

## **Project Proposal, National Campaign**

### **Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University**

Prepared by

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For our National Campaign project, RU Voting™ will be focused upon enhancing political awareness and political participation among students. We focused upon this topic due to the implications active political participation can have on our generation and society at large. Having a voice in politics through the powerful tool of voting is part of what enables us to make positive change in our daily lives through the political process.

Political participation, especially getting to the polls, can be a challenge, on the Rutgers campus. Several obstacles make the process difficult –a student body of over 40,000 students (one of the largest campuses in the country), students living on and off campus, and polling locations that are not always easily accessible. It is for these reasons that RU Voting™ has decided to focus its efforts on enhancing political awareness and participation among students.

**Overall Goal:** Increase student interest in politics, increase the number of registered voters, and increase voter turnout for Rutgers University, as well as for participating schools.

#### **Proposed National Campaign Project – Millennial Voters Club:**

- Each consortium school will register a Millennial Voters club on their campus. The purpose of this club is to increase voter registration, interest in politics, and voter turnout at each club's respective university. It will specialize in establishing on-campus voter registration drives and organizing political events such as documentary screenings or public debates.
  - Membership of at least 20 students per club.

- Each club will act independently on its own campus in order to increase interest in politics, voter registration, and voter turnout.

### **Measuring Success:**

#### *Increase Interest*

- Rutgers University
  - Hold 1 club organized “Pizza and Politics” Event – A student event featuring a public speaker, student panel, or debate, with free food served. Voter registration also will be provided during this event.
    - Goal= 50-75 attendees
  - Hold 1 club organized “Popcorn and Politics” Event – Student event featuring a politically styled documentary, movie or show screening with discussion to follow. Voter registration also will be available during this event.
    - Goal=50 attendees
  - Make greater use of existing Youth Political Participation/RU Voting social media tools
    - Post 5-7 items/week
    - Increase likes/shares by 5-10% in one year
- National Campaign (each consortium school)
  - Hold 1 club organized “Popcorn and Politics” Event – Student event featuring a politically styled documentary, movie or show screening with discussion to follow. Voter registration also will be available during this event.
    - Goal=50 attendees
  - Make greater use of clubs’ social media tools
    - Post 5-7 items/week
    - Increase likes/shares by 5% in one year

#### *Increase Number of Registered Voters*

- Rutgers University
  - Hold two club organized campus-wide voter registration drives

- National Voter Registration Day
- Constitution Day
  - Goal= Increase in registrants by 5-10%
- National Campaign (each consortium school)
  - Hold a club organized campus-wide voter registration drives organized by each consortium school's respective club.
    - National Voter Registration Day or Constitution Day
      - Goal= Increase in registrants by 5%

*Increase Voter Turnout Rates*

- Rutgers University
  - Social Media
    - Starting 1 month before election, each club will post weekly, reminding students to vote and where to vote.
    - 1 week before election, increase posts to every other day.
      - Goal=5-10% increase in turnout
  - Flyers
  - Advertisements on Rutgers TV and Radio networks, Rutgers University's Webpage
  - E-mail blast from the President's office
- National Campaign (each consortium school)
  - Social Media
    - Social Media/ Flyers Starting 1 month before election, weekly posts reminding students to when and where to vote.
    - 1 week before election, increase posts to every other day.
      - Goal=5% increase in turnout
  - Flyers
  - Advertisements on respective University's webpage, TV and Radio Networks
  - Email Blast from President's office

*Throughout Year 1:*

- Consortium schools and their clubs will connect at a regional level.
  - Hold monthly Google Hangout/ Skype sessions with consortium schools at a regional level – discuss what schools have done to increase political interest, what has worked and what hasn't, etc.
    - Goal=75-80% of registered consortium schools have representatives in attendance
- Each school's respective club will be responsible for creating Facebook and Twitter accounts for their university, using these accounts as a tool help achieve the aforementioned goals.
- By the end of year one, all consortium schools and their clubs should make a collaborative effort to increase political interest, voter registration, and voter turnout.
  - Each club should create an interactive flowchart or some other means of illustrating how to register to vote on their specific campus, where polling locations will be for their specific campus, and what political events will be held on their specific campus. This flowchart/fact sheet can then be uploaded onto Harvard's IOP website.
- Rutgers
  - 2-3 club organized on campus voter registration drives
  - 150-200 more followers on social media platforms
  - Increase in voter turnout by 5-10%
- National Campaign
  - Creation of each consortium school's Millennial Voters club
  - 1 on campus voter registration drives for each participating school (sponsored by their respective club)
  - Each school's club to increase membership to 25+ students per club
  - 150-200 Followers on each school's club Facebook/Twitter pages
  - Increase in voter turnout on consortium schools' campus by 5%

**Collaboration:**

Participating schools could work with several on-campus groups, such as the Student Assembly, school papers/tv networks/radio stations, College Republicans/Democrats, NAACP, etc. These groups could co-sponsor voter registration drives, advertise events through their social media presence, and increase the number of volunteers available.

**Research:**

Each school and its club should research topics such as how many students are registered on their college campus, how many have been registered in the past 5 years, how many students vote and how frequently, what regional barriers/disincentives there may be to prevent students from voting, how to better advertise the necessity and importance of voting, etc.

Each school and its club should also be responsible for finding local policy makers who share a belief that increasing voter registration and political awareness is something that should be addressed through not only political channels, but grassroots student organizations as well. Research can be done on how to actively address the issue at hand, whether it be through civic or political methods. For example, if focusing on political, research can be done on legislation that may be hindering the ability of people to vote. Or, in regards to civic methods, research could be done about the effectiveness of clubs, voter registration drives, etc.



Eagleton Institute of Politics

### General Timeline:

#### Eagleton Institute of Politics

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## First 6 Months

- During the initial months, a main goal would be to create a solid group of at least 10 participating schools.
- Hold 2-3 voter registration drives (to be held annually): Student Involvement Fair, Constitution Day, and National Voter Registration Day, etc. on Rutgers Campus. For consortium schools, hold 1 voter registration drive and establish their club.

## First Year

- Increase school membership to 15-20 participants.
- Upload each consortium club's infographic/factsheet onto Harvard's IOP website.

## Year Two

- Increase membership to 35-50 schools.
- Make serious efforts to either pass legislation or begin the lobbying process to make voting more accessible and increase awareness about the importance of voting.