



A blueprint for cancelling classes on election day. The what, why, and how guide to promoting election engagement at your law school.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Why We Created This Document	2
Using the Blueprint	3
Building Momentum	4
Timing	
Developing Your Pitch	
Compiling Data	
Utilizing the Media	
Generating Value For All Involved	
Identifying Limitations And Nonstarters and What To Do About Them	
Working with your Team, Allies, and Stakeholders	6
A Group Of Committed Individuals	
Stakeholders	
What Implementation Might Look Like	9
Classes Are Rescheduled	
Alternatives To School-Wide Class Rescheduling	
Coordinating Civic Service Opportunities	11
Identifying Needs	
Incentivizing Participation	
Civic Service Programming	
Thank You	13
Appendix	14

WHY WE CREATED THIS DOCUMENT

In 2016, students at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law led the charge to cancel classes on election day as a way to encourage law students to engage in the election process and to promote civic engagement on campus. In 2018, several more schools joined this effort. Loyola Law School, Los Angeles expanded this program by offering members of the law school community the opportunity to sign up to be a poll worker, get trained, and get placed at a polling center in historically underserved communities.

Following the election in November 2018, leaders of the American Constitution Society University of Denver Sturm College of Law Student Chapter decided to pursue civic participation by working to create community-based service opportunities on federal election days. We quickly learned that this process was anything but linear, and that its nuances and caveats were both extensive and demanding. This difficult process inspired us to create a set of tools would make it easier for other students at other law schools to pursue class cancellation efforts.

So, we created this blueprint.

USING THE BLUEPRINT

This document will assist you in spearheading large scale, but localized, civic participation on election days. We've geared this blueprint towards bringing together your fellow law students around well-coordinated opportunities for community engagement. This includes actions like rescheduling classes and coordinating civic service programming. In a time of democratic uncertainty, the access and ability to exercise the vote is essential. Holding elections is difficult and election administration is a process that consumes significant time and resources. Fair elections are a national need built on the success of local initiatives. To this end, law students and law schools can help lead the way. Law schools bring together institutional resources, a network of support, and robust social energy. As students, we can utilize our knowledge of the law to foster the civic participation necessary to a healthy democracy. While we are far from experts, we have something substantial to offer and a brief window in which to affect change.

Establishing an election day cancellation initiative and day of civic service allows members of the law school community to take the time to vote, deepen their knowledge around elections, and gain clinical legal experience assisting their communities. This process requires creativity, patience, the ability to organize, and the skills to work with a number of stakeholders. No two processes will be identical—each school is unique, and each community faces its own set of electoral challenges. Consider these recommendations as you pursue civic and electoral participation *on your own terms*.

While we recommend you read through the entirety of this document, it can be used effectively as a reference or 'manual' that you consult as you address particular needs or issues. The guide consists of five sections: 1) Building Momentum 2) Working with your Team, Allies, and Stakeholders, 3) What Implementation May Look Like, 4) Coordinating Civic Service Opportunities, and 5) Appendix. This final section, "Appendix," will include a number of documents that law students and faculty have developed while participating in this work at the school level. Please use these documents to whatever extent they are useful, whether for inspiration or to adopt as your own.

BUILDING MOMENTUM

1. TIMING

- a. Planning around your next federal election day will help you structure your timeline, set your goals, and generate the sense of urgency necessary to get everything in place. An upcoming election will allow you to take part in a larger network of support that includes existing resources and ongoing initiatives. The more lead time you give yourself, the better.
- b. When reaching out to administrators, be sure to not prematurely engage them in the process. While administrators are essential to institutional changes (like rescheduling classes), they will likely be folks you connect with after doing some significant leg work. Sometimes an administrator is well positioned and interested in getting involved early on, but typically they will be a secondary or tertiary point of contact. Administrators are busy and coming to the table with half an idea can cool their interest. When it comes time to meet, you should seek out what the next steps in the process are and how you can begin to involve your administrators in implementing your ideas.

2. DEVELOPING YOUR PITCH. Your pitch will evolve over time as you gather more information and begin to identify solutions. In your conversations you can weave together the story you are telling, the value you will create, and the key points you are trying to get across. It is useful to create a 'static' pitch document that contains all of your major themes and points that you can cherry-pick from depending on who you are working with.

3. COMPILING DATA. You will need to collect and present data in a way that demonstrates the urgency of the problem. Consider the two different frames below and how drastically they can change your perspective.

- a. Colorado regularly sees 60-65%% turnout during federal elections – this is some of the highest in the country and surely demonstrates a certain ease of participation.
- b. In Colorado, only 13 out of 20 people cast a ballot and on-the-ground reports show that individuals still face unnecessary hurdles at polling centers.

A simple shift in perspective can dramatically alter one's opinion on the quality of elections and create momentum for supporting civic participation in elections.

4. UTILIZING THE MEDIA. All forms of media, from newspaper to podcasts, can be your friend in generating support for this work. Radio stations and newspapers can be excellent public forums for getting the word out, blogs and online forums can be great spaces to write more personal, creative, and in-depth pieces around voting, and social media can be a great way to connect community members and keep people up-to-date on the progress you are making. Write op-eds and reach out to local journalists and media hosts who you believe might be interested in giving you a platform from which to promote your work.

5. GENERATING VALUE FOR ALL INVOLVED. Value will not be the same for every audience or community; it can take the form of a volunteer opportunity, or an improved public profile, or pro bono hours for a student, or whatever else you may come up with. Focus on generating value in a number of ways instead of getting locked into a single, rigid initiative. Value is an incentive for collaboration, flexibility, and possibilities, as diverse stakeholders will have different needs and desires.

6. IDENTIFYING LIMITATIONS AND NONSTARTERS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM. Of primary concern are the limitations and nonstarters you will face as you build a program. The sooner you identify these, the more time you save and the more prepared you will be to present an achievable plan. Maintaining flexibility and thinking creatively will get you over these hurdles. If you want to stay flexible and creative, have as many conversations you can with people knowledgeable in this space. While the following list is not exhaustive, it does contain some sticking points that have come up while doing this work.

- a. ABA requirements and restrictions of law schools (i.e. number of class hours);
- b. Registrar timelines for changing the academic calendar;
- c. Needs/preferences of faculty/professors;
- d. Existing programs you can plug into for the civic service component;
- e. Existing calendar restrictions (i.e. an unmovable event like an ABA site visit); and
- f. Administrative disinterest or pushback.

WORKING WITH YOUR TEAM, ALLIES, AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 1. A GROUP OF COMMITTED INDIVIDUALS.** Whether you are a few individuals or a large steering committee, what matters is the commitment of your teammates. Those who you trust, who care about the issue, and who work hard are your people. Your greatest advocates should be your fellow students, faculty, and administrators.

- 2. STAKEHOLDERS.** To be successful, you should identify and work with each stakeholder group. Stakeholders are those who are materially affected by a change in the academic calendar, those with sway or power to turn the gears of the administration, and those involved in the project in any capacity.
 - a. Who.** These stakeholders will be administrators, professors, staff, students, and community partners. Meetings are one of the best ways to uncover stakeholders, find advocates, and determine different ways of creating value. To make these meetings useful, work with your current and prospective advocates, and those who regularly interface with students on such projects. Such individuals are often constitutional law and civil rights professors and administrative deans.
 - b. Students.** When generating student support, consider *who* you need. You do not need, and will not get, a thumbs up from every student at your school. Demonstrating general support and the support of specific groups of students, such as student leaders, is useful. For the sake of not becoming inundated with the needs and concerns of hundreds of students, identify and utilize the most efficient way of generating support. This can include activities like collecting signatures from student leaders, sending out school-wide surveys to faculty, administrators, and students, and having face-to-face conversations with other students.
See Appendix: Document A for an example of a student proposal letter.
 - c. Community Partners.** Community partners are fairly easy to identify. Through Google searches, your network, and word of mouth, you should be able to identify organizations, individuals, and government bodies doing election and voting rights work in your community. Organizations may provide data on elections and voting in your state or locality and what

needs exist, run civic service programs that you can plug into on election day, offer advice on how to set up a program of your own, and help identify other relevant or useful organizations and stakeholders. Forming partnerships with these established organizations will make your proposal more credible.

- d. Faculty, Staff, and Administration.** Those who are ultimately responsible for sustainable, institutional change will be your faculty, administration, and registrar. Working with faculty and staff is essential for generating ideas and institutionalizing change. You will need to determine who turns the wheels of change; at some schools, faculty will guide most of the decision making, at others the lead, often times it is some the administration will take mix of the two. Building useful relationships and having meaningful discussions about ideas and issues requires sitting down with the relevant players. Faculty members will likely generate ideas, offer advice, identify red flags, and recommend additional folks to connect with and/or offer their support. They will broaden your knowledge on both voting needs and how your school administration operates, and provide feedback that will be useful as you piece together your strategy. This process can take a few months, but it is well worth the information, networking, and ideas you will generate.

See Appendix: Document C, for an example of a faculty support letter.

i. Useful discussion points and questions to ask during these meetings include:

1. The progress you have made, including: current faculty advocates/champions, what the next steps are, the overall goals of the project, and your most recent/viable ideas for implementation.
2. Data and testimonials on local voting and election conditions.
3. What barriers or resistance do you think we will face in implementing our proposed initiative(s)?
4. What barriers do voters face right now? What needs does our election system have?
5. Is there anything about the administration and their processes that we should know and consider in devising the best options for implementation?
6. What can we do to generate buy-in and support from faculty members such as yourself?

7. Are there any other faculty, staff, or administrative members with whom we should be discussing this initiative?
8. We have generated a number of ideas about how to implement these civic participation initiatives, they are _____, _____, and _____. What do you think of these?
9. What other suggestions or ideas do you have?
10. What opportunities are there for me to present my idea to the faculty and administration?
11. Have you volunteered in some capacity during an election? What was your experience like? Was it problematic for voters? Can we plug into this opportunity?

ii. When the time comes to meet with administrators, you should:

1. Be familiar with general registrar processes for calendar changes;
2. Have identified possible ways to overcome any administrative hurdles;
3. Demonstrate you have a base of support that includes students and faculty;
4. Have ideas on how to implement your proposal; and
5. Utilize your narrative and theme - your 'why' - through which you discuss your purpose.
6. ****If you are certain you have an administrator who would support this work, you should think about involving them early on and establishing them as one of your 'champions.'**

WHAT IMPLEMENTATION MIGHT LOOK LIKE

You should generate a number of different ways to engage your school in the election process. Your set of options will be dependent on your timeline, the resources available to you, and the speed with which your faculty and administration act. It can be useful to think about implementation as something that happens in stages; a transition to a full-blown day of rescheduled classes and civic service can happen over time. The maxim “don’t let the perfect be the enemy of the good” is especially applicable here. The rubric items below outline some of the methods for putting these ideas into practice. *See Appendix: Document B, for an example of an evolving program.*

1. CLASSES ARE RESCHEDULED

- a. Classes are canceled by the administration and a make-up day is scheduled by the registrar. This day can push the start of finals by a day, start the term a day early, or shift the start of reading/exam preparation days.
- b. The details of class cancellation will change school-to-school. Below are some possible solutions and programming that can be implemented independently or as part of a complete class cancellation.

2. ALTERNATIVES TO SCHOOL-WIDE CLASS RESCHEDULING

- a. **Designated Make-Up Day/Time.** Many professors may individually offer to cancel their classes on a national election day. The professor can reschedule the class on their own, add 3-5 minutes to each remaining class, or you can work with your registrar to schedule a make-up day for any cancelled classes.
- b. **For-Credit Alternative.** Professors can offer the equivalent of in-class credit to students who participate in some sort of civic service on election day instead of attending class. Given the pedagogical freedom afforded professors, this can be a fairly easy process.
- c. **Professors Do Not Take Attendance that Day.** While a lot of professors do take attendance every day, you may be surprised by their flexibility and willingness to not do so for a good cause.

- d. Professors Provide Excused Absences.** If you commit to serving in your community on election day, your professor may provide you with an excused absence. There are ways to ensure that those not in class are participating in election volunteering. For example, you can work with officials at voting precincts to 'certify' that absent students were at the polling center, or professors can require students to provide some sort of reflection on the experience. Professors can also record class for students who do not attend.
- e. Notify Your Professor You Will Not Be Attending Class.** Under ABA guidelines, you are required to attend 80% of all classes within a single course. If your professor(s) chooses to take attendance or otherwise not excuse your absence, and if you have not already utilized your available unexcused absences, consider using one in this instance.

COORDINATING CIVIC SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Civic service opportunities are essential as both a way of practically engaging the community and a compelling reason for your administration to say 'yes' to a change in schedule. These opportunities are numerous, and many are discussed in detail below. To coordinate these activities, look to plug into existing programming that provides day-of election support and, if possible, addresses a need unique to your community.

See Appendix: Document F for a list of National Organizations doing Election Participation and Voter Protection work.

1. IDENTIFYING NEEDS. You will need to identify particular day-of voting needs. Start with organizations committed to either/both election day volunteering and public policy advocacy. Organizations with a focus on public policy often have data and insights much of the community might not. You can also reach out to your secretary of state's office, county clerks, and others generally involved in voting work to get an idea of specific needs.

2. INCENTIVIZING PARTICIPATION

- a. If your school requires public service, pro bono hours, or something similar, coordinate with the appropriate individuals to ensure that the time spent volunteering go towards fulfilling that requirement.
- b. Create election and voting education materials and activities, such as education panels and debates on voting rights and elections, a brief syllabus of election related cases and readings with accompanying materials, or literature packets for professors to provide to their students.
- c. Remind possible participants that this is a chance for them to put their unique legal training to work for their communities. A lot of law students want to get out into the world and make good use of their growing skills – you can help them do that.

3. CIVIC SERVICE PROGRAMMING

- a. You and your fellow advocates can establish connections with existing organizations offering civic service engagement opportunities and plug into those initiatives. This can include things like phone banking and getting people to the polls, serving as a poll worker or election judge, or assisting the election day administration.
- b. Work with the official election infrastructure to establish an easy way for students to plug in and volunteer.
- c. Collect data, feedback, pictures, and testimonials from students and community members who participate. This will provide insight into how you can improve your programming and provide you with important information from on-the-ground participants. Finally, proof of concept may be what takes your school from endorsing a pilot program to committing to permanently changing their schedule.
- d. You will need to be careful about the volunteering opportunities you plug into. While individuals can plug into partisan opportunities, it is unlikely the school, given its status as a 501(c)(3) organization, will be able to support engagement with those particular organizations.

THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to read through this blueprint and even more for pursuing meaningful civic engagement in your community. This is difficult work, but we believe democracy is worth the challenges and obstacles we will face along the way. Please reach out at LegalEagleElections@gmail.com if you need assistance in your efforts, if you would like to provide feedback on how to improve this document, or if you simply want to connect with some fellow voting rights advocates.

Onward!

APPENDIX

Document A: Sample of a Student Proposal for Class Cancellation and Civic Service	i
Document B: Sample of an Evolving Program.....	ii
Document C: Sample of a Faculty Support Letter	vii
Document D: Law Schools that Have Instituted Civic Participation on Election Day	ix
Document E: Articles and Op-eds	x
Document F: National Organizations doing Election Participation and Voter Protection work	xi

APPENDIX: DOCUMENT A

Dear Dean [REDACTED]

On behalf of the entire law school population, the American Constitution Society and Federalist Society Student Chapters would like to propose that Election Day 2018 be recognized as *A Day of Civic Service* at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law. Northwestern Law led in Chicago and the legal academy in 2016 by hosting our first Day of Civic Service, demonstrating a firm commitment to participatory democracy and civic education. We believe that hosting our second Day of Civic Service on Tuesday, November 6, 2018 is an incredible opportunity to continue to demonstrate our leadership and encourage Northwestern Law students to engage in their civic responsibilities.

We find it troubling that we, as a nation, elect our public leaders on a day when millions of workers and students are kept from voting and participating in the political process because Election Day is not a recognized holiday. Election Day classes deter many Northwestern Law students and faculty members from casting their ballots, and they act as a barrier preventing students and faculty members from actively serving as Election Day volunteers. Moreover, it is concerning that many foreign students, both JDs and LL.M.s, will graduate from Northwestern Pritzker Law without any substantive opportunity to understand the structure of the American government and electoral system. As an institution committed to the fundamental values of republican democracy and the rule of law, Northwestern Pritzker Law can take additional steps to promote democratic participation and provide enriching civic education. To turn *A Day of Civic Service* into a reality, we urge the Administration to adopt the following proposals:

- Reschedule all classes on Tuesday November 6th to allow students and faculty to participate in Election Day by casting their ballots and/or volunteering with public interest organizations;
- Encourage active public service among students and faculty by identifying and making readily available opportunities to serve as election judges, poll watchers, or one of the many other in-demand Election Day positions protecting the integrity of the electoral process;
- Educate our foreign students on American civics by offering an interactive lecture presentation tailored to those students new to the United States; and
- Create joint faculty-student *Day of Civic Service Committee* to coordinate opportunities for service, organize the civics lecture, and handle any additional logistics.

We believe that rescheduling one day of classes with several months of notice is a manageable burden—especially in light of this laudable purpose. Moreover, we would like to state plainly that *A Day of Civic Service* is a non-partisan effort to educate and encourage maximum participation, regardless of political affiliation.

We very much look forward to your response and commit to the effective implementation of the proposed agenda outlined above. Please see the attached proposal for more information on the success of the 2016 Day of Civic Service, and our vision for the future. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] President of the Federalist Society Student Chapter, and [REDACTED] President of the American Constitution Society Student Chapter, will gladly answer any questions you may have regarding this proposal. We thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

President, ACS Student Chapter

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

President, Federalist Society Student Chapter

A Day of Civic Service at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law



Law students and faculty shouldn't spend Election Day in the classroom *talking* about democracy – they should be in polling stations, *living* democracy.

Why We Need *A Day of Civic Service*

In 2016, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law became the first school in the nation to independently cancel classes to encourage students to vote and volunteer. **The nation has noticed.** Northwestern's leadership has encouraged students and professors to successfully push for *A Day of Civic Service* at law schools across the country. In fact, Loyola Law School in Los Angeles has recently announced that they will be cancelling classes November 6th, 2018 – because Northwestern Pritzker School of Law's leadership inspired students and faculty to take action! We ask you to continue this important tradition of actively encouraging student and faculty engagement, and ensure that Northwestern Pritzker School of Law maintains its position as a national leader in civic service

Today, voter suppression is rampant. Northwestern Pritzker School of Law students recognize the severity of this problem. Before the 2016 election, Beau Tremiere, class of 2017, published an article entitled “[Election Day is broken and it's time to fix it](#)” in *The Hill*, about how “[t]he demands of school and work schedules keep millions of Americans . . . from ever getting to their polling stations.” Ngozi Nezianya, class of 2017, wrote about how law students can be a part of the solution and promote access to the ballot in “[A Voting Problem that Law Students Could Solve.](#)” The voter suppression problems we faced in 2016 have not disappeared. We believe that it is our duty as law students to support voter registration efforts and volunteer on Election Day with nonpartisan organizations to ensure that every citizen has the opportunity to vote.

Northwestern Law students started a movement in 2016, and we want to continue this legacy. These students created the Election Rave (**R**egistration, **A**wareness, **V**olunteerism, and **E**ducation) Campaign (www.electionrave.com). The Election Rave Campaign is part of Northwestern students' effort to create national momentum across law schools, which we intend to continue through 2018. In 2016, Northwestern law students created a network of students across the country who were all interested in bringing *A Day of Civic Service* to their law schools. We intend to grow this network and work together, by hosting national conference calls and connecting with local chapters to combine volunteer efforts. The Election Rave Campaign website also has a compilation of the press we received for leading a national movement.

We ask for Northwestern Law's support in growing *A Day of Civic Service* in 2018 – and beyond. Because of our tremendous success with the 2016 *A Day of Civic Service*, we are confident that we will be able to strengthen and grow *A Day of Civic Service* in 2018.

A Look at 2016

In 2016, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law clearly established its place as a national leader for encouraging civic engagement. Northwestern Law rescheduled all classes regularly held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016, allowing students and professors to volunteer their time by helping with the election. As a result:

- Over 120 students and faculty volunteered on Election Day, enthusiastically supporting fair elections in Illinois.
- Several eligible students served as Election Judges for Cook County, the very pinnacle of civic engagement. These students had the opportunity to act as government officials for a day, working with their fellow citizens to ensure the continued functioning of our democracy.
- Students and faculty also volunteered with numerous organizations, serving diverse populations across the state of Illinois. These organizations included:

Election Protection, a project of the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, is among the largest nonpartisan voter protection coalitions. In 2016, many Northwestern students served as **poll watchers** and were deployed to polling places around the city to ensure that voters' rights were respected and that obstacles to voting—whether intentional or unintentional—were eliminated. Other students fielded calls for Election Protection's **Election Emergency Hotline**, where volunteers helped diagnose issues and problem-solve for voters out in the field.

Voting Access Chicago, a nonpartisan venture between Equip for Equality, the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners, and the Department of Justice. Volunteers ensured that Chicago's 1,800 polling places complied with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Many of Chicago's polling places remain non-compliant, making it challenging if not impossible for voters with disabilities to vote. In 2016, student and faculty volunteers surveyed several polling places each in the days and week leading up to the elections, where they conducted easy-to-administer tests to verify ADA compliance.

Mikva Challenge, a nonprofit in Chicago that helps youth to be informed, empowered, and active citizens and community leaders. Volunteers traveled to numerous polling places over the course of Election Day to support high school students serving as Election Judges.

- In addition to the numerous students who volunteered for nonpartisan organizations, some students chose to volunteer with political campaigns and gained a first-hand look at the operations of political campaigns.
- Students gained national attention and published articles on voting rights in national new outlets.
- As a result of the volunteer opportunities made available in 2016, students have remained actively involved in election protection and have continued to volunteer with these organizations.

Testimonials from 2016

After Election Day, we asked participants to share their stories and insights. Students and faculty overwhelmingly reported that their experiences were positive, and that they were honored to serve the community. Below are a few highlights:

I could not have been more honored to participate in the Mikva Challenge on Election Day. **Seeing the hope, excitement, and determination in the eyes of Chicago high school students as they took part in the political process continues to give me hope, today, that there is a better future for America.** The poise and maturity of the students, as they worked long hours to protect the rights afforded our citizens by the Constitution of the United States, was inspiring. And beautiful. I thank them for their service, and I look forward to the day in the not-too-distant future when they are our leaders.

- Northwestern Pritzker School of Law Faculty Member

It was really an unforgettable chance for foreign students to [learn] about the US election by participating in Election Day volunteer [opportunities].

- 2017 Northwestern Pritzker School of Law LLM Student

It was the first time I participated in nonpartisan Election Day activities, and I was a little wary of interacting with voters in person all day, particularly given the heightened emotional immediacy surrounding this election. **I ultimately found the day to be incredibly fulfilling**, particularly because of the gratitude many of the voters showed to my fellow Election Judges and me. Such gratitude made me realize that those who make the effort to vote really and truly appreciate the opportunity to fulfill their civic right.

- 2018 Northwestern Pritzker School of Law Student

I'm in my 30s and this is the first time I've volunteered during an election, though I've voted in every election since I turned 18. This year, I answered phones for the non-partisan group Election Protection. It amazed me how even simple issues can cause confusion for voters, and how a 10-second phone call could clear everything up. **For every voter I assisted, I can only imagine the dozens who didn't vote because [of] a small logistical challenge . . . and they didn't know where or how to get help.**

- 2017 Northwestern Pritzker School of Law Student

On Election Day I served as a poll watcher in Chicago's 38th ward for the Democratic Party. **I could not be more proud to have participated in the Day of Civic Service.**

- 2019 Northwestern Pritzker School of Law Student

It was great to get out into the community and encourage people to vote. **It's easy to get stuck in the law school bubble, and I was happy to engage with the broader Chicago community.** I went to areas of the city that I rarely spend time in, and I spoke with members of the community who I otherwise would have never met. Everyone I spoke with was very enthusiastic and we all agreed about the importance of this election.

- 2019 Northwestern Pritzker School of Law Student

Our Vision

In 2016, we showed the power of Northwestern Pritzker School of Law students and faculty when they came together in a coordinated campaign to oversee free and fair elections in the broader community. We want to continue this incredible opportunity. We ask that, for the upcoming 2018 Election, Northwestern Law:

1. Cancels all classes on Election Day
2. Supports voter registration efforts
3. Actively encourages students and faculty to volunteer on Election Day
4. Educates students on the importance of civic engagement and participation

We believe it is critical for everybody in the legal profession to participate in civic engagement opportunities. Northwestern Law can ensure that students have the opportunity to volunteer on Election Day.

The Day of Civic Service is a tremendously important Northwestern Law initiative—for students, and for the wider Chicagoland community—and a firm commitment from the Administration for 2018's elections will cement its continued success through 2020 and beyond.

APPENDIX: DOCUMENT C

To: Faculty

From: Associate Dean

Date:

Re: Proposal to Cancel Classes on Election Day to Encourage Students to Become Election Officials for the Day

Introduction

At the next faculty meeting, I will seek faculty approval of a proposal to cancel classes on the day of a federal general election (the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of an even-numbered year), in order to encourage students to serve as election officials for the day.

Background:

There are few ways in which private citizens, including law students, may become fully-vested public officials for a day. We serve as public officials in an exceedingly limited capacity when we vote (particularly on ballot initiatives), or when we serve on a jury. Some serve as public officials (with exceedingly tight constraints on discretion) when they work to collect information for the Census. And some serve as public officials when they act as election officials, assisting the county registrar by serving as workers at the polls.

Service as an election official represents a rare opportunity for a law student. Those who serve as election officials on Election Day must undertake specific training offered by the county on the laws and regulations governing the election process, and must apply those laws and regulations to citizens arriving at the polls. Poll workers are subject to the ultimate supervision of county registrars, and may be subject to the instructions of a senior poll worker at the polling place itself, but these are not otherwise positions of limited or interim authority: each poll worker is vested with the power to apply the law in a wide variety of circumstances, and their decisions with respect to individual voters are often unreviewable as a practical matter. There are few ways for students to gain practical experience in the interpretation and application of overlapping federal and local regulations quite as efficiently, with several hours of training followed by one day of service. (Some of the training is online, and some is in-person, but the registrars all offer many different in-person options, with both timing and location flexibility. Our county needs thousands of pollworkers for each election -- so they have to provide a great deal of flexibility. There are enough training options that the need to attend one training session should not interfere with class or other student commitments.)

When law students serve as poll workers, they also fill a substantial community need. County registrars are responsible for recruiting, hiring, training, and deploying poll workers, and they are always in need of reliable assistance; legal training is an immense bonus in this regard. And poll workers with the ability to understand and speak languages other than English are in particular demand. Given the capacity and diversity of our student body, our students would be exceedingly valuable recruits, contributing to the valid exercise of the franchise by eligible voters across the region, particularly in underserved communities. The registrars of several

counties in the area have already indicated an intense interest in deploying any poll workers that we could offer, and I am confident that registrars in other surrounding counties would be similarly eager. I am also confident that the registrars would assist in noting our participation in a service effort of this scale, providing significant positive publicity.

The county generally pays a modest stipend for individuals who serve as poll workers. The pro bono committee has determined that students who decide to serve as poll workers and who either 1) do not accept the stipend, or 2) donate their stipend to any 501c3 nonpartisan nonprofit organization, would be eligible to log the training and service time in partial satisfaction of their pro bono commitment.

Service as a poll worker on Election Day begins quite early in the morning and extends to quite late in the evening: a 16-hour shift is not uncommon. A student could not both serve as a poll worker and also attend class on Election Day.

The Office of the Registrar and the Office of Student Affairs have indicated that they would be able to handle a cancellation of class on Election Day 2018 — Tuesday, November 6, 2018 — without substantial disruption to the class or exam schedule, simply by shifting the start of exams one day forward. While I do not propose to require service as a poll worker on Election Day, such service would be heavily encouraged.

Proposal:

This proposal asks to cancel classes on the day of the federal general election, the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of an even-numbered year. Students would be heavily encouraged to serve as poll workers on that Tuesday, taking advantage of the unique opportunity for legal training that service as an election official entails.

APPENDIX: DOCUMENT D

LAW SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN ELECTION ENGAGEMENT

1. Chicago-Kent College of Law – Illinois Institute of Technology
2. Fordham University School of Law
3. Harvard Law School
4. Loyola Law School, Los Angeles
5. Northwestern Pritzker School of Law – Northwestern University
6. University of Nebraska College of Law
7. University of Pennsylvania Law School
8. University of South Carolina School of Law

APPENDIX: DOCUMENT E

ARTICLES AND OP-EDS

- [Law Schools Cancel Classes for Election Day](#)
- [Nebraska law duo raises bar for civic activism on Election Day](#)
- [Fighting for Democracy in Law School: Q&A With Beau Tremiere](#)
- [Democracy on the Ground Floor: Law Schools Lend a Hand on Election Day](#)

APPENDIX: DOCUMENT F

NATIONAL VOTING AND ELECTIONS ORGANIZATIONS

Below is a list of national organizations committed to fair elections and voter protection. It is likely they have a local chapter that would be interested in supporting your work.

1. [ACLU](#)
2. [All Voting is Local](#)
3. [American Constitution Society](#)
4. [Common Cause](#)
5. [Election Protection](#)
6. [Fair Elections Center](#)
7. [HeadCount](#)
8. [NAACP](#)
9. [Rock the Vote](#)