



All In Campus Democracy Challenge 2020 Action Plan

Report prepared by University Relations and Communications, External Relations (12/12/19)

Executive Summary

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) has a long history of student, faculty and staff involvement in civic and community engagement. Our [Guiding Values](#) prominently feature community engagement, reflecting their deeply rooted role in the actions and environment of UWM. Our students, faculty and staff are involved in a wide range of civic engagement projects at international, national, state and local levels, while maintaining partnerships with a large number of Milwaukee-area community organizations.

The goal of this action plan is to provide a template for student voter engagement and outreach. Guided by the student voting work group, tasks throughout will be assigned to committee members with the goal of increasing voter turnout so that eligible voters know how to register, find their polling location or absentee ballot and ultimately vote. This is a non-partisan initiative. The majority of work in this action plan takes place January – November.

Chancellor's Commitment

UWM continues to deepen its positive impact in the city and region through community and business partnerships. Through this work, UWM boasts a strong and long-established track record of pervasive community partnerships, community-driven research, educational and research collaborations, student experiential learning opportunities, contributions to economic development, and enhancements to cultural and environmental quality-of-life.

UWM is proud to have been recognized among the nation's top universities for community engagement by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The foundation created its [Community Engagement Classification](#) to recognize colleges and universities that benefit their communities in ways not reflected by the national educational data typically used to compile lists of top colleges.

Upcoming 2020 Elections

Spring Primary – Tuesday, February 18, 2020

Spring Election/Presidential Primary – Tuesday, April 7, 2020

Fall Primary – Tuesday, August 11, 2020

Fall General Election – Tuesday, November 3, 2020

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UWM's Action Team

Our multidisciplinary team includes representatives from around campus with the goal of raising civic engagement across campus. Members are selected by members of the Chancellor's Cabinet and the group is co-chaired by University Relations and Communications and Student Affairs. The committee meets monthly to assess progress. This is a working group, so all representatives assist with implementation of tactics, evaluation of data and success of the action plan. Representatives include:

- Executive Sponsors: Vice Chancellor for University Relations Tom Luljak and Chief Student Affairs Officer Kelly Haag
- Action Plan Facilitator - Director, External Relations, Keri Duce
- Registrar, Kristin Hildebrand
- Director, Center for Student Involvement, Eric Jessup-Anger
- Dean of Students Office Representative, Domonique Smith
- Director of Facilities Peck School of the Arts, Randall Trumbull-Holper
- Integrated Marketing & Communications – Mark Jacobson, Tina Keller, Erika Kramer, Lesley Kelling, Kathy Quirk, John Schumacher and Michelle Johnson
- University Housing Representative - Matt Mountin
- UWMPD Chief Joseph LeMire
- Student Union Facilities and Marketing - Mike Schmit, Brandon James, Amanda Elliott
- Panther Card Office – Richard Haskey
- Executive Director Center for Community-Based Learning, Leadership & Research Laurie Marks
- Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (Waukesha/Washington Co.) - Courtney O'Connell
- Student rep – TBD by Student Association
- Faculty rep – TBD by Letters and Sciences and University Committee

Community Partners

City of Milwaukee Election Commission, Panther Advocates, Panther Promoters, and the League of Women Voters.

Early Voting Site

UW-Milwaukee has again been selected as an early voting site for the 2020 general election. Planning for a high-traffic location is in progress.

UW-Milwaukee was [one of eight in-person absentee “early” voting sites in the City of Milwaukee for the 2018 general election](#). Of the 2,633 early voters at UWM's site, 112 were Sandburg Hall residents. Sandburg Hall, located in ward 130, had 902 polling place voters on Election Day. 856 of them resided at Sandburg Hall and 782 were same day registrations.

Possible Service-Learning Courses

- Paru Shah's Political Science 150

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Possible 2020 Events

- Campus Election Engagement Project Fellow working on GOTV efforts (CBLLR)
- Constitution Day on September 17 (Letters and Sciences)
- Political rallies and visits as requested by groups (Campus Facilities and Event Planners)
- Townhall and debate events and watch parties (Campus Facilities and Event Planners)
- Civic Responsibility speaker series (Global Inclusion and Engagement)

DNC 2020 Convention Planning and Engagement

Milwaukee is excited to welcome the 2020 Democratic National Convention to our world-class city July 13-16. A campus working group has convened to address space requests, courses offered, service learning, volunteer opportunities, programming, promotional/marketing opportunities, media/experts, staffing and internship needs. (uwm.edu/DNC2020)

Marketing and Communication Materials

- Key election dates are on the campus events calendar.
- Marketing materials across campus are refreshed and given a similar look and feel, while also being reviewed for consistency and clarity of message.
 - Posters, banner and printed marketing is focused in the Student Union and University Housing. Digital signage will be utilized around campus.
 - Initial marketing ready by Orientation (June 2020)
- Most information is housed at uwm.edu/vote, a one-stop website for students with information on registration, voting locations, voter ID and more. This site also includes information on how students can access a customized voter enrollment verification letter. This site is updated by External Relations. Our Action Plan and NSLVE data are also available on this site.
- The social media plan is coordinated through University Relations and Communication, focusing on proactive messaging and response to issues.
- Campus-wide email(s) are sent to students, faculty and staff. It includes the UW System Guidance on Political Campaign Activities guidelines. (September/October 2020)
- Parents receive information through the Panther Family Association so they can assist their students in identifying where to vote or how to obtain an absentee ballot.



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2014 & 2018 Campus Report: Student Voting Rates for UWM

National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement

Milwaukee Campus

- The percentage of total students voting rose 16.4 percent.
- In spite of extensive early vote campaigns, and a convenient early vote location, in-person election day voting still accounted for 75 percent of all student votes.
- The biggest area of growth continues to be the youngest demographic – 18-21-year-olds who may be voting for the first time (will be voting for President for the first time in 2020).

Washington County

- Enrollment declined 26.6 percent from 2014 to 2018 but the total number of students voting only declined by 14.6 percent.
- Nearly all students do in-person voting – a unique challenge for on-campus promotion as most cannot vote on campus (have only their home address).
- Opportunity to promote early voting (if it exists in various communities) as almost no students take advantage. It is likely available in a few larger communities in the county.

Waukesha

- Enrollment declined 25.4 percent from 2014 to 2018 but total student voting only declined 4.8 percent.
- In-person voting remains the nearly exclusive way votes are cast. Similar to the case at Washington County, perhaps there are some marketing ideas for on campus providing info on voting locations just for the few days before election day.
- Early voting would be a growth area though – larger communities within this student body group (Waukesha, Brookfield, Menomonee Falls) could provide realistic opportunities for promoting this.

Recommendations Moving Forward

- Increase marketing efforts on Waukesha and Washington Co. campuses past student email. Get up signage. Make sure tabling for voter registration is coordinated. Encourage early voting opportunities where they live.
- Create a voting video – “Get Ready to Vote”
- Print and place Grind Coffee Shop stickers to increase awareness
- Encourage students to register to vote during Orientation and Move-in
- Maintain a voting link in Student News & Stuff September-November
- Proactively ask students in the PantherCard office if they need a free voter ID (create a quarter sheet with ID information)
- Register athletes, housing floors, service learners, etc. to vote as large groups when programming is available from League of Women Voters, etc.
- Add voting to the UWM Bucket List or other campus-wide promotions

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Goals

- To increase student voting rates by 10 percent from 2018 to 2020.
- To provide additional opportunities for students to register to vote prior to election day.
- To actively promote the City of Milwaukee early voting site on campus.
- To target marketing on all three campus locations to ensure outreach to all students.