

All In Challenge Action Plan 2024 Bryn Mawr College

Executive Summary

Bryn Mawr College (BMC) is a small, women’s college located on a residential campus just outside of the city of Philadelphia, PA. The College is a leader in academic innovation, with a strong emphasis on putting learning into action through research, fieldwork, civic engagement, and internships. Bryn Mawr’s mission states that “the College’s rigorous liberal arts curriculum and distinguished graduate programs foster a thirst for knowledge, open inquiry, global perspective, civic engagement, and innovation through study across the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences” with a goal of preparing students for “lives of purpose.” Included in that mission is the belief that participation in civic life through service, activism, advocacy, and political engagement is a key component of life both during and after college.

Our campus action plan is a collaborative effort involving input from and action by faculty, staff, student, and community partners who share a passion for civic engagement and a commitment to the College’s mission. Under the leadership of the Director of Civic Engagement in the Career & Civic Engagement Center, our team includes campus administrators, faculty members, advising deans, department directors, librarians, members of our Facilities team, student leaders, and community partners. Our student body is relatively small with a student body consisting of around 1360 undergraduate students, but our campus voting impact is large—our county, Montgomery, is considered to be a key factor in the upcoming election. Our plan aims to empower Bryn Mawr students to be educated, prepared, and active voters. We also want to train our faculty and staff as knowledgeable and reliable nonpartisan allies who students can turn to for support. By including student, staff, and faculty voices, we have created a plan that aims to include every student by addressing potential barriers to voter registration or access to the polls and by providing nonpartisan information that allows for multiple viewpoints and perspectives on the candidates.

Through a multi-pronged approach involving outreach in public areas on campus, residential spaces, dining halls, classrooms, and co-curricular programming, we are striving to increase our institution’s voting rate into the 90th percentile for 2024. Based on the data collected in our 2020 NSLVE report, this is an achievable goal and one we are excited to meet. Our long-term goal is to instill in every student the belief that civic engagement is rewarding, important, and a key part of adult life. We hope students will make voting in every election a commitment they will carry with them beyond their time at Bryn Mawr College.

Our efforts will focus primarily on Bryn Mawr College undergraduate students—the majority of whom register to vote using their on-campus address and vote in Montgomery County,

Pennsylvania. The action steps detailed in this plan will be executed starting in August 2024 and will run through the General Election on November 5, 2024.

Leadership

Voter engagement efforts are coordinated through the Career & Civic Engagement Center at Bryn Mawr College. Over the past eight years, the Center has worked with on-campus partners to establish ourselves as the “hub” of voting on campus. The Center has a staff of 16 full-time employees, including five staff members who fall under the umbrella of Civic Engagement. The responsibility of student voter registration and education as well as the All In Campus Democracy Challenge committee lead is written in to the job description of the Director of Civic Engagement, insuring that the committee and its work will continue on campus no matter who inhabits that position.

On July 1, 2024, Bryn Mawr College welcomed our 10th president, Dr. Wendy Cadge. Dr. Cadge is a sociologist and a national expert in contemporary American religion who was drawn to Bryn Mawr for its [“unique combination of undergraduate liberal arts for women and coeducational graduate programs.”](#) Within the first ten days of President Cadge’s arrival on campus, she reached out to the Career & Civic Engagement Center to find out what we had planned to support students in preparing for the upcoming Election and how she and her office could help. She made a point of wearing a “Bryn Mawr Votes” sticker on her robes during Convocation and is hosting a special all-campus Coffee Hour called “Donut Forget to Vote” in partnership with Career & Civic Engagement to educate the community about voter registration, student voting, and how the entire campus community can be involved in civic engagement. President Cadge’s enthusiasm about civic engagement and this upcoming election has provided a boost of energy across campus constituencies for which we are very grateful. She has also committed resources through the President’s Office, including the support of the Senior Advisor for External Relations & Secretary of the College, that have helped us amplify our work across campus.

Below please see a list of the full committee:

Bryn Mawr Votes Team Members

Name	Title
Ellie Esmond (Team Lead)	Director of Civic Engagement, Career & Civic Engagement Center
Millie Bond	Senior Advisor for External Relations & Secretary of the College, President’s Office
Leila Brown	Student Voting Ambassador (Sophomore)
Dawn DiGiovanni	Associate Director of Facilities for Grounds

Hedy Gerace	Assistant to the President for Events & Campus Outreach, President's Office
Melissa Giess	Assistant Dean of Sophomore Experience, Undergraduate Dean's Office
Marissa Martino Golden	Associate Professor of Political Science
Mia Harvey	Student Engagement Coordinator
Olivia Loudon	Student Voting Ambassador (Senior)
Candice Love	Director of the Impact Center for Community, Equity, and Understanding
Luci MacNamara	Director of Counseling, Health Center
Rose Miller	Campus Safety Student Liaison
Amanda Moser-Shick	Associate Director of Volunteer Programs, Career & Civic Engagement Center
Liv Raddatz	Senior Associate Director of Praxis, Career & Civic Engagement Center
Sydney Robertson	Administrative Program Coordinator, Career & Civic Engagement Center
Alandra Russ	Counselor, Health Center
Tiffany Stahl	Associate Director of Praxis, Career & Civic Engagement Center
Tracy Weber	Director of Global Education
Lisa Zernicke	Director of Conferences & Events

Community/Institutional Partners

- ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
- League of Women Voters—Lower Merion & Narberth
- Montgomery County Voter Services, Norristown, PA
- National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)
- Pennsylvania Student Voting Coalition
- PHENND (Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development)

The committee members and community partners listed above represent those on the team who have specific responsibilities related to our Bryn Mawr Votes strategic plan. We've built a team that can provide support and resources for students from both a logistical standpoint—providing the tools needed to register to vote, learn about the candidates, and cast a ballot—and from a social-emotional standpoint—providing opportunities to discuss values, handle the emotional stress connected with this election year, connect across difference, learn about alternate viewpoints, and even take a break from thinking about the election. We also want to recognize that we depend on the support of our paid and volunteer student leaders, student campus affinity groups and clubs, faculty members who invite us to classes to assist with voter registration and education, and staff members who help provide rides to the polls via our Election Day Shuttle. Our campus truly is “all in” on supporting student voting.

Commitment

Bryn Mawr signed on to the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge and began our participation with the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) in 2016. Since that time, we have actively participated in the challenge every two years, receiving recognition as a Bronze Campus (2016), Gold Campus (2018), Platinum Campus (2020) and Diamond Campus (2022). In 2022 we earned the following special recognitions:

- 2022 Pennsylvania Campus Voting Challenge, Highest Voting Rate (4-year Institution)
- 2022 Pennsylvania Campus Voting Challenge Highest Registration Rate (4-year Institution)
- Inclusion on ALL IN's inaugural list of Top Campuses by 2022 Voter Turnout for 4-year Private Institutions

In 2020 our President signed on to the ALL IN Presidents' Commitment. We celebrate each recognition and share our NSLVE data across campus to recognize our community's success and identify areas for growth and development. Our alumnae/i magazine has highlighted our collective work to support student voters several times, most recently in a Spring 2024 article called "[Changemakers](#)" which celebrates Bryn Mawr alums who have entered careers in politics and calls out our campus' commitment to civic engagement.

The mission of Civic Engagement at Bryn Mawr College is to collaborate with community-based organizations to prepare students to be socially responsible leaders and citizens through purposeful action, reflection, and learning. From the [College's mission](#), students are called to "emerge from their Bryn Mawr experience equipped with powerful tools and with deeper understanding of the world and each other...[defining] success on their own terms and [lifting] up others as they make a meaningful difference in the world." These missions reflect a call to action for the community—one that affirms each student's voice as important, their decisions as consequential, and their impact as powerful. Our students embody these missions through their eagerness to participate in the electoral process and our faculty and staff do so in their enthusiastic support of our student voters.

Landscape

The College's participation in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) provides us a valuable tool to help guide our efforts in engaging student voters. Our 2022 NSLVE report showed us that our students voted at double the rate of the average institutional voting rate—BMC 61.2%, institutional average 30.6%. While that seems great, our registration rate was 89.4%, so we saw that we had work to do to increase voter turnout.

During the summer of 2024, the Career & Civic Engagement Center worked with our College Communications Department to create a new visual identity for the Bryn Mawr Votes campaign. After the successful creation of a new design, we ordered stickers and yard signs and added the new logo to all our printed and online material. We also created a self-serve voter registration station in the Student Life & Wellness Building, a central location on campus where Career & Civic Engagement is located. In addition to providing pre-printed Pennsylvania voter registration forms and a template to help students complete the forms, we also stocked the station with pre-stamped envelopes addressed to the Montgomery County Voter Services office.

In considering other potential barriers that could inform the difference between the College's voter registration rate and voting rate, we committed to providing more information about student voting options including voting by mail, providing information about our local secure ballot drop box, and increasing the publicity around the Election Day Voting Shuttle. We are also working with our Director of Global Education to disseminate information about voting from abroad to our students currently studying overseas.

We currently do not share enough of our IPEDS data with NSLVE to provide a full report on our campus voting rates for different racial and ethnic groups. With the arrival of our new College president, we are hopeful that we can successfully advocate for changing our data sharing policy and obtain this data for the future.

Goals & Strategy

Our overall campus strategy as related to voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote efforts relies on three guiding principles:

- Education: Make sure all students are aware of their options and rights regarding voter registration and casting their ballot
- Ease: Remove as many barriers as possible that would make it challenging for students to register and vote
- Empowerment: Build students' confidence in their ability to make their own choices and act on their values

Our methodology is to engage students through multiple channels—in person conversations, information sessions, online resources, classroom presentations, and peer to peer education. New this year is a focus on social-emotional support as part of our programming. Students have made it clear that they are finding the lead up to the 2024 election to be an incredibly stressful time. They are dealing with divisions within their families and friend groups, they find themselves triggered by political ads, they are overloaded with information about the candidates, issues, and races, and they are concerned about the repercussions of the election on their own lives and communities. To that end, the Impact Center for Community, Equity, and

Understanding and the Counseling Center are integral members of the Bryn Mawr Votes team, providing opportunities for students to deal with the uncertainty around the election and talk with others who have different outlooks and perspectives in a structured environment.

Below is a list of the specific initiatives and programs we have scheduled so far:

Event	Audience	Theme	Date
“Registering to Vote with Ellie Esmond” video	First Year/Incoming Students	Logistical Support	June 2024
Self-Serve Voter Registration in The Well	All Students	Logistical Support	August 2024 – May 2025
Voting Information for Students webpage	All Campus	Logistical Support	August 2024 – May 2025
Voter Registration Tabling on Move-In Day	All Students	Logistical Support	8/28/2024
Voter Registration Tabling at Fall Frolic	All Students	Logistical Support	9/5/2024
Present “Supporting Student Voters” PowerPoint @ Undergraduate Dean’s Division Meeting	Deans & Directors w/in Undergraduate Dean’s Division	Education	9/5/2024
Voter Registration Tabling for National Voter Registration Day	All Students	Logistical Support	9/17/2024
“Supporting Student Voters” information presented at Faculty Meeting	All Faculty	Education	9/25/2024
“Donut Forget to Vote” President’s Coffee Hour Presentation	All Campus	Education	10/3/2024
National Voter Education Week social media campaign	All Campus	Education	10/7/2024 – 10/11/2024
“Living Room Conversations: Trust In Elections” workshop	All Campus	Education	10/8/2024 or 10/22/2024
“Approaching the Election with Hope” (Vision Board Creation)	All Students	Social-Emotional Support	10/24/2024
“Getting Ready to Cast Your Ballot” workshop with League of Women Voters	All Students	Education	10/29/2024 or 11/2/2024

“Election Free Study Zone”	All Students	Social-Emotional Support	10/28 – 11/8/2024
National Women’s March in Washington, D.C.	All Students (space is limited/charter bus)	Activism	11/2/2024
Election Night Watch Party	All Students	Social-Emotional Support	11/5/2024
Post-Election Teach-In	All Campus	Education	11/6/2024
“Pizza, Politics, & Peaceful Conversation”	All Students	Social-Emotional Support	11/8/2024

In addition to these listed events, the Career & Civic Engagement Center, with the help of our paid Student Voting Ambassadors, is continuing to offer voter registration tables in the campus dining halls and at key campus events until the Pennsylvania voter registration deadline—October 21, 2024.

On Election Day the Career & Civic Engagement provides a full day of support for student voters. Beginning at 9:00 am, Career & Civic Engagement Center staff set up an Election Day Voter Support Station at a central location on campus. At this location we set up voter support tables that provide nonpartisan candidate guides, a copy of our voting district’s sample ballot, and an opportunity to ask any last-minute questions. This is also the location of our Election Day Voting Shuttle—a campus van driven by faculty, staff, and student volunteers that provides free rides on demand to student voters. Bryn Mawr College’s assigned polling place is in a convenient, walkable location less than a mile from campus, but students enjoy riding the Election Day Shuttle and voting with their friends. This year we will also be providing fire pits, s’mores, and music to create a festive, fun, and welcoming atmosphere. Our Election Day Voter Support Station operates from 9:00 am – 8:00 pm—or until the last voter in line returns to campus.

Reporting & Evaluation

To evaluate our efforts to engage student voters, we will track our social media accounts and postings to measure engagement, track the number of voter registration forms students complete through our programming, and track the number of attendees at our events. We also use our Handshake swiper to track the number of students who ride the Election Day Voting Shuttle to measure usage of this resource. We will also add a link to Bryn Mawr’s most recent NSLVE report to our student voting website to more publicly benchmark our campus’ engagement levels and goals. Our committee will have a post-election meeting to discuss our successes, challenges, and future goals.