



# Indiana University South Bend 2024 Democratic Engagement Action Plan

## I. Executive Summary

This action plan was developed by Elizabeth Bennion, Chancellor's Professor of Political Science & American Democracy Project Director to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Indiana University South Bend. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2024 – 2025 Academic Year, on and around our campus in South Bend, Indiana. *This year's election-related activities will take place during the fall 2024 semester because there are no primary or general elections in Indiana in 2025. We will turn to broader civic learning and engagement goals during the spring semester, but will focus on our voter registration, education, and mobilization plans for fall 2024 in this plan.*

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

- Undergraduate Students
- Graduate Students
- Student Organizations
- Faculty
- Civic/Political/Community Engagement Center
- Student Affairs Staff
- Academic Affairs Staff

But our coalition is broader and includes the Chancellor's Office, Facilities Management, Athletics, Residence Life, Financial Aid, Dining Services, the local League of Women Voters, local media partners, and local election officials – including the St. Joseph County Clerk.

The mission of our initiative is:

- The #IUSBVotes Coalition promotes and supports student political learning and participation in democracy.

The action plan is designed to create a comprehensive, campus-wide effort to ask every IUSB student to register and vote in the 2024 presidential election and to foster long-term political learning and engagement during and between election cycles.

## Leadership

Elizabeth Bennion, Chancellor's Professor of Political Science & American Democracy Project Director will oversee our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- The Chancellor's Office: Chancellor Susan Elrod signed the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation for the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. She appointed Elizabeth Bennion a Chancellor's Professor and tasked her with coordinating the Campus Action Plan. The chancellor leads the campus and, together with her Chief of Staff, Elizabeth Paice, communicates our campus-wide commitment to nonpartisan democratic engagement and full student voter participation to all campus stakeholders.
- The Academic Council (Vice Chancellor, Deans): Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Jill Pearon is also involved in the initiative's leadership. As chief academic officer, Dr. Pearon will communicate the campus commitment to all members of the Academic Cabinet, each of whom will promote democratic engagement efforts in their own units.<sup>1</sup> Academic cabinet members engaged in our campus leadership team include: Hope Smith Davis (Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs), Doug McMillen (Dean, College of Arts and Sciences), and Jesús García-Martínez (Dean, College of Professional Studies). They will be joined by the Dean of the library, the associate deans of each college, and the School Leader for each new schools within each College.<sup>2</sup> This list includes: Bhavik Pathak (Associate Dean, College of Professional Studies and Director, Leighton School of Business), Jenny Deranek (Associate Dean, Dwyer School of Health Sciences), Tony Randles (Assistant Dean, School of Education), Otrude Moyo (Director, School of Social), Tami Martinez (Associate Dean, Raclin School of the Arts), Henry Scott (Associate Dean, School of Natural Sciences), Kyoko Takanashi (Associate Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences), and Susan Thomas (Dean, Library Services). Dr. Bennion will be in regular contact with these academic cabinet members via email and at monthly Academic Cabinet meetings.
- The Associate Deans, Assistant Deans, and Directors who serve as heads of their schools will help communicate the importance of educating for democracy to their department chairs, program directors, and faculty and encourage faculty to incorporate voter

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<sup>1</sup> Although the campus has restructured from six colleges to two – beginning July 1, 2024, prior colleges have largely remained intact, now existing as schools within the College of Professional Studies and the College of Arts & Sciences. This allows us to continue our past efforts with minimal disruption given that the new School Leaders have already demonstrated a commitment to continuing – and strengthening – our collective efforts to promote nonpartisan democratic engagement. Now that the major task of reorganization is complete, academic leaders can focus on working effectively within the new structure. A few new members will join our existing team and future inclusion in this coalition will be based on the job titles/positions that individuals hold, allowing for automatic replacement (barring unusual circumstances in which a particular leader opts not to cooperate – something that has not been a problem to date). In such circumstances, we will ask this academic leader to appoint a representative from their school to serve in their place.

<sup>2</sup> A number of factors influence the titles used for each new School Leader, but our coalition will continue to engage all school leaders whether their title is Associate Dean, Assistant Dean, or Director.

registration and education activities into the classroom. They will also help identify Faculty Civic Engagement Champions and send our discipline-specific messaging to faculty to share with students via email, class announcements, and Canvas announcements.

- Other Members of the Academic Cabinet and the Chancellor's Cabinet: Other faculty and staff members involved in our #IUSBVotes leadership team include Keith Dawson (Registrar), Connie Peterson-Miller (Director of Admissions and International Student Services), Kori Vitangelli (Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs), Laura Harlow (Dean of Students and former Director of Equity and Inclusion), Steven Gerenscner (President of the Academic Senate), Jay VanderVeen (Director of the University Center for Excellence in Teaching), Rick Dennie (Director of Student Support), Melissa Pace (Office of Financial Aid), Erika Zynda (Campus Grants Coordinator), Pedro Huet (Institutional Analytics Campus Manager). *We briefly highlight the role of each of these persons in the bullet points that follow. We will work one-on-one with these people (and their support staff) on the specific tasks/roles identified below in addition to meeting with them at monthly meetings of the Academic Cabinet organized by the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, monthly meetings of the Deans and Directors organized by the Chancellor, and monthly Academic Senate meetings, organized by the Senate President and attended by voting and non-voting faculty, staff, and administrators.*
  - The **Registrar** will maintain up-to-date course information to aid in scheduling in-class and Zoom presentations. The Office of the Registrar will also work with our team to ensure that all registered students receive the resources needed to register to vote and, along with the Director of Financial Aid, will officially record and report our compliance with federal mandates regarding Constitution Day and voter registration.
  - The **Director of Admissions and International Student Services** will help us to engage international students in our voter registration and education efforts and help us to connect domestic and international students in ways that educate and engage both populations.
  - The **Vice Chancellor for Student Engagement and Dean of Students** will help us to plan programming and outreach efforts that reach the widest group of students possible, allowing us to reach under-represented students, overcome turnout gaps identified in our NSLVE report, and follow best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion while promoting a sense of belonging and students' desire to engaged on and office campus while making their voices heard.
  - The **President of the Academic Senate** will ensure that our team gets space on the senate agenda to share our plans with faculty and seek greater faculty engagement with planning and implementation of our Campus Action Plan.
  - The **Director of the University Center for Excellence in Teaching (UCET)** will work with Dr. Bennion to schedule faculty workshops designed to promote civic knowledge, skills and experience - including training them to register voters, use the voter engagement Canvas module, and demonstrate the campus-branded

(Civic Nation) voter engagement portal to students – along with training on how to embed key civic skills and civic action projects into courses throughout the year.

- The **Director of Student Support** will encourage advisors in our Titan Success Center and faculty teaching the U100 introduction to college life course to encourage students to participate in campus GOTV opportunities and will place QR codes with our campus registration portal in prominent locations so that all students seeking academic and other support services will see them.
  - Meanwhile, the **Office of Financial Aid** will work with Dr. Bennion to identify work-study eligible #IUSBVotes Democracy Fellows and to educate fellows, and their faculty/staff advisor, on the requirements attached to work-study positions. Similarly, the **Contracts and Grants Coordinator** will work with Dr. Bennion, and other members of the team, to prepare and submit grant applications to fund campus-wide civic/election education and engagement efforts. (This has already proven successful in generating three grants to support our fall 2024 GOTV efforts).
  - The **Institutional Analytics Campus Manager**, with the support of our lead data analyst, will help the team to collect and analyze useful data to supplement the NSLVE and better understand the political landscape on campus.
- Additional members of the team will include Tony Vickrey (General Supervisor of **Support Services**) who will ensure appropriate set-up for campus events, Betsy Lucal (**Director of First Year Experience**) who will help us reach all new freshman through visits to required first-year seminars and encouraging FYE professors to participate in GOTV classroom outreach efforts, Deb Marr & Cathy Borshuk (**Co-Directors of the Honors Program**) who will incentivize honors student leadership and volunteerism by making #IUSBVotes events part of the event attendance requirement and service hours requirement for our 450 honors students.
  - Eileen Villanueva (**Campus Event Planner**), Scott Strittmatter (**Director of Student Life and advisor to Titan Productions and the SGA**), Scott Cooper (**Athletics Director**), Loni Oelwein (**Housing Director**), David Saleh (**America Democracy Project Intern and Student Body Vice President**) will join the #IUSBVotes **Democracy Fellows** in rounding out our #IUSBVotes Team.
    - The Campus Events Office provides a one-stop-shop for event planning including room reservations, catering services, yard sign approval, event parking, security, AV, and more.
    - The Director of Student Life and SGA Vice President will help us engage diverse student clubs and organizations (e.g. Black Student Union, Latino Student Union, Queer Student Alliance) in our work. The SGA and Office of Student Life will also co-sponsor Constitution Day along with several of our civic holiday events and are working on strategies to incentivize participation in #IUSBVotes initiatives.

- As a returning SGA member, past and present ADP intern (i.e. Democracy Fellow), and member of diverse student organizations (e.g. Student Veteran Organization/Titan Vets, Muslim Student Association, Black Student Union), Mr. Saleh will help to recruit a diverse range of student leaders to join our existing student leadership team including returning democracy fellows: James Schultz, Liz Howard, Jarrett Taft, and Caleb Rice. This core – and experienced – student leadership team is primarily responsible for carrying out our campus GOTV efforts with the support of their supervisor (American Democracy Project Director Elizabeth Bennion), student organization leaders who represent diverse student communities, and the #IUSBVotes Team of faculty, staff, and administrators identified above.
- Other critical persons/offices that will support our work including the **Campus Event Planner** provides a one-stop shop for campus event planning (including room reservations, furniture and AV reservations, catering reservations, and more), the **Housing Director** will work with us to staff voter registration and education tables in residential areas, approve late night (after hours) debate watch parties (for president, vice president, governor, U.S. senate, and U.S. House), a Bagels & Ballots Vote Early Day Party to the Polls, and an Election Night Watch Party in the community building at campus housing, and provide publicity surrounding these events and other voter registration/education opportunities. (Ideally, we will also work with the **Residence Coordinator** to develop a training program for Residence Assistants that includes a Dorm Storm or House Competition).
- In addition, **payroll administrators** and ADP **secretary** will help us to carry out our plans by providing help approving and correcting intern TIMESHEETS and providing logistical support, while not being official members of the #IUSBVotes Team.
- **THE SUCCESSION PLAN IS CLEAR.** Our American Democracy Project Director, who leads the #iusbvotes coalition, has a written job description that includes voter registration, education, and mobilization and the position (and director) have been in place, with course release, a summer stipend, and a small grant-supplemented budget, for two decades. If Dr. Bennion were to leave the institution or transition out of this role, the position would be filled by another faculty member, appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The other members of the team are included by virtue of their **positions** at the university. Whoever holds these positions will also be invited, and expected, to participate in campus GOTV efforts as part of their work with the university. Similarly, the mechanisms for providing student team leaders (“Democracy Fellows”) with course credit is institutionalized through the Department of Political Science while the mechanism for hiring work-study fellows is institutionalized within the Office of Financial Aid.
  - The diversity of the full student team in any given year will reflect the constellation of student organizations that students themselves create to represent their interests and needs, and the ADP Director will work with ADP Fellows, Director of Student Life, and the Dean of Students to ensure the coalition includes representatives of key student constituencies including the Black Student Union, Muslim Student Union, International Student Organization, Feminist Student Union, and Queer Straight Alliance, as well leaders from various Christian and Jewish

student organizations, and highly relevant academic clubs (e.g. History Club, Criminal Justice Student Organization, and Political Science Club).

**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, leaders who have the ability to set priorities and staff members whose assistance is required to carry out plans and host events on our campus.

Members of the team will meet at least monthly as part of the Academic Council Meetings, Chancellor's Cabinet Meetings, and Academic Senate Meetings beginning August 2024 (with 1:1 and small group meetings happening with greater frequency). Members of the team will provide brief updates – and a call for action – at each of these meetings, with post-meeting following between the ADP Director and ADP Fellows and key members of the broader team.

We will also seek help from national partners committed to non-partisan student voter outreach, especially those groups associated with the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition.

- Following past practice, we plan to partner with the national American Democracy Project, American Political Science Association, All In Campus Democracy Challenge, National Voter Registration Day, Vote Early Day, Ask Every Student/Students Learn Students Vote Coalition, Community Engaged Alliance, Campus Election Engagement Project, League of Women Voters of the South Bend Area, League of Women Voters of Elkhart County, League of Women Voters of LaPorte County, Indiana Debate Commission, Institute for Democracy in Higher Education (NSLVE), Voter Riders, and Issue Voter. Signature partners will include our funders: Ask Every Student (NSLVE/NEO Philanthropy, Community Engagement Alliance, and National Voter Registration Day (Nonprofit Vote), plus the provider of our campus registration portal: All In Campus Democracy Challenge.
- We may also partner with Up to Us, Campus Vote Project, and the Scholars Strategy Network. We have indirectly partnered with NASPA, NCoC, and Young Invincibles in the past. NCoC and Young Invincibles funded past campus GOTV efforts and NASPA co-sponsors the conference we attend every summer. We would be happy to partner with the again in the future if the right opportunity arises. The key will be for all the partnerships to assist with the successful implementation of our Campus Action Plan.
- During the fall 2024 semester, funding will be provided by the campus (ADP budget) and the following external grants:
  - Ask Every Student Implementation Grant (**\$5,000**), 2024. Funded by the SLSV Coalition with funding from NEO Philanthropy. Supports a comprehensive campus wide effort to ask every student to register to vote in the fall 2024 election. Funds will be used to pay our student democracy fellows to

work under Dr. Bennion's supervision – and with the support of the campus -- carry out our plan.

- Election Engagement Grant (**\$1,500**), 2024.  
Funded by Community Engaged Alliance to support a comprehensive voter registration, education, and mobilization campaign at IU South Bend. Funds will be used to purchase food to attract students to events.
- National Voter Registration Day (**\$1,250**), 2024.  
Funded by NVRD and Nonprofit Vote to support a robust National Voter Registration Day campaign that increases the number of students registered to vote in the 2024 election. Funds will be used to purchase participation incentives including t-shirts that support the GOTV message and water bottles stuffed with the information students need to register and vote.
- Dr. Bennion will continue to apply for these small grants and will work with the Office of University Advancement (Rob DeCleene) to identify additional grants and donors to promote long-term financial sustainability of our campus civic and political engagement efforts.
- Note that we also partner with local media organizations. The South Bend Tribune prints and promotes our online voter guide. The local ABC, NBC, and CBS affiliates, along with the local public television and radio stations, partner with us to televise candidate debates. For example, all commercial and public broadcast stations (TV/radio) will work with the ADP and local League of Women Voters chapters to produce and broadcast a 2024 congressional candidate debate, while ABC57 will partner with the ADP and LWV to produce and air school board and county-level candidate forums. Local media outlets also provide news coverage of key campus voter engagement events. We will continue to cultivate and track media coverage of our voter registration, education, and mobilization activities and accomplishments.
- Succession Plan: If key voting coalition leaders change role or leave the institution, the work will continue because roles are related to people's functional responsibilities on our campus rather than individual interests or passions of the persons holding these positions. Similarly, when news directors of local TV stations change, we will work with the new director to continue producing election content – which is something that we have done with success for multiple election cycles. While student members of the #IUSBVotes team will change from year-to-year, the campus will continue to advertise the positions to all students and to work with leaders from diverse student organizations.

## II. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrate commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. We also see this same commitment reflected in our institution's values.

Mission Statement: Indiana University South Bend is this area's premier comprehensive public university dedicated to serving the needs of North Central Indiana and beyond. As a regional campus of Indiana University, IU South Bend provides a diverse population the opportunity to affordably earn a prestigious IU degree through its quality graduate and undergraduate programs. With its caring faculty and staff, IU South Bend is committed to an inclusive, student-centered approach that focuses on preparing its students for both the workforce and postgraduate education through rigorous coursework, research, and creative activity. We are a catalyst for social mobility that contributes to the vitality of our region by educating informed individuals, thoughtful stewards, innovative professionals, and responsible leaders.

The campus mission to create thoughtful stewards, innovative professionals, and responsible leaders who serve the region, and beyond, sounds a lot like the civic engagement mission of the American Democracy Project - to create citizens equipped to make a meaningful difference in their communities.

As with our strategic plan (see below), the commitment to civic engagement is implied (without using that phrase) and the commitment to democratic engagement is not explicit. It is clear that the campus sees itself as a steward of place and is eager to promote partnerships with the broader community. The commitment to civic and political engagement is real, but it is not explicitly stated in core written documents defining the campus mission and strategic plan. This should be improved in future mission statements and strategic plans. Given the overwhelming support for GOTV work among campus leaders, this is a step we expect to take in the future.

Despite this room for growth, the commitment to democratic engagement is woven into the culture of the institution – from the decades-long support of a robust American Democracy Project (through an annual budget, director course releases and summer stipends, work-study funding, office space, technological support, and frequent promotions/profiles created by the campus marketing and communications department). In fact, the American Democracy Project has brand new headquarters that is larger than our classroom computer labs! Our Chancellor is also among the signatories of the [ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge President's Commitment to 100% Voter Registration and Turnout](#).

Moreover, our campus General Education focus on critical thinking, information literacy, diversity in U.S. society also lend themselves well to engaging entire classes in American Democracy Project events designed to cultivate the habits of mind, and deliberative skills, required for active civic and voter engagement.

Strategic Plan: Goal 5: Enhance Community, Regional and National Partnerships.

-Share the talents of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni to strengthen our community, region, nation, and world.



-Formalize, coordinate, and promote existing and new partnerships that integrate community engagement in campus culture, including curricular, co-curricular, and volunteer activities.

-Develop and enhance mutual and reciprocal relationships and partnerships among faculty, staff, students, alumni, and local and regional non-profit organizations, government entities, business, and industry to ensure positive community **outcomes**.

-Produce annual evidence of the extent, nature, and impact of our external engagement activities.

-Perform an assessment of our external engagement activity and identify the needs of our communities. Create a plan with goals for our engagement activity.

-Identify opportunities to expand connections and build partnerships in our community, region, nation, and world to meet our engagement goals.

-Strengthen partnerships that open doors to educational opportunities.”

On campus, we've seen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs or student organizations
- Campus leaders promoting voting
- Voter registration tables
- Signage promoting Election Day
- Voter information tables, candidate forums and debates, debate watch parties, virtual and in-person classroom-based voter registration drives

On campus, we've experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
- Political speakers
- Walks / rides to polls
- Registering to vote
- Civic Holiday events (incl. National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, Election Hero Day, and Vote Early Day)
- Deliberative dialogues
- Election-related event programming including candidate forums, candidate speed dating, election information sessions, and candidate debates

This year we are also working with the county clerk to recruit and train student poll workers. This partnership has been highlighted in local media and includes both a daytime and evening training sessions on campus for student poll workers and other poll workers in our county.

There is always room for improvement and the emphasis on civic learning and democratic engagement campus-wide could be increased by involving a wider range of faculty, staff, and students in our campuswide civic and political engagement efforts. Still, there is a strong institutional commitment to civic and political engagement, as evidenced by the dozens of faculty members who agree to make and post announcements about voting in class and on campus and

the recent upgrading of the American Democracy Project headquarters to a large and highly visible location on the first floor of a major classroom building.

### III. Landscape

The following tables provide a brief overview of the landscape of our campus. This information is based on data collected as of Aug. 31, 2023 when our total student enrollment was 4,446.

#### Enrollment Data:

Undergraduate	Graduate	Full Time	Part Time
3918	528	71%	29%

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents
91%	3%	6%	400 (max capacity)

#### Gender Demographics:

Men	Women
34%	66%

#### Age:

<24	>25
73%	27%

#### Racial Demographics:

Asian	American Indian / Alaska Native	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	2 or More Races
2.1%	0.162%	8.48%	18.1%	%	63.2%	5.43%

Our institution has also utilized the following data gathering tools:

- Ask Every Student First Step Form
- National Survey of Student Engagement

These tools will help to inform our institution's civic learning and democratic engagement efforts. For example, our most recent NSSE results show that IU South Bend compares favorably to other IU campuses and to peer institutions in students' reflections about their interactions and relationships with faculty. This is one reason we work diligently to get our faculty involved in our voter outreach efforts. Professor Bennion will continue to talk with the Chancellor, Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, and campus Deans and Directors about how the NSSE and AES framework should inform our Campus Action Plan for the coming year(s).

#### IV. Goals

We know our campus faces following challenges internally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters, including the fact that our institution's mission statement, values, and strategic plan do not mention civic learning and democratic engagement. Sustainable funding is also a topic worth consideration. Funding has been adequate with the help of grant funding (which is not guaranteed). Integration throughout the campus should also be improved. While the work is not completely siloed, it is largely carried out by one entity (the American Democracy Project); we need to engage more students, staff, and faculty in the work.

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

- While state laws are not as bad as they could be (and do not prevent us from supporting student voter registration efforts), the 29-day pre-registration requirement, the lack of mail-in voting, the lack of Election Day registration and no-excuse absentee voting options make the work more challenging than it should be. The lack of robust civic group involvement in all counties also makes it challenging to educate & engage students from so many different nearby communities.
- In addition, a new state law (SB202) requires that all faculty, including tenured faculty, be assessed for "viewpoint diversity" – with penalty of termination of employment for those who share personal political views that are deemed insufficiently (ideologically) diverse or irrelevant to the course curriculum. This has made some faculty nervous about introducing anything related to politics into their classes. Fortunately, the campus and the IU system has been clear that voter registration and engagement is a campus and

university priority and, therefore, classroom voter registration presentations and informational Canvas announcement are appropriate regardless of the topic or curriculum of the course.

With that said, we know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:

- We have someone whose job responsibility is to foster civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- We have a coalition of people who are positioned to implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- We have processes in place for registering large percentages of our students.
- We have ways in which we communicate voting information to our students.
- We use the resources readily available to develop and implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- Voter engagement efforts on campus are nonpartisan.
- We engage student leaders to lead our initiative.
- We have an outstanding working relationship with our local election office.
- We have working relationships with community partners who are invested in civic learning and democratic engagement.
- Faculty, staff, and students across campus are willing to "step up" to help with voter engagement efforts campus/local groups are prepared to supplement base funding and grant funding to support this work

These strengths are tempered by the political context in which we find ourselves. We live in a state where neither statewide nor presidential elections are competitive due to the dominance of one party statewide. Indiana is the “reddest” state in the Midwest. All statewide offices are held by Republicans. The Republicans have a super majority in both the state House and the state Senate, and the state’s electoral college votes were cast for the Republican in every presidential election since 1940, except 1964, when Lyndon Johnson won a landslide victory over Barry Goldwater and in 2008, when Barack Obama narrowly defeated John McCain during a severe recession under a Republican president including a 25% unemployment rate in places like Elkhart County, Indiana. Republicans have won by double-digits in the last three elections, with Donald Trump receiving 57% support to Joe Biden’s 41% in 2020.

This sometimes makes it difficult to generate enthusiasm among students who often feel like their votes don’t matter because they assume that their candidates will win (or lose) with or without them. In fact, out of all fifty states plus Washington DC, our state ranked 50th out of 51 for voter turnout in 2022, and 40th when it comes to registration.

When setting our measurable goals for 2024 we take into account this state political context, and the national context in which young people have expressed little enthusiasm for either president

candidate (although we see some increased interest after Kamala Harris replaced Joe Biden on the ballot). Because of these factors we expect that young people in our state may participate at lower rates than in 2020. Our goal, then, is to maintain the relatively HIGH levels of student turnout we achieved in 2020. We have set the three goals that we would like to achieve in 2024:

1. To match or increase the percentage of students who are registered to vote compared to the last presidential/general election in 2020 by registering at least 84.1% of our student body.
2. To match or increase the percentage of registered students who cast a ballot, by inspiring at least 74.8 percent of registered students to get out and vote.
3. To match or increase the overall student voter turnout among IU South Bend students, by achieving a turnout rate of at least 62.9.

***While these goals may not seem ambitious, they are actually very much so!***

Context is extremely important in interpreting the results of specific campus GOTV efforts. If Indiana University South Bend can match or exceed voter registration and turnout rates of 2020, a year with unusually high student electoral participation, despite the lack of competitive elections, same-day voter registration, robust statewide culture of engagement, or swing-state status that other campuses enjoy, we will have achieved something to be proud of – and to build upon in future years.

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

1. Expand the number of student organizations engaged in voter registration, education, and mobilization initiatives to engage at least ten unique organizations.
2. Expand the number of faculty members who are actively engaged in voter registration, education, and mobilization initiatives to engage at least three dozen faculty members.
3. Increase the visibility of our commitment to democratic engagement (through revisions to our mission statement, strategic plan, website, and press releases).
4. Reduce existing gaps in participation rates by age, race, ethnicity, and program of study.

As an emerging HIS, we would also like to achieve voter parity across racial and ethnic groups, with students of color voting at the same rate as white students

## **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):

- VOTER REGISTRATION: Voter registration in the classroom - Voter registration on Zoom - Voter registration tables - Voter registration signage --Voter registration Canvas module - Voter Registration at Welcome Week, Voter Registration on Constitution Day, National Voter Registration Day
- VOTER EDUCATION: National Voter Education Week - Voter education tables - Voter education sessions on campus - Voter education session on Zoom - On-campus and Online open “office hours” for voter Q&A - Candidate forums/debates - Deliberative dialogues on key issues shaping local/state/national elections - Voter education Canvas module & ready-to-use assignments
- VOTER MOBILIZATION - Get-out-the-Vote signage - Get-out-the-Vote tables/buttons - Vote Early Day - Party at the Polls

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

- In addition to all the above, we plan to add friend-to-friend calling, texting, emailing, and social media outreach campaigns plus “dorm storm” style house-vs.-house competitions in student housing and customized, targeted pre-scripted messages for faculty across campus to use when registering and mobilizing student voters in their own academic units/disciplines.

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

- Institutionalize democratic engagement efforts by formalizing the #IUSBVotes task force as an ongoing part of dean, director, administrator, and student leader roles.
- Institutionalize Civic Holidays by writing them into the job description of the campus American Democracy Project Director.
- Explicitly link our new First Year Experience to our democratic engagement goals. Explicitly include our civic and democratic engagement goals into the language of future campus mission statements and strategic plans.
- Establish a polling place on campus. ■

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

Our campus has access to our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) data for 2020, the last time our students participated in a presidential election. In 2020 our

registration rate was 84.1%. In comparison to the data from four years prior in our NSLVE report, this rate increased.

In 2020, our voting rate was 62.9% and our voting rate among registered students was 74.8%. During this year, our voting rate was lower than the national average (which is also true, more generally, of voter turnout in the state of Indiana).

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

- Asian
- Black
- Hispanic
- White
- 2 or More Races

For the racial groups that have recent voter turnout data, we saw the following groups increase in voter turnout compared to four years ago.

- Asian
- Black
- Hispanic
- White
- 2 or More Races

Our campus also has access to our NSLVE data for 2020. In 2018 our registration rate was 80%, our voting rate was 41.4% and our voting rate among registered students was 51.7%.

All demographic groups increased their participate rate (comparing 2020 to 2016). This includes undergraduates and graduate students, freshman, sophomores, and upperclassmen, full-time and part-time students, women and men. Men and women participated at roughly equal rates (with 63% of women and 62% of men casting a ballot in 2020).

Older students participated at greater rates than younger students, with 61% of 18-21 year olds versus 82% of 50+ year olds casting a ballot, but it was younger students who increased their participation rate most in 2020. (Ages 18-21: 50%->61%; 22-24: 51%->62%; 25-29: 53%->62%; 30-39: 59%->67%; 40-49: 74%-73%; 50+: 85%->82%).

All academic majors increased their participation rate (compared to 2016) except for communication/journalism (-1 p.p.), history (-2 p.p.), & physical sciences (-4 p.p.). The students with the highest participation level in 2020 were studying Multi-Interdisciplinary Studies (79%), Public Administration & Social Services (75%), Visual & Performing Arts (72%) and English Language & Literature (70%). The only academic field in which most students failed to cast a ballot was physical sciences (with only 46% of all majors casting a ballot in 2020). This was a reduction from 2016, when 50% of all physical sciences majors cast a ballot.

## **VI. Reporting & Evaluation**

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

- Email to the Chancellor
- Email to members of our campus coalition
- Email to campus administration

We plan to share this Action Plan (once completed) externally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Post on the ADP's campus website
- Share with the entire campus by posting a link to the complete Action Plan on the Daily Titan, our daily all-campus newsletter

We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Asking students to complete a brief post-election survey
- Asking faculty to complete a brief post-election survey
- Regrouping with campus coalition to debrief and reflect
- Integrating feedback collection into individual campus efforts

We plan to evaluate our success by:

- Reviewing our NSLVE data and looking for improvements year over year
- Seeking out feedback throughout the action planning process from people outside of our action planning team
- Revisiting our goals, identifying goals achieved and not achieved, and adjusting our short and long-term goals accordingly.