



WESLEYAN
ACCELERATING EQUALITY FOR WOMEN

ALL IN Campus
Democracy
Challenge

Wesleyan College 2024 Nonpartisan Democratic Engagement Action Plan

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Executive Summary:

This nonpartisan democratic engagement action plan has been developed by Wesleyan College in Georgia 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 Wesleyan College in the 2024 election are: **To meet or exceed a 90% voter registration rate and 80% overall voting rate for our fulltime student enrollment.**

Leadership:

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

- Meaghan Blight, President
- Melody Blake, Provost – Chair of Civic Engagement Committee
- Theresa Abercrombie, Staff – Student Affairs Program Coordinator
- Civic Engagement Peer Ambassadors (six students in paid positions in Student Affairs, supervised by Theresa Abercrombie)
- Allyn Snyder - League of Women Voters Macon

Commitment:

- Curriculum: WISE (first year experience) includes voter education.
- Faculty Involvement: History, Political Science, and Global Affairs (HPGA) Faculty host HPGA Discussion Wednesdays monthly during election season with a “coffee-chat” format (9/4/24, 10/9/24, and 11/6), with the final coffee-chat being a time to “unpack”, The Day After: Making Sense of the Election.
- We connect students with nonpartisan Voter Information on our [website](https://www.wesleyancollege.edu/about/voterinfo.cfm): <https://www.wesleyancollege.edu/about/voterinfo.cfm>), provide the Election calendar with the Georgia Voter Page QR code in new student “PACK” Orientation folders, send

postcards to campus residents to remind them to register and make a plan to vote, and host regular voter registration drives outside our campus dining hall. Government Directory brochures provided by League of Women Voters Macon. Georgia Voter registration paper forms are available in Student Affairs – we require students to mail the form themselves if they choose a paper form; we encourage students to register online via the Georgia Voter Page or League of Women Voters (vote411.org) for instant results. Information such as election calendars are shared and available in the Student Affairs office and at tabling events for voter awareness, to help our community to register to vote and make a plan to vote.

President Meaghan Blight is a current signatory to the ALL IN Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation.

Landscape:

Wesleyan College is a private 4-year institution and joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge in 2017. Our institution has been designated as the following: Predominantly White Institution, Rural Serving Institution (see note about demographics below).

The voter registration deadline for Georgia is thirty days before the election (October 7), and the vote by mail ballot request deadline is twelve days before the election (October 25); voters must present valid (current) government issued identification at the voter poll or to be able to vote by mail. Early voting is October 15 – November 1 for the next Election on November 5.

Our campus demographic and voting data:

Wesleyan College an official 523 full time students (2023-2024 IPEDS). As of September 30, 2024, we have just 392 full time students including all programs. Of these, 280 live on campus, 59 commute, 53 are online.

We have 434 students age 18-24, and 96 students age 25-64 (only 19 students in this upper age group are undergraduate traditional students; while 46 students are enrolled in the online undergraduate program, and 31 students are enrolled in post-baccalaureate programs).

Note: Demographics have become more balanced each of the last several terms, and currently, the campus is not currently predominantly white but well balanced with the black and white population almost even, and hispanic, biracial, and AAPI populations increased since our 2022 NSLVE report, so that our population of eligible voters has become more diverse. We make sure to reach out to all students to make sure everyone knows how to register to vote, the deadlines for registration and mail in ballot requests/submissions, and the election schedule. We do not have on-campus voting, but we do offer free campus shuttles to remove the impediment of transportation for students who can vote at our campus' poll.

Wesleyan College has authorized the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) and will receive campus voting data for the 2024 election. Our NSLVE authorization runs through 2033.

Our 2022 campus voting rate was 38%
Our 2022 campus voter registration rate was 85.6%

Our 2020 campus voting rate was 72.6%.
Our 2020 campus voter registration rate was 95.5%.

Our 2018 campus voting rate was 59.5%.
Our 2018 campus voter registration rate was 98.6%.

Our voter registration and voting rates have decreased. We have determined from conversations with students and faculty that there is a spreading feeling of disenfranchisement and fear of approaching the polls due to the polarization in our battleground state of Georgia and the many attempts to change voter laws since the 2020 election.

To combat the feeling of voter disenfranchisement, we have scheduled lunchtime tabling by Civic Engagement Peer Ambassadors and guest Faculty, September 30 - election day. Faculty engage with students in the Dining Hall for open discussion, and HPGA departments their monthly coffee-chat with students, as well. The goal is to offer casual conversation about how “representation is key”, “your vote is your voice”, and impact statements about how voting makes a difference, and even one vote can determine an election. We currently are rolling out an “Ask Me #WhyIvote” social media campaign which involves our Communications team conducting random, candid video interviews across campus, cute “Ask Me Why I Vote” buttons, and a banner with handwritten voter impact statements in our main lobby.

Wesleyan College has been recognized by ALL IN with the following seals of recognition for past elections: **2020 Gold, 2022 Silver.**

Goals:

Our institution’s nonpartisan democratic engagement goals are:

- Increase student voter turnout rate to 80% in 2024 to increase our 2020 rate
- Increase student voter registration rate to 90% in 2024 to increase our 2020 rate.
- Add voter registration information to all new and transfer student PACK Orientation folders, to include Spring and Fall, first-year and transfer students.
- Continue to have our President renew the ALL IN Higher Education Presidents’ Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation.

Strategy:

Wesleyan College will implement these strategies to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement and student voter participation.

We will:

- Continue to host voter registration drives for new and returning students each semester with the help of League of Women Voters Macon and other local partners.
- Continue to celebrate National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Election Heroes Day.

- Continue providing in person (lunchtime tabling), paper, and virtual reminders to help students make a plan to vote.
- Continue to offer free shuttles to early voting and Election day voting at our local poll.
- Continue WISe first year student curriculum on voter education, as well as HPGA coffee-chats and faculty-student lunches for civic engagement conversations, which will facilitate voter engagement and increase enthusiasm to vote, whether by mail, early, or on Election Day.

Evaluation:

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

Wesleyan College will use the National, Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement to evaluate the increase of student voting by comparing our campus voter turnout and voter registration rates to past elections to measure progress on increasing both.

Theresa Abercrombie, Civic Engagement Peer Ambassadors, and faculty, will debrief and use feedback from students (via interactions/conversation and testimonies from the #WhyIvote campaign), to refine materials and marketing. Our hope is to create a feedback loop, wherein the conversation around voting becomes more open, equitable, and engaging. We will continually refine our messaging and ultimately reach more students to increase our voter registration and voting rates.

Reporting:

Our campus action plan will be posted on our campus page on ALL IN's website <https://allinchallenge.org/campuses/wesleyan-college/>.

Action Plan will be shared specifically with Civic Engagement Committee and Civic Engagement Peer Ambassadors.

NSLVE is shared on our voter information page, publicly at: <https://www.wesleyancollege.edu/about/voterinfo.cfm>