

**Idaho State University  
Democratic Engagement Plan  
Draft  
2022-2023**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This document serves as Idaho State University's Democratic Engagement Plan for 2022-2023 academic year. Idaho State University (ISU) is starting the program in spring 2022. As such, ISU is largely in the planning stages. There is not available data on voter registration among students. The initial goal of the program is to develop partnerships on campus and conduct a voter registration drive along with education for fall 2022. We are building the initiative from the bottom up. At this point, the key task is building a coalition that will oversee the further development and implementation of this plan. The hiring of an Associate Dean of Students in August 2022 is crucial for ISU to successfully develop a Democratic Engagement Initiative for the 2022-2023 academic year. Once hired, the Associate Dean of Students will oversee the further development of this plan. This initial plan provides a broad overview of ISU's initial efforts to start this process focusing on leadership, coalition development, and initial plans at voter registration, marketing, and education.

**LEADERSHIP**

We are currently contacting various groups and offices on campus. This includes Student Affairs (who will direct this effort starting in August, 2022), ASISU, Academic Affairs, Athletics, the ISU Library, Housing, Diversity and Inclusion, student organizations, and academic departments (perhaps History, Communication, Media, and Persuasion, Political Science, and others). Over time, we will identify other groups as well. There should also be external partners (the League of Women Voters, Bannock County Election Office, and others). Again, all of this is in progress and we are reaching out to contact these groups and offices.

Point of Contact: Bobby Arteaga (ISU Housing) and Mark McBeth (Political Science) are the interim point of contacts while Student Affairs is hiring an Associate Dean of Students who will then take over this initiative.

### **COMMITMENT**

ISU's Community Engagement mission reads as follows: "As an integral component of the community, Idaho State University develops partnerships and affiliations through the exchange of knowledge, resources, research, and expertise. Through a diverse university staff, faculty, and student body, ISU provides cultural, social, economic and other opportunities to enrich the lives of citizens."

ISU is committed to student engagement as part of our community engagement mission. The newly hired Associate Dean of Students will have student engagement as part of their formal job description. ISU is committed to having a diverse group of participants involved in this project.

### **BACKGROUND**

ISU is committed to civic engagement. In the past, there have been some uncoordinated efforts to register students to vote but this is the first formal and coordinated effort to do so. In 2022, President Satterlee asked faculty and staff at ISU to get involved in this project. We hope to have initial data on voter registration in fall 2022 and we will then build upon this in future semesters and years. In addition, ISU plans for educational activities that will help students understand the importance of voting and the importance of democratic participation in a representative democracy.

### **GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

#### Goals

Short term goal: Develop a working plan. This includes coaches buy-in, the development of a partnership map, facilitating ideas for engagement, forming ISU's coalition. (Timeline: This will occur during summer 2022. The goal is to have a skeleton framework in place when the new Associate Dean of Students starts at ISU in August, 2022. The development of this coalition is

crucial so that the new Associate Dean of Students can start this project in August, 2022).

Short-term goal: Develop a campaign around a civic holiday (November 7, Election Hero Day).

Short-term goal: Reach out to SAAC at ISU.

Short-term goal: Transition the point of contact to the new Associate Dean of Students

Long-term goal: Develop a cohesive ISU coalition dedicated to promoting student engagement.

Long-term goal: Institutionalize student engagement, voter registration, and educational activities at ISU.

Long-term goal: 78% Voter Registration Rate across Big Sky Votes an increase from 74.3% in 2018 based on NSLVE reports.

Long-term goal: 45% Voter Turnout Rate across Big Sky Votes an increase from 43% in 2018 based on NSLVE Reports.

### Learning Outcomes

Idaho State University is committed to engaging students in the importance of civic engagement. Students will:

- Understand the importance of participation in democratic processes.
- Understand the importance of participation in community events including developing relationships with others who are participating.
- Develop the ability to develop empathy and understand the importance of learning about others and how they view the world.
- Use their knowledge from civic engagement in their chosen field of studies and use their own experiences in civic engagement to think critically in the classroom.

### **STRATEGY**

The strategy is necessarily incremental until the new Associate Dean of Students is hired. Currently Bobby Arteaga is contacting several groups and offices on campus to see if they are

interested. The goal is to have a skeleton plan, a partnership map, and positive movement in place for when the new Associate Dean of Students starts at ISU. At that point, there will be more action with voter registration education and drives in the fall semester. ISU will then recalibrate where it is in the process and expand efforts.

We believe that our initial focus will be on the following areas: voter registration, voter education, and voter access.

Voter registration: As ISU is just starting this process, we do not yet have detailed plans. But ISU Housing and ISU Student Affairs will work to ensure that students are informed about voter registration during the fall semester.

Voter education: As ISU is just starting this process, we do not yet have detailed plans. But Student Affairs will coordinate with Academic Affairs and academic departments to host or co-host events aimed at civic education.

Voter access: Student Affairs and the coalition will work to ensure that students know where to vote, how to vote absentee, and how voting rules in Idaho might impact student voting.

### **REPORTING**

Student Affairs will share the report with the ISU coalition and ISU leadership. A report can be shared on the ISU website.

### **EVALUATING**

Each year, Student Affairs and coalition partners will evaluate efforts by looking at voter registration data, activities on campus, and educational efforts. ISU will compare efforts with other Big Sky schools and network with these schools at events sponsored by All In.

Specifically, all civic engagement programming will be evaluated. This will include:

- Coalitional debriefing after every event to determine what worked and what did not work.
- The tracking of voter registration numbers.
- Surveys of students to determine what activities best encouraged students to vote and participate in activities.

- Participation in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE).

An evaluation report will be shared with ISU leadership and posted to the ISU website.