



Civic Engagement Action Plan 2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Civic Engagement is being examined on modern college campuses, Black Hills State University in Spearfish, SD is taking action to combat new and young voter ignorance by inspiring the student population to become registered, educated, and engaged members of their community. Getting young people civically involved continues to be a challenge in recent elections; this lack of engagement is something that has plagued both presidential and midterm elections for some time, this shows that it may not be a generational issue, but rather how the low youth engagement is tackled could make all the difference. There are many groups around the country including hundreds of colleges and universities that have stepped up and taken on this problem, fearlessly trying new ideas to increase the rate at which students actively participate in and contribute to the community they utilize. Black Hills State University is a campus full of passionate leaders and energetic students that have potential to be highly engaged with their community and democracy. The functionality of a democracy depends on the participation of the people, and we must do all that we can to encourage and facilitate involvement. Between Move-In Day and Election Day, each and every student will have been encouraged to and presented with opportunities to register to vote. Every student will know their polling place, how to vote absentee, how to early vote, and have access to information about the candidates and issues that they will be voting on.

We, the Black Hills State University Student Senate is excited to take on this Civic Engagement Challenge as we enter the 2018 midterm elections. Below we have outlined a timeline of what we would like to accomplish this year. The poster series outline and the timeline are ideas that we would like to happen, but of course they may not happen exactly as written. We will work to ensure that the basics of this Civic Engagement Initiative are met and that every BHSU student has the opportunity to become an informed voter this November.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COALITION MEMBERS

Dr. Pam Carriveau, Vice Provost and Political Science Professor
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Dr. Chris Crawford, Provost

Dr. Jane Klug, Dean of Students

Erika Whitaker, Student Union & Engagement Assistant Director
Student Senate

Hannah Neumiller, Wyatt Osthus, Josh Vaith, Jackie Robles

Student Organizations (in alphabetical order)

Buzz Arcade

Buzz Marketing

Campus Ventures

Cheerleading

Circle K

College Democrats

College Republicans

Concert Choir

Council for Exceptional Children

Enactus

English Club

Honors Club

Jacket Pack

KBHU Radio

KBHU-TV

Newman Club

Presidential Student Ambassadors

Public Relations Club

SDEA

Students for Life

Swarm Days

Talking Hands

Theatre Society

Thompson Diversion Program

University Ambassadors

ACTION PLAN

Poster/Video Series

Below is a rough outline of posters that we will design, print, and distribute throughout campus between the beginning of school and November. This poster series will be in conjunction with a video series that will be able to go into more detailed explanations of topics than we can effectively put on a poster.

1. Basic Information/Voter Registration- there's an election this year, register and pay attention the next few months
2. State Senate Candidates: Bob Ewing and Sherry Bea Smith
3. State House Candidates: Timothy Johns, Charles Turbiville, Wyatt Osthus, Naveen Malik
4. National House Candidates: Dusty Johnson and Tim Bjorkman
5. SD Gubernatorial: Kristi Noem and Billy Sutton
6. Other ballot initiatives (state and local)
7. Absentee ballot information, how to request, where to vote, how to get transportation if we have a busing system set up
8. After election, inform students of the outcome of the election, both candidates elected and if issues passed or failed

Survey

BHSU has been tracking the NSLVE data for the past few elections, but we are curious to the deeper questions of why students do or do not vote, if they feel like they are informed voters, and other issues looking into why BHSU students are not extremely active in their democracy. This would ideally be a short survey that could be handed out and collected in classes (with the approval of the professor), during tabling events, and at student organization meetings.

Timeline of Events

July

- Reach out to the County Commissioner about hosting a polling booth on campus
- Send an initial email to administrators, faculty, and staff that may be interested in serving on the BHSU Civic Engagement Committee
- Inquire about having a voter registration as a part of freshmen orientation or SWARM Days
- Look into becoming involved with Michelle Obama's When We All Vote movement
- Either end of July or beginning of August we should contact coaches to see if they are on board with encouraging/requiring their athletes to register to vote/participate in our events/vote.
- Make a proposal to admin to make videos/posters about voting with recognizable faces around campus (profs, Pres. Jackson, athletes, student leaders, RAs)

August

- Collaborate with Marketing/Graphic Design to design a final Master Plan
- Assemble the BHSU Civic Engagement Committee and get approval of Master Plan
- Submit Master Plan to the All In Challenge
- Have poster #1 completed and hung up by the first week
- Print voter registrations for the Senate table at the Campus Fair 8/19.

- Register with the National Voter Registration Day Organization (it's 9/25)
- Contact the county election office on the best way to complete a voter registration drive and when those collected need to be submitted by-(10/22)
- If hosting a polling booth on campus was approved or is a possibility, work to make that a reality. If not, inquire about the best way to have a transportation system to the poll (Campus Cab, Prairie Hills Transit, a BHSU van with student drivers?)
- Contact offices of candidates with interest in hosting debates on campus, ask for available dates (Noem, Sutton, Turbiville, Johns, Osthus, Malik, Ewing, Smith)

September

- Continue to design and distribute new posters, ideally every two weeks
- Look into including information on the survey into the Homecoming Court voting table
- Finalize plans for National Voter Registration Day, where tables will be, who's running them, print registrations, have information about absentee/mail in voting
- National Voter Registration Day is September 25th. Since this is during Swarm (homecoming) week we will be tabling to register new voters at the events on this day
- We will also be tabling at events and in the Student Union throughout this week
- Schedule a Trivia Night to be all about American Government

October

- Acquire and share sample ballots for state general elections (SD, WY, CO as majority of our students are from these areas), and District 31
- Any speakers/debates that we have on campus will take place sometime on the dates October 10-12th or 15-19th. We will be working to effectively and efficiently advertise this to the campus and Spearfish communities.
- Finalize either the polling booth on campus or transportation to the poll
- Contact professors about voting day and suggest/ask that they make voting a part of class or give the day off for students to vote
- Last day to register in South Dakota is Oct. 22

November

- Hang up the poster about election day, polls, transportation
- American Government Trivia night on 11/5
- Election Day is Nov. 6th, Election watch party event in dorm lobby
- Hang up a poster to inform students of election results