

DEVELOPING A CIVIC IDENTITY¹

PURPOSE²: This two-part mapping exercise is intended to help you develop a civic mindset in project work, in your major, in your career, and in your life.

Learning Outcomes

LO1: Articulate one's own civic identity and pathways for engagement

LO1c: Explore approaching a career with a civic mindset

LO1d: Identify variety of ways to be civically engaged

Before you begin, refresh yourself on what it means to be civically engaged (*definition below*), and the continuum of ways to be civically engaged (*see figure 1*). Being civically engaged will look different for each of us. It depends on where we live, our interests, our skillsets, our social tolerance, and our priorities. However, we should all *be civically engaged* in some capacity. Contemplate what your civic identity might look like using the prompts in Part I, below.

Civic Engagement: how an individual participates in and contributes to their community (personal/professional) with the goal of facilitating positive change in a collaborative manner.

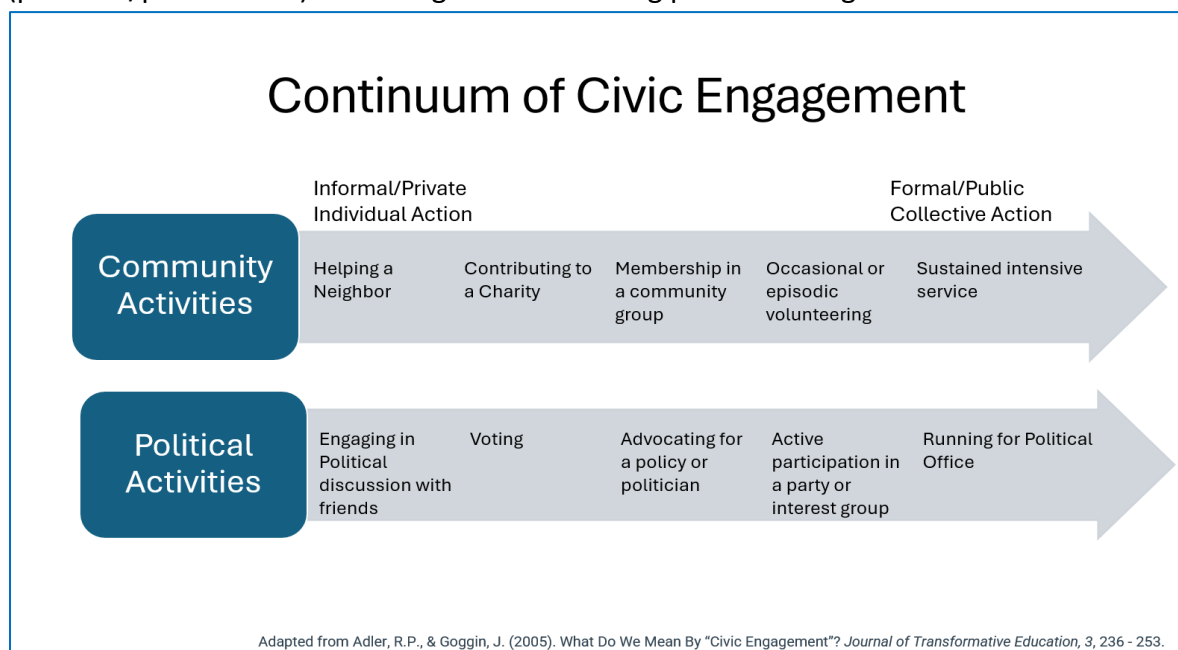


Figure 1: Continuum of Civic Engagement Activities

¹ Loosely adapted from Facing History & Ourselves, "**Civic Self-Portrait**".

² This exercise should be completed *after* an introduction (via reading or in-class lecture/discussion) to civic and democratic engagement

INSTRUCTIONS

PART I (For homework):

To begin, **individually**, complete part I of this exercise. No need to use full sentences, simply share your reaction to the prompts below in outline form. Denote which section you are answering by using the box labels.

PART II (Complete in-class):

Complete part II as a group. No need to use full sentences. Discuss each prompt with your group, share where you collectively land on how you might approach your project in a civically/democratically engaged manner.

- I. **HOMEWORK:** contemplate *your civic identity* by answering the questions in the boxes below. As you fill in the boxes with your thoughts, consider how your answers might influence your personal and professional path/behavior.

HEAD (critical thinking)

What topics have I learned about (at WPI, within Worcester, within Massachusetts, within my hometown, within the country, and/or globally) that have made me question how things function in society?

EYES (thoughtful observation & awareness)

What have I read, viewed, or observed that influences my understanding, behavior and interest in my community (local, state, national, global)?

EARS (thoughtful listening)

Who has influenced or offered me guidance on: how/when/where I should be civically engaged?

HEART (internal assessment)³

What topics/issues am I passionate about? What is my personal/professional WHY?
What is my civic responsibility?

MOUTH (thoughtful speaking)

How do I feel most comfortable using my voice for my community and the environment within my personal and/or professional life?

HANDS (planning)

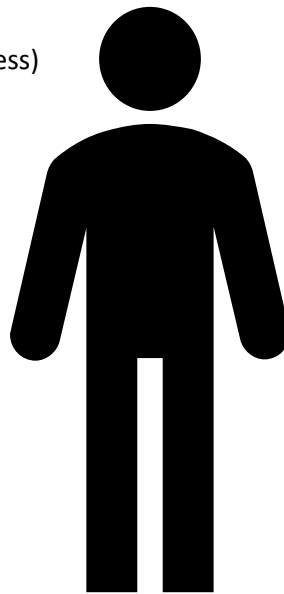
What can I do within my personal and professional path that benefits the common good?

STOMACH (internal assessment)

What is my gut reaction to getting involved in my community (broadly defined)? (NOTE: It is ok if your first instinct is to be anxious or fearful to get involved).

FEET (take action)

What might my first steps be to incorporate civic engagement in my personal & professional life?



³ Simon Sinek's Golden Circle Theory, described in his famous [TED Talk](https://simonsinek.com/golden-circle/), and in writing <https://simonsinek.com/golden-circle/>

II. NEXT, AS A GROUP: discuss and report how you might approach your project in a *civically/democratically engaged manner*

