

Overview:

Our campus effort seeks to create sustainable institutional support for more informed and civically engaged student body at Wayne State University. In the short-term the effort has sought to increase registration and turnout rates, increasing the registration rate and decreasing the gap between registration and actual turnout with the support of a coalition of university and external partners who are already conducting work around civic learning and democratic engagement. In the longer run the effort seeks to establish a single clearinghouse for information and action related to elections as a foundation upon which future student leaders can build with the help of a supportive network of faculty, staff and civic organizations. Efforts during 2018 represented important first steps but were not as effective as they could have been with additional faculty and administration support. Members of the coalition have come back together to commit to building stronger efforts for 2020.

Coalition:

The coalition created in 2018 offers significant potential for achieving the goal of a Voter Friendly Campus, including participants from various sectors of the university (students, faculty, administration, student affairs) and external organizations with an interest in voter turnout and elections

Voter Friendly Campus Coordination Team

- *Democracy Fellows*, Marangelis Rosado, Undergraduate Student, Department of Political Science & Center for Latin American Studies and Ashi Arora, Undergraduate Student, Department of Public Health & Honors College
- *Faculty Liaison*. Kevin Deegan-Krause, Professor and Faculty Advisor, Department of Political Science & Honors College

University Members:

- *Dean of Students Office*, David Strauss, Dean of Students
- *Office of Government and Community Affairs*, Brianna Ellison, Associate Director- Advocacy and Community Programs
- *Center for the Study of Citizenship*, Marc Kruman, Professor and Director, Center for the Study of Citizenship
- *Student Senate*, Stuart Evan Baum, Director of Governmental Affairs of Student Senate

External Partners

- *Citizen Detroit*, Sheila Cockrel, President of Crossroads Consulting
- *League of Women Voters*, Deborah Lynn Bunkley, Director for Voter Service Support, Detroit

The coalition met initially in Spring of 2018 and there was considerable enthusiasm for cooperative effort and subsequent cooperation. The willingness of coalition members to work together did not come into play, however, because there was insufficient support from the faculty liaison to bring the group together on a

regular basis. The coalition did meet again, however, in January of 2019. when those present renewed the commitment to voter turnout and education and to meet quarterly in 2019. Efforts in the coming year will be strengthened by the elevation of Stuart Baum to the presidency of the Student Senate in 2019, but it will also be necessary in this coming year to re-engage with the Dean of Students Office and to seek out additional faculty liaisons and more partner organizations inside and outside the university.

Analysis of your work:

The overall work of campus engagement proceeded slower and with more obstacles than we initially anticipated. The Democracy Fellows were active and eager to pursue the efforts but did not receive adequate support from the faculty liaison. The four areas of effort developed as follows:

- Voter registration: We registered students at several and early-semester campus festivals (Orientation, Fest-Fall and Constitution Day) and from staffed tables in the Student Center during September of 2018.
- Voter education: When engaging students on registration we directed them to nonpartisan websites (especially the League of Women Voters and Citizen Detroit) for candidate information and we invited the League to speak to students in the Honors 1000 large lecture. In a related effort the Political Studies Association organized a debate before the election between members of the local branches of the major political parties.
- Ballot Access: We encouraged students to vote but did not have a broader impact on direct ballot access. Students who requested absentee ballots were able to receive them (except in instances where voters registered online and therefore, according to Michigan law, needed to be present in person to vote. Those who registered with their campus address had full access to the polling place, but its location was approximately ½ mile away across a major thoroughfare.
- Voter Turnout: We encouraged students with tables in the student center and with a moderately-attended pre-election debate hosted by the Political Students Association and with emails and texts, but there was little faculty or administration support for other efforts, so it was difficult to have more of an impact.

In all of these areas we acknowledge significant difficulties in gaining momentum and look forward to the guidance of the Campus Vote Project.

Successes:

Although the 2018 engagement efforts did not reach our expectations, we can cite several positive developments:

- Coalition Startup: Just getting the project started at Wayne was an important feat, and even if it did not achieve its full potential, it at least created a framework for cross-campus coordination on elections that is active and ongoing.
- Registration and Education Presence: While not as frequent or extensive as we had hoped, the efforts still managed to reach many students and led directly to voter registration and likely also to voting.
- Improved Awareness of Barriers: While it is not exactly a marker of success, the discovery of barriers during the first year are useful in helping us to perform better in the future.

Barriers:

The institutional barriers in 2018 were greater than we expected and hampered our efforts to a significant degree.

- **Faculty Leadership:** One of the primary barriers to success in 2018 was a lack of faculty leadership. The Wayne State faculty liaison did not reconvene the coalition after the initial meeting or provide sufficient support and leadership and this made progress difficult. Additional faculty members and faculty effort will be necessary for these efforts to be successful in the long run, especially given the progress of students through the institution.
- **Timing:** Because our we were not able to put a campus team together until late in the Winter semester, just before the Spring/Summer lull in campus activity, it was difficult to develop momentum in the early part of the Fall semester when action was most critical. Now that the efforts have been established for nearly a year, it should be easier to span those summer months and hit the ground running in fall of 2019 and especially 2020.
- **Access to Students:** Although Wayne State has recently increased the share of full-time on-campus undergraduate students, our campus still consists largely of commuter, part-time and graduate students who are more difficult to contact. Reaching these students is an important next step in our efforts, though we still are not certain how to pursue that goal and would be grateful for support and guidance.

Beyond 2018:

Efforts in 2019 and 2020 should look different than those of 2018 both because of a change in the Michigan constitution in 2018 and as a result of the first year of experience of the Campus Vote Project.

The change in external circumstances relate to the passage in Michigan of Proposition 3 which will, among other changes, extend the registration date until two weeks before the election and permit registration up to and including election day at official offices, so that the period of registration efforts will blur into the period usually designated for post-registration education. Proposition 3 also means that for most students will take place at the age of 16 when they apply for a driver's license. This might not make a huge difference for the 2020 election (only first year students will likely be registered in this way) but by 2022 nearly all students will be registered before coming to campus. He also noted that the change in the registration deadline means that the period of registration will be longer and blur into the period usually designated for post-registration education. In practice, these changes means two different strategies for the next two major elections: longer registration efforts in 2020 combined with education, and lower-key registration but more sustained education efforts in 2022.

The Campus Vote Project at Wayne State will also change because of the lessons learned during the past year and the efforts of campus groups. During the 2019 meeting, the coalition members present agreed to pursue the following goals for 2019:

- Complete current efforts to move a polling place to campus in 2019 so voting-day efforts for students registered in Detroit can shift to a simpler location.
- Consolidate all voting and civic engagement-related information to a single website (likely <http://studentsenate.wayne.edu/warriorsvote>) and hashtag #warriorsvote.
- Engage in more extensive registration efforts in Fall 2019 including New Student Orientation, Festifall, Student Organization Day, Civic Fest, National Voter Registration Day, Homecoming and Volleyball games.
- Continue meetings of the coalition on a quarterly basis with the next meeting occurring in early April.

NSLVE Data

We have had a difficult time know how to use the NSLVE data effectively. It provides a fascinating snapshot of electoral activity, but to date our efforts have been campus-wide and public-space focused and so we could use assistance in how to use NSLVE data to target our message. The webinars have helped but additional training would be extremely useful.

Photos and Stories

Share your favorite photos and stories with us from the election!

Warriors Vote Meeting 2019

Wayne State Honors College

January 16, 2019, 1:30pm

Deborah Bunkley, League of Women Voters

Helena Scott, League of Women Voters

Brianna Ellison, Office of Government Affairs

Marc Kruman, Center for the Study of Citizenship

Stuart Baum, Student Senate

Kevin Deegan-Krause, Honors College, Department of Political Science

1) Review of 2018 Activities/Lessons Learned

- a. The committee discussed the experience of the efforts to increase registration and turnout for the 2018 elections including success in a variety of outreach efforts but also insufficient faculty support and problems with gaining access to large numbers of students.

2) Plans for 2019-2020

- a. Faculty advisor search
Marc Kruman will work with Kevin Deegan-Krause to find an additional faculty representative
- b. Precinct on campus

Stuart Baum and Brianna Ellison discussed the extensive efforts to bring a polling station to campus including the work they have done with the city clerk, the discussion of the move with the current host (Bethel A.M.E at 5050 St. Antoine which also hosts two other precincts), with the new proposed host (the Damon Keith Center for Civil Rights). They expect that the formal change can be ratified in 2019 in ample time for the election in 2020.

- c. Confirming name, image, mission statement, goals

- i. Those attended accepted the “Warriors Vote” name and #WarriorsVote hashtag.
 - ii. Stuart Baum said that he would discuss with the Student Senate the potential of hosting a Warriors Vote page with information about elections and civic involvement. This may be a task for next year’s Democracy Fellows.
- d. Identifying all possible events/venues
 - i. Investigating the possibility of hosting a 2020 Democratic debate (discussion of application to the Democratic National Committee)
 - ii. Stuart Baum identified a series of events that would be useful for participation
 1. A formal role at various stages of new student orientation
 2. Festifall before the start of the semester
 3. Student Organization Day shortly after the beginning of the semester
 4. Civic Fest around 11 September
 5. National Voter Registration Day later in the fall semester
 6. Homecoming
 7. Volleyball games
- e. Effects of Proposition 3.

Stuart Baum noted that with the passage of Proposition 3, voting registration for most students will take place at the age of 16 when they apply for a driver’s license. He noted this might not make a huge difference for the 2020 election (only first year students will likely be registered in this way) but that by 2022 nearly all students will be registered before coming to campus. He also noted that the change in the registration deadline means that the period of registration will be longer and blur into the period usually designated for post-registration education. This means two different strategies for the next two major elections: longer

registration efforts in 2020 combined with education, and lower-key registration but more sustained education efforts in 2022.

3) Working with outside partners

- a. Resources Warriors Vote can offer
 - i. Deborah Bunkley at the League of Women Voters said that their branch was preparing a list of goals and associated needs and that they would share those with the committee members to see if there were any areas of overlap where Wayne State could be useful.
 - ii. Stuart Baum and Brianna Ellison discussed the possibility of county clerks deputizing students to accept absentee ballots

4) Other opportunities/Relationships

- a. Michigan Voice, Lacy Dawson (Helena Scott can make connection)
- b. MOSES (Helena Scott can make connection)
- c. Representatives of campus-based political party organizations

5) Next meeting

- a. Kevin Deegan-Krause will circulate a poll in late March to find a date for an early April meeting.