



Voter Engagement Plan:

Executive Summary:

- Developed by: David Adams, Vice President for Student Affairs.
- Purpose: At Independence Community College (ICC), civic and democratic engagement are foundational principles on which the College will continue to build a bright future. College leadership has continued to reinvest in the civic engagement principles it was founded on almost 100 years ago. Under the Student Affairs division, the Student Life Department at ICC establishes the majority of our campus-wide student activities, including civic engagement and specifically voter registration.

Student Life is not only the hub for students to foster connections across campus but also to find enrichment and expand their worldviews. ICC is home to a broad spectrum of students, with a campus population built on a local, national, and even international student base. Having a vastly varied campus encourages our students to embrace a growth mindset. Through this plan we seek to apply that desire for growth in a way that helps students learn to embrace their civic responsibilities.

Foundations to our work include providing access to voter registration at key events including orientation and move-in, connecting with students at lunch about voter registration, investments in programs like TurboVote, and partnering with Phi Theta Kappa honor society on voter registration. This season we will look to expand upon this by increasing student access opportunities to voter education, voter registration, and exposure to election outcomes.

We look forward to comparing our previous NSLVE data to upcoming data. We will use this information to set more concrete goals moving forward related to voter participation upon receiving a new report for comparison.

- Where the Plan will be implemented: Independence Community College Main Campus.
- Intended duration of the Plan: January, 2024 – December, 2025.
- How the Plan will be implemented: Through focusing on the goals below.

Commitment:

The commitment from the college president and executive level staff are very strong. In fact, the President signed the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation. The Student Affairs division and specifically the Student Life department are responsible for Voter Engagement. Due to limited staffing, the Vice President for Student Affairs and Director of Student Life engage in most of the work to support and promote voter engagement. Even though the Vice President for Student Affairs and Director of Student Life have over 20 other areas of responsibility, the commitment to voter engagement persists and is a continuous topic of discussion and action planning.

The Student Affairs budget provides yearly funding to support achieving the goals below.

In 2024, the college will begin work on developing a new Strategic Plan and due to the Vice President for Student Affairs taking a lead role in supporting voter engagement, the new strategic plan will have language that supports voter engagement functions.

The Vice President for Student Affairs and Director of Student Life have 1-2 WorkStudy students who will also assist with promoting voter engagement, connecting with their peers about voter engagement and may contribute to the coalition described below.

Leadership:

Voter Registration and Civic Engagement Coalition:

- Campus Staff & Faculty:
 - Vice President for Student Affairs – David Adams
 - Director of Student Life – Cody Westerhold
 - Director of Institutional Research & Faculty member – Anita Chappuie
- Student:
 - President of Student Government Association – to be announced soon
- Community:
 - Montgomery County Clerk/Election Officer – Charlotte A. Scott Schmidt

Meeting Frequency: Described in goals below.

Succession Plan: If one person were to vacate the coalition group, the Vice President for Student Affairs would search for a new member. It is likely that the reason for someone vacating the coalition is due to that person also vacating their professional position and in that case, the new person who enters the role would be asked to be part of the coalition.

Due to the small size of our campus, most faculty and staff serve on multiple committees on campus and in the community. For this reason, the coalition is kept small, but flexible and functional. If at any time during the year, a new person would like to join the coalition, they would be welcomed!

Landscape:

Independence Community College is preparing to celebrate its centennial birthday in 2025. In preparation for this special year, the college has an interest in ensuring that students continue to receive voter registration information and more.

The college is one of nineteen public community colleges in Kansas. The mascot is the Pirates, who is named Captain James Montgomery. With community being the college's middle name, it is only fitting that the mascot is named Captain James Montgomery, as the college serves a large portion and is located in Montgomery County. Captain James Montgomery is also the name of the artificial intelligence bot who reaches out to students through text messaging about a variety of information, including voter registration information. In addition to the Captain James Montgomery bot, the college also partners with TurboVote which has a texting platform to remind participants about voter information.

The college serves approximately 800-1000 students each semester. The college is located about 5-10 minutes from the town of Independence and enrolls approximately 300-400 concurrent high school students, has a very engaged athletics and theatre program and approximately 300 students live in Student Housing. Due to having an engaged athletics department, roughly 100 students originate from outside of Kansas, including roughly 20-25 international students. Since Athletics is such a captive audience, one of the goals below has been focused on that population, which is often the college's most diverse population.

Past Campus Democratic Engagement Efforts: Between 2021-2022, the Student Life department was able to hire one Student Life Coordinator position. During that academic year, that professional position was taking the lead on democratic engagement efforts, but unfortunately due to budget cuts, that position was eliminated. As a result, the democratic engagement work efforts had to be refocused and aligned within the workflow of the Director of Student Life and Vice President for Student Affairs. Enough time has now passed and the workflow for democratic engagement efforts has been incorporated into the portfolio for the Director of Student Life and Vice President for Student Affairs.

Evaluation:

- We will continue to use the NSLVE data as an assessment tool.
- Track participation through goals below.

Goals:

Note: the Director of Student Life and the Vice President for Student Affairs will be responsible for all of the following goals.

Short Term (January, 2024 – December, 2024):

1. Work with the newly established local Voter Registration and Civic Engagement Coalition. This coalition is currently composed of the Montgomery County Clerk/Election Officer, ICC Faculty member, the Vice President for Student Affairs, Director of Student Life and the Student Government president. This group will strive to do the following:
 - 1.1. Meet each quarter (four times each year).
 - 1.2. Promote Voter Registration.
 - 1.2.1. Utilize the Captain James Montgomery bot.
 - 1.3. Promote election dates.
2. Hold Activities that promote voter registration:
 - 2.1. Constitution Day.
 - 2.2. National Voter Registration Day
 - 2.3. At least two other Voter Registration events
 - 2.4. Strive to have at least 50% of our SGA students registered to vote, for all who are eligible to vote.
3. Work with Athletics to encourage voter registration.
 - 3.1. Strive to have at least 50% of students connected to each sport registered to vote, for all who are eligible to vote.

Long Term (January 2024 – December, 2025):

4. ICC will continue to contract with TurboVote for voter registration between 2023 – 2025.
 - 4.1. TurboVote will be prominently featured on the ICC webpage.
 - 4.2. TurboVote will be featured throughout campus and integrated into the college experience course.
 - 4.3. Providing a computer for students to access TurboVote during Constitution Day and National Voter Registration Day.
5. Secure accurate college voter information.
 - 5.1. ICC will continue to be a registered campus with the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to benchmark voter registration initiatives.
 - 5.2. When possible, ICC will participate in local, state, and national efforts to track college student voter registration and turnout.

