



---

100 Grant Street • De Pere, WI 54115-2099 • [www.snc.edu/millercenter](http://www.snc.edu/millercenter)

January 15, 2020

Catherine Fish  
Associate Director  
ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge  
Civic Nation  
1156 15th St. NW, Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Catherine,

Thanks for your patience with the submission of our Campus Action Plan from St. Norbert College.

We very much appreciate our collaboration with ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, and we are pleased to offer the action plan that follows below. It was developed in consultation with several community partners and other offices on campus, but remains the primary responsibility of the Norman Miller Center for Peace, Justice & Public Understanding.

with appreciation,

Robert A. Pyne, Th.D.  
Director of Community Engagement  
Director, Norman Miller Center for Peace, Justice & Public Understanding

# Campus Action Plan for Voting

St. Norbert College  
De Pere, Wisconsin

## Executive Summary

This plan was drafted by Dr. Robert A. Pyne, Director of the Norman Miller Center for Peace, Justice & Public Understanding at St. Norbert College in consultation with a number of other campus offices and community partners. These partners will be listed below.

This action plan will guide our efforts for the 2020 calendar year. It will cover plans for the Spring Primary Election (February 18, 2020), the Spring Election (April 20, 2020), and the General Election (November 3, 2020).

While the plan focuses on efforts undertaken on behalf of students at St. Norbert College, some elements of the plan will also benefit the local community. Specifically:

1. The designation of the campus as a polling place for early voting,
2. Community voter education programs led by students,
3. Celebrations of the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in America,
4. Students volunteering at the polls on Election Day.

The plan will be implemented by a committee of SNC staff, students, and community members, under the leadership of the Norman Miller Center.

## Leadership

The individuals currently making up our working group are:

- Dr. Robert Pyne, Director of the Norman Miller Center (chair)
- Dr. Charles Jacobs, Professor of Political Science
- Dr. Wendy Scattergood, Professor of Political Science
- Dr. Gratzia Villarroel, Professor of Political Science
- Carey Danen, City Clerk of De Pere
- Charlotte Goska, Coalition of Voting Organizations of Brown County
- H. James Smet, Coalition of Voting Organizations of Brown County
- Kevin Welch, Coalition of Voting Organizations of Brown County
- Diana Delbecchi, Green Bay Public School District
- Elise Skarda, student

- Jaxsen Schermacher, student
- Ellen Socha, Student Community Organizer, Norman Miller Center
- Emma Johnson, Student Community Organizer, Norman Miller Center
- Leah Jobe, Student Community Organizer, Norman Miller Center
- Kodee Zarnke, Student Community Organizer, Norman Miller Center
- Hattie Kruschek, Residence Life
- Migena Vula, Residence Life
- Mike Peckham, Director of Residence Life
- Jill Olson, Program Coordinator, Norman Miller Center
- Reilly Harrington, NextGen America

We will also invite student leaders from the College Republicans and the College Democrats, along with other interested students. As in past years, we are working with Political Science students who will help assess our voter registration drives in order to improve those efforts in the future. Also, as in the past, we are working with the Coalition of Voting Organizations of Brown County and the City Clerk of De Pere. New this year is a dedicated collaboration with Residence Life, which will play a significant role in voter registration efforts.

This group will meet as needed, and is already actively engaged in electronic communication. We hope to consolidate our voter registration and voter education efforts so that we will work together in a coordinated way.

## **Leadership and Communication**

St. Norbert College was recently recertified with the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. Civic engagement is an institutional priority as seen in the campus strategic plan and in specific instruction from the Board of Trustees to encourage and facilitate student voting. Reports from our NSLVE data are circulated to the President's Cabinet and to select members of the board. A report was also published for interested community members by the Coalition of Voting Organizations of Brown County (COVO).

## **Goals and Strategy**

We started collecting data on student voter registration and voter turnout through the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) in 2012. Our student voting rate in that election was 58.6%, 11 points higher than the national average. In the

2014 midterm election, it was 32.7%. That looks low, but it was still 13 points higher than the national average for college students. In 2016, another presidential contest, it was 50.6%. That was an improvement on the 2014 midterms, but a significant decline from 2012. While many would point to depressed voter turnout nationwide, our student election turnout was only .2% higher than the national average. We really wanted to do better, so we started planning some new approaches for 2018.

COVO was at the heart of our efforts, coming to campus for a voter registration drive and registering students during our first year Gateway Seminar. Kevin Welch, our dedicated COVO volunteer, met repeatedly with our student staff and volunteers to strategize about voter education efforts and Election Day programming. We also collaborated with Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP) through Wisconsin Campus Compact (WiCC); Yalla Vote, through the Arab American Institute; the ALL In Campus Democracy Challenge (including the Higher Education - Service Learning forum); Vote Together; Get Out the Vote (GOTV); NextGen; Young Invincibles (with Students Learn Students Vote), the City Clerk of De Pere, and Wisconsin Conservation Voters. On campus, we worked with nearly a dozen offices and student organizations to offer voter education programs (non-partisan presentations about the voting process, what various offices did, and what was on the ballot), distributed information about voting using both print and social media, and ran a shuttle to the polls on Election Day. We distributed pizza, cookies, hot chocolate and voting information throughout the day on Election Day, and we shuttled more students to the polls than in any of the previous three national elections. Several of our students were interviewed on the local television news. It all seemed successful, but we did not know for sure until the NSLVE data was released last month.

In the 2018 midterms, according to the the report we just received, we are again more than 8 points over the national average. Our voting rate of 47.3% was an improvement of 14.6 percentage points from the 2014 midterms! 1490 students (70.7% of the student body) had registered, an increase of 231 from four years earlier.

Our goal for 2020 is to increase all these numbers. We would like to register a higher percentage of students than before, and we hope to see a higher percentage of them actually vote. Here is how we hope to accomplish that:

1. **Designate the St. Norbert College Campus as an early voting site.** This suggestion comes from the City Clerk, and it will require approval of the City Council. We are drafting that proposal now, with the goal of placing it before the Council before the end of January. This designation will give us multiple opportunities both to encourage and to track student voting. It will allow a progressive “contest” between residence halls and will take pressure off the local polling place on Election Day.

Further, it will extend these benefits beyond the campus as early voting will also be available to the community.

- 2. Cooperate with Residence Life to promote voter registration, education, and voting in the residence halls.** We are a residential campus, with over 90% of students living on campus. This year we hope to take advantage of that by promoting voter registration and participation through the residence halls. Student RA's will lead a "contest" between halls for percent participation in voter registration and voting. Participation in early voting will allow us to track this over time rather than restrict it to a single day.
- 3. Voter registration efforts will continue through COVO volunteers and students who will be trained to work with them.**
- 4. Campus Card Services will again produce alternative photo IDs suitable for voting.**
- 5. Student volunteers will be trained to work in the polling places for early voting and on Election Day.**
- 6. Student Community Organizers from the Norman Miller Center will lead several voter education programs:**
  - 6.a. "What's on my ballot" for SNC students
  - 6.b. 100th anniversary of women's suffrage celebration for students and community members
  - 6.c. Voting education for primary school students and middle schoolers, with celebration of women's suffrage
  - 6.d. Debate watching parties on campus
- 7. Student Community Organizers from the Norman Miller Center will drive a shuttle to the polls on Election Day.**
- 8. Students from Political Science classes will conduct exit polls and will also track registration efforts.**

## **Assessment and Reporting**

As always, data from our national NSLVE report will help us realize whether we attain our goals of increased student participation. These reports will be shared with the administration and community members.