



WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2024 Campus Action Plan

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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.

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by University of Wisconsin–Madison for the 2024 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 2024 election are to increase turnout and registration by three percentage points over the previous Presidential election in 2020. Long-term goals are to sustain student civic engagement following the Primary elections and Presidential election in 2024 and to further establish the BadgersVote brand on campus as a source for nonpartisan involvement.

COMPOSITION

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

BadgersVote Chair

Dr. John Zumbrunnen, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning

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Campus Stakeholders

Office of the Provost, including:

- Division for Teaching and Learning
- Morgridge Center for Public Service
- Division of Continuing Studies
- School of Medicine and Public Health
- Center for Healthy Minds
- Elections Research Center
- Department of Political Science
- UW–Madison Libraries

Office of Student Affairs, including:

- Office of Student Assistance and Support
- Multicultural Student Center
- Center for Interfaith Dialogue
- RecWell
- Gender and Sexuality Campus Center

Office of University Relations

Office of Strategic Communication

Office of Finance and Administration, including:

- University Housing

Associated Students of Madison (ASM) Legislative Affairs

Registered Student Organizations

UW Athletics

Community Partner

City Clerk's Office, City of Madison

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 promoting 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 former Chancellor Rebecca Blank, the Plan reaffirms the university's commitment to a public presence.

LANDSCAPE

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

At the start of the 2023–2024 academic year, University of Wisconsin–Madison enrollment was 50,633 students, 71% of whom are undergraduates, 25% graduate students, and 4% special students. Approximately 50% of undergraduate students are Wisconsin residents and 85% of the university's students are U.S. citizens. Demographically, the largest self-identified racial and ethnic groups are white (60%), Asian (9%), Hispanic (8%), and Black (3%), with approximately 15% 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
- 2023 Student Honor Roll: Laine Bottemiller
- Most Engaged Campus 2022
- WI Campus Voting Challenge 4-year: Highest Voter Registration & Highest Voter Turnout

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

- 2016 Silver
- 2018 Platinum
- 2020 Gold

GOALS

Our broad student engagement goals center around increasing student voter participation, 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 2024 election cycle:

- Increase campus voter turnout and registration by three percentage points compared to the 2020 election
- Increase digital communication efforts and initiatives to engage with students

LONG TERM GOALS

Goals to be achieved over 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
- Build a brand and identity of nonpartisan resources through BadgersVote

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, voter education (through the election season), and voter engagement (from when early voting begins).

VOTER REGISTRATION

Bus pass pick-up coordination: The Morgridge Center for Public Service will coordinate with 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.

Ongoing registration opportunities: Organized by the BadgersVote Coalition, trained City of Madison election officials, will provide voter registration tabling opportunities at multiple locations and times on campus up through the registration deadline.

VOTER EDUCATION

An authoritative information portal: Strategic Communication will maintain a central source of information about voting for students online at vote.wisc.edu. The site will provide information for students wishing to vote at their home or campus address and will refer students to trusted sources for essential information.

Campus-wide communications: Stories about BadgersVote and upcoming election deadlines will appear in “The Weekly,” an electronic newsletter distributed to all students. 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 classes will be distributed to instructors through the Provost's Office.

Bookmarks distribution: All first-year students attend the Chancellor's Convocation at the beginning of the academic year and receive copies of the campus common read program known as "Go Big Read." BadgersVote volunteers will 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 (Wiscards) will be provided with information about state voter ID requirements. Students will also be provided with the opportunity to acquire eligible voter IDs.

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: The Morgridge Center Communications Team in collaboration with Strategic Communication 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 website, posting election information on electronic kiosks in libraries, and distributing information materials to patrons who check out library resources.

Bookstore partnership: The University Book Store will host a 3-day voter registration drive during textbook pick up at the beginning of each semester. The bookstore tends to see the most foot traffic during this time, this will allow us to reach a large number of people in a short time-period.

Center for Healthy Minds partnership: This collaboration will focus on developing resources for Election Stress Disorder, helping to engage students in wellbeing practices during election cycles.

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” will be paired with information about the voting process. BadgersVote volunteers will create sidewalk chalk messages and images to mark the nine campus polling places on election day. Hundreds of t-shirts promoting voting among students will be distributed to volunteers to heighten visibility in both on and off campus spaces where they are encountered. In partnership with the Dean of Students’ Office, a “make a vote plan with Bucky” event will take place at a central campus location on the first day of early voting.

Texting platform: Strategic Communication 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 print a paper copy of their voter-compliant IDs, suitable for voting. In cooperation with campus IT staff, BadgersVote volunteers (UW professional and student employees) will provide technical support to students who use the printing service. Mobile hard-copy student voter ID printers will be available for students to print a physical hard-copy of their student voter ID.

Programs and partnerships: To make civic and voter engagement engaging, BadgersVote has planned programs and will respond to requests to co-host a variety of programs including Vote Friendship Bracelet workshops paired with a voter registration event, Voterpalooza, and a concert celebration of voting.

EVALUATION

The BadgersVote Coalition will utilize this action plan and NSLVE data to support our ongoing efforts to evaluate our work.

According to NSLVE data, in the 2020 Presidential Election, UW–Madison’s eligible voters had a 72.8% voting rate. Our goal is to increase this rate by 3% in 2024.

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 2024 election and other recent election cycles will all be posted on the BadgersVote website for students, staff, faculty, media, and members of the community to view.