



Voter Engagement Plan Piedmont Virginia Community College Charlottesville, VA

OVERVIEW

At PVCC our civic engagement mission is “to create a campus climate that encourages and prioritizes civic leadership and democratic engagement in PVCC students, faculty, and staff.” PVCC is committed to educating our college community for citizenship and encouraging active participation in the democratic process.

The lead PVCC employee for this plan is Connie Jorgensen, Assistant Professor of Political Science. A large committee of volunteer faculty, staff, and students has been assembled to provide support. A full list of members is available at the end of this document.

The goals for the 2016/17 academic year are to:

1. Encourage students to be civically and politically engaged;
2. train students to become civic and political leaders on campus and in their communities;
3. encourage faculty, staff and students to participate in the political process;
4. expose faculty, staff, and students to the political processes and issues relevant to their daily lives; and
5. help faculty, staff, and students make informed political choices.

Our community partners include (but are not limited to):

- [The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression](#)
- [The University of Virginia Center for Politics](#)

- [The Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution at Montpelier](#)
- [Virginia21](#)
- [The Charlottesville Newsplex \(CBS, ABC, FOX\)](#)
- [icitizen.com](#)
- [TurboVote.org](#)
- [The Democracy Commitment](#)

At PVCC voter engagement is year-long effort. In Virginia we can't afford to take time off after November 8, 2016 because the Commonwealth has elections **every** fall. For example, in November 2017 Virginia will elect a new Governor, Lt. Governor, the Attorney General, the entire House of Delegates, and many local officials. We need to keep citizen engagement in front of our students, faculty, and staff in order to keep the level of knowledge and participation high.

PVCC VOTES!

- A team of PLS211 (Introduction to U.S. Government I) students will conduct a Voter registration, absentee ballot, and GOTV (Get Out The Vote) campaign.
 - We will be using [TurboVote](#) so we can register students online and students can sign up to receive text or email message reminders of elections, and apply for absentee ballots. Professor Connie Jorgensen will use the administrative function to track numbers of registrations and where they register (i.e. how many register in the Bolick Center, Keats, online, on blackboard, etc.) Data obtained from from the admin function guide next year's voter registration efforts.
 - PVCC will focus our registration efforts on and around National Register to Vote Day, September 27.
 - A registration link will be put on the PVCC website under Student Life and Workforce Services.
 - There will be a registration link on Blackboard.
 - Faculty will be asked register students in class.
 - The registration team will encourage absentee ballots in order to increase student voting.
 - PLS211 students will design and hang posters around campus.
 - PLS211 students will design "I registered to vote" stickers.
 - On the day before Election Day and on Election Day (November 7 and 8), we will have an information desk in the Bolick Center and Workforce Services with information about poll locations and ID requirements.
 - We are considering a selfie contest of students and their "I Voted" stickers.
- Students in Journalism and Political Science classes will collaborate on a non-partisan Voter Guide that focuses on student issues for the presidential and congressional elections in our service area.
 - Copies will be available in the Bolick Center, Workforce Services, on the PVCC website, and via an all campus email.
 - The PVCC library will conduct a mini-institute on voter guides
- Students in PLS135 (American National Politics) will plan and manage an Election Fair scheduled for September 26.

- Participants may include:
 - Candidates looking for volunteers
 - Localities looking for poll workers
 - Register to vote table with absentee ballot information
 - Club tables with information on campaign issues(e.g. Gender Equality, BSU, environment)
 - [Virginia21](#) table with information and sign up
 - Political book table hosted by the PVCC Library

VOTER and ISSUE EDUCATION

- PVCC Celebrates Constitution Day (September 17)
 - On Monday, September 19 Doug Smith (Executive Director of the Center for the Constitution at Montpelier) and Stewart Harris (Professor, Appalachian School of Law), hosts of the NPR radio program [“Your Weekly Constitutional”](#) will present a humorous look at the US Constitution. They did C-Day last year and several faculty want them back again!
- *PVCC’s Civic Engagement team and the PVCC college library are collaborating on a Banned Books Week event (September 25-October 2). At this time our plan is incomplete.*
- A team of PLS211 students will assist in the planning of a Congressional Debate, Monday, October 10.
 - We are partnering with the Charlottesville Newsplex (CBS19)
 - Both the Republican and Democratic candidate have committed.
 - 7:00 – 8:00 televised, 8:00 – 9:00 online (student questions).
 - We will use [icitizen](#) as a way to get students, faculty, and staff engaged.
- Free Speech Week, October 17-23
 - PVCC will host the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression’s Mobile Free Speech Monument.
 - Virginia Supreme Court Chief Justice, Donald Lemons has been invited to speak, but not confirmed. We are working on Plan B.

- PVCC will be an official Partner with <http://www.freespeechweek.org/> (we were last year as well.)
- Miscellaneous notes
 - Connie Jorgensen will meet with Kit Decker's Spanish201 class for a unit on political vocabulary.
 - Diane Valade is investigating ways to register and engage Math students.
 - SDV students will have the opportunity to register to vote and sign on to the icitizen app in class. (All incoming students are required to take a student development class).
 - The College Senate, Faculty Senate, and Professional Association of Support Staff will be active participants in this plan.

AFTER THE ELECTION

- PVCC will host a college-wide party to watch the inauguration, Friday, January 20 at noon.
 - Faculty will be asked to encourage students to attend, perhaps by offering extra credit.
 - We hope that offices can be closed for 1 hour in order for all staff to participate, but even if this cannot happen, one or two classrooms will be showing the event.
 - Budget permitting the college will provide a lunch buffet.
- Panel discussion – January/February 2017
 - Partner: UVA Center for Politics
 - *Topic TBD in January*
- The annual student lobbying trip to the Virginia General Assembly, arranged through the PVCC President's Office. January/February 2017
- A team of PLS211 students will plan the second Positive Action Conference: A Civic Leadership Experience (Service Learning)
 - A Friday night and Saturday in March

- A returning student has committed to establishing a [Virginia21](#) chapter at PVCC. She is attending the VA21 Student Leadership Institute in July 2016.
- PVCC will participate in the [All in Campus Challenge](#)
 - The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge recognizes campuses for their commitment to improving democratic engagement, increasing student voter participation rates, and graduating students with a lifelong commitment to being informed and active citizens.

DATA COLLECTION/MEASUREMENT

- PVCC will participate in The Democracy Commitment's Civic Engagement Survey.
 - During Summer 2016 Jolene Hamm of PVCC's Office of Institutional Research and Connie Jorgensen, Political Science professor will evaluate the first year survey results. These data will affect next year's voter engagement plan and as a tool for measure success.
 - The next student survey is scheduled for April 2017.
- PVCC has requested our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement ([NSLVE](#)) report.
 - The NSLVE offers colleges and universities an opportunity to learn their student voting rates.
 - PVCC should receive data in fall 2016 and will use these data for the next year's voter engagement plan and as a tool to measure success.

The Piedmont Virginia Community College Voter Engagement team consists of volunteers from faculty, staff, administration, and students. Membership includes the leaders of the Faculty Senate, Professional Association of Support Staff (PASS), Student Government Association (SGA), and College Senate.

Members include:

Michelle Armstrong, HR Assistant

Kirsten Holt, Student Success Advisor

Jessica Kingsley, Professor of English

Karen Waters-Wicks, Adjunct Professor of Education

Kit Decker, Professor of Spanish

Corinne Lauer, Administrative Assistant and President of PASS

Miriam Rushfinn, Program Manager, Youth and Educational Symposia

Barbara Heyl, Professor of Chemistry

Anne Allyson, Professor of Biology

Colum Leckey, Professor of History and College Senate Chair

Crystal Newell, Coordinator of Library Services

Laura Skinner, Assistant Professor, Reference/Instructional Librarian

Kelley Bennett, Administrative Assistant

Michael Rahilly, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Diane Valade, Assistant Professor of Mathematics

David Berti, Adjunct Associate Professor of Humanities

David Lerman, Coordinator of Student Success

Wendi Dass, Professor of Mathematics

Rachel Franz, Enrollment Services Specialist

Wadah Al Mulhim, Student Government Association President

Jenny Koster, Professor of English

Ann Smith, Director of Nursing Programs, Professor of Nursing

Kent Schlüssel, Adjunct Faculty, Mathematics

John Gulley, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Faculty Senate Chair