



Campus Vote Report 2020-2021



POINT OF CONTACT:

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COMMITMENT:

Mount St. Joseph University (the Mount) champions election engagement because it complements our mission of "educating students through interdisciplinary liberal arts and professional curricula emphasizing values, integrity and social responsibility." At the Mount, we are known for having strong community service, service learning, and student philanthropy programs; this is reflected in our inclusion in the President's Community Service Honor Roll in 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, and 2015. While service to others is one of our core values, and while service is an important component of what it means to be a responsible citizen, participation in the democratic process is also a cornerstone of what it means to be a responsible citizen. Since beginning our democracy program in 2015, we have significantly increased our student voter registration and our student voting rates. By continuing to strengthen our democracy program, students will be more likely to develop across the engaged citizenship continuum, moving from personally responsible citizenship to participatory citizenship and then to transformative citizenship. Because of our success with turning students into student voters, NASPA designated Mount St. Joseph University as a Voter Friendly Campus in 2017-2018 and 2019-2020. Additionally, the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge recognized the Mount with the Silver Seal for our student voting rate in 2016 and the Gold Seal for our student voting rate in 2018. We were also included in Washington Monthly's Best Colleges for Student Voting in 2018, 2019, and 2020. In 2020, Washington Monthly ranked Mount St. Joseph University as the 12th Best College for Student Voting in the United States.



ELECTION ENGAGEMENT COALITION:

The following individuals and organizations helped to facilitate the democracy program at Mount St. Joseph University in the spring and fall of 2020:

Chair:

- Keith Lanser, Associate Director of Service Learning & Civic Engagement

Faculty:

- Dr. Pete Robinson, Professor of History
- Dr. Jennifer Morris, Professor of History
- Dr. Georgana Taggart, Professor of Legal Studies
- Dr. Jennifer Withrow, Assistant Professor of Social Work
- Roxana Hawkins, Assistant Professor of Social Work
- Dr. Richard Simon, Assistant Professor of Sociology
- Dr. Jim Bodle, Professor of Psychology
- Dr. BC Charles Liscombe, Associate Professor of Exercise Science & Integrative Health
- Cindy Shibinski, Faculty Instructor of Special Education

Staff:

- Dr. Rayshawn Eastman, Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer/Title IX Coordinator
- Janet Cox, Dean of Students
- Amy Demko, Health Services Manager
- Jeff Hurley, Coordinator of Residence Life
- S. Karen Elliott, C.P.P.S, D. Min., Director of Mission Integration
- Michelle Arnold, Assistant Director of Mission Integration
- Nicole Rottmueller-Jones, Career Development Coordinator
- Linda Pohlgeers, Director of The Career & Experiential Education Center
- Michael Heckmann, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations
- Amanda Gratsch, Web Services & Technology Coordinator
- Jon Moore, Digital Marketing & Social Media Manager
- Scott Lloyd, Director of Library Services

Students:

- Jaleah Fair-Harris- Democracy Fellow
- Ben Stanton- Democracy Fellow
- Sarah Teuschl- Graphic Design Co-op
- Tiffany Manning- Career Center Co-op

Community Partners:

- Campus Vote Project
- League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area
- Hamilton County Board of Elections

The Service Learning & Civic Engagement Office in the Career & Experiential Education Center served as the backbone office for this project, providing leadership for strategic planning, project coordination, and program evaluation. Our student Democracy Fellows facilitated a variety of the programs and services offered through our democracy program. Democracy Fellows were supervised by the Associate Director of Service Learning & Civic Engagement, who chaired the Election Engagement Coalition.

STUDENT VOTING DATA (FROM NSLVE):

Since beginning our democracy program in 2015, we have significantly increased our student voter registration and student voting rates over time:

Year	Student Voter Registration Rate	Rate of Registered Students Who Voted	Student Voting Rate
2012	80.4%	77.2%	62%
2014	75.8%	33.9%	25.7%
2016	85.7% (+5.3% over 2012)	76% (-1.2% over 2012)	65.2% (+3.2% over 2012)
2018	83.9% (+8.1% over 2014)	54% (+20.1% over 2014)	45.3% (+19.6% over 2014)

GOALS FOR 2020-2021:

We have three primary goals for 2020-2021:

1. Increase our student voter registration rate in 2020 to 90% (a 4.3% increase over 2016), as seen in the 2020 NSLVE report for Mount St. Joseph University.
2. Increase our overall student voting rate in 2020 to 70% (a 4.8% increase over 2016), as seen in the 2020 NSLVE report for Mount St. Joseph University.
3. Increase student voting rates to 50% for the following majors, as outlined by the 2020 NSLVE report for Mount St. Joseph University: communication & journalism, parks/ recreation/ leisure/ fitness studies, and visual & performing arts.



Moderated by Dr. Rayshawn Eastman and Dr. Richard Simon

09/10/2020 | 12:15PM-1:15PM

Zoom meeting ID: 963 9256 4797

Join the conversation on this important and timely subject. All students, faculty, and staff are invited.

ANALYSIS OF WORK:

Activities	Strategies	Outputs/ Outcomes	Lessons Learned
Voter registration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hired two Democracy Fellows to assist with voter registration and other programs. 2. Facilitated voter registration during all in-person orientations and via in-class voter registration drives during the first two weeks of class. 3. Facilitated voter registration events like: Spring Voter Registration Day, National Voter Registration Day, Last Minute Voter Registration Day, and the Dorm Storm Voter Registration Drives. 4. Disseminated campus-wide email reminders on voter registration. 5. Updated voter registration information on MSJ's external website and MSJ's internal website. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successfully hired two Democracy Fellows. 2. 162 voter registrations were submitted in 2020 (+12.5% over 2016). 3. 18 campus-wide email voter registration reminders were sent in 2020. 4. Voter registration information was updated on both the MSJ external website and the MSJ internal website. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not all incoming freshmen attended orientation due to the pandemic. 2. When we did in-class voter registration drives, students registered to vote online, which meant that we could not track that data.
Voter education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distributed the League of Women Voters of Cincinnati's nonpartisan voter guides (at the campus library and over email). 2. Facilitated the Cincinnati Politics Challenge. 3. Co-facilitated the Campus Vote Project's Southern Ohio Student Democracy Summit. 4. Took HON 263 to Washington DC to experience the richness of American history. 5. Celebrated Constitution Day. 6. Facilitated Virtual Presidential Debate Watch Parties. 7. Facilitated Social Justice Forums. 8. Promoted the Ohio Student Voter Summit. 9. Promoted the Campus Compact Regional Conversation Series. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disseminated 100 copies of the League of Women Voters' primary election voter guide and 50 copies of their general election voter guide. Sent out three campus-wide emails about the League of Women Voters' primary election voter guide and two campus-wide emails about their general election guide. 2. Approx. 30 people participated in the Cincinnati Politics Challenge. 3. Approx. 15 people attended the Campus Vote Project's Southern Ohio Student Voter Summit. 4. Five students participated in the HON 263 trip to Washington DC. 5. Approx. 25 people attended Constitution Day. 6. 57 people attended our three Virtual Debate Watch Parties. 7. 126 people attended our four Social Justice Forums. 8. Approx. 12 people attended the Ohio Student Voter Summit. 9. 10 members of the Mount community participated in the Campus Compact Regional Conversation Series. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We did not need as many physical copies of the voter guide in the fall due to the pandemic. 2. We believe more people attended our virtual debate watch parties because of the virtual format; if we had hosted them in-person, we believe we would have had fewer attendees. 3. Our students wanted to talk about social justice issues that directly affected their lives. We were surprised about some of the topics that they chose to discuss.
Ballot access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MSJ served as a polling location for the first time during a presidential election. 2. Provided proof of residency letters for students who 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MSJ successfully served as a polling location for the first time during a presidential election. 2. Provided 26 proof of residency letters for students who live on campus. 3. We added the following on our internal website: information about absentee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students had dramatically more interest in voting absentee this year due to the pandemic.

	<p>registered to vote using their dorm address.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted students with voter registration checks, polling location checks, absentee ballot requests, and absentee ballot checks. Disseminated campus-wide email reminders about absentee voting, voting plans, and recruiting poll workers. 	<p>voting, how to identify your polling location, information on voter ID requirements, and how to look up sample ballots.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Completed 65 voter registration checks, two polling location checks, 36 absentee ballot requests, and seven absentee ballot checks. Disseminated five campus-wide emails about absentee voting during spring primary election, three campus-wide email reminders about making fall voting plans, and one campus-wide poll worker recruitment email. 	
Voter turnout	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated "Why Are You Voting in the Primary?" tabling events. Disseminated campus-wide email reminder about the general election. Promoted key election dates in print marketing and online. Facilitated a "Why Are You Voting This November?" social media campaign. Facilitated a social media takeover in partnership with the marketing department. Wrote grants to help purchase VOTE masks and VOTE t-shirts for MSJ students. Facilitated a March to the Polls on Election Day. Our democracy program was featured in national, regional, and local news stories. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 75 people participated in the "Why Are You Voting in the Primary?" tabling events. Disseminated one campus-wide email reminder the day before the Primary election in Ohio, and disseminated one campus-wide email reminder the day before the general election. Added democracy program calendars for September and October to the democracy program page on our internal website. Posted five "Why Are You Voting This November?" videos to the Career Center's Facebook page, featuring 19 MSJ students/ faculty/ staff. Successfully facilitated a social media takeover in partnership with the marketing department. Secured \$1000 grant from Campus Vote Project to purchase 250 VOTE masks and 40 VOTE t-shirts. Three students marched together to the polling location on campus on Election Day. Our democracy program was featured nine times in national, regional, and local news stories. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students responded well to our event giveaways; they drove attendance up at our voter education events. It was hard to maintain an October calendar because of the changes to the debate schedule. Collaboration with other student organizations on campus also helped to increase student participation at our events and they helped us to distribute our VOTE masks and VOTE t-shirts. Because we are a heavily commuter campus/ because students voted early, our March to the Polls was not very well attended. We are becoming a national authority on voter engagement. We had very relatable stories that viewers/ readers cared about.

Top Successes:

- We were surprised by how much media attention that our democracy program received this year. This fall Washington Monthly ranked the Mount 12th in the country in their "Best Colleges for Student Voting" list. Spectrum News 1 Ohio ran four stories across Ohio this fall where they tracked our democracy fellow, Jaleah Fair-Harris, as she educated herself on the issues and casted her ballot in her first presidential election. Our democracy program was also featured in a story by WCPO, two stories by WKRC, and one story by Northern Kentucky University. We believe we were successful in garnering media attention because we are becoming a national leader in election engagement and because we had very relatable stories to tell.
- Our voter education activities and events were very well attended this year, particularly our Virtual Presidential Debate Watch Parties and our Social Justice Forums. We believe that more students attended these events because of the virtual format; it allowed them to connect to the event whether they were on campus or at home. We might consider facilitating similar events virtually in the future to ensure equitable access to democracy program events.

3. Providing students multiple opportunities and formats to become registered to vote was successful in increasing student voter registrations compared to the registrations from 2016 (+12.5%). Embedding voter registration into student orientations is the most effective way to register students to vote. Voter registration events like National Voter Registration Day and digital voter registration communications provided students who did not attend orientation the opportunity to become registered to vote.

Top Barriers:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic was the obvious barrier to success during this election cycle. We were hoping to facilitate a variety of in-person events and to have more voter engagement within our courses this fall, but we were unable to do so because of limitations presented by the pandemic. However, we were able to shift our voter education focus more towards virtual co-curricular experiences, which were very successful.
2. Voter registration this fall was more difficult than usual in large part because not all of our incoming freshmen attended orientations due to the pandemic. Voter registrations were also more difficult to track this fall because we believe some students used our voter registration email reminders and in-class voter registration drives to register to vote online.
3. The current climate of political polarization in our community caused us to worry about backlash and incivility. We decided to change the name of our voter engagement program from democratic engagement program to democracy program to prevent the perception that the University could be endorsing political candidates and parties. Moreover, one of the topics of one of the Social Justice Forums was LGBTQ+ Issues. We were worried about trolling and censorship during this particular forum, but that did not occur to the best of our knowledge.

Beyond 2020:

Mount St. Joseph University will maintain its commitment to turning students into student voters because we believe it strengthens our mission of “educating students through interdisciplinary liberal arts and professional curricula emphasizing values, integrity and social responsibility.” Moving forward, we hope to continue using NSLVE data to increase our student voting rates in majors with lower voter turnout. We also hope to identify new ways to engage with graduate students, as our current democracy program is heavily focused on undergraduate students. Finally, we intend to continue facilitating Social Justice Forums because they provide safe spaces for folks in our campus community to engage in meaningful dialogue about issues that our students truly care about.

NSLVE Data:

When we receive our NSLVE data for the 2020 general election, we will be looking for the following:

1. Our 2020 student voter registration rate. We hope to continue the success our democracy program has had with getting students registered to vote. Our goal for the 2020 election was to increase student voter registration by 4.3% over 2016. Our student voter registration rate increased by 8% between 2014 and 2018, so it is possible that we could see an increase of higher than 4.3%.
2. Our 2020 student voting rate. We aim to continue the success we have had with turning out student voters as well. Our goal for the 2020 election was to increase student voting by 4.8% over 2016. That said, we saw a 19% increase to student voting from 2014 to 2018, so it is possible that we could see a double-digit increase in student voting between 2016 and 2020.
3. Our student voting rate by field of study. We hope to see an increase in voter participation from students in the following majors: communication & journalism, parks/ recreation/ leisure/

fitness studies, and visual & performing arts. We hope that the voter education events that we facilitated will help to increase those numbers.

Mount St. Joseph University's Democracy Program stories from 2020:

- “Best Colleges for Student Voting”, Washington Monthly:
<https://washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/september-october-2020/americas-best-colleges-for-student-voting-2/>
- “How Mount St. Joseph University succeeds at turning students into voters”, WCPO:
<https://www.wcpo.com/news/education/higher-education/how-mount-st-joseph-university-succeeds-at-turning-students-into-voters>
- “College Students Face Challenges with Registering to Vote”, Spectrum News 1 Ohio:
<https://spectrumnews1.com/oh/cincinnati/news/2020/09/23/college-students-face-challenges-with-registering-to-vote>
- “Mount St. Joseph University encourages civic health”, WKRC:
<https://local12.com/health/health-updates/mount-st-joseph-university-encourages-civic-health>
- “What’s Happening in Health: September 27, 2020”, WKRC: <https://local12.com/health/whats-happening-in-health/whats-happening-in-health-september-27-2020-wkrc-cincinnati-liz-bonis-coronavirus-pregnancy-blood-pressure-cane-challenge-flu-halloween-knee-addiction>
- “First-Time Voters Weigh In On Debate”, Spectrum News 1 Ohio:
<https://spectrumnews1.com/oh/columbus/news/2020/09/30/first-time-voters-weigh-in-on-debate>
- “College Student Votes for the First Time”, Spectrum News 1 Ohio:
<https://spectrumnews1.com/oh/columbus/news/2020/11/03/college-student-votes-for-the-first-time>
- “Flynn’s Corner: A Conversation with Keith Lanser”, NKU Magazine:
<https://inside.nku.edu/nkumagazine/2020/October/keithlanser.html>
- “College Students React to the Election Results”, Spectrum News 1 Ohio:
<https://spectrumnews1.com/oh/dayton/news/2020/11/09/college-students-react-to-election-results>



**Southern Ohio
Student Voter
Summit**



**HON 263's Trip to
Washington DC**

Lions Vote!



Register to Vote in Ohio:



Register to Vote in Kentucky:



Register to Vote in Indiana:



Register to Vote in other States:



Questions?

Email keith.lanser@msj.edu
or call 513 244-4634

A Celebration of Constitution Day

Celebrating a Century!

VO+E

"Not for Ourselves Alone"
The 19th Amendment & the Empowering of Democracy

September 22
12:15pm-1:15pm

Via Zoom
ID: 987 8759 9588
Password: 406676

Questions? Contact Keith Lanser at Keith.Lanser@msj.edu or (513)244-4634

**Constitution Day:
"Not for Ourselves
Alone"**



COVID-19 and Health Care Access

Moderated by Dr. BC Charles-Liscombe
and Amy Demko

Oct 5, 12:00PM, Via Zoom

Zoom meeting ID: 972 1427 2155



**Social Justice
Forum:
COVID-19 and Health
Care Access**

**Vice Presidential
Debate Watch Party**

Vice Presidential Debate Watch Party

Vice President Mike Pence vs. Kamala Harris

October 7, 2020
9:00pm–10:45pm

Join us via Zoom!
ID: 950 4772 4721

Questions? Contact keith.janser@msj.edu
Jaleah.Fair-Harris@msj.edu



March to the Polls