



BGSU VOTES ACTION

PLAN

2019-2020

BOWLING GREEN STATE
UNIVERSITY
Center for Public Impact
in partnership with the BGSU
Votes Coalition

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History

The Bowling Green State University Center for Public Impact (CPI) has led BGSU Votes, an initiative dedicated to increasing students' political engagement and civic learning since 2012 at Bowling Green State University. Through a variety of on campus partnerships with Residence Life, Undergraduate Student Government, Department of Political Science and off campus partnerships such as the Wood County Board of Elections, Bowling Green League of Women Voters, the Andrew Goodman Foundation, Campus Election Engagement Project, All In Campus Democracy Project, and the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), a strong foundation has been established to increase capacity for more political engagement and civic learning at BGSU. Based on NSLVE data, our student voter participation for 2016 showed an increase of 10.1% since the 2012 election and BGSU was recognized as a Bronze Campus by the All In Campus Democracy Challenge with an overall voting participation rate of 52.9% in 2016. In 2019, BGSU received the Voter Friendly Campus Designation from Campus Vote Project for demonstrating the ways BGSU strives to institutionalize the voting process. Highlights of political engagement and civic learning accomplished to this point include:

- **Cultivating a Sustainable Student Leadership Model**– Through support from our national partners such as the Andrew Goodman Foundation and the Campus Election Engagement Project, we have recruited student leaders to identify strategies and engage peers in political engagement and civic learning. This team also includes a variety of volunteer roles to register, educate, and empower voters at major events.
- **Voter Identification Letter for On Campus Students** - Worked with the Board of Elections, Registration and Records, and Office of Residence Life to create a voter identification letter available to on campus voters via their online student portal.
- **Watch Parties for 2016 Election** – Collaborated with a coalition of political student organizations to organize three debate watch parties and an election night watch party.
- **Voting 101 Guides** – Created an interactive survey for students to complete to learn more about voting and to create a personalized action plan. Created student-friendly guides to primary elections.
- **Policy Guide** – Compiled all campus policies related to voter engagement in one document and shared with student organizations and political organizations.
- **City Council and Mayoral Forums** – Worked with the League of Women Voters, local candidates and elected officials to emphasize the importance of local elections and issues in off election years.
- **Midterm Election Forums** – Developed a series of events to engage and educate students on the various races involved in the 2018 midterm election.
- **BGSU Votes Website (www.bgsu.edu/BGSUVotes)** – This website has served as an easy one stop location for students to find voting information and get their questions answered about the voting process.
- **Texting Platform** – Worked with the Andrew Goodman Foundation to implement a mass-texting tool on BGSU's campus to update students on voter engagement events and provide registration information.
- **Summer Intern** – For the past three years BGSU has supported a summer intern in the Center for Community & Civic Engagement to do voter engagement and education

during Student Orientation and Registration and to coordinate the BGSU Votes action plan for the upcoming year.

Pursuing the Voter Friendly Campus Designation throughout the 2018-2019 academic year allowed us to reflect on our successes and challenges and provided the groundwork for the BGSU Votes coalition to continue this work. This updated action plan will allow us to pursue the designation in Spring 2020 and to establish a plan for our ongoing work.

Leadership:

Paul Valdez
Associate Director, Center for Public Impact
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Harrison Carter
Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Student Ambassador
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Alyssa Tomins
Andrew Goodman Foundation Vote Everywhere Student Ambassador
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Spencer Walsh
Voting video-series creator
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Will Robinson
BGSU Votes/CPI Summer Intern
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Coalition Members:

The BGSU Votes coalition is a group of partners from the community and on campus. The coalition is comprised of the major stakeholders in BGSU Votes. Coalition members keep in regular contact with the leadership team as well as attend meetings to assess progress and develop new strategies to complete the goals of the coalition. We are currently in the process of expanding this coalition for the upcoming presidential election. The coalition is made up of the following members:

Tim Shaal
Senior Associate Director, Office of Residence Life
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Lee McClair
Former President, Wood County League of Women Voters
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Lee Haket
President, Wood County League of Women Voters
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Marcus Goolsby
President, Undergraduate Student Government (USG)
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Brian Heilmeyer
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Amy West
Director of Marketing and Communication
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Dana Nemeth
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Objective:

Create a positive climate for political engagement and civic learning at BGSU.

Areas of Focus:

1. Connecting on and off campus partners.
2. Voter registration
3. Get out the vote
4. Civic learning and skill development
5. Removing barriers to voting

Goals:

The following are the specific goals we hope to accomplish with initiatives outlined in more detail below:

1. Build a stronger relationship with coalition members.
2. Increase subscribers to the texting platform from 220 to 500+.
3. Increase the number of civic learning events to 3 per semester.
4. Present to at least 100 people through classrooms or student organizations before the November 2019 election, prioritizing classrooms with majors that vote at lower rates as identified in our NSLVE data.
5. Establish an active and effective social media presence
6. Find 2 new ways to further institutionalize voter registration.
7. Create campus action plan for 2020 presidential election using the NSLVE data to be release during summer 2019.

Initiatives:

To make improvements in the above focus areas, the BGSU Votes Coalition will complete the following specific initiatives:

Summer 2019:

BGSU Votes Summer Intern

Description: Support a summer intern to:

- Coordinate BGSU Votes coalition during the summer and assist in finalizing events listed within 2019-2020 action plan
- Maintain a consistent presence at new student orientation
- Manage logistical coordination and preparation for Fall 2019 initiatives
- Assist in coordinating Opening Weekend action plan

Coalition Members: Center for Public Impact

Focus Area(s): All

New Student Orientation

Description: Interact with new students and their guests during resource fair. Educate about voting rights history, voting procedures, options available to students, and upcoming issues and elections. This will be the fourth consecutive year BGSU Votes has participated in new student orientation.

Coalition Members: Center for Public Impact

Focus Area(s): Voter Registration, Civic Learning



BGSU Votes Summer Intern Brandon Willinger interacts with a student during 2018 Student Orientation and Registration.

Marketing and Social Media Schedule

Description: Develop a schedule with deadlines for highlighting campus-wide information about voter engagement to educate students, faculty, and staff about upcoming election information. Incorporate university social media platforms and communication outlets. Create outline of schedule for planned text messages to be released in fall. Work to finalize design of marketing materials. Set up a bgsuvotes@bgsu.edu email account to be used in communications and creating independent social media accounts.

Coalition Members: Center for Public Impact, Marketing and Communication

Focus Area(s): Registration, GOTV, Civic Learning

BGSU Votes Website

Description: Update voter information and hyperlinks to ensure that the BGSU Votes website (www.bgsu.edu/bgsuvotes) serves as a hub for BGSU student voter information. Add new resources including:

- Census 2020 information and programming
- Ballot information for Bowling Green residents in Fall 2019 election
- Highlights of political engagement on campus, including faculty spotlight, student spotlight, and upcoming events/opportunities
- 2018 NSLVE report (to be released in September 2019) and interpretation of this data
- Updated Voting 101 videos
- List of potential ways to increase understanding of civic engagement

Coalition Members: Center for Public Impact

Focus Area(s): Civic Learning

BGSU Votes

Bowling Green State University / Center for Community & Civic Engagement / BGSU Votes

BGSU Votes is a student-led initiative focused on voter and political engagement to increase the knowledge and develop the skills of students to engage in democracy, politics, policy making, and social action. BGSU Votes is a campus resource for election information, presentations, and political engagement collaborations. **Contact us** with any questions or requests. Want to volunteer with BGSU Votes?

Apply to be a 2019-2020 BGSU Votes Volunteer!

Join a team of student leaders dedicated to nonpartisan voter engagement. BGSU Votes volunteers arrive early to campus in the fall for training and assist with registering students to vote during Move-In, Opening Weekend, Welcome Week and key events throughout the academic year. The goal is to ensure all students at BGSU know how they can get more civically engaged and participate in democracy. Questions? Contact Harrison Carter (hcarter@bgsu.edu) or Alyssa Tomins (atotins@bgsu.edu).

2019-2020 Volunteer Application

Voter Friendly Campus 2019-2020

BGSU recognized as a voter friendly campus by Campus Vote Project and NASPA.

Learn more

VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS

As a 2019-2020 Voter Friendly Campus designee, we empower students to

Current view of the BGSU Votes homepage.

Coalition Update and Meeting

Description: Reconnect with coalition members listed previously to identify areas on campus they see room for more civic engagement opportunities. Work with coalition to learn how we can tap into various aspects of campus to identify needs for civic engagement that are currently being unmet. Include their feedback in updated campus action plan. Preparation for this meeting will be organized by the summer intern.

Coalition Members: All

Focus Area(s): All

Fall 2019:

Opening Weekend and Welcome Week

Description: Establish a volunteer plan to have a large presence at Opening Weekend and Welcome Week events to register voters and educate about voting rights history, voting procedures, options available to students, and upcoming issues and elections. Work with Opening Weekend Group Leaders to encourage new student participation. Events will include:

- University Welcome and Playfair
- Evening and Late Night Events
- Campus Picnic
- Commuter Breakfasts
- Multicultural Welcome
- Campus Fest

Coalition Members: Center for Public Impact, Student Orientation and Registration

Focus Area(s): Voter Registration, Civic Learning

Residence Hall Student Voter Outreach

Description:

- Create poster with information and resources for distribution in each residence hall.
- Attend Residence Life Fair to answer questions from residence life student leaders.
- Develop a slide for Opening Weekend presentation to new students living on campus.
- Create a document with voting information to be given to all first-year students during move-in to residence halls.
- Have a presence in the lobby of Residence Halls on selected evenings. Register students and work with them to create their action plan to vote.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes, Office of Residence Life

Focus Area(s): Registration, GOTV, Civic Learning

Major Events

Description: In the fall semester a variety of high profile and well attended events occur to support new and returning students. BGSU Votes will attend these events and educate about voting rights history, voting procedures, options available to students, and upcoming issues and elections. Events include:

- [Campus Fest](#) – Get involved fair, roughly 5,000-8,000 in attendance.
- [Expand Your Horizons Fair](#) – Experiential learning fair, 700 in attendance.
- Constitution Day – Hosted with Office of Campus Activities

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes

Focus Area(s): Voter Registration, Civic Learning, Connecting partners



Savannah Hinde and Brandon Willinger host a raffle in the Union to celebrate Constitution Day.

Athletics

Description: Engage with athletic teams to encourage voter registration and participation. Work with these students to have them visibly promote voting to encourage the rest of campus to participate.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes

Focus Area(s): GOTV

Tabling on the Road

Description: Expand tabling efforts to where majors that vote in lower numbers are. NSLVE data showed Health and Human Services, Sciences, and Tourism/Leisure/Sport Management as low rates. Tabling in the buildings where these majors are housed, as well as areas that commuter students use.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes

Focus Area(s): Voter Registration.

Sample Ballot

Description: Develop a non-partisan sample ballot with general information and resources for all of the candidates and issues that will be on the ballot for November 2019. Distribute during events and outreach.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes, Political Science Department, League of Women Voters

Focus Area(s): Civic Learning

Presentations

Description: Give presentations to classes and organizations about political engagement and voting. Register any students who need to be registered, and offer volunteer opportunities to

those needing service hours. Presentations initiated through our request form online. Additionally, classes and organizations affiliated with majors with historically lower voter rates as indicated by NSLVE data, will outreach about hosting a presentation.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes, Fraternity and Sorority Life, Campus Activities

Focus Area(s): Civic Learning, Voter Registration

National Voter Registration Day

Description: Work with University Activities Organization and Undergraduate Student Government to create a campus-wide push for voter registration. Hold a celebration for voter registration in the Union Oval or Union tables. Use this event to increase recognition of BGSU Votes as a resource to students and to further encourage students to vote. This event will be the largest push for voter registration of the year prior to the November election, and will also be an opportunity to increase subscribers to the BGSU Votes texting platform.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes, Undergraduate Student Government, University Activities Organization

Focus Area(s): Voter Registration, Civic learning

Candidate and Issue Forum

Description: Bring in local candidates and experts on the issues on the ballot to answer questions from students. The last time BGSU Votes organized a candidate forum was in 2017.

Coalition Members: League of Women Voters, Undergraduate Student Government, Falcon Media

Focus Area(s): Civic Learning, GOTV, Connecting partners



Students from BGSU Votes helped organize the 2017 Bowling Green City Council Candidate Forum.

Texting Platform

Description: The Andrew Goodman Foundation has provided BGSU with a texting subscription platform that can be used to connect students to civic engagement opportunities happening on campus and inform them of voter registration deadlines. As of May 2019, there are 220 people subscribed to the platform with low opt-out rates. Through events and marketing material, the BGSU Votes team will seek to increase this subscription number to 500+.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes, Undergraduate Student Government, Marketing and Communications

Focus Area(s): All

Voting Video Series

Description: Expand the video series by developing a 3-4 minute quick reference video explaining the basics of voting: registration, early voting, election day voting, absentee voting, unique accommodations, getting informed, and where to find more information. Audience is

intended for residents of Wood County with some student specific information. Script development and gathering of B-roll footage to take place in Fall 2019 with final video produced for use Spring 2019 and into the future.

Coalition Members: CCCE, Wood County Board of Elections, Marketing and Communications
Focus Area(s): All

Spring 2020:

Major Events

Description: In the spring semester a variety of high profile and well attended events occur to support new and returning students. BGSU Votes will attend these events and educate about voting rights history, voting procedures, options available to students, and upcoming issues and elections. Events include:

- Get Involved Fair
- Black Issues Conference
- Latino Issues Conference

Coalition Members: Center for Public Impact

Focus Area(s): Voter Registration, Civic Learning, Connecting partners



MLK Jr. Day of Service participants listen to Civic Action Leader Angel Alls-Hall during opening ceremonies.

Presidential Primary Presentations

Description: Develop nonpartisan candidate guides to inform students of the various people running in the presidential primary elections. Create nonpartisan presentation and discussion forums, perhaps through another “Pizza & Politics” series.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes

Focus Area(s): Civic learning

AGF Social Media Ambassador

Description: Identify and recruit a third AGF Ambassador to serve as a social media and communications guru. Reach out to AGF to start the process of applying for funds for a third ambassador, then start recruitment process.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes

Focus Area(s): All

Ohio AGF School Collaboration

Description: Work with other Ohio AGF schools to better understand why Ohio does not provide method of voting data to NSLVE. Reach out Secretary of State’s office as a coalition of Ohio schools.

Coalition Members: BGSU Votes

Focus Area(s): N/A

USG Elections

Description: Promote student participation in our on-campus elections.

Coalition Members: Center for Public Impact, USG

Focus Area(s): Civic Learning

Volunteer Recruitment

Description: Recruit the 2020-21 student volunteer team to serve during Opening Weekend registration events as well as throughout the school year.

Coalition Members: All

Focus Area(s): All

2020-2021 Action Plan

Description: Develop an Action Plan for the next academic year. Tailor this action plan to apply for the next round of Voter Friendly Campus Designations in Spring 2020.

Coalition Members: All

Focus Area(s): All

Success:

The BGSU Votes coalition will carry out these plans throughout the summer of 2019 through the 2019-2020 academic year. After much success increasing civic engagement through the 2018 midterm election, this team is hopeful we will meet similar success in the coming year. We are thankful for all the support we have received from our national partners, including the Andrew Goodman Foundation and Campus Election Engagement Project. With their support, BGSU is a more civically engaged university educating students “for lives of engaged citizenship and leadership in a global society.”

