



University of Miami: Democracy For U, By U

ALL-IN VOTER ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2016-17



UNIVERSITY
OF MIAMI



OVERVIEW

History and Background of UM

The University of Miami is a vibrant and diverse academic community, which has rapidly progressed to become one of America's top research universities. The University comprises 11 schools and colleges serving undergraduate and graduate students in more than 180 majors and programs. In 2016, U.S. News & World Report ranked UM No. 44 among the top national universities in the country in its “Best Colleges” listings. U.S. News also cites several of its programs in “America's Best Graduate Schools.”



Furthermore, the University of Miami’s mission is to educate and nurture students, to create knowledge, and to provide service to our community and beyond. Committed to excellence and proud of the diversity of our University family, we strive to develop future leaders of our nation and the world.

The University is absolutely committed to freedom of inquiry—the freedom to think, question, criticize, and dissent. We pursue the value of excellence in our research and educational missions with the single-mindedness that only great commitments deserve. The University provides its students with the foundations for ethical citizenship and service to others, a respect for differences among people, and a commitment to high standards of thought and communication. We also will prepare them for rewarding lifelong careers and will imbue in them a continued and permanent desire for the study of knowledge and the search for truth.

NSLVE Data Analysis

NSLVE NATIONAL STUDY OF
LEARNING, VOTING,
AND ENGAGEMENT

According to Tufts University’s National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) report, UM students voted at a higher rate during the 2012 presidential election than the 2014 midterm election. In 2012, UM’s voting rate was 50.1% and our registration rate was 83.2%. Although our 2014 election rate (15%) was substantially lower than our 2012 rate, we are committed to creating the best ways to mobilize our students to vote by enhancing their democratic engagement. Using this data, UM has made a commitment to implement strategic civic participation endeavors across campus by creating a coalition committed to increasing our voting rates in future presidential, midterm and local elections.



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GOALS

The University of Miami set multiple goals in coordination with the Get Out The Vote organization. These goals included:

1. Implementing a campus-wide voter awareness program.
2. Promoting an atmosphere of democratic engagement.
3. Increasing student voting rates above 2012 levels.
4. Registering 1,000 students to vote.
5. Hosting at least three university-wide events.
6. Collecting 500 pledges to vote.
7. Providing transportation to the polls during early voting.

COALITION

Overview and Impact

The CanesVote Network is made up of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members who are passionate about civic participation in the University of Miami community. The coalition enabled us to connect individuals with the common purpose of increasing awareness and active participation.

Lead Voter Engagement Organization: Get Out The Vote (GOTV)

GOTV is a campaign led by students with the support of the University of Miami's administration. The purpose of the campaign is to reach out to the students, faculty and staff and encourage them to get involved in the political process. GOTV consists of four Executive Board members, three chairs, and thirty-five general body members.



Along with GOTV, the University of Miami was selected to host three Campus Election Engagement Project Fellows and one Campus Vote Fellow in the 2016 election cycle. Each provided the energy and passion needed to carry out election engagement programs on campus and assisted in planning all election related initiatives.

Schools, Colleges and Campus Units:

Division of Student Affairs, Butler Center for Service and Leadership, Department of Political Science, School of Law, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, Miller School of Medicine, Housing and Residential Life, LGBTQ Student Center, Multicultural Student Affairs, Orientation and Commuter Student Involvement, Student Center Complex, and Student Activities and Student Organizations.

Student Organizations and Program:

Student Government, College Democrats, College Republicans, Association of Greek Letter Organizations, Student Athlete Advisory Committee, Graduate Student Association, SpectrUM – LGBTQ Student Organization, United Black Students, Hurricane Productions, Association of Commuter Students, Students for Sensible Drug Policy, Rathskeller Advisory Board, Freshman Leadership Council, Federacion de Estudiantes Cubano, TEDxUMiami, Orientation Outreach, First Year U, and STRIVE.

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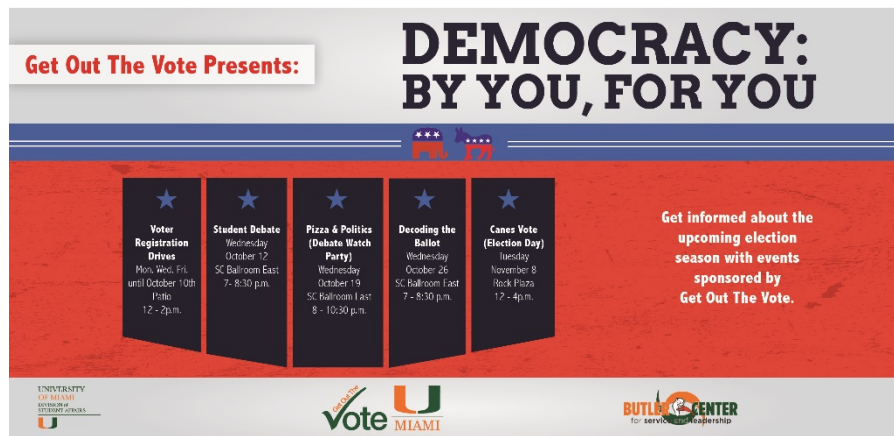
Community Partners:

Engage Miami, National Organization for Women, League of Women Voters, Women's Commission, Florida Campus Compact, Campus Vote, Campus Election Engagement Project, Vote Smart, and the Miami-Dade Board of Elections.

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

Mobilization Campaign: Democracy By U for U

The University of Miami and GOTV scheduled multiple events to further engage the campus community. This included programs to increase voter registration, educate the campus and assist students in easily getting to the polls and voting.



Get Out The Vote Presents:

DEMOCRACY: BY YOU, FOR YOU

★ Voter Registration Drives
Mon, Wed, Fri, until October 10th
12 - 2pm.

★ Student Debate
Wednesday, October 12
SC Ballroom East
7 - 8:30 p.m.

★ Pizza & Politics (Debate Watch Party)
Wednesday, October 19
SC Ballroom East
8 - 10:30 p.m.

★ Decoding the Ballot
Wednesday, October 26
SC Ballroom East
7 - 8:30 p.m.

★ Canes Vote (Election Day)
Tuesday, November 8
Rock Plaza
12 - 4pm.

Get informed about the upcoming election season with events sponsored by **Get Out The Vote.**

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

vote MIAMI

BUTLER CENTER
for service leadership

Voter Registration

Campus voter registration drives were held three times a week from 12pm-2pm from August 29- September 30, four times a week from 11am-3pm from October 3- October 17, and three times a month at the Law School and Medical School. Voter registration drives were also held at campus resource and organization fairs, new student orientation, campus service days, Hurricane Athletes Vote event, National Voter Registration Day, student organization meetings, classroom presentations, Greek chapter meetings (Greeks' Vote), and at residential colleges (Coming to U Dorm Stake-Out).



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Campus Education

In order to promote educated voting, three Debate Watch Parties were hosted on campus in conjunction with the national debates:

1. Election Course Debate Watch Party on September 26, 2016
2. 'Pizza and Politics' hosted by GOTV on October 19
3. Residential College Watch Party on October 19



Candidate Forums with Campus Partners

1. Candidate Forum hosted by United Black Students organization on September 29.
2. Student Issue Debate hosted by the School of Law on October 12.
3. "Decoding the Ballot" event hosted by GOTV with community partners Engage Miami and the League of Women Voters on October 26.
4. Candidate Policy Trivia Night hosted by GOTV with the American Enterprise Institute Executive Council on November 7.
5. Outdoor Civic Participation Event hosted by the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs featuring campus party representation, nonpartisan voter information, games and prizes; goal of keeping politics visible and encouraging diversity in representation on November 7.

Throughout the election season GOTV offered classroom and student organization presentations, distributed Campus Election Engagement Project guides (two party, four party, Supreme Court, Debate Watch Guide and Classroom Conversations guide), League of Women Voters' Voter Guide, Engage Miami Guides (specific UM related guide, Classroom Conversations, Election Deadlines, Nonpartisan Candidate Guides), Project Vote Smart's Guides (Nonpartisan Candidate Guides) and the Miami-Dade Board of Elections Guides (non-partisan candidate guides, State and County Deadlines and Local Races Guides).



Transportation to the Polls and Early Voting

GOTV, in partnership with Student Government and Parking and Transportation, provided early transportation to the Coral Gables Public Library on October 25, 26, and 27 as well as on November 1 and 2 (Early Voting Transportation). GOTV tabled specifically to assist students in requesting an absentee ballot (Absentee Ballot Guru) and hosted a 'Canes Vote Extravaganza on Election Day which encouraged, and rewarded, students to vote at the on campus polling station. GOTV used palm cards, flyers and social media for updates and reminders.

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Outreach Campaign

Academic Involvement

In order for students to gain a better understanding of how elections work in the United States and the role of the everyday citizen in making democratic government function, the Political Science Department designed an elections course. In addition to lectures from faculty, each week guest speakers from campaigns, the media, polling, and other key players in the 2016 election provided inside accounts of the democratic process. Multiple courses also offered extra credit to students for volunteering with GOTV and attending GOTV's events. Faculty allowed GOTV to promote events and awareness through classroom presentations and sent email blasts empowering students to participate in the electoral process.

Internal Media

The University of Miami communication team assisted GOTV to raise awareness and document campus involvement. Students, faculty, and staff received a digital letter from Vice President for Student Affairs encouraging students to vote using the on-campus polling site and practice healthy dialogue and communication with others around the election season. GOTV used social media to engaged the larger campus presence through groups and personal pages. Pictures, reminders, and infographics were posted on social media at least three times a week by each executive board member of GOTV as well as other campus organizations and partners. All events were promoted and covered through the student newspaper (The Miami Hurricane), student weekly e-newsletter (Ibis News), Political Science Newsletter, the William R. Butler Center for Volunteer Service and Leadership Development's e-newsletter, and the student organization listserv.



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External Media Coverage

UM's efforts to increase civic involvement throughout the campus community caught the attention of various media sources. GOTV initiatives received external media coverage from the Miami Herald, ABC, NBC, Telemundo, and Al Jazeera. The Election Day Watch Party had media coverage by ABC national news out of New York City.

Additional Media Coverage:

Aside from media coverage, GOTV used banners ("Why Do You Vote?" and "Register to Vote!"), flyers for each event, palm cards (Transportation to the Polls and Election Day Watch Party), buttons ("CANES VOTE"), pens, and t-shirts ("No Vote, No Voice; I Voted at the U").

Special Programs

During the 2016 election cycle, the University of Miami hosted and/or created several special programs for the student body and the community at-large. Some of these included:

1. CNN Republican National Debate
2. Primary election polling on campus
3. *What Now?: A Post-Election Campus Dialogue*
4. Email from the President recognizing the hard work and dedication of Get Out the Vote
5. Election Day at the Rathskeller watch party event with University President Julio Frenk speaking and recognizing Get Out the Vote. Site provided ABC National News live coverage during election night.



REFLECTION

Outcomes and Successes

During this election cycle, GOTV's work resulted in the following outcomes and successes:

1. 2,500 students, faculty and staff registered to vote.
2. 1,200 student written pledges to vote.
3. 230 students opting to use Early Voting shuttles to the polls at Coral Gables Public Library.
4. 82% turnout at the campus polling site (Watsco Center), which ranked 12th out 784 precincts in Miami-Dade County.
5. 1,500 students, faculty and staff attended Election Day at the Rathskeller event with participation by the University President and Vice President for Student Affairs.
6. Increase in campus engagement overall that incorporated the Graduate School, Law School, Medical School, RSMAS, and Undergraduate Schools.

Obstacles

Despite GOTV's successes, there were indeed several obstacles encountered during this election cycle. These included:

1. Efficiently and effectively communicating information with all UM campuses.
2. Collaboration among university departments.
3. Communication to all departments and across campus about events.
4. Florida State Voter ID Laws (students' IDs not accepted at polling site).
5. State of Florida Board of Elections inputting incorrect data from students registering to vote.
6. Outside partisan organizations registering students without consent of the University of Miami administration.

BEYOND 2016

As a campus that has exhibited great vigor for civic participation, UM will continue to perpetuate student civic participation at all times, not just during elections. The UM campus community, specifically GOTV, will continue registering students to vote every week through tabling, participating in college-wide events and partnering with student organizations, academic departments, and Greek Life. In addition to registering students to vote, GOTV is hosting a "Why It Matters: Evolving Awareness" dialogue series. The series will bring together professors, scholars and public officials to discuss the relevant issues of our time. The issues range widely from political economy and environmental policy to international relations and defense policy. Along with the speaker series, GOTV will host a Policy and Cabinet Breakdown Workshop, Civic and Democracy Expo to bring our community partners and organizations on campus for our students and co-sponsoring an Elect Her Workshop.

