Castleton University 2022 Democratic Engagement Action Plan
Developed by: Rich Clark

Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Castleton University in Vermont for the 2022 election. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout in the 2022 midterm election. The goals for Castleton University for the 2022 election is to exceed the voter turnout level among students that we found in the 2018 mid-term election (35% of VEP).

Leadership:

Our leadership team includes the following:
- Rich Clark, Professor of Political Science, 802-468-1306, rich.clark@castleton.edu
- Matt Patry, Interim Dean of Students, 802-468-6085, matthew.patry@castleton.edu
- Perry Ragouzis, President of Castleton University Student Government Association
- Kayon Morgan, President of the Castleton University Student Chapter of the NAACP, 916-260-7780, ktm10260@csc.vsc.edu
- Maisie Wood, Castleton League of Women's Voters, 802-273-3124, Britbiscuit@comcast.net

Commitment:

Castleton University has been a signatory to the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation since 2022.

The University is currently in a state of transition, but it remains solidly committed to promoting civic engagement among the student body. CU President Parwinder Grewal has listed Community Engagement as a priority moving forward during the transition from Castleton University to Vermont State University.

Landscape:

Castleton University is a public 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2020.

Our campus demographic and voting data:

Castleton University is a rural, state college that has 2,211 students, 65 percent of whom are Vermont residents.

Castleton's undergraduate population is primarily traditional college age, with the average student age of 21.

Twenty-four percent of Castleton students reside in on-campus housing.

About 82 percent of Castleton students identify as white, non-Hispanic.

Castleton University has authorized NSLVE.

Our institution had a 2020 campus voting rate of 67.2%.
Our institution had a 2020 voter registration rate of 83%.

Our institution had a 2018 voter turnout rate of 35%.
Our institution had a 2018 voter registration rate of 72.7%.

Our institution has been recognized by ALL IN with the following seals: 2020 Silver

Goals:

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:

Increase student voter turnout rate to 40% in 2022 and 70% in 2024.
Increase student voter registration rate to 80% by 2024.

Strategy:

Castleton University will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation.

Currently, a student-led petition, initiated by the Castleton University Student Chapter of the NAACP, has been circulating to ask the administration to make election day a voter holiday by cancelling classes and mandatory activities.

Members of the University/Town Bridge Committee have volunteered to drive students to the polls for early voting.

The University's Content Lab, a student organization for graphic design and promotional work, is developing a social media campaign titled, "Why Spartans Vote" to encourage students to vote using peer-to-peer outreach.

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

After each national election, the actors involved in Castleton's Voting Engagement efforts meet to de-brief on strategy in advance of the NSLVE data. At that point we are also reviewing output data on the number of events, number and type of student contacts, and number of presentations.

When the NSLVE data are received, they are shared broadly with the administration and all interested parties to assess our outcomes.

Reporting:

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/castleton-university/.

Additionally, the campus Engagement Leadership shares the data through presentations to staff, faculty, and students.