

Deans Council agenda

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE
ELECTORAL VOICE INITIATIVE
AMERICAN DEMOCRACY PROJECT

Your campus is cordially invited to participate in an exciting nationwide voter registration project! Join us in registering 50,000 new voters in the national elections in Fall 2006.

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), through its American Democracy Project, recently received a grant as part of the Young Voter Strategies Project to conduct research while undertaking voter registration activities. We are one of twelve organizations nationwide to receive funding through the support of the Pew Charitable Trusts.

This is an invitation for your campus to be involved.

By law, all colleges and universities receiving federal funds are required to provide students with opportunities to register to vote. For those of us in the American Democracy Project, voter registration is often a key activity. While many institutions have worked to register their students, we know very little about the best ways to register college students. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) invites you to join our effort to register 50,000 students (on 100 campuses) nationwide during the national elections this coming Fall 2006. Because the project is designed as a randomized field experiment, we will be able to measure the effectiveness of our efforts and to assess the relative success of different voter registration tactics. Tactics will include: classroom-based registration, registration tables, direct mail, campus mail, and e-mail. Campuses may opt into any (or all) of these tactics, or add their own ideas. This study will provide you with valuable assessment data about your institution, as well as important lessons for future registration campaigns.

As part of the Young Voter Strategies Project, your campus will receive the following FREE benefits:

To help you plan and execute your registration activities, we will provide you with:

- Detailed information about your state's voter registration laws.
- Legally approved (non-partisan) messages to use during your registration campaign.
- A list of do's and don'ts for non-partisan voter registration campaigns.
- Training sessions and detailed advice for non-partisan voter registration activities.
- Opportunities to talk with registration leaders on other AASCU campuses.
- Advice and mentoring from leading researchers on voter registration and mobilization techniques.
- A specific, specially-tailored plan for registering (and tracking) young voters on your campus.
- Continued access to voter registration experts for trouble-shooting and sustained advice.

To help you showcase the good work of your campus, we will provide you with:

- Sample press releases (allowing you to insert your campus name for instant publicity)
- Talking points for editorials and interviews with newspaper, radio, and television reporters.
- A recommended timeline for press releases and other media-generating tactics.
- Opportunities to feature your students, staff, and faculty in public radio commentaries.
- Conference calls for your communications director to talk with directors on other campuses.
- Recognition on AASCU's American Democracy Project website.
- Recognition on the *New York Times* Knowledge Networks website.
- Acknowledgement in printed reports and academic publications about this project.

To help you measure your success and plan for the future we will provide you with:

- A scientific assessment of the effectiveness of the voter registration tactics used on your campus.
- Specific information about the *relative* effectiveness of different voter registration techniques.
- A summary of the results of AASCU's multi-campus voter registration field experiment.
- A Guide to Best Practices based on (tested) registration activities by diverse groups in 2006.
- Advice from voter registration researchers about new directions for the future.
- Conference calls with other campus registration leaders about their 2006 efforts and future plans.
- Opportunities to work with voter registration researchers to design (and co-author) future studies.
- Suggestions for reporting the results of your 2006 successes in ways that might peak donor interest.

In addition to the long list of benefits mentioned above, the project will provide two types of stipends to participating campuses. One stipend will be an honorarium designed to support the work of a Campus Director at each institution. Stipends for Campus Directors will be pro-rated: for campuses with fewer than 8000 students, the stipend will be \$ 500; for campuses between 8,000 and 15,000 students, the stipend will be \$ 750; for campuses above 15,000 students, the stipend will be \$ 1,000. Stipends for student organization stipends will range from \$100 to \$500, depending on the size of the student organization, and will be individually negotiated with the principal investigator.

Each campus must designate a Campus Director in order to participate in this project. AASCU and the Principal Investigator (PI) will provide each Campus Director:

- Frequent access to the PI (for consultation and advice)
- A sample of a successful human subjects research application, plus assistance as needed
- High quality training. We will hold two training sessions at Snowbird for Campus Directors during the American Democracy Project national meeting June 15-17 in Utah, one on Thursday as a pre-conference session from 10 am – 2 pm, and second training session on Friday from 3:30 – 7:30 pm. For those not going to Snowbird, we will schedule a special conference call in July.
- Specific suggestions for recruiting professors (including sample e-mails, letters, and speeches)
- Specific suggestions for recruiting student clubs (including sample e-mail, letters, and talking points)
- Advice on how to coordinate the efforts of diverse and numerous campus actors
- Specific instructions regarding the experimental protocol and how to encourage compliance
- Legal advice and research about what data you can provide to the PI and how to provide it
- Legal assistance (if required) to access student data
- Regular opportunities to talk with other Campus Directors about challenges, questions, and progress
- A cash stipend

The Campus Director will be responsible for:

- Working with the Principal Investigator (PI) to design a specific registration plan.
- Working with the PI to obtain approval with your campus human subjects committee.
- Attending a training session in Snowbird, Utah or working separately with the PI to learn more about this field experiment.
- Recruiting professors to participate in the classroom registration experiment.
- Recruiting student clubs or leaders to participate in the tabling experiment.
- Coordinating the efforts of various campus actors to pursue a common registration strategy.
- Insuring the all participants follow the registration protocol designed for your campus.
- Submitting registration data (including photocopied registration cards, if legal) to the PI.
- Submitting student data (including class rosters, if applicable) to the PI.
- Maintaining regular contact with the PI via conference calls.
- Submitting brief (and regular) e-mail reports about registration activities to the PI.
- Reporting challenges, problems, and successes to the PI.
- Observing and reporting any competing (uncoordinated) registration activities on your campus.

We hope that you will join us in this important project. To register your campus, please ask the person you designate as your Campus Director to fill out the attached form and send it to John Hammang, AASCU Office of Special Projects, 202 478-4676 hammangj@aacu.org.

Please feel free to contact either of us at any time if you have any questions.

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Thank you for your interest in AASCU's Electoral Voice Project.

Please provide us with the information requested below. Enter it in the table cells underneath the column heading.

Please let your information wrap around in the boxes and **do not use carriage returns**. This information will be copied directly from this form and pasted into an Excel worksheet and will appear exactly as you have entered it.

When you have completed this form please send it back to me as an attachment to an e-mail at hammangj@aascu.org.

Institution Name	Campus Coordinator name	Campus Coordinator email address	Campus Coordinator phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx)	Campus Coordinator Address 1	Campus Coordinator Address 2	Campus Coordinator City	Campus Coordinator zip code

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. We look forward to a successful project and very much appreciate your participation.

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