

## **ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge 2022 Action Plan**

### **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 and Institutional Vision](#) 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 national, state and local levels, while maintaining partnerships with a large number of community organizations in Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington County and beyond. The goal of this action plan is to provide a template for UWM's 2021-2022 student voter engagement and outreach initiatives. Spearheaded by External Relations and guided by the Student Voting Work Group, tasks will be completed with the goal of increasing voter turnout so that eligible voters know how to register, find their polling location or request an absentee ballot, and ultimately vote. This is a nonpartisan initiative to strengthen democracy and ensure all students can fulfil their right to vote.

### **Chancellor's Commitment**

UWM's Chancellor is committed to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. He has signed on for the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to full student voter participation. The Presidential Commitment ensures our responsibility to prepare students to become responsible and engaged participants in our democracy, including exercising the right and duty to register and vote. This commitment has been discussed at the University of Wisconsin System level with several UW Chancellors and is mentioned in messaging to campus and external stakeholders when applicable.

A commitment to civic learning and democratic engagement extends beyond the scope of the Chancellor at UWM. Many of our staff are involved in Panthers Vote and support CLDE in their departments. Our goal is to wholistically promote civic learning and democratic engagement to make it a part of our institutional culture. These values are represented in University of Wisconsin System mission,

*"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."*

Additionally, 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.

## **2022 Elections and Events**

### *Elections:*

Spring Primary: February 15, 2022

Spring Election: April 5, 2022

Fall Primary: August 9, 2022

Fall Election: November 8, 2022

### *Events:*

Student Orientation Outreach – Summer

Move-In at the Residence Halls - Late August

Constitution Day – September 17<sup>th</sup>

National Voter Registration Day - September 27<sup>th</sup>

National Voter Education Week - October 3<sup>rd</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>

Vote Early Day - October 22<sup>nd</sup>

Election Hero Day – October 31<sup>st</sup>

Legislative Town Hall - October TBD

Early/ Absentee Voting (Milwaukee Campus) – October 24<sup>th</sup> - November 7<sup>th</sup>

Get Out the Vote – Election Day November 8<sup>th</sup>

## **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. Based on the prior Panthers Vote coalition, these are some expected participants and/or units with commitments to student voting:

Keri Duce, Director of External and Government Relations, Kelly Haag, Chief Student Affairs Officer, Alannah Ray, External Relations Graduate Intern, Alyssa Conrardy, Outreach Program Manager,

Kristin Hildebrandt, Registrar,

Johannes Britz, Provost,

Erika Kramer, Digital and Social Specialist,

Kathy Quirk, Senior Communications Specialist,

Mike Schmit, Assistant Director Union Operations,

Jessica Wegner, Event Planner,

Amanda Elliot, Senior Marketing Specialist,  
Paul Dixon, Administrative Assistant Campus Housing,  
Laurie Marks, Executive Director Center of Community Based Learning, Leadership, and Research,  
Adam Schemm, Senior Associate Director of Athletics,  
Colin Daly, Director of New Student Programs,  
Alberto Maldonado, Director Roberto Hernandez Center,  
Elias Argueta, Student Services Coordinator,  
Eric Jessup-Anger, Director Center for Student Involvement,  
Courtney O'Connell, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (Waukesha/Washington Co.),  
Sue Kalinka, Senior Student Life Coordinator (Waukesha/Washington Co.),  
Student Representatives, and  
Faculty Representatives.

### **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:

Andrew Goodman Foundation

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**

UW-Milwaukee's main campus will host an early voting site for the 2022 fall general election. Planning for the location is underway in conjunction with the Wisconsin and Milwaukee Election Commission. Fifty percent of voters in the 2020 election used early or absentee voting at UWM. This increase can be attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic. Returning voters will already be familiar with alternatives to day-of voting so we expect to see a continuation of higher rates of early voting. Early voting is an important option to mitigate crowds on election day and increase accessibility, particularly as student populations are transient and may prefer this alternative.

### **Campus Voting Location**

UWM will be hosting an on-campus polling location for all 2022 elections. Due to ongoing construction in the Student Union (a past polling location), plans for a new campus voting location are currently underway in collaboration with the City of Milwaukee Election Commission. We will update this section as new information becomes available.

### **Marketing & Communication Deliverables**

- Election dates are posted on the campus events calendar and shared in course syllabi.
- For 2022 we are working with Union Marketing to create a new marketing campaign focused on why elections matter and advertising election dates. 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 three campus locations.
- [uwm.edu/vote](http://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*

- 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](http://uwm.edu/vote)

#### *Washington County Campus & 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 2021, 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 2022 Election**

- Create and send over marketing materials to Washington Co. & 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](http://uwm.edu/vote) website if restrictions have been lifted on the service.
- Update [uwm.edu/vote](http://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 2022 midterms.
- We would also like to target efforts at increasing voting rates for fields of study with low rates of voter turnout. Based on 2020 NSLVE data, Engineering & Engineering Technologies, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics, Computer and Information Sciences, and

Biological and Biomedical Sciences all had comparatively low rates of voter turnout. Our goal is to increase those rates to at least 55% in each field in the 2022 fall election. We have already begun meeting with the Deans of these areas to increase engagement.

- Engineering & Engineering Technologies 46%
- Physical Sciences 43%
- Social Sciences 51%
- Mathematics and Statistics 51%
- Computer and Information Sciences 51%
- Biological and Biomedical Sciences 51%
- Integrate voting information into course syllabi and establish an optional Canvas course on voting for students by fall 2022.
- Increase student and faculty involvement in the Panthers Vote coalition in spring 2022 by increasing outreach to campus affinity groups and organizations.

### **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**

- 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 are 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.