



Campus Voter Engagement Plan 2020
Marywood University

Executive Summary

Civic and community engagement are extremely important to Marywood University and are represented in our Mission and Core Values. Pacers to the Polls was the beginning of a movement that began during the Fall 2019 semester, and has since generated a lot of buzz around campus. This project has been spearheaded by Marywood's Office of Student Engagement, and has produced an interest in other departments, which led to the creation of the Pacers to the Polls Task Force. This voter engagement plan was developed by the task force, which has representation from many areas of the campus community: students, faculty, and staff.

The Pacers to the Polls movement has multiple areas of focus, including: emphasis on historically marginalized groups, promotion of the option to register locally, sharing information about when and where to vote, offering voter registration drives, working voter

registration into already established mediums, encouraging students to understand and research political stances, understanding the barriers to student voting and relieving as many as we can, and coordination of Election Day awareness through programming.

The Campus Voter Engagement Plan will take place over two academic years, as it begins in the Fall of 2020 and concludes following the Spring of 2022. The plan will be implemented by current leadership (see Leadership) and will likely expand over time to include new departments, individual staff and faculty members, as well as incoming students.



“Marywood University prepares students to seek sustainable solutions for the common good and educates global citizens to live responsibly in an interdependent world.”

-Marywood University Mission Statement

Voter engagement work at Marywood University is coordinated and executed primarily through the Office of Student Engagement and the Pacers to the Polls Task Force. The program is led by a committee that is composed of students, faculty, and staff. This group meets monthly to share ideas, collaborate on projects, and continue to work on breaking down voting barriers.

Students

Alexis Palys, Student Government President (undergraduate student)

Matthew Catanzaro, Student Government Representative (undergraduate student)

Carly Walker, Student Engagement Graduate Assistant (graduate student)

Faculty

Adam Shprintzen, Assistant Professor of Social Science

Chris Speicher, Associate Professor in the School of Business and Global Innovation

Staff

Michael Kalage, Director of Student Engagement

Ross Novak, Dean of Students

Sherry Frable, Public Relations Specialist

Patrick Cowley, Assessment Coordination & Communication Specialist

Jay Monahan, Assistant Director of Sports Information

Yerodin Lucas, Director of Institutional Equity & Inclusion and Title IX Coordinator

Haleigh Zurek, Assistant Director of Campus Programming

Commitment + Landscape

Presidential Commitment

Sr. Mary Persico, the president of Marywood University, has committed her leadership and support to the Pacers to the Polls movement. She commits to aiding the committee with fully engaging students in all elections and voting related learning opportunities. This signed agreement makes a statement that Sr. Mary Persico is dedicated to full student voter participation, and, by making this visible, encourages the campus community to commit themselves to democratic engagement.



“The All In Challenge encourages college campuses across the nation to help students form habits of active and informed citizenship and establish democratic participation on their campus. Now more than ever it is vital for young people to take part in their civic duties and vote! By joining this challenge, Marywood University has committed to inform the students on our campus why participation in our democracy is so important and how our vote counts. We hope to provide information sessions and other events and resources for students to gain more awareness so they no longer wonder, “Does my vote matter?” By working together we can create a more democratically engaged community, empowering our students to achieve their full potential just as our core values state.”

-Sr. Mary Persico, *President, Marywood University*

-Alexis Palys, *President, Marywood University Student Government Association*

Landscape

Marywood University Guidelines for Political Activities

Marywood University encourages students, faculty and staff to be politically active, recognizing that political activity is an important expression of citizenship. The University supports and encourages the free exchange of ideas related to all issues and individuals' decisions to support causes and candidates of their choosing.

As a tax-exempt, charitable institution, however, the University is subject to the relevant rules and regulations of the Internal Revenue Code that prohibit universities from participating in any political campaign or partisan political activity. Related Federal Election Commission regulations also place other limitations on political activity at educational institutions.

Political Candidates and Campaigns

Students, faculty and staff are free to express their individual and collective political views, so long as it is clear they do not speak or write for or in the name of Marywood University. A registered student organization may not endorse a particular candidate and neither the University's name nor logo may appear on any materials used for or intended to

support a particular candidate or campaign. Political programs on campus may be sponsored only by an individual, organization or department from the University community. Any campus appearance of a candidate for political office must be only for an educational or informational purpose. The event must not be conducted as a campaign rally and the moderator should indicate clearly that neither the sponsoring University entity nor the University supports or opposes the candidate(s).

During such programs, representatives of political parties may distribute materials directly related to the issues being discussed, but individual political candidates may not be promoted. Program planners must ensure that all sides of a dialog have equal opportunity for presentation and discussion during the same event. Campaign solicitations and campaign fundraising activities may not be held on University property. This prohibition extends to the posting or transmission of campaign materials by or through any University communication network.

Funds for political candidates or campaigns may not be solicited in the name of the University or on the campus. Members of the community are

encouraged to participate in programs that enable students to register to vote. The Dean of Students provides information on voter registration and the process to conduct such drives.

Use of University Facilities and Resources

University facilities and resources may not be used by or on behalf of an outside organization or individual whose purpose is to further the cause of a particular candidate or political party. University communications systems, including but not limited to phone, internet, e-mail and campus mail may not be used to support or oppose a particular political candidate and no University funds may be used to support any politically partisan activity, including services or materials. If a program will include candidates for public office and/or current or former or group; materials that support a particular candidate or a single side of an issue are not permissible and may not be posted.

political office holders, the program organizers should notify the Marketing and Communications Office well in advance of the program.

Related Policies

All activities and events which meet the above criteria also are subject to the policies and regulations related to hosting speakers, scheduling events, posting materials and other event logistics. Advertisements for such educational, political programs on campus must comply with the posters/fliers/signage policy published in the student clubs/organizations handbook. The Director of Student Engagement or his/her designee must review and approve such materials prior to posting. Promotional materials must include a program description and contact information of the sponsoring individual.

The NSLVE Report

The NSLVE Report

Marywood University has requested a copy of the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE). The Pacers to the Polls Task Force is hoping to gain the following information, in order to develop adequate and achievable goals: voter registration statistics, information about voter education, as well as voter turnout statistics. Once this information is released, we aim to make our goals specific, measureable, achievable, relative, timely, inclusive, and equitable.

For this purpose, the Pacers to the Polls committee will make projections based on the National 2012-2016 National NSLVE Report.

Insert Marywood NSLVE data once received

Focus Areas

- Achieve voter registration rate **80%** in 2020
 - In 2018, national student registration rate for private 4 year colleges was 76.4%
- Aim to increase voter registration by **2%** every 2 years
- Achieve voter participation rate **60%** in 2020
 - In 2018, the national student turn out of registered students at private, 4 year colleges was 51.6%
- Enhance resources to ensure students make informed choices on Election Day
- Assess barriers to student voting and remove when possible

Programming

- Work with faculty and staff to host a deliberative dialog series
- Promote and host a speaker series featuring local politicians (with a focus on major issues)
- Emphasize virtual programming in light of COVID-19
- Host a campus wide event for National Voter Registration Day
- Promote and host debate watch parties
- Work with Chartwells to decorate Nazareth Dining Hall for Election Day
- Cancel classes on Election Day, in combination with Advocacy Day

- Pacers to the Polls had hoped to host events surrounding empowering women/100th anniversary of women's suffrage/former Sisters/March but sadly was unable to do so in the midst of COVID19. Events that shine light on historically marginalized groups will be pursued in the future
 - Women's History Month -
 - Scranton Mayor, League of Women Voters
 - Talk of the University / Local Women in Politics event

- Pacers to the Polls will adopt resolutions from all Senates & SGA to cancel classes
 - Gain Cabinet support
 - Introduce to Policy Committee
 - Introduce to Strategic Planning Committee
 - Presidential and Board of Trustees Involvement

- The following student groups will hold their own involvement programs: SGA, MCC, History Society, SAGA, Environmental club, SVA, GSC, Honors Program, Greek orgs, NSLS, SAAC

- Pacers to the Polls will incentivize attendance at educational events
 - Sign in/prove attendance for bonus points, etc

Social Media

- Marywood's President and Student Government Association President will send out a campus wide email regarding the importance of voting
- Organize a campus wide pledge to vote campaign

- Create a Social Media Campaign for National Voter Registration Day

- Do a student social media take out with voter registration content
- Student Government Association will host a social media campaign to encourage students to register to vote
 - “I voted” stickers/hashtag to gain popularity
 - “How to” cheat sheets for registering, finding your polling place handouts for events and social media posts
- Dean of Students, Ross Novak, sends out an email at the beginning of each semester containing information about: voter registration, polling places, absentee ballots, and more.

Voter Education

- Inform students of their home state voting laws, with a particular focus on Pennsylvania’s voting laws
- Offer one educational session per semester, that introduces students to the current issues, as well as voter registration, absentee ballots, polling places, and laws
- Create and print flyers to post around campus about upcoming elections
- Offer support to help those with barriers to voting
- Emphasize the opportunity to work as a poll worker, with the possibility of a poll location at Marywood due to COVID-19
- Can/can’t sheet to any student groups participating in these programs/hosting their own programs
- Promote free ride options to voting places to students
- Provide links and resources to help with voter registration will be available on the following: Moodle, the Marywood app, our website, social media, This Week at Marywood
- Dean of Students, Ross Novak, sends out an email at the beginning of each semester containing information about: voter registration, polling places, absentee ballots, and more.

Constitution Day

Constitution Day programming is hosted out of the Social Sciences Department at Marywood University. Typically, the program has fallen into the hands of Assistant

Professor of History and Honors Program Director, Adam Shprintzen, Ph.D. In the past, programming surrounding Constitution Day has been as simple as handing out a quiz in all History courses. Since then, the events have transformed into guest lectures, trivia nights, and voter registration drives. Marywood University abides by the PATRIOT Act, which was passed shortly following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. To remain eligible for Title IV funding, Higher Education Institutions must offer educational programs annually on September 17th, Constitution Day.

Voter Registration

Voter Registration Drive take place at both of the annual Involvement Fairs. Voting fact sheets are distributed, with information including: how to register to vote, how to vote once registered, etc. This information is aimed at students specifically living in PA, but also includes information about registering and voting in other states.

Pacers to the Polls will host continuous voter registration social media campaign due to COVID-19.

- Incorporate voter registration information on the Marywood University app
- Incorporate voter registration information at popular, yet unrelated, events on campus
- Incorporate voter registration at New Student Orientation and Transfer Orientation
- Have student-driven efforts to register voters in the Scranton community
- Twice a year, the Office of Student Engagement will have a Voter Registration table at the highly attended Involvement Fair
 - Fast facts/misperceptions handouts will be available
- Student Engagement will add voter registration links to SGA ballots, MAC applications, NSLS applications, etc.
- Student Engagement will email all club leaders with voter registration information and the option to host their own events
- Census 2020 involvement
 - Social media campaign
 - Email to students from Ross Novak, Dean of Students

Reporting

We will be sharing the report to both internal and external outlets, such as:

- Marywood University's Outcomes Assessment Committee
- The Wood Word (Marywood University's newspaper)
- Local media (FOX56, WNEP, Times Leader)
- The Marywood University website

Evaluation

| GOAL | MEASURE |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Achieve voter registration rate 80% in 2020 | Assess data based on the NSLVE report |
| Aim to increase voter registration by 2% every 2 years | Assess data based on the NSLVE report |
| Achieve voter participation rate 60% in 2020 | Assess data based on the NSLVE report |
| Enhance resources to ensure students make informed choices on Election Day | Student-driven assessment to determine satisfaction and satisfaction with resources |
| Access barriers to student voting and remove when possible | Student-driven assessment to determine barriers and evaluation of NSLVE report to determine if our efforts are effective |