



FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY

AMERICAN DEMOCRACY PROJECT

Forward thinking. World ready.

This year, we would not only like to reach peak voter registration but also see more turnout at the polls on election day. To do this, we have a few points to make students more likely to vote:

- Partnerships with various organizations. We already partner with Student Government Association with our Voter Registration Day Drive, but I believe if we partner with other campus groups, we can reach a wider variety of students.
- Educate students on their right to vote and how they can exercise it. Many students don't vote because they don't even realize they can vote here in Hays, or that they can request ballots from their hometown. By giving them the information they need, they are more likely to go vote. We would also like to heavily push absentee ballots given our demographic of students from other areas of the state.
- Inform students on notable deadlines. Make sure all students are aware of the deadline to register to vote and the deadlines for requesting absentee ballots.
- Host events that make students excited to exercise their right. Make sure events emphasize the importance of using one's right to vote in order to make real changes in their local, state and national government.

Partnerships

Since the American Democracy Project is a non-partisan organization, I believe we can appeal to most campus organizations by offering an avenue for voter registration that doesn't include a partisan pressure. We can reach out to different organizations that will likely yield motivated potential voters such as:

- Greek Life
- Faith-based organizations
- Various Honor societies
- Cultural organizations

By attending these organizational meetings and letting the involved students know the laws regarding their right to vote, we can reach more people in a more personable setting than tabling in the Union.

Through positive partnerships, we can also recruit volunteers for future registration drives and direct motivated volunteers towards campaigns. This will drive engagement up and make them more likely to vote in November.

Education

Most students are unaware of the laws that govern how they can and cannot vote and this mainly prevents them from voting. The most common issue that students run into when register to vote is which address they should use, since many of our students are not originally from Hays. Many are unaware that they can register to vote here if they wish, even if they are living in residential halls. Others do not wish to vote here because they are more connected to their local politics, and are unaware of the process of getting an absentee ballot. By letting students know their voting rights, they are more likely to use this knowledge to vote. With the new KSVotes.org system, we can push absentee ballots to students who wish to vote in their hometown.

Deadlines

Keeping students aware of deadlines attached to voter registration, it puts a sense of urgency into the process. We should utilize social media to host a countdown 10 days before the registration deadline to keep people in the loop, while also allowing them to share this information with their followers. If possible, we should also utilize all-student emails to send out reminders a week before, a day before and day of.

Events

We should keep the election in the back of our mind during our events so we can encourage students to get involved and vote. Most of the students who attend our events are civically engaged in some form or another and I think that after hearing an interesting panel or an inspiring presentation, that is the best time to encourage them to register to vote. Our debates will likely be the most engaging event but all of our events have the potential to inspire people to be engaged.

Tools:

- KSVotes.org
- Nonpartisan and nonprofit organizations such as LoudLight.org who specialize in providing unbiased commentary on state issues
- Our National Voter Registration kit which includes posters to outline important dates and stickers to hand out
- Giveaways from our partnership with the New York Tiems
- Social media; especially with national hashtags such as #AceTheMidterms and #MidtermsonMyTerms

- Our partnership with Student Government Association which provides us with volunteers for Voter Registration Drives

Future Goals:

- More engagement with the community, particularly with the local high schools in getting students registered to vote if they will turn 18 before the next election
- Tracking our voter engagement better through access to our NSLVE data
- Attempting to establish a polling center on campus
- Shuttling students to their local polling center from residential life buildings