



Illinois State University

ALL-IN VOTER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

2020-2021

Overview

One of [Illinois State University's](#) core values is Civic Engagement. Illinois State University (ISU) prepares students to be informed and engaged global citizens; ethical leaders who will craft, promote, and further positive goals for the betterment of society. The University promotes active learning experiences, through which students gain an awareness and understanding of civic engagement as a lifelong responsibility. Created in 2017, ISU's [Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning \(CESL\)](#) builds on the past work of the American Democracy Project as well as supporting and enacting the institutions core value of civic engagement. CESL brings coordination and a shared purpose to the numerous civic engagement efforts already occurring throughout the University as well as to create new opportunities. The scope of the center is broad and involves supporting in-class and out-of-class learning experiences that partner with the community.

The [American Democracy Project](#) at Illinois State University is a cooperative effort by students, faculty, staff, and administration. The goal of American Democracy Project is to promote civic engagement, in many different forms, on the part of students, now and in the future. American Democracy Project embraces all organized activities designed to promote constructive civic engagement on the part of undergraduates while they are on campus, and after they graduate. Building on a wide variety of such activity already occurring at Illinois State, the American Democracy Project is designed to serve as a catalyst for programmatic changes that will ensure all Illinois State students are fully prepared to assume a responsible role as contributors to civic society.

It is important for students to learn both the process of political participation and engaging in democracy. This is not about voting in single elections, it is about creating an identity of being an engaged citizen over a lifetime. Voter engagement efforts at ISU take a non-partisan approach where we can talk about political engagement and be inclusive. By developing a clear plan for voter engagement we can better address the ideals described above.

ISU will be seeking the Voter Friendly Campus (VFC) Designation for 2020-2021

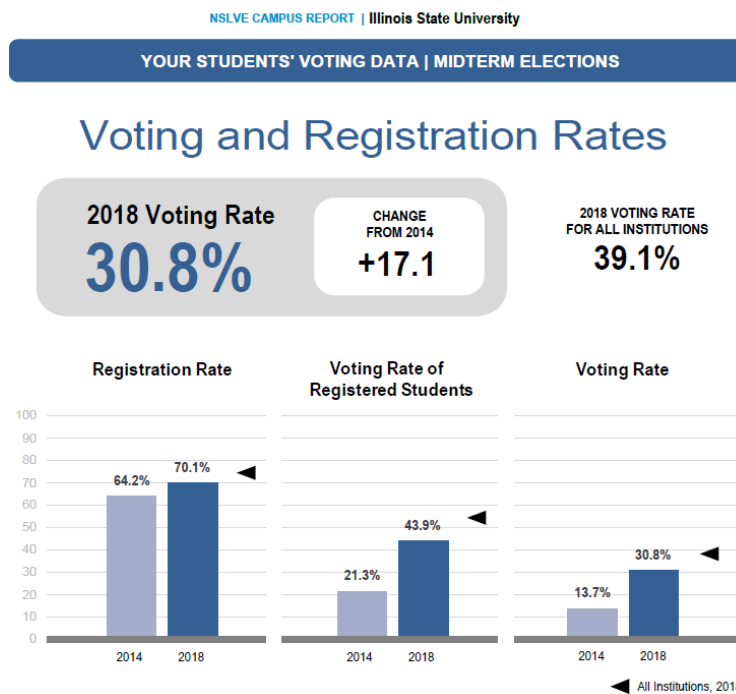
<https://www.voterfriendlycampus.org/> "The goal of the program is to help institutions develop plans to coordinate administrators, faculty, and student organizations in civic and electoral engagement. The Voter Friendly Campus designation helps administrators develop a strategy to engage students and set clear goals so a path can be created in advance of upcoming elections. These activities can be institutionalized for years to come, keeping students engaged as they enter, and move through their time at school."

Landscape

National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) provides data on voting rates. NSLVE is a signature initiative of the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education (IDHE) at Tufts University's Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life. The voter registration and voting rates reflect the percentage of your institution's students who were eligible to vote and who actually voted in the 2018 and 2016 elections. These results are based on enrollment ISU submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse (FERPA-blocked records excluded) and publicly available voting files collected by Catalist.

2018 Mid-term Elections

Voting in the 2018 midterm election rose to around 31 percent at Illinois State, a jump from a 13 percent turn-out in the 2014 midterms. This matches the increase in voting rates, with 99 percent of all schools surveyed saying they saw a rise in students casting ballots in the latest midterm elections.



2016 Election

NSLVE CAMPUS REPORT | Illinois State University

YOUR STUDENTS' VOTING DATA | PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Voting and Registration Rates

2016 Voting Rate

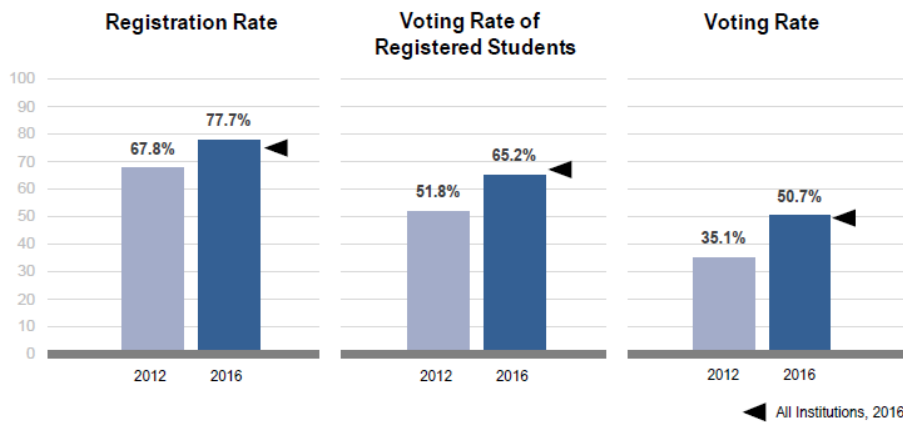
50.7%

CHANGE
FROM 2012

15.6

2016 VOTING RATE
FOR ALL INSTITUTIONS

50.4%



Goals

Short Term (2020 Election)

ISU would like to build on current civic engagement efforts. For the short term, we are focused on the 2020 presidential election. As data shows above, higher voter turnout happens during a presidential election than at mid-term. As voter turnout in non-presidential elections is lower than in presidential elections, we chose data from the last presidential election in 2016 as the baseline for setting goals.

The goals are:

- To increase our 2020 Voting Rate by 10 points, from 50% to 60%.
- To increase our 2020 Registration Rate by 10 points, from 77% to 87%.
- To increase our 2020 Rate of Registered Students who Voted by 10 points, from 65% to 75%

Strategies

There are 4 pillars that will focus this plan, those include:

1. Students & Faculty/Staff as Advocates
2. Voter Registration
3. Voter Education
4. Voter Turn-out

Students & Faculty Staff as Advocates

Student Coalition

- Recruit & Train student ambassadors to promote voter registration and voting turnout (TurboVote Liasons); help with tabling events and attending student group meetings. A special emphasis for recruiting student ambassadors from majors with low voter participation.
- Include non-political Registration Student Organizations, Greek Life, Club Sports, Minority Students for Political Action, and STEM groups. Visit Diversity Advocacy Organizations to get perspective on voting through listening sessions.
- Student leadership opportunities are a must do – Democracy Fellows (stipend, Campus Vote Project), CEEP, Students Learn Student vote (Young Invincibles), ISU LEADs certificate program.

Faculty/Staff Coalition

- Faculty ambassadors in each department (in the works through CESL); visit each department at faculty/staff meetings
- Work with faculty to make announcements in class encouraging voter registration and participation in elections
- Share NSLVE data with all department chairs
- Target as needed based on low voting departments from NSLVE
- Also include non-academic departments and community organizations - Athletics, League of Women Voters, WGLT (local NPR station), Student Government Association's Civic Engagement Chair represents student coalition, Student Affairs representative from NASPA/CLDE people group, STEM connections
- Partner with Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology to offer faculty workshop centered on voter engagement in the classroom for early Fall 2020
- Make information about the elections a part of the New Faculty Orientation (August)

Voter Registration/Voter Education

- TurboVote (<https://illinoisstate.turbovote.org/>)
 - Illinois State University partners with TurboVote to bring voter registration and assistance to ISU students, faculty and staff. They can register to vote online if they're a first-time voter and if they're already registered, change current registration, request a mail-in ballot or sign up for election reminders all in [TurboVote](#).
 - Have a focused laptop station at the CESL and in the Bone Student Center where students could always go to register via Turbovote.
- **Campus Competition** – ISU, Illinois Wesleyan University, Heartland Community College
 - Kick off on National Voter Registration Day (Sept 22):
 - Mascots registering
 - Small shift where President Dietz, VP Johnson, Reggie, Coach Spack table for voter registration
 - News article/other marketing to prep for campus activities, create lots of buzz, set a goal for number of people to register on that day, if we plan to do something on this day, we can register on their website
- Update American Democracy Project website & [Redbird Voter Guide](#)
 - Clearinghouse of information related to 2020 election to include links to candidate websites/social media; current issues, etc.
 - “Can’t Vote” and “Can Vote” tabs on website on how to get involved
 - <https://www.thelovevote.org/>
 - A statement about nonpartisanship and what it means on the first page
 - <https://www.studentslearnstudentsvote.org/>
- Preview (Freshman Student Orientation)
 - CESL add TurboVote information into current presentation given at Preview
 - Social Media contests – get students to like and follow CESL, ADP, SGA social pages
- Welcome Week
 - Table events – Quad, Bone Student Center, Housing, Milner
 - Engage students to register by asking them what is important to them; what do they pledge to do; WHY VOTE - create Mural with information and engage ISU Art Program as part of class project.
 - Remind returning students to change their address in Turbo Vote
- Off Campus services welcome bag include information
 - Remind returning students to change their address in Turbo Vote
- Tabling at Festival ISU: TurboVote Info; Why Vote?- add to Murals around Campus
- E-postcard for distribution to student government email lists.
- Campus-Wide E-mails from President Dietz – Constitution Day, National Voter Registration Day
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) campaigns led by various student groups promoting voting; #ISUVotes
- Digital and physical flyering around campus
- Voter registration information in Reggie Net; create Module and Announcements

- Voter Registration information in [Redbird Life](#) (Registered Student Organization platform)
 - Add election dates as events and deadlines
 - A pop-up notification in Spring (February) and Fall (October)
- Promote voter registration and/or voting at Family Weekend; And in the Parents and Family Newsletter the Dean of Students sends out.
- RSO & Fraternity/Sorority Outreach
 - In RSO newsletters; create message
 - RSO Competition using TurboVote referral links
 - Students from voter coalition can go to RSO meetings and help them register on site or talk about voting
- IDS 128 & COM 110 & ENG 101 POL 106 - Focused Information
 - Prepare canned presentation and/or Video for instructors fl. (include Reggie, SGA, President).
 - Voting and have students register, Turbo Vote; focus on first year seminar courses; High voter registration when instructor gives an enthusiastic introduction
- Housing
 - Bulletin Boards, tabling events with giveaways; Why Vote?- Murals in Res Halls- way to collect data on what is important to students
 - RA/CAs & Floor Presidents as ambassadors; information added to their current training/curriculum
- Debate Live Stream links or viewing in Rosa Parks/Escalante Room etc./Channels for residence hall viewing; Partnership with the Social Media Analytics Command Center (SMACC) lab to host. Create #s for monitoring
- A “Next Election” live countdown (on Reggienet; on Marques Stadium)
 - <https://allintovote.org/>
- “Pledge to Vote” event or tab attached to follow up email list
 - <https://www.whenweallvote.org/>

Voter Education/Voter Turnout

- SGA Get out the Vote with help from Student Ambassadors
- President's Welcome Message – Fall 2020; Importance of Voting/Registering to Vote
- Voter machine demonstrations or videos – use Mascots (extension of competition)
- Giveaway ideas – bookmark with voting information; t-shirts
- Customized google map for available voter locations for students
- Through housing - Table tents, flyers – dorms; partner with RAs; partner with Apt management companies
- On campus – feather flags for registration, early voting, voting to advertise to students. (Could also use for tabling)
- Party at the polls on election days to celebrate student voters;
- Live and streaming watch parties; partnership with School of Communication
- Improve and monitor on-campus voter experience for students; Work with SGA, Dean of Students, and McLean County Clerk's Office
 - Set up a Social Media Command Center at CESL to monitor voting experience, lines, challenges, manage misinformation and other feedback; Assist from School of Communication;
 - Develop strategic path and focused response team ready if issues arise
 - Celebration - I voted Stickers, first time voters, EarlyBird Stickers; photobooth at BSC & Watterson, Social Media Blasts--#ISUVOTES
 - I Vote Because.....campaign for students to articulate issues that are important to the; Civic engagement pledge cards – “I pledge to....”; way to collect & compile data on important issue
 - Voting Locations- Bone Student Center & Watterson – all campus but educate them on other locations
 - Have volunteers on hand and prepared to help direct students to other voting locations.
 - Faculty/Staff Coalition help on voting day– provide information, updates on lines, turnout
 - Determine key volunteers from steering committee to be on site and report to other groups on wait times, etc.
- Student campaign ideas
 - “Don't wait in line on St. Patrick's day, go vote early”
 - Get your fast pass, register in advance
 - Early bird vote
 - Pre spring break checklist
 - Early vote back home
 - Student Wellness Ambassador Team – vote with your condoms, stickers
- Free ride to the polls - Connect Transit or ISU van to shuttle students to government center

General Timeline

Build the Voter Engagement Steering Committee and Student, Faculty/Staff Coalitions, solicit input for the Voter Engagement Plan

November – February

Offer communication reminders for voter registration and participation in March elections

January-April

Connect with campus partners to plan fall events, confirm plans for polling places, prepare election and fall communications

March-August

Implementation of Strategies for Voter Registration/Voter Education - #ISUVotes

August–November

Implementation of Strategies for Voter Turn-Out/Voter Education

October-November 3rd

Debrief results and envision the future

November –December

Repeat the Cycle for Voter Engagement Planning

Evaluation and Ongoing Planning

The Steering Committee will lead the evaluation process. Evaluation Measures will include:

- Numbers of students that sign-up via TurboVote
- Attendance at events/programs
- Number of students and Faculty/Staff engaged in respective Coalitions
- Work with NSLVE and our local elections board to get data on voter registration and voter turnout.
- Share data with key stakeholders and university leaders
- Solicit feedback from key partners County Board of Elections, faculty/Staff, and students involved with voter engagement events to continuously improve efforts

Voter Engagement Plan Steering Committee

The Voter Engagement Steering Committee is made up of representatives from students, faculty, and staff from student affairs, university housing, academic affairs, and academic departments all working to develop this engagement plan to build on the successes of our current civic engagement efforts.

- John Davenport - Student Affairs, ADP Co-Leader
- Jackie Lanier- ADP Faculty Co-Leader
- Harriett Steinbach - Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CESL)
- Katie Pratt - Political Engagement Project (PEP)
- Megan Taylor - Political Engagement Project (PEP)
- Emily Nafziger - Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning
- Frank Beck – Stevenson Center for Community & Economic Development
- Magalie Baker - Graduate Assistant, ADP
- Hannah Beer, Student Government Association (SGA)
- Samiat Solebo, Student Government Association
- Clarissa Brookins, University Housing Services
- Olivia Butts, School of Kinesiology and Recreation
- Stephen Hunt, School of Communication
- Nathan Carpenter, School of Communication