



ALL IN Challenge Action Plan 2023-2024

Delta State University's Plan to Increase Civic Learning, Political Engagement and Voting Rates

Executive Summary

Delta State University is a public institution providing an all-inclusive learning experience to approximately 3,500 students that are enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs. Knowing that the origin of the institution began with the fundamentals of a teacher's college, the University continues its success in teacher education while embracing the expansion of other traditional and unique fields of study. From the core disciplines such as arts, humanities, and sciences, to unique programs such as Commercial Aviation, Nursing, the Delta Music Institute, and the nationally recognized Geospatial Information Technology program, the University is committed to meeting the evolving needs of the students it serves.

Continuing this fall, this nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan will build upon our mission for the 2022-2023 school year. We will continue to focus on local and primary elections by using campus and social matters as examples to exercise and form voting habits. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout on the upcoming voting dates. The goals for Delta State University for elections are to help our students understand democracy on an applicable level and create healthy voting habits while utilizing the creativity of the traditional and unique fields of study.

The overall purpose of our plan is to continue the initial mission of Delta State University. Taking into consideration the teacher's college aspect, our efforts will model the education system as well as the unique core values of other fields of study that we have progressed into, in order to get our message across. We plan to educate, prepare, organize, cross collaborate and implement strategies that will get our students into the habit of voting campus wide and locally so that we can increase the turnout for all Election Days to come.

The plan will be implemented in four phases:

- First, we will focus on reiteration. In this phase— much like the launch — we will simply plant the image and idea around campus so that it becomes familiar.
- The second phase requires us to meet the students where they are. We will observe and collect data on their perception of politics. In this phase we find our “why” so that we can know how to approach the next stage. We have found great engagement with our On the Spot at Delta State sessions.
- In phase three, we will provide educational tools – in regard to important dates and more— in good company with simulated and realistic campus voting scenarios to help them understand the power of their vote.
- Lastly, the implementation phase will consist of getting them prepared to vote and getting them out to assist in the community. This stage requires action. It requires them to trust their voice and

to follow through with their opinions that they have formed from the information they were presented with. We will learn from these four steps and repeat them for the following year(s). The focus is to create awareness and help form healthy voting habits.

The Landscape of Delta State University

Delta State University is a public 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2022.

Delta State University prides itself on giving special attention to small classes, a friendly environment, and a broad liberal arts foundation. The University encourages student-faculty interactions in order to help shape and mold the next generations to come. With programs and services that promote intellectual, cultural, ethical, physical, and social development, students are able to expand their horizons and form their own opinions of the world.

This would be considered a primary asset to help advance the civic engagement on campus. Students from different cultural, socioeconomic, and ethnic backgrounds will be able to interact with each other and develop the ability to respect and value their peers' point of view. They will also be able to develop, assess, and express their own thoughts effectively by being able to analyze different perspectives. Nonetheless, they will be able to use the techniques of research and performance associated with their traditional and unique disciplines.

Another asset that Delta State University has in its collection is the growing ethnic diversity that is present. Although the institution is considered a PWI, Caucasian students have accounted for 50-60% of the student body from 2011-2023, while other ethnic races and multicultural students account for the remainder 40-50% — with African Americans accounting for 30-40% of that populace within that timeframe. Currently, people of color average around 47.1% of the undergraduate level for 2023, while 56.5% make up the 2023 graduate level people of color student body.

We feel that to create a world where decisions benefit everyone, we must know what everyone needs. Our newly formed student organization will be in the classrooms with the help of the social sciences department to obtain opinions of what is needed. We strive to help students understand real world views and understand that their voices are heard.

Presently, we are assessing our initiatives introduced in the last two years. Our action plan's foundation was strong and will continue to help us document data to further evaluate.

Campus and Community Coalition

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Strategies for Action

Delta State University has implemented these strategies on an introductory scale to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation through: Voter Registration tables, educational entertainment opportunities that helps students develop their “why” when choosing to vote, informational opportunities to help them form an opinion, and surveys to monitor voter interest, engagement, and follow-through. Specialized social media engagement and informational booths will also be present for National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week and Vote Early Day. The ALL IN Campus Democracy at Delta State Student Organization has implemented a social media campaign titled “On the Spot at Delta State,” that allows them to use the pop-up method to gage their peers understanding of government policies and voting. This activity is presented at random times of the day and throughout the year to help engage the students in a safe space with familiar faces. In our efforts to gage their opinions and teach them why their civic duty is important, we understand who they are and what they value in the process. With this information, we can positively alter our strategies to appeal to them.

Success Goals:

- Short-term
 - Collect data that provides a representation of our student interest pertaining to voting.
 - Student voter demographic of at least 30% or more.
 - Obtain voter registration data from our incoming freshmen and transfers in 2024.
- Long-term
 - Increase student voter demographic.
 - Create a voting location on campus for students.
 - Increase campus collaborations.
 - Cross reference and obtain data for incoming freshmen and transfers and compare/contrast the difference of upperclassmen and new students.

Timeline:

2023

November 1 – 6 *Election Announcement and Reminders*

November 7 – Dec. 8: *Promotion of the Introduction to the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge*

2024

Jan 16	On the Spot at Delta State Welcome – Reiterate the of Mission
Jan 30	Q/A Day – What do you know? (Survey Day)
February 13	Branches of Government (Survey Day)
February 20	Townhall Meeting Simulation (Survey Day)
March 5	On the Spot at Delta State session
March 7	Juried Student Exhibition - Support of the Art Department
March 7	The “O” – Voting Simulation on Political Statement Fashion Pieces
March 12	2024 Mississippi Democratic and Republican Primary - allocation
March 26	Day in the Life of Political Figure
April 9 – May 10	Political Mystery Debates (Survey Period and Data Generation)
May 15 – Aug 11	Reminder of the ALL IN Challenge and plan the implementation phase
August 20	Voter Registration Table and Election announcements notice
September 10	Voter Registration Table
September 16	Presidential Debate Watch Party
September 17	On the Spot at Delta State session
September 25	Presidential Debate Watch Party

September 26	On the Spot at Delta State session
October 1	Presidential Debate Watch Party
October 3	On the Spot at Delta State session
October 9	Presidential Debate Watch Party
October 10	On the Spot at Delta State session
November 5	2024 Presidential Election – “Get Active” Poll Assistance Volunteer Day
Nov 6– Dec 15	Student Organization poll and evaluation of action planning

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways: Utilizing survey tables to engage, inform and observe campus habits. We will follow up with students who participate in surveys in order to complete a focus group study.

Upon the entrance of students on campus during each semester, the student organization will analyze the number of participants and the demographics reflected to edit strategies before the timeline starts. With every event, an office form survey will be presented to gather data at that moment. Factors that are important will be assessed, what gained their attention the most will be subject to observation and overall takeaway will be assessed. We want to be able to take attendance, see if they have registered to vote, what aspects helped them decide to vote and will they be on-site to attend “Get Active” days. Data will be forwarded to our Department of Institutional Research and the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE).

Reporting:

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN’s website <https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/delta-state-university/>. Our institution has given ALL IN permission to publish our NSLVE reports which are posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website. Delta State University’s Department of Institutional Research will also have access to the action plan and NSLVE reports. Semi-annual reports will be posted online for the Delta State community to access.