



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
**RIVER FALLS**

**ALL IN** Campus  
Democracy  
Challenge

## University of Wisconsin-River Falls 2024 Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement Action Plan

Developed by: Elise Peters

### Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan was developed by the University of Wisconsin-River Falls in Wisconsin for the 2024 election. The purpose of this action plan is to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter registration, education, and turnout in the 2024 election. The goals for University of Wisconsin-River Falls for the 2024 election are:

- Register 250 students at our voter registration events and increase our voter registration rate to 80% from 73.3%
- Increase our voter turnout by 5.5 % from 37.9 to 43.4%

### Leadership:

Our leadership team includes the following, campus groups, and organizations:

Elise Peters – Assistant Director of Student Involvement & University Center Outreach

Michael Gilmer—Dean of Students

Kayla Ross—Student Care Manager, Dean of Students Office

Maira Lynch— Professor of Politics, Geography and International Studies

Amy White & Jaclyn Hanson—River Falls City Clerks

We are Falcons & We Vote Ambassadors—5 Student Involvement Student Interns who execute Voter Registration as well as social media content

Student Government Association—Provide funding for We are Falcons & We Vote Efforts

### Commitment:

- Voting on campus is woven into the campus culture by our mission statement
  - *The University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) mission is to prepare students to be leaders and citizens who are ethical, creative, engaged, and have a global perspective.*
- We are Falcons & We Vote is a voting initiative that was created in 2019 to help provide Voter Registration, education and get out the vote efforts to the campus community. We do not have a formal Civic Engagement Office on our campus, so Student Involvement

takes on voting efforts and ramps up the content and education during larger elections (Mostly presidential and gubernatorial races).

- Also, this year, the Dean of Students received a grant from the Wisconsin Institute for Citizenship & Civil Dialogue to provide events and education around Civil Discourse and dialogue. They have planned 4 events between September through December to address Freedom of Expression and Civil Discourse.
- How is the commitment to nonpartisan democratic engagement communicated to the campus community?
  - Students and faculty alike receive communication about the upcoming elections and information through email.
  - We are Falcons & We Vote does a full-fledged social media content plan over the course of September-November on all things voting voter reg, and education around the process. We promote and produce content weekly that we put out on our page.
  - I have a team of 5 student interns as well as one videographer who helps create the content. See the Strategy section of this action plan.
- This is the first action plan that the University of Wisconsin-River Falls has developed for ALL IN.

## Landscape:

In the state of Wisconsin, the last day to register “online” or in person at the University with our team of student ambassadors is Wednesday, October 16, 2024. After that, students will have to go to City Hall to register. The national election will take place on Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

In the state of Wisconsin, students can register to vote on election day, but in the last presidential election, the city registered over 900 students, which was a lot. We are hoping to register as many students as we can before election day to alleviate the day-of registration burden.

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls is a public four-year institution that joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2024. Our campus is a rural serving institution with a unique location close to the St. Paul/Minneapolis metro area.

Something unique about our campus is that we are about 50 percent out-of-state students (Generally MN students) and 50 percent in-state students. This makes our campus unique, as many of our MN students are eligible to vote here if they would like.

Something we run into often is our Voter ID laws, as our campus’ student IDs are not a voter IDs, so our out-of-state students must get an additional voter ID. Our Student Government pays for them free of charge, but it is an additional step for out-of-state students. Our Carding Office has created a very streamlined system to do this, which is helpful.

### **Our campus demographic and voting data:**

University of Wisconsin-River Falls has 5,222 students in fall 2024

University of Wisconsin-River Falls has authorized the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) and has past campus voting data.

UWRF's 2022 Data:



We have a lot of "traditional aged students" and many first-time voters.

CAMPUS REPORT: University of Wisconsin - River Falls

### Looking Closer

By Age Group

**Here, we provide the numbers of students in each age category and the voting rates for each group.** These are based on the student's age on the day of the election, as calculated by the National Student Clearinghouse using data from student enrollment records.

	2014			2018			2020			2022			2018-2022 Change
	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	Enrolled	Voted	Rate (%)	
18-21	3,362	609	18	3,968	1,617	40	3,745	2,567	68	3,289	1,170	35	↓ -5
22-24	1,264	280	22	1,050	434	41	1,033	673	65	898	330	36	↓ -4
25-29	437	125	28	380	177	46	338	219	64	258	109	42	↓ -4
30-39	282	130	46	194	98	50	206	133	64	205	107	52	↑ 1
40-49	139	73	52	84	56	66	86	61	70	103	65	63	↓ -3
50+	89	69	77	31	21	67	31	26	83	54	42	77	↑ 10

## Goals:

Our institution's nonpartisan democratic engagement goals are:

- Goal: Increase student voter turnout rate to 43.4% in 2024 and 47% in 2026.
- Goal: Increase student voter registration rate to 80% in 2024 and 82% in 2026.
- Goal: Add voter registration to new and transfer student orientation for fall 2026.

## Strategy:

University of Wisconsin-River Falls will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation.

Our team has a number of strategies to ensure our students have access and education on voting.

### Timeline:

- Spring 2024 Elise submitted a proposal to our Student Government Association to request funding for We are Falcons & We Vote which included print materials, t-shirts, food, yard signs etc. SGA approved our proposal of \$9,000 for fall 2024
- In the summer, Elise worked with our graphic designer to create a brand for this year's voting content "Use your Voice and Vote."

### Get out the Vote Education in the Classrooms:

- The Political Science, Geography and International Studies Department post voter registration information and links to Student Involvement events taking place this fall on their course Canvas pages. They also provide short reminders in class to their students about voter registration (e.g. MN vs. WI voter registration steps) throughout the fall.

### Partnership with the City of River Falls:

- Over the past 5 years, I have cultivated a relationship with the City of River Falls City Clerks to create a system that works well for both of us. They come and help us register voters at our annual Involvement Fair and National Voter Registration Day, and we meet annually to review our voter registration process on campus to ensure they can match the proof of residence with the application. It has been a great partnership for both of us.

### Graphic Design:

Throughout the brand, we created a number of graphic pieces

- General posters
- Voting pledge cards placed in every residence hall room
- National Voter Registration Day t-shirts
- National Voter Registration Day posters
- Voting buttons
- Social media graphics for all events
- Voter Registration yard signs and Vote Today yard signs.



**Social Media Strategy:**

- Once we created the content, my student interns and I started the content plan for the fall. We have 5 student ambassadors who have agreed to help with voter registration booths, create social media content, and educate.
- Below is an example of our content plan and links to our videos, Instagram, and social content.

**September Content Plan**

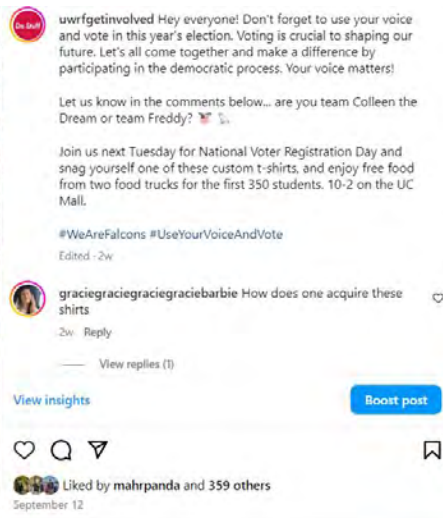
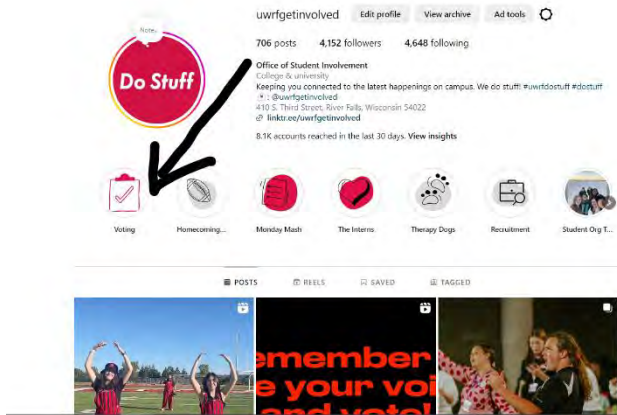
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10 weeks until Election	<p>What's Your Voting Plan Story Graphics (Soph)</p> <p>Promote voter registration booths in the Monday mashup</p>	<p>Involvement Fair</p> <p>Voter Registration booth with The City</p> <p>Brady get photos of the full fair and the VR Booth</p>	<p>Bagel VR (Post graphics of VR for the weeks)</p> <p>Brady get photos of the bagel shoot</p> <p>First one of the semester—we will be here every Wednesday</p>		<p>Colleen the Dream photoshoot with the NVRD Shirts</p>	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9 weeks until the election	<p>How Do I Register to Vote Graphics (Elise)</p> <p>Promote the VR dates</p> <p>DOS: Braver Angels Event</p>		<p>Bagel VR</p>	<p>Post Freddy/Colleen T-shirt Drop</p> <p>Promote on the story—Vote for Egg Rolls/Smoothie</p>		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21

8 weeks until the election	<b>National Voter Registration Day Promotion and Live Coverage</b>  <b>Monday Mash wear the shirts in the filming</b>	<b>National Voter Registration Day</b>  <b>Constitution Day: potentially a voter registration in the library in the basement</b>  <b>VR drive with the City</b>  <b>Food/VR/T-Shirt T-shirts on the Terrace</b> <b>I am voting because</b> <b>Video/Photoshoot</b>	Bagel VR	Ballot is available to start your research (post this on the story)		
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
7 weeks until the election	<b>How Do I know Who is On My Ballot?</b>	4-6 Voter Reg Booth (Dining Hall)	Bagel VR			
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>					
6 weeks until the election HOCO Week	<b>Absentee Voting Graphics. Request an Absentee or vote absentee next time you are home</b>  <b>Late Night Voter Reg Booth</b>					

**Social Media Examples:**

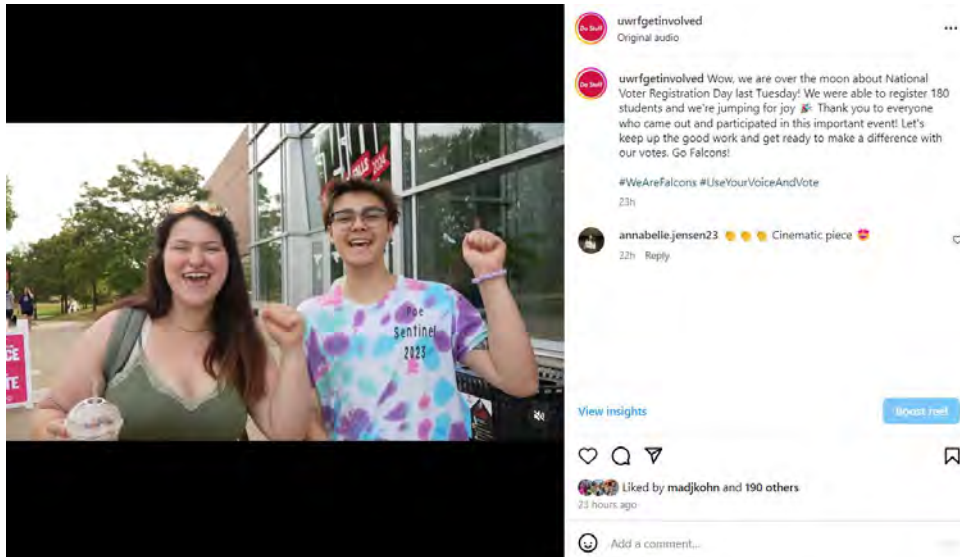
Instagram Highlight is utilized for all our content. Each week, we have chosen one piece of education to prepare students. We then save it to our highlight so they can go back and learn all the steps. Visit our Instagram to page through our voting content [@uwrfggetinvolved](https://www.instagram.com/uwrfggetinvolved).





National Voter Registration Day promotion—the T-shirts were a great draw to get students excited about voting!

[National Voter Registration Day Recap Video](#)



### Events:

- We have a number of events taking place this semester to promote Voter Registration and education around civil dialogue.
- **National Voter Registration Day**
  - o For National Voter Registration Day, we had a large event with a t-shirt giveaway, two food trucks, and voter registration. Over the course of 4 hours, we gave away 500 shirts and 370 food truck meals and registered 180 students to vote!
  - o The T-shirts were a super fun nod to the election and our official mascot and unofficial mascot. Students got to “vote” for what mascot they were supporting, and many students told us this was their favorite shirt we had ever done.
  - o We created a video from NVRD that we posted later to continue to promote registering to vote and got a ton of students ready for November 5
  - o The city was shocked at the number of students they registered and had to print off way more voter registration applications than they anticipated.
- **Civil Dialogue Series:**
  - o **September 9: Bridging the Divide: Skills for Communications** (Better Angels) Participation: 30 students
  - o **October 10, Navigating Civil Conversations on Campus:** A panel will discuss and share the scope of free expression on a college campus, including ways to demonstrate effectively and promote civil dialogue.
  - o **November 18, Understanding Freedom of Expression in the Classroom.** A panel will discuss and share the scope of free expression in the classroom and what limitations there are. Questions will be welcome.
  - o **December 4, Championing Civil Dialogue and Engagement after Graduation.** A panel will discuss and share ways for students to take what they have learned at UWRF and be engaged after graduating and how they can champion civil dialogue.

### **Voter Registration Booths:**

- Our team committed to providing a weekly voter registration booth every Wednesday from 9-11 throughout the fall. We also added one evening voter registration booth



from late September- October 16 (the last week WI students can register on campus with us). See below for the dates

<b>Voter Reg Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Number Registered</b>
9/3 (Involvement Fair— City Clerks)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	24
9/11	9-11 a.m. UC	4
9/17 (NVRD—City Clerks)	10am-2 pm	180
9/18	9-11 a.m. UC	8
9/24	4-6 p.m. Outside Dining Hall	3
9/25	9-11 a.m. UC	2
9/30	6-8 p.m. Fitness Center	
10/2	9-11 a.m. UC	
10/7	6-8 p.m. Fitness Center	
10/9	9-11 a.m. UC	
10/14	4-6 p.m. Outside Dining Hall	
10/16	9-11 a.m. UC	

### Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls will use our NSLVE data to evaluate our progress toward our goals.

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls will evaluate our voter registration numbers by October 16 and will be able to see if we have met our goal of 250 registrants.

### Reporting:

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website <https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/university-of-wisconsin-river-falls/>.

ALL IN has permission to publish our NSLVE reports.

Our ALL IN action plan will be shared with campus leadership.

Our ALL action plan will be posted on our voting website.