



Missouri State University Voter Education Initiative

Paws to the Polls

pawstothepolls@missouristate.edu

<https://www.missouristate.edu/ADP/paws-to-the-polls.htm>

WHO ARE WE, AND WHAT ARE OUR GOALS?

Paws to the Polls is a nonpartisan grassroots campus initiative dedicated to increasing voter engagement and voting knowledge at Missouri State University. Designed specifically for MSU with its grizzly bear mascot and its public affairs mission, our aim is to weave civic engagement into the fabric of the university. Students learn the relevance of civic engagement and how it embodies MSU's public affairs mission.

THE THREE ARMS OF PAWS TO THE POLLS



Our approach is multi-faceted and broad; we implement students' innovative ideas about how to energize and engage their peers. We strive to facilitate students' understanding of how voting relates to their lives, familiarize them with the voting process, and increase awareness of unbiased sources of political information.

The three main arms of Paws to the Polls are:

~ **EDUCATION**

~ **OUTREACH**

~ **VOTER SUPPORT**

EDUCATION

Voter Education Modules

Used in the Freshman Foundations class, the interactive modules foster critical thinking skills in relation to civic engagement. They personalize and familiarize the voting process, show how to avoid misinformation and bias, locate legislators, examine sample ballots, and learn legislators' positions on issues.

Voter Information Booklet

Updated each semester, our booklet includes information on registering to vote and voting, as well as nonpartisan sources of political information.

Educational Videos

- Paws to the Polls: Finding Your Voice - PTP students discuss the importance of voting and its role in MSU's public affairs mission
- Paws at the Polls: Casting Your Vote - Voting process, filmed at the Greene County Election Center

Watch videos: <https://www.missouristate.edu/ADP/paws-to-the-polls.htm>



OUTREACH



Classroom and Group Visits

We provide presentations of various lengths, in-person or via Zoom. The main goals are to convey voting-related information and raise awareness of Paws to the Polls as a campus voting resource.

Tabling, Voter Registration Drives, & Other Activities

- Tabling throughout academic year
- Athletic team registration
- Trivia Night
- Voter simulation activity for classes, campus organizations, and residence halls
- Voter Awareness Week
- Social media contests



Interactions with Legislators



Members follow legislation and connect with local legislators by inviting them to discuss current issues. We travel to Jefferson City to advocate for expanding voter access for college students.

VOTER SUPPORT

We partner with MSU's Office of Public Affairs Support to meet with students, respond to email inquiries, assist with voting access, keep abreast of voting regulations and legislation, and serve as a liaison between students and the Greene County Clerk's Office.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

League of Women Voters of Southwest Missouri



Greene County Clerk's Office
Shane Schoeller, County Clerk



DEMONSTRATED SUCCESS

Building on the foundation provided by MSU's Office of Public Affairs Support, our collaborative efforts to provide quality, non-biased and peer-to-peer voter education was recognized by the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge with a Silver Seal for increased student voting rate in the 2020 election.

Freshman Foundation Class pre- and post-test results demonstrate a marked increase in student knowledge of voting-related topics and their perception of the importance of voting.



Missouri State
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