

# ACTION PLAN 2020



## ALL IN CAMPUS DEMOCRACY CHALLENGE

**BW**  
BALDWIN  
WALLACE  
UNIVERSITY

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Baldwin Wallace University is an academic community committed to the liberal arts and sciences as the foundation for lifelong learning.

The University fulfills this mission through a rigorous academic program that is characterized by excellence in teaching and learning within a challenging, supportive environment that enhances students' intellectual and spiritual growth.

Baldwin Wallace assists students in their preparation to become contributing, compassionate citizens of an increasingly global society and encourages their pursuit of personal and professional excellence.

## BACKGROUND

Located in Berea, Ohio, Baldwin Wallace University is an independent, liberal arts & sciences university located in Berea, Ohio, offering bachelor's and master's degrees, certificates and professional education programs.

Informed by results of its 2014 participant and student leader surveys based on the Civic Minded Graduate, which indicated that both student leaders and participants (volunteers) were less motivated to follow politics and participate in elections than other forms of community engagement, the David & Frances Brain Center for Community Engagement (Brain Center) sought ways to engage students in working toward increasing participation in 2015. Brain Center supported the development of Jackets Engaged, a student leadership team focused on non-partisan political engagement, including voter registration and voter education. Jackets Engaged has conducted voter registration and voter education activities year-round since their formation.

Brain Center and Jackets Engaged collaborated with #BWWOTES, a voter registration initiative by students, faculty and staff in the Conservatory of Music in 2018. Together these groups answered the call to join the ALL-IN Campus Democracy Challenge during Fall Semester of 2019 with the support of BW's President and administration.

## 2020 ACTION PLAN

The 2020 Action Plan was developed by Julie Robinson, Associate Director of Community Engagement; Danielle Lykins, Conservatory Admissions Office Manager; and Dr. Zarina Melik-Stepanova, Conservatory Faculty, with input from students, faculty and staff.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Data from the 2016 and 2018 National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), and a campus scan of current civic engagements efforts were utilized to develop the goals for 2020 through 2024. Brain Center will provide oversight for the plan, providing a yearly update on progress and opportunity for revision.

The Action Plan builds on Baldwin Wallace University's deep commitment to assist students in "becoming contributing compassionate citizens of an increasingly global society," long history of community engagement through the Brain Center, and more recent work in registration and education. In joining the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge and forming a Coalition for Democratic Engagement, BW formalizes its commitment to voter engagement and builds a stronger campus support network for this work. The purpose of this Action Plan is to identify short and long-term goals for increasing democratic engagement among BW students, and outline strategies for achieving them.



# LEADERSHIP

The primary responsibility for democratic engagement at BW falls under the Brain Center for Community Engagement, situated in the Division of Student Affairs. Brain Center's Associate Director, Julie Robinson, is tasked with advising Jackets Engaged, a student team focused on non-partisan political engagement. Building on the collaboration between Jackets Engaged and #BWVOTES during Fall Semester of 2018, #BWVOTES advisors Dr. Zarina Melik-Stepanova and Danielle Lykins worked with Ms. Robinson to convene a Campus Coalition during Fall Semester 2019. Ms. Lykins and Ms. Robinson will continue as Coalition chairs. The Coalition brings together a diverse set of stakeholders to contribute to the development and implementation of this action plan.

Student voices are central to these efforts, with involvement by Jackets Engaged, #BWVOTES, Student Government and the Honors Program. Outreach is underway to include student athletes, members of the fraternity and sorority life community, and multicultural student organizations. Faculty from the Honors Program, Philosophy Department and Department of Politics and Global Citizenship have pledged support, as have staff from Diversity Affairs and Student Affairs. Input for the action plan was collected via a team meeting in November 2019, individual conversations, and electronic communications.

The Coalition will meet once per semester starting in Fall Semester 2020. Members will support democratic engagement initiatives by promoting activities and campaigns throughout their campus networks and attending events when able.

## COALITION MEMBERS

Angela Dalipi, Honors Program & Jackets Engaged  
Avedis Escandon, #BWVOTES  
Cameron Monaghan, Jackets Engaged Student Director  
CJ Harkness, Chief Diversity Officer  
Cole Lopez, Student Government  
Julie Candela, Student Affairs  
Kelly Coble, Department of Philosophy Faculty  
Lauren Copeland, Department of Politics and Global Citizenship Faculty  
Margaret Stiner, Honors Program & English Faculty  
Mark Mattern, Department of Politics and Global Citizenship Faculty  
Stephen Tsambarlis, #BWVOTES  
Tom Sutton, Department of Politics and Global Citizenship Faculty

## CONVENERS

Danielle Lykins, Office Manager, Conservatory Admissions  
Julie Robinson, Associate Director, David & Frances Brain Center for Community Engagement  
Zarina Melik-Stepanova, PhD, Conservatory of Music

# COMMITMENT & LANDSCAPE

Baldwin Wallace has long been committed to diversity, inclusion and civic engagement. Education regardless of race, gender, creed and ability to pay were among the ideals of its founders. In 1845, more than 15 years before the Civil War, Baldwin Wallace was founded as one of the first colleges in the nation to admit students without regard to race or gender. Baldwin University's earliest classes included nearly as many women as men and students who could not afford an education were offered jobs to help cover the cost of tuition. Embedded in the University's mission is the statement, "Baldwin Wallace assists students in their preparation to become contributing, compassionate citizens of an increasingly global society." BW lives that mission and supports civic learning and engagement through curricular and co-curricular initiatives, examples of which are included below.

## CO-CURRICULUM

- The David & Frances Brain Center for Community Engagement (Brain Center) is housed in Student Affairs. Brain Center engages students in the community through co-curricular service, service-learning, philanthropy, voter education and engagement, non-profit internships and leadership training for social change. Brain Center serves as a connector and advocate for campus and community partnerships.
- Jackets Engaged: Political Engagement Team, a student team within the Brain Center has been conducting voter registration and education since 2015. The student director of this program serves as the University's Campus Election Engagement Project Fellow.
- #BWVOTES is a student organization in the establishment faze that grew out of the #BWVOTES campaign implemented by Conservatory of Music students, faculty and staff in 2018.
- The Center for Inclusion, led by the Chief Diversity Officer, Mr. Charles Harkness, "works to promote community, advance civility and cultural competence, and uphold standards of conduct."
- Student Government funded organizations focused on service to the community, including Rotaract and Circle K.



# COMMITMENT & LANDSCAPE

## CURRICULUM

- Approval of a civic engagement undergraduate learning outcome during fall of 2017, adapting the Association of American Colleges and Universities' (AAC&U) definition stating that "Civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individual participate in activities of persona and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community. They do this by cultivating knowledge, skills, and motivation to make that difference and promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and nonpolitical processes."
- Since adoption of civic engagement as an undergraduate learning outcome, the University Assessment Committee has adapted AAC&U's Civic Engagement Rubric and created a process whereby civic engagement may be selected as an outcome for CORE courses. To date, 8 courses within the CORE include civic engagement as a learning outcome. One of those courses is being assessed in regard to the outcome during fall of 2019. Those courses offered in the spring are slated to be assessed in May of 2020.
- 24 service-learning designated courses across all 7 schools (Supported by the Brain Center)
- Jacket Philanthropy Program, an academic service-learning program through which students provide direct service to local non-profits and award grant funding to organizations meeting immediate needs within the community. The program has engaged 735 students with more than 50 non-profit organizations, and awarded over \$185,000 in 11 years.
- Faculty Fellows provides a 2 1/2 day service-learning professional development immersion program for BW and faculty from other institutions in the region every other May.

## BW STRATEGIC PLAN

Two of three commitments made in the 2019-2023 strategic plan emphasize community engagement:

- Commitment to the student experience: "BW students build profound and connected leadership experiences through personal relationships that carry them throughout their entire lives to connect their learning with the needs of our global community."
- Commitment to business and community partners: "BW is the regional leader and is integral in developing workforce strength, organizational capacity, leadership, service, and is committed to supporting the core values of our business and community partners."

The explicitly stated commitment to civic learning and community engagement in the Baldwin Wallace mission statement and new strategic plan create fertile ground for more pervasive efforts around democratic engagement. The University President, Dr. Robert Helmer, and other key members of the administration have voiced support for BW to join the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. Joining ALL IN and establishing the Coalition are significant steps in bringing together efforts already in place (Jackets Engaged, #BWVOTES, etc.) and garnering broader support for democratic engagement campus wide.

## RESOURCES

In addition to staff time allotted for democratic engagement work, including advising of Jackets Engaged, Brain Center dedicates a portion of its operating budget to democratic engagement each year. Additionally, BW has received support from Campus Election Engagement Project through educational resources, funding for a CEEP Fellowship, and occasional CEEP grants.

# GOALS

## FOCUS

Baldwin Wallace University's voter engagement efforts will focus on three main areas for 2020:

- Increase voter turnout to 60% for the 2020 Presidential Election
- Increase voter registration and turnout for students who turn out at lower rates
- Provide resources to ensure students develop election information literacy.

## SHORT-TERM GOALS

- Increase the visibility of voter registration opportunities during Orientation and Week of Welcome
- Provide voter registration opportunities throughout campus during various events, such as sporting events, music performances, and every 3rd Tuesday at the Student Union.
- Develop targeted outreach campaigns to increase voter registration and turnout rates for groups with lower rates, including males and students in the physical and biological sciences
- Support the continued engagement of students from racial/ethnic minority groups through collaboration
- Provide easy access to non-partisan educational materials through the CIVIC CORNER and a strategic social media campaign
- Share voter engagement activities with First Year Experience instructors

## LONG-TERM GOALS

- Increase student voter participation by 10% by 2024
- Improve scores on NSSE related to civic engagement
- Continue to provide opportunities for voter registration year-round
- Enhance voter engagement programming pertaining to local elections
- Increase the number of total courses addressing the Civic Engagement student learning outcome

## OAC GOALS

- To recognize the OAC campus with the greatest increases in voter registration and voter turnout
- To recognize the highest overall registration and turnout rates
- To recognize the campus with the most unique voter engagement initiative
- To engage coaches and teams in voter engagement efforts

# ASSESSMENT & REPORTING

## ASSESSMENT

Currently, Baldwin Wallace University's main data sources to inform our understanding of students' civic learning and democratic engagement is the National Study of Voting, Learning and Engagement. Other sources that will inform this work in the future include the National Survey of Student Engagement Civic Engagement Module, which will be administered in Spring Semester of 2020; and the report from the Institutional Assessment Committee following the application of the Civic Engagement rubric to courses that include the civic engagement undergraduate learning outcome. Additionally, the Brain Center for Community Engagement will track number of registrations, attendance, and voter education materials distributed.

## NSLVE DATA

### Presidential Elections

- Voter registration rate up 5.2% in 2016 compared to 2012
- Voting rate down 1.2%
- Absentee voting rate = 3.4% increased by .4%
- Differences in voting rate by gender
  - Women 61.4%; 9% increase
  - Men 49.5%; 3.8% decrease
- 
- Differences in voting rates by Race/Ethnicity
  - Asian 32% increase
  - Hispanic 3.1% increase
  - White .8% decrease
  - Black 7.2% decrease
  - 2 or more races 2.8% increase

### Midterm Elections

- Voter registration rate up 9.1% in 2018 compared to 2014
- Voting rate up 28%
- Absentee voting rate = 21.4%, increased by 19.6%
- Voting rates increased among most
- Difference is voting rate by Gender
  - Women 44%; 26.1% increase
  - Men 36.6; 20.8% increase
- Racial/Ethnic categories with the greatest increase among Hispanic population
  - Asian n/a
  - Hispanic 29% increase
  - Black 22% increase
  - White 23.9% increase
  - 2 or more races 22.8% increase

## REPORTING

This plan and NSLVE reports will be provided on the the University's community engagement webpage. The Coalition will revisit the plan each year and provide updates on progress. Accomplishments will be shared with University Relations for press releases.

# STRATEGIES

A variety of voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote strategies will continue to be utilized at Baldwin Wallace University during 2020 and beyond to ensure progress toward our goals. It is likely that many of the in-person strategies will need to be modified due to the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 crisis. If in-person events are held, appropriate social distancing practices must be used. Otherwise, social media and virtual strategies will be implemented.

## **New Student Orientation**

Jackets Engaged typically hosts voter registration tables during summer orientation resources fairs and was planning to ramp up their orientation involvement by adding voter registration opportunities to more of the large-scale events during orientation. With orientation changing to a virtual format as a result of COVID-19, the team is contacting orientation staff to determine how voter registration can be offered during the virtual orientation.

## **Week of Welcome**

Jackets Engaged/#BW Votes will offer numerous opportunities for voter registration during Week of Welcome. Tabling will be utilized at a number of widely attended events if WOW is in-person. If done remotely due to COVID-19, the team will rely on social media and other electronic means for voter registration initiatives.

## **Debate Watch Parties**

Jackets Engaged will offer debate watch parties for the Presidential debates during Fall Semester 2020. These will be held via video-chat if gathering in person is not safe.

## **Voter Registration/Education Tables**

Prior to COVID-19, weekly voter registration and education tables were planned for Fall Semester leading up to the Presidential Election. It is unlikely that these will be held, but the team will re-institute voter registration tabling when possible.

## **Voter Registration/Education Tables at Campus Events**

The Coalition will capitalize on opportunities to offer voter registration and educational resources at already scheduled events (if they are held) including the Student Involvement Fair, Bold & Gold Festival, Saturday of Service, Music Theatre productions, Social Change Summit, MLK Week Celebration, and the Bach Festival Run and Picnic.



# STRATEGIES

## #BWVOTES Event

#BWVOTES held a large concert to register students to vote and offer voter education materials during Fall Semester 2018.. A similar event is tentatively scheduled for September 25, 2020..

## Class Presentations

Jackets Engaged offers voter education/registration presentations for First-Year Experience and other courses each year. Outreach to faculty will occur in this summer. A video presentation will be created in the event that in-person presentations are not feasible.

## Brain Student Fellowship

This year-long civic leadership program resumes for 2020-2021 after a one year hiatus. The program's mission is "student leaders addressing today's most complex and challenging social issues, while working to educate and empower the community to take action."

## BW's 5th Annual Social Change Summit

In the spirit and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr, this conference-style event brings together BW students from across campus to explore issues, assets and opportunities to put ideas into action for social change. During this full-day experience participants have the opportunity to examine their own personal beliefs and commitments related to social justice, learn from community leaders, explore creative approaches to social change and connect with fellow BW students around ideas for action.

## Civic Corner

Ritter Library purchased a Civic Education Corner (see photo) to provide easy access to voter registration and educational materials in the Student Union. Jackets Engaged will stock the Corner with relevant materials.

## OAC Votes

BW has committed to the OAC (Ohio Athletic Conference) Votes challenge. Julie Robinson represents BW on this committee. She will share updates with the Coalition and seek input as this initiative develops. Outreach to the Athletic Department and coaches will occur during Summer Semester 2020.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Jackets Engaged will develop graphics to be shared via social media and campus digital displays to advertise many of the events above, remind the campus community about important deadlines, and provide educational resources. Additionally, campaigns will be launched in celebration of **National Voter Registration Day** and **Vote Early Day**.

