

Draft Civic Action Plan

[IMPORTANT NOTE TO THE READER: This document is a draft document shared for background information only. The document follows a template provided by Campus Compact for Civic Action Plans. Some text has been included here to give a sense of information that will be in each section of the plan, however, none of the text in this document is final, and it will be amended and revised significantly as input is collected through the campus dialogues or the online survey. Thank you for your input.]

Begun at Navy Pier after World War II but recreated as the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1982, UIC is a young university with an ambitious goal to create knowledge that transforms our understanding of the world and - through hands-on application - changes the world itself. In just over thirty years, the university has emerged as a leader in the field of postsecondary education, with more than 29,000 students, fifteen academic colleges, \$347 million in annual research expenditures and has than 200,000 living alumni around the globe. UIC's student body, which is approximately 65 percent undergraduate and 35 percent graduate/professional, is recognized as one of the nation's most diverse.

Civic and community engagement are at the heart of UIC. As a university created for and by the people of Chicago and Illinois, we have learned from and been transformed by the rich diversity of our surrounding communities and their people, and we embrace our mission to transform lives. UIC students and faculty are involved in an extensive range of civic engagement projects funded by federal, state, local and private sources. These initiatives - pursued at all levels of government - contribute resources and assistance to communities from the school's immediate neighborhoods to locations around the world. UIC maintains partnerships with a large number of community agencies, providing consultative services, staff development, and educational activities. These relationships inform and enrich the education offered to UIC students providing shared opportunities for learning, collaboration, and discovery. The university's social justice mission has a global dimension as well as more than a third of UIC students speak English as a second language.

The integration of academic and public service is a cornerstone of UIC's identity as a land-grant institution. UIC provides students with educational opportunities only a leading research university can offer. In the context of an increasingly globalized and diverse United States, UIC fosters scholarship and practices that reflect and respond to the fluid dynamics of an ever-changing world. UIC intends to continue building towards achieving recognition as the nation's premier urban public research university.

UIC, as part of the larger University of Illinois system, has articulated a Civic Action Plan that aligns with, and supports the goals identified within, the *University of Illinois' Strategic Framework*. This document, adopted in 2016, identifies civic engagement as a strategic priority for students, faculty, and staff at the University. Specifically, the plan sets out the following goal:

To create an engaged citizenry for the state, nation, and world, we will encourage critical discussion of civic values and responsibilities, build enduring connections with community organizations across Illinois, and connect the people of the System with opportunities for service.

Approach

[This section will detail the goals and priorities of the plan and relates those priorities to other important campus plans and documents. For example, the UIC Strategic Priorities document is a key related document, also the requirements for the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification will be key targets for this plan.]

To cultivate civic engagement, UIC's Strategic Priorities document outlines the following three approaches.

Embrace Community: UIC can build upon a rich history of successful community engagement. We will continue to expand the meaning of engagement by striving for equitable, transparent, and reciprocal relationships. We will develop new collaborations between the University and communities in Chicago and regions throughout the state for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and leverage resources to create opportunities for the engagement of students at all levels. We will collect and measure the impact of community engagement, listen to our partners, conduct needs assessments and broadly communicate our results. We will exceed the criteria for the highest Carnegie classification for university community engagement. We will strive to be the most engaged public university in the nation by creating incentives both internally and in Illinois' communities to support wider access to education.

Create Partnerships: The University can benefit significantly from new collaborations with state and city agencies, as well as the business, cultural, and arts communities in Chicago and throughout the state. We will pursue opportunities to increase engagement with the state and the city and to inform public policy and economic development through our research and scholarly work. We will extend our collaborations with and increase our presence in the Chicago Public Schools and the City Colleges of Chicago. We will explore the creation of joint academic, research and creative achievement programs with the top cultural and art institutions in Chicago. We will develop new partnerships with the business community to facilitate faculty research and student placement for internships and professional positions.

Expand Care: UIC is committed to continuing to provide top quality health care to all, regardless of socioeconomic status. We will promote greater alignment of the health science colleges with the UI health care delivery system to better address the needs of the communities UIC serves and increase research in the health sciences. We will expand our clinical care delivery network to more areas and create new collaborations with safety net hospitals and clinics throughout Chicago to support their operations.

Beginning in the Spring of 2016, UIC formed a "Core Civic Engagement Coordinating Committee" to coordinate civic engagement efforts and to create a common civic engagement calendar of events and to coordinate civic engagement efforts across the campus. As part of the Core Group's efforts for better coordination, high priority goals include: preparing for and educating and engaging students in Midterm elections; appealing to commuter students and those who are otherwise less inclined towards involvement on campus; and collaborating with student groups, academic departments, student services, and any other groups on campus to achieve these goals.

Outcomes

[This section documents recent progress with regard to building UIC's civic engagement programming and capacity as a baseline against which to determine success of the plan. The section will also detail systems in place for measuring and tracking key data and outcomes associated with plan activities.]

UIC is continuously striving for improvement and has already enjoyed great success in achieving the goals outlined above. University of Illinois Service, a database of public service activities, lists no fewer than 230 programs on the Chicago campus, while the Chicago Public School (CPS) activities database describes 135 partnerships that UIC regularly maintains with CPS. Additionally, The Community Engagement Core at the UIC Center for Clinical and Translational Science operates 82 clinical health-related programs and is active in all 77 neighborhoods in Chicago. This engagement is inclusive of global partnerships; as of February 2017, the online database of the UIC Office of International Affairs lists 168 active agreements operating in 63 foreign countries.

As a result of this campus-wide civic engagement effort, by the end of the fall semester 2016, the university was able to register 350 students before the March 2016 primary and then an additional 1,592 students to vote between June and October before the November 2016 election. We established an early voting polling site for the first time in the March 2016 primary. In the fall before the election the early voting site allowed more than 1,000 students, staff, and faculty to vote in this election from November 2nd to the 4th alone. In addition, voter turnout at the University's regular precinct polling place achieved record high numbers this election year in comparison to recent years.

According to a report from Illinois PIRG, a public interest research and student advocacy organization, the following figures are a result of campaign efforts to educate and register new voters:

2008: 460 registered, 327 voted (71% turnout)

2012: 813 registered, 634 voted (78% turnout)

2016: 1,130 registered, 956 voted (84.6% turnout)

This increase is attributed to collaborative efforts between student organizations and local grassroots organizations, as well as to opportunities facilitated through UIC's internship programs and to a rich calendar of events reinforcing a campus culture of pride in civic engagement. Events include Constitution Day, National Student Issues Convention, Bring It to the Table at UIC, Senatorial Town Hall with Tammy Duckworth, a letter-writing campaign supporting the MAP Grant, and campus conversations with the Provost on matters such as immigration, police brutality, and election engagement. There has been increased utilization of social media to engage students, exemplified by the "My Reason Why" Facebook Live challenge in which students were encouraged to "go live" on Facebook to explain their reason for voting. Facebook and Twitter were also used by university departments to inform students on upcoming opportunities, deadlines, and voter information.

We measure progress both by the number of students involved in curricular and co-curricular activities and by their depth of involvement in the same. UIC accurately tracks the number of students registered to vote; the number of students and the percentage of the student body that

voted in the 2016 election versus previous elections; the number of students who volunteer with our community partners; the number of interns who work with our community partners; and the attendance at events like debate watch parties and speaker series on campus. We expect to develop more accurate measures of our impact on the city, state, and nation going forward. We already track such measures as the number of faculty and students in each ward and state legislative district and the purchasing power of the university in those communities. We are developing a more comprehensive database of UIC alumni and their continued involvement in the life of our university.

UIC was one of the four finalists for the site of the Obama Presidential Library and, according to the Obama Library Foundation, one of the strongest aspects of our application was the plan we advanced for augmenting civic engagement at the proposed library site in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood. Our proposal was developed in collaboration with that community and with community partners throughout Chicago.

Implementation

[This section details the specific action steps to which UIC is committing with regard to building civic engagement learning, programming, and support on campus along with a timeline for those steps. Action steps will address three key aspects of growing our campus civic engagement capacity: curricular (course related), co-curricular (non-course related), and leadership/administrative support. Ideas for action steps may be shared in a campus dialogue or through the online survey. Some potential action steps are listed here now.]

- Create a fund to support faculty grants for developing service-learning courses, community-based research, and other civic engagement projects.
- Develop a method for gathering data and evaluating UIC's community partnerships, service-learning courses, co-curricular activities, and faculty and student research. House this data centrally so it can be updated and accessed easily.
- Evaluate campus policies and procedures that directly impact student engagement, such as designated space around campus for booth reservations; the registration application process for student organizations and included requisites; and campus policy for posting.
- Centralize supports that enrich student learning through meaningful service opportunities, paired with critical reflection that supports course objectives
- Support the development of quality community-based research that meets community needs while also promoting overall community development.
- Conduct an evaluation of existing UIC partnerships with the community and host meetings with community partners to determine future partnerships.
- Map community partnerships to highlight UIC's commitment to the community, while also providing an invitation to all with details on how to engage and connect with UIC.

- Build community among faculty, staff, students, and community partners engaged in civic engagement through workshops, events to recognize community work, and networking events.
- Conduct a review of tenure and promotion guidelines to determine if community-based research, service-learning, and teaching that promotes civic engagement is adequately considered in the promotion process. Develop a mechanism such as peer review to determine the value of civic engagement or public service activities of faculty members. Incorporate these reviews into the promotion and tenure documents and process.
- Develop more opportunities for co-curricular civic engagement and the resources needed to support increased programming.
- Develop a fundraising plan in conjunction with The Advancement Office to support UIC's civic engagement efforts.

Communication

[This section will detail how the plan documents and progress, specifically with regard to action steps, will be shared and updated throughout the course of the plan. Communication and outreach will be done through a wide range of campus channels including social media, massmail, and targeted communications to students, faculty and staff]

Next Steps

[This section will detail the immediate next steps with regard to the plan, once it has sign off from campus leadership. At this point, the next steps are to collect input through dialogues and the survey, followed by incorporating broad themes and specific ideas into a complete draft plan.]