

# SWOSU<sup>TM</sup>

Southwestern Oklahoma State University



## All-In Campus Democracy Challenge 2018-2019 Action Plan

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## SWOSU Mission

The mission of Southwestern Oklahoma State University, a member of the Regional University System of Oklahoma, is to provide educational opportunities, research, scholarly and creative activities, and service in a safe, accessible, nurturing learning environment that meets the needs of the state and region and contributes to the educational, economic, and cultural environment. SWOSU provides traditionally strong programs of study leading to a variety of degrees, from associate to doctoral degrees. The University's areas of study, nationally accredited programs, general education curriculum, service and experiential learning activities, and participation in student activities and organizations provide students with opportunities to obtain skills, knowledge, and cultural appreciation that promote achievement by students and alumni.

## Values

SWOSU confirmed its values with its stakeholders.

- We value our standing as a premier Oklahoma institution of higher education that meets the needs of the state and the region by providing accessible, affordable, high-quality associate's, bachelor's, master's, and professional degree programs.
- We are committed to high standards for instruction, administrative services, research, scholarly and creative activities, and service to the university and community.
- Our faculty, staff, and administration are committed to fostering a safe, healthy, and diverse intellectual, cultural, and social environment for student success.
- We are dedicated to the economic stability and growth of our region, and we cherish our role as a center for arts, culture, science, and technology.
- We guide our actions by fairness, honesty and integrity as we meet our obligations through wise use of the financial and natural resources entrusted to us.

## Vision

As a premier university responding to an ever-changing world, SWOSU will provide an environment for faculty, student and graduate success and public service through a variety of elements:

- Innovative and accessible academic programs;
- Student activities and opportunities;
- Cultural inclusion and diversity;
- Expanded international programs, opportunities for international students, and promotion of global awareness;
- Community and private sector partnerships that benefit students, faculty and staff and the community;
- Student and faculty research, scholarly, and creative activities that expand bodies of knowledge and enhance quality of life;
- Activities and investments that promote ethical, intellectual, professional, and personal growth;
- Promotion of university and community health and wellness;
- Commitment to advancing and maintaining technologies that optimizes university operations and classroom and student distance learning;
- Management of our financial resources and establishment of new avenues to support and preserve quality programs; and
- Expansion of alumni relations, recognition, partnerships and support.

## University Contact Information for Democracy Challenge

Dr. Ruth Boyd  
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580-774-7172

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SWOSU Political Science Club

Dr. Raygan Chain, Faculty Sponsor  
SWOSU Pre-Law Student Association

Dr. Howard Kurtz, Faculty Sponsor  
SWOSU Criminal Justice Students' Association

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Student Government Association  
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SGA Civic Engagement Committee  
[sga@swosu.edu](mailto:sga@swosu.edu)

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SGA Special Projects/Events  
[sga@swosu.edu](mailto:sga@swosu.edu)

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Velma Carriaga, President  
SWOSU Political Science Club

Bailey McKay, President  
SWOSU Pre-Law Student Association

Summer Graham, President  
SWOSU Criminal Justice Students' Association

### Dean of Students

The Dean of Students is responsible for the oversight of several areas of operation to include: student conduct, financial aid appeals, disabled student services, faculty drops and reinstatements, campus activities, campus organizations, and leadership development. Student development theory is the basis for providing holistic strategies to support student services.

### Student Government Association

The Voice of the Students! The Student Government Association (SGA) is the governing body of SWOSU students. Student fees fund the operations of the SGA, and student-elected officers oversee the expenditure of those funds. The three branches of the SGA (Executive, Legislative, and Judicial) work together to lead students by serving them. The SGA is the advocate for student interests, a powerful voice for change and progress, and a dedicated provider of student services and resources.

## Collegiate Activities Board

The Collegiate Activities Board (CAB) is a university-funded group of students who plan and organize the majority of student activities at Southwestern. CAB is a volunteer force of over 100 students, both international and domestic, fostering an inclusive environment of rich diversity.

## Criminal Justice Students' Association

The Criminal Justice Students' Association is an association organized to promote the interests of criminal justice majors and minors, as well as anyone interested in criminal justice, to alert students to career opportunities in the field of criminal justice, and to promote fellowship and scholarship among interested students and faculty.

## Political Science Club

The purpose of the Political Science Club is to promote fellowship and scholarship, and to develop by principle and example a more intelligent, enterprising, and dedicated citizenry.

## Pre-Law Student Association

The Southwestern Oklahoma State University Pre-law Student Association is a growing conglomerate of students dedicated to the study and/or practice of law. The Pre-Law Student Association is also focused on educating other students on the guiding principles that have forged the legal foundation of the United States.

## Annual Events

### Campus Compact Voter Registration Initiative

SWOSU welcomes students back to campus each fall and encourages them to register to vote as part of Dawg Days Activities. Additionally, students may register to vote throughout the year in the Dean of Students office. As a Campus Compact institution, SWOSU participates annually in the Voter Registration Contest, and was recognized in December 2017 by the Oklahoma Chancellor for Higher Education.



(L to R) Jordan Selman, Chancellor Glen Johnson, Katie Warnick, Regent Dr. Ron White

According to the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) report, SWOSU's efforts have been somewhat successful. The voter registration rate among SWOSU students increased from 59.7% in 2012 to 64.7% in 2016 (+5.0% change). The voting rate of registered students rose from 60.6% in 2012 to 66.9% in 2016 (+6.4% change). However, voter turnout among SWOSU students was low for the 2014 mid-term elections.

Data indicates that only 12.1% of SWOSU undergraduate students voted in 2014; voter turnout among SWOSU graduate students was slightly higher at 38.2%. Of the 2,537 enrolled students aged 18-21, 9% voted (n=227). Of the 995 enrolled students aged 22-24, 11.8% voted (n= 117). This Action Plan seeks to increase civic awareness and participation on campus by implementing these changes:

1. Mass Orientation – August 18, 2018. Mass Orientation is a mandatory meeting of the entire 2018 freshman class. All attendees received Oklahoma Voter Registration Applications as part of their welcome packet. During the Orientation, the Student Government Association's President,

Marshall Wallace, and Civic Engagement Co-Chair, Jaycie Brown, addressed students about their civic responsibility and encouraged them to register to vote.

2. A Sample Voter Registration FAQ sheet was prepared for distribution (see Appendix A).
3. Organization Fair – August 30, 2018. The Collegiate Activities Board sponsored a booth at which SWOSU students could obtain Oklahoma Voter Registration Applications and the Sample Voter Registration FAQ sheet.

### Constitution Days

SWOSU celebrates Constitution Day annually with a week of activities. Students are encouraged to stop by the Collegiate Activities Board booth in the General Thomas P. Stafford Center between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. where they can sign a large replication of the United States Constitution, register to vote, watch a video about the Constitution, and receive a free pocket-sized Constitution. Local grade school children are invited to participate in a patriotic art contest as well. Below is a sample of how we have celebrated Constitution Day.



### Civic Club Partnerships

The SWOSU Student Government Association will reach out to civic groups such as the Rotary International and Kiwanis International in order to sponsor candidate presentations on campus (Appendix B).

### Student Organizations

All recognized campus organizations are coordinated through the Dean of Students' office. Current student organizations with a political classification include the Student Government Association, the Political Science Club, the Criminal Justice Students' Association, the Pre-Law Student Association, SWOSU Young Democrats, and SWOSU Young Republicans. All recognized student organizations are

eligible to seek University funding through the annual Student Allocations process during the month of October.

## Political Forums

SWOSU student organizations will welcome political candidates to campus and to the community in 2018.

Candidates for District 38 of the Oklahoma State Senate, Mr. Jeff Berrong (D) and Mr. Brent Howard (R), will come to campus during the month of September.

The City of Weatherford will host a political forum for these two candidates on October 2, 2018. SWOSU students will assume leadership duties during the forum, including presenting questions to the candidates, time-keeping, and other tasks.

To date, negotiations continue in order to bring Oklahoma gubernatorial candidates Mr. Drew Edmonson (D) and Mr. Kevin Stitt (R), to the SWOSU campus.



## Appendix A – Sample Voter Registration FAQs

### Did you know?

1. If you change your voter registration to reflect your **SWOSU residence hall address**, you will vote at the Methodist Church – across the street from the SWOSU football field (817 N. 7<sup>th</sup> Street). Be sure and use the following mailing addresses and **include your room number!**

Oklahoma Hall Rm #  
104 E. Davis  
Weatherford, OK 73096

Mann Hall, Rm #  
111 E. Davis  
Weatherford, OK 73096

Black Kettle Hall Rm #  
1120 N. Broadway  
Weatherford, OK 73096

Neff Hall, Rm #  
221 W. College  
Weatherford, OK 73096

Jefferson Hall, Rm #  
113 E. Davis  
Weatherford, OK 73096

Stewart Hall, Rm #  
215 E. College  
Weatherford, OK 73096

2. If you wish to maintain your voter registration at your permanent address, you may request an Oklahoma Absentee Ballot at the Oklahoma State Election Board [website](#). Or, pick up your Absentee Ballot Application in the Dean of Students' office! The deadlines to request an absentee ballot are as follows:

August 28 Runoff Primary Election	Last day to register to vote: Aug. 3	Last day to request absentee ballot: 5:00 p.m. Aug. 22	Early Voting: Aug. 23-25
November 6 General Elections	Last day to register to vote: Oct. 12	Last day to request absentee ballot: 5:00 p.m. Aug. 31	Early Voting: Nov. 1-3



## Appendix B – Sample Letter to Civic Groups

June 1, 2018

Kari Jones, President  
Rotary International Club  
100 Campus Drive  
Weatherford, OK 73096

Dear Ms. Jones:

As the state of Oklahoma prepares for the 2018 elections, the SWOSU Student Government Association would like to express our interest in partnering with the Weatherford Rotary Club in order to bring candidates to our community. We know that this will be a busy election season, including our gubernatorial race and several state legislature/U. S. House of Representative seats.

SWOSU policy states that outside speakers must be sponsored by the University or a recognized University organization. If candidates request to present at Rotary Club, will you please let us know? If possible, SGA would like to extend invitations for candidates to speak on campus as well.

Thank you for your continued support of SWOSU students.

Sincerely,

Marshall Wallace, President  
Student Government Association  
Southwestern Oklahoma State University