

ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge 2024 Action Plan

Executive Summary

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) boasts a rich tradition of active participation by students, faculty, and staff in civic and community engagement. Our [Guiding Values and Institutional Vision](#) prominently feature community engagement, reflecting their deeply rooted role in the actions and environment of highlight the significance of community engagement, reflecting its integral role in the ethos and activities of UWM. Our community involvement spans various civic engagement initiatives at a national, state, and local levels, fostering enduring partnerships with numerous community organizations in Milwaukee and Waukesha. The objective of this action plan is to furnish a framework for UWM's initiatives in student voter engagement and outreach. Led by the Dean of Students Office, specifically Abby Meddaugh, Associate Dean of Students, and steered by the Student Voting Work Group, the plan entails tasks aimed at enhancing voter turnout by ensuring eligible voters are well-informed about the registration process, polling locations, and absentee ballot requests, facilitating their participation in the democratic process. This nonpartisan initiative is geared towards fortifying democracy and ensuring every student can exercise their right to vote.

Chancellor's Commitment

UWM's Chancellor is dedicated to advancing civic learning and democratic engagement, having pledged support for the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to achieving full student voter participation. This commitment underscores our obligation to equip students for responsible and active citizenship, emphasizing their right and responsibility to register and vote. Discussions about this commitment have taken place at the University of Wisconsin System level, involving various UW Chancellors, and are communicated in relevant messaging to campus and external stakeholders.

The dedication to civic learning and democratic engagement goes beyond the Chancellor's role at UWM. Numerous staff members actively participate in Panthers Vote and endorse within their respective departments. Our objective is to comprehensively foster civic learning and democratic engagement, integrating these values into our institutional culture. This commitment aligns with the mission of the Universities of Wisconsin:

“The mission of this system is to develop human resources, to discover and disseminate knowledge, to extend knowledge and its application beyond the boundaries of its campuses, and to serve and stimulate society by developing in students heightened intellectual, cultural, and humane sensitivities; scientific, professional, and technological expertise; and a sense of purpose. Inherent in this mission are methods of instruction, research, extended education, and public service designed to educate people and improve the human condition. Basic to every purpose of the system is the search for truth.”

Furthermore, UWM takes pride in its acknowledgement as one of the nation's leading universities for community engagement by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The foundation established the Community Engagement Classification to honor colleges and universities contributing to their communities in ways beyond the scope of traditional national educational data used for ranking institutions.

UWM Student Data

According to the most recent [Common Data Set](#) UWM student data demographic includes:

- 23,139 Students which includes¹:
 - 18,751 undergraduate
 - 4,387 graduate
 - 7,670 identified as male
 - 9,558 identified as female
 - 11,951 undergraduate identified as white, non-Hispanic
 - 1,343 undergraduate identified as Black or African American
 - 824 undergraduate identified as Hispanic/Latino
 - 1,250 undergraduate identified as Asian, Non Hispanic
 - 2,683 ungraduated identified by two or more races
- 12% of the undergraduate population is from out of state
- 18% of undergraduates live in campus housing
- 82% of undergraduates live off campus
- The average age of undergraduates is 24

2024 Elections and Events

Elections:

- Spring Primary: February 20, 2024
- Spring Election: April 2, 2024
- Fall Primary: August 13, 2024
- Fall Election: November 5, 2024

Events:

Ongoing

- Voter Registration
 - The goal is to host 2-3 in person events prior to each online registration deadline. These events will take place in the residence halls and the Student Union, which are accessible and highly visible.

¹ Other Gender was redacted for privacy from the Common Data Set

- Student Orientation Outreach – Summer

Date Specific

- Early Voting (Milwaukee Campus)- April 2024
- Move-In at the Residence Halls - Late August
- Constitution Day – September 17, 2024
- National Voter Registration Day - September 17, 2024
- National Voter Education Week TBD
- Campus Voting Summit (HOST)- TBD
- Vote Early Day - TBD
- Election Hero Day – TBD
- Legislative Town Hall - October TBD
- Get Out the Vote – Election Day November 5, 2024

UWM's Action Team

To promote civic engagement more holistically across campus, our multidisciplinary team includes students, faculty, and staff representatives from across campus. As a working group, representatives review data, evaluate the success of the action plan, and assist with the implementation of tactics and strategies to promote civic engagement and voting literacy across campus. Members of Panthers Vote meet bimonthly during the academic year. Examples of this are the partnership with UWM's Center for 21st Century Studies, university housing, Student Association and student organizations that have specific voting initiatives such as Un-PAC. Their 2023-2024 programming explores issues of trust and civic engagement through story carts, roundtables, and presentations to build a community of scholars that engages in pressing issues. Last year, Panthers Votes efforts did outreach through classroom efforts to 30 classrooms which reached over 1000 students. Additionally, a program was intentionally done to assist students in understanding voter ID. Panther's Vote is committed to ensure that educational programming efforts surrounding this topic continue.

Community Partners

We are extremely grateful to all the campus partners who help make our campus voting initiatives a reality. In addition to the wonderful campus departments who set up for our events, create and share promotional materials, photograph and promote our events, and help facilitate our programs, we also work with many partner organizations. This is not an exhaustive list as we are continuously working with new partners, but here are some of the organizations we have collaborated with and hope to continue working with in the future:

Alumni Groups – Panther Advocates, Panther Promoters, Board of Visitors

ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge

Campus Compact

Campus Election Engagement Project aka Civic Influencers

Campus Vote Project

City of Milwaukee Election Commission

Civic Holidays (National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, Vote Early Day, Election Heros Day)

Civic Nation

Common Ground

Institute for Democracy & Higher Education

Leaders Igniting Transformation

League of Women Voters

National Conference on Citizenship/ Students Learn Students Vote Coalition/
Election Trust Project

RISE

Students Learn Students Vote

Supermarket Legends

When We All Vote

WISPIRG/ Student PIRGS

Early Voting Site

UWM has worked with the City of Milwaukee Election Commission to have early voting on campus including for the April and November 2024 elections. Having this site on campus not only provides UWM on campus students the opportunity to vote early, but it also allows those students as well as faculty and staff who live in Milwaukee to vote early on campus. When partnering with the city, we worked extensively to have voting hours that include weekend and extended hours to provide a variety of options for voters.

Campus Voting Location

UWM host elections in February and April on campus and will host the August and November 2024 elections on campus. For the 2024 voting year, the polling location has been moved to a location that is most visible on campus to make voting on campus more accessible.

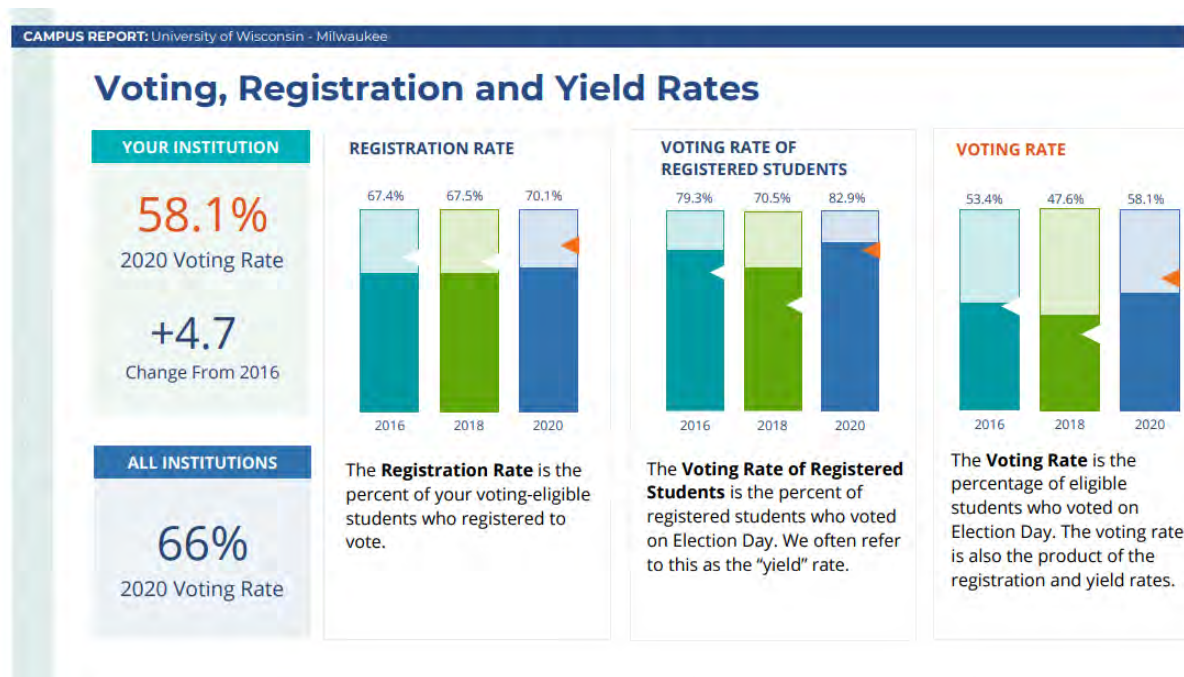
Marketing & Communication Deliverables

- Election dates are posted on the campus events calendar and on the Panthers Vote Website
- Printed posters and banners will be posted in the Student Union and materials will be distributed to University Housing. Digital signage will be present on monitors around campus and posted on campus social media. Similar signage is used on all campus locations.

- Uwm.edu/vote is UWM’s designated voting website. This will be updated to reflect the most up to-date information on registration, polling locations, and more. Our past and present Action Plans and NSLVE reports are posted to this website as well.
- Social Media is coordinated through University Relations and Communication. Information will be posted to UWM’s Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. We also have engagement plans for the campus Tiktok account.
- Campus-wide emails are sent to students, faculty, and staff. These emails include the UW System Guidance on Political Campaign Activities sent in October and reminders prior to elections encouraging registration and voting.
- Families receive information through the Panther Family Association to assist their students in identifying how to register, where to vote or how to obtain a ballot.
- Many campus departments encourage voting to their student populations (i.e. Athletics engages with student athletes, certain schools/colleges engage students through course presentations, etc.).

National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement

Milwaukee Campus



While we do not have the most up to date data, the 2020 report indicates that:

- 58.1% 2020 Voting Rate, a 4.7% increase from 2016
- 82% of registered students voted in 2020 (yield rate). 70% of eligible students are registered to vote at UWM.
- 58% of 18 to 21-year-olds voted in the 2020 election, a stunning 11 percent increase from 2016

- 15% of students voted early, 32% voted in-person on Election Day, and 50% of students voted not in-person
- Full report can be accessed on our website, uwm.edu/vote

Waukesha Campus

- The Institute for Democracy & Higher Education (IDHE) is currently working on determining whether branch campuses will continue to receive designated reports. As of fall 2023, we have no specific NSLVE data for either of our branch campuses so we will utilize our general campus report to guide voting efforts on all our campuses.

Recommendations For Fall 2024 Election

- Create and send over marketing materials to Waukesha to put up on their campuses to increase outreach to their student populations.
- Updated video to share why voting matters to our students.
- Print & place Grind Coffee Shop stickers about the uwm.edu/vote website if restrictions have been lifted on the service.
- Update uwm.edu/vote website with relevant information as it becomes available.
- Disseminate information about election timelines and polling locations through campus social media, our course management software, campus-wide emails, and other print and digital channels.

Short Term Goals

- Midterm elections have a historically lower turnout rates than presidential elections, but they are just as important. Our goal is for at least 60% of our eligible student population to participate in the 2024 midterms.
- Increase student and faculty involvement in the Panthers Vote coalition in spring 2024 by increasing outreach to campus affinity groups and organizations.
- Higher student fellows who can specifically assist with and lead Panther's Vote efforts.
- Continue to partner with and enhance the current partnership with campus departments, including Centry for 21st Students and the political science department.

Long Term Goals

- Although we are proud of the 4.7% jump in voter participation our campus saw in the 2020 presidential election, it fell short of our goal of increasing voting participation by 10%. This is an opportunity to continue to grow our campus participation. Our goal is to exceed the national 2020 voting rate average of 66% in 2024.
- Reach full voting participation on campus by 2028.

Reporting

- UWM strives for wide reaching participation and transparency in our voting efforts. Documents such as the NSLVE report and Action Plan are shared both internally through email and externally on our website, campus social media, and newsletters.
- Press releases are utilized as applicable to highlight valuable information such as the NSLVE data, ALL IN Awards, early voting sites, etc.

Evaluation

The Associate Dean of Students oversees the evaluation of each strategy and tactic used in our voter engagement initiatives. Panthers Vote will evaluate the effectiveness of events based on various metrics such as voter registration numbers, pledges, volunteer participation, and event attendance. To collect these short-term metrics, Panthers Vote will utilize methods such as sign-up sheets, online registration forms, and attendance tracking systems. Additionally, we analyze the data collected to understand which strategies are more successful than others in engaging our student body. The data analysis process is managed by our campus voting coalition, with designated individuals responsible for collecting, analyzing, and presenting the data to ensure informed decision-making and continuous improvement in our voter engagement efforts.

- Panthers' Vote meetings will discuss successes and areas of improvement while tracking progress towards goals.
- A new tracking QR Code will help gauge redirection rates to UWM voting website. Google analytics is also used.
- Voting data from the early voting and election site is reported to us by the City of Milwaukee.
- In-person events will track turnout and participation.