

Manhattan College

Democratic Engagement Action Plan

September 27, 2016

Goals:

Increase registration rate to 70%

Increase voting rate to 40%

Increase rate of registered students who vote to 60%

Have 200 students attend debate watch gatherings (over the course of the three debates)

General Strategy

We aim to increase voter participation across our student body. Our plan has three parts.

We intend to register unregistered students. Last year, we set up registration tables on several occasions, and this fall we are doing it again. We will encourage all resident assistants to include voter registration in a floor program before the registration deadline. We will also use college announcements and social media to inform students of a website through which they can register to vote and request an absentee ballot. In the longer term, we hope to talk with the administration about the best way to make registration easily available to every student.

We want to encourage students to cast a vote and make it easier for them to do so. We know that many of our students are already registered to vote, but that only 55% of the registered cast a vote in 2012. Therefore, we want to encourage students to cast a vote. We know that many of our students are far from home on Election Day, and so we will spread the word about casting an absentee ballot.

We want to motivate students to vote. We know that many students doubt that voting is worthwhile, and so we will host debate viewings and communicate to students about the importance of voting.

EVENTS

These are events we hope will encourage student interest in and knowledge about politics. We will provide voter registration forms at all of them until the deadline.

Tuesday, September 6 – Student Engagement Fair

Friday, September 16 – Constitution Day – we registered voters on the Quad

Monday, September 26 -- Presidential Debate Viewing, Kelly Commons

Wednesday, October 5 – JustPeace handed out info about the candidates and absentee ballot applications on the Quad, 11-2 pm.

Thursday October 6 – Voter Registration Table, Kelly Commons, 1-4 p.m.

Sunday, October 9 -- Presidential Debate Viewing, Kelly Commons

Wednesday, October 19 -- Presidential Debate Viewing, Kelly Commons

Tuesday, November 8 – Election Day

Wednesday, November 16 – Harry Enten, of www.fivethirtyeight.com, explains the election to us.

MAKING VR forms and info available

The Student Engagement office is making forms available all fall, and has put out an announcement to that effect.

We've asked Resident Assistants if they will include voter registration forms in an activity they are doing. And we'll ask them to hang flyers.

We're collecting these forms and mailing them, so that students aren't delayed by the lack of a stamp.

Encouraging people to register and vote

Social media sharing about voter registration and get out the vote on Twitter @ManhattanEdu, @MCStudentEngage and Manhattan College's Facebook and Instagram accounts.

We're also sharing this link, at which people can verify that they are registered:
<https://www.headcount.org/verify-voter-registration/>.

We are sharing the links to vote.gov and usvotefoundation.org Where people can register and request an absentee ballot – on announcements and social media.

In late October/early November, we'll list 5-10 reasons to vote on the daily MC Announcements email. We'll also make posters of these reasons.

We'll also make sure that students registered locally know where their polling site is.

We'll pitch a story to the Quadrangle, the college's newspaper, to cover All-In Challenge and voter registration ahead of November elections

The Quad is doing a column, Manhattan Caucus, about the election in October and November.

Longer term plans

After November's election, we will make a plan for the most efficient way to see that all Manhattan College students are regularly offered the opportunity to register to vote.

When we receive the NSLVE report on our 2016 participation, we'll meet (perhaps with a larger group) to discuss the results and consider next steps.