



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

LAUREN SHINHOLSTER | MERCER UNIVERSITY

PATHWAYS TO THE POLLS: FACULTY AND STAFF ROLES IN ADVANCING STUDENT VOTER ENGAGEMENT

ABSTRACT:

Faculty and staff are essential partners in ensuring that student voters are informed, empowered, and equipped to participate in civic life. This poster provides specific examples for how faculty and staff can support student voters through campus-based, curricular and co-curricular initiatives. Designed to advance full student voter participation, examples will include strategies for embedding voter engagement into courses, service-learning programs, and signature campus events.

THEMATIC FOCUS:

Blockage and Clearance: Physical, infrastructural, financial, or organizational barriers or portals to community engagement.

Convergence and Intersections: How increasing or decreasing hyperconnectivity can impact community engagement.

Floods and Droughts: Too much of one thing, not enough of another. How complimentary partnership can fill the gaps.

Gauging the Waters: Using research and assessment to course correct or gain deeper insight.

BIO:

Lauren Shinholster is the Associate Director of Engaged Learning at Mercer University. Since joining Mercer in 2017, Lauren has worked to connect academics and student life through civic engagement and student mentorship. As a former community educator for the Safe Routes to School program at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, Lauren brings a public health and equity lens to fostering collaborations that strengthen both student learning and community well-being. Lauren was the recipient of the Gulf-South Summit's 2025 Award for Outstanding Practitioner Contributions to Service-Learning in Higher Education.