Prairie View A&M University 2020 Democratic Engagement Action Plan
Developed by: Crystal Edwards, PhD

Executive Summary:

The Civic Engagement Plan for Prairie View A&M University (PVU) was written and developed by Dr. Crystal Edwards, Civic Engagement Initiative Coordinator. The goals and strategies of this plan were informed by National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) and in collaboration with Students, Administrators, Staff, and faculty with a in-depth understanding of the unique challenges and obstacles faced by Prairie View students and community members. In alignment with the university's commitment to Civic Engagement, the Division of Student Affairs and through the Office of Student Engagement, promote non-partisan democratic engagement

This plan will continue to guide the work implemented beginning in the Fall 2020 and beyond. While creating this plan, we paid specific attention to increasing the voting rate of our students through, implementing numerous on campus voting registration opportunities, and by increasing efforts to promote, institutionalize, and make possible early voting for students.

While historically we have been successful in ensuring high voter registration rates, we were intentional in our focus in promoting democratic engagement and informed civic participation. The primary objective has remained to increase voter turnout and to mediate some of the ongoing obstacles to student voting. It is our hope that through the implementation of the strategies outlined below, we will be able to achieve both our short term and long term goals. Further, this plan was developed to ensure sustained fulfillment of PVU's ongoing commitment to student civic and democratic engagement.

Leadership:

Our leadership team includes the following:

The campus team charged with the responsibility of establishing and implementing the goals and strategies outlined in this plan includes students, administrators, and staff. The working group—or Democratic Engagement Coalition—which consists of the following:

Civic Engagement Initiative Coordinator	Dr. Crystal Edwards
Vice President for Student Affairs	Dr. Timothy Sams
Assistant Vice Chancellor for State Relations	Mayor Frank Jackson
Executive Director, Office of Student Engagement	Shante Moore
Communication Specialist	Kimberly McKnight
Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow	Cameron Jackson
Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow	Kala Washington
PV Student Government Association President	Alanna Gaskin

PV Student Government Association Vice President   Gregory Bowens

The working group was also assisted by Valerie Holmes, the Assistant Vice President for Student Experience. Additionally, efforts were made to establish cross campus assistance with faculty through the collaboration with the Community Engagement Committee and the Faculty Senate. Administrators and staff in Housing and Residence Life also supported our efforts to reach students in their residence both on and off campus.

Commitment:

Our campus has signed the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation.

Our campus has used the following methods to communicate with students about the election:

By email, By posting on institutional social media channels

Landscape:

Our campus demographic and voting data:

2014 -Voter Registration = 74.6% - Actual Voting Rate = 20.6%   2018 -Voter Registration = 77.3%   -Actual Voting Rate = 49.1%; 2019 Enrollment Data: Total Students on Campus (including UG/Post Bacc/GR/D): 8,940; Male Identified Students: 3,111, Female Identified Students: 5,829; Ethnic Demographics: African American- 83%, Hispanic- 8.7%, White- 1.6%, Asian- 1.9%, Am Indian/Alaskan/ Nat Hawaiian/Pacific Isl <1%, International- 2%, Multi-Racial- 1.6%

Goals:

Our campus democratic engagement goals are:

Short Term Goals:

Goal 1: Establish connections with civic and democratic organizations, both locally and nationally, that are reciprocal and mutually beneficial.
Goal 2: Increase student registration by 10 percent from the years prior and increase actual student voting numbers by 20 percent.
Goal 3: Identify ways to mediate the obstacles experienced by PVAMU students as it relates to: 1) registering to vote in Waller County; 2) having transportation and support for early voting at the Waller County Community Center; 3) improve instances of student voting suppression in the county.
Goal 4: Increase informed voting by providing students with candidate information both locally and nationally.
Goal 5: Increase student let civic engagement initiatives on PVAMU campus.

Long Term Goals:

Goal 1: Establish a campus culture of civic engagement and prepare students for lifelong engaged citizenship.

Goal 2: Challenge existing social and economic inequalities that threaten and prevent democratic involvement.
Goal 3: Secure early voting location on PVAMU campus that will aid in increasing student voter turnout.
Goal 4: Continue to grow and develop relationships with civic and democratic organizations, to ensure support for our student engagement efforts.

Strategy:

Our campus has used the following strategies and organized the following events:

In-person voter registration drives, In-person voter education events (e.g. film screenings, debates, lecture series, etc.), Classroom voter registration presentations (in-person or virtual), Virtual voter registration drives (e.g. Couch Party text banking events), Virtual voter education events (e.g. film screening, debates, lectures series, etc.), PVAMU Votes Challenge

1.   Engage in collaborative efforts with organizations and initiatives such as:
        a.   Students Learn Students Vote (SLSV) Coalition
        b.   Campus Vote Project
        c.   Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Network
        d.   Vote to Live
        e.   Houston Youth Voters
2. Facilitate large scale voter registration drives, as well as ongoing voter registration initiatives.
        a.   Freshman Registration Drive 9/5 and 9/12
        b.   "History is on Us" campaign 9/19
        c.   SGA Registration Days 9/15-10/5
        d.   PV Final Push Voter Registration Event 10/5
3.   Participate in National Black Voter Day 9/18
        a.   Virtual Rally #ReclaimYourVote
4.   Facilitate civic engagement themed workshops and panel discussions that facilitate civic learning
        a.   Taking the Mystery Out of Voting Workshop
5.   Promote informed Voting through virtual roundtables and Q&A Sessions to discuss candidates in both national and local elections; as well as the significant policy items.
6.   Targeted social media and campus wide email marketing campaigns
7.   Establish an Early Voting Initiative
8.   Campus Wide voting challenge
9.   Increase student advocacy and thought leadership
10.   Implement cross unit collaborations to ensure that students are receiving all of the necessary information when it comes to voter registration, voting in person, voting by mail/absentee ballots.

NSLVE:

Prairie View A&M University has authorized NSLVE.

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

Evaluation will be a critical means of measuring the effectiveness of our democratic engagement efforts, specifically as it relates to: increasing student voter turnout, voter registration, and civic education. The process will continue to be lead through the Office of Student Affairs and Student Engagement. Lead by the Civic Engagement Initiative Coordinator, we will track attendance at events/programs and assess outcomes using event/program evaluations. We will continue to work with NSLVE to gain and maintain data for annual data comparisons. Following the 2020 elections, we will conduct an overall evaluation of the success of our efforts in alignment with both our short-term and long-term goals, as outlined in our Civic Engagement Plan. The information will be utilized to make necessary adjustments to our civic and democratic engagement efforts moving forward.

Reporting:

We will report our campus action plan and NSLVE reports in the following ways:

Our action plan will be posted on our campus website and shared with the campus community.

Will be shared with the campus community and the information from the report will be included in the Student Affairs' Performance Snapshot. The snapshot if posted on the university website and available to the campus community and the general public.