

ALL IN Campus Democracy  
Project Challenge

# ACTION PLAN

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Rollins College

Center for Leadership and Community Engagement

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# Executive Summary

Rollins College educates students for global citizenship and responsible leadership, empowering graduates to pursue meaningful lives and productive careers. We are committed to the liberal arts ethos and guided by its values and ideals.

Rollins College is a private, four-year college with an enrollment of approximately 2,500 undergraduate students. At Rollins College, The Center for Leadership & Community Engagement (CLCE) supports opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to get involved in their communities and become leaders to create positive change. CLCE administers The Rollins College Democracy Project (DP), an initiative intended to increase and elevate the civic learning and democratic engagement of the Rollins community, which includes students, staff, faculty, and community partners. The DP initiative derives its comprehensive goals from *A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy's Future*, *A Call to Action* and *Report from The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic* and therefore seeks to "foster a civic ethos that governs campus life, make civic literacy a goal for every graduate, integrate civic inquiry within majors and general education, and advance civic action as lifelong practice."

The Democracy Project is intended to increase and elevate the civic involvement of the Rollins community by preparing students with the knowledge and skills to impact social change, spark civic interests, and find their voice within local and global democracies. Through programming and education, this nonpartisan initiative strives to empower students as the next generation of active citizens by fostering a civic ethos and advancing civic action.

Our strategic priorities for 2020 are as follows:

- Ensuring all Rollins students, particularly first-time voters, have the tools and resources they need to be active participants in the electoral process
- Creating spaces for healthy, deliberative dialogues across campus, so students understand how this type of discourse is integral to the democratic process and active citizenship
- Providing Rollins students with direct, first-hand experience meeting candidates and learning about the voting process.

The following action plan seeks to guide and enhance democratic engagement efforts at Rollins College for the 2020-2021 academic year and beyond.

This action plan was developed by:

- Bailey Clark, Associate Director, Center for Leadership & Community Engagement
- Meredith Egan, Graduate Assistant, Center for Leadership & Community Engagement
- Sofia Allred, Student Coordinator, The Democracy Project

# Leadership

## Student Leadership

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The Democracy Project initiative is student driven and relies on the commitment of multiple undergraduate student leaders.

The Democracy Project **Student Coordinator** is responsible for facilitating the development and implementation of the entire Democracy Project initiative. The position is filled annually and seeks a student leader who is professional, highly organized, passionate about leadership and the democratic process, committed to bipartisanship, and an out-of-the-box thinker.

### Essential Duties & Responsibilities

Recruit, advise, and support DP Student Ambassadors, which includes facilitating weekly meetings, assigning tasks, and ensuring accountability.

Represent the student voice for all DP activities and serve as the DP representative at various meetings, events, and service opportunities both on and off-campus.

Develop collaborative partnerships with different clubs, organizations, and departments across campus and in the Central Florida area to further students' engagement in the democratic process.

Help plan, implement, and facilitate various DP programs, such as: voter registration drives, Constitution Day, National Voter Registration Day, Politics on the Porch, Politics on Tap, Debate Watch Parties, Candidate Forums, etc.

Market and promote DP initiatives to the Rollins community through email, social media, website, etc.

Maintain transparent and timely communication with the Associate Director, Graduate Assistant, Student Ambassadors, and community partners

Commit to a minimum of 8 hours per week, including 6 office hours in the Center for Leadership & Community Engagement.

In addition to the Student Coordinator, there are approximately fifteen Democracy Project **Student Ambassadors** recruited annually to implement the initiative's programming on campus. The goal is to recruit diverse ambassadors who will encourage various groups of students to get involved i.e. athletics, Greek life, first-year students, science majors, etc. Both the Student Coordinator and the Student Ambassadors report to a **Graduate Assistant** within the Center for Leadership & Community Engagement.

## Community Partners

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Democracy Project is not a third-party voter registration organizations and therefore relies heavily on community partners to register students to vote. Additionally, partner organizations provide support for voter education and information about upcoming elections.

### **Orange County Supervisor of Elections Office**

The mission of the Orange County Supervisor of Elections Office (OCSEO) is to ensure the integrity of the electoral process, enhance public confidence, and encourage citizen participation. Every year, the Democracy Project partners with representatives from OCSEO to multiple voter registration drives on campus.

### **Orange County League of Women Voters**

The Orange County League of Women Voters (OCLWV) encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. OCLWV regularly partners with the Democracy Project to educate voters. In Fall 2018, a representative from LWV also hosted a workshop for the Rollins community to learn about the 12 Amendments on Florida's ballot. In 2020, a representative from OCLWV will facilitate a workshop on voter rights in Florida.

### **The City of Winter Park**

The Democracy Project hosts Town Halls and Meet and Greets with candidates running for local office in the City of Winter Park. This year, DP Student Ambassadors are also being encouraged to attend City Commission meetings.

### **Internships**

Every semester, dozens of Rollins students serve as interns with elected officials. Recent examples include U.S. Representative Stephanie Murphy and Florida House Representative Anna Eskamani. This year, a Bonner Leader from Rollins College is serving with the Orange County League of Women Voters.

## **Campus Partners**

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### **Student Organizations**

The Democracy Project partners regularly with the Rollins Democrats and the Rollins Republicans to bring candidates and elected officials to campus. In Fall 2018, the Democracy Project hosted meet and greets with U.S. House District 7 candidates and City of Winter Park Commission Seat 3 candidates. The Democracy Project intentionally partners with the Rollins Republicans and Rollins Democrats to ensure both parties have a voice on campus. Additionally, DP partners with student organizations like EcoRollins to host educational events focused on specific policies and pertinent legislation.

### **Faculty**

Faculty play a critical role in the success of the Democracy Project and civic engagement in general at Rollins College. The DP partners frequently with the Political Science Department to host deliberative dialogue forums, specifically the Politics on Tap series. Student Ambassadors also partner with faculty to present in classes during election years.

### **Residential Life & Explorations**

The Residential Life & Explorations (RLE) team provides numerous opportunities for Student Ambassadors to register voters i.e. move-in day, first-year orientation, and first-year seminars.

# Commitment

For more than 125 years, Rollins has adhered to one overarching belief: College is about more than preparing for a career. It's about learning to think critically. It is about discovering how one individual can positively impact the world. To that end, Rollins strives to enable individuals to see the bigger picture, to understand how areas of knowledge are interrelated, and to view learning as a lifelong endeavor. As a result, our graduates are prepared to succeed in any career, but they are also prepared to pursue lives of meaning and purpose.

Rollins College strives for an engaged campus, defined by Campus Compact as, “one that is consciously committed to reinvigorating the democratic spirit and community engagement in all aspects of its campus life: students, faculty, staff and the institution itself. The engaged campus recognizes that knowledge cannot be separated from the purposes to which it is directed. The engaged campus is not just located within a community, it is intimately connected to the public purposes and aspirations of community life itself. The engaged campus is unable to separate its unique responsibility for the development of knowledge, from the role of knowledge in a democratic society to form the basis for social progress and human equality.”

The College's Board of Trustees approved Rollins College's updated strategic framework in May 2017. The framework structures the initiatives proposed in response to the strategic questions posed by President Cornwell at the start of the 2016-17 academic year, undergirded by the three purposes of our strategic planning (strengthening the integrity of our mission, strengthening our market position, and building a strong sense of shared vision) and defined by the three themes that emerged in the planning process: engaging our students, delivering on our promises, and strengthening our strategic assets.

Implementation of initiatives began in 2017-18. At the forefront of the strategic plan is engaging our students.

## Engage Our Students

*We will build upon our tradition of innovation in our educational programs so that we become a national model for engaged learning.*

- Assure that students find Rollins intellectually and professionally rewarding, with a thoughtful process for selection of major.
- Establish Center for Global Initiatives, elevating and manifesting our commitment to comprehensive educational preparation for global citizenship.
- Establish Center for Civic Engagement, elevating and unifying our robust programs in civic and community engagement, social innovation, and social entrepreneurship.
- Assure that all students engage in experiential learning, creating essential connections between knowledge and practice.
- Increase options for on-campus student housing, enabling more students to experience the full potential of living and learning in a campus community.

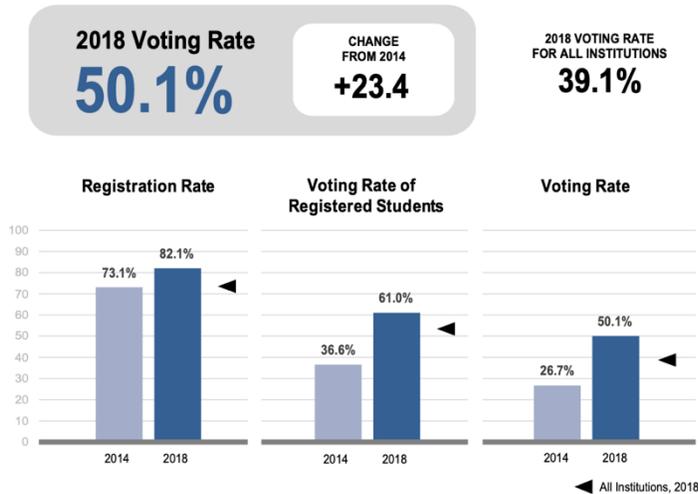
# Landscape

Democratic Engagement is part of the culture at Rollins College. It is embedded in both curricular and co-curricular programs.

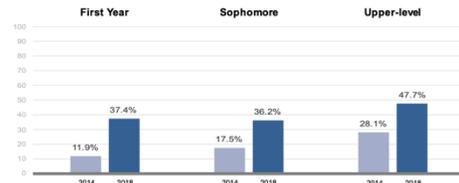
## Highlights from Rollins College's 2018 NSLVE Report

- The registration rate of Rollins College students overall was 82.1%.
- The voting rate overall in the midterm elections increased 23.4% from 2014.
- The voting rate is higher among graduate students than undergraduate students.
- The voting rate in 2018 was highest among upper-level undergraduate students.
- We saw a significant increase in early voting, which rose to 35.2% in 2018.

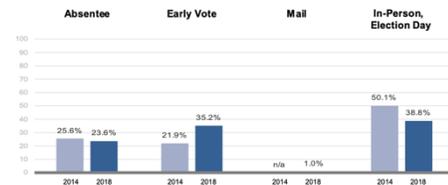
## Voting and Registration Rates



## By Undergraduate Class Year\*



## By Voting Method\*



## CLDE Courses Offered in 2019-2020

### Fall 2019

- Economics & Public Policy
- Topics: American Environm Thought
- Decade: Revolution/Constitution
- Problems in Political Thought
- Global Democratization
- Applied Political Ethics
- Foreign Policy of the US
- Voting & Elections
- Issues in Public Policy/Economics
- US Food Policy: Changing World
- Political Economics on YouTube
- Rise Fall Democracy
- Identities and Conflict: The 1960s
- Music & Politics in the Americas
- Diversity in American Education
- International Human Rights
- Social Movements

## Spring 2020

- Food Democracy
- Ethics and Social Justice
- Pluralism and the American Politics
- Inequality and Privilege
- American Environmental History
- Food Culture and Environment
- National Parks & Protected Areas
- Environmental Justice
- Seminar: Can Democracies Die
- The Mathematics of Democracy
- Peace and Conflict Policy
- American Political Thought
- Transcultural Competence
- Community Arts and Activism
- Politics of Climate Change
- Economics, Media, & Propaganda

# Goals

## Long-Term Goals

(Beyond 2020)

- 95% Voter Registration by 2024
- 75% Voter Turnout by the 2024 Presidential Election

## Mid-Term Goals

(2020 Presidential Election Goals)

- Host an Absentee voting party where students can all send their ballots together
- Host a series of discussions for international students to present the ways in which they can be involved in the American Political system
- Create a voter registration competition between all residential communities on campus; targeting first and second year students
- 90% Voter registration by the 2020 presidential election
- 70% Voter turnout in the 2020 presidential election
- Host two “Rally to the Polls Events” during early voting and have transportation to and from polling places all day on Election Day
- Host a “Post Poll Party” with food, activities and live election results

## Near-Term Actions

(Spring 2020)

- Launch a “Why I vote” social media campaign
- Host monthly voter registration events
- Add Election Day to the Campus Calendar
- Host at least one Politics on Tap and Politics on the Porch per Month

# Strategy

## Politics on Tap

Every month throughout the academic year, the Democracy Project selects one faculty member to moderate deliberative dialogue on current issues in American politics. Recent examples include a discussion on Big Pharma with a faculty representative from Chemistry, a discussion on the Supreme Court Nomination with a faculty representative from Political Science, and a discussion on Climate Change with a faculty representative from Social Entrepreneurship.

## Politics on the Porch

The Democracy Project partners with Pinehurst Cottage for a monthly deliberative dialogue in the residence hall that focuses on issues in local and state politics. Guest speakers include elected officials and community partners.

## Constitution Day

Every year, the Democracy Project celebrates Constitution Day on September 17. Student leaders handout pocket Constitutions and conduct information sessions on the U.S. Constitution during community common hour.

## Classroom Presentations

Faculty teaching first-year seminar courses partner with a representative from the Democracy Project to register voters and provide information about upcoming elections and other ways to get involved in democratic engagement initiatives. Student leaders and staff members from the Center for Leadership & Engagement also provide informational workshops to any class upon request.

## First-year Orientation

The Democracy Project team hosts voter registration drives throughout Welcome Week to register first-year students. Students are taught that they have the option to vote utilizing their home address or their on-campus address as college students living in residential halls. Peer Educators are also provided training on voter registration and elections.

## Rally to the Polls

The Democracy Project provides transportation to the local polling site at the Winter Park 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Center on Election Day utilizing one of the College's 15-passenger vehicles. Students also schedule a walk to the polling site at Winter Park Public Library during early voting.

## After Polls Party

The Democracy Project partners with Rollins Entertainment Programs to host election results watch parties. The entire campus is invited to participate and there are ground rules to ensure it is a safe space for all political ideologies.

### **#RollinsVotes**

Rollins has a webpage dedicated to voter education: <https://www.rollins.edu/rollins-votes/>

## **Reporting & Evaluation**

Rollins College participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) sponsored by the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education at Tufts University. NSLVE is the first and only study to objectively examine student and institution-level data on student voting to share these data with participating campuses.

Collected data in the future will be analyzed for trends and responses. Relevant portions of this information may potentially be shared with collaborating departments and organizations as we continue to further develop our strategic plans and look for areas of need or improvement. Finally, these results will also inform and be shared in future iterations of this plan.