



**VOTER FRIENDLY
CAMPUS DESIGNATION 2020-2021
UHCL CAMPUS PLAN**

Executive Summary

This action plan has been developed in April 2020 to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at the University of Houston-Clear Lake during the 2020-2021 academic year. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over the next year on and around our campus in Houston, Texas. This plan will be implemented by the Campus Plan team in order to accomplish our goals and further institutionalize the University of Houston-Clear Lake's commitment to civic learning, democratic engagement, and student participation in elections.

UHCL hopes to have an increase in student engagement with political processes such as registering and voting. UHCL also hopes to increase its offering of civic programming. UHCL can help students who are engaging or interested in political processes. By providing more civic programming options that help to educate and get students involved, we can more easily reach our goal of increasing student engagement with political processes. We also had a very limited number of civic programs prior to Fall 2019, so increasing the amount of programming we are offering is an important goal to have for the campus. The final goal for the campus is to participate in the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education's National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement and using the data to inform future programming efforts.

Throughout the 2019-2020 academic year, UHCL has worked to start offering several civic engagement programs and educational opportunities. Constitution Day has been a major event in civic engagement in the past and really the only event. This year, all Office of Student Involvement and Leadership full-time staff have worked to become Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar (VDVR) so that voter registration can be offered on campus. It was decided to be VDVR for all the surrounding counties to help get students registered at the time of interaction.

University Landscape

UHCL was founded in 1974 as an upper-level institution. In 2014, the university expanded to welcome freshman and sophomore students to the campus. UHCL is a Hispanic Serving Institution with 37% of our students identifying as Hispanic. In Fall 2019, UHCL had 6,770 Undergraduates and 2,379 Graduates for a total of 9,148 total registered students. Of this total, 4,190 were full-time and 4,959 were part-time. UHCL opened its first residence hall,

Hunter Hall, in 2019 and remains a primarily commuter campus. About half of our student population are Harris County residents.

Goals

Short-term

- * Increase offered civic programming by increasing the number of programs to at least 2 programs per month during the semester.
- * Increase student engagement with political processes such as registration and voting by offering programs that incorporate voter education and registration.

Long-term

- * Become part of the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement and use the data to inform and improve future programming
- * Voting rate of 50% by 2022

Coalition

Mary LeBlanc, Coordinator for Community Engagement in the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership will be the main lead for the coalition and execution of the campus plan. The Coordinator for Community Engagement oversees volunteer and service-learning opportunities on campus and within the community. The coordinator is also responsible for implementing civic engagement programming for the campus as it is seen as an important part of engaging with the community.

Our ideal coalition consists of students, faculty, staff, and outside partners who can help increase awareness and education on civic engagement. These partners will help to give valuable insight and ideas for how we can improve and increase our programming. They will also be able to reach different student audiences. Our ideal coalition will consist of the following representatives:

- *Office of Student Involvement and Leadership Staff*
- *Office of Student Involvement and Leadership Student Employee*
- *Student Democracy Fellow*
- *Student Government Association Representative*

- *Faculty Representative*
- *Housing and Residence Life Staff*
- *Office of Orientation and New Student Program Staff*
- *Harris County Board of Elections Member*
- *Galveston County Board of Elections Member*

Other groups who will be beneficial partners and will help us achieve our goals are Rock the Vote and the League of Women Voters. These are groups we have followed advice from and have requested to give presentations. We intend to continue these partnerships moving forward.

Description of Work

Voter Registration

All full-time employees in the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership (OSIL) are trained and appointed as Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar in Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris, and Montgomery. OSIL will be helping students get registered at all orientation sessions by having their own table for voter registration. At UHCL, we have Rock the Vote: Voter Registration, where we table to help students register to vote. We plan to offer these events in various locations around the campus to hopefully interact with different students each time. We also hope to utilize a campus golf cart to do a mobile registration event. We also plan to utilize larger university events such as Student Organization Expo and Spirit week to incorporate voter registration.

Online

Due to COVID-19, we have also prepared to move our programs online for the year. We have provided the Office of Orientation and New Student Programs with information on how students can register themselves by using Turbovote to fill out a voter registration form or requesting a form be sent to them through the Secretary of State for any online orientations. In place of in-person Rock the Vote: Voter Registration events, OSIL will hold

online Rock the Vote: Voter Registration events to walk students through the processes described above for completing voter registration on their own.

Voter Education

Election Days

We intend to continue our Rock the Vote: Election Day events. We do these events for local and larger elections. At election day events, we give students information on the local polling location closest to the university, what options will be on the ballots for each of the local counties, and phone numbers that may help them once they get to the polling locations if they need help. Because these are themed “Rock the Vote,” we play music and have music themed giveaways. We also give away rock candy to remind students to “Rock the Vote.” While these might be minor details, they are important for event recognition and student engagement. We hope to be able to offer students shuttle rides to the Harris County and Galveston County voting locations closest to the University. This will depend on the state of the university in the Fall (regarding COVID-19) and the permission of Parking Services.

Debate Watches and Deliberative Dialogues

Debate Watches and Deliberative Dialogues are planned for the Fall semester. We are hoping to use our available resources on campus such as different offices who might be able to provide some perspective on important factors in deciding who to vote for and how differing platforms might affect current social issues. These are planned to surround the debates but will be planned more in depth once we have official dates.

Constitution Day

Constitution Day will be a large-scale event as it previously has been. Typically, the Dean of Students office hosts this event with information on the constitution, a photo opportunity, voter registration, and treats. This event is now being hosted by OSIL. It will remain similar with the same information and offerings, but we would like to add more educational components to it. Because the Census deadline has been extended past this date, we can continue to talk it up as well as continue to provide information on the Presidential Election.

National Voter Registration Day

National Voter Registration Day will also be a day for us to plan an event to help educate students. Our hope is that, with the help of Harris County, we can take advantage of their opportunity to demonstrate the polling equipment and use that to help us create a poll on campus. This past year, we were supposed to vote on and reveal a university hand-sign. If we are able to add our own options to the polling equipment and receive the results, we are hoping to have a “mock election” to help demonstrate to students what they should be expecting on election day and by actually using the polling equipment, they would be voting on something that directly affects the school. This would be able to combine both the university with political events. This would also be an event to push voter registration.

Passive Programs

Along with in-person events, we also plan to utilize passive programming for voter education. We have set up a bulletin board in two of our frequently visited buildings which help us give information to students on the elections. We call these the “Election Connection” boards. Prior to the Stay Home, Work Safe these boards were used to engage students in the Primary Elections by offering information on the candidates as well as definitions on important terms students should know that relate to elections. Upon returning to campus, these boards will be used similarly to engage students in the upcoming Presidential Elections and offer unbiased information and education to help guide them through the election processes.

All voter education programming can easily be transitioned to a virtual format. If the university is not open for on-campus participation in Fall 2020, we do plan to continue with these events virtually.

Timeline

Events ranging from July - November 2020. Next three pages show visual calendar of events.

JULY 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Primary Runoff Elections- Rock the Vote	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 Voting 101 Workshop during Weeks of Welcome	28	29
30	31					

SEPTEMBER 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3 Voter Registration Tabling - Arbor Building	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Voter Registration Tabling - Delta Building	11	12
13	14	15 Residence Life Information Session	16	17 Constitution Day - Bayou Building	18	19
20	21 Voter Registration Tabling - STEM Building	22	23	24 Rock the Vote: Voter Registration/National Voter Registration Day	25	26
27	28	29	30			

OCTOBER 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Rock the Vote: Voter Registration (Last Day to Register)	2	3
4	5	6	7	8 Deliberative Dialogue*	9	10
11	12 Deliberative Dialogue*	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 Deliberative Dialogue*	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 Deliberative Dialogue*	29	30	31 *Subject to change

NOVEMBER 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3 Rock the Vote: Election Day	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Success

Our success will be measured in several ways. We will use debriefs, learning outcomes, voter registration numbers, and NSLVE reports to assess our success with our programming.

Debriefs

After each of our events, debriefing about the event with the office who hosted the event and possibly the coalition committee will provide valuable insight on the events. We may also be able to include students who assist with the events, such as student employees to get feedback from more student perspectives.

Learning outcomes

Each large event will demonstrate specific learning outcomes. These can be measured by having students take surveys to assess their learning after each event.

Voter Registration

We can assess our voter registration events by recording the number of people registered at each event.

NSLVE Participation

We will be successful in our goal of becoming a participant in the NSLVE if we are able to receive approval. This will be helpful in assessing our voter registration events as well as our election day events. We also will be able to use the information from the reports to inform and improve our offered programs. The information can also be used to help us plan targeted programs to increase our reach to students who may not be active in our current program offerings.