



LMC Votes!

Voter Registration and Engagement Plan for Lake Michigan College 2018-2020

About Lake Michigan College

Lake Michigan College offers over 80 different academic programs, including career education, transfer programs, part-time and full-time options and online learning.

Even before students graduate from high school, LMC has partnered with local school systems to offer college-level coursework to qualified students. With Early College, students earn both high school and college credit for courses, saving families thousands of dollars in college tuition.

LMC has 660 full-time employees with 42% full-time and 49% part-time faculty guiding 3,964 students on their learning journey. Most of our students are in-district, but we have 13% out of district and 2% international. Our student body is 59% female and 41% male with the majority between the ages of 18 and 30. We serve a diverse student body from six counties with three campus locations as well as distance education, dual-credit classes in high schools and specialize learning opportunities for career education programs. The college's goal is to improve the quality of life in our region by establishing connections using civic, social, creative and economic opportunities in the communities we serve.

Plan Overview

During the spring and fall 2020 semesters, Lake Michigan College will implement the second campus-wide voter registration and engagement initiative. We learned many valuable lessons in the 2018 mid-term election that we have applied to the upcoming 2020 general election. Our goals have been updated to include the 2016 NSLVE data and to build upon foundation we initiated in 2018.

The five goals Lake Michigan College seeks to accomplish in 2020 are:

1. Increase the number of students registered to vote through enhanced marketing efforts on our main campus (Benton Harbor/St. Joseph), the South Haven campus, the Niles/Bertrand Crossing campus, the Allegan campus, the Van Buren campus and the Bangor campus. The latter three campuses are mainly attended by 5th year high school students who may be eligible to register depending on their birthday.
* Our goal is 500 new registered voters by Election Day 2020
2. In 2018, we gathered over 1,500 contacts or pledges to vote on Election Day.
* Beginning with registration efforts on National Voter Registration in 2019, activities and events throughout 2020, we hope to double our contacts and outreach. Our goal is to collect 3,000 pledges to vote on Election Day 2020.
3. Building off our social media presence and community outreach efforts of 2018, we hope to double our Get Out the Vote contacts in 2020 using various platforms: Constitution Day

(Sep. 17), National Voter Registration Day (Sept. 24), drop-in voting Q & A sessions (2), Honors Colloquium Presentation, Party at the Polls (Nov. 3)

* Our goal is 160 hits per day on social media accounts (Twitter, Facebook, What's App, Instagram) and 3,000 GOTV contacts between September 4 and November 3, 2020.

4. In 2018, we had three media stories published about the LMC Votes efforts. Since then, the local media has recognized LMC for our Voter Friendly Campus designation as well as the Silver Award for All-In Voter campaign. In 2020, our goal is to have at least four stories published about LMC Votes and our efforts to inform and engage voters.
5. We plan to maintain the current campus coalition and expand it to other support organizations, both internally and externally. The current organization includes different divisions on campus and two from the community.

The LMC Votes! coalition includes:

- Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs (Dr. Leslie Kellogg)
- Political Science Program Coordinator (Dr. Tiffany Bohm)
- Dean of Arts and Sciences (Dr. Gary Roberts)
- Director of Student Life (Andrea Zick)
- Start to Finish Coordinator (Charmae Sanders)
- Honors Program Coordinator (Dr. Amy Scrima) and Honors students
- Residence Hall Director and Resident Assistants (RA's)
- Marketing Department (Candice Elders)
- William Hessel Library (Diane Baker)
- South Haven campus (Keri Garr and Jeremy Burleson)
- Bertrand/Niles campus (Nick Hooper and Kam Chancellor)
- Student Government Association, Club Presidents and Student Senators
- League of Women Voters
- Berrien County Clerk's Office
- Rock the Vote
- Campus Vote Project
- Campus Takeover/National Voter Registration Day org
- #VoteTogether/Young Invincibles
- Students Learn, Students Vote
- Campus Elect (Lisa Lawrason)
- DoSomething.org (Adam Garner)
- All In Challenge (Ryan Drysdale)

2020 Plan Overview

This will be the second year of the LMC Votes! project and much of the preparation occurred during fall 2019. The coordination completed prior to the beginning of the spring 2020 semester included: updating voter registration forms and informational hand-outs, maintaining our social media presence (Facebook and Twitter accounts), updating the student handbook for the

“Campaigns and Elections” students (fall 2020 semester), collecting donations and securing volunteers for the upcoming initiative. We are in the process of hiring two fellows for the second year of participation in the Voter Friendly Campus program.

Our campus efforts in the spring 2020 semester will be mainly informational with a “contact collection” effort to use in the fall 2020 semester. We will have one voter registration event in mid-April following Census Day on April 1, 2020. We will work with marketing to develop a voter information & registration packet to give to incoming students at Lake Michigan College. As part of our campus-wide efforts, we plan to create a short reference guide which lists upcoming election dates as well as includes a blank voter registration form and contact information for LMC Votes!

For those taking the POSC 205: Campaigns and Elections course in fall 2020, we will organize initial meetings to assign duties and tasks over the summer. These duties will include preparing for Constitution Day and creating a calendar for fall 2020 events. Students in the “Campaigns and Elections” course will facilitate several voter registration drives, Q & A sessions and the Election Day party. Additional events may be added as funds and opportunities present themselves. We plan to coordinate again with the local chapters of the League of Women Voters and the South Haven chapter of the American Association of University Women on National Voter Registration Day, September 24, 2020.

Throughout the months of October and November, the students will work to highlight local issues and educate the campus community about the candidates (non-partisan) running for local offices. LMC Votes! will host a “First Time Voter” events at our Bertrand Crossing/Niles, Allegan, Van Buren, Bangor and South Haven campuses. Our dual-enrolled high school students attend these particular locations. In the political science courses taught at these locations, only one student was 18 and able to vote in the November 2018 election. That being said, we believe we can encourage future voting by offering a “first time voter” or “future voter” event for those who are too young to vote in 2020. We feel this event will be beneficial to our first time voters as well.

Between September 4 and November 3, 2020, students will use the LMC Votes! social media networks to engage with the campus community as well as our external partners. We will work with the marketing department to issue press releases about the voter registration and engagement events as well as post events related to LMC Votes! on the college homepage and the college Facebook page.

Voter Registration Efforts

The LMC Votes! voter registration efforts will begin the first week of school with a table at the “Welcome Week” event for both spring and fall 2020 semester. Handouts on upcoming events for Voter Registration Drive (April 2020), Constitution Day, National Voter Registration Day and the Election Day party will be provided. We will hand out LMC Votes! Bookmarks to highlight important dates for voter registration opportunities as well as special events. The LMC Votes! team will also work with the Student Government and clubs on campus to staff volunteers at all of the voter registration and engagement events.

We will work closely with our full and part-time faculty and student services staff to announce registration events at all professional development opportunities. We will encourage faculty to include the list of events in their course syllabi and consider offering extra credit for student participation. Additionally, “The Chronicle,” our campus (and alumni) newsletter will highlight all of the LMC Votes! events.

During our registration period, September 14 to November 1, 2020, we will post several reminders on the LMC Votes! Facebook page, the LMC Votes! Twitter page and the CCTVs located in several locations on campus. The William Hessel Library will provide blank registration forms at their front desk and student workers will help remind all students to register to vote.

Voter Education

The foundation for our campus-wide voter engagement project will be the “Campaigns and Elections” course (POSC 205) again. This worked well in 2018 and with some minor adjustment we will use the same pedagogy to guide the course as well as efforts on campus. The students who enroll in the course will be responsible for scheduling, organizing and staffing nearly all of the LMC Votes! events. Their efforts serve as an active learning component; students in the course will learn first-hand the processes of running a campaign (albeit an election) and how challenging it can be to work with several moving parts. During the course, students will listen to several guest speakers including: a county council candidate, the local chapter President of the League of Women Voters, and the Berrien County Elections Administrator. Their efforts will be matched with a course textbook to satisfy the course learning objectives.

The college has established relationships with the local Democrat and Republican parties and through the LMC Votes! project, students serve as conduits for information about all candidates for the election. LMC Votes! students will research and present candidate biographies to classmates as well as classes we are invited to present within; voter registration forms will be made available at all presentation events.

During our Constitution Day event, we plan to register new voters as well as have an activity to encourage participation around campus related to our constitutional right to elect our representatives. We plan to hold National Voter Registration Day events at all of the satellite campuses in the fall 2020 semester. This will be a comprehensive push to register as many new voters as possible for the upcoming 2020 general election. Details on each of these events will be provided at a later date.

The LMC Votes! team will collaborate with the Economic Club of Southwest Michigan to offer free politically related events to our students. In 2018, the Economic Club brought former Vice President Joe Biden to campus and students were invited to a private, question and answer session. We plan to participate in any event like this as well as staff a registration table out front of any of these events for maximum coverage.

LMC Votes! students will print generic ballots for several of the voting precincts within our college campus voting area and place these in prominent areas like the William Hessel library, the main bulletin board and several large classrooms and lecture halls. Additionally, our tabling events will have a laptop where individuals can check their registration status and verify their precinct information.

Using our social media accounts, the LMC Votes! team will share many stories and articles related to local candidates and elections. We also provide links to the Michigan Secretary of State's office as well as the local county election administrators to facilitate voter education and registration.

Students in the "Campaigns and Elections" course will facilitate casual discussion opportunities in the "Hawks Nest," which is the main student-gathering place on campus. Dr. Bohm will meet with the Honors Colloquium to answer questions about voting, voter registration and any new proposals on the ballot. We hope to reach 200 students in each of these informational sessions.

We plan to hold another "make-and-take" event where attendees can make an LMC Votes! keychain in our FabLab. The activity will be free and encourage discussion about the upcoming election. Previously, we had over 45 students attend and our goal is 100 attendees at the fall 2020 event.

Election Day/Get Out the Vote efforts

The LMC Votes! team will develop GOTV efforts as part of their class in September and October 2020. Based on this hands-on learning, we cannot provide the details of these events at this time.

We will encourage students to vote and take a selfie outside of their precinct on November 3, 2020. Students who share their photos with an LMC Votes! social media account(s) will be entered to win a drawing/gift card to the student bookstore on campus. Facebook was less useful in 2018 so we are hopeful that Instagram and Twitter will be more accessible to our students.

In the evening of November 3, 2020, we will celebrate the election with a party in the Hawk's Nest. We will provide transportation from our satellite campuses to encourage participation. In 2018, we had 100 people attend; in 2020, our goal is to have 200 people attend the party. We will provide food and snacks for all attendees. We will invite the clubs and organizations on campus to join us as well.

Anticipated Barriers for 2020

Some of the challenges we anticipate relate to this being a relatively new program. Additionally, the administrative organization has changed and will change again with pending retirements, transitions and new hires in the summer of 2020.

- We anticipate a new marketing system; details will be available in the spring semester

- We are looking for greater involvement from Student Life with the hiring of a new Dean in Student Affairs; previously this position did not exist.
- The Census 2020 may create participation apathy since our campus is involved in a strong push to count underrepresented populations and there may be some resistance to active participation in the fall 2020.

Point of Contact for LMC Votes!

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