



# Grand View University Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2024

*This plan was created using the Votes & Ballots Action Planning Form.*

## I. Executive Summary

This action plan was developed by Heidi Pries, Associate Dean of Students to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Grand View University. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2024, on and around our campus in Des Moines, Iowa.

The following groups will be leading this work at Grand View University in order to accomplish our goals and further institutionalize our commitment to civic learning, democratic engagement, and youth participation in elections:

- Undergraduate Students
- Student Affairs Staff

The mission of our initiative is:

- Grand View University is committed to increasing voter registration in our campus community. The university is committed to increasing the number of students that vote in 2024 compared to previous years.

Our institution and our campus leaders are committed to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. We also see this same commitment reflected in our institution's values, "Grand View equips students for lives of leadership."

## II. Leadership

Heidi Pries Associate Dean of Students will be overseeing our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- Dr. John Howe Associate Provost
- Ms. Makena Adkins, Student Leadership Team at Grand View University
- Mr. Steven Kellogg, Director of Inclusive and Supportive Programming and Advisor to Grand View Black Student Union
- Ms. Corinna King Director of Planning and Strategy for the President

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership, Representation from different perspectives and areas of expertise, Trusted leaders and organizations who support communities that are historically underrepresented in democracy, Leaders who can help with outreach and power building by bringing more people across campus in to our work

Our group plans to meet as needed at

We are also partnering with the following organizations from the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition to support our efforts on campus:

- Seed Coalition, Des Moines Iowa

### III. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrates commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. We also see this same commitment reflected in our institution's values. They state, "The core values at Grand View University provide a foundation for faculty, staff, and students to fulfill the mission and achieve the vision of the institution. Excellence: Consistently surpassing expectations Inclusive Community: A campus community that values all members and appreciates our differences Adaptability: Adjusting to our changing world through resilience, flexibility and openness Faith: An individual's experience of, or a belief in, a power apart from the self. Global Curiosity: An open-minded interest in cultural understanding that fosters discovery and growth Agility: Proactive intelligent improvement and innovation Positivity: A constructive and optimistic mindset"

In addition, our campus has mentioned civic learning and democratic engagement in their strategic plan, stating Grand View University will ensure that current and future learners are equipped for agility and civic/global engagement through innovative and relevant academic programming and exceptional learner experiences for life. We also have had a senior leader commit to civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.

On campus, we've seen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs or student organizations
- Campus leaders promoting voting
- On campus polling place
- Voter registration tables
- Signage promoting Election Day
  
- On campus, we've experienced:
  - Voting in student body elections
  - Political speakers
  - Walks / rides to polls
  - Town halls
  - Registering to vote
  - Deliberative dialogues
  - The emphasis on civic learning and democratic engagement could be increased.

## IV. Landscape

We do not have access to comprehensive demographic information about our student body at this time.

Our institution has also utilized the following data gathering tools:

- Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement
- National Survey of Student Engagement

They help to inform our institution's civic learning and democratic engagement efforts to learn where our community is currently at in terms of civic engagement and how we can increase that engagement.

### Goals

Before setting our civic learning and democratic engagement goals on campus, we took the following information into consideration.

We know our campus faces following challenges internally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

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- We don't have someone whose job responsibility is to foster civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- We don't have a coalition of people who are positioned to implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- We don't have processes in place for registering large percentages of our students.
- We don't have sustainable or consistent funding.
- We have trouble engaging student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.
- We also know our campus faces the following challenges externally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:
  - Our state laws make it challenging to support student voter registration efforts.
  - With that said, we know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:
    - Our institution's mission statement, values, and strategic plan mention civic learning and democratic engagement.
    - We have ways in which we communicate voting information to our students.
    - We have a working relationship with our local election office.

- We have working relationships with community partners who are invested in civic learning and democratic engagement.
- With this in mind, we have set the three goals that we would like to achieve over the next academic year:

To create a way to register a large group of students at orientation.

We have also set three goals that we would like to achieve over the next five years:

Increase voter registration and voting turnout.

## V. Strategy

Below, we have outlined a strategy describing how we will bring this vision to life in the coming months and years.

These are tactics that we **are already doing** in the **short term** (within the next year):

- Tabling for voter registration,

These are tactics that we **plan to do** in the **short term**:

- Satellite Voting Location, voter registration drive, voter registration offered in classes, social media posts, campus posts internally, offering absentee ballot requests in our office.

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **short term**:

- Campus Signs, rides to polling locations

These are tactics that we **want to do** in the **long term**:

- Include registering in our new student orientation program

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **long term**:

- Create a student group that can oversee voter registration.

## **VI. National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)**

Our campus has access to our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) data for 2024. In 2024 our registration rate was 80.1. In comparison to the data from four years prior in our NSLVE report, this rate decreased.

In 2024, our voting rate was 31.5 and our voting rate among registered students was 39.3. During this year, our voting rate was lower than the national average.

In our NSLVE report, we had racial data for the following groups:

- Asian
- American Indian / Alaska Native
- Black
- Hispanic
- Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
- White
- 2 or More Races

Our campus also has access to our NSLVE data for 2020. In 2020 our registration rate was 85.1, our voting rate was 65.2 and our voting rate among registered students was 76.6.

## VII. Reporting & Evaluation

We plan to share this Action Plan internally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Email to members of our campus coalition

We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Regrouping with campus coalition to debrief and reflect

We plan to evaluate our success by:

- Reviewing our NSLVE data and looking for improvements year over year
- Revisiting our goals, identifying goals achieved and not achieved, and adjusting our short and long-term goals accordingly