



Background

The American Democracy Project has been a part of Fort Hays State University since it was brought onto campus in 2004 and the non-partisan initiative is currently housed inside of the Center for Civic Leadership, a nationally recognized institute for civic engagement. The ADP has taken steps to engage the future graduates of tomorrow by creating events that are centered around registering students to vote and encouraging them to vote; promoting positive civic discourse, as well as educating students on current topical issues in ways like talks like Times Talks.

Current On-Campus Partnerships

- Center for Civic Leadership
 - Related Entities: Tigers in Service, Global Leadership Project, Women's Leadership Project
- Student Government Association (SGA)
- Department of Political Science

Past On-Campus Partnerships

- Department of History
- Department of Psychology
- Department of Sociology
- Department of Teacher Education

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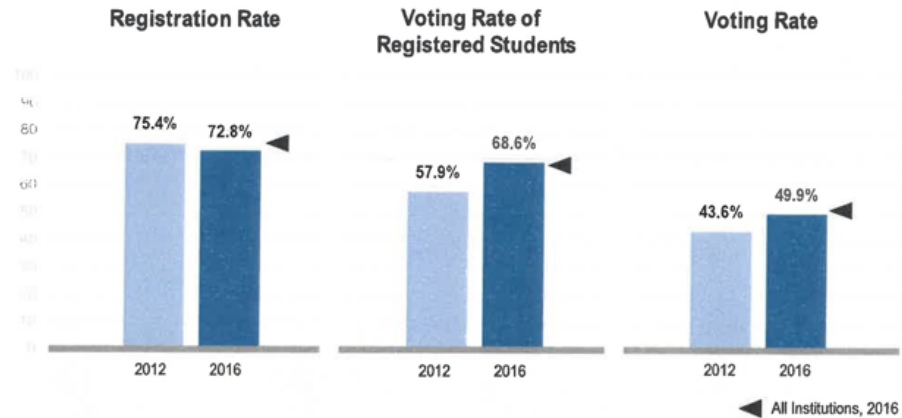
Goals for 2020

Given that this upcoming year is a major key election, we would like to reach peak voter registration but also see more turnout at the polls on Election Day. The methods on how we will accomplish this in order to get students more likely to vote:

- Increases in the voting rate
 - A particular goal we would like to achieve at Fort Hays State University in terms of voter registration is the voting rate among registered students and the voting rate overall. Our total goal of the number of students that vote in the 2020 election is at around 6,500, set above the actual number of students that voted in 2016 in our NSLVE report, which was 5,445 students. The voting rate goal that we hope to set in 2020 is 55%, which is also 5.1% higher than the actual



percentage of 49.9% of students that voted in the 2016 elections. See figure to data below.



- Utilization of Resources/Budget

Our resources are what can help us make the goals we have more attainable for getting students to register to vote on-campus. That means partnering and networking with organizations that help us spread the message like National Voter Registration Day or Loud Light. We can also tack onto SGA's initiative to bring the League of Women Voters onto campus. As for the one way we will best utilize our resources for 2020 is to obtain devices (iPads in particular) capable for allowing students to register to vote relatively quickly without having to pull out laptops. We will have to ask for the purchasing of those devices from either our budget or have some appropriated money from the Student Government Association.

- Partnerships

Partnerships are crucial in spreading the message of civic engagement on-campus. As the ADP is a non-partisan organization, we would like to create a path for voter registration that yields in motivated and potential voters like:

- Greek Life
- Faith-based organizations
- Honor societies
- Cultural organizations

By letting the involved students know their rights to vote and the laws behind it, we can reach more students on a personal level as opposed to tabling in the Memorial Union. Not only that but we can recruit volunteers for future voter registration drives. This we feel that will bolster civic engagement and the participation in our democracy.



- Events

At the beginning of the year, we should keep the 2020 election in the back of our minds during the planning of our events. Candidate forums and voter registration/information events will be the goal in order to activate and pique the interest of so many to go vote! These events have to be educational and not so overwhelming in nature, otherwise other students that don't care and have heard the message repetitively will not vote.

- Education

Many students are unaware of the laws that attribute to how they can and cannot vote, thus preventing them from voting. After tabling in the past, the most common issue students run across when registering to vote is whether they should use their permanent address, since many FHSU students are not originally from Hays. Some are unaware that they can register to vote here if they wish, no matter if they are living on-campus in the residential halls. Some may not wish to vote here since they are more in tune with their local politics but yet are not aware of the process of obtaining an absentee ballot. By educating the students in a concise manner, they are more likely to use the knowledge we provide to vote and the facts stick with them for the rest of their civic lives.

- Social Media

As of the date of the posting of the initiative, the FHSU ADP social media handles are not being used as much to help spread the message to encourage and fire up potential student voters on-campus. When next year hits, we will utilize those media more, whether it be reminding students on deadlines that are almost due or promoting an event that relates to voting and voting registration. It will elicit the response to the student that the matter has urgency and is important. And to do that, we will have to employ hashtags and engaging graphics that will ultimately help us in achieving our goal of reaching FHSU students.