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The Democratic Literacy Oral History Project

The Democratic Literacy Oral History Project (DLOHP) is an undergraduate research project that will have students using narrative research methods and public writing genres to document and analyze the rhetorical history of the 2024 Election. Students will be participating in this project through their enrollment in a newly approved CE course in the Department of Writing and Cultural Studies - ENG 204: Public Writing: Rhetoric, Citizenship, and Community Engagement.

ENG 204 is an undergraduate, experiential community-based research course where students will work with voter education organizations such as The League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region by using oral history as a method of documenting the 2024 Election. In a very real way, students will be documenting and archiving the primary source materials future researchers will be able to use. Additionally, they will analyze these oral histories and produce a digital narrative project in the form of a podcast that will serve as a primer for students who will be learning about the democratic imperative built into their education. In short, students need to hear from one another what elections are, why they are important, and who makes them happen.

This research project asks undergraduates to consider the following research question: how does the rhetoric and language of democracy construct our identities as citizens? What conflicts emerge between our values as citizens, as college students, and as members of the workforce.