University of Southern Indiana
Voter Registration Action Plan
Fall 2016

Introduction

The University of Southern Indiana's mission states that it is an engaged learning community advancing education and knowledge, enhancing civic and cultural awareness, and fostering partnerships through comprehensive outreach programs. USI prepares individuals to live wisely in a diverse and global community.

USI's 2016 voter registration project came to fruition after students, faculty and staff all expressed interest to raise the awareness of the right to vote and the importance of civic involvement. The campaign is titled *Squawk the Vote* and includes the University's mascot, Archie, in an effort to relate to the students.

Goals
Squawk the Vote is more than a campaign to register voters – it is a campaign to engage students in civic involvement. This includes registering to vote, gaining access to ballots through absentee registration, early voting and day-of in-person voting. Providing educational materials, faculty-led discussions and bringing guest speakers to campus are key to the success of the program.

The University of Southern Indiana has the goal of registering 1,000 students to be voters or request absentee ballots. This goal will be measured with the use of log sheets. Students are asked to sign in with their name and email address and indicate if they are registering to vote and/or in need of an absentee ballot. Those who register are given a registration form to complete and submit. Those who need an absentee ballot will receive an email with information for their respective state.

This Action Plan is representative of the combined work of students, faculty and staff to not only register voters, but assist them with election education and encouraging them to vote.

Squawk the Vote Project Outline

Committee
Members of the *Squawk the Vote* committee are from all areas of the University community. Students, faculty and staff are represented on the committee and serve in volunteer and leadership roles for the project's completion.
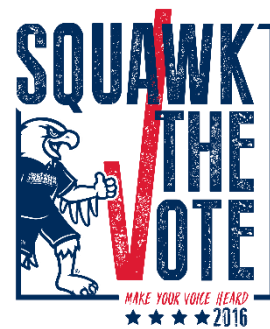
Members:
  Laurie Berry, Assistant Dean of Students, Office of the Dean of Students
  Caylin Blockley, Assistant Director of Alumni and Volunteer Services, University Relations

Cindy Brinker, Vice President for Government and University Relations, Government Relations
Travis Dickinson*, President, Master of Public Administration Society
Dr. Trent Engbers, Assistant Professor of Political Science, College of Liberal Arts
John Farless, Director of University Communications, University Communications
Dr. Jason Fertig, Associate Professor of Management, Romain College of Business
Alexis Giannini*, Student Worker, University Relations
Sally Gries, Director of University and Community Relations, University Relations
Dr. Matthew Hanka, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Director of Master of Public
         Administration Program, College of Liberal Arts
Stephanie Hawes, Marketing and University Relations Supervisor, University Relations
Karen Huseman, Assistant Director, Housing and Residence Life
Janet Johnson, Director of Alumni and Volunteer Services, University Relations
Daniel McMurtry*, President, College Republicans
Angie O'Nan, Writer, USI Today
Amy Price, Director, Housing and Residence Life
Andrew Ramsey*, Assistant Vice President Government Relations, Student Government
         Association
Teddi Rausch*, President, College Democrats
CJ Regin, Director of Special Events, University Relations
Kate Sherrill, Assistant Librarian, David L. Rice Library
Kindra Strupp, Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications, University Relations
Dr. Chad Tew, Associate Professor of Online Journalism, College of Liberal Arts
Jennifer Wittstock, Assistant Director of Student Development, Student Development Programs
Ashley Wright*, President, Student Government Association

*Student representative

Theme and Logo
As previously mentioned, the campaign is titled *Squawk the Vote* and includes the University's mascot, Archie, in an effort to relate to the students. The square image
will be provided to students in the form of a sticker after they
register.

Promotional and Educational Materials
Information for *Squawk the Vote*, as well as other voter resources, are available on USI's website at www.usi.edu/vote. When registering to vote or requesting an absentee ballot, students will receive the educational material on the following page in an effort to have informed voters.

The *Squawk the Vote* poster will be utilized to promote voter registration throughout campus. Digital images will be used on social media and on the closed-circuit televisions on campus.

USI's mascot, Archie, will promote *Squawk the Vote* by attending events and through social media. A large decal of the poster is placed on a window of the University Center. The "V" in vote on the decal will track the progress for the number of students registered to vote. For every 100 voters a decal will be added to the "V" with a goal of registering 1,000 voters.

Educational Materials for Voters

Promotional Posters

Volunteer Engagement Community Partners

Members of the *Squawk the Vote* committee have volunteered to serve in this capacity and to enlist others to participate when appropriate. Additional faculty participating in the *Squawk the Vote* efforts are serving on a subcommittee for the Presidential Debate Viewing Party and the General Election Day Viewing Party. This faculty includes Dr. Melinda Roberts, Criminal Justice; Dr. Wendy Turner-Frey, Social Work; Dr. Timberly Baker, Teacher Education; and Phil Orr, David L. Rice Library.

Community partners include Samantha Buente with Indiana Competes who will offer training for volunteers who will be registering voters. Members of the Southwest Indiana League of Women's Voters are volunteering at several events to register voters.

Members of the campus and local community will collaborate to host one of three Gubernatorial Debates for the State of Indiana on the USI campus. This event ticketed will be open to students, faculty and staff, and the public. The debate will take place in the University's Performance Center.

By the Numbers

The University of Southern Indiana has a total enrollment of 10,693 for the fall 2016 semester. The majority of students at USI come from the state of Indiana with 89 of 92 counties represented. Out of state enrollment, including international students, is 1,437 students. Students come from 36 other states and 74 countries. Minority and international students make up just over 13 percent of the student population. Full-time students continue to be the majority at 80 percent. A total of 2,565 students have opted to live on campus, and housing is near capacity at more than 98 percent.

The National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) USI Campus Report indicates that 73.4 percent of USI students were registered to vote for the 2012 Presidential Election, but that only 44 percent actually went to the polls. Enrollment at that time was 10,289. Of those who voted, 67.7 percent were graduate students and most voted in-person on election day (60 percent). Twenty-seven percent voted by absentee ballot. Overall, USI's participation rate for the 2012 Presidential Election was comparable to other institutions in the same Carnegie classification (46.9 percent).

Calendar of Events – Timeline (including committee meetings)

Date	Event	Location	Time
06/29/16	Planning meeting	WA100	8:30 a.m.
07/06/16	Student meeting	WA100	1 p.m.
07/13/16	Planning meeting	Carter Hall A & B	10 a.m.
08/09/16	Planning meeting	UC2217-2218	2:30 p.m.
08/18/16	Fall Move-In - Voter Registration	PAC	9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
08/30/16	Planning meeting	UC2217-2218	noon
08/31/16	Student Involvement Fair - Voter Registration	Quad	2-6 p.m.
09/07/16	Volunteer Fair - Volunteer Registration	Carter Hall	
09/16/16	Planning meeting	Traditions Lounge	1 p.m.
09/19/16	Constitution Day	Rice Plaza	11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
09/19/16	Voter Registration Volunteer Training	RL 0017	3-4 p.m.
09/20/16	Voter Registration Blitz Kick Off Day	Outside UC	11 a.m. – 6 p.m.
09/20/16	MPA Speaker Series - James Hitchcock	UC 2207	5 p.m.
09/21/16	Voter Registration Blitz	BE, HP, UC	11 a.m. – 1 p.m., 4 - 6 p.m.
09/22/16	Voter Registration Blitz	BE, HP, UC	11 a.m. – 1 p.m., 4 - 6 p.m.
09/26/16	National Debate - Presidential - Public Viewing	Carter Hall	7 - 10 p.m.
09/28/16	Wellness Fair - Voter Registration	Carter Hall	8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
10/20/16	Indiana Secretary of State Connie Lawson visit and presentation: INBiz Presentation	Traditions Lounge	1-2 p.m.
10/25/16	Gubernatorial Debate – Live on-campus; televised state-wide	Performance Center	7 p.m.
11/08/16	Election Day Coverage - Public Viewing	Carter Hall	6 p.m.

The *Squawk the Vote* **Committee meetings** are held as needed to plan the various events for the project.

Students new to the University of Southern Indiana participate in **Move-in** activities in late August. The majority of these students have recently become eligible to vote in the United States due to age. Voter registration takes place as part of the activities during this event.

The office of Student Development hosts the **Student Involvement Fair** each fall at the beginning of the semester. This outdoor event provides students exposure to various groups and activities that take place

on campus. *Squawk the Vote* used this opportunity to register students to vote and request absentee ballot information.

Volunteer involvement is important at the University of Southern Indiana for not only on-campus organizations, but also community organizations. The **Volunteer Fair** invited campus and community organizations to offer information about volunteer opportunities. The *Squawk the Vote* project relies on volunteers to register voters. Volunteers were solicited at the Volunteer Fair, and students were asked to register to vote or request an absentee ballot.

The University celebrates **Constitution Day** annually with a public reading of the United States Constitution. Participants include the University President, students, faculty and staff from across the University.

Designated times were set for **Voter Registration** in high-traffic areas of campus. The kick-off event is to include the University mascot, Archie, and his 20-foot blow-up counterpart and ice cream for those who register. At every event where there is voter registration, voter education materials will be distributed as well as *Squawk the Vote* stickers.

The **Master of Public Administration Society Speaker Series** will feature James Hitchcock, an Evansville native who is the assistant editor at RealClearPolitics in Washington D.C.

Faculty are collaborating to host the **Presidential Debate Viewing Party** where they will lead discussion on civil discourse and view the debate.

Voter registration will be available at the **Wellness Fair**, an event organized by Human Resources for faculty, staff and students.

The **Indiana Secretary of State, Connie Lawson**, is scheduled to visit campus to discuss with students the role her office plays in elections and preparing for elections.

The University of Southern Indiana has been chosen as the state's southern location for a G**ubernatorial Debate.** This is the first time the University has hosted this event. And, it is the first time this event has been held in Evansville. The University was asked to host this event by the Indiana Debate Commission and is working with the Evansville Courier and Press, WFIE Channel 14, and WNIN, the public radio station. USI students will provide assistance for the event. The University will host this event in late October, and will welcome the University community and the public to attend.

Contact information

For more information regarding *Squawk the Vote*, contact
Sally Gries, Director of University and Community Relations
University of Southern Indiana
8600 University Boulevard
Evansville, IN 47712
812-465-7050
sagries2@usi.edu