

## Voter Engagement Plan

### Ferris State University

#### **Executive Summary:**

Ferris State University is committed to leading efforts that increase knowledge and voting rates among its students. The below plan outlines details for non-partisan voter engagement on the Ferris Campus for 2024 and beyond.

#### **Leadership:**

- The group members are Ahmad Wright, Summer Black, Paris Horton. All Ferris Social Work Interns.
- Senior administrative leader over the leadership is Angela Roman, Director Career and Professional Success
- This group representing CAPS office will be coordinating with the Student Government Association here at Ferris State university, Political Engagement Project and other faculty, staff, and student organization passionate about this topic.
- Member strengths: Ahmad is a senior social work student in his last semester and brings leadership, social justice, and community social work practices into this project. Summer's strengths are experience in student government dating back to her high school years, the ability to be creative along with being able to problem solve, which is a great asset to our team. Paris' strengths are that she is highly organized and can create and organize projects while maintaining order and research. She also has experience working with technology. She is currently working for the IT department here at Ferris State.
- The communities that is involved with this plan is the CAPS office, Student Government Association and local government agencies.
- The groups will meeting regularly weekly, Ahmad is responsible for communicating amongst the group, and we plan to meet weekly at our CAPS office.

**Commitment:** Ferris State University's mission, vision, and core values underscore its commitment to preparing students for active participation in society, including engagement with the democratic process. Efforts to increase student voter engagement align closely with these guiding principles, reflecting the university's broader commitment to promoting responsible citizenship and lifelong learning.

To assess the institution and its senior leadership's commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement, evidence of this commitment such as:

- Support to join the Campus Vote Project
- Creating a dedicated student team to lead voter engagement on campus
- Public statements or actions from senior leadership emphasizing the importance of civic engagement.
- Involvement in community partnerships to promote civic engagement.
- A \$500 grant was secured for this project

### **Landscape:**

- Civic learning and democratic engagement are shown on our campus in various ways like RSO's and Greek organizations.
- The institution has historically supported student voting with information and activities, especially during presidential election years.
- A faculty led volunteer group called Political Engagement Project (PEP) is active and collaborative.
- A few internal barriers we may run into is lack of support from staff and faculty around campus, lack of data from the university, limited funding, etc.

### **Short-term goals:**

#### **1. Increase Voter Registration Rates:**

- Specific: Host voter registration drives on campus targeting all students, particularly freshmen and transfer students.
- Measurable: Aim to increase voter registration by 10% prior to the presidential election
- Ambitious: Set a goal of registering at least 75% of eligible students.
- Realistic: Utilize existing campus events and orientations to maximize registration opportunities.
- Time-bound: Complete initial registration drives within the first month of each semester.

#### **2. Raise Awareness and Education:**

- Specific: Organize monthly civic education workshops covering topics such as voter information, ballot information, and local election information.
- Measurable: Track workshop attendance and engagement through sign-in sheets and post-event surveys.
- Ambitious: Achieve a total workshop attendance of at least 100 people

- o Realistic: Partner with faculty to integrate civic education components into existing courses.
- o Time-bound: Schedule workshops to coincide with relevant events such as National Voter Registration Day and Constitution Day.

**3. Facilitate Access to Voting:**

- o Specific: Establish a dedicated voter assistance center on campus to provide guidance on registration, absentee ballots, and polling locations.
- o Measurable: Monitor the number of students utilizing the assistance center and track successful voter registrations.
- o Ambitious: Aim for 100% of students to know where and how to vote, either on-campus or via absentee ballot.
- o Realistic: Collaborate with local election officials to ensure accurate information and support.
- o Time-bound: Have the assistance center operational at least two months before major elections.

**Long Term Goals- Sustain Voter Turnout Across Elections:**

- Specific: Implement a long-term voter engagement strategy that includes ongoing voter education campaigns and regular reminders about upcoming elections.
- Measurable: Track voter turnout rates for local, state, and national elections, aiming for consistency and improvement over time.
- Ambitious: Maintain voter turnout rates above the national average for college-age students.
- Realistic: Utilize a variety of communication channels, including social media, email newsletters, and campus events, to reach students.
- Time-bound: Commit to sustaining voter engagement efforts indefinitely, with regular reviews and adjustments as needed.

**Empower Student Leaders:**

- Specific: Create leadership development programs focused on civic engagement, providing training and resources for student-led voter registration and education campaigns.
- Measurable: Monitor the participation and impact of student leaders in voter engagement initiatives, including registration numbers and turnout rates.
- Ambitious: Cultivate a diverse cadre of student leaders who are passionate about civic engagement and capable of mobilizing their peers.
- Realistic: Provide ongoing mentorship and support for student leaders, empowering them to take ownership of their initiatives.

- Time-bound: Ongoing

### **Strategy:**

**Student-Led Voter Registration Drives:** Encouraging student organizations to host voter registration drives on campus is an effective way to increase voter registration rates among students. These drives can be held regularly throughout the academic year, especially during orientation sessions and major campus events.

**Social Media Campaigns:** Leveraging social media platforms to raise awareness about voter registration deadlines, polling locations, and relevant issues can reach many students. Campuses can create engaging content, share informative graphics, and use hashtags to encourage participation.

**Transportation to Polling Locations:** Offering transportation services to polling locations on Election Day can make it easier for students to vote, especially if they do not have access to reliable transportation or if polling places are not easily accessible from campus.

**Peer-to-Peer Outreach:** Engaging student leaders and peer educators to encourage their peers to register and vote can be highly effective. Students are more likely to trust and respond to messages from their peers, making peer-to-peer outreach a powerful tool for increasing voter engagement.

### **Long Term Strategy**

**Build Institutional Commitment:** Secure long-term institutional commitment to supporting voter registration and education efforts, including dedicating resources, staff, and infrastructure to sustain these initiatives over time.

**Empower Student Leaders:** Invest in leadership development programs that empower students to take ownership of voter registration and education initiatives, fostering a legacy of student-driven civic engagement on campus.

### **Reporting/Evaluation:**

We will use a variety of assessments.

- Event attendance at all activities will be taken
- Assess planning committee personal success

- Feedback from students around campus
- Student voter turnout and number of student registrations