



JWU

★ ALL IN Campus
Democracy
Challenge

Johnson & Wales University 2024 Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Developed by: Patricia Leahey-Hays

Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by Johnson & Wales University in Rhode Island for the 2024 election. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, political literacy, civic education, and increased voter turnout for the 2024 election. The goals for Johnson & Wales University for the 2024 election are:

To educate the JWU community about how and when to participate in the democratic process through the civic responsibility to register to vote and to complete the action of voting. To provide easily accessible locations to distribute information regarding how to register to vote, registration and voting dates and deadlines, how to find polling locations and rules and regulations for in-state as well as out-of-state voters.

A JWU Votes committee started meeting regularly in mid-August. The committee has implemented the following activities: celebration of Constitution Day on Tuesday, September 17th, with Constitution Day Trivia. The committee also tabled in 2 locations on our two Providence campuses, Downcity and Harborside. The tabling effort was to engage with students, staff and faculty and provide them with information regarding voter registration. The volunteers tabling were able to provide community members with the ability to register to vote electronically in real time upon request. The tabling took place on September 17th which was also National Voter Registration Day. We tabled for a 2nd time during the last week in September.

The committee has been getting voter registration information and resources out to the JWU community through campus-wide digital and social media and will continue to do so through November. This messaging provides students with information regarding dates, mail-in ballots, absentee ballots and in-person voting. Voter registration and nonpartisan election information has been displayed on bulletin boards in our residence halls. These bulletin boards are dedicated to promoting education for voter registration. In conjunction with the bulletin boards, fliers have been posted throughout campus as well.

We will invite students and members of the JWU community to engage in an election night watch party on campus.

Leadership:

Our leadership team includes the following, campus groups, and organizations:

Sarah N. Campbell – Instruction Librarian/Adjunct Faculty – English Department
Kevin DeJesus - Associate Professor of Social Sciences
Derek Lavoie - Student Communications Specialist
Patricia Leahey-Hays – Associate Dean of Student Life
Madelena Santore –Head Coach, Women’s Ice Hockey
Rory Walsh Senerchia- Associate Dean & Professor John Hazen White College of Arts & Sciences
Dr. Melanie Tucker – Dean of Students/VP of Student Affairs
Mike Waugh – Director of Inclusion & Belonging
Elizabeth Zmarlicki – Director of Student Engagement

Commitment:

Johnson & Wales University is committed to practicing ethical and engaged citizenship in all aspects of university life. JWU acts as a good steward of our resources to support the needs of our students, faculty, and staff.

Within our co-curricular programming model, we educate our students and community on civic life and increase the understanding of how to be a positive and contributing member of the communities in which we live.

JWU communicates this commitment through our internal university social media communication platform, jwulink, as well as through tabling and having conversations with the community, fliers in buildings on campus and through the university library and the JWU Library’s Guide to Voting.

President Maria Bernardo-Sousa is a current signatory to the ALL IN Presidents’ Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation most recently signing the commitment in 2024.

Landscape:

Johnson & Wales University is a private 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2020.

Johnson & Wales University Providence campus has 4237 students.

Our student population in Providence is 60% white, 14% Hispanic or Latino, 11% Black or African American, 4% unknown, 4% us non-resident, 4% Asian, 2% identify as two or more races and less than 1% American Indian or Alaska Native.

In 2022 the voter registration rate at JWU was 52.3%, the voting rate of registered students was 31.4% and the voting rate was 16.4%.

Johnson & Wales University has authorized the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) and will receive campus voting data 2024.

Johnson & Wales University participates in the following initiatives to support the development and implementation of our nonpartisan democratic engagement efforts on campus: National Voter Registration Day and Constitution Day.

Goals:

Our institution's nonpartisan democratic engagement goals are:

JWU continues to increase educating our campus community about voter registration regarding how, where and when. Within our goal to create a Campus Culture of Care we recognize that we are obligated to not only educate our students about the processes of voter registration and the action of voting, but also offer safe spaces for dialogue before and after our major elections.

Strategy:

Johnson & Wales University will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation.

JWU has participated in/created the following non-partisan events on campus:

1. Celebration of Constitution Day on 9/17/24 with SGA hosting Constitution Day Trivia.
2. JWU All In Challenge kickoff with the use of social media, jwulink, jwu libguide.
3. Held tabling events in areas of campus where faculty, staff and students shared resources to the JWU community on how, where and when to vote. Guided students through the process upon request.
4. Various faculty held tabling events with student groups and academic departments. Two departments partnered and held The Changing Constitution: A Lecture Series Presented by the Humanities Department – one event during each month for September, October and November.
5. Held an event bringing Braver Angels to campus to provide our students with the tools to engage in civil conversations when discussing topics that can be emotionally and politically charged (October 2024).
6. Will hold an election results watch party on the evening of November 5th.

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

Johnson & Wales University will use the National, Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to evaluate the increase of student voting by comparing our campus voter turnout and voter registration rates to past elections to measure progress on increasing both.

Reporting:

Our institution has given ALL IN permission to publish our past NSLVE reports, which can also be found on our campus website.