

Overview

This coalition is dedicated to promoting the Northern Michigan University student vote turnout through increasing the accessibility of voter resources. Focuses will include non-partisan websites with information on candidates, as well as information on how to obtain an absentee ballot, and hopefully provide stamps and envelopes closer to election date. Tables containing vote information will be held around campus and opportunities to hold events will be taken as often as possible. We hope to establish a satellite office on campus for 4 weeks before election day to make voting more accessible to students without reliable transportation or those with hectic schedules.

Coalition

The coalition will be advised by Dr. Brian Cherry, and composed of Bethany Beavers (chair), Ali Deutsch (Democracy fellow) and Kate Gunville (Democracy fellow), as well as anyone else who expresses interest and commitment to the Marquette student voter turnout.

The civic engagement of this coalition will be focused around democratic engagement, i.e. voting, via promotion of community (specifically campus) based events.

Civic learning will be achieved through making efforts toward inclusivity in language and opportunities for students to register to vote. The idea of voting as a social responsibility is one the coalition embodies, and non-partisan resources on candidates will be provided.

The coalition will integrate voting into the curriculum by involving professors on campus, and delivering class presentations on how to register to vote, where students can find more information on candidates, etc. For efficiency, QR codes will be provided.

Description of Work

The coalition prioritizes student-to-student engagement, as well as student leadership in the endeavor of increasing student voting turnout. Students tend to understand what other students are looking for, and can plan events that reflect these interests. Students on this committee are prepared for questions related to finding candidate information, as well as requesting absentee ballots and registering to vote. The students that make up this committee are equipped to explain these concepts to the general student body.

Voter Registration

The coalition will host Voter Registration Tables biweekly throughout the semester. The coalition hopes to collaborate with community members who are civically involved as well as political organizations on campus and housing/dining staff.

The coalition will collect email addresses to follow up with those who register and are interested in applying for absentee ballots in order to ensure time-sensitive forms are completed and students have access to voting information.

The coalition hopes to pair with faculty to make in-class presentations about registering to vote in order to provide students an opportunity during class to get some information.

The coalition will try to meet students at different student organizations to promote voter registration and expand student outreach.

The coalition will create graphics encouraging students to register to vote to be posted throughout campus.

Voter Education

In coordination with Homecoming, the coalition will host a Civic-Engagement themed scavenger hunt.

The coalition chair will host skill builder programs to promote the importance of lifelong civic engagement and voting.

Voter Mobilization

Students will be encouraged to request an absentee ballot in the event they are unable to vote on election day. Students will be referred to the satellite office for additional counsel surrounding election day.

The coalition plans to follow up with all students it engages, to ensure they vote and to provide informational resources, to promote informed voting.

Students are encouraged to contact the coalition with any questions about absentee ballots, and if they are in need of postage.

The coalition hopes to run a bus to the polls on election day, to and from campus, pending university travel guidelines and if the buses will run.

Timeline:

In May, we will meet biweekly to discuss arrangements necessary to achieve high voter turnout in the fall semester. During this time, we will make sure the class presentation is up to date, and start thinking about promo merch we think will increase student voter turnout. We will also get involved with Promote the Vote, to possibly get more involvement on campus, and more resources. We will also start talking about putting together some voter events. Last election year, we hosted a debate showing.

For the remainder of the summer, we will have meetings as needed, and remain in contact via email.

In August and September, we will begin to contact professors regarding giving class presentations and promoting voter resources on campus. During this month, we will also start hosting vote tables, with vote resources, and promo merch, to encourage students to register to vote. We hope to host these tables twice a week. They will likely be at the Northern Lights Dining in the evening, or in Jamrich in the afternoon (from my experience, these are the more traveled regions of campus. I am definitely open to other options). We will register for a table at Fall fest (this might have to be done through an org; if that's true, we will talk about which org we can collaborate with. Maybe Mortar Board).

In October, we will continue to run the vote tables, and we'll work on establishing the satellite office in the Northern Center again. It's important to establish it in October, so students who want to vote without a car can do so, but having it too early means the novelty wears off by the

time it's important. We will continue to host vote tables, and voting events, and I'm hoping presentations have tapered off by then.

The main thing in November will be continuing to have the Satellite office. Because election day is the 8th, we will probably keep the office until the Friday following it. We could host a vote party or something in the satellite office. Maybe some pictures of Wildcat Willy in the Satellite Office.

The NSLVE data from 2018 showed a 16% increase in voter participation, making a total of 30.2% of students enrolled. Based on this, our goal is a 34% student voting rate, which is ambitious, but realistic. We opted for the lower end of ambitious (and subsequently the higher end of realistic) because steady increases will lead to more sustainable student voting outcomes. This would involve approximately 586 more students voting based on population increases. Various student groups including global campus students and graduate students will be focused on in order to diversify the voting population and maybe reach groups of people that are historically forgotten about on campus.

This coalition will also advertise the poll worker job opportunity to continue to get students politically engaged.