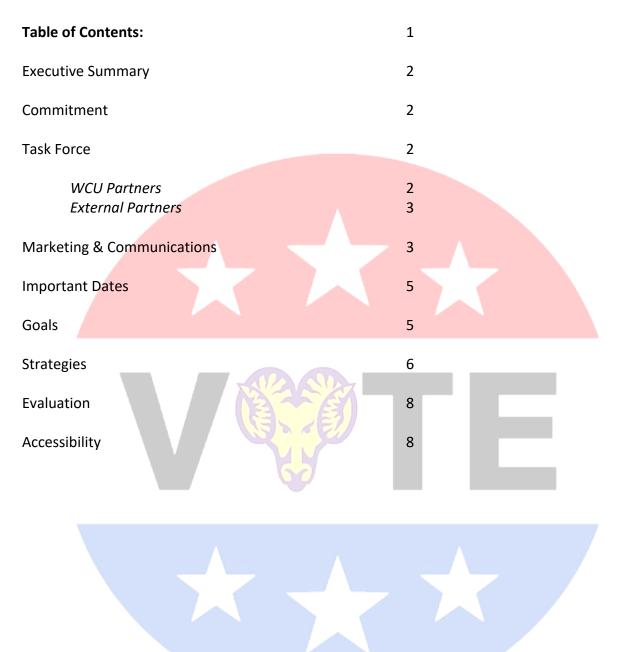# WCU VOTES: 2020 CAMPUS ACTION PLAN

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

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WEST CHETSER UNIVERSITY
WCU VOTES 2020 ACTION PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

West Chester University (WCU) has a long history of campus involvement in various forms of civic engagement, including service-learning, community-based research and voter engagement. The University is deeply committed to developing graduates who contribute to the common good through participation in cultural and civic discourse, and through understanding the ethical implications of decisions and the world in which they live.

This action plan will provide is a guide for campus voter engagement and outreach. Guided by a task force made up for students, faculty and staff, as well as input from community partners, voter engagement goals will be reached through various strategies, including programs, projects and initiatives taking place between May and November 2020.

The voter engagement task force is led by the Office of Service-Learning & Volunteer Programs within the Division of Student Affairs at West Chester University and is a non-partisan initiative.

COMMITMENT

According to the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE), conducted by the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education at Tufts University, West Chester University students voted at a rate of 43.8% in 2018. This is an increase of 27.8 points from 2014. The 2018 voting rate for all institutions was 39.1%. We aim to increase participation in 2020 by roughly 60%. Through collaborative efforts from various divisions, departments and campus constituents, the University is committed to developing the campus community's understanding of civic participation in order to foster students' character and values, while preparing them for community and civic leadership roles.

WCU students, faculty and staff are involved in a wide range of civic engagement projects at local, state, national and international levels, strengthened by long-standing reciprocal partnerships with community organizations. The University has held the Carnegie Engagement Classification since 2010 (reclassified in 2020).

PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

WCU partners:

TASK FORCE MEMBERS:
Student Affairs
Office of Service-Learning & Volunteer Programs (OSLVP)
-   Pam Frontino
-   Seth Jacobson
-   Shannon Gillespie
Student Leadership & Involvement (SLI)
-   Patricia Riley

Dowdy Multicultural Center (DMC)
- Denice Velez
- Briana Green

Center for Trans & Queer Advocacy (CTQA)
- Tiffany Gray

Center for Women & Gender Equity (CWGE)
- Sendy Alcidonis
- Tess Benser

Communications & Marketing
- Sabrina Rightmer

Faculty

Political Science
- Peter Loedel
- Ashlie Delshad
- Chris Stangl
- Linda Stevenson
- Frauke Schnell

English
- Hannah Ashley

University Affairs

External Relations
- Julie Dietrich

Student Representatives

Nick Marcil (OSLVP GA, HEPSA graduate student)
Ashley Pogash (CEEP Fellow, graduate student)
Allyson Drames (undergraduate student)
Taylor Gibson Campbell (undergraduate student)
Additional student representatives and 2nd CEEP Fellow- TBD

Additional campus partners:

Office of Sustainability
WCU Sustainability Council
Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs
Residence Life
Fraternity & Sorority Life

External partners:

Campus voting organizations
Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP)
Campus Vote Project

All-In Campus Democracy Challenge
Head Count
National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE)

Local and regional organizations
Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND)
Campus Compact of New York and Pennsylvania (CCNYPA)
Pennsylvania Department of State
League of Women Voters of Chester County and/or Pennsylvania
Chester County Voter Services (Sandy Burke, Director)

Local government officials
Carolyn Comitta (PA House of Representatives, 156th District, Democrat)
Dianne Herrin (Mayor of West Chester, PA, Democrat)

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

- OSLVP Webpage: www.wcupa.edu/wcuvotes
  - This page will be updated regularly with upcoming news and information about voter engagement events and opportunities on campus, as well as Frequently Asked Questions and more information.

- Student Voting Plan (online form)
  - This form was designed to encourage students to think through their process for registering to vote and participating in upcoming elections. It includes information about how to register, how to apply for mail-in/absentee ballots, questions about transportation and the option to include one's phone number for updates and reminders via text message. Students who complete a Voting Plan will also receive email updates and reminders.

- Social Media:
  - Student Affairs
    - @wcustuaffairs (Instagram)
  - Office of Service-Learning & Volunteer Programs:
    - wcupa.volunteer (Instagram)
    - facebook.com/wcuvolunteers (Facebook)
    - @wcupa.volunteers (Twitter)
  - Dowdy Multicultural Center
    - Dowdymc_wcu (Instagram)
  - Center for Women & Gender Equity
    - Wcu_cwge (Instagram)

- Newsletters:

- RamServe (OSLVP newsletter)
- Ram Connect (Division of Student Affairs (DOSA) student newsletter)
- DOSA Developments (Division of Student Affairs staff newsletter)
- Dowdy Multicultural Center newsletter
- Center for Women & Gender Equity newsletter

- On-campus Resources
  - On-campus tabling events
  - On-campus TV screen advertisements
  - On-campus posters/flyers

- Additional web resources:
  - Votespa.com
  - Vote.gov
  - Rockthevote.org
  - USA.gov/voting
  - Vote.org

IMPORTANT DATES

National Voter Registration Day: September 22, 2020
General election voter registration deadline: October 19, 2020
General election vote by mail application deadline: October 27, 2020
General election mail-in ballot deadline: 5pm on November 3, 2020
General election: November 3, 2020

Task force meetings will take place at 12pm on the following **Fridays** (via Zoom or in the OSLVP conference room):

July 17th
August 14th
September 11th
October 9th and 23rd
November 6th and 20th

GOALS

1. Increase WCU student voter registration for the primary election by 20 percent
2. Over 60 percent WCU student voter turnout in the primary election
3. Increase WCU student voter registration for the general election by 40 percent
4. Over 60 percent WCU student voter turnout in the general election

5. Engage up to 75 percent of WCU students in educational workshops, events, and activities designed to deepen understanding of the election process and candidates, with a particular emphasis on reaching historically underrepresented students.

STRATEGIES

GOAL 1: Increase WCU student voter registration for the primary election by 20 percent

Strategies	Timing	Delegation	Outputs
Email from WCU President to campus community	May	OSLVP	Email sent to all students
Video with voter registration details/dates/resources	May	OSLVP, Communications	Emailed to all students; shared on social media
Social media campaign on voter registration details/dates/resources	May, June	OSLVP, Communications, CWGE, DMC	2 posts weekly; posts shared amongst departments/task force members
Social media campaign on registering for mail-in ballots	May	OSLVP, Communications, CWGE, DMC	2 posts weekly; posts shared between departments/task force members

GOAL 2: Over 60 percent WCU student voter participation in the primary election

Strategies	Timing	Delegation	Outputs
Social media campaign for mail-in or in person voting	May, June	OSLVP, Communications, CWGE, DMC	4 posts weekly; posts shared between departments/task force members

GOAL 3: Increase WCU student voter registration for the general election by 40 percent

Strategies	Timing	Delegation	Outputs
Voter registration tabling events	Weekly, August-October	CEEP Fellows, students	Students registered
National Voter Registration Day events	September 22nd	CEEP Fellows	Events implemented; students registered
Email from WCU President to campus community	August	OSLVP	Email sent to campus community
Student Voting Plan	August-November	OSLVP	Plan submissions will be sent directly to OSLVP; Students will receive email/phone reminders

Video with voter registration details/dates/resources	August	OSLVP, Communications	Included in President's email; sent to campus community
Social media campaign on voter registration details/dates/resources	July-October	OSLVP, Communications	2 posts weekly; (4 during the two weeks leading up to the election); posts shared between departments/task force members
Social media campaign on registering for mail-in ballots	July-October	OSLVP, Communications	2 posts weekly; (4 during the two weeks leading up to the registration deadlines); posts shared between departments/task force members

GOAL 4: Over 60 percent WCU student voter participation in the general election

Strategies	Timing	Delegation	Outputs
Student Voting Plan	August-November	OSLVP, SLI	Plan submissions will be sent directly to Pam Frontino; Students will receive email reminders
Promote student voting plans	October-November	OSLVP, SLI	Included on home screen of "RamConnect" (campus event platform)
Provide transportation to polling stations in West Chester	Nov. 3rd (election day)	OSLVP	See Accessibility section (below)

GOAL 5: Engage up to 75 percent of WCU students in educational workshops, events, and activities designed to deepen understanding of the election process and candidates, with a particular emphasis on reaching historically underrepresented students.

Strategies	Timing	Delegation	Outputs
"Bringing Out Students of Color: Our Voices, Our Votes" (planning group)	June-Nov.	Faculty, DMC, students	Group meetings held regularly; programs implemented
New Student Orientation	August	OSLVP	An information guide will be included in student resource folders during Welcome Week 2020
FYE Module: Voter Engagement for First Year Students	Sept.-Nov.	OSLVP, Faculty	An instructional module will be included in all First Year

			Experience (FYE) sections, reaching all first-year students
1-2 Campus Debates/Town Hall events (candidates and issues)	August-Nov.	External Affairs, OSLVP	Students in attendance will hear dialogue on issues from local and state candidates, or faculty speaking about specific issues
1-2 Debate Watch Parties	August-Nov.	Communications, OSLVP	Students will have the opportunity to view
1-2 workshops, events, or activities designed to educate students on the *importance* of voting	August-Nov.	Faculty	

EVALUATION

Evaluation of goals will largely be based on feedback from the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE)'s 2020 report, which will be released in 2021. Attendance will be noted at any events or programs, and student feedback will be sought via survey and testimonial, in order to create an evaluation following the November election.

ACCESSIBILITY

To ensure that every student has the ability to register to vote and participate in the 2020 elections, WCU will implement the following tactics:

- Transportation will be provided by the University to polling locations on November 3, 2020 for students who do not have access to a vehicle or ride.
- Postage (for mail-in ballots) will be provided by the Office of Service-Learning & Volunteer Programs and made available to students who might not access to stamps. In the case that students cannot be on campus due to complications from COVID-19, stamps and other materials will be mailed directly to students' homes.
- On-campus ballot drop-boxes for mail-in ballots will be requested through the County Voting Office.
- Students with mental or physical disabilities that could hinder their access to voting will have the option of applying for assistance through Disability Rights Pennsylvania, with support from the County Voting Office and the Office of Service-Learning & Volunteer Programs.

Due to the current COVID-19 global pandemic, all events are being planned to be easily converted to virtual/online modes if the county or state go back to the "red" phase, or if the University is forced to suspend all in-person programming.