embed community engagement into the many aspects of the education our students receive and actively partner with the surrounding community for educational, cultural, and social purposes.

For us, effecting positive change wherever a Spartan goes should be second nature. Participation in efforts like voter engagement is yet another way for our community to encourage the civic engagement that is a hallmark of a healthy and interconnected community. But we are no longer living in a time where the usual methods interact with each other are feasible. We must display creativity and resolve in our efforts to provide nonpartisan education and opportunities. Only then can we be confident our campus community is equipped to help protect the vulnerable, secure platforms for the underrepresented, and challenge the privileged to leverage their advantage on behalf of others.

Our plan seeks to raise awareness of and promote issues critical to voters, as well as impress upon community members the power that ripples out from their engagement and decision to vote. In line with the expectations of the NASPA Voter Friendly Campus and the Pennsylvania Campus Voting Challenge is to commence these efforts over the summer and fall of 2020, and then institutionalize them into the fabric of our campus culture. As students matriculate and graduate, the population turns over regularly; therefore, it is our intention that this plan's goals become part of the campus culture and have no real end date. The major goals of this plan include:

1. Institutionalize the provision of voter engagement and registration information to campus
    a. Establish explicit guidelines for student organizations and institutional departments interested in working with non-partisan organizations and campus departments with assistance from Student Senate, Academic Senate, and the Division of Student Affairs
    b. Partner with Admissions and the Office of Student Activities and Orientation (OSAO) to
    c. Work with Library and Technology Services and the Office of Communications to ensure resources and educational materials are available in Schmidt Library, in academic computer labs, and on the college's website and relevant social media accounts
2. Provide or develop accessible materials on ways to be or become a more informed and engaged voter--this includes but isn't limited to how to complete voter registration forms, find your polling place, apply for an absentee ballot, and participate in community town halls.
    a. Focus on facts that will be helpful for varying levels of involvement
    b. Ensure materials are accessible for hearing and/or vision-impaired members of the community
    c. Materials could include digital signage, bulletin boards, social media posts, short informational videos, etc.
    d. Informational pieces will be accessible via the college website and/or a Google Drive folder accessible to anyone with a YCP email address
3. Work with the Provost's Office to add registration deadlines, elections, and other voting-related dates to the College's academic calendar

4. Develop a campus-wide process for engaging with both non-partisan political entities and politically-affiliated individuals or groups that can be enhanced or modified as needed for forums, campus visits, or community events

While Phillips Thomas Hornbuckle, J.D., Director of the Office of Intercultural Student Life & Global Programming, and R. Caleb Doyle, YCP student (class of 2020) are the primary authors of this plan, it has been developed with opportunities for students, faculty, and administrators to provide input and feedback. It is designed to operate as a living document that regularly takes in and responds to the feedback of the community. Additionally, it will adjust the finer details of the plan to accommodate the ever-shifting dynamics of our campus and surrounding community.

II. **Leadership**

The institution's work will be overseen by a committee that is composed of students, faculty, and administrators. It will also be applying guidance from experts and representatives from both NASPA's Voter Friendly Campus Initiative and the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. Members were selected for their proximity to the community, areas of expertise, and interest in supporting students' interest in increasing voter engagement. Member selection has been primarily based on their campus roles' relevance to our goals and voiced interest in achieving them.

Members will provide guidance on implementing the strategic plan and leveraging their knowledge and skills to achieve specific goals. Its current makeup represents a range of sexes, racial or ethnic backgrounds, ages, religious affiliations, and other intersectional identities at which many voters make critical decisions about candidates and issues. The committee will work to meet once per month.

This group will work to coordinate various independent efforts in order to better organize how students engage with all aspects of the political process. Its members include:

- Phillips Thomas Hornbuckle, J.D. (Student Affairs, ISLGP)
- R. Caleb Doyle (YCP Student, Class of 2020)
- Brian Dix (Communications)
- Mary Dolheimer (Communications)
- Nate Taylor (OSAO)
- Peter Levy (Academic Senate President, History & Political Science)
- Rita Trippett (YCCOSP)
- Sara Goodwin (Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, OSAO)
- Tami Amrom Miller (OSAO)
- Vinny Cannizzaro (Center for Community Engagement)
- Pending or potential members include: Dr. John Altman (History and Political Science), Dr. Sung-Wook Paik (History and Political Science), Karen Rice Young (Schmidt Library Archives), Jeff Vermeulen (External Affairs), and representation from Student Senate

These members all represent departments involved in academia, communications and marketing, community engagement, and administrative support. Depending on the committee's vision for this plan, additional external members may be invited. Student organizations with previous political activities will be invited to participate as well--this includes but is not limited to UNITY, Sigma Gamma Rho, Pre-Law Society, YCEA, CASA, and individual students from the YCCOSP program.

Phillips Thomas Hornbuckle, J.D. will chair the group through the summer of 2020 with Caleb Doyle as a co-chairperson. The committee will determine ahead of the beginning of the fall semester whether other committee members will be better positioned to achieve the plan's goals. The committee will convene over the summer to determine whether coordination with the local election office is a feasible partnership to set up immediately or for later in the fall semester.

III. **Commitment**

York College demonstrates its commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement in our mission and vision, through community-focused initiatives under the Center for Community Engagement. and with sustaining gifts like the Naylor Endowment in Writing Studies. This commitment is published on the college's website, reinforced by the President at milestone events like Convocation and Commencement, and emphasized in all leadership development programs and opportunities. Externally, this commitment is communicated to the general public through the programs we host or sponsor with community partners and engaged community members or groups.

A productive and purposeful graduate is one who recognizes the value of their voice and successfully leverages that voice to the benefit of others. Our leadership development opportunities and Spartan Oath challenge our entire community to reflect on how their actions affect the entire community. Moreover, our strategic plan and vision for the future of our college involve deepening our relationship with the greater York community and being an active participant in its redevelopment of and reinvestment in its people and its potential.

On campus, students like Caleb Doyle have found only support and enthusiasm from mentors and senior administrators for their interest in increasing voter engagement and turnout. The President personally works to be highly visible among the students in order to personally invest in their development of skills to advocate for themselves and others to people of greater responsibility. Additionally, committees like the one formed for this purpose speak to our commitment to make voter engagement a part of institutional culture.

We have created a YCP Google Drive folder in which all relevant engagement resources from NASPA, PA ALL IN Campus Voter Challenge, and other partners are collected for easy access for the committee members. As all stakeholders reach consensus around reasonable timelines for release, subfolders will be created and made accessible to the campus community for use in courses, student organization meetings, leadership training workshops, and professional

development sessions for faculty and staff. As community partners like YWCA York and others formalize their support for this effort, they too will receive access to those materials.

The excitement from students interested in leading the charge to increase voter engagement and turnout has been palpable. Caleb has seen and can provide first-hand accounts of how well received his commitment to this cause has contributed to his success as a student at YCP. His greatest supporter has been the Department of History & Political Science, which not only mentioned the importance of engagement in course lectures, but also provided extra credit for those who registered to vote and thoughtfully dedicated time in classes to focus on the deomcratic process and true value of one's vote. Other students can speak to how civic engagement was critical to their development of skills in the Developing Leaders program under Student Activities and Orientation.

The focus of the current policies in place for political engagement by students is on balance. As part of their general education credits, all incoming students must complete a citizenship course prior to their first semester. And in extracurricular programming, OSAO strongly discourages the invitation of one party representative and not the others, the hosting organization denies their fellow students the opportunity to weigh options in real time and reach a more informed conclusion. By pushing for a balanced presentation of opinions, students are invited to contemplate how the opposing viewpoint reaches its conclusions.

The Committee will be able to speak to more specific benchmarks of success after initial surveying of the returning and incoming student populations, but two overarching goals we will hope to report include (1) 90% affirmation that all returning or incoming students are provided with the information necessary to register to vote or determine registration status and (2) 100% affirmation in the Division of Student Affairs Senior Survey that they were provided opportunities to engage in civic discourse about issues important to them as potential or actual voters.

IV. **Landscape**

Civic learning and democratic engagement are valued aspects of a students' experience, but this opportunity to enhance voter education and engagement will be what pushes disparate student-led efforts into a more cohesive and comprehensive plan.

Little to no assessment data has been gathered and shared with campus administrators around the political climate and feelings about democratic engagement. Neither has much been distributed for comparison to peer institutions beyond anecdotal recollections. This is one area that will display the greatest improvement over the academic year, as all the resources involved will provide invaluable guidance on gathering, reporting, and articulating the data to relevant stakeholders.

Some political science courses do delve into civic learning and democratic engagement, including the courses co-created with the CCE's Glatfelter Public Policy Institute. And programs like the Developing Leaders Seminar have made civic engagement a pillar of its program for organizing its sessions with its participants and program mentors.

But our campus has great room for improvement; the campus culture is relatively apathetic at first glance. Upon closer inspection, however, there are several individual students or student organizations working to achieve the same ends but doing it without an awareness for the others. Coordinating these efforts to ensure no one's program promotion falls through the cracks will assist with this.

Our greater community will also benefit from this opportunity to troubleshoot our engagement and turnout. While our campus provides easy access for some to engage in the political process by providing the Grumbacher Sport and Fitness Center as a polling place, the Commonwealth's use of closed primaries and declination to allow online registration shutters the ability for many potential voters to make their concerns visible to their representatives. Opportunities like mail-in ballots, online registration, and adjusted windows for accepting voter registrations and mailed ballots would go a long way to increasing voter turnout.

Dedicated manpower and ready-to-go materials like those offered through these initiatives are two of the most needed resources. As other needs arise, the committee will not hesitate to forward those for resolution. Most importantly, the campus will need outside expert voices to help us reframe what we do and how we operate as a community to include greater democratic engagement and smarter, more nuanced civic learning.

V.   **Goals**
Long-Term Goals
- ❏ Provide 100% of enrolled students with the resources to determine their voting eligibility and, where possible, register to vote
- ❏ Develop or make available materials educating100% of students on ways to be or become a more informed and engaged voter
- ❏ Increase student voting rates by 10% from 2020 by 2024
- ❏ Add electoral engagement to First Year Seminar syllabi as a learning objective
- ❏ Incorporate civic education and democratic engagement as learning outcomes to 25% of courses by 2024

Short-Term Goals
- ❏ Assess current community voting rates
- ❏ Develop a comprehensive process for individuals, organizations, or departments wishing to host or sponsor a speaker or event focused on civic learning and/or democratic engagement
- ❏ Work with Library and Technology Services and the Office of Communications to ensure resources and educational materials are available in Schmidt Library, in academic computer labs, and on the college's website and relevant social media accounts
- ❏ Partner with Academic Senate and the Provost to embed YCP's commitment to being aware of democratic engagement by adding election-related dates and deadlines to the academic calendar by 2022
- ❏ Add voter registration (local and out-of-state) information to the institution's website and relevant social media accounts

❏ Create a database for all student organizations interested in running voter registration drives on campus or in the community--successful addition to the database would involve a standard training around proper behavior, permissible language, correct handling of completed forms, and receipt of a list of professors who will grant extra credit to those who volunteer to staff the tables for a shift.

VI. **Strategy**

The COVID-19 pandemic has upended how our campus engages with our students and staff, both in terms of what channels are used and with what frequency each medium is tapped to reach them.

The plans for programming that were initially discussed remain as tentative if not more so than beforehand. Between social distancing expectations from all levels, best practices for avoiding burnout or overstimulation, and increasing amounts of misinformation, there has never been a greater need for providing thoughtful, respectful, and non-partisan spaces to evaluate the perspectives one personally holds as well as those of others.

As best we can predict at this time, we would plan for the following activities:

- Virtual Town Halls
    - Organized by theme or issue
    - Moderated by President Gunter-Smith, expert members of the committee, or local community leader
- Advocacy for institutionalizing the work
    - Promoting our goals at Academic Senate
    - Promoting our goals at Student Senate
    - Promoting our goals to Provost's Office
- Rollout of Media Toolkits provided by NASPA and ALL IN
- Voter Registration Drives
    - At orientations
    - Throughout the semester
- Voter Engagement Surveys (conducted after programs and bi-annually)

The committee and student volunteers will do the work and be responsible for implementing each planned activity. The work will happen largely on campus or on college-controlled communication channels or social media accounts, and primarily while classes are in session or as critical election dates approach. The purpose of the work has been and is to remind students of their awesome power as voters and stakeholders in their respective communities.

VII. **Reporting**

The progress reports will be drafted, edited, and reviewed by the committee at least once per semester. The committee will then share with senior leadership, Student Senate, and Academic Senate for any questions or feedback that will enhance the impact of the report. Finally, it will be posted to the institution's website and relevant social media accounts pending review by the Office of Communications and approval by the President.

Stakeholder organizations or departments can coordinate with the committee to organize Town Hall events to discuss the reports or other issues critical to voters on campus or in the community. Where available, senior administrators, community leaders, or democratic engagement experts may be invited to provide their perspectives as well.

Some of the data gathered may venture into FERPA-protected territory; should this occur, those portions of the report will not be made available to the public in order to maintain the institution's compliance.

VIII.   <u>**Evaluation**</u>

Annual evaluations will provide timely opportunities to see the feedback from a higher vantage point and reflect on how much our programming impacted campus culture each year. We are setting goals, but evaluating our progress is the truest accountability method for long-term goals. The feedback articulates what we must change and how best to adapt to the shifting needs of our community. We want to know how we are following through on our well-intentioned statements and goals; whether our commitment is holding true; and if the information we are providing is actually informing others on what steps to take

The committee will work with guidance from our IRB to conduct surveys and analyze the data. Committee members could be assigned to conduct internal audits in their respective areas to gather feedback on how effective our methods have been there. Brief evaluations will be conducted following each program; the frequency of larger-scale evaluations will depend on guidance from IRB and approval from the Provost's Office.

The responses will be gathered via Qualtrics, Google Poll, in person feedback, or paper forms. While most of the forms will be provided in English, we will work to provide translated copies as we are able and upon request. The results will be presented at committee meetings and submitted to senior leadership and the Board of Trustees Student Life Committee for their consideration.

Results of the evaluations will be stored in spreadsheets, SPSS Analytics, and other forms of visual or audio representation. Where possible, they will be available on the committee's Share Drive for committee meetings or requested presentations.