



WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2022 Action Plan

ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge

#BADGERS
VOTE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan was prepared by leadership of the BadgersVote Coalition and staff of the Morgridge Center for Public Service.

With a rich history of civic engagement, the University of Wisconsin-Madison takes seriously its public service mission — including helping students become their best civic selves. Voting is one of the single most important actions U.S. citizens can take in contributing to their democracy. To that end, UW–Madison students, administrators, staff, and faculty have made and continue to pursue vigorous voter information, education, access, and outreach efforts. The Morgridge Center has provided an expansive civic learning and democratic engagement network, which has grown tremendously since its establishment in 1996, and aims to engage students in community service, civic engagement, and voting in a comprehensive and educational manner. On our campus, robust student engagement efforts are a priority. With essential contributions from campus and community partners, the Morgridge Center serves as the hub for implementing our action plan.

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by University of Wisconsin-Madison for the 2022 election. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout. Short-term goals for University of Wisconsin-Madison for the 2022 election are to increase turnout and registration by three percentage points over the previous midterm election in 2018 by using new means to reach segments of the student body with lower levels of participation. Long-term goals are to sustain student civic engagement through the state and local elections in 2023, increase turnout of underrepresented groups generally, and to further establish the BadgersVote brand on campus as a source for nonpartisan involvement.

LEADERSHIP

The BadgersVote Coalition is a campus-wide initiative that strives to provide University of Wisconsin-Madison students with everything they need to know in order to participate in their elections. The BadgersVote Coalition brings together key stakeholders from student affairs, academic units and departments across campus, student voices, community partners, and the city of Madison.

BadgersVote Co-Chairs

Barry Burden, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Elections Research Center
Shelby Fosco, Co-Curricular Programs Specialist, Morgridge Center for Public Service

Campus Staff

Lisa Chambers, Administrative Director, Morgridge Center for Public Service
José Luis Ramirez, Jr., Assistant Director of Civic Engagement, Morgridge Center for Public Service
Tabitha Houghton, BadgersVote Lead Intern
Brandon Nielson, BadgersVote Social Media Intern
Taryn Hanson, Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow
Amanjot Kaur, League of Women Voters of Dane County Intern
Laine Bottemiller, Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassador
Kayley Bell, Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassador
Giorgia Brandt, Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassador
Katie Wilberding, Andrew Goodman Vote Everywhere Ambassador

Campus Stakeholders

Associated Students of Madison (ASM) Legislative Affairs
University Communications
University Housing
Dean of Students Office
Elections Research Center
Department of Political Science
UW-Madison Libraries
Student Advocacy and Student Affairs
Morgridge Center for Public Service
Wisconsin Black Student Union
Multicultural Student Center
Office of University Relations
UW Health/School of Medicine
Social Justice Hub

Community Partners

League of Women Voters of Dane County
City Clerk's Office, City of Madison
University of Wisconsin Hillel Foundation

Our campus works with these following national nonprofit partners: Andrew Goodman Foundation, Ask Every Student, Campus Compact, and Campus Vote Project.

COMMITMENT

Civic participation is a key element of the culture of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The university is a member of Campus Compact, a sign of its commitment to the public purposes of the university. It has been a signatory to the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation since 2020.

In 2017 a campus-wide committee developed the UW-Madison Civic Action Plan. Endorsed by the University Chancellor, the Plan reaffirms the university's commitment to a public presence. It recommends that civic engagement be woven into the curriculum more fully to help establish high levels of student involvement in every major and unit on campus.

LANDSCAPE

University of Wisconsin-Madison is a public four-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2016.

As of the start of the 2022-2023 academic year, University of Wisconsin-Madison enrollment is nearly 50,000 students, 70% of whom are undergraduates. Approximately 45% of students are Wisconsin residents and 84% of the university's students are U.S. citizens. Demographically, the largest self-identified racial and ethnic groups are white (60%), Asian (9%), Hispanic (7%), and Black (2%), with approximately 16% identifying as international students.

University of Wisconsin-Madison is an authorized participant in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE).

Our institution had a 2020 campus voting rate of 72.8% and a voter registration rate of 85.2%.

Our institution had a 2018 voter turnout rate of 56.0% and a voter registration rate of 80.5%.

Our institution has been recognized in the past by ALL IN for these awards:

- 2020 Student Honor Roll: Tamia Fowlkes
- WI Campus Voting Challenge 4-year: Highest Voter Registration & Highest Voter Turnout

Our institution has been recognized by ALL IN with the following seals:

- 2018 Platinum
- 2020 Gold

GOALS

Our broad student engagement goals center around increasing student voter participation, particularly among lower turnout segments of the student body, institutionalizing expectations of voting among students, and fostering a campus community that is civically engaged throughout the year.

SHORT TERM GOALS

Goals to be achieved within the 2022 election cycle:

- Increase campus voter turnout and registration by three percentage points compared to the 2018 election.
- Increase digital communication efforts and initiatives to engage with students.
- Implement new outreach strategies with students who vote at lower rates as identified by our NSLVE reports.

LONG TERM GOALS

Goals to be achieved throughout the next three to five years:

- Enhance opportunities for sustained civic engagement beyond a presidential election with a particular focus on state and local elections.
- Increase voter turnout in underrepresented groups based on the NSLVE data to at least an average of 50% across the underrepresented groups and closer align to their white identifying peers.
- Build a brand and identity of nonpartisan resources through the BadgersVote Coalition.

STRATEGIES

The University of Wisconsin-Madison will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation. We separate the strategies into those focused on voter registration (up through the October 19 voter registration deadline), voter education (through the election season), and voter engagement (particular when early voting begins on October 25).

VOTER REGISTRATION

Bus pass pick-up coordination: The Associated Students of Madison (ASM, the campus student government) will coordinate with the Wisconsin Union Social Justice Hub, volunteers from the Dane County chapter of League of Women Voters, and the City Clerk to offer voter registration opportunities when students pick up their bus passes at the beginning of the semester.

Campus events: The Morgridge Center for Public Service will arrange voter registration and voter information opportunities in conjunction with other student events.

National Voter Registration Day: The BadgersVote team will celebrate National Voter Registration Day with informational social media posts and voting registration tabling opportunities at high traffic locations on campus.

City outreach to first year students: The City Clerk will mail registration forms and instructions to all eligible students living in campus residence halls, using information provided by the university. Because nearly all of these students have only recently become eligible to vote and all have moved since the last election, providing the forms and return postage is expected to generate a large number of first-time registration forms.

Ongoing registration opportunities: BadgersVote interns, City of Madison election officials, and local League of Women Voters volunteers provide voter registration tabling opportunities at multiple locations and times on campus up through the registration deadline.

VOTER EDUCATION

An authoritative information portal: University Communications will maintain a central source of information about voting for students online at vote.wisc.edu. The site will be vetted by the City Clerk's Office to ensure it is correct and all communications with students will refer them to the essential information provided there.

Campus-wide communications: Stories about BadgersVote and upcoming election deadlines will appear in “The Weekly,” an electronic newsletter distributed to all students. All enrolled students will also receive information emails from the Dean of Students and the ASM (student government) Voting Ambassador with guidance on the voting process at the beginning of the early voting period and again the day before election day.

Working through parents: An article about the voting process for students will be included in the October newsletter of the Family and Parent Program to encourage conversations between parents and their university students.

Working through instructors: Slides for sharing in classroom or online through course web sites will be distributed to instructors through the Provost’s Office.

Bookmark distribution: All first-year students attend the Chancellor’s Convocation at the beginning of the academic and receive copies of the campus common read program known as “Go Big Read.” BadgersVote volunteers will also distribute informational bookmarks to those students providing election dates and essential facts about how to get registered and vote.

Student ID pick-up: All incoming students picking up their campus IDs (Wiscard) will be provided with information about state voter ID requirements. Students will also be provided with the opportunity to acquire eligible voter IDs on the spot.

BadgerVotes Notes: Student interns with BadgersVote will produce a monthly newsletter for fellow students that highlights aspects of the election such as how to get eligible IDs and what is on the ballot.

National Voter Education Week: BadgersVote social media will celebrate National Voter Education Week with daily social media posts amplifying the hashtags associated with the national campaign.

Videos: University Communications will produce several engaging videos about the voting process to be distributed on social media, by email, and on campus web sites when early voting begins and immediately before and on election day.

Library partnership: University Libraries will enhance student awareness by providing a “tile” about voting on the main Library web site, posting election information on electronic kiosks in libraries, and distributing information materials to patrons who check out library resources.

VOTER ENGAGEMENT

Debate and election watch parties: Debate watch events and election night results watch events will be held on campus for all interested students. Refreshments, faculty experts, and voter registration opportunities will be provided as appropriate.

Visibility: Several activities are designed to enhance awareness of the election and generate interest. Stand-up banners encouraging voting will be placed outside residence halls daily during the early voting period when there are three voting locations on campus. An engagement event with campus mascot “Bucky” or another character will be paired with information about the voting process. Large marquee letters spelling out a voting message will be placed in the center of campus (on Bascom Hill) on election day eve and election day itself as “selfie” opportunities to motivate voting. BadgersVote volunteers will create sidewalk chalk messages and images to mark the nine campus polling places on election day. Hundreds of tee shirts promoting voting among students will be distributed to volunteers to heighten visibility in both on and off campus spaces where they are encountered.

Texting platform: University Communications will provide a service where students may sign up for text reminders about upcoming election deadlines. The texting platform will be promoted on social media and other communications to students.

Voter ID printers: To assist students who arrive at campus polling places without acceptable identification, ID printing stations will be established at each location to create temporary paper IDs suitable for voting. In cooperation with campus IT staff, BadgersVote volunteers will fill dozens of hourly shifts to provide technical support to students who use the printing service.

EVALUATION

The Badgers Vote coalition will utilize this action plan to support our ongoing efforts to evaluate our work. Although the NSLVE data will not be available until at least Summer 2023, we are able to identify the following areas to support our understanding of successes, challenges, and opportunities for the future. This evaluation will be led by the Co-curricular Programs Specialist with contributions from students, staff, faculty, and community partners. We hope to build upon existing successes and identify areas for improvement.

BadgersVote Coalition leaders will intentionally set aside time to review strategies and goal achievement following the November 2022 election. The Coalition will draw perspectives from those close to the work including faculty, staff, students, and community partners. Individual meetings will be set up with key stakeholders involved in executing projects housed within the Coalition. This effort will be led by the BadgersVote Lead Intern in evaluating and reflecting on the success of the Coalition including the emphasis of how the university can continue to elevate student voices, foster engagement, and empower students to overcome hurdles to participation.

REPORTING

The UW-Madison campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website <https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/university-of-wisconsin-madison/>.

Reports for the 2022 election and other recent election cycles will all be posted on the web site of the Morgridge Center for Public Service for students, staff, faculty, media, and community partners to view.