COUNCIL OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGES JOINS “ELECTION IMPERATIVES” INITIATIVE

(WASHINGTON, DC) In view of the upcoming midterm elections, the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) announced its endorsement of the “Election Imperatives” initiative, ten research-driven recommendations for colleges and universities to increase students’ engagement in voting, strengthen knowledge of American government, and encourage informed participation in democracy. The initiative was developed by the Institute for Democracy in Higher Education of Tufts University’s Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life with several organizational partners.

The initiative is an outgrowth of IDHE’s analysis of voting data on more than 10 million students in over 1,100 participating colleges and universities. CIC’s endorsement underscores the critical importance of responsible and informed civic participation as voters. The low 2014 midterm turnout of only 12 percent for first-time voters ages 18-21 gives special importance to this initiative.

CIC hopes that campus leaders will use the resources that IDHE has provided in the “Election Imperatives” initiative, including a toolkit, to encourage students to vote. The ten recommendations by Election Imperatives include recommendations for campus activities, and the resources of IDHE.

“The recommendations in Election Imperatives are well-suited to the small to mid-sized liberal arts colleges,” CIC President Richard Ekman said. “CIC’s endorsement of this project continues a long tradition of leadership that focuses on increasing students’ civic engagement.”
In 2016, CIC supported Dominican University of California and others to host a convening of 150 college students from across the U.S. in the nonpartisan College Debate 2016. The students identified issues that mattered most to millennial voters and created questions to be asked of the presidential candidates during the fall debates. The project’s social media outreach engaged an audience of 1.8 million.

Earlier, in 1999 CIC was involved in founding Project Pericles, the creation of entrepreneur Eugene Lang, to prepare students for participation in a pluralistic society in which citizenship, social responsibility, and community are inseparable.

Even earlier, in 1996 as a member of the Washington Higher Education Secretariat, CIC also worked with the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities to help launch the “Your Vote, Your Voice” voter registration project.