



Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Action
Plan for Voter Registration,
Education, and Engagement for 2018

Executive Summary

Kennesaw State University is a comprehensive multi-campus public university located in Cobb County within northwest metropolitan Atlanta, and is the third largest institution within the University System of Georgia with over 35,000 students. KSU and the former Southern Polytechnic State University were consolidated into one new university in January 2015. As a result, the NSLVE data in 2016 represents the total new university where the 2012 data is separated by each former institution, and 2014 midterm data is only available for the former Kennesaw State but not for SPSU. This makes it challenging to fully assess change rates, but based on all data available from both institutions, the voting rate increased from 2012 to 2016. Looking solely at the KSU report, the overall voting rate increase 2%, but comparing the rate solely of the former SPSU to the overall newly consolidated rate the increase was 5%. The established aspirational goal was an overall voter increase of 5% for the fully consolidated institutional data, and while that was not fully achieved, when reviewing just the voting rate of registered students, the increase was 4% from the former KSU data and 8% for the former SPSU data, with the consolidated 2016 rate of 69.5%.

For the first time in 2017, KSU added the Civic Engagement module to our regular NSSE distribution. The results are being publicly released in January 2018, but initial data assessment suggests the responses from KSU's first-year and senior students are on par with national data.

Moving into 2018, voter registration efforts will continue as outlined in the previous plan, and KSU is excited to continue our partnership with TurboVote. The 2018 enhancement goals focus on voter education and engagement through:

- **Ease of Access to Voting:** The Student Government Association has begun researching the feasibility of establishing an on campus polling site for future elections, particularly for an advance voting polling site. In the meantime we will continue the transportation options we added in 2016 for advance voting and select Election Day polling locations strategically selected to maximize opportunity for students across all campuses.
- **Commitment to Civility:** Assess and enhance the institutional climate and culture. KSU has experienced significant change in leadership coupled with a variety of high profile conflicts, in many ways mirroring the national climate. In late 2016 we achieved a long-standing dream and created permanent Democracy Walls on both campuses, and experienced a fair level of engagement in 2017, but will focus on more structured approaches in 2018. The university is also hosting our first Creed Week in January 2018 to expand awareness and commitment to the university's Owl Creed and the institution's aspirational values.

CLDE Coalition & Leadership Team

Building on the small American Democracy Project team that had served as primary coordinators of our annual Constitution Week activities, the Office of the Dean of Students assembled a multi-disciplinary team of institutional partners who guide this work. The KSU coalition includes:

- Associate Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students (CLDE Chair, and Deputy Registrar for Cobb County Board of Elections and Registration)
- Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs (ADP Chair)
- Associate Vice President for Strategic Communication and Issues Management
- Director of Government Relations
- Student Government Association President, SGA Senators, and students from various registered student organizations, fraternities and sororities
- Chair of the Department of Political Science & Faculty representatives
- Assistant Dean of Students for Student Life
- Executive Director for the Center for Student Leadership
- Coordinator for Thrive Leadership Program, Center for Student Leadership
- Director of Student Engagement
- Dean of University College
- Director of First-Year Seminars & Assistant Professor of English
- Associate Director for Student Advocacy
- Assistant Director for Volunteerism and Service Learning
- Coordinator of Assessment and Strategic Planning
- Assistant Professor of Leadership Studies and Assistant Director of Engagement
- Associate Director of Residence Life
- Associate Dean of Library Systems
- Outreach Coordinator, Office of the Georgia Secretary of State

We strategically engage a wide diversity of students, faculty, staff, and administrators, along with external partners from the League of Women Voters, Cobb County Board of Elections and Registration, and Office of the Secretary of State to ensure comprehensive buy-in and multi-layered support. Internal partnerships across multiple Student Affairs and Academic Affairs units is critical for infusing our marketing efforts in the classroom, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities. We also partner with Alumni Affairs and Parent & Family Programs to reach broad audiences that both contribute to civic engagement in their own right but also have influence upon our students. With such a large coalition, sub-teams are formed to focus on specific tasks and programs.

Commitment and Landscape

KSU is experiencing significant transition and is actively engaged in institutional strategic planning efforts that include civic learning and democratic engagement. As these efforts are still evolving, the work of the CLDE coalition for 2018 will continue to follow the established plans from 2016 and 2017.

Assessment results from NSLVE have been made publicly available through the website below:
<http://deanofstudents.kennesaw.edu/resources/clde.php>

The KSU student newspaper, The Sentinel, ran a front page article on November 7, 2017 highlighting the NSLVE results. This was followed with an online article and blog discussion.

In addition to NSLVE, KSU for the first time in 2017 added the Civic Engagement module to our regular NSSE distribution. The results are being publicly released in January 2018.

Goals

Building upon our past traditions, much of our formal programming focuses on Constitution Week, a theme experience that encompasses Constitution Day & Citizenship Day (September 17) concluding around National Voter Registration Day. The extended week includes a variety of speakers, discussions, and registration and education activities to both promote local and national elections and also encourage on-going democratic engagement. Building upon that anchor week, additional programming and service opportunities are added at strategic points throughout the year to continually keep students engaged.

Two key overarching goals for 2018 include:

- **Ease of Access to Voting:** The Student Government Association has begun researching the feasibility of establishing an on campus polling site for future elections, particularly for an advance voting polling site. In the meantime we will continue the transportation options we added in 2016 for advance voting and select Election Day polling locations strategically selected to maximize opportunity for students across all campuses.
- **Commitment to Civility:** Assess and enhance the institutional climate and culture. KSU has experienced significant change in leadership coupled with a variety of high profile conflicts, in many ways mirroring the national climate. In late 2016 we achieved a long-standing dream and created permanent Democracy Walls on both campuses, and experienced a fair level of engagement in 2017, but will focus on more structured approaches in 2018. The university is also hosting our first Creed Week in January 2018 to expand awareness and commitment to the university's Owl Creed and the institution's aspirational values.

Immediate and On-going SMART goals include:

- Increase voter registration rates by 5% over the 2012 NSLVE data by 2020
- Increase voting rate by 10% over the 2012 NSLVE data by 2020
- Increase TurboVote participation rate by 15% by December 2018 over the July 2016 rate
- Track student participation in the new all-digital access New York Times readership program initiated in September 2017 and demonstrate that at least 10% of all KSU students have created an account and utilized the readership program by May 2018

Strategy

The KSU Owl Creed was created 20 years ago by a special committee of students, faculty, and staff in response to on-going human relations concerns involving an increase in incidents of incivility. Beyond inclusion in the Student Handbook and select other documents, the Owl Creed was not a 'living' creed actively taught to students and assessed for its adoption by the

greater campus community. In 2016 the Division of Student Affairs spearheaded a comprehensive conversation about institutional values and re-engaged the Creed in multiple ways across the university. This campaign continued in 2017 with professionally designed marketing materials distributed across the university and more prominent inclusion in Welcome Week and First-Year Experience activities. Through the Office of Student Advocacy, a student CivOwlity Council was created to increase peer-to-peer deliberative dialogue about civility and our shared values expressed through the Owl Creed. In celebration of the 20th anniversary, KSU will host its first “Creed Week” in January 2018 to engage the broader university community in awareness of the Creed values and ways everyone can enhance campus civility and civic engagement.

The activities hosted through Creed Week will set the theme for all CLDE-related programming for the remainder of 2018.

The CLDE Coalition will use the same template from 2017 in 2018, but framed through the lens of the Creed. Constitution Week in September 2018 will revisit the activities and outcomes achieved through the Creed Week in January 2018 and serve as a post-assessment experience for returning students and a pre-assessment entry point for new students. While specific plans for Creed Week 2019 have not been established, if all goes as anticipated in January 2018 this new theme week will serve as a significant spring term compliment to the well-established Constitution Week tradition each fall term.

Between these two signature theme weeks the Democracy Wall and related programming will serve to continue the conversation. The Democracy Wall includes within its guidelines reference to honoring the values of the Owl Creed, serving as another connection point between these complimentary efforts. The details on the Democracy Wall with link to the Creed is available online at:

<http://deanofstudents.kennesaw.edu/resources/democracywall.php>

Since the 2016 and 2017 plans included significant implementation details and the 2018 action plan will continue along the same framework, those details are not all being included here but are readily available to the public online through KSU’s CLDE sites and the All In Challenge site.

Reporting

KSU is committed to full transparency to encourage maximum participation. The link below provide all NSLVE data, current and historic programming efforts, and related details on KSU’s Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement activities:

<http://deanofstudents.kennesaw.edu/resources/clde.php>

The link below provides all Voter Registration and Education details and connections to TurboVote and the Georgia My Voter Page.

<http://deanofstudents.kennesaw.edu/resources/voter-registration.php>

As new information becomes available the site are revised and enhanced by the Office of the Dean of Students.

Evaluation

The two primary tools for evaluation are the NSLVE reports (currently available to the public online) and the NSSE Civic Engagement module data (which will be made available in January 2018). The Coalition periodically reviews the data to determine if we are on track toward achieving goals. Minimally the university's CLDE work is evaluated each June and December in coordination with annual reporting guidelines for the partner associations that support national CLDE efforts, such as NASPA and AASCU. Broader evaluation of campus climate is coordinated through the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and the results of that regular campus climate assessment serve as an additional resource for the CLDE coalition.

Point of Contact:

Michael L. Sanseviro, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

Kennesaw State University
Division of Student Affairs
Office of the Dean of Students
395 Cobb Ave. NW #0501
Kennesaw, GA 30144

Phone: 470-578-6367
Fax: 470-578-9165

<http://deanofstudents.kennesaw.edu/>
deanofstudents@kennesaw.edu

Original All-In Challenge Plan Submission:
Final Voter Friendly Campus Designation Submission:
2018 Action Plan Submission:

July 29, 2016
January 21, 2017
December 15, 2017