



**TEXAS LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR SERVANT LEADERSHIP
2018 VOTER ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Texas Lutheran University (TLU) is a private, liberal arts institution located on 184 scenic acres in Seguin, TX. Seguin is situated on the growing corridor of cities between San Antonio and Austin. TLU has a diverse student body of approximately 1300 students, with over half of the student population being first generation (meaning they are the first in their families to attend college). In recent years, TLU became accredited to award master's degrees in three areas: athletic training, accounting, and data analytics. Approximately 65 percent of students live on campus. TLU is also a Hispanic Serving Institution, with 32 percent of the student population being Hispanic. With just over 70 full-time faculty members, TLU has a small student-faculty ratio of 14:1 and an average class size of 18.

Texas Lutheran University is a community of learning and a community of faith. As part of its [mission and institutional goals](#), TLU encourages and assists its students in developing a commitment to active community service, an integrated ethical perspective and a sense of moral purpose, a desire to cultivate physical and psychological health and well-being, and a will to pursue continued cultural, intellectual and spiritual growth. Civic engagement is actively promoted and supported at TLU, but explicit planning and goals related to voter engagement have not existed in TLU's history. Most efforts for voter engagement have existed through the university's civic engagement center, the Center for Servant Leadership. As the Center for Servant Leadership restructured in 2016 to have one centralized staff person, the need to approach democratic engagement as a cross-campus collaborative effort has grown. This action plan establishes goals and plans for promoting civic learning and democratic engagement on TLU's campus, and creates measurable goals for the institution to use in the future. The Center for Servant Leadership developed this plan with the intent to expand leadership around programming to a coalition of internal and external partners.

The TLU Voter Engagement Plan was created to thoughtfully and intentionally plan civic learning and democratic engagement priorities and programs for the upcoming years. The plan establishes a working group/coalition that will assist in editing, maintaining, implementing, and advancing the action plan. The action plan is being submitted to NASPA for consideration of TLU as a 2019-2020 Voter Friendly Campus Designation Campus. The Voter Engagement Plan begins with programming in fall 2018 centering around the midterm elections, but continues on-ward indefinitely with long-term goals through at least 2024. The plan as it is laid out in this document will be implemented throughout the next year. The plan is living document—flexible and adaptive—and is expected to grow and change as new programs are established and created.

LEADERSHIP

The TLU Voter Engagement Plan will be overseen by the Center for Servant Leadership and its Director, Morgan Klaser, who will serve as Chair of the Voter Engagement Coalition of Partners. The purpose of the Coalition of Partners is to bring together representatives of different parts of TLU's campus and Seguin's community to assist with the goals set forth in this Voter Engagement Plan. Group members are responsible for attending quarterly meetings, sub-committee meetings if needed, sharing ideas, and presenting feedback on the plan implementation based on their specific role in campus and/or broader community. The Student Civic Engagement Coordinator (a one-year student leadership role through the Center for Servant Leadership) is responsible for taking minutes and reporting updates out to the campus community.

The Voter Engagement Coalition of Partners will initially include:

Vickie de la Rosa
Community Forum

Cecilia Gutierrez
MOVE (Mobilize. Organize. Vote. Empower) Texas

Dr. Judith Hoffmann
TLU Professor of Social Innovation & Social Entrepreneurship

Andella Janicek
TLU Director of Student Activities

Morgan Klaser
TLU Director of the Jon & Sandra Moline Center for Servant Leadership, *Chair of Voter Engagement Coalition of Partners*

Sylvia Marmolejo
Guadalupe County Elections Office Deputy Clerk

Kassandra Nieto
Student Civic Engagement Coordinator with TLU Center for Servant Leadership

The members of this group represent student leaders (Nieto), student affairs administrators (Janicek), faculty (Hoffmann), local elections officials (Marmolejo), and off-campus, nonpartisan organizations (de la Rosa and Gutierrez). By representing each of these groups, the Coalition of Partners brings together differing voices in the TLU and Seguin community that are knowledgeable about democratic engagement. Group members were selected based on their roles within their jobs. Additional group members, especially those related to assessment, marketing, and technology, can be added if the Coalition of Partners agrees they would assist with the TLU Voter Engagement Plan. The Coalition of Partners will meet at least quarterly during the year (beginning July 2018, and following October 2018, January 2019, April 2019, etc.) to update the existing plan and connect about future plans. Sub-committees will meet more frequently throughout the year, if needed.

COMMITMENT

Texas Lutheran University demonstrates its commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement through the establishment and support of the Jon & Sandra Moline Center for Servant Leadership. The Jon and Sandra Moline Center for Servant Leadership (CSL) provides centralized leadership for civic engagement, including an emphasis on quality over quantity, while also embracing community partners and students as co-educators. Created in 2005, the CSL is animated by 1 full-time staff, 12 student workers, and a shared office administrator. Each student worker serves as a year-long liaison to a different community organization, facilitating regular service opportunities for TLU students, ranging from promoting Mexican cultural arts at Teatro de Artes de Juan Seguin, to organizing events for a senior living community at Eden Cross, to mentoring at the disciplinary campus, Lizzie Burges

Alternative School, for the local Independent School District. The CSL has one student coordinator dedicated to civic engagement and voter registration efforts. The CSL intentionally nurtures a wide diversity of community service opportunities. This includes coordination for two annual days of service (one per semester) in which student leaders facilitate reflection for small groups of participants. CSL staff support students' international efforts to raise funds and awareness for Tanzanian children orphaned due to AIDS, and build water wells in rural Africa. In 2016-2017, the CSL has additionally hosted conversations and documentaries about social justice issues in the community, including a documentary about access to nutritious foods and a community dialogue focused on immigration issues in the United States.

CSL staff also meet regularly with TLU faculty to encourage and develop curricular civic engagement. During the 2016-2017 academic year, 24 full-time faculty taught 55 civic engagement courses, reinforcing the culture of service within the academic setting. The culture of service at TLU does not begin and end with the CSL. Every athletic team participates in one or both of the annual days of service; many teams also organize a separate community service project. Each social Greek organization chooses a philanthropic cause to support through service and fundraising. For example, the Xi Tau sorority raises awareness about domestic violence by hosting several annual events and volunteering weekly at the local shelter. The institution does not currently have an explicit, visible commitment specifically demonstrating a commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement, but that is a goal identified in this plan.

TLU communicates its commitment to civic engagement internally through voter registration efforts in the FREX (freshmen experience) courses, which is a required course for all first-year students. Efforts to educate students, faculty, staff, and community members by the Center for Servant Leadership through candidate forums, debate watch parties, and civic dialogue programs are valued and marketed by the university. The TLU Action Plan, established in 2009 as a way to articulate institutional priorities that are part of the TLU Strategic Plan, demonstrates that fostering a positive, engaged and productive campus culture is important to TLU. More specifically, areas of the TLU Strategic Plan for 2010-2016 that support civic learning and democratic engagement include:

- 1.1 Foster a culture of engagement where faculty and staff intentionally incorporate high-impact practices to support the achievement of the Institutional Goals for Graduates.
- 1.2 Create a university calendar that promotes experiential learning, collaboration, and community building.
- 1.4 Integrate global and environmental sustainability awareness into the learning experience.
- 2.4 Enhance and coordinate the leadership and ethics programs. Examine and integrate the role of the various current leadership and ethics initiatives under a more intentional, comprehensive plan.

These priorities are communicated internally to TLU faculty and staff. Additionally, TLU communicates this priority to outside constituents by serving as a community resource for voter registration and proclaims it on the TLU website as a [community education program](#). The mission of TLU to "engage each student in a process of self-education which will assist him or her in developing as an informed and resourceful person in today's rapidly changing world" shows its support of educational pursuits, such as those dedicated to civic learning and democratic engagement, that help with overall student

development for adaptive change in the world. This plan’s purpose is to help instill a culture of democratic engagement at TLU.

LANDSCAPE

Civic engagement is a part of TLU’s Institutional Goals for Graduates, which are listed on the [TLU Mission webpage](#). In this document, it states that “TLU encourages and assists its students in developing:

- a commitment to **active community service**,
- an **integrated ethical perspective** and a sense of moral purpose,
- a desire to cultivate physical and psychological health and **well-being**, and
- a will to pursue continued **cultural, intellectual and spiritual growth**.”

While civic learning and democratic engagement are not specifically mentioned in these institutional goals, they are accepted as part of TLU’s responsibility and commitment to community service and ethical perspectives. Civic learning and democratic engagement is seen as a responsibility of active community members, and as such, TLU supports and encourages TLU students to be engaged. The Center for Servant Leadership also has developed learning outcomes for students engaged in its programs. As a result of engaging with the community, TLU students will be able to 1) value community, 2) discover their place within a community (civic identity), and 3) link the communities in which they operate (the academy and the larger community). Civic learning and democratic engagement are connected with these outcomes. Active participants in civic learning and democratic engagement programs become connected with a community, its issues, and find ways to connect their passions and values to the greater community through civic dialogue and using their voices.

TLU participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) with Tufts University’s Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life. According to data from NSLVE (see chart below) in the 2014 midterm elections, the voting rate for TLU was 10.6%, which was below the average voting rate for all institutions (19.1%). During the 2014 midterm elections, approximately two-thirds of students were registered to vote at TLU (66.3%). The 2016 voting rate at TLU was 43.7%, which is less than the 2016 voting rate of all participating institutions (50.4%). Between the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections, TLU saw an overall increase by 13.4% in the voting rate. There was also an increase between 2012 and 2016 in the number of students who registered and the number of students who voted. TLU renewed participation with the NSLVE program through 2020, which will help to see ongoing trends. The trends in the NSLVE data shows increased numbers of students registering to vote (83.5% of TLU students in 2016) and turning out to vote, but TLU still has work to do to maintain voter registration and achieve increased voting rate percentages that match national averages or surpass them.

National Study of Learning, Voting, & Engagement Data					
2012 Voting Rate for All Institutions	2012 Voting Rate for TLU	2014 Voting Rate for All Institutions	2014 Voting Rate for TLU	2016 Voting Rate for All Institutions	2016 Voting Rate for TLU
46.9 %	30.3 %	19.1 %	10.6 %	50.4 %	43.7 %

In 2016, TLU also participated in the Campus Compact Annual Membership Survey, which produced a comparison report to peer institutions. The key findings identified that Texas Lutheran University is on target with what comparably sized institutions (FTE student enrollment under 3,000) are accomplishing

in community engagement on their campuses. Particularly, the way that TLU tracks curricular and co-curricular service and number of hours of service completed is on par with the national trend and affinity group. In terms of our campus-community partnerships, TLU is not currently utilizing community partners in many on-campus committees, which may be a beneficial addition to consider in the future. The Coalition of Partners is a positive step in increasing community partners on TLU committees. Tracking alumni engagement in public service and national service is not something TLU currently does, but could be useful for knowing some of the long-term impact of service and community engagement on Texas Lutheran University students. TLU is part of the 52% of institutions that identify specific learning outcomes for civic engagement, something that TLU utilizes in assessment efforts.

Civic learning and democratic engagement are present in the curriculum as part of civic engagement courses. The TLU general education curriculum has a global citizenship competency, which students are required to engage in. The global citizenship competency encompasses not only community engagement and civic engagement courses, but also courses where students are engage in cross-cultural learning. Courses that have a civic engagement component and also are designated with the global citizenship competency use the CSL learning outcomes (community, civic identity, and linkages between academy and community) in their syllabi. These courses are assessed by the Center for Servant Leadership through a pre- and post-survey administered to students. Examples of departments that have civic engagement courses include Nursing, Education, Sociology, Communication, and Information Systems. Civic learning and democratic engagement in the co-curriculum are mostly seen through programs with the Center for Servant Leadership and Campus Ministries departments. This plan will help to expand these programs into the curriculum and co-curriculum.

BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

TLU's landscape is overall fairly accepting of civic learning and democratic engagement efforts in the curriculum and co-curriculum. Barriers do exist that prevent the institution from being successful. A challenging internal barrier is the lack of staffing. The Center for Servant Leadership is staffed by a Director, who creates curricular and co-curricular programming for civic engagement, volunteerism, and service-learning. The CSL Director and student coordinator are the main on-campus contacts for voter registration, voter engagement, civic dialogue, etc. External barriers that have been problematic include navigating local politics of a small town and their thoughts of college-age students voting in their county. TLU does have resources from the Guadalupe County Elections Office, the Community Forum group (a nonpartisan group dedicated to helping Hispanic and Latinx communities have access to voting), and MOVE Texas (a nonpartisan nonprofit). MOVE Texas and Community Forum have both been helpful partners in registering students to vote and co-planning democratic engagement events throughout the year. Their assistance has combatted the internal barrier of lack of staffing. These external partnerships need to be additionally cultivated, and new partnerships that could be helpful should be explored.

GOALS

TLU has both long-term and short-term goals for civic learning and democratic engagement. The long-term goals listed below are a vision for the next ten years, while the short-term goals are a vision for the next 1-2 years.

LONG-TERM GOALS

- Increase student voting rates by 10 percentage points from 2016 to 2024.

- Integrate electoral engagement and voter registration into all “FREX – Freshmen Experience” courses and orientation programming.
- Achieve an explicit, visible commitment on the part of the TLU president for improving civic learning and democratic engagement.
- Incorporate civic education and democratic engagement into co-curricular programs/departments outside of the Center for Servant Leadership.

SHORT-TERM GOALS

- Add voter registration (local and out-of-state) information to the institution’s external website and the internal portal website.
- Institutionalize the practice of the president sending a letter to all students every semester about the importance of being civically engaged and participating in elections.
- Develop resources for faculty with the CSL and Center for Teaching & Learning to incorporate civic learning and democratic engagement into their classrooms.
- Establish Memorandums of Understanding with external partners, including Community Forum and MOVE Texas.
- Publish TLU data from the National Study of Learning, Voting, & Engagement on the TLU website, and make it available to faculty, staff, and students.

STRATEGY

The strategy for programming listed below consists of an election-season approach and an approach when there is not currently an election happening. The Center for Servant Leadership and the student coordinator for civic engagement will be responsible for this work, although some projects will require partnership and collaboration with internal departments and external community partners.

STRATEGY FOR ELECTION SEASON: 2018 Midterm Elections Example

Pre-Election: August 21-November 5, 2018

Prior to Election Day on November 6, 2018, the Center for Servant Leadership (CSL) will focus efforts around voter education and voter registration. These efforts will primarily be successful through email communication, web design, and marketing/promotional items.

Voter Registration

To register to vote in Texas, a completed application must be mailed to your local County Voter Registrar 30 days prior to Election Day. For the November 2018 elections, this date is October 9, 2018. Since Texas Lutheran University frequently has voters from both Guadalupe County (the county in which Seguin resides) and Comal County, the CSL makes both county’s applications available at each voter registration event. Some resources for voter registration that we utilize and tell students about:

- [Am I Registered?](#) Website can tell individuals if they are registered to vote in a particular county if this information can be provided: Name, County, Date of Birth. This is helpful if individuals have forgotten where they’ve registered or if they’re registered already.
- [Online Voter Registration Application](#). This document must be filled out, printed, and mailed to your local County Voter Registrar to be valid.

- [Texas Student Voting Guide](#) gives some helpful tips about registering at school or home, which types of ID are needed to vote, voter registration deadlines, etc. that are specific to Texas.

Email Communication for Voter Registration

An email regarding how to register to vote will be sent to students around the time of National Voter Registration Day, which is on September 25, 2018. This email typically is sent by the Director of the CSL, Morgan Klaser, but it may be helpful to ask the Dean of Student Life & Learning to send an email instead to try to reach a broader audience. A recommended date to send this email in Fall 2018 is Monday, September 10th.

Where & when will voter registration happen on campus?

There is a student on the CSL staff whose job is dedicated to voter registration and civic engagement. This student will assist with voter registration efforts on campus and recruiting fellow students to be deputy registrars.

- CSL Volunteer Fair. A table at the annual CSL Volunteer Fair will be occupied by the Guadalupe County Elections Office. They will provide on-the-spot voter registration for students. This event is anticipated to be held on Wednesday, August 22, 2018.
- National Voter Registration Day. A table will be set up in the Alumni Student Center (ASC) on Tuesday, September 25th from 9:30am-1:00pm. At the table, voter registration applications and information about polling locations will be provided. Promotional/Marketing items will include:
 - Stickers from National Voter Registration Day campaign
 - Donuts provided by CSL
 - Large "Texas Lutheran Votes!" banner for table
 - Pins and/or other promotional materials
 - Bulldog TV slideshow
- Tabling in the ASC. A table will be set up in the ASC during the last week of voter registration. The table will be staffed with a student rep or a staff rep from 11:00am-1:00pm on September 25-28, 2018. At the table, voter registration applications and information about polling locations will be provided. Promotional/Marketing items will include:
 - Stickers from National Voter Registration Day campaign if there are any leftover
 - Large "Texas Lutheran Votes!" banner
 - Pins and/or other promotional materials. There is a button maker in the library that is free to use for faculty/staff/students as long as you bring printed out pieces of paper.
 - Employ yard signs around campus that have information regarding registering to vote and the deadline. We have T-signs already from another program. We'd need to laminate posters to put outside. We would also need approval from the Director of Physical Plant and Asst. Director of Physical Plant. Perhaps also Director of Event Services.
 - "Are you registered to vote? Come in the ASC between 11am-1pm to sign up!"
 - Have a "TLU Votes!" banner hanging outside of the ASC during the week of September 25, 2018. Get approval for this from the Director of Student Activities by September 3rd.
 - Large "Texas Lutheran Votes!" banner for table
- Digital Boards. On the digital boards on campus (called Bulldog TV), we will have a PowerPoint slide available from September 10th until October 9th that showcases information about registering to vote. This slide will be emailed to Student Activities on Friday, September 7th. On October 9th, freeze the Bulldog TV slide for 2 hours during the day to remind students it's the deadline to register to vote.

- Other promotional materials will include using the Growler (an online message board available to all students), as well as hanging posters and flyers using the “TLU Votes” branding.
- Print 1/6 sheet flyers about voter registration and place them in student mailboxes (approximately 200 pieces of paper for 1,200 copies).

Candidates Forum

In Fall 2018, the Center for Servant Leadership will host a series of Candidates Forums on campus, which will be open to faculty, staff, and students. The Candidates Forum will be planned in conjunction with community partners, Community Forum and MOVE Texas. They will bring candidates in the upcoming election onto campus to share their ideas, platforms, and educate the campus community about them as a candidate.

Debate Watch Parties. For more highly publicized elections, the CSL will host debate watch parties in the Alumni Student Center so that students can easily educate themselves about candidates in upcoming elections. This is a practice we used in the fall 2016 presidential elections. Local elections are not usually televised, which is why candidate forums have been used instead to educate students.

Election Day: November 6, 2018

Email Communication for Election Day

Email from SGA president will go out on November 6th reminding students that it is Election Day, directing students to FAQ website on tlu.edu, confirming if students are registered to vote, and encouraging them to vote. Coming from a peer rather than a staff may encourage them to vote.

Advertise campus polling place

- Create/run a Bulldog TV slide (permission from Student Activities by 11/1) about the Jackson Park polling place and who is eligible to vote there. Have this run on November 5-6, 2018

Results-watching event

- Use the space by the TV in ASC Graf Lounge. Reserve with Student Activities by 9/3.
- Provide pizza for students.
- This is a high student traffic location.

Post-Election: After November 6, 2018

Student Survey

Sent out the student survey in the weekly @TLU email for students. Coordinate with Ashlie Ford in Marketing office on campus to make sure the survey will work in the emails and to pick the best day to include the survey. Offer a gift card incentive for a randomly selected participant to either Bulldog Bucks, Tschoepe Coffee Shop, or the campus bookstore. Ask these questions and/or others using Google Forms:

Did you vote in the 2018 midterm election? (select one)

Yes

No

If you answered no to voting in this election, what was your primary reason for making that choice? (select one)

I was not of age or not eligible to vote

I was eligible but chose not to vote

I was unsure how to register as an out of state resident
I was unsure how to register as a Texas resident
I found the process of registering too confusing or difficult
Other: _____

Did you vote in the 2016 presidential election? (select one)

Yes
No

If you answered no to voting in this election, what was your primary reason for making that choice? (select one)

I was not of age or not eligible to vote
I was eligible but chose not to vote
I was unsure how to register as an out of state resident
I was unsure how to register as a Texas resident
I found the process of registering too confusing or difficult
Other: _____

During the 2018 midterm election, which of the following information about voting did you see or receive on campus? (select all that apply)

ASC table voter registration
Flyers or posters on campus
Yard signs on campus
Advertisement in campus mailbox
Email from Dean Quiros
Email from SGA President

What do you feel is the most effective way to get voter registration and election information out to students?

FREE RESPONSE

STRATEGY FOR NON-ELECTION SEASON

During the seasons when there is not an active election, the Center for Servant Leadership will have ongoing programming for education around civic learning and voter registration. Some examples of this ongoing engagement strategy include:

Ongoing Voter Registration Efforts. The CSL will offer voter registration 2-3 times during the semester in the Alumni Student Center, which is the main student center on campus, and in academic building lobbies. Additionally, the CSL student coordinator for civic engagement will offer voter registration for faculty to implement in the classroom. This has worked as a popular voter registration method in the past, and faculty seem to enjoy having the opportunity physically brought to their students in the classroom. The CSL student coordinator for civic engagement will help to plan, coordinate, and implement voter registration efforts with the CSL Director and the County Elections Office. The main audience for this activity is current TLU students.

Civic Dialogues. The CSL will provide 1-2 civic dialogue programs each semester for students, faculty, staff, and community members. These events in the past have been in a variety of formats including community dialogue circles focused on a relevant issue, a speaker series bringing in local experts on a topic, or documentaries about a social cause or advocacy issue. The purpose of the civic dialogue events is to promote dialogue on campus where folks can

educate themselves, find out how to get involved regarding a particular issue, and speak civilly about a controversial issue with others who may have differing opinions.

Issues Advocacy. MOVE Texas plans to host issues advocacy programming throughout the year that the CSL may co-partner with to bring resources to TLU students, faculty, and staff. The purpose of issues advocacy programming is to bring together individuals around a like-minded cause (i.e. healthcare), and provide those individuals with resources to be more active about around their stance on an issue in their community.

Voter Engagement Leadership Gatherings. The CSL staff and Community Forum have brought together high school seniors and TLU students to learn about civics with MOVE Texas in the past. The purpose of these events has been to gather young people together to learn about how to get involved with local government. There are plans to do more events that bring together young leaders in the future.

REPORTING

The TLU voter engagement campus guide will be shared internally to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) and to the President's Cabinet. The plan will also be shared on the Center for Servant Leadership portal page, which is an internal sharing site for TLU employees. The goals from the plan will also be shared in the Center for Servant Leadership's annual report, which is shared with the VPAA's division and faculty on campus. The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement data will be published on the CSL's external website so that it is made available to the public. Information from the NSLVE report will be shared at certain CSL civic engagement programs to help educate the audiences at each event of the level of engagement that TLU students have with the democratic engagement process.

EVALUATION

Continual participation in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) is critical in evaluating TLU's long-term goals involving voter registration and voter turnout. As the reports from NSLVE are sent to TLU periodically, the Voter Engagement Coalition of Partners will monitor changes. Additionally, the survey mentioned in the "Strategy" section will be sent to all TLU students by the Center for Servant Leadership and TLU Marketing Department after the November election. The purpose of the survey is for the CSL to better understand how to market the elections and voter registration materials to students. The information collected from the survey will be analyzed by the Coalition of Partners to determine strategies that the majority of students found useful. The survey will help to identify new goals to pursue, and results of the survey will be shared with the Coalition of Partners and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Additional evaluations may be created by the Coalition of Partners. It may also make sense to invite the Director of Institutional Research to join and/or advise the Coalition to plan future evaluations. Results from any existing or future evaluations can be shared through the Center for Servant Leadership's annual report.