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## CD16 study featured at international conference

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College Debate 2016, Dominican University of California's national initiative to galvanize college students through civic engagement, was presented at an international academic conference June 16-17.

A paper by Dr. Hanna Rodriguez-Farrar, senior adviser for strategy and planning, and Dr. Gigi Gokcek, associate professor of Political Science, outlining Dominican's work creating [College Debate 2016](#) was accepted for presentation at the Youth Political Participation Conference at Canada's McGill University. The conference was organized by the Center for the Study of Democratic Citizenship.

The June 16-17 academic conference brought together international experts on political participation, socialization, and civic education to discuss the state of the field, recent research findings, and to explore future avenues of research. The conference showcased research from different national contexts and offer a comparative perspective on the contemporary challenges of youth political engagement in western democracies.

This first-of-its-kind initiative, College Debate 2016 was created by Dominican to provide college students from throughout the United States a platform to discuss and debate the complex issues facing our country. Dominican is a Voter Education Partner for the [Commission on Presidential Debates](#).

Students from colleges and universities throughout the United States have been selected as College Debate 2016 delegates. These delegates are leading a national conversation around the key issues that resonate with younger voters.

On June 1-2, more than 130 delegates [attended a planning and training session](#) on the Dominican campus in San Rafael, California, to organize issue-focused events and outreach on their home campuses. The programming focused on promoting civil discourse, understanding responsible digital citizenry, and avoiding stereotypes and assumptions while focusing on the issues rather than party politics.

Throughout the summer, the delegates will advance political conversation on a variety of issues using social media. When they return to their campuses for the fall semester, they will organize on-campus events and outreach.

The students will initiate discussion on the issues they feel most passionate about, says Rodriguez-Farrar.

"We are providing a forum for young people to talk about issues, think about policies, become informed, and learn from their peers," she adds. "These are all activities likely to increase voting in the 2016 presidential election."

In September, student delegates will attend a moderated town hall meeting at Dominican. The event will be live-streamed to campuses across the country. During the town hall, the students will agree on the key issues – and very specific questions – for the presidential candidates to address. These questions will be presented to the moderators of the 2016 presidential debates.

*June 9, 2016*