

Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles

Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement Action Plan

COMMITMENT

Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles is fully committed to engaging all members of our community in the democratic process. By providing resources, education, and programming we hope to encourage students to assume and embrace their full role as active citizens and ultimately to become "graduates who are committed to using their knowledge and skills to better themselves, their environments, and the world" (MSMU Mission Statement). MSMU Votes is an initiative of the Division of Student Affairs coordinated by Women's Leadership and Student Engagement and in collaboration with various departments and offices.

ABOUT MOUNT SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY LOS ANGELES

Our founders climbed this mountain with a vision for educating and empowering women.

We're the Mount. And we're Unstoppable.

Mount Saint Mary's is the only women's university in Los Angeles and one of the most diverse in the nation. Mount Saint Mary's University was founded in 1925 by the **Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet** (CSJs), a group of bold visionary educators who sought to establish an institution of higher learning where women could become leaders dedicated to service, justice and knowledge. Rooted in a **rich history** that dates to 1650 in Le Puy, France, CSJs have always been trailblazers. Our past, present and future are shaped by the mission of the sisters - to respond to the needs of the times. Today, Mount Saint Mary's is the **only women's university in Los Angeles** and one of the most diverse and transformative in the nation. The Mount is recognized nationally for its academic quality, research on gender equity, innovative health and science programs, empowerment of women, leadership development and commitment to social justice.

In 1928, the sisters purchased 36 acres that stretched among the foothills of the Santa Monica mountains, which would become the Chalon Campus. Today, the **Chalon Campus** houses most of the University's traditional undergraduate programs and the first women's leadership program established in the western United States. In 1962, the University expanded to its second campus on the historic Doheny Estate near downtown Los Angeles. The **Doheny**

Campus is home to the Mount's graduate degree programs, associate in arts programs, education credential program, and the Weekend/Evening & Online College. The University has graduated **more than 24,000 students**. Mount Saint Mary's graduates are engaged, active, global citizens who use their knowledge and skills to better themselves, their communities, and the world.

The University is known nationally for its research on gender equity, its innovative health and science programs, and its commitment to community service. Mount Saint Mary's University offers a dynamic learning experience in the liberal arts and sciences to a diverse student body. As a Catholic university primarily for women, we provide a superior education enhanced by an emphasis on building leadership skills and fostering a spirit to serve others. Our measure of success is graduates who are committed to using their knowledge and skills to better themselves, their environments, and the world. As one of the most diverse universities in the nation, we believe that diversity and social justice are fundamental components of educational excellence and the advancement of knowledge. Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles is committed to becoming an antiracist university that pursues equity, diversity, justice, and belonging. We acknowledge that all aspects of our culture and institution are impacted by structural racism. We seek to address the policies and practices that lead to inequities across the university. We strive to build a community that educates, transforms, and supports the wellbeing of students, staff, and faculty. We enact antiracism by confronting and healing racial tensions, dismantling the structural and historical legacies of white supremacy and other systems of injustice, to build a culture of belonging. We aim to incorporate intersectionality, increase representation, build our capacity, and work in solidarity toward unifying love.

Quick Highlights

#1 Student Social Mobility - According to U.S. News & World Report. Our grads go further in their careers, earn more advanced degrees, and make more money.

#3 Most Transformative Colleges - Money magazine has ranked the Mount as a top university that significantly changes the life path and earnings for students who graduate.

13:1 - Student-Teacher Ratio - Our passionate, experienced faculty are here for you. You can ask questions, voice your opinions, and build a valuable relationship.

\$30,510 - Average Student Aid -Education should be for everyone. Our goal? Reduce the financial strain on our students so they can focus on their education.

LEADERSHIP

Our MSMU Votes Coalition, comprised of faculty, staff, and students as well as our MSMU Votes Civics Team help to spread the word and engage all members of our community in the democratic process. Various educational and social events are held throughout the year to ensure that all students are connected to the resources and information needed to participate fully in our democracy. In addition, specific student groups listed below will be working directly with Dr. Joseph (MSMUVotes Lead) on area/population programming.

- Student Groups
 - o Student Government Association - Advocating and educating the student community on their voter bill of rights and needs as they prepare to vote.
 - Lobby Core- Researching ballot measures that will directly affect the student populations at the Mount which include women identified students, Latina, first generation students, and those in financial need.
 - o Civics Team - Coordinating and facilitating workshops and large-scale programming on the topic of voter development, leadership in politics, and voter registration.
 - o Latinas Unidas - Ensuring Latina women are educated on how to vote, where to vote, and the power of their vote.
 - o Pangkat- Ensuring the Filipino Community is educated on how to vote, where to vote, and the power of their vote.
 - o Hawaiian Club - National measures to protect Hawaii sacred land.
 - o Eco Club - Environmental racism/policy development/ballot measures regarding the environment
 - o Psychology Club- Educate others on the field of professional psychology while hosting events that are connected to mental stimulation
 - o Community Assistants - Ensuring that residential students understand the ballot and election process for their respective areas of Los Angeles
- Division of Student Affairs

- Women's Leadership and Community Engagement
 - MSMUVotes Partnerships
 - Poll Worker Information to student community
- Student Engagement and Inclusion
 - Cultural Decision Making and Voting Rights Work Sessions with the cultural club and organizations.
- Campus Ministry & Spirituality
 - Catholic Principles & Voting Initiative Video featuring students connecting principles and voting rights.
 - Prepping for the Primaries Video Series highlighting the importance of "serving thy dear neighbor" by voting in the primaries.
 - Video participants will be in MSMUVotes and Campus Ministry gear.
 - Prayers for global justice monthly postings and in person reflections.
 - Faith Traditions and Voting Rights Workshop with MSMUVotes.
- Career and Professional Development
- Student Care and the Dean of Students Office
- Vice President of Student Affairs Office
- Veterans and Military Student Services
- ISAE- Trio Program
 - Specialized workshops on the importance of First Gen Students and Voting Rights.
- Sports, Recreation, and Wellness
- Academic Affairs
 - Academic Assessment Committee
 - Department of Political Science
 - Department of Film with an emphasis in Social Justice
 - Department of Education
 - Department of Nursing and Pre-Nursing
- Other Departments
 - Admissions Undergraduate-Weekend/Evening College-Graduate
 - Facilities Management
 - Campus Safety & Transportation

- Community Supporters
 - o California Ballot Bowl Competition
 - o National Voter Registration Day Partner
 - o League of Women Voters

GOALS

- Long Term
 - o Neighborhood Polling Location at the Doheny Campus
 - o Ensure 90% Student Registration beginning fall 2024.
 - o Increase turnout for students who vote at lower rates by offering tailored resources and support.
 - o Build the habit of political participation by engaging first-time voters, including first-generation U.S. citizens and first-generation college students.
 - o Enhance get-out-the-vote efforts to increase overall voting rates.
- Short Term
 - o Ballot Box Drop Off's on Campus- Chalon and Doheny.
 - o 650 students complete online pledge to vote.
 - o Increase on sight voter registration by 30%.
 - o Classroom Partnerships with faculty in various majors.
 - o Facilitate 25 one-on-ones with student leaders to nurture meaningful partnerships and programming through their club efforts.
 - o 50% increase in the number of students applying for internships/programs and conferences regarding political life, policy development, and lobbying.

STRATEGY

- Voter Registration/Check Your Status Drives "Are You Ready?"
 - o New Student Orientation, June/August 2023- June/August 2024
 - Incoming students will have the option to register to vote as part of a required orientation session. MSMUVotes will review the options for voter registration (at home or on campus), walk students through the form, answer questions and collect completed forms.

- Quarterly Residential Life Connects - program in which a Civics Team member pairs with a Community Assistant to ensure that residents have programming to allow them to register or check status.
- Special Election Events
 - MSMUVotes hosted Debate Watch Parties for all local, state, and national debates.
 - Voter education programs to provide non-partisan information on candidates, issues, and ballot measures.
 - Transportation support to get students to the polls.
 - MOUNTleads "I Lead, We Lead" Workshop Series session "VOTING AND WHY IT MATTERS AS A COLLEGIAN: A DEEP DIVE INTO THE PURPOSE OF LOCAL, COUNTY, AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS."
- Social Media
 - Instagram @msmuleadership
 - Webpage [MSMU Votes - MSMU](#)
 - MyMSMU Hub
- Civic Holidays
 - Constitution Day - September
 - As part of the Constitution Day celebration, a table will be set up to engage students outside the University Union. In addition to voter registration efforts, this event will include opportunities for students to articulate why voting matters and contribute to a social media campaign. Copies of the U.S. Constitution will be distributed, and students, faculty and staff can participate in activities. We will also decorate one dining hall on campus.
 - National Voter Registration Day - September
 - National Voter Registration Day activities will include voter registration in a prominent location, a campus-wide email with voting information, partnerships with student organizations, social media outreach and more. We will also decorate the Chalon Student Lounge and Doheny Cafe on campus celebrations on each campus with information on

voting, checking status, registering. In addition to learning about upcoming elections and candidates on the ballots.

- National Voter Education Week - October
 - Social media engagement throughout fall break week on how to educate, advocate, and prepare to be #voteready.
- November Election Day
 - Ensure that students vote at their correct poll site, drop ballots at a ballot drop box and host a MSMUVotes information table at the campus poll site on Election Day. Volunteers will be trained with information about student voter rights and how to address common issues that student voters may encounter. Students who live off campus will receive detailed information about how to get to their correct poll site and how to drop ballots if necessary.
- Educational Resources
 - Voter Library within the office of Women's Leadership and Community Engagement at both campuses, open to the university community. Housing history of voting books and research journals on voter engagement.
 - Faculty Resource Guide [MSMU Votes - Faculty & Staff.pdf \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
 - Student Poll Worker Program with LA County
 - Non-Citizen Engagement
 - Specialized programming for students and community leaders who are currently not eligible to vote will have the opportunity to learn about ways to be civically engaged.
 - Meet the Candidates Social Media Engagement
 - We will record short interviews with political candidates and post them on our webpage, YouTube page and on social media.
- Student Communication
 - Special Population Connection & Education Pamphlets
 - First Generation students - I'm First Gen & Voting for the First Time
 - Inter Club Council leaders - Your Club & Voting
 - Community Student Ambassadors - Community & Your Voting Rights - share voting resources and provide voter registration forms to graduating students and at community partner sites

- Sports Club Teams - Voting & Sports
- Campus-wide student email
 - An official University email will be sent in September, reminding students of their right to register to vote and providing information on how to do so.
 - In addition to voter registration emails, we will send an Election Day email to all students through the University's official email communication tool as well as through the Student Government Association.
- Pledge to vote Using the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge's online pledge to vote tool, we will encourage students to make a commitment to vote and will offer drawings for students who participate. We will also consider hosting campus-based competitions (by college, academic program, living community, etc.) to generate excitement. For an extra drawing, students will be challenged to remind three friends to vote.
- Important California Dates
 - Voter Registration - Online or Postmark by February 20, 2024. You can "conditionally" register and vote at your county elections office after the 15-day voter registration deadline.
 - Vote-by-Mail Ballot Request - Must arrive by February 27, 2024
 - Election Date March 5, 2024, Presidential Primary Election
 - Completed Ballots Including Vote-by-Mail Ballots - Personally delivered ballots: Must be delivered by close of polls on March 5, 2024; Mailed ballots: Must be postmarked on or before March 5, 2024, and received by your county elections office no later than March 12, 2024.

ASSESSMENT

Data collection and tracking is ongoing, and formal assessment processes take place at the end of each semester. Evaluation results are shared with campus and community partners, and some data (such as the number of students registered and changes in turnout rates) are shared more widely to both celebrate and strengthen our work.

1. National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) - will participate in NSLVE to track student voting rates and utilize data to expand programming efforts to targeted student populations.
2. Identify learning outcomes and assess student learning through surveys and notes on quality and depth of discussion and reflection, in addition to tracking attendance.
3. Conduct a debrief after every event and at the end of each semester to go over what worked well, what needs improvement and potential changes for the future. This includes post-event surveys for all participants. Following a debrief meeting, the point person will complete an event summary which will detail the event, debrief discussion, and include any primary metrics and outcomes.

REPORTING

This report will be shared with campus and community partners as well as other higher education institutions interested in strengthening their own voter engagement work.

The plan is posted publicly with national partners, such as the All in Challenge and Voter Friendly Campus and will be shared on the MSMUVotes website and ENGAGE Student Portal. The report will also be shared with university partners, trustees, and administration including the President's Cabinet.

Student leaders who are involved in democratic engagement will be doing a formal university report and sharing via live stream with the Mount community.