



Voter Engagement Action Plan 2024

Executive Summary

The 2024 Voter Engagement Plan for Hocking College is prepared by the Assistant to the Vice President of Student Life, Terry Koons. The plan will focus specifically on engaging the Hocking College community, primarily students, outside of the classroom because this is within the scope of the mission of Student Life. This plan sets out our goals, action steps, and strategies related to student voter engagement, education, and turnout. Voter engagement is a new initiative at Hocking College and while working on our 2024 plan we were able to strategically implement some student engagement through the October 2023 election in Ohio.

Leadership

The Student Engagement team for the Department of Student Life will facilitate civic learning, voter registration, and voter education programming leading up to the November 2024 elections. All activities associated with the All In Challenge mission will be facilitated by this team. The Student Life team includes the Director of Student Activities, Operations Manager of the Student Center and the Director of First-Year Experience/DEI and led by the Assist to the Vice President of Student Life. This team will coordinate all civic and voter engagement for students, and student groups. Our campus and community partners include:

Student Activities Advisory Board
Residential Community Assistants
Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Mu Delta Chapter
National Society of Leadership and Success
Student Center Student Employees
Career Center Student Employees

Athens County Board of Elections
The Athens County League of Women Voters

Commitment

Hocking College's President, Dr. Betty Young, is committed to supporting student voter engagement. Dr. Young demonstrated this commitment in the fall of 2023 by approving funds to support voter registration, collaboration with the League of Women Voters, shuttle bus on election day for residential students and free cookies in the dining hall for anyone wearing an "I Voted" sticker. The support is also mentioned in the college mission statement-

"We serve as a pathway to prosperity, teaching and inspiring all who seek to learn, growing careers and changing lives."... Our mission is immeasurably enriched by the students, faculty and staff who bring diverse experiences and backgrounds to our campus. We believe that diversity comes in many flavors, not just those typically considered--race, religion, color, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, physical challenge, or marital status--but also in thought, political persuasion, physicality, and spirituality.

The Student Life Student Engagement team supports student involvement outside the classroom and this action plan will focus on our ongoing commitments to extracurricular social civic learning and engagement. We recognize the opportunity to expand to curricular engagement opportunities in the future by building relationships with other departments at the College. However, at this time, we will be focusing on extracurricular programming through the Student Life team. The capacity of the staff charged with carrying out this plan is limited, and they must focus on programming that aligns with department resources and goals related to extracurricular involvement. Our plan includes building a civic learning coalition at Hocking College in the future that holds potential for expanding to future cross-departmental collaboration.

Landscape

Some challenges that we face is that the College is split between residential and commuter students. Many of our residential students are from throughout Ohio, twelve other states and 8 countries. We started encouraging residential students to become registered either at their home address or their campus address. Our commuter population on average travels to campus more than 40 miles one way, again we focus on getting commuters to register at their home address. The complexity of where students are registered to vote makes it imperative that we focus on early voting, voting by mail or if they vote locally providing transportation. Due to the college credit plus program we found during our voter registration drives that many of our students who are

on campus are not yet 18, so we will need to do more to provide registration as an on-going operation not just before the election.

Goals

We have reviewed the 2022 All In Action Plan Report and have developed goals to reach within the next two years.

- Establish a baseline of registered voters on-campus.
- Increase voter registration and participation by 5 percent.
- Increase the number of students who utilized the voter shuttle bus in Oct of 23 of 20 students by 50 percent.
- Increase voter registration from Oct 23 of 118 students by 50 percent.
- Provide more civic engagement opportunities on campus recommended by student partners, such as increased voter registration days, awareness of deadlines and dates.
- Establish a cross-functional coalition to increase activities and the ownership of election engagement outside of the Department of Student Life.