



**CAMPUS  
DEMOCRACY  
CHALLENGE**

## Loyola University Chicago 2020 Democratic Engagement Action Plan

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### **Executive Summary:**

#### Growing Public Service Programs and Pathways

One of the goals of LUPE is to encourage students to pursue careers in public service. To that end, we will encourage participation in the DC Internship Program, and help connect students to other opportunities for undergraduates in public service across the city of Chicago and Illinois. In providing pathways to public service, LUPE will also strive to mitigate the very real barriers to entry for many who would like to engage in this work. Often, internships in public service are unpaid and very few can afford to work in these jobs for free. Additionally, many groups have historically faced—and still face—barriers based on minority or marginalized status. To this end, we propose the creation of scholarships, fellowships, and other forms of funding and support for students who would like to pursue internships and positions in public service but cannot afford to do so.

#### Becoming a Resource for Elected Officials

As a hub of information, research, and expertise about public service, LUPE should be a resource for elected officials. This could include providing training for aldermen and state officials. The Office of Civic Engagement is currently working on reports that reflect Loyola's contribution to the local community and city as a whole. This report will be available to local elected officials as well as the public, making it a good starting point for this work.

#### Further Connections with Local Community

To achieve these goals, we need to strengthen and expand our connections with local community groups. This will also involve centralizing information about where these connections exist within the university. As we pursue this work, we will support those existing partnerships where we can and share this information to ensure stronger, more strategic partnerships. These connections will also inform and strengthen the other work LUPE seeks to do and will provide us with invaluable insights into the perspectives of those with whom we share a community.

#### Encouraging Scholarship in Public Service and Democratic Engagement

Scholarship is an essential aspect of LUPE's work. To encourage and promote this work, especially as it relates to public service and democratic engagement, we will pursue several different avenues. First, the University Libraries will explore the creation of a Public Engagement Collection in Loyola University Chicago's eCommons (<https://ecommons.luc.edu>) to promote and provide access to the research efforts of faculty, students and staff.

The Civic Engagement Librarian will provide support for discovering and acquiring scholarly resources in civic engagement. However, as neither LUPE nor the University Libraries currently have dedicated funding to support collection building in this area, we will seek to establish a subject-specific endowment. This would allow us to broaden and deepen our general and archival collections in public engagement.

To promote the use of University Libraries collections in pursuing research on topics related to public engagement we will seek funding to support archival fellowships for graduate students to identify and describe appropriate material from our archival collections.

For faculty and post-doctoral candidates, we will seek funding to establish research fellowships in public engagement, possibly including a collaboration with the Gannon Center to fund research on women in political and civic organizations.

To publicize local expertise in public engagement, we will work with University Marketing and Communications to make sure that faculty working in this area are well represented in the Faculty Experts database (<https://bit.ly/2FD78NL>).

#### Public Service Internship Repository

By Fall of 2019, the Office of Civic Engagement will provide a master list of government and public service-related internships. This is an opportunity for LUPE to become a hub for this kind of information, in that we will be able to use that information and information from other units on campus to connect students, staff, and faculty to appropriate resources and people.

#### Engaging Staff

We hope to provide ample opportunities for staff to participate both in this work and in any programming we provide. We may do so by engaging those who supervise staff, and by providing programs specifically targeted towards staff which do not interfere directly with their ability to complete work in a timely manner.

One opportunity we have identified is the prospect of making voter registration available during the benefits and health fairs, or as a part of annual benefits renewal.

It is also important to us that we establish a reciprocal relationship with university shared governance, including Staff Council. By keeping Staff Council apprised of our efforts, we will ensure that staff members are aware of how they can help support our goals while simultaneously staying informed about the issues on campus and in the community which matter most to staff.

#### Mentoring Students

To understand the complex landscape of public engagement and to fully represent the broad range of opportunities in the public sphere, LUPE will provide mentoring opportunities for students. This includes peer-to-peer, alumni-to-student, and professional-to-student mentoring. A strong mentoring program exists in Inside Government, from which we could potentially model or expand future mentoring initiatives.

#### Evaluation & Assessment

In partnership with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, LUPE plans to leverage existing data collection efforts to track trends related to LUPE's mission. For example, in the summer of 2018, Loyola enrolled in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to receive data on how many LUC students register to vote and end up voting. Additionally, there are relevant questions on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and The Freshman Year Survey that ask specific questions about student's civic and democratic experiences. Bringing together these and other forms of data will allow LUPE to help demonstrate Loyola's comprehensive commitment to this work.

#### Growing & Sustaining Student Involvement

This is a step-by-step process. From Freshman/Transfer students to student group collaboration, it's essential to get student attention early on in order to sustain involvement (as mentioned earlier regarding yearly process). We will work with our campus and community

partners to provide opportunities for involvement at every level. See section V for more information.

#### Momentum between Election Years

As a task force, we have been working to sustain and expand the work began by the Loyola Votes initiative. That this work is not central only in years containing national elections, but every year, is a huge asset for us. By keeping public engagement in the minds of our students, staff, faculty, and administration, we will never need to completely reinvent our efforts, nor will we need to struggle to obtain buy-in every two or four years. Continuing the momentum of our work each year also shows our campus and community partners that we are committed to this work and will sustain partnerships.

#### **Leadership:**

Our leadership team includes the following:

Demetri Morgan, Assistant Professor - School of Education  
Vivian Mikhail, Program Coordinator - Office of Civic Engagement  
Phillip Hale, Vice President of Government Affairs  
Marissa Lucchesi, Director of Student Activities and Greek Affairs  
Geoff Swindells, Associate Dean of Libraries  
Claire Kruchten, President of Inside Government and Student Worker in the Office of Civic Engagement  
Claire Harrison, Senator for Student Government of Loyola University Chicago

#### **Commitment:**

Our campus has not yet signed the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation, but we are working with the Office of the President to have it signed.

Our campus has used the following methods to communicate with students about the election:

By email, By posting on institutional social media channels, E-newsletters; Sakai site that faculty added to their course; presentations to courses and different community groups.

#### **Landscape:**

Our campus demographic and voting data:

2016: 57.5%; 2018: 40.8%, Enrollment: ~17,000 Demographic Breakdown: White 56%, Black: 5%, Asian: 12%, Hispanic/Latino: 17%, Two or More: 4%

#### **Goals:**

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:

##### Short Term:

- Increase voter registration numbers
- Increase percent of students casting a ballot
- Provide voting resources for election education

- Facilitate non-partisan virtual events on different civic engagement topics
- Encourage planning and execution of post-election events and support
- Strengthen partnerships with university partners and entities. Consistent branding and voice around elections and broader public engagement efforts.

Long Term: LUPE aims to provide a vision for a complete four-year experience for our undergraduates regarding Public Engagement. What follows is a series of scaffolding experiences.

#### High School

We will work with the Schools 2020 program and other partners to expand programming around Public Engagement which is appropriate for a High School audience. We will support existing programs of this nature by providing information, and by promoting their efforts. The School of Education's partnerships with Senn High School is a good example of a partnership which is not only already incorporating civic education curriculum taught by student teachers from Loyola but is also a partnership which would be incredibly fruitful to support, amplify, and emulate elsewhere.

#### First Year

The focus of the first year is to introduce students to Public Engagement opportunities on campus and in Chicago more generally. This is the only time when we have the attention of the entire undergraduate population (through UNIV 101).

Main efforts will include:

- Implementing a UNIV 101 unit which centers on Public Engagement at all levels
- Rambler card/UPASS voter registration & voter information for Freshman & Transfer students.
- Various tabling events and programs during key dates: Constitution Day, National Voter Registration Day, Election Day, etc.
- Introducing students to Public Engagement resources and opportunities on campus (e.g. Inside Government) by having a presence at the Student Organization Fair and the Job, Internship, and Service Fair.

#### Second and Third Years

During the second and third years, we seek to provide opportunities both curricular and co-curricular for students to participate in public engagement. Though students are all incredibly busy, we seek to offer compelling programs which are also informative and support the development of our students as citizens.

Main efforts will include:

- Partnerships with units such as the Center for Experiential Learning/ Loyola Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program to provide opportunities for undergraduate research in Public Engagement pairing students with faculty from a variety of disciplines.
- Programming which focuses on public engagement including but not limited to:
  - o Workshops to help students hone public engagement skills
  - o Discussion- and problem solving-focused events which inform students about global, national, or local issues and allow students to model civil discourse in their discussions.
  - o Lectures, speakers, etc.
  - o "On the Table" style events which create a lunch/happy hour event for various audiences, whether it be students, the Loyola campus community, residents of the Rogers Park and Edgewater neighborhoods, and/or alumni, etc.
- On the Table is based on dedicating an hour to discussing various issues that matter in the community. We are free to focus it on whatever topic we choose.
- Connecting students with internships and jobs in the public sector

#### Fourth Year

The fourth year is likely our final opportunity to prepare our students to become citizens before they leave the undergraduate environment. As students are focused on the next steps they will take in their lives after graduation—including jobs, internships, and graduate school—we want to ensure our efforts align with that focus.

Main efforts will include:

- Partnering with CEL/LUROP to provide opportunities to present and/or publish student work surrounding Public Engagement.
- Providing opportunities for undergraduates to meet graduate students, professional students, alumni, and faculty working in Public Engagement.

#### Arrupe Students

It is of vital importance that Arrupe students are included within these experiences, whether they pursue a four-year degree at Loyola following the completion their two-year associate's degree or not. Because Arrupe accepts students from populations with historically low voter turnout and those who have been marginalized by municipal and federal policies, we are dedicated to including Arrupe students in this work. Therefore, we will be mindful in our efforts to invite Arrupe students to programs, especially those hosted on the Water Tower Campus, and in our creation of programming specifically for Arrupe students. In all efforts, campus-wide, we will be cognizant of the fact that not all community members are able to participate in all aspects of public engagement and will therefore make sure to emphasize the various channels of civic engagement. LUPE recognizes that United States citizenship is not a requirement for being a citizen, as we have previously stated.

Additionally, student's families are very important in Arrupe's approach to education. Outreach to the families of Arrupe students might be an opportunity to broaden our efforts into South and West side communities.

#### Graduate & Professional Students

We are also dedicated to making sure this work is salient for graduate and professional students. These are two distinct groups and the opportunities will (in many cases) differ. In our outreach to graduate students, we want to emphasize that Public Engagement is a legitimate and rewarding area of research in numerous disciplines. We will therefore consider the establishment of cross-disciplinary reading groups, fellowships, and an annual research colloquium. These same strategies could also be applied to faculty as our efforts expand. Public Engagement is relevant to professional practice in a variety of professions. It will therefore be the focus of our efforts to bring professional students and practitioners together, perhaps through an annual symposium on careers in public engagement.

#### Health Sciences

In accordance with Strategy 4 of Plan 2020, we will work with the Health Sciences campus to support research and programming which reflects "a commitment to addressing health disparities." As we expand and deepen our partnership with members of the Health Sciences Division, we will add to our strategies to make sure LUPE's work is salient to Health Sciences students, faculty, and staff.

#### Alumni

Our alumni are integral to these efforts, as we rely upon them to serve as models to our current students. As previously mentioned, we will call upon them in hopes of recruiting mentors. We'll also work with Alumni Relations and UMC to make sure our efforts are communicated to alumni, who can then participate, support, or learn more about LUPE. This could also lead to expanded opportunities, such as an alumni-sponsored lecture series concerning public engagement

## **Strategy:**

### **COVID-19 Action Plan: 2020**

Prior to COVID-19, the Loyola University Public Engagement (LUPE) working group initially had plans to ramp up voter registration and voting services on campus through various tabling events, and student-centered events across all three Loyola campuses. We also were planning to recruit a group of undergraduate and graduate students to work as “Loyola Votes Ambassadors”. However, the pandemic put our plans to a screeching halt, as Loyola decided to go solely virtual for the Fall 2020 Semester.

Going virtual meant that no students were permitted to live on our campus residence halls, and no classes were to be held in-person. We had to quickly figure out how to go about voting efforts virtually, which meant we needed to ramp up outreach to all University entities more than ever before, and heavily rely on both new and existing internal partnerships.

### **National Partnerships**

A couple of major key partnerships that really assisted our virtual efforts this fall, were with two National organizations that focused on democratic engagement within University campuses: the All-In Campus Democracy Challenge (joined in 2018) and the Ask Every Student Coalition (joined 2020).

The All in Campus Democracy Challenge provided us an excellent one-stop shop of voting resources through AllintoVote.org. They also gave us helpful tools and information on their website to utilize for our own digital bundle of resources on our own website.

The Ask Every Student Coalition partnership was incredibly helpful, as they provided us immeasurable support through toolkits, and through bi-weekly virtual meetings where we were able to have an open discussion on not only our own voting efforts, but also shared ideas and resources with other academic institutions on a national scale. This is where we received tools such as the Faculty Champions Toolkit, a 51 State-by-State Voter Guide, “I am a Voter.” masks, COVID-19 response tools, and more. We intend to continue to meet with them and utilize their resources after Election Day.

### **University-Wide Collaboration**

Although at first, going solely virtual to promote Public Engagement efforts seemed daunting, the opportunity to collaborate with various University departments turned out to be much more successful than anticipated. We were able to meet with over a dozen University entities and found avenues where cross collaboration was possible. We formed strong partnerships on Public Engagement with the following departments:

- **University Marketing and Communications (UMC)**
  - Mass e-mails, social media posts, and YouTube videos with Loyola Votes resources. They can and have been able to reach out to a wide variety of audiences.

- Assisted with updating the Loyola Votes website (LUC.edu/Vote) which includes a master list of Election-themed virtual events hosted by University groups.
- **Human Resources**
  - Outreach to Loyola staff and faculty with voter resources through University-wide newsletters.
- **Athletics**
  - Athletics has done a fantastic job with their internal campaign targeted to their student athletes. Through social media, virtual meetings, and e-mails, they were able to successfully register 100% of their student athletes and continue to be a key partner by providing Election Day resources. The Director also gave student athletes November 3<sup>rd</sup> off to be able to go out and cast their ballots on Election Day.
- **Student Development**
  - The Student Development Division is a large entity of the University, with many departments under its Umbrella. This consists of First-Year Experience, Student Activities and Greek Affairs, Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, Off Campus Student Life, OSCCR, and more.
    - First Year Experience: We were able to host a Civic Engagement themed discussion which focused on how to talk about politics to over 50 peer advisors, who then take what they learned from the exercise, and apply it to their Freshman students. A Ballot Party was also held on National Voter Registration Day with First Year Experience, where students signed up and participated in the event; they were able to learn about up-to-date voter registration resources, how to case their ballot, and most importantly, how to become an informed voter this General Election.
    - Student Activities and Greek Affairs: Through a digital platform which reaches out to hundreds of student organizations, LUCommunity was utilized to send out mass messages to students regarding Voter Registration and Voter participation. This was also done through their own social media channels.
    - Other departments under Student Development have also promoted their own voting events and resources as well.
- **Mission & Integration**
  - Loyola University Chicago is a Jesuit Institution, and heavily weaves social justice into its curriculum and culture. Since civic engagement is a pillar of social justice, the Division of Mission Integration has also been a key partner with our Voter Registration Efforts. The Hank Center for Catholic Heritage has and will continue to host informational virtual forums on civic engagement and voting, particularly in a spiritual/catholic setting. These virtual events are made available to both the Loyola community and the public.
- **COVID-19 Response Teams**
  - In response to the Pandemic back in March, Loyola formed a new structure, where newly assigned groups had to refocus and make decisions on specific aspects of our response to COVID-19, which included decisions on University operations, while prioritizing the health and safety of both the Loyola community, and our external community. The benefit of creating these structures and groups, was LUPE was able to present and engage with a wide variety of Loyola

faculty and staff via Zoom, in ways that we were unable to do before had we continued to work in-person. Members of LUPE were able to meet with over a dozen of these response groups to present on our strategies, voting goals, initiatives, and gave recommendations. By presenting in front of all these specialized response groups, we were able to promote public engagement with consistent, centralized messaging across the entire University.

- **Faculty & Graduate Students**

- Launched the Faculty Champions Program, which supports civic learning and democratic engagement in the 2020 election and beyond. To participate, Faculty must:
  - Decide and commit to supporting Loyola University Chicago's democratic engagement efforts.
  - Review a menu of Civic Learning Opportunities.
  - Select one or more options and begin to implement them into your course.
  - Access virtual Faculty Champion toolkit for additional resources and links.
  - Fill out the form to receive recognition and updates.
- Faculty Champion program engaged 50+ instructors from across the university. Instructors employed at least 1 of 8 activities or practices that encouraged students to vote.

- **Registered Student Organizations**

- We encouraged our Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) to host their own civic engagement virtual events and encouraged them to engage one another. A few RSOs have held their own "Voting 101" virtual events which include topics ranging from how to register to vote, voting by mail, and more.

- **Office of Civic Engagement /LUPE**

- Election Consultations: Beyond the aforementioned activities, members of LUPE provided one on one or group consultations to a number of students, faculty, and staff groups throughout the semester. These ranged from answering simple election questions to helping conceptualize events, responses to national events, and post-election planning.
- Throughout the fall semester, we offered virtual one-on-one Voting Advising Open Hours on Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays from 3pm – 5pm for all Loyola students, faculty and staff via Zoom. We were available to assist them on all voting matters, from their registration process, to locating their polling place – no matter where they were located.

- **Social Media/Promotional Tools**

- As mentioned earlier, one of the most important partnerships we were able to form, was one with our University Marketing and Communications team. They have assisted us with promoting our efforts through both e-blasts and social media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter), especially around national campaigns:
  - Pledge to Vote Campaign (All Fall Semester)
    - As a partner of the All-In Campus Democracy Challenge, we promoted AllintoVote.org - a one stop shop for all voting-related resources and information. On this website, a student also can "Take the Pledge" to vote. Not only are our students able to take

the pledge to hold themselves accountable, but they were also able to receive election reminders and updates directly to their phones via SMS text messages.

- The Pledge to Vote campaign also has a leaderboard that will continue to be up and live until the Election. Thanks to our promotional efforts, Loyola Chicago has solidly remained in the top 15, and will intend to (hopefully) stay there until the contest concludes!
- National Voter Registration Day (9/22)
  - In the past, we used to host large-scale tabling events across our three campuses in celebration of this campaign. However, due to the pandemic, we decided to kick off a large, University-wide social media push promoting voter registration. One major accomplishment from this campaign, was that 100% of our Rambler Athletes and every member of our Loyola student government were registered to vote!
- National Voter Education Week (10/1-10/12)
  - Every day during National Voter Education Week (first week of October), we shared one helpful and interesting fact, statistic on our social media channels. We also officially became partnered with National Voter Education Week and used their resources and materials on our social media outlets. Many departmental and student-run Loyola social media accounts reshared what they learned from NVEW.
- National Vote Early Day (10/24)
  - Loyola officially became partnered with National Vote Early Day. Loyola was able to receive 100 free “I am a Voter.” disposable masks from Ask Every Student. We incentivized Early Voting, and decided to give these masks out to every student who voted early, if they were able to show us some sort of proof (sticker, bracelet, e-mail confirmation, photo, etc). We were able to promote this on all social media channels.
- **Loyola Experts Series**
  - Every Wednesday, our UMC team posts videos covering a wide variety of topics, where they interview and ask questions to “Loyola Experts”. This can be Loyola Faculty and Staff who specialize in certain areas, from medical research, to the economy, to social justice and more. For three weeks, they were able to interview a member of LUPE regarding voting (safe voting, mail-in ballots, encourage others to vote) and created a three-part video covering all these topics.

### **Post-Election Planning**

While our efforts were heavily focused on promoting the Election, we also recently shifted to the Post-Election landscape, and preparation for possible outcomes and responses. We created a larger “Post-Election Response” group, consisting of 25 staff and faculty from a variety of departments, including members of LUPE to put together a list of resources for our students. One of the first lists we were able to put together, was a list of virtual events that are going on

across the University that discuss both Election Day topics, and Post-Election topics, resources, whether they be informational or focused on wellness. These events also are tailored to various audiences; some events are for students, some for faculty to staff, and some to the general public. This list lives on [LUC.edu/Vote](http://LUC.edu/Vote). We still will continue to meet every week following Election Day.

**NSLVE:**

Loyola University Chicago has authorized NSLVE.

**Evaluation:**

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

- Increase in the percentage of voter turnout over 2016
- Debrief with the leadership on what went well and what would we do differently
- Creating an infrastructure to better evaluate the evaluation (quantifying emails, hours spent presenting, prep work).

**Reporting:**

We will report our campus action plan and NSLVE reports in the following ways:

Our action plan will be posted on our campus website and shared with the campus community.

Our campus hasn't confirmed a plan to post our NSLVE reports on our campus website.