



**WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY**



**2022 - 2023
Voter Friendly Campus
Action Plan**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Wayne State has been an innovative public urban center of higher learning since 1868, when a group of Civil War doctors envisioned a better world through better medicine. Since our founding as the Detroit Medical College, WSU has grown to become one of the 50 largest public universities in the United States and is Michigan's most diverse campus.

Throughout history, Wayne State has enabled students to realize their full potential and contribute to society throughout their lives. The University's commitment to accessibility for qualified students of all backgrounds creates exceptional opportunities and enriches our communities. WSU's longstanding commitment to diversity and its rich, multicultural environment prepares students for success and eventual leadership in a diverse, global society.

At Wayne State University, student success is supported in a multitude of ways. However, the heart of success is engagement outside of the classroom. One of the most impactful ways that the student body has shown its dedication to student success and civic engagement is through voter awareness and engagement. The influx of voter participation on campus resulted in national recognition. In February 2020, WSU was designated a "Voter Friendly Campus" through a program sponsored by NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and the Fair Election Center's Campus Vote Project. Wayne State University is one of 123 colleges across 31 states to earn this designation for promoting voter registration and engaging the student body as a part of its institutional mission.

The connection between student and voter participation is not only being seen in local and national elections, but in on-campus elections as well. Just as national political interest has surged among students, so has interest in WSU's Student Senate, our student government on campus.

Wayne State's student dedication to civic engagement doesn't simply end at registering to vote. In collaboration with Campus Vote Project, WSU will work to raise awareness about voting as well as educating students on all facets of the electoral process for the upcoming 2022 election. Together, we have developed a plan of action that outlines improvements and methods to increase student voter participation and education on campus.

As a part of our action plan, we intend to form a Democratic Engagement Coalition that will collaborate with administrators, faculty, staff, community leaders, and students to develop and accomplish our goals. We are focused on broadening the definition of civic engagement, and the understanding of how students can get civically engaged. Voting is important, but it is not enough, and it is also not the only way that students can be civically engaged. Therefore, in participating in Campus Vote Project, ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, and writing this Campus Action Plan, Wayne State University commits to institutionalize civic and democratic engagement by integrating voter registration, education and turnout campus-wide, further engaging students, faculty, and community members, and overall creating a more civically engaged campus and community.

“WAYNE STATE IS ONE OF ONLY SIX PUBLIC URBAN UNIVERSITIES IN THE UNITED STATES TO HAVE RECEIVED THE HIGHEST CARNEGIE FOUNDATION RATINGS FOR BOTH RESEARCH INTENSIVENESS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.”

LEADERSHIP



Wayne State University's Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan was assembled by Dean Strauss, Brandon Shamoun, Tony DiMeglio, and Devin Reynolds, building off of the groundwork laid by former Wayne State University Campus Vote Project Fellow, Amina Khalique, and the 2019-2020 Democratic Engagement Coalition. The goals listed in this action plan shall be executed by Brandon Shamoun of the Dean of Students Office with the assistance of any and all engaged Wayne State Students.



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VOTER REGISTRATION

The NSLVE data indicates that Wayne State had a 6.5% increase in its registration rate - from 83.6% in 2016, to 90.1% in 2020. It is our goal to reach a voter registration rate of 95% by the next 2024 NSLVE campus report.

VOTER EDUCATION

Increase Wayne State students' awareness, understanding and confidence of civic and electoral processes through programming and events, marketing and communication, and an effective digital presence.

VOTER TURNOUT

The NSLVE data indicates that Wayne State had a 12.3% increase in its registration rate - from 61.2% in 2016, to 73.5% in 2020. It is our goal to reach a voter turnout of 75% by the next 2024 NSLVE campus report.

INSTITUTIONALIZE

It is our goal to shift as many of these regular requirements and tasks regarding the upkeep of increasing voter registration, voter education, and voter turnout onto the universities administration. The status of civic engagement can not fall on the engagement and involvement of students on campus, and all of these processes shall be integrated with the process of full time staff. As a component of this, it is our goal to revive the 2019-2020 Democratic Engagement Coalition. A group of students, faculty and staff who would meet once a semester to discuss these goals and the Universities standing.

GOAL REACHING STRATEGIES



GENERAL CAMPUS POPULATION

- ★☆☆ *First Year Seminar Curriculum:* Work with the professors of and department head of the First Year Seminar (FYS) classes to incorporate a unit on civic engagement and voting within the course curriculum.
- ★☆☆ *Canvassing Classes:* The team will gather volunteers to help canvass classes in the weeks leading up to elections to encourage students to get out and vote. This will include a short presentation highlighting voter registration, voter education, and voter turnout.
- ★ *Voter Registration Drives & Tabling:* We will host voter registration drives on campus throughout the year at both university events like Festifall, Student Org Day and Winterfest but additionally at additional times at high trafficked regions of campus.
- ★ *Collaborate with Registrar:* The team will implement a voter registration step on Wayne State's class registration website. As students register and check into their classes, they will be able to update their registration and check if they are registered to vote. If they are not registered yet, the information needed to register to vote will be hyperlinked on the website. Our team will work with the C&IT department to add this step on the website.
- ★☆☆ *Voter Registration Resources:* The team will develop print and web-based voter registration resources which will include guides, fact sheets, pamphlets, etc.
- ★☆☆ *Warrior Votes Website:* The Wayne State Dean of Students has launched a voting focused website page. This will be updated as needed to include information about voter registration. The team will incorporate further information onto the Warrior Votes website including: voter guides and information, voter registration forms/links, and additional resources for faculty
- ★ *Rides to the Polls:* We will collaborate with Lyft to provide transportation to the various polling locations around our community for Wayne State students who need transportation to the poll
- ★ *Election Day Holiday:* Ensure that no classes are hadl on all of Michigan's election days.
- ★ *Mailing Voter Registration Forms:* The team will work to provide mailing supplies and stamps for people to mail out their voter registration forms. Additionally work to provide students with the city of Detroit pre-stamped election forms.

GOAL REACHING STRATEGIES



ADMINISTRATIVE EFFORTS

- ★☆☆ *Freshman, Transfer, and Graduate Orientation:* Institutionalize voter registration by implementing voter registration at all student orientations at Wayne State University. The university should be responsible for setting up and maintaining voter registration.
- ★ *Campus-Wide Emails:* President Roy Wilson will send out at least one campus-wide email each semester to all students. The emails will include voter registration information and a direct link to MI's online voter registration system.

RESIDENCE HALL PROGRAMMING

- ☆☆★ *Residential Curriculum:* Work with the Community Directors responsible for curriculum development within the office of Housing and Residential Life to expand the pillar of "Warrior Pride" to incorporate Civic Engagement and voting.
- ★☆☆★ *Building Programs:* The Wayne State CVP will partner with RA's and hall counsels to ensure all students living on campus have the opportunity to register to vote.
 - Move-in day:* Coordinate with each building's staff to set up a voter registration tent/table when people are moving in.
 - The team will make sure that students are aware of the on-campus polling location, as well as how to access off-campus polling locations.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- ★☆☆★ *Wayne State's Instagram:* Increase social media usage, outreach, and presence through Instagram stories and posts via the Wayne State Instagram page. This will encourage people to share, post, and register to vote.
- ☆☆★ *Warrior Votes Accounts:* The team will launch and manage social media accounts for Warrior Votes to highlight any and all political events occurring on campus, and to promote the importance of democracy and civic engagement.

GOAL REACHING STRATEGIES



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- ★ *National Voter Registration Day:* The team will offer day-long voter registration programming. We will register students to vote, allow students to check their registration, and provide guides to voting.
- ★ ★ *Donuts for Democracy:* The team will host a “Donuts for Democracy” event where students can grab a donut, register to vote, and learn more about why democracy and voting matters! We will offer promotional items, flyers, guides, fact sheets, and additional information regarding voting.
- ★ ★ ★ *Civic Fest:* We will organize a civic fest on campus to strengthen the WSU community and encourage students to be more engaged. There will be music, dance, fun activities and workshops, food, and of course, voter registration. All political student organizations are invited to hold tables and participate in the programming and activities. These activities will include but are not limited to different lawn games, voter trivia, music, food, providing swag and promotional items, and opportunities for photos. We will register students to vote, allow students to check their registration, and provide guides to voting.
- ★ *Debate Watch Parties:* The team will organize debate watching parties to gather students and watch various candidate debates and learn more about the candidates’ issues and views. This will allow students to be more informed while voting.
- ★ *Workshops:* We will host workshops throughout the year such as mock elections, electoral education, political candidate forums, among other workshops.
- ★ *March to the Polls:* Create an event where students on campus can march to the campus polling location (Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights).
- ★ *Host a Party at the Polls:* provide food and festivities at a location nearby the voting precinct on election day to generate a fun, exciting party for the Wayne State community to take part in. This will include music, promotional items/swag, patriotic activities, food, and community

REPORTING AND EVALUATION



REPORTING

This action plan will be shared with various voting centric outside organizations and Wayne State University's senior level leadership in an endeavor to create a more civically engaged campus, community, and society. We hope to work effectively with the student body, faculty, administration, and community leaders as we progress towards our goals to develop voter engagement on our campus and collectively work towards increasing it.

EVALUATION

WSU will participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), to track data specific to voter registration and turnout at our institution. This will help us determine if our initiatives are effective in engaging students on campus. Our evaluation this school year will determine the path that we take for future civic engagement initiatives at WSU.

We intend to be honest and transparent with the campus community about our progress towards reaching our goals. We will work consistently to ensure that every student at Wayne State University is equipped with the knowledge, skills, tools, resources, and ability to #WarriorsVote.