Democratic Engagement Action Plan Rubric

DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT = CIVIC LEARNING + POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT + STUDENT VOTER PARTICIPATION

This rubric was developed to supplement the publication, Strengthening American Democracy: A Guide for Developing an Action Plan to Increase Civic Learning, Political Engagement, and Voter Participation Among College Students (3rd Ed.).

Language in the rubric can and should be adapted to the language of the individual campus.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT	is any act intended to improve or influence a community through deliberation, collaboration, and reciprocal relationships and community-building.
CIVIC LEARNING	is promoting the education of students for engaged citizenship through democratic participation in their communities, respect and appreciation of diversity, applied learning, and social responsibility.
CURRICULUM	is an academic course of study; the knowledge students are expected to learn in the classroom.
DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT	is a combination of promoting the education of students for engaged participation through democratic mechanisms and principles in their communities, respect and appreciation of diversity, applied learning, and social responsibility.
DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION	is civic engagement that involves democratic processes (e.g., when an organization puts a matter to a vote and there is individual participation).
FULL PARTICIPATION	this occurs when all students are asked to participate in the democratic process
NATIONAL STUDY OF LEARNING, VOTING, AND ENGAGEMENT (NSLVE)	offers colleges and universities an opportunity to learn their student registration and voting rates and, for interested campuses, a closer examination of their campus climate for political learning and engagement and correlations between specific student learning experiences and voting. https://idhe.tufts.edu/nslve
POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT OR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION	is civic engagement that emphasizes governmental institutions and/or power (e.g., voting in a local, state, or federal election). Participating in the political process also occurs by making one's own opinions and beliefs known outside of the electoral process (e.g., protesting, campaigning, performing jury duty, running for office, community organizing).
S.M.A.R.T.I.E.	is an acronym used to guide goal-setting: Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable.
VOTER REGISTRATION	is the process of successfully completing the application to be able to cast a ballot in an election.
VOTER EDUCATION	is the curricular and co-curricular activities offered to students and designed to facilitate civic learning, political engagement, and increase participation in elections.
VOTER MOBILIZATION	the act of implementing tactics to encourage potential voters to follow through with becoming voters.

	4 | Established	**3 | Progressing**	**2 | Emerging**	**1 | Undeveloped**
Executive Summary Overview of the action plan explains: 1) Who developed it 2) The purpose of the plan 3) Where the plan will be implemented 4) The goal(s) of the plan 5) The intended duration of the plan 6) How the plan will be implemented.	Overview of action plan includes responses to all 6 of the suggested guiding questions.	Overview of action plan includes responses to 4-5 of the suggested guiding questions.	Overview of action plan includes responses to 1-3 of the suggested guiding questions.	Overview of action plan is not included.
Leadership Description, including names and titles, of the leadership coalition responsible for improving democratic engagement. 5 categories of participation are encouraged: 1) students 2) faculty 3) student affairs 4) community/national organizations 5) local elections office coordination.	A leadership team of all relevant stakeholders (across 5 categories) exists. The team includes academic affairs, student affairs, and students; as well as community partners and/or the local election office. The team includes diverse and marginalized communities.	A leadership team with many relevant stakeholders (across 3-4 categories) exists AND an effort is made to include diverse and marginalized communities.	A leadership team with a few relevant stakeholders (across 1-2 categories) exists, OR is in the process of being formed.	A leadership team has not yet been formed AND plans to develop one are not specified.
Commitment Description of institutional commitment to improving democratic engagement.	According to the plan, institutional commitment is visible and widely communicated – internally and externally. It is woven into the culture of the institution and is clearly reflected in the institution's mission, learning outcomes, curriculum, and co-curriculum.	According to the plan, institutional commitment is explicit, but is marginal - it is not woven into the culture of the institution, and appears in silos.	Institutional commitment is implied in the plan, but it is not explicitly described.	Institutional commitment is not apparent in the action plan.
Landscape Analysis of student data, campus climate, and current institutional efforts for improving democratic engagement.	The plan communicates a comprehensive understanding of its students, campus efforts, and climate; AND is using this information to inform its strategy.	The plan communicates an understanding of either its students, campus efforts, and/or climate; and may be using this information to inform its strategy.	The plan communicates that a landscape analysis is being developed.	The plan does not communicate that a landscape analysis exists or is being developed.
Goals Description of institutional short-term (e.g., by next election) and long-term (e.g., in next decade or two election cycles) desired democratic engagement results.	Short-term and long-term democratic engagement goals are described. Goals are also S.M.A.R.T.I.E.: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound, Inclusive, and Equitable.	Short-term AND long-term democratic engagement goals are described.	Only short-term OR long-term democratic engagement goals are described.	Neither short-term nor long-term democratic engagement goals are described.
National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) Free report providing campuses with their actual student registration and voting rates.	Summary AND detailed (e.g., demographic) NSLVE data are described and specific goals based on these data are set.	Either summary OR detailed (e.g., demographic) NSLVE data are described and general voting goals are set.	Participation in NSLVE is mentioned.	Participation in NSLVE is not mentioned.
Strategy Description of institutional efforts to reach desired democratic engagement results.	Strategy includes short-term tactics and long-term strategies. Tactics include a description of multiple voter registration, voter education, and voter turnout activities. Long-term strategies seek to make civic learning and democratic engagement an established part of the institution's curriculum and co-curriculum and go beyond the election.	Strategy includes short-term tactics. Tactics include a description of voter registration, voter education, and voter engagement activities. Activities occur inside and outside the classroom, but are not described as a systematic part of the curriculum or defined as long-term strategies.	Strategy includes short-term tactics. Tactics include description of voter registration, voter education, and/or voter engagement activities, but not all three. Activities predominantly occur outside the classroom. Long-term strategies are not described.	Institutional efforts to reach desired results in terms of voter registration, voter education, and voter engagement are not described.
Reporting Description of institutional efforts to make plans, data, and reports public.	Action plan, data, and reports are shared on campus AND are publicly available.	Two or more of the action plan, data, and reports are shared on campus and/or publicly.	One or more of the action plan, data, and reports is available either on campus or publicly, OR a plan to do so is being developed.	Institutional efforts to share plans, data, and reports OR to make them public are not described.
Evaluation Description of institutional efforts to evaluate the action plan, implementation, efforts, and results.	The evaluation strategy describes how and what information will be collected and analyzed as well as how the results will be used to make improvements. Includes more than just looking at NSLVE data. Evaluation happens before, during, and after plan implementation. Evaluation strategy crosses several categories of participation from the Leadership Section.	The evaluation strategy describes how and what information will be collected and analyzed. Includes more than just looking at NSLVE data. Evaluation happens during and after plan implementation. Evaluation strategy crosses 1 category of participation from the Leadership Section.	The evaluation strategy describes what information will be collected. Evaluation mostly consists of NSLVE breakdown data. Evaluation is limited to post-election information.	Institutional efforts to evaluate the action plan, implementation, efforts, and results are not described.