



### **Background/Setting**

Feather River is a remote, rural community college in Plumas County, California, in the northern Sierra Nevada mountains. The student demographic is diverse, and many students are from other counties or states. The campus's younger student body demographic means that many students turn 18 during their two years at Feather River College, and become eligible voters. Voter registration, however, is low amongst students, reflecting national and state figures on younger voters or potential voters.

While the student demographics present a challenge when it comes to voter registration, the campus environment presents many opportunities for promoting civic engagement, which will at least lead to increases in voter registration and turnout, and at best, highlight and extol the importance of democratic participation. One way that this already occurs is in the classroom. Many courses, from Political Science, History, and English, expose students to the American political system and to conversations about the important of participation in this democracy. Campus activities and events at FRC are successful because of the collaboration and coordination that occurs across departments and offices. With its history of promoting civic engagement, the lead faculty in Political Science is prepared to manage the ALL IN Challenge, and will work closely with the Phi Theta Kappa honors society (as she also serves as this group's advisor), and will coordinate closely with the Office of Student Life and Engagement, the Student Success and Support Programs (SSSP), and other faculty to organize activities and events around the promotion of civic engagement.

### **Goals**

The goal of this project is to educate students for citizenship (which aligns to campus-wide learning outcomes), promote civic participation, and enhance student connections with community.

Supporting opportunities for civic engagement will be an important step towards achieving these goals. Registering voters will be part of these efforts.

Voter education efforts will be undertaken.

Events and activities will reinforce the spirit and meaning of US democracy.

### **2016-2017 Action Plan**

Improve student voter participation through voter registration and voter education.

## **FALL 2016**

**October – November 7** (registration deadline in California October 24; other states will be different)

- Participate in Institute for Democracy & Higher Education's National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE). (Joined 10/4/16)
- Participate in ALL IN Campus and Democracy Challenge (joined 10/4/16)

### **Voter Registration**

- Early October: Train students to register voters using the tablets and paper registration to get the project started.
- Order "Register to Vote Here" vinyl sign for all registration events
- Use tools, such as the tablets, to increase registration rates, particularly among students from other California counties and from other states.
- October 10-15: Campus Spirit Week: Work with SSSP and Student Life events to make voter-registration opportunities visible at the week's events and activities. This will co-sponsoring the "Green and Gold" lunch where visible voter registration efforts will occur.
- Work with local high school government teacher to register eligible voters at high school.
- October (ongoing): Use the campus FRC Application (on mobile devices), to send out voter registration links and reminders.
- October (ongoing): conduct voter registration drive at athletic events.
- October 10, 17, 24: Use all-student email list to send voter registration links and reminders of registration deadlines.
- All who register to vote will receive a t-shirt.

### **Voter Education**

- Design and order "I Vote" t-shirts.
- All events and activities will be posted on the FRC events calendar, and the FRC App will be used to send out links to students about where they can find more information about registration, the issues, voting, etc.
  - CA Registrar of Voters: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/>
  - Online Registration: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/>
  - Voter Guide: <http://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/>
  - Easy Voter Guide: <http://www.easyvoterguide.org/>
  - League of Women Voters (local contacts and meeting times)
  - SmartVoter: <http://www.votersedge.org/ca/page/smartvoter>
  - Project Vote Smart: <http://votesmart.org/>
  - Plumas County Elections  
<http://www.countyofplumas.com/index.aspx?NID=142>

- October 4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup>: Use FRC application to remind students about the vice-presidential debate, and the final two presidential debates.
- Work with POL 101 students and Student Life and Engagement Office in organizing election party.
- Coordinate with ENG 120 Speech class on debate organization; assist with marketing material for the event.
- Work with POL 101 student election projects. These include producing videos of what is important to college voters, survey data compilation on student political ideologies and voting preferences, compilation and presentation of information about ballot propositions and measures, etc. Post appropriate and useful student videos on FRC website.
  - o This will include a campus-wide “mock election” prior to Election Day.
  - o Distribute student work on propositions and local measures as educational information about the issues is

### **November 8**

- Election night party in the student lounge with food and community. All who attend will receive a t-shirt.
- Voting day encouragement: Plumas County has a “Vote by mail” system only. If students plan to vote on Election Day, they will need to drop their ballot off at the County Election site. We will be working with the County Elections office to see if we can get a drop off box on campus. If not, we will offer rides to students to go to town and drop off their ballot.

### **November 9**

- Thank you for voting text and email will be sent out to campus.

### **SPRING 2017**

- Voter registration efforts will be ongoing during the spring.
- Visit county Superior Court and meet with judges. Students will learn about court system, importance of jury duty, including grand jury service.

Campus field trip to California state capital. Most students have never seen the capital in Sacramento, let alone the capital in any state. The trip will be available to all interested students who sign up in advance. Local representatives and their staffs will be contacted in advance to arrange for a meeting. A group tour of the capital and grounds will be organized. Meals provided.

These field trips will also make government more “real” to the students, and help them feel more confident and informed in their participation.

- Determine future engagement goals based on NSLVE data.