

WAKE FOREST
UNIVERSITY

20
20

ACTION PLAN



CAMPUS
DEMOCRACY
CHALLENGE

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY'S
OFFICE OF CIVIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



OVERVIEW

WAKE FOREST

Wake Forest University is a highly selective, private university in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Often described as a "collegiate university," Wake Forest combines a liberal arts core with innovative professional and graduate programs. The University embraces the teacher-scholar ideal, prizing personal interaction between students and faculty. It is a place where exceptional teaching, fundamental research and discovery, and the engagement of faculty and students in the classroom and the laboratory are paramount. The university motto, *pro humanitate*, inspires an institutional commitment to civic engagement and the development of the whole person – intellectual, moral, spiritual and physical. While electoral engagement is a cross campus collaboration, the work is housed in the Office of Civic and Community Engagement. The Office of Civic and Community Engagement (OCCE) is the hub of community-based activity at Wake Forest University. In the spirit of *pro humanitate*, we engage community partners, faculty, staff, and students to create meaningful social change. The Office aims to leverage resources, build capacity, and incubate community initiatives in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and beyond. Due to the unique positionality of OCCE, the action plan is able to be implemented not only within the campus community, but also the broader Winston-Salem community.

DEACS DECIDE

Deacs Decide is a highly collaborative, campus-wide political engagement project with representation from student affairs, academic affairs, and students that will be implementing the 2020 All In Plan. Our aim for the 2020 presidential election is to build partnerships with surrounding institutions, promote early voting, establish the Deacs Decide Fellows Program for student engagement, develop informed voters, and increase voter turnout rates. Deacs Decide offers a variety of opportunities to create relationships across difference, examine issues critical to American elections, build competencies for engaged citizenship, and experience American democracy. Students lead deliberative dialogues, participate in "teach-in" sessions with faculty, and register others to vote. Groundwork will begin in the fall of 2019 and end in fall of 2020. Deacs Decide is co-chaired by Dr. Marianne Magjuka, Assistant Dean and Executive Director and Deb Marke, Assistant Director of Advocacy and Social Justice Education in the Office of Civic and Community Engagement.

LEADERSHIP

DEACS DECIDE STEERING COMMITTEE

Shannon Ashford, Associate Director,
Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Jackson Blodgett, Student Government
Representative, WFU 2020

Daniella Feijoo, Presidential Fellow,
Office of Wellbeing

Marianne Magjuka, Assistant Dean and
Executive Director, Office of Civic and
Community Engagement

Deb Marke, Assistant Director, Office of
Civic and Community Engagement

Jonathan McElderry, Assistant Dean and
Executive Director, Intercultural Center

D’Najah Thomas, Associate Director,
Office of Residence Life and Housing

Sophia Pappalardo, Wake Forest
University J.D. Candidate, 2020

Penny Rue, Vice President, Campus Life

Dexter Sharp, Associate Director,
Student Engagement

Tion Taylor, Assistant Director,
Residence Life and Housing

Anne Winfrey, Student Government
Representative, WFU 2020

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Every Vote Counts

Democracy NC

Inspire2Vote

Forsyth County Board of Elections

Forsyth County Young Leaders Program

League of Women Voters

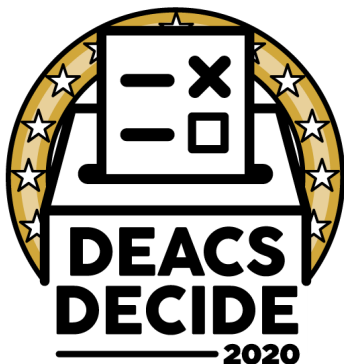
MUSE Winston-Salem

North Carolina Campus Compact

North Carolina Center for Justice

Southern Poverty Law Center

You Can Vote North Carolina



THE STEERING COMMITTEE

In order to achieve 100% voter participation, everyone needs to take ownership of Deacs Decide. Folks who express interest in being a part of the committee are welcome to join the team. When they step off the committee for whatever reason- capacity, exiting the University, etc. - we request that they tap or recommend another individual. At all times, we have representative from Campus Life, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Office of Civic & Community Engagement, and Academic Affairs. We request that the Student Government has representatives on Deacs Decide and let them go about doing that in the way that makes the most sense for them. In addition, we launched a Deacs Decide Fellowship Program, which asks students to apply to participate in Deacs Decide. A small panel of faculty, staff, and students interview and select a cohort of 6-8 fellows. In this way, students are always at the center of Deacs Decide and lead the initiative in key areas: communication, registration and GOTV, programming, academic initiatives, and off-campus engagement.

DEACS DECIDE FELLOWS



The Deacs Decide Fellowship provides students with the opportunity to directly engage with nonpartisan civic engagement and work on the ground. The Fellows will reach out to their peers; register students to vote; create and distribute educational materials (such as nonpartisan candidate guides); develop programming to help others navigate the ever changing voter laws; and organize and carry out Deacs Decide events. Assisted by a collaborative team of faculty, staff, and student volunteers, the Deacs Decide Fellows will bring their own passion and energy to have a powerful impact on nonpartisan electoral engagement. Due to the impact of COVID-19, Deacs Decide opted to extend the Fellowship into Summer; students will be working on several different projects with various community partners.

Deacs Decide is lucky to have the support and engagement of senior administration, including the Vice President for Campus Life. The Provost and Vice President are both extremely supportive in the efforts of Wake Forest University becoming a polling location. In the future, we look forward to getting a Presidential commitment and video expressing the importance of voting. The Office of Civic & Community Engagement commits professional staff time to supporting and engaging Deacs Decide. Staff have also engaged with colleagues across the ACC in the DemocrACCy Challenge, discussing best practice, sharing ideas, and supporting the work of election engagement. We look forward to implementing innovative approaches to support election engagement in our new virtual landscape, and plan to embed civic and community engagement into orientation and other areas of our curricular and co-curricular engagement.

UNIVERSITY COMMITMENT



WAKE FOREST
UNIVERSITY



context

Wake Forest by the Numbers

8,401

TOTAL ENROLLMENT

Wake Forest is a private, highly selective, four-year university in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In Fall 2018, the undergraduate enrollment was 5,225

20%

NORTH CAROLINA RESIDENTS

Wake Forest is a national university, drawing undergraduates from the South (50.6%), Northeast (26.4%), Midwest (6.2%), and West (5.9%). About 10.8% come from other countries or territories.

73.2%

PERCENTAGE REGISTERED IN 2016

Voter registration is a strength of election engagement efforts at Wake Forest. During 2016 presidential election, 73.2% of students were registered to vote; however, only 41.1% of registered voters actually voted in 2016.

41.1%

2016 VOTING RATE

Only 41.1% of students voted in the 2016 presidential election. The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) reports a voting rate of 50.4% for all institutions in 2016.

LANDSCAPE

Wake Forest Landscape

Wake Forest University is an inaugural participant in the National Study on Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), a study of voter engagement and turnout based at Tufts University. In 2016, the last Presidential election, 73.2 percent of Wake Forest students registered to vote, but the voting rate was only 41.1 percent. In response, administrators convened a group of Wake Forest students, community leaders, faculty, and staff to design a comprehensive action plan for election engagement. Students in organizations, such as College Republicans, College Democrats, Student Government, Black Student Association, OLAS, and various fraternities and sororities, shared ideas related to election engagement, which led to the creation of Deacs Decide. Wake Forest joined universities across the country in the ALL IN Democracy Challenge and committed to be a Voter Friendly Campus in 2018.

North Carolina Landscape

North Carolina has been at the heart of gerrymandering cases and confusion around voter identification laws. Wake Forest University and the surrounding community have been affected by gerrymandering, with the Reynolda campus being divided down the middle into two different precincts in 2019, making it crucial that students are updating their voter registration and staying abreast of changes to their polling locations. For this reason, Deacs Decide convened a committee to investigate the possibility of establishing an early voting location on the Wake Forest University campus.

When it comes to voter identification laws, information changes swiftly and is not always clear to students, faculty, or staff. Early laws required institutions of higher education to provide separate voter identification cards to students. In November of 2019, the North Carolina Board of Elections announced that school identification cards for all UNC System schools, some community colleges, some private universities, including Wake Forest University, could be used in the 2020 primary election. Ultimately, in January of 2020, a federal judge temporarily blocked the ID law altogether, which means that students did not need any form of identification to vote in the 2020 primary. The confusion around voting laws is a huge barrier to voting for a variety of constituents. As we move forward with the 2020 Election, Deacs Decide will focus on education, including a social media campaign, poster campaign, and clear signage, to educate students about voter identification laws and requirements.

In Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, about 24 percent of residents aged 18 to 24 voted in the 2018 midterm election, compared with 72 percent of residents aged 65 to 84. This gap in electoral participation is stark and must be addressed. In addition, White, non-Hispanic residents had higher participation rates in the 2018 election than African American or Latinx residents. About 53 percent of White residents voted in 2018, compared with 48 percent of African American and 18 percent of Latinx residents. Deacs Decide is committed to registration and GOTV efforts both on-campus and off-campus. Students designed several events to register community members, specifically in marginalized communities, and are investigating ways to provide transportation to the polls.

ACTION PLAN

A photograph showing three students, two men and one woman, sitting at a long wooden table in a classroom or workshop. They are focused on their work, with papers, pens, and various materials spread out on the table. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and a bright window.

GOALS (2019-2020)

Short Term Goals

- Increase voter turnout rate to 50% (increase of 9 points from 2016).
- Build partnerships with surrounding institutions such as Winston-Salem State University, University of North Carolina School of the Arts, and Salem College to create college-led initiatives for community voter engagement.
- Establish Wake Forest University as a polling location in the 2020 Election.
- Promote early voting by providing early voting shuttles for residents in Winston-Salem.
- Establish the Deacs Decide Fellows Program for students to lead voter education and engagement throughout campus and Winston-Salem.
- Create a comprehensive communications plan, including local voting information, voter guides, and social media campaigns to develop informed voters.
- Keep students, faculty, and staff abreast of changes to voting laws, polling locations, and voter identification requirements throughout the election cycle and beyond.
- Engage faculty to promote registration and voting and participate in “teach-in” events related to issues at stake in the 2020 Election.

Long Term Goals

- Increase voter participation for eligible voters to 100%. Identify opportunities to engage students who are not eligible to vote (undocumented and international students).
 - Identify ways to support a student's electoral engagement while studying abroad.
 - Develop or identify ongoing opportunities for students to become engaged in other aspects of political engagement (e.g. advocacy, campaign engagement, etc.)
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STRATEGY

Fall 2019

- Re-establish and re-engage Deacs Decide Steering Committee with representation from across campus by mid-October of 2019.
- Identify successes of midterms and areas of opportunity in the first meeting of 2019.
- Launch Fellows application in November of 2019, making sure to reach out to departments and student organizations that do not have an explicit link to politics.
- Programming
- A Conversation with Bill Kristol with the Wake Forest Review.
- Deliberative Dialogue: A Broken Political System with Student Government.

Spring 2020

- Held training for voter registration.
- Developed exploratory committee to design early polling location on campus
- Attended Forsyth County Board of Election meetings.
- Attend Forsyth County Board of Election Meetings.
- Develop proposal and gain support from senior administration and Student Government.
- Attend precinct meetings.
- Make a proposal to the Board of Elections.
- Drove 30 students to the polls during the last day of early voting.
- Drove over 220 students to the polls on Super Tuesday
- Programming:
- Deacs Decide shuttle to the polls (both early voting and primary day)
- Super Tuesday Results Watch Party in Zick's Underground
- Co-hosted North Carolina Climate Solutions, a virtual panel and deliberative dialogue on sustainability and climate change in partnership with the Office of Sustainability; over 200 faculty, staff, students, and community partners attended the panel discussion and over 65 participated in the deliberation.

STRATEGY

Summer 2020

- Become an early polling location by the end of summer 2020.
- Launch Deacs Decide Summer Fellowship for 25 incoming and current students
- Partner with Every Vote Counts, a “student-led, nonpartisan organization dedicated to increasing voter turnout and expanding voter access nationwide.” Create toolkits for other college students so that they can institutionalize EVC chapters and election engagement work on their campuses. This project will require students to develop resources on the following:
 - Communication and social media engagement
 - Partnership development
 - Working with administrators
 - Strategy
 - Event planning
 - On- and off-campus engagement
- Partner with Inspire2Vote , a group that “supports nonpartisan efforts to promote voter registration among high school students.” This year they are expanding their work to community colleges. Fellows on this project will:
 - Reach out to Forsyth Technical Community College
 - Develop a survey to better understand the issues important to college students in North Carolina
 - Develop a digital voter guide and voter registration graphics and information that can be used by WFU & other college campuses
- Partner with MUSE Winston-Salem, a museum and exhibit space that shares the people’s history of Winston-Salem. The purpose of this project is to document a political season from multiple perspectives, and in this particular time, to document how the democratic/electoral process is adapting to the context of COVID-19. Though projects wouldn’t have to focus exclusively on COVID-19’s impact, one of the inevitable take-aways would be observing the effect that the pandemic is having on their lives, livelihoods, political races, etc. This is an opportunity to preserve a record of this historic moment in time and build an archive of primary sources for future historians and researchers to be able to study. Fellows on this project will:
 - Conduct oral history interviews with people currently involved in politics in some capacity. This could be local or state level politicians, campaign staffers, beat journalists covering a local campaign, or voters watching and responding to the campaign season as it unfolds, etc.
 - Conduct oral history interviews with women in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County and record their experiences of voting and political engagement in anticipation of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment.
 - Develop a podcast and develop a plan to share this information in a virtual medium.

STRATEGY

Fall 2020

- National Voter Registration Day- September 22nd, 2020
 - Partner with Student Government and other colleges in Winston-Salem to mobilize students to register.
 - “Dorm storm” on-campus to go door-to-door with voter registration cards.
 - Set up registration stations at high traffic areas across campus.
 - If virtual, develop social media campaigns and include high profile members of WFU and WS community.
- Vote Early Day- October 24th
 - Party at the polls with ballots and biscuits.
 - Tabling for on-campus registration weekly throughout fall semester in the Benson University Center or in front of the Pit (dining hall).
- Work on distributing the voting guide that was developed over the summer.
- Recruit poll monitors for polling location and host training with Democracy NC.
- Work with local community organizations to coordinate getting community members registered to vote
- Coordinate with other colleges and universities to coordinate voter registration and develop a college coalition.
- Coordinate with faculty to develop syllabus toolkits. According the NSLVE data, target specific academic departments to see if we can work on campaigns and information relevant to the following areas:
 - Communications 23.8%
 - Computer and Information Sciences 21.5%
 - Liberal Arts/Humanities 27.6%
 - Philosophy
 - Mathematics & Stats 14.5%
 - Health and Exercise Sciences 23.4%
 - Physical Sciences 24.3%
 - Physics, chemistry, astronomy
 - Business, Marketing, Management 27.7%
 - English 28.1%
 - Social Sciences 23.7%
 - Political science, anthropology, sociology
- Coordinate on-campus educational programming with academic departments to develop informed voters.
- Utilize data to develop programming relevant to college students.



Reporting & Evaluation

Our evaluation and reporting strategy has a few key components:

1. Survey to better understand the issues important to college students in North Carolina;
2. Qualitative interviews with Deacs Decide Summer Fellows;
3. Program evaluations following every program or event sponsored by Deacs Decide in Fall 2020;
4. Registration tracker in residential halls and on-campus following registration events;
5. NSLVE data-informed campaigns to engage academic departments in Fall 2020.

In Summer 2020, Deacs Decide Fellows will design and administer a survey to college students in North Carolina. This survey will ask students to identify the issues important to them in the 2020 Election and their motivations to engage (or not) in politics. Based on survey data, Deacs Decide Fellows will design social media campaigns to highlight the issues important to college students and target organizations, campaigns, and candidates with direct outreach. Fellows will spotlight students' responses in a WHY VOTE campaign, aimed at increasing voter turnout. In addition, Deacs Decide fellows will use this data to inform the type and focus of programs in Fall 2020.

Using a rubric designed by the Office of Civic & Community Engagement, Deacs Decide Summer Fellows will rate their own civic competencies at the beginning and end of the summer experience. Staff will engage fellows in qualitative interviews to better understand their learning and the impact of the fellowship. This information will inform future decisions about the fellowship program. In Fall 2020, staff in the Office of Civic & Community Engagement will administer surveys following each program sponsored or co-sponsored by Deacs Decide. Survey questions will include demographic questions, feedback on the quality of the event, and questions about whether participants learned something new, heard a different perspective, and/or identified ways to engage politically. Staff and Deacs Decide Fellows will review this data and make changes to events and programs, as needed.



Reporting & Evaluation

We will track voter registration numbers from on-campus drives in the Benson University Center and Pit (dining hall). After each weekly session, volunteers will add the number of registrations to the tracker in the Office of Civic & Community Engagement. In addition, Deacs Decide Fellows will engage Resident Assistant (RA) teams in each residential hall to provide a registration tracker in the halls. When students register to vote via dorm storm, those numbers will be updated in the halls on bulletin boards. Deacs Decide fellows will also reach out to the nonpartisan civic organizations, like You Can Vote, that often register voters on campus, and ask for number totals to add to the tracker. In this way, Deacs Decide fellows will have a sense of voter registration numbers in the fall semester. We will do a check-in after orientation in August, after National Voter Registration Day on September 22nd, 2020, and after every two weeks of voter registration tables to gauge numbers and adjust location and strategy as needed.

Finally, we will use NSLVE data from 2016 and 2018 to identify the academic departments in which students have a lower voter turnout. We will approach faculty in these departments to develop targeted approaches to engage students in the department. For example, students in the social sciences (e.g. political science, anthropology, sociology) had a voting rate of 23.7 percent. Given the explicit curricular focus on understanding cultures, societies, and politics in these disciplines, this is a staggeringly low rate of voter turnout. We might decide to employ a social norming campaign with posters in the buildings where courses are taught, an accountability buddy system, and/or direct discussion in classes. These tailored approaches will be recorded and reviewed with 2020 NSLVE data.