



SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE

Action Plan for Southwestern Michigan College(SMC)

To Increase Civic and Political Engagement, and Voting Rates for the 2018 mid-term election.

The Definition of Civic Engagement

“Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.

A morally and civically responsible individual recognizes himself or herself as a member of a larger social fabric and therefore considers social problems to be at least partly his or her own; such an individual is willing to see the moral and civic dimensions of issues, to make and justify informed moral and civic judgments, and to take action when appropriate.”

Excerpts from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000. http://www.nytimes.com/ref/college/collegespecial2/coll_aascu_defi.html

Proposal

Obviously, an important topic and concern. What are we teaching our students? Math, Psychology, English, Welding, Accounting; yes, indeed, all of these but what do you do with it? Each one of the definition presented discusses involvement in our communities. We are a community college so by definition we should be involved in Civic Engagement. Southwestern Michigan College should be involved in the process. I would like to “get to know” The Democracy Commitment” better before we consider a commitment to this organization.

At SMC we are small but mighty.... I believe this initiative should be cross campus involving all parts of our community. I can already think of the Honors Program (and PTK) students having programs in their areas of interest. Accounting students working with the laws that affect their professions (after all today is Tax day). STEM students being involved with the agencies that

affect the environment, “get out the vote” programs, bringing (more) local and state legislators on campus, Social Work students working in their policy areas, re-enforcing and acknowledging some of the already great things our students, faculty and staff are already doing, just to name a few off the top of my head.

Specific Goals

1.) Obtain background information and baseline information to start process.

Plan: Attend Michigan Voting Summit at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, May 18, 2018
Attend the Conference, Civic Learning & Democratic Engagement Meeting in June 2018.
(<http://www.aascu.org/meetings/clde18/>).

We attended last year in Baltimore but this year we are sending more than person from our campus to increase team support and knowledge.

2.) Apply for the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) report. We did this in January 2018 and waiting for the report to be sent. We have been in contact and it due to be sent to us in mid-June.

3.) Increase information and access to all on campus about voter registration.

Plan: Embedding voter registration information in the SMC’s homepage, Moodle (our course management systems), and/or Wired (our online portal operated by the SMC).

4.) Increase Voter Registration

Plan: Voter registration available during freshman orientation, in residential areas and during Campus Bash. Note since we have not received our NSLVE report no data is available to project increases.

Participation in National Voter Registration Day- September 25th, 2018.

Increase by 5%

We plan to coordinate with faculty members to encourage their students to register to vote in the first weeks of classes.

5.) Voter Education

Plan: Host Constitution Day.

Use of Social Media to organize social media campaigns to get students active and voting on campus. This would involve sending regular updates through various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to remind students of important deadlines and other pertinent information regarding the elections, deadlines, and the candidates.

Use of Wired to have reminders posted once students and faculty members sign in to remind them Primary and Election Day voting.

6.) Increased Voter Turnout

Plan: Awareness of “last day” to register campaign for primary in August and general election in November.

Information provided in classes, social Media use to “remember to vote”, information in Wired.

7.) Increase participation across campus.

Plan: Engage faculty and staff in process.

Identify and engage student groups in process

Coalition:

Who are the other team members who will be involved in the project/ Example members include student leaders, deans, staffers and faculty. If not yet known, what are the academic institution’s offices that will be involved?

Dr David M Mathews; President

Dr David Fleming; Vice President for Instruction

Dr Joe Odenwald; Vice President for Student Services

Dean of Arts and Sciences

Dr Stacey Horner Young; Dean for the Schools of Business and Technology

MS Rebecca Jellison Dean for School of Nursing and Allied Health

Mr. Branden Pompey; Assistant Manager of the Student Activities Center (SAC)

Dr Mary D Young-Marcks; Instructor Social Sciences

Faculty Members from various departments and schools

Representative from Student groups.

Work will begin in July 2018.

Point of Contact for Designation Process

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