



Warren Wilson COLLEGE

CENTER FOR
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2020 ALL IN Democratic Challenge Action Plan



Introduction

Executive Summary

This action plan has been prepared by Genny Davis and Shuli Archer for Warren Wilson College's Center of Community Engagement to improve voter engagement in the 2020 election. This plan utilizes data from the 2014/2018 NSLVE report as well as demographic data to create a guide of goals and strategy to improve communication, accessibility, and mobilization for Warren Wilson student voters.

Leadership

Campus Voting Engagement Leaders

Shuli Arie Archer, *Associate Dean of Community Engagement*

Genny Davis, *Student Voting Engagement Project Leader*

Supporting Team

Anna Johnson, *Student Leader*

Amy Knisley, *Professor of Environmental Policy and Ethics*

Emme McManus, *Bonner Leader Student*

Joyce Milling, *Associate Dean of Students*

Emily Oostveen, *Student Leader*

Tacci Smith, *Student Activities Director*

College Mission statement

Warren Wilson College's distinctive approach to education intentionally integrates academics, work, and community engagement to cultivate curiosity, empathy, and integrity. We empower graduates to pursue meaningful careers and lead purposeful lives dedicated to a just, equitable, and sustainable world.

Commitment

Warren Wilson College is committed to developing students who intentionally engage and support their community. From the time a student arrives at Warren Wilson to the time they graduate, they are encouraged and uplifted to become an active member of the local community as well as the national community. Voting is no exception to this commitment. Warren Wilson College commits to teaching students their civic responsibility, motivating student voter turnout, and making the 2020 election as accessible as possible.

Landscape

Background

Warren Wilson College is a small, private, liberal arts institution in the rural Swannanoa Valley and fifteen minutes from downtown Asheville, North Carolina. It is a small college with only 638 undergraduate students. Warren Wilson is a work college of engaged students, where every on-campus student works on a college work crew and volunteers to fulfill community engagement requirements. Students tend to be focused on community and the environment within the school and the outside community through this work.

National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) Report

Warren Wilson College participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report. This project collected data on the Warren Wilson student participation in the 2014 and 2018 elections. They monitored variables such as the registration rate, registered voter rate, and voting rate of students as well as voting methods and demographics of student voters.

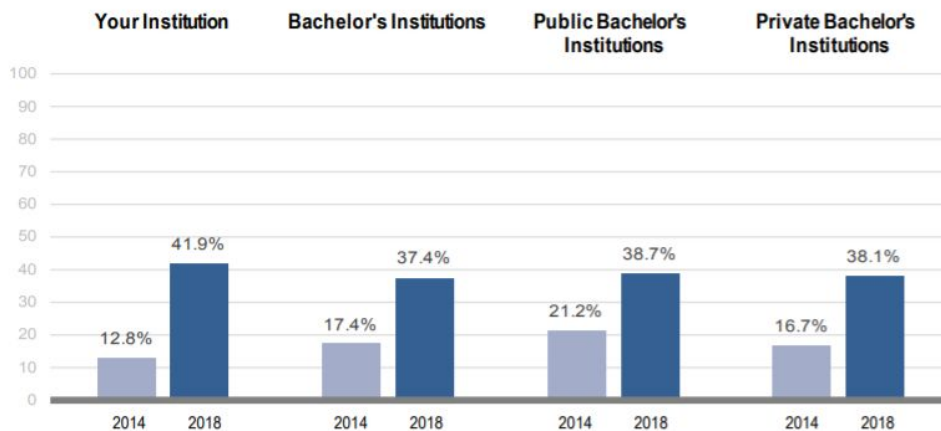


Figure 1: Carnegie classification data from the 2018 NSLVE report.

Overall, by the Carnegie Classification, voter engagement in 2014 was 3.9% lower than the national average for private bachelor's institutions. Voter engagement since tripled, and in 2018 was above the national average for private bachelor's institutions by 3.8%

Voter Registration

The start to all voting engagement on campuses is voter registration. A student can not vote if they are not registered. Registration can feel like an overly complicated process, especially to students since many have not voted before and may be split between two residences. The voter registration rate of Warren Wilson students increased by 8.8% from 2014 to 2018 and is slightly

above the college average. Voter registration is not interwoven with any college office or institutional event (such as freshman orientation). In 2018, the voter registration effort was tackled by a collaboration between the Center for Community Engagement and the Environmental and Social Justice Crew (which since has been dissipated).

This is a landscape of the grievances felt by Warren Wilson students registering to vote:

1. North Carolina students can register in their home town, but many do not know they can register with their campus address.
2. There are issues with campus addresses because many do not know the address of their specific physical residential building, and instead use the shipping address of the college, which will not be accepted. This creates confusion for students registering to vote.
3. North Carolina has no online voter registration, so all forms must be mailed or brought in person, which poses a barrier to student registration. This creates inaccessibility to students, as postage is not a popular media used by their age group, stamps are not sold at the college post office, and the Buncombe Board of Elections is a significant distance from campus.
4. Many students do not know that some optional portions of the registration form are important, such as including a phone number. This poses a barrier to student registration, as many make mistakes with the residential address and without a number there is no way to contact them to fix it.
5. Many students do not know that they do *not* need to have all of the following: Social Security number, North Carolina voter number, and NC drivers license number. Instead they just need one. This creates confusion for students who do not have a North Carolina driver's license or a voter number.
6. Any time students change residence halls they need to re-register to their current residence hall address. This is unknown by many students, leaving their registration invalid.

Voting

Warren Wilson engages students in civic duties beyond voter registration. In 2018, the voter turnout rate spiked at 41.9% which is a 29.1% increase from 2014 and is 2.8% above the national average voting rate for college campuses. In 2018, the student voting effort was tackled by a collaboration between the Center for Community Engagement and the former Environmental and Social Justice Crew. Both of these crews provided voter information as well as shuttling to both the early voting sites as well as the voting day sites. In 2018, 38.6% of students voted early, which is a 11.9% increase from 2014. Early voting was the most popular voting method as 23.1% of students voted on election day, and 21.6% voted absentee. From this data, there is

evidence that the push towards early voting as well as early voting shuttling are effective methods for increasing voting accessibility.

There are many challenges Warren Wilson students face when voting such as:

1. Deadlines for absentee ballots are confusing and get mixed up with absentee voting request form deadlines.
2. Many students get confused on the differences between early voting sites and voting day sites.
3. Same-day registration can be done ONLY with early voting which requires campus identification and proof of residency. There is confusion on what is approved as proof of residency as no official college postage usually states residential dorm addresses of students.
4. NC is in the process of creating an ID requirement. This poses a barrier to students (especially since WWC has a large number of out-of-state students who would not have an NC license).
5. The voting site, while close to campus, is a 30 minute walk. The road is busy and does not have sidewalks. Unless a student has a personal vehicle, they require college transportation to get to the polling place.

Goals

Short term goals

1. Create a team to organize the planning and execution of voter information and events
2. Be involved in orientation week by offering voter registration, voting guides, and information for new voters
3. Participate in Voter Registration Day
4. Increase the amount of registered voters for general election (specific number)
5. Increase turnout in general election (specific number)
6. Hold campus education events such as documentaries, debate watchings, speakers, and “know your voting rights” workshops
7. Create an online election guide for Warren Wilson Students
8. Create voter education materials such as posters and flyers
9. **Increase voter engagement to 50% for the 2020 general election.**

Long term goals

1. Make Warren Wilson College a general early voting site

2. Engage in pro-voting efforts with the local and state government
3. Create relationships with voting engagement groups such as Democracy North Carolina
4. Create a voting engagement committee that will outlast current student leadership

Strategy

Voting Engagement During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Warren Wilson College is planning to return to in-person classes in the fall semester of 2020. However, social distancing and safety precautions will still need to be implemented. Student leaders will keep up-to-date information on how the general election may change and modify its regulations for a post COVID-19 world. Student leaders will be flexible and implement strategies that are congruent with the safety measures and economic atmosphere of COVID-19. Before next semester, voter information guides will be made accessible to students online. There will also be plans for voter information sessions to be able transfer from an in-person format to a video conference format. There will information made available for students to stay safe and healthy while fulfilling their civic duty.

Partnership with Democracy North Carolina

The student voting engagement leaders will utilize resources from Democracy North Carolina such as voting information handouts as well as in-person voter registration training and other workshops that may benefit the campus. Student leaders will attend local meetings and virtual seminars

Campus Communication

Student leaders will organize a group to oversee the dissemination of voter information and execution of events. They will develop posters and flyers in collaboration with the Student Activities office. There will be further implementation of integrating voting information with technologies such as campus TVs, the Warren Wilson app, and other social media. Student leaders will implement weekly voter information emails. There will be an outreach effort to work with student groups such as Resident Assistants, the student government, and other clubs to spread voter information and the importance of voter engagement. There will also be an emphasis on working with professors with corresponding class topics to communicate voter information. Voting engagement will be intertwined with campus events such as new student orientation where registration and voter information will be offered. These resources will also be put in mailboxes and welcome packets.

Transportation

A committee for voter transportation will be created early in the semester. There will be an effort to incentivise students with work hours or volunteer hours. Transportation will be offered in a shuttle format everyday of early voting and preferable all day on voting day.

Proof of Residency

Proof residency is needed for students to same-day register. There will be a collaboration with the Residence Life office to provide a list of student dorm addresses, approved, signed, and given to early voting sites.

Planning Calendar July 2020 - December 2020

July 2020

- Strategize with Tacci Smith around events to implement as part of Orientation
- Prepare presentations for voting awareness
- Strategize information to include in the welcome packet
- PSA video about voter engagement at Warren Wilson College
- Explore a partnership with TurboVote for the upcoming year

August 2020

- Orientation
 - Voter registration training
 - Voter registration (In-person and via TurboVote)
 - Information on voting as a student in North Carolina
- Beginning to create a Voter Engagement Committee

September 2020

- Offer voter registration tabling
- Voter registration parties and events (virtual)
- Create transportation committee to map out a plan for shuttling, prepare shuttling materials
- **September 9th:** Offer a viewing for the first general election debate
- **September 22nd:** Create programming for voter registration day

October 2020

- **October 7th:** viewing party for the vice presidential debate (possibly as a drive-thru movie)
- **October 9th:** REGISTRATION DEADLINE for general election
- **October 15th:** viewing party for the second general election debate
- **October 22nd:** viewing party for the third general election debate
- **October 22nd:** deadline for absentee voting application

- **October 27th:** deadline for absentee ballot
- **OCTOBER 15TH - 31ST EARLY VOTING**

November 2020

- **NOVEMBER 3RD ELECTION DAY**
- evaluate election action plan and collect feedback

December 2020

- Work on voter engagement plan for the 2021 spring semester