

Draft Political Engagement and Voting Campus Action Plan

2018

Muhlenberg College's mission statement affirms our campus' commitment to developing independent critical thinkers who engage in civil debate, equipped with ethical and civic values, and prepared for lives of leadership and service (Mission Statement 2014). To support our mission and these values, BergVotes, in collaboration with the campus community, have created this Action Plan as and strategies to increase political discourse and engagement on campus.

BergVotes is a non-partisan student movement dedicated to raising political awareness and increasing political engagement on campus. Working in collaboration with BergVotes is the BergVotes Collective, comprised of faculty, staff and students to support voter engagement and education activities.

Strategic Priorities:

1. Increase Muhlenberg College student voter registration rate of eligible students to x.

In 2016 Muhlenberg College student voter registration rate of eligible students was 59.2% an increase of 5% from 2012 (NSLVE, 2017).

In order to increase the voter registration rate of eligible students BergVotes, in cooperation with the Office of Community Engagement, Office of Housing and Residential Life, and other campus clubs and offices will:

- a. Table at Seeger's Student Union during high traffic times of day
 - b. Provide information during New Student Orientation about voter registration to new students
 - c. Remind students to register before campus speaking events related to the election
 - d. Post voter registration information on the BergBulletin and the campus calendar
 - e. Dorm Storm Freshmen Quad to register new voters
2. Provide information and opportunities to discuss issues related to policies and candidates in advance of the Midterm Election
 - a. BergVotes will host at least 1 issue round table
 - b. BergVotes will host Issues Expo with other student clubs prior to Election Day
 - c. Residence Life will host a Candidate Expo for Lehigh County political candidates
 - d. Academic Departments will host Election Series and Center for Ethics series that address public policy issues and the election

3. Increase Muhlenberg College student voter turnout rate

In 2016 the voter turnout rate for eligible students was 49.3, which is below the mean of all colleges and universities nationwide of 50.4% but an increase of almost 9% from 2014.

To increase voter turnout BergVotes, in collaboration with campus departments and other student clubs, will:

- a. Inform/remind students about absentee ballot deadlines particularly in PA, NY and NJ
- b. Dorm storm in the days prior to November 6th
- c. Ask students to sign voter pledge cards and place these cards in a public location prior to and on Election Day
- d. Residence Life will host Election Day celebration in a visible location while polls are open
- e. Remind students through email, social media and campus webpage to vote
- f. Use social media to publicize voting on campus

4. Continue to engage with Lehigh County Voter Registration Office

- a. In 2016 34 students served as Poll Workers (12) and Spanish language interpreters (22) for Lehigh County.
- b. Do we want a goal? Keep this number or higher?

We could attach BergVotes Collective Info here and BergVotes student club regarding committees, more details, etc.

We could do a SWOT analysis at some point, which might be helpful