

VOL. 22, NO. 4 • 2020

Diversity & Democracy

CIVIC LEARNING FOR SHARED FUTURES

A Publication of the Association of American Colleges and Universities

Creating a Civic-Minded Culture



*Association
of American
Colleges and
Universities*

EMILY SCHUSTER, *Editor*

CHRISTEN ARAGONI, *Contributing Editor*

BEN DEDMAN, *Associate Editor*

ANN KAMMERER, *Design*

MICHELE STINSON, *Production Manager*

DAVID TRITELLI, *Vice President for
Communications and Public Affairs*

DAWN MICHELE WHITEHEAD, *Editorial Advisor*

TIA BROWN McNAIR, *Editorial Advisor*

CARYN McTIGHE MUSIL, *Senior Editorial
Advisor*

Advisory Board

HARVEY CHARLES, *University at Albany,
State University of New York*

TIMOTHY K. EATMAN, *Rutgers
University—Newark*

ARIANE HOY, *Bonner Foundation*

SHANNA SMITH JAGGARS, *The Ohio
State University*

HILARY KAHN, *Indiana University—
Purdue University Indianapolis*

KEVIN KRUGER, *NASPA—Student Affairs
Administrators in Higher Education*

GEORGE MEHAFFY, *American Association
of State Colleges and Universities/
American Democracy Project*

CATHERINE MIDDLECAMP, *University
of Wisconsin—Madison*

TANIA MITCHELL, *University of Minnesota*

EBOO PATEL, *Interfaith Youth Core*

RICHARD PRYSTOWSKY, *Independent Scholar*

JOHN SALTMARSH, *University
of Massachusetts Boston*

GEORGE J. SANCHEZ, *University
of Southern California*

DAVID SCOBAY, *Bringing Theory to Practice*

DARYL SMITH, *Claremont Graduate University*

'DIMEJI R. TOGUNDE, *Spelman College*

ROWENA TOMANENG, *San José City College*

KATHLEEN WONG(LAU), *San José State
University*

Published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009; tel 202.387.3760; fax 202.265.9532. *Diversity & Democracy* (formerly *Diversity Digest*) is published quarterly and is available at www.aacu.org. Copyright 2020. All rights reserved. ISSN: 2476-0137 (print); 2476-0145 (online).

The opinions expressed by individual authors in *Diversity & Democracy* are their own and are not necessarily those of *Diversity & Democracy's* editors or of the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Cover photo courtesy of [iStock.com/Anna_Om](https://www.istock.com/Anna_Om)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 | From the Editor

Creating a Civic-Minded Culture

4 | “Mind Your Business”: Educating for a Pluralist, Equitable, Truth-Telling Democracy

CARYN McTIGHE MUSIL, *Association of American Colleges and Universities*

6 | Defining and Developing Civic-Minded Institutions

ASHLEY FINLEY, *Association of American Colleges and Universities*

7 | Cultivating a Global Civic Mindset

DAWN MICHELE WHITEHEAD, *Association of American Colleges and Universities*

8 | The Democratic Commitment of Community Colleges

VERDIS L. ROBINSON, *Civic Specialist*

10 | Organizing for Change: Delta College’s Civic Story

LISA LAWRASON, *Delta College*

12 | Lest We Forget: Continuing Historically Black Colleges and Universities’ Legacy of Fostering Social Change

CHARLES H. F. DAVIS III, *University of Michigan*; FELECIA COMMODORE, *Old Dominion University*; and KYAH KING, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Civic Engagement at the Macro Level

14 | Maryland’s Formula: Civic Education and Engagement Drive Democratic Culture

NANCY S. SHAPIRO, *University System of Maryland*, and KAREN OLMSTEAD, *Salisbury University*

19 | A Commitment to Civic Learning in Massachusetts

JOHN REIFF, *Massachusetts Department of Higher Education*, and CYNTHIA LYNCH and CINDY VINCENT—*both of Salem State University*

23 | Civic Engagement in Virginia’s Public Higher Education Institutions

JODI FISLER, *State Council of Higher Education for Virginia*, and LYNN E. PELCO, *Virginia Commonwealth University*

26 | Leveraging the LEAP Framework to Advance Civic Knowledge

C. EDWARD WATSON, *Association of American Colleges and Universities*

27 | Civic Engagement, Regional Accreditation, and the Public Good

JEFF ROSEN, *Higher Learning Commission*

Campus Practice

28 | Global Issues, Local Concerns: A Community College Educates for Democracy

PATTY ROBINSON, *College of the Canyons*

30 | Home and Away: An Engaged Institution’s Continuing Commitment to Global Learning

AMY CONRAD WARNER, MARY F. PRICE, LESLIE A. BOZEMAN, and STEPHANIE LESLIE—*all of Indiana University—Purdue University Indianapolis*

FROM THE EDITOR

A Deep, Continuing Commitment to Diversity and Democracy

For the past twenty-four years (the first eleven as *Diversity Digest*), *Diversity & Democracy* has amplified the voices of higher education leaders and educators seeking to prepare students to become active, socially responsible world citizens. Nearly a quarter of a century later, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) remains firmly dedicated to civic learning and democratic engagement, global citizenship, and engagement with diversity. The association renewed its commitment to these principles in its recent publication, *What Liberal Education Looks Like: What It Is, Who It's For, and Where It Happens*, which presents “an aspirational vision of liberal education that is centered on its potential to serve all our students and to renew our democracy.”

As AAC&U works to communicate its vision of liberal education more effectively and strategically, the association has decided to consolidate its three periodicals into a single magazine, which will be launched in fall 2020. The new *Liberal Education* magazine will fully integrate civic learning and democratic engagement, global citizenship, and engagement with diversity with AAC&U's priorities of advancing liberal education and inclusive excellence, bringing these topics to a wider audience. Although I am sorry that this will be the last issue of *Diversity & Democracy*, I'm excited to work with my colleague Christen Aragoni as co-editors-in-chief of *Liberal Education*. Along with our talented team, we are developing a beautifully designed magazine with compelling content and high-quality writing and analysis. I can't wait for you to see it.

This final issue of *Diversity & Democracy* addresses a topic at the core of our civic work: how to build

civic-minded cultures in higher education institutions. As our deeply divided nation confronts the devastating effects of a global pandemic and accompanying economic crisis, along with the continuing destructive legacy of racial injustice, the need for such a civic-minded culture comes clearly into focus. We desperately need people who can work together across differences and national borders with mutual care and respect to address these overwhelming problems and work for positive change.

Whether in person or online, colleges and universities bring together people with different life experiences, empowering them to care for each other as a community.

Colleges and universities provide excellent environments for constructing civic-minded cultures that cultivate graduates who bring civic values and practices into the wider society. Whether in person or online, colleges and universities bring together people with different life experiences, empowering them to care for each other as a community. By providing a liberal education that challenges learners to examine their own beliefs and engage with others different from themselves, colleges and universities can help to build a world where people see themselves as responsible for each other's well-being and success, while recognizing that their different backgrounds and perspectives are an asset, not a liability.

In my three years as *Diversity & Democracy's* editor, it has been my honor to help authors craft their messages of a vision of such a world and the work we need to do to make it a reality. I have been fortunate to work with a

brilliant advisory board, who brought their wisdom and insights to our many dynamic conversations. It was a joy to have one more opportunity to work with senior editorial advisor Caryn McTighe Musil, who recently retired from AAC&U after nearly three decades, on the first article in this issue. Among her many accomplishments at AAC&U, Caryn was part of the team that launched *Diversity Digest*, and she served as its executive editor from 1998 to 2006. In addition, I am indebted to Ann Kammerer, who

has skillfully designed *Diversity & Democracy* since the very beginning. I am thankful to my wonderful colleagues at AAC&U, past and present, especially those in the Office of Communications and Public Affairs, who have brought their talents and dedication to our work every day. I thank all these colleagues for their friendship and collaboration.

And finally, I am grateful to you, the readers of *Diversity & Democracy*, for being with us in this work. I hope that this publication has inspired you to think more broadly about diversity, democracy, and global citizenship, and has helped you to bring a vision of a civic-minded and equitable culture closer to reality on your own campus. I am excited to continue this work with you through the new *Liberal Education* magazine.

—Emily Schuster,
editor of *Diversity & Democracy*,
co-editor-in-chief of *Liberal Education*,
and senior editor

[CREATING A CIVIC-MINDED CULTURE]

“Mind Your Business”: Educating for a Pluralist, Equitable, Truth-Telling Democracy

■ **CARYN MCTIGHE MUSIL**, Former Senior Director, Civic Learning and Democracy Initiatives, at the Association of American Colleges and Universities

. . . *we are each other's harvest:
we are each other's business:
we are each other's magnitude and bond.*

—“Paul Robeson” by Gwendolyn Brooks

This issue of *Diversity & Democracy* is published as the nation reels from the COVID-19 pandemic and as white Americans have been forced to examine how white supremacist values embedded into systems for centuries continue to despoil the lives of African Americans and other people of color. The calls for a national reckoning with our shared past and the deep anguish caused by racial violations could, if we seize the moment with courage and truth-telling, lay the groundwork for a multiracial, multicultural democracy marked by justice, equity, and commitment to one another's welfare.

The theme for this final issue of *Diversity & Democracy* is appropriately focused on what is required to create civic-minded institutions that seek justice and recognize diversity's value. What it means to be civic minded has multiple meanings stemming from the use of the word *mind*. Academics typically use *mind* to refer to cognitive dimensions: reason, discernment, imagination, consciousness, thinking, perception. Another use is the idiom “I have a mind to . . .,” which implies an intention to act in some way. Still another meaning is suggested by the electronic intoning of “mind the gap” on

the London Tube, calling for distracted commuters to be aware of their environment. Paying attention matters. Finally, there is the dismissive “mind your own business,” a phrase Gwendolyn Brooks turns on its head in her 1984 poem “Paul Robeson.”

These four associations of the word *mind*—knowledge, intention, attention, and making other people's business our own—illuminate a nuanced understanding. When we put the word *civic* in front of *mind*, these definitions take on yet more meanings. Because *civic* derives from the Latin *civitas*, meaning a city-state or its citizens, we move from “I” to “we.”

In these past months, cities and towns have provided public squares where citizens, many wearing protective masks, have poured into the streets for Black Lives Matter protests, demanding an end to violence against African Americans and to systemic racism everywhere. Rooting civic-minded practices in democratic values of justice helps create more inclusive, equitable political structures; stirs economic development in which all, not just some, benefit; and affirms the dignity, worth, health, and life of every person.

Mortar in the Bricks

When we reinforce civic-mindedness for democratic justice as the mortar in the bricks of structures, policies, laws, values, culture, and practices of a democratic nation—as the United States professes to be but cannot be without reckoning with its past and present—the importance of cultivating

civic-mindedness increases. *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*, published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities in 2012, was a national call to action in the face of civic anemia in terms of knowledge, intention, attention, and understanding how “we are each other's business.”

Since then, the health of democracies has endured an even more precipitous global decline. The *Economist's* Democracy Index listed the US democracy as flawed for the first time in 2017, while in 2019, the index showed the worst average collective global score since its launch in 2006. Stakes could hardly be higher for investing in education for a pluralist, equitable, truth-telling democracy. Schools and colleges globally have typically served as sites for citizenship. Now the task is Herculean. While many colleges and universities “have a mind to” offer a richer array of civic opportunities for students, they need a far more comprehensive institutional approach developed with heightened mindfulness about equity and truth-telling. Small reforms will no longer suffice.

A Crucible Moment made such a challenge. It argued that each college and university needed to be a *civic-minded institution*. The report challenged institutions to model civic-mindedness daily in practices, policies, knowledge resources, and interactions. That vision suggests every employee, student, and local and global partner should play a role. No one gets a pass. Contributing through knowledge, intention, and attentiveness to educating for a pluralist and just democracy should be understood as everyone's business.

The chart on page 5, first published in *A Crucible Moment*, offers a glimpse of what a civic-minded institution might look like. Its vision continues to serve as an aspirational starting place to reach the four dimensions of civic ethos,

literacy, inquiry, and action, practiced by everyone. As Yoni Appelbaum argues, “Democracy is . . . an acquired habit,” and “democratic behavior develops slowly over time, through constant repetition” (2018).

Expected Rather than Optional

Since *A Crucible Moment* was published, some progress has been made. More institutions are seeking to make civic learning pervasive rather than partial, expected rather than optional. Sixty-four percent of female seniors and 55 percent of male seniors who responded to a 2019 National Survey of Student Engagement had completed at least one service-learning course. More general education courses include experiences that expand students’ democratic knowledge and skills. Some departments are beginning to design majors that emphasize social responsibility and the public good. Most widely adopted high-impact practices have strong civic outcomes (Kuh 2008). But this portentous moment of democratic possibility demands far

more. Social justice movements need to be a routine part of the curriculum at multiple levels. Both in and out of the classroom, students need to practice interrogating how systemic racism works even when masked as neutral. The demographics of who works and studies at colleges must finally begin to look like America’s future.

Student affairs professionals, already on the front lines of this work, must help cultivate personal and political engagement in the face of contestations among students about all manner of issues. At the same time, many students continue to spearhead social movements on and off campus to hold US democracy and global organizations accountable. More space for such activities is available through statewide civic learning and engagement mandates in Massachusetts, Virginia, and Maryland, described in this issue on pages 14–26. The Higher Learning Commission’s adoption of similar educational outcomes as a new standard for accreditation, described on page 27, promises to generate even more

civic spaces for justice work at nearly one thousand colleges in nineteen states.

Perhaps, however, the most radical democratic reframing, running like rivulets through the four dimensions of civic ethos, literacy, inquiry, and action, is captured in Gwendolyn Brooks’ poem “Paul Robeson.” A bedrock value of a civic-minded institution is that those who comprise the college are each other’s business, as are the surrounding community, nation, and globe. This requires serious mind-work (especially for white people), fresh scholarship, wide perspectives, vulnerable openness, and hands-on practice working toward shared goals with others across differences. Only then can everyone understand what it means now, and has meant in history, to be “each other’s harvest” and “each other’s magnitude and bond.”

We need to pose uncomfortable questions. How have colleges and universities, historically or today, diminished some people’s magnitude,

(Continued on page 32)

What Would a Civic-Minded Campus Look Like?

CIVIC ETHOS governing campus life

The infusion of democratic values into the customs and habits of everyday practices, structures, and interactions; the defining character of the institution and those in it that emphasizes open-mindedness, civility, the worth of each person, ethical behaviors, and concern for the well-being of others; a spirit of public-mindedness that influences the goals of the institution and its engagement with local and global communities.

CIVIC LITERACY as a goal for every student

The cultivation of foundational knowledge about fundamental principles and debates about democracy expressed over time, both within the United States and in other countries; familiarity with several key historical struggles, campaigns, and social movements undertaken to achieve the full promise of democracy; the ability to think critically about complex issues and to seek and evaluate information about issues that have public consequences.

CIVIC INQUIRY integrated within the majors and general education

The practice of inquiring about the civic dimensions and public consequences of a subject of study; the exploration of the impact of choices on different constituencies and entities, including the planet; the deliberate consideration of differing points of views; the ability to describe and analyze civic intellectual debates within one’s major or areas of study.

CIVIC ACTION as lifelong practice

The capacity and commitment both to participate constructively with diverse others and to work collectively to address common problems; the practice of working in a pluralistic society and world to improve the quality of people’s lives and the sustainability of the planet; the ability to analyze systems in order to plan and engage in public action; the moral and political courage to take risks to achieve a greater public good.

[CREATING A CIVIC-MINDED CULTURE]

Defining and Developing Civic-Minded Institutions

■ **ASHLEY FINLEY**, Senior Advisor to the President and Vice President of Strategic Planning and Partnerships at the Association of American Colleges and Universities

Before jumping into what it takes to develop or create a civic-minded institution, it's helpful to consider what the term "civic-minded" means. "Civic," per the Google definition (don't judge me), has two meanings. The first is "relating to a city or town, especially its administration." The second is "relating to the duties or activities of people in relation to their town, city, or local area."

What's compelling about those two definitions is that the first suggests intent or actions within a community that are politically oriented, while the second implies actions that occur within communities. I suggest that the second offers a more inclusive definition that encompasses multiple forms of community-based engagement. When we use the term "civic," we *may* be referencing political action, but we also may not be. It's important to make sure stakeholders in your civic-minded institution know that both definitions may be in play.

If both are in play, it is an opportunity to unite the multiple forms of civic engagement happening across campus—such as service learning, internships, community-based research, fieldwork,

practicums, and student activism. That unification does not occur by acknowledging that these practices exist but rather by understanding how they mutually support the institution's civic mission.

But that's just step one. The next step is to define what components of quality ensure that all of these types of civic engagement are transformative for students. Articulating these shared dimensions of quality practice will ensure that, as students participate in civically engaged experiences, they encounter reinforcing principles for what it means to be a citizen in a range of community environments, domestically or internationally.

The notion of being civic "minded" suggests "dispositions" or "habits of mind." Disposition is defined, again in Google (last time—I promise), as "a person's inherent qualities of mind and character." Perhaps even more helpful is the example sentence provided with this definition: "Your sunny disposition has a way of rubbing off on those around you." The example suggests that dispositions are not just one's own but can also

be transferred to others. We hope that by seeding many civic-minded individuals, we will encourage the growth of similar attitudes so that a culture is created and sustained.

So how, then, do we create dispositions? First, dispositions come from doing, not just thinking. Students must produce something from their

civic experiences. Educators must invite students to reflect on, apply, record, and make meaning of their experiences. Faculty, staff, and administrators at civic-minded institutions must also make sense of and express civic outcomes, whether by organizing voter registration drives, applying civic outcomes within courses, or working alongside students on volunteer projects.

Second, dispositions are produced and reinforced through language, objects, symbols, and customs. As the markers of culture, these four elements reflect the levers and saturation points for campuses to gauge their own evolution toward becoming more civic-minded. Campuses must use civic language pervasively and understand why it matters to use words like "social justice," "stewardship," "leadership," or "global citizenship" in their mission statements.

Campuses then need to ask: What does success look like in meeting the language of the mission? At a minimum, success should reflect actions, skills, and attitudes for all students—not just the ones who opt into civic experiences. The only way to understand degrees of success is to measure them. Knowing how to tell the story from the data takes conversations and collaboration.

Finally, campuses need to unite stakeholders and break down civic silos through events or practices in which students, faculty, and staff come together in dialogue to share insights and perspectives.

As the United States enters a new era of reckoning with civil rights and global health, there is no better time to be clear and inclusive about what a civic-minded campus is. Students have questions, ideas, and plans for the future. Making sure students, regardless of major or institutional type, integrate their civic selves into those queries and plans is the responsibility of every civic-minded institution. ☐

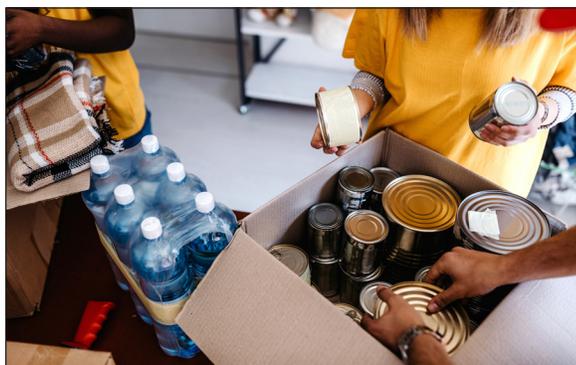


Photo courtesy of iStock.com/mixetto

[CREATING A CIVIC-MINDED CULTURE]

Cultivating a Global Civic Mindset

■ **DAWN MICHELE WHITEHEAD**, Vice President of the Office of Global Citizenship for Campus, Community, and Careers at the Association of American Colleges and Universities

The legacy of American tennis great Arthur Ashe began in his hometown of Richmond, Virginia, where his core values included a “passionate belief in the salvific power of education and intellectual inquiry, an extraordinary work ethic, and a deep commitment to social and civic responsibility” (Arsenault 2018, xii). These same values complement a global civic mindset that is essential for today’s students. With its deep roots in civic-mindedness, a global civic mindset requires individuals to question their intellectual perspectives and their own identities while also forging a strong

abilities, and contacts” (Yosso 2005, 77) of communities of color are recognized and valued as assets. As students engage in experiential civic learning, these concepts help them position themselves and consider how they may be perceived before they enter an international community or a local civic space with global connections. This framing prepares students for the complex intercultural, global, and intergenerational engagement they may encounter.

After articulating what a global civic mindset is, students can focus on who they are becoming in their academic

Students must have time and space to reflect, respond, and situate their global and civic experiences into their majors, their course(s), and their lives.

commitment to social and civic responsibility at the local, global, and international levels. As students develop a global civic mindset, they focus on who they are becoming and how they can practice dispositions and skills in their civic and emerging professional lives.

At its foundation, a global civic mindset is based on the concepts of cultural humility and community cultural wealth. To practice cultural humility, individuals must negotiate meaning as they encounter people in various cultural contexts. They must also become aware of positionality, power, and privilege to ensure shared dignity (Hartman et al. 2020). Community cultural wealth ensures that the “knowledge, skills,

fields, as members of society in local and global contexts, and as future professionals. This requires a reflective but forward-looking orientation. Students must have time and space to reflect, respond, and situate their global and civic experiences into their majors, their course(s), and their lives. This mindset must also be forward-looking in that students should see how their own global and civic knowledge has evolved across their educational experiences, in their engagement with different communities, and as future leaders in these communities. As more institutions challenge students to attempt to solve real-world problems based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

(United Nations, n.d.), students will have opportunities to apply their global civic mindsets to the challenges that face their nations and the world. In many cases, they will be asked to do this in diverse teams with members from different majors, educational backgrounds, racial or ethnic groups, and/or nationalities. This will be critical to solving the challenges that face our world. No nation can do it alone, and we must prepare students to work together across boundaries and borders using innovation and technology to connect.

Having traveled the world as a tennis professional, Arthur Ashe won singles tennis titles at Wimbledon, the US Open, and the Australian Open, but he also was well known as an international activist for civil rights, racial equality, and women’s rights. “By the close of his career, he had become a model of cosmopolitanism and a self-proclaimed ‘citizen of the world,’ earning almost universal respect as . . . an independent-minded thinker and writer, a humanitarian philanthropist, and an unrivaled ambassador of sportsmanship and fair play” (Arsenault 2018, xii). These are the qualities we want all of our students to develop, and with a strong foundation in the tenets of a global civic mindset, they will be well on their way, regardless of their field of study. ☐

REFERENCES

- ARSENAULT, RAYMOND.** 2018. *Arthur Ashe: A Life*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.
- HARTMAN, ERIC, NORA PILLARD REYNOLDS, NIKI MESSMORE, SABEA EVANS, BIBI AL-EBRAHIM, and JOHN MATTHIAS BROWN.** 2020. “Coloniality-Decoloniality and Critical Global Citizenship: Identity, Belonging, and Education Abroad.” *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* 32 (1): 33–59.
- UNITED NATIONS.** n.d. “About the Sustainable Development Goals.” <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.
- YOSSO, TARA J.** 2006. “Whose Culture Has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth.” *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8 (1): 69–91.

[CREATING A CIVIC-MINDED CULTURE]

The Democratic Commitment of Community Colleges

■ **VERDIS L. ROBINSON**, Civic Specialist, Associate of the Kettering Foundation, and Former Director of Community College Engagement at Campus Compact

The notion of community colleges as “democracy’s colleges” echoes back to the 1947 Truman Commission Report on Higher Education for Democracy, which argued for the creation of a national system of community colleges. Today, these local institutions play key roles in democratizing higher education and giving more people access to the American dream. With affordability, accessibility, and open-access admission practices, community colleges have higher enrollments of lower-income students, nontraditional students, and students of color than four-year colleges and universities, and they also have high percentages of immigrants and English language learners among their student populations.

However, most community colleges struggle with sustaining a holistic campus life because their students often work, take care of families, and manage other responsibilities outside of their education. Additionally, community colleges’ success is often unfairly measured by a completion model, while in reality, community college students sometimes transfer directly to four-year institutions without completing an associate’s degree. These issues, along with the elitist perception of community colleges as “junior colleges,” tend to make community colleges invisible when compared with four-year public and private colleges and universities. This invisibility is unfortunate because community colleges embody a democratic society, as they provide open access to higher education.

How do we make the invisible more visible? How do we get everyone to take notice of the value of community colleges, to see them as democracy’s colleges, and to see their students as democracy’s students? This article argues that this can be done through civic learning and democratic engagement.

Aligning Civic Engagement with Institutional Priorities

Civic learning and democratic engagement should be institutional priorities, but for the majority of community colleges, they are not (or they are in name only). Yet, because community colleges draw their students primarily from their local communities, these colleges are especially well positioned to develop ways to benefit their communities while deepening the educational experience of their students. As they face budget cuts that began before the COVID-19 pandemic and will likely worsen in the coming months, many community colleges are limiting their priorities only to those that would appear most obvious in their ability to advance institutional success and effectiveness, such as workforce readiness, economic development, completion, pathways, access, equity, inclusion, assessment, and accreditation. Many community colleges do not recognize civic engagement as an effective strategy for achieving these same goals. We must not segregate civic learning and democratic engagement programs, initiatives, and pedagogies—like deliberative dialogues, service learning, community-based learning,

electoral engagement, and student organizing and leadership training—from efforts to advance institutional priorities. Preparing students for democracy and preparing them for the workforce, careers, and continued education are mutually reinforcing.

In addition, as the American Association of Community Colleges has asserted, “What happens in a college is only as important as the degree to which students’ lives are educationally challenged and changed. . . . Student success lies not only in academic gains, but also in personal, social, and civic development” (Prentice, Robinson, and Patton 2012, 26). If we do not integrate civic learning and democratic engagement with efforts to advance institutional priorities, we will never realize our commitment to the public purposes of higher education.

So how do we ensure that community college students graduate as civically engaged, informed, active agents of change? How do we make civic learning and democratic engagement a priority in community colleges for the future of our democracy? How do we show that civic learning and democratic engagement strategies can be leveraged in powerful ways to advance priorities related to institutional effectiveness, college completion, and student success?

Community college leaders should make the connections between civic learning and democratic engagement and these institutional priorities apparent and measurable. Naming and framing the work already being accomplished at community colleges as civic learning and democratic engagement is essential to advancing this work and making it a priority. For example, many community colleges have food pantries on campus. These food pantries not only ensure that hunger is not a barrier to student success but also feed students’ families in the immediate community. These food pantries support institutional

priorities like enrollment, retention, and completion, but they are also a form of civic engagement.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must continue to advance civic learning and democratic engagement. As educators are adapting their courses to online formats, now is a great opportunity to plug civic learning and democratic engagement into their syllabi. For example, the National Issues Forums Institute (NIFI) is working with campuses throughout the country to convene online nonpartisan discussions of important public issues in this election year. In partnership with the Kettering Foundation and a network of higher education associations, NIFI is preparing complementary materials to support online and in-person deliberative discussions during Constitution Week in September. To learn more, visit www.nifi.org.

Community Colleges for Democracy

In 2018, the Democracy Commitment (TDC), a project focused on preparing community college students for democratic participation that had been housed at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, was integrated into Campus Compact, a national coalition of colleges and universities committed to the public purposes of higher education and building democracy through civic education and community development. What had been TDC was transformed into a new network of Campus Compact's 240 community college members, Community Colleges for Democracy (CC4D). This network signaled the deepening of Campus Compact's ongoing national commitment to community colleges, civic engagement, and democracy. CC4D continues the national movement of community colleges committed to preparing students to be informed, active, mobilized leaders in their communities, states, and the world, in addition

to preparing them for the workforce, careers, and continued education.

CC4D offers communities of practice for community college civic and community engagement professionals, where they can share questions, challenges, and approaches they found to be effective in linking community-based civic learning to broader goals for retention, completion, and education for democratic participation. In addition to providing training and resources for faculty, staff, and administrators working to maximize community and campus assets to achieve shared goals, CC4D offers a wide variety of professional development opportunities through state, regional, and national conferences and

As Campus Compact engages higher education in the effort to achieve full participation in our communities, democracy, and economy, community colleges must and will stand front and center.

events. Campus Compact will become the national megaphone to increase awareness about the public purposes of community colleges and raise the profile of community colleges as central to the role of higher education in building democracy. To learn more about the civic work of one CC4D network member, see pages 10–11.

Because community colleges enroll nearly half of all students and play a disproportionate role in educating students from communities that face exclusion, as well as first-generation students from all backgrounds, they are central to Campus Compact's mission of ensuring that higher education is contributing to the health and strength of our democracy. As Campus Compact engages higher education in the effort to achieve full participation in our communities, democracy, and economy, community colleges must and will stand front and center.

Conclusion

Community colleges are communities' colleges because of their many close ties to their communities. Both in principle and in practice, they are positioned to become civic leaders at home and globally (Zlotkowski et al. 2004). As community colleges work to help students achieve their academic goals, "our most important civic engagement work is to help our students learn to imagine not just a better future for themselves but a more just and equitable world in which they desire, and are prepared, to be engaged citizens" (Schnee, Better, and Cummings 2016, 6). Community colleges strive to empower their students and to remove

political, economic, and social barriers that inhibit full participation in our democracy for our students and the communities in which they live and *with* which our campuses serve. The road to greater justice and equity runs through community colleges. ☐

REFERENCES

- PRENTICE, MARY, GAIL ROBINSON, and MADELINE PATTON. 2012. *Cultivating Community Beyond the Classroom*. Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges. https://www.mesacc.edu/sites/default/files/pages/section/students/service-learning/CultivatingCommunities_Aug2012.pdf.
- SCHNEE, EMILY, ALISON BETTER, and MARTHA CLARK CUMMINGS, eds. 2016. *Civic Engagement Pedagogy in the Community College: Theory and Practice*. New York, NY: Springer International Publishing.
- ZLOTKOWSKI, EDWARD, DONNA K. DUFFY, ROBERT FRANCO, SHERRIL B. GELMON, KATRINA H. NORVELL, JENNIFER MEEROPOL, and STEVEN G. JONES, eds. 2004. *The Community's College: Indicators of Engagement at Two-Year Institutions*. Providence, RI: Campus Compact.

[CREATING A CIVIC-MINDED CULTURE]

Organizing for Change: Delta College's Civic Story

■ LISA LAWASON, Political Science Professor at Delta College

Students walking the hallway at Michigan's Delta College couldn't help but stop. A mirror framed by the words "The New Face of Addiction" challenged stereotypes of those devastated by the opioid crisis. A computer displayed slides with stories of victims: beautiful people who fell prey to addiction, with fatal consequences. A table display presented opioid addiction as a mental health—not criminal—issue by asking passersby to sign a letter urging local law enforcement agencies to implement Hope Not Handcuffs. Started by the Michigan-based grassroots organization Families Against Narcotics, this initiative allows addicts to walk into an agency and seek treatment, without fear of being put behind bars.

The six Delta College students who pulled off this project were enrolled in an American Politics course at the community college that took them through a process of organizing to create a positive change. The students had formed a group around a common interest and personal experiences in the opioid crisis, but by the end of the semester, they found themselves the closest of friends. The group worked with Families Against Narcotics on the project. All the while, they gained citizenship skills—such as problem solving, critical thinking, and working collaboratively with others—to improve the quality of life in their community.

"Seeing how people reacted to Hope Not Handcuffs and Families Against Narcotics when I advocated for them . . . made me feel empowered and like I was actually effecting positive change," said

student Anna Percy. "That was a really, really good feeling."

Group member Brandon Schultz added, "People out there actually don't want to be silent; they want to have a voice in their government."

The same organizing framework that students like Anna and Brandon used to mobilize their peers is implemented across Delta College's campus to create a culture of civic activism and realize the civic mission of higher education.

Woven throughout Delta College's civic story are community organizing principles: identifying interests, building relationships, telling stories, creating structure, designing strategy, and taking action. Just as community organizers build capacity for change, change agents including faculty and staff must organize constituencies across campus to create a civic culture. As we cultivate relationships with key players whose goals are aligned with civic work, we create building blocks for change.

Interests, Relationships, Stories, and Structure

At Delta College, campus civic organizers began by understanding how the interests and goals of departments and programs on campus aligned with civic activism. We asked, "What offices, departments, or initiatives support getting students out in the community and empowering them to use their education to create a positive change?"

The answer has resulted in the Democracy Commitment (TDC) core team at Delta College. As the hub for campus civic initiatives, it comprises faculty and staff across the college. This

work started in 2011 as Delta College's response to a national call to action from the Democracy Commitment, now Campus Compact's Community Colleges for Democracy network. (See pages 8–9.)

Because civic engagement involves student engagement, faculty and staff with an interest in seeing students plug into college life have worked together on the TDC core team and multiplied their individual efforts. The campus life and student engagement coordinator has become a valuable member of the team. As the information specialists on campus, librarians are stakeholders in cultivating a politically informed student body and have become important team members as well. Faculty across disciplines have found civic engagement to be an effective way to help students see the real-life relevance of course material. For example, faculty teach English and communication as citizenship skills that can be used to effect positive change. Biology professors empower their students to raise awareness about public health issues like antibiotic-resistant bacteria or vaccine hesitancy. Faculty in these disciplines and others, like sociology and psychology, are an integral part of the team. All faculty can apply their service to the team to the promotion and tenure process. Finally, administrators support civic engagement due to its impact on students' personal and professional growth, as well as the presence it gives the college at the community, state, and national levels. For example, Delta College furthered its commitment to sustainability by sending students to the Citizens Climate Lobby conference in Washington, DC, in June 2019, with funding from the college's TDC budget.

With stakeholders identified, the rewarding work of building relationships begins. Investing in the *people* contributing to this work is essential to maintaining long-term commitments. Before our campus closed due to the

COVID-19 pandemic, we invited our stakeholders to coffee conversations, conferences, deliberative dialogues, and celebratory events to demonstrate the value of each player in creating a civic culture. Team meetings, whether in person or through videoconferencing platforms, must include an agenda that works toward the goals of the team. A record of the group's decisions and individuals' commitments is critical for a productive meeting in which people know their time was appreciated. These relationships are the starting point for structuring the team and its leadership and assigning roles.

We meet with the college's leadership at least annually to describe the work's benefits to students, the college, and the community. We invite students to share their stories because stories are powerful motivators, evoking emotions and a sense of urgency, hope, solidarity, or even anger that can lead to action. We have also decorated halls around campus with pictures of and quotes from students who have been transformed by civic encounters. For example, one student said, "It has become very important to me to get involved and to stop thinking that one person can't make a difference when that's not the case. All it takes is one person to begin to spread the word about something and over time becoming an overwhelming force that cannot be stopped."

Strategy and Action

After building capacity for cultural change by identifying interests, cultivating relationships, telling stories, and creating structure, Delta College's TDC core team began developing its strategy for change. Strategizing is an ongoing process. We plan, act, evaluate the results, and plan some more (Ganz 2008). We have chosen tactics that raise the visibility of civic and political engagement on campus, creating encounters that encourage students to



Delta College students participate in a deliberative dialogue in 2018. (Photo courtesy of Delta College)

participate. Before the 2018 midterm election, for example, we challenged students to vote through signs around campus, a "pledge to vote" display, and the "Democracy Wall," a three-sided black dry erase board outside the library where students could respond to questions of public concern in neon markers. We have hosted events—like a deliberative dialogue on marijuana legalization and a meet the candidates event—out in the open, piquing the interest of passersby.

Once we identified our strategy, we took action by deploying our team's resources. The TDC core team has maximized its "people" resource by partnering with organizations including the League of Women Voters, Campus Vote Project, Campus Election Engagement Project, NextGen America, TurboVote, and the local county clerk's offices. The college received a Voter Friendly Campus designation for the 2018 midterm election for its strategic actions in three areas: voter registration, education, and engagement. (We are also applying for this designation for the 2020 election.) This process involved creating an action plan with realistic goals, deadlines, and responsibilities, which ensured that we remained

accountable and intentional about our partnerships and resources and that we carried out our vision of an engaged campus. In addition, the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge awarded our 2018 voter engagement action plan a Gold Seal for increasing voter turnout rates by 17 percentage points since 2014 and recognized our 2020 voter engagement action plan as exemplary (2020).

All this work culminates when students discover their voice in the political realm and become part of shaping the world in which they live. "Civic engagement at Delta College gave me firsthand experience in helping to enact meaningful, positive change in both my college and my community," said former Delta College student Richard Diehl. "My involvement with a local organization gave me the on-the-ground training in this sort of work, and coupled with what I was learning in the classroom, provided me with a tool bag of skills." 📌

REFERENCES

- ALL IN CAMPUS DEMOCRACY CHALLENGE.** 2020. "Action Plan Examples." <https://www.allinchallenge.org/resource-hub/action-plan-examples/>.
- GANZ, MARSHALL.** 2008. "Organizing: People, Power, and Change." Course lecture notes, Harvard University. <https://annastarrrose.files.wordpress.com/2011/06/ganz-course-notes.pdf>.

[CREATING A CIVIC-MINDED CULTURE]

Lest We Forget: Continuing Historically Black Colleges and Universities' Legacy of Fostering Social Change

■ **CHARLES H. F. DAVIS III**, Assistant Professor of Higher Education, Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education at University of Michigan

■ **FELECIA COMMODORE**, Assistant Professor of Higher Education at Old Dominion University

■ **KYAH KING**, Doctoral Student at University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Since their inception, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have served as proving grounds for redressing our nation's disenfranchisement of Black people from the everyday rights and responsibilities of American life. The first HBCU, now called Cheney University of Pennsylvania, was founded in 1837, and the number of HBCUs increased following the abolition of slavery. HBCUs were initially established to provide scaffolded instruction to free Black people. In 1890, the second Morrill Act required states in which higher education was segregated to offer land grants on which to build colleges and universities specifically for Black students. Today, more than one hundred public and private HBCUs offer Black students access to opportunities not otherwise available.

However, in addition to producing most of the nation's Black professionals (including doctors, engineers, lawyers, and professors), HBCUs are preeminent

producers (and incubators) of civically engaged students who lead fights for civil rights and social justice. Of course, when considering the civic legacies of HBCUs, one need not struggle to identify visible figures like Martin Luther King Jr. (Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia); Ella Baker (Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina); and Bayard Rustin (Wilberforce University in Wilberforce, Ohio, and Cheney University in Cheney, Pennsylvania). But, lest we forget, innumerable others, through their collective civic participation, undergird HBCU students' longstanding tradition of organized resistance. For example, on May 26, 1956, Wilhelmina Jakes and Carrie Patterson, both Black women students at Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU), sat down in the "Whites only" section of a segregated bus in Tallahassee, Florida. After they refused to move to the "colored" section, the bus driver pulled into a service station and called the local police, who arrested Jakes and Patterson for "placing themselves in a position to 'incite a riot'" (Ensley 2016). Subsequently, a cross burning at Jakes and Patterson's residence escalated racial tensions and spurred FAMU students to boycott the public bus system.

The Tallahassee Bus Boycott, as it would later

be known, was among the largest boycott campaigns in the Jim Crow South. Similar to the 1953 boycott in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, of which students at Southern University were an integral part, and the better-known 1955–56 Montgomery Bus Boycott in Alabama, the campaign in Tallahassee marked a time in history when HBCU students were crucial to sociopolitical change. The well-documented sit-ins by students from Greensboro's North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College (now a university) at a Woolworth's lunch counter in the 1960s further affirm HBCU college students' role in igniting national campaigns of civil disobedience against injustice. Yet, as both state and federal policymakers pose questions regarding the continued relevance of HBCUs, especially in today's socio-political climate, it is important to reflect on the historical and contemporary roles of encouraging student participation in political activities.

HBCUs and Social Justice Advocacy Today

How should HBCUs continue to support and develop civically engaged advocates for social justice? In an address at the United Negro College Fund's 2019 Career Pathways Initiative Annual Convening, Phillip Agnew, former student body president and graduate of FAMU, spoke about how instrumental his college experience was to his current advocacy and activism. "Sometime around my sophomore year, [Daryl Parks], a mentor of mine, who I look up to a great deal, another graduate of [FAMU], told me that as a student at [FAMU], I was part of a long lineage and history of people who had considered themselves a part of a community," Agnew said. He went on to discuss meeting with Parks and other student leaders from nearby colleges and universities to watch a videotape recording in which guards at a juvenile-detention



Dream Defenders at the Mississippi Freedom Summer 50th Anniversary Conference at Tougaloo College in 2014. (Photo by Charles H. F. Davis III)

boot camp in Bay County, Florida, kicked, hit, and forced a Black fourteen-year-old named Martin Lee Anderson to inhale ammonia. Anderson died the next day, January 6, 2006. Agnew continued, paraphrasing Parks' message to him, "You're the student government leader at Florida A&M University. . . . It is your role, your duty to do something." Following the campus-community organizing efforts of students led by Agnew and others, seven Bay County guards and one nurse were ultimately charged with aggravated manslaughter, only to be later acquitted.

Agnew, who cofounded the Dream Defenders in 2012 after the killing of Trayvon Martin and served as its codirector until 2018, told the anecdote to an audience of HBCU presidents and senior leaders to explain how integral their institutions are in cultivating radical thinking and practice. In particular, Agnew noted, "The universities that we all attend, that we all love, have a particular purpose, not just in the communities that surround them, but [for] the sanctity of our democracy." Agnew charged HBCUs to resist the rising tide of neoliberal higher education in exchange for returning to their founding commitments of defying the status quo. In particular, he urged them to reject the shift of postsecondary institutions toward an overemphasis on profit generation, corporate partnerships, and STEM fields at the expense of more holistic educational experiences consistent with liberal arts training.

Agnew called into question how niche investments in particular curricular areas, athletic and social facilities, and socially conservative practices (Mobley and Johnson 2019) often undermine the broader democratic role and responsibility unique to HBCUs. To be sure, Agnew acknowledged similar shifts toward market-driven behaviors in higher education more broadly. Further, as HBCUs are particularly challenged

by precarious donors, stretched endowments, and declining state appropriations and federal funding, these institutions find themselves having to navigate political terrain with deferential care to secure institutional sustainability. Nevertheless, for the minoritized students HBCUs serve, a balanced investment in civic programs and initiatives, however difficult, is not impossible.

Supporting Student Advocates

As applications and enrollments at HBCUs continue to rise, largely in response to the toxic—and sometimes violent—racial climates at many predominantly White institutions, HBCUs are uniquely positioned to receive and further cultivate incoming students who are already politically engaged. What is more, Black women at Atlanta's Spelman College and LGBTQIA+ students at Fayetteville State University in Fayetteville, North Carolina, continue to advocate for recognizing and supporting HBCU students minoritized based on gender and sexual orientation. Within the broader sociopolitical contexts of the Movement for Black Lives, the #MeToo movement, and, most recently, #DefundPolice protests, HBCU students are continuing to demonstrate leadership through their activism on campus and beyond.

For these reasons, supporting HBCU students' political engagement requires educators to recognize the critical role they can play in improving students' political efficacy and affirming their desires to radically reimagine school and society. We cannot overstate the importance of institutions providing access to the resources and infrastructure necessary to ensure students and their movements can achieve their political goals. We find this is especially urgent for HBCUs near Black communities deeply affected by the injustices of police killings, everyday



Phillip Agnew, FAMU alumnus and cofounder and former codirector of the Dream Defenders, during the organization's 2018 convening in central Florida. (Photo by Charles H. F. Davis III)

racial violence, and disparate health outcomes during the COVID-19 crisis. Just as students at North Carolina A&T State University recognized the need to take on segregationist practices through the sit-in movement, today's HBCU student activists continue to actively challenge racist structures, systems, and practices affecting their communities. They understand that, to paraphrase Assata Shakur (1973), loving and supporting each other is the only way our duty to fight for freedom can deliver on the promise of our duty to win. And we must use this same idea to reframe the campus-community relationship, one that remains critical to higher education serving the interests of the Black public. For when Black institutions, people, and communities are mutually invested in each other, their social and political relevance cannot be debated. ☐

REFERENCES

- ENSLEY, GERALD. 2016. "The Ride to Equality Started 60 Years Ago." *Tallahassee Democrat*, May 20, 2016. <https://www.tallahassee.com/story/news/2016/05/20/bus-boycott-60-years-later/84546580/>.
- MOBLEY, STEVE D., JR., and JENNIFER M. JOHNSON. 2019. "No Pumps Allowed": The 'Problem' with Gender Expression and the Morehouse College 'Appropriate Attire Policy.'" *Journal of Homosexuality* 66 (7): 867–95.
- SHAKUR, ASSATA. 1973. "To My People." <http://assata-shakur.blogspot.com/2006/02/assata-shakur-to-my-people.html>.

[CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE MACRO LEVEL]

Maryland's Formula: Civic Education and Engagement Drive Democratic Culture

■ **NANCY S. SHAPIRO**, Associate Vice Chancellor for Education and Outreach at the University System of Maryland

■ **KAREN OLMSTEAD**, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Salisbury University

A generation ago, we took for granted that the American experiment—a Constitution-based civil society—was *self-sustaining*. Recent events, however, remind us that, as the expression goes, “the price of liberty is eternal vigilance.” At a time when our democracy is being tested by attacks from foreign powers intent on undermining democratic elections, awakened by public outrage at systemic race-based inequities, and challenged by the dual forces of a global pandemic and economic downturn, education—and particularly post-secondary education—must reaffirm its mission of educating for democracy. Given the current cultural landscape of divisiveness and polarization, and the troubling trends in America’s overall civic health, we face a “crucible moment” that demands action from the higher education community (National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement 2012). Because approximately 75 percent of students in college attend a state college or university, public higher education will need to drive this effort with a nationwide, state-by-state commitment.

The University System of Maryland (USM)—composed of twelve diverse institutions including research universities, comprehensive universities, and Historically Black Universities—has actively reaffirmed this mission through system-wide and institution-specific activities. In April 2017, the USM convened a symposium on “Civic Education, Civic Engagement, and Civic Responsibility: Foundations of a

Democratic Society” to advance civic education as a system-wide priority. The Honorable Barbara Mikulski, the longest-serving female United States Senator (1987–2017) and a Baltimore native, presented the keynote lecture and challenged the USM to ensure that all 176,000 students enrolled in the public university system would graduate with the civic knowledge and skills to assume responsibility for sustaining US democracy and civil society. (See <http://www.usmd.edu/usm/academicaffairs/civic-engagement> to learn more.)

Over the past few decades, post-secondary education has become increasingly focused on goals defined in terms of workforce and economic development. But the symposium on civic education sent a clear signal to all USM institutions that our mission is much broader and must include setting system-wide expectations for student learning in such critical areas as US history and government; global, cultural, and environmental awareness; information technology literacy; open discussions of complex issues that are inclusive of a diversity of perspectives and opinions; and the exercise of civic responsibility and ethical leadership.

In June 2018, the USM Board of Regents charged a task force to survey the system’s institutions about their current civic education and engagement practices and make recommendations to support and enhance student learning outcomes to fulfill the mission of educating for democracy. The USM set up three working groups to serve as hubs

for communication and coordination across all the campuses, aligned with the key recommendations of the task force’s report: (1) Voting and Census Engagement; (2) Carnegie Community Engagement Classification; and (3) Integration of Civic Engagement and Education into the Curriculum. With representatives from each USM institution in each working group, we have established an effective and efficient way to share information, resources, and expertise as individual campuses pursue targeted goals.

Nancy Shapiro, USM associate vice chancellor for education and outreach and coauthor of this article, chaired the Voting and Census Engagement working group. Since all the universities in the USM participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), this working group agreed to compare results from institutional reports and share strategies for encouraging voter registration and voter turnout. The 2020 Census has created an urgent need for infusing civic education and engagement across all USM institutions, because everyone needs to be counted and understand why it is so important.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic upended our original plans for voter registration in fall 2020, we have reinvented the work in our new reality. We still plan to focus on student-to-student connections, understanding that virtual outreach will be as important—if not more important—than campus activities. What began as a working group focused on voting and the Census has evolved to address structural racism, civility, and civic responsibility both on and off campus.

The second working group, led by Deb Moriarty, former vice president for student affairs at Towson University, served as an incubator for campus applications to the Carnegie Foundation for the coveted Community Engagement

Classification (see <https://www.brown.edu/swearer/carnegie/about>). At the time, Towson University was the only USM institution with the Community Engagement Classification, and this working group was charged with helping other USM institutions to prepare their applications. As a result of the working group's collaboration, three additional USM institutions prepared full applications for submission in April 2019, and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) and Salisbury University (SU) were designated as Community Engaged campuses in 2020. The USM Board of Regents encouraged other USM institutions to apply in the next call for applications.

The third working group, Integration of Civic Engagement and Education into the Curriculum, shares resources and best practices across campuses. SU had a head start in this area with their Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE), established in 1999 to “reinvigorate the idea of a state university as a place where civic and political involvement could be developed and where students’ spirits of generosity and intellectual curiosity could foster engagement” (Salisbury University 2018). SU Provost Karen Olmstead, coauthor of this article, chairs USM’s curriculum integration working group and describes the multifaceted civic engagement work taking place at her university in the following section.

How One USM Campus Integrates Civic Learning

Salisbury University is a mid-sized public comprehensive institution with a mission to connect students to the community and to contribute to the “educational, economic, cultural, and social needs of the local region, the State of Maryland, and the nation” (Salisbury University 2019). SU is committed to graduating informed, engaged community builders and future leaders,

and the university has intentionally shaped its academic programs, faculty development, and cocurricular programs to serve that mission.

SU’s academic programming includes academic majors and minors like social justice, social work, health humanities, conflict analysis and dispute resolution, and law, justice, and advocacy, as well as noncredit activities designed to support civic education and engagement. For example, in the Presidential Citizen Scholar (PCS) program, students spend three semesters building skills for future careers and community service and leadership. In 2018, SU used World Café–style dialogues (World Café Community Foundation, n.d.) to engage students from all majors in roundtable discussions about homelessness in the community and raised student awareness of food insecurity on campus. As a result of that project, students created a campus food pantry, which has maintained operating hours throughout the COVID-19 closures and summer break. A small cadre of faculty and student volunteers, coordinated by PACE, have continued receiving and distributing donations, and volunteers have distributed food, hygiene items, and activity packets to local schools and religious groups. They distributed some 750 meals and 200 activity sets in the first weeks of COVID-19 closures.

In addition, SU’s Honors College has developed a “civic learning spiral” for its students. In their first-year seminar and cocurricular activities, Honors students engage in community service with partners like Habitat for Humanity, the Humane Society, the public library,



Salisbury University students partnered with community organizations to host a Haitian Community Event in April 2019 with activities for families and children, food, music, voter registration, and more. (Photo courtesy of Salisbury University/Megan Raymond)

and community gardens. In 2018 and 2019, hundreds of students volunteered at the National Folk Festival held in Salisbury. Upper-division students have the opportunity to work with mentors to identify their own projects. As a result of this intentional spiral of experiences, students gain confidence, and some have even received community recognition such as the Friends of Wicomico Public Libraries Light of Literacy Award.

PACE is a third example of SU’s integrated approach to civic education. PACE promotes voter registration and fosters public awareness and discussion of contemporary issues, but its real innovation has been in curriculum development. As SU reframed many of its undergraduate courses, it created space for integrating significant community projects into a four-credit course model. Maarten Pereboom, dean of SU’s Fulton School of Liberal Arts, challenged the campus to explore what civic engagement looks like across disciplines and programs. Recognizing the need for faculty development to achieve this, Pereboom worked with faculty members and PACE codirectors Sarah Surak and Alexander Pope to launch a faculty development seminar

in 2014 called Civic Engagement across the Curriculum (CEAC) that has been transformative for the campus.

Guided by the American Democracy Project's framing of civic engagement as "working to make a difference in the civic life of the communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference" (Ehrlich 2000), CEAC leaders recognized the complex challenge of authentically engaging faculty in this work. They created a ten-week seminar in which forty faculty participants over the last five years have explored a conceptual framework and compiled practical tools to incorporate and assess civic engagement in new or existing courses from the introductory to graduate level. (Some of these tools are available on CEAC's National Civic Engagement Resources list at <https://www.salisbury.edu/academic-offices/liberal-arts/pace/ceac/civic-engagement.aspx>.) This is difficult and complex intellectual work, but the faculty participants were excited by the challenge. A sample of the faculty seminar projects suggest the scope and scale of their work:

- a series of Holocaust remembrance events reaching more than five thousand members of the local community
- a student-facilitated informational forum on the Maryland General Assembly's proposed animal rights legislation
- a highly successful Philosophy in Schools program developed in partnership with the local school district

With support from the USM Wilson H. Elkins Professorship, Surak and Pope are developing an online module of the program, which will be available for all faculty in the USM system by fall 2020. The research that Surak and Pope have conducted on community-engaged teaching and learning, and CEAC more specifically, is a significant contribution to understanding this important pedagogy and its future potential (Surak et al. 2017).

CEAC's efforts have driven current conversations about general education revision at SU. A proposed model would require students to complete a civic and community engagement course component that could be met through the very courses redesigned under CEAC. The PACE rubric for CEAC courses, developed from suggestions in Welch (2016) and from AASCU's American Democracy Project, would serve as a tool to review potential courses in the proposed general education model.

In addition to the CEAC program, SU established a robust Faculty Learning Community (FLC) program, which grew out of an initial faculty-driven book group on disparities in higher education. The FLCs have often focused

on issues and opportunities in the community, including food insecurity, collaborative educational programming with the local zoo, women's leadership, and social justice. The Social Justice, Equity, and Teaching Transformation FLC created a robust library guide for students, faculty, and staff across campus, which provides important resources on topics including gender, race, social class, disability, nationality, indigeneity, and intersectionality. (The library guide is available at <https://libraryguides.salisbury.edu/DIRC.>)

Recognizing that incoming students need better models for addressing the deep divisions that exist in society, the campus launched a New Student Reflection (NSR) program in 2018, drawing on the methods pioneered at the Center for Civic Reflection, which was established in 1998 at Valparaiso University with support from the Lilly Endowment. Unlike some orientation programs that use a first-year book to initiate campus-wide discussions and inquiry, NSR uses short texts (including poems, prose, and nonfiction articles) introduced in orientation seminars to stimulate thinking and reflection about students' shared world and differing values and perspectives. These focused, moderated discussions model the type of dialogue sought in SU's classrooms. In the inaugural year of this program, and thanks to effective collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs, 125 trained facilitators composed of SU faculty, staff, and returning students worked with more than 1,350 first-year students. A survey conducted after these sessions indicated that 87 percent of first-year students felt engaged during the discussion, and 92 percent agreed that the NSR helped them feel more welcome at the university. In 2019, SU became the new home for the Center for Civic Reflection and its online resources, offering low-cost training for campuses and organizations across



Salisbury University's Organization of Latin American Students screened *A Bridge Apart*, a 2014 documentary about migrants coming to the United States from Central America and Mexico. A discussion followed with the coproducer and immigration experts. (Photo courtesy of Salisbury University/Megan Raymond)

the country that are interested in using this powerful methodology (see <https://civicreflection.org>).

Important conversations should not stop because work and courses move online. In fact, fostering civic awareness takes on even more urgency at a time when “community” is being redefined by COVID-19 guidelines. SU will again welcome new students to campus with the NSR experience. Fully online for the first time in fall 2020, the program will facilitate open dialogue about issues of diversity and inclusion, social justice, and individual and collective action. Using a half dozen “objects”—mostly images and video—facilitators will help new students practice the kinds of conversations that happen in college classrooms while also exploring challenging problems that matter across our communities.

The fall semester will also find PACE promoting political awareness and action across the state. Entering its fourth year, the special topics course Democracy across the Disciplines will explore the political climate in the context of the 2020 general election. A dozen faculty from all six SU schools and colleges as well as the Department of Political Science will present weekly lectures as part of the team-taught course, offered remotely for the first time. SU students can opt to take the course for one pass/fail credit or may audit the course. PACE will support high school government teachers and students who wish to integrate the course with existing K–12 requirements or explore dual-credit options. PACE is also opening the course to faculty, students, and staff at other USM schools and, as in past versions, there will be an option for the general public to participate, helping to bring the breadth and depth of the course to people across Maryland.

With programming for students and faculty in place, SU recognized the need for greater communication with

community partners, seeking to better establish the mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationships that are the hallmark of engaged campuses. PACE’s annual spring Community Engagement Showcase invites agencies, employers, internship partners, and other partners to a workshop to facilitate dialogue about community needs and opportunities for collaboration. The 2019 showcase was cosponsored by a regional nonprofit community foundation. Although COVID-19 prevented a 2020 showcase, campus and community leaders continue to collaborate to keep their long-term partnerships strong. Now more than ever, the health of the community—town and gown—depends on respect and shared responsibility for mutual well-being. SU will continue to ask students to explore what civic engagement looks like for them as individuals, professionals, and community members.

The SU example illustrates how a university system can tap into academic programming at one campus for the benefit of all of the system’s institutions. The USM working groups provide a forum for sharing curricular innovations and civic engagement practices for the benefit of the entire system.

Lessons Learned and Looking Forward

The USM Board of Regents is acutely aware of public postsecondary education’s obligation to promote, preserve, and protect the civic culture that is the foundation of democracy. Educating students to fully participate in democratic



Salisbury University’s Food for the Flock student food pantry helped the Maryland Food Bank kick off its It Takes More than Food to End Hunger campaign in April 2019. (Photo courtesy of Salisbury University/Kathy Pusey)

ideals, values, and processes must be at the center of what we do. By launching the system-wide task force and working groups, including representatives from all twelve USM institutions in the work, and providing reports and updates to the regents, the USM has raised the visibility and recognition of civic activities on the campuses. Through reports to the regents, institutions get credit for their efforts, and the sharing of information becomes a multiplier for the USM’s civic education mission.

At his first meeting with the USM Board of Regents in January 2020, Jay Perman, the newly appointed chancellor, invited a panel of students from several USM institutions to offer their perspectives on civic education and engagement in higher education, making his priorities clear from day one. When asked about how he sees the role of civic education in higher education, Chancellor Perman frames the issue like this:

Colleges and universities—especially *public* universities—have a responsibility to educate students for ethical citizenship. In turn, citizens in a democracy have a responsibility to help construct and sustain a just society through voting and public

service. We cannot look at the fraught political and civic landscape in America and not feel a sense of urgency around fulfilling this most basic contract. Preparing students to protect—and perfect—American democracy was *always* a central mission of US higher education, and it remains a central mission today. As deep divisions and political polarization threaten our national unity, as our founding norms and values are increasingly eroded, we must recommit to high-quality, integrated civic education as the way forward.

Below are a few lessons the USM has learned so far:

- **Institutional leadership comes from many sources on a campus as well as from the system headquarters.** From the top, the USM Board of Regents established and then endorsed the recommendations of the initial task force on civic engagement and education and now requires an annual report from each campus.
- **Academic affairs and student affairs are equal partners in this work.** Indeed, through close collaboration, these partners can form effective networks that support community-based learning, students' professional and civic formation, and the connection of academic content to student passions.
- **Fostering collaborations across institutions allows campuses to learn from each other and share innovative approaches.** The USM boasts numerous national experts in both student affairs and academic affairs who serve as resources across institutions through system-wide summits, networks, and shared projects.
- **Various departments and units can make contributions across a university through research, community**

engagement, collective action, and modeling tolerance and respect.

- **Reflection—in both academic and student affairs settings—is a key component of the civic maturing process.** From new student orientation to senior capstone projects, faculty and staff across the system create opportunities for civic reflection to engage students, faculty, staff, and community members.
- **The most effective strategies involve student-to-student interactions.** Research confirms that student-driven efforts allow participants to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively channel their energy, expertise, and education to address important challenges in their communities. Supporting student leadership has a multiplier effect on civility across campuses.
- **Challenging problems provide the topics for robust discussion.** Discussions about complex issues—like inequitable access to health care, structural racism, globalization, climate change and environmental sustainability, freedom of expression, public understanding of science, and cybersecurity—are and always have been central to the mission of a university.

The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement report, *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*—prepared at the invitation of the US Department of Education under the leadership of the Global Perspective Institute and the Association of American Colleges and Universities—described what a civic-minded institution should look and act like in the twenty-first century:

Colleges and universities need to expand education for democracy, so it reaches all students in ever more

challenging ways. . . . This is the crucible moment as the United States faces major challenges at home and abroad. Let us pledge to make it a transformative one that advances democratic values of liberty, justice, domestic tranquility, and the general welfare of the people and the planet. (2012, 69)

COVID-19 created a new context for a “crucible moment.” Black Lives Matter created a new definition of a “crucible moment.” Yet the centrality of “democratic values of liberty, justice, domestic tranquility, and the general welfare of the people and the planet” could not be more relevant. The University System of Maryland has embraced the urgency of this challenge and has a structure in place to hold itself accountable to this public mission. ☐

REFERENCES

- EHRlich, THOMAS**, ed. 2000. *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education/Oryx Press Series on Higher Education.
- NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON CIVIC LEARNING AND DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT**. 2012. *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities. https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/crucible/Crucible_508F.pdf.
- SALISBURY UNIVERSITY**. 2018. “PACE History and Co-Founders.” <https://www.salisbury.edu/academic-offices/liberal-arts/pace/history.aspx>.
- . 2019. “SU’s Mission and Values.” <https://www.salisbury.edu/discover-su/mission-values.aspx>.
- SURAK, SARAH, CHRISTOPHER JENSEN, ALISON RIOS MILLETT MCCARTNEY, and ALEXANDER POPE**. 2017. “Teaching Faculty to Teach Civic Engagement: Interdisciplinary Models to Facilitate Pedagogical Success.” In *Teaching Civic Engagement across the Disciplines*, edited by Elizabeth C. Matto, Alison Rios Millett McCartney, Elizabeth A. Bennion, and Dick Simpson, 231–46. Washington, DC: American Political Science Association.
- WELCH, MARSHALL**. 2016. *Engaging Higher Education: Purpose, Platforms, and Programs for Community Engagement*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- WORLD CAFÉ COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**. n.d. “World Café Method.” <http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method/>.

[CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE MACRO LEVEL]

A Commitment to Civic Learning in Massachusetts

■ **JOHN REIFF**, Director, Civic Learning and Engagement at Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

■ **CYNTHIA LYNCH**, Executive Director, Center for Civic Engagement and Frederick E. Berry Institute of Politics and Civic Engagement at Salem State University

■ **CINDY VINCENT**, Associate Professor, Media and Communication, at Salem State University

In 2015, Kimberly Barboza came to Salem State University in Massachusetts, curious about social justice issues but lacking a formal understanding of civic learning. In her first year, her interest in environmental science led her to become involved in the campus chapter of the Massachusetts Student Public Interest Research Group, and she soon discovered the university's new Center for Civic Engagement (CCE). The CCE was designed to bring together people interested in a range of issues, make connections between different forms of social justice, and teach skills for addressing those issues. As Kimberly settled into her second year, she became a crucial member of the CCE, focusing her activism on gender-based violence and taking on several campus leadership roles, including serving as student cochair of the Advocacy Day Committee and as president of the Florence Luscomb Women's Center.

"I deepened my understanding of my civic responsibilities and became part of a community of socially conscious students," Kimberly said of her civic engagement at Salem State University. "My education and experiences helped me understand complicated issues in gender-based violence."

Upon graduation, Kimberly worked for the anti-sexual assault movement to create better policies for students and survivors. Following that experience, she accepted a role at the CCE as the founding coordinator of the Frederick

E. Berry Institute of Politics and Civic Engagement.

Kimberly's growth and leadership in civic engagement are illustrative of a long history of civic activism in Massachusetts. In fact, it was the advocacy of public college and university faculty, concerned by what they saw as too strong an emphasis on workforce development in public higher education, that led the state's Board of Higher Education (BHE) in 2014 to include civic learning in its strategic agenda (Brennan 2017). As we struggle to preserve and participate in our democracy during the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis, the knowledge, skills, and competencies that are incorporated in a robust civic education are even more critical than ever.

Statewide Civic Learning

In its 2014 Policy on Civic Learning, the BHE defined civic learning as the

acquisition of the knowledge, the intellectual skills, and the applied competencies that citizens need for informed and effective participation in civic and democratic life; it also means acquiring an understanding of the social values that underlie democratic structures and practices.

Civic learning, the BHE noted, can occur through academic coursework, cocurricular activities, and off-campus civic engagement. The policy directs

Massachusetts's twenty-four state universities and community colleges to involve all their undergraduate students in civic learning. (See <https://www.mass.edu/bhe/lib/documents/AAC/AAC14-48CivicLearningwithPolicy-RevisedFinalforBHE.pdf> for the full policy.)

Toward this end, the policy includes a four-point action plan to advance the system-wide goals, with the first point addressed directly to the campuses and the other three to the Department of Higher Education (DHE), the state agency that works with the campuses to implement the board's policies:

1. Attention to civic learning as a goal in campus strategic plans.

The civic learning policy calls on campuses "to incorporate civic learning . . . as an expected outcome for undergraduate students," and the BHE works with campuses as they revise their strategic plans, evaluating drafts before the final version is submitted for full BHE approval.

For example, Salem State University's strategic plan, approved in 2017, identifies civic engagement as one of its seven core values, pointing to the role of the CCE in partnering "internally with faculty and staff and externally with regional partners to provide our students with the pedagogy and experiential learning opportunities to become engaged members of their communities, the nation, and the world." The plan also aims to expand civic learning and engagement through active learning approaches. The key metric associated with civic engagement was to "achieve Carnegie Classification for Civic Engagement" in 2020—which Salem State fulfilled in January.

2. Facilitation and support for campus work in civic learning through conferences and meetings to share best practices and, as available, the

provision of funding for campus projects.

In 2015, Massachusetts's DHE hired John Reiff, coauthor of this article, to work with campuses in building capacity to promote civic learning. One of the first outcomes was a collaboration with Cynthia Lynch (also a coauthor) at Salem State University to create a daylong conference that explored pathways to civic learning. The two went on to plan additional conferences each year, addressing topics such as the impact of civic engagement on student learning and success and the habits and practices of democracy. More than a hundred faculty and staff from across the state attended each conference, and Reiff continues to advise administrators and faculty on individual campuses.

When the coronavirus crisis hit, Reiff organized virtual conversations with educators across the state about the challenges of doing civic engagement work as campuses and community organizations have moved their work online. Faculty and staff from Massachusetts's community colleges are currently participating in meetings every few weeks, sharing their practices of pivoting to virtual community engagement and helping each other plan for an uncertain fall semester.

3. Development of new ways to measure the extent and variety of civic learning and report student outcomes.

Beginning in fall 2016, the DHE asked Massachusetts's community colleges and state universities to designate course sections across the curriculum with a substantial focus on civic learning (with no engagement component), civic learning with engagement as an option, and civic learning with required engagement. Courses designated for civic learning without engagement may include political science or history courses, in which students learn about the function of three branches of government or the history of struggles to increase democratic participation. The courses may also focus on identifying ways to address social, economic, or environmental problems or on taking the perspective of someone whose identity differs significantly from one's own and participating in dialogue with that person. Courses with engagement (either required or as an option) offer projects or placements involving the community beyond the classroom, linking projects explicitly to course learning goals and to at least one of BHE's four components of civic learning: knowledge, intellectual skills, practical skills, and values. Students reflect on their experiences

within broader political, social, or economic contexts. Examples include a class on food insecurity that created a cost-free, mobile food pantry that brings fresh produce and healthy shelf-stable food directly to the campus and surrounding community twice each month, or a

composition class sharing and discussing writing with an organization of formerly incarcerated women.

From summer 2018 through summer 2019, state universities enrolled 34,697 students in civic learning courses, and community colleges enrolled another 39,686. While these figures include students who took more than one civic learning course during the year, it still represents a significant portion of the roughly forty thousand students enrolled in the state's universities and the eighty thousand students enrolled in the state's community colleges.

4. Collaboration with the state's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop a cross-sector plan for civic learning from kindergarten through college.

In 2016, the BHE and the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education added civic preparation to a preexisting joint agreement on college and career readiness, creating a framework for collaboration on civic learning in public K-16 education (see https://www.mass.edu/bhe/lib/documents/BHE/04_BHE%2016-05%20Civic%20Preparation%20Added%20to%20Career%20Readiness.pdf). Drawing on this agreement, in 2018, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved a revised history and social science curriculum framework that emphasizes civic education throughout grades K-12 and requires a yearlong civics course in grade 8. The state legislature passed a bill requiring all public school systems to facilitate student-designed civics projects between grades 8 and 12.

Salem State's Center for Civic Engagement

Although Salem State University has a rich history of civic engagement, it wasn't until the launch of the CCE in 2015 and its intentional alignment with the DHE



Salem State University students visited Massachusetts Congressional representative Ayanna Pressley in Washington, DC, in March 2019. (Photo by Kate Adams)

policy that it began to strategically build a holistic civic-minded campus. The CCE focuses on advocacy, civic learning, community, and political engagement and has created curricular and cocurricular programming that engages students with community members in civic life and prepares them for democratic participation.

One of the CCE's programs is Salem State's First-Year Day of Service: Moving Forward, Giving Back (MFGB), which promotes civic engagement and social justice and creates an opportunity for two hundred new students to feel connected to their campus and surrounding communities. Data show that participation in MFGB correlates with increased retention, GPAs, and overall satisfaction with Salem State as well as stronger peer connections and a greater desire to get involved in on- and off-campus organizations. "It made me feel like I can make a difference while here at Salem State, and I learned that every little thing counts," one participating student said.

After the 2016 election, with students concerned about Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), rollbacks in gender rights, and policies unfairly targeting minority and underserved communities, the CCE established Advocacy Day: For People Who Want to Take Action to teach students to raise their voices and look at issues through multiple perspectives. The event features guest speakers and workshops and has addressed social justice issues like immigration, voting rights, women's rights, economic and housing justice, racial justice, and LGBTQ rights. The CCE also created advocacy education initiatives for which CCE staff and students visit approximately forty classes a semester to help students connect their curricula to their lived experiences, develop civic agency to influence decisions in their communities, and learn how to engage elected officials in the advocacy process. "The CCE's advocacy workshops give

my students an opportunity to consider how they can influence and advocate for the social issues that are important to them," said sociology professor Sara Moore, "whether that's gender equity, college affordability, or racial justice."

In 2017, the CCE reviewed service learning on campus, identifying several troubling issues, including inequitable power dynamics and a lack of intentional learning outcomes. This analysis led to a new approach, Critically Engaged Civic Learning (CECL), which brings together community members, community partners, students, faculty members, and other education leaders to codesign, implement, and evaluate CECL initiatives, addressing the root causes of inequality in the community (see Vincent, Lynch, and Moore 2018). "If we as students wanted to do something to promote change in our communities, I feel like we definitely would be able to do it," said a student who participated in a CECL project. "Showing us these problems and what we can do about them made us feel more empowered."

The CCE's annual Your Voice, Your Vote election programming involves voter registration and two months of intensive educational election programming that includes ballot question panels, political workshops, debate watch parties, candidate forums, civic art, teach-ins, and a large voter mobilization effort. For Election 2018, the CCE provided more than fifteen events, registered more than nine hundred voters, and saw six hundred students vote on campus. Overall, Salem State had a 46.8 percent student voting rate, which was 20 percent higher than the national average, according to the National Study on Learning, Voting, and Engagement. The university also earned a Gold Seal from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge and was listed in *Washington Monthly's* 2018



Salem State University students have helped change campus culture around voting, leading Salem State to have a level of student voting well above the national average. (Photo by Emma Kearns)

America's Best Colleges for Student Voting. During the 2020 primary, more than four hundred Salem State students cast ballots just weeks before leaving campus due to COVID-19 concerns.

As of this writing, the CCE is developing strategies to advance civic learning and engagement while Salem State remains closed during the pandemic. One plan in the works is a scaled-down Day of Service that has students working in small groups on campus or virtually to address the needs of the greater Salem community as it recovers from the COVID-19 crisis. Additionally, the CCE is developing advocacy modules to support faculty as they adjust their fall 2020 courses. Finally, there will be a robust effort to register students to vote online, prepare them to vote, and provide virtual election workshops, debate watch parties, and guest speakers via webinars for individual classes and the community at large.

Challenges to Meet

One of the biggest challenges to Massachusetts's 2014 Policy on Civic Learning is that each state campus has its own culture and priorities. Moreover, campuses belong to one of three different systems: the University

of Massachusetts system, the state university system, and the community college system. The state legislature gave the University of Massachusetts system considerable autonomy in relation to the BHE, and the system's president chose not to formally participate in the civic learning initiative. As a result, civic learning and engagement course designations and campus consultations have been limited to the nine state universities and fifteen community colleges. Among those institutions, some have created civic learning faculty development programs or centers; others have not.

A related challenge is funding. In the first years of this initiative, grants allowed the campuses to build civic learning infrastructure, and Reiff's position as half-time director of civic learning and engagement was created. However, when state budget cuts ended the DHE's capacity to incentivize campuses through civic learning grants and reduced Reiff's position to quarter-time, some campus leaders saw the initiative as an unfunded mandate that they could largely ignore. Other campuses, however, took the BHE's mandate as a supportive context for their own commitments to civic education and the future of democracy. In the current pandemic-driven economic constriction, it would be difficult to persuade campuses to make new commitments of their own funds to build infrastructure for civic engagement; however, Reiff has been working with campus leaders to articulate how the current infrastructure supports campus priorities such as community relations and student retention and should therefore be maintained.

A third challenge is the cataclysmic emergence of the coronavirus. As of this writing, campuses in Massachusetts (as in the rest of the nation) are closed to students and faculty, spring 2020 courses pivoted midsemester to remote teaching,

and fall plans remain uncertain. Civic engagement in this context has been shredded as faculty have been occupied with managing online instruction, many students have struggled to participate in that instruction because of lack of access to needed technologies, and many community partners are shifting how they operate and encountering new needs. Losses in revenue coupled with new costs are also hitting campus budgets.

To address some of these COVID-19 challenges, DHE is adapting its activities designed to support civic learning and engagement:

- The annual conference on civic learning and engagement originally scheduled in May 2020 will now be a virtual symposium in September 2020.
- Campus leaders are working to run remote faculty development programs for educators drawn to civic engagement because of the pandemic, as well as to help civic engagement faculty address community partners' needs under social-distancing guidelines. Reiff is working with Campus Compact—a national coalition of colleges and universities supporting campus-based civic engagement—to create a COVID-19 civic engagement virtual toolkit for faculty and curriculum development.
- Reiff and Campus Compact are creating virtual civic learning communities, based on theme, issue, or institution type, to help civic-minded faculty and staff stay connected.

To varying degrees, all of us—students, faculty, and staff—are struggling with the trauma of the pandemic, and our plans for our ongoing work should be “trauma-informed” (Davidson 2020). Offering options for civic engagement is an important way to support our students in moving beyond the boundaries of their own trauma, experiencing

a larger community, and experiencing their own agency in strengthening that community. We have the opportunity to share across our campuses our creative responses to continuing civic learning and engagement, which weave a web of support for faculty, students, community partners, and campus leaders.

Yet as we focus on this work, we must also hold a broader vision. As Harkavy, Bergen, Gallagher, and van't Land (2020) remind us, “The post-COVID-19 world must be based on the values we cherish: democracy, human rights, and the rule of law as well as social justice, inclusion, and equity.” The pandemic is sharpening challenges to democratic institutions and values, and colleges and universities must prepare students to participate in civic life with knowledge, skills, and competencies they need to be effective advocates for a more democratic and just society. They deserve nothing less from us. ☐

REFERENCES

- BRENNAN, JAN.** 2017. *Higher Education Civic Learning and Engagement: A Massachusetts Case Study*. Education Commission of the States. <https://www.ecs.org/higher-education-civic-learning-and-engagement-a-massachusetts-case-study/>.
- DAVIDSON, CATHY.** 2020. “The Single Most Essential Requirement in Designing a Fall Online Course.” Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (blog), May 11, 2020. <https://www.hastac.org/blogs/cathy-davidson/2020/05/11/single-most-essential-requirement-designing-fall-online-course>.
- HARKAVY, IRA, SJUR BERGAN, TONY GALLAGHER, and HILLIGJE VAN'T LAND.** 2020. “Universities Must Help Shape the Post-COVID-19 World.” *University World News*, April 18, 2020. <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20200413152542750>.
- MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION.** 2019. “Civic Learning.” <https://www.mass.edu/strategic/civic.asp>.
- SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018–21.** 2017. <https://records.salemstate.edu/node/472>.
- VINCENT, CINDY, CYNTHIA LYNCH, and SARA MOORE.** 2018. “Moving from Service-Learning to Critically-Engaged Civic Learning at Salem State.” AASCU'S American Democracy Project. <https://adpaascu.wordpress.com/2018/02/21/campus-spotlight-moving-from-service-learning-to-critically-engaged-civic-learning-at-salem-state/>.

[CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE MACRO LEVEL]

Civic Engagement in Virginia's Public Higher Education Institutions

■ **JODI FISLER**, Associate for Assessment Policy and Analysis at the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

■ **LYNN E. PELCO**, Associate Vice Provost for Community Engagement at Virginia Commonwealth University

The syllabus for Forging Cultures of Resilience was a tall order for a fifteen-week undergraduate sociology course. The spring 2019 class aimed to incorporate multiple theoretical and philosophical perspectives with the lived realities of citizens. It included plans for conversations with both US and South African community activists; a mock city council meeting during which student teams would deliberate and propose solutions to structural inequalities in the local community; and a final essay exam asking students to reflect on the capacity of democratic processes to address racial inequality.

Coinstructors Dingani Mthethwa and Susan Bodnar-Deren at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond, Virginia, weren't sure they could pull off incorporating all the strategies to promote and assess civic learning. They knew, though, that they could draw on the support of other faculty members participating with them in a yearlong, interinstitutional Debate for Civic Learning faculty learning community (FLC) cosponsored by VCU and James Madison University. The FLC would also provide them with expert advice as they developed, taught, and assessed the experiential learning class in which students would have multiple opportunities to practice civic behaviors. "When you incorporate a concrete activity, such as debate-based learning," Bodnar-Deren wrote in describing the class for the FLC, "we (as instructors) can observe and assess the students' civic behaviors, such as critical thinking, consensus building,

and synthesis of perspectives through a hands-on experience."

The impetus for the Debate for Civic Learning FLC and similar faculty development initiatives across Virginia was the statewide assessment policy, adopted in July 2017, that named civic engagement as a required competency that all public institutions of higher education must assess. As colleges and universities nationwide have been reclaiming their leadership role in supporting civic education to model democratic practices, graduate engaged citizen leaders, and collaborate with their communities to solve critical societal problems (AGB 2019; APLU 2015; Sutton 2016), Virginia is using its higher education assessment policy to further encourage that shift. Although the sudden transition to remote learning in the middle of the spring 2020 semester disrupted instruction and programming (as well as assessment activities) on most campuses, many faculty and staff around the state have continued efforts to develop students' civic capacities and strengthen civic-mindedness on their campuses.

A LEAP of Civic Engagement

In 2014, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)—which oversees the activities of the state's fifteen four-year institutions, one two-year junior college, and the Virginia Community College System's twenty-three campuses—approved *The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*. Under one of the strategic plan's goals, "Optimize Student Success for Work and Life,"

SCHEV committed to "strengthen[ing] curricular options to ensure that graduates are prepared with the competencies necessary for employment and civic engagement" (SCHEV, n.d.-a).

Over the next few years, SCHEV identified a number of priority initiatives to focus the agency's efforts toward meeting its strategic goals. One of these initiatives called on SCHEV staff to "collaborate with institutions to measure the quality of undergraduate education, including civic engagement of graduates" (SCHEV, n.d.-b). SCHEV staff then embarked on a fifteen-month process, starting in spring 2016, to review and revitalize the state's policy on the assessment of undergraduate student learning. A twenty-one-member task force, made up almost entirely of representatives from Virginia's public two- and four-year institutions, began with a foundational question: What does a high-quality education look like in the twenty-first century? The task force returned to a statement on quality that had been drafted for SCHEV a year earlier in the wake of a symposium on that very topic. Drawing on the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) framework articulated by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), the statement affirmed that a high-quality college education—regardless of a student's field of study—should emphasize broad learning in a variety of disciplines, intellectual and practical skills, personal and social responsibility, and integration and application of knowledge and skills. (See the sidebar on LEAP on page 26.)

Acknowledging SCHEV's specific references in the strategic planning documents, the task force named civic engagement as one of several competencies all public institutions would be required to assess among their students. In this way, the new policy not only responded to SCHEV's interest in civic engagement but also addressed the

“personal and social responsibility” component of the LEAP framework. The other required competencies, by contrast, focused on the development of intellectual and practical skills such as writing and critical thinking.

The task force spiritedly discussed how the policy could establish clear expectations while still honoring the individual missions and diverse contexts of the state’s thirty-nine public institutions. Some institutions were concerned that civic engagement would be reduced to participation in volunteer service. Most had no mechanism for counting students’ volunteer hours, and some believed that a community service requirement would be unreasonably burdensome to a large segment of their student population (such as those in rural areas attending college part-time while also managing work and family responsibilities). Other institutions worried that SCHEV would expect them to change their curricula to incorporate civic education (which SCHEV has no authority to do). Consequently, the policy gave institutions the flexibility to define and foster civic engagement in ways that made sense for each campus and its students.

From Policy to Student Learning

In June 2017, a month before the assessment policy was formally adopted, nearly 150 faculty, academic leaders, and community/civic engagement staff attended a meeting at which SCHEV staff discussed the policy’s civic engagement requirements. The meeting included presentations by representatives from two- and four-year institutions in Virginia, as well as a few invited speakers from other states, who gave their perspectives on the “hows” of civic engagement: how to define, teach, and assess it. Because the program was specifically about addressing this new state requirement, it drew a greater mix of people than might

normally attend a regional civic engagement conference and, consequently, allowed for much richer conversations about how institutions might incorporate civic engagement into their curricular and cocurricular programs. The schedule included time for institutional teams to work on their civic engagement assessment plans based on what they had learned during the day. Those who could not travel to the meeting could livestream the plenary sessions and ask questions via Twitter. Presenter materials, a recording of the livestream, and other resources were made available to all attendees, as well as to anyone else who expressed interest in the event.

The positive response to this 2017 civic engagement meeting led SCHEV to create additional opportunities for interested faculty, staff, and institutional leaders to gather and learn from one another. In the past two years, SCHEV has sponsored FLCs, statewide assignment design workshops (in person and online), and “days of dialogue” focused on teaching and learning. Although these initiatives often address more than just civic engagement, the high level of interest in civic engagement is evident. In the pilot year of SCHEV’s FLC initiative (2018–19), four of the six self-designed FLCs focused on topics related to the teaching of civic engagement.

Independently of SCHEV’s initiatives, institutions have offered faculty development programs of their own. George Mason University, for example, now offers additional recognition to promote involvement in civic- and community-engaged teaching, research, and service, including curriculum impact grants, work-study assistants for community-engaged research, and institution-level awards for faculty. Virginia Commonwealth University and James Madison University teamed up to host the inter-institutional Debate for Civic Learning FLC described at

the beginning of this article. That collaboration proved so beneficial that the FLC’s facilitators and participants hosted a two-day Debate for Civic Learning Summit at James Madison University in September 2019. Fifty faculty from sixteen campuses attended the summit, which was designed to support faculty members from around Virginia in promoting students’ civic learning and engagement through debate and deliberative dialogue pedagogies. The summit organizers received a statewide grant to award seven minigrants to attendees to support them in integrating debate pedagogy into their classes. Summit attendees from the University of Mary Washington (UMW) further built on the summit by organizing an FLC on Advocacy, Deliberation, and Civic Learning during spring and summer 2020. Faculty from a range of disciplines participated, even amid the disruption of COVID-19. Leslie Martin, who directs the UMW Center for Community Engagement and cofacilitated the FLC, said that although faculty had to adjust their courses and respond to scheduling and budgetary changes, “the emphasis on combining civic education and either debate or advocacy has not wavered.”

The Debate for Civic Learning Summit and related FLCs exemplify the cross-institution and statewide collaborations and trainings that have grown organically from the new assessment policy and SCHEV’s sponsorship of initial conversations and professional development offerings. As a result of the policy, strong relationships have developed between SCHEV and other organizations that share a concern for civic engagement. Jodi Fisler, coauthor of this article, has presented at meetings of the Virginia Engage Network, a statewide association of civic-oriented higher education faculty and staff. She has also collaborated with staff from Virginia’s Campus Compact to raise awareness

and promote civic engagement efforts among faculty and staff from around the state. The Virginia Engage Network, in turn, assists SCHEV in supporting civic-oriented FLCs and provides content expertise as needed. These mutually supportive relationships are creating professional networks touching all sectors of Virginia's higher education landscape.

Rising to the Challenge

During summer 2019, faculty researchers at VCU began collaborating with the authors of this article to analyze the civic engagement assessment plans that all Virginia public higher education institutions had submitted to SCHEV in accordance with the SCHEV policy. At the time, the data showed that a majority of institutions across the state were beginning work in the areas of civic knowledge and skills, and several institutions were also making intentional efforts to develop students' civic values and actions. These four dimensions—knowledge, skills, values, and collective action—make up the framework for civic learning and democratic engagement articulated in *A Crucible Moment*, a report commissioned by the US Department of Education under the Obama administration and prepared under the leadership of the Global Perspective Institute and AAC&U (National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement 2012). A small number of institutions—including both of Virginia's public Historically Black Universities, Norfolk State University and Virginia State University—planned to address all four dimensions, using both curricular and cocurricular methods to develop students' civic competencies and assessing them through a mix of direct and indirect methods, including embedded course assessments, surveys, reflective writing, and participation in community service, voting, and other civic-minded activities.

SCHEV staff recognize the complex nature of civic engagement and understand that the civic engagement assessment requirement is part of a long game. Many institutions need time to build up the programs and structures that develop students' civic capacities. After all, assessment doesn't mean much if it is detached from actual learning experiences. What that means in practice is that the assessment plans are living documents that are very likely to change as institutions try out ideas, discover different approaches, and adapt to shifting circumstances. In the two years since institutions submitted the initial assessment plans, a number of institutions have made substantial modifications to their civic engagement plans. Some have revised their general education curricula and integrated civic engagement more purposefully into their programs; others have added or reallocated staff resources. George Mason University, for example, hired a director of civic engagement to provide centralized leadership across its three campuses. The centralized support for civic engagement has resulted in enhanced communication, resources, and visibility for existing civic partnerships, according to Julie Owen, an associate professor of leadership studies at GMU, while expanded reporting of civic engagement has led to greater awareness and opportunities for faculty, students, and community partners. "For many years," Owens said, "community-engaged work was done in episodic ways and focused on individuals dedicated to making a difference in area communities. This changed when Virginia raised the profile of civic engagement by including it as a core competency." These kinds of changes are exciting to see, and naturally, they will influence how institutions think



Faculty at the Debate for Civic Learning Summit at James Madison University in September 2019. (Photo by Jodi Fislser)

about assessment and even what kind of assessment is possible.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted educational activities in ways that we have not had time to fully understand. Although teaching and learning continue, SCHEV suspended assessment reporting requirements for the duration of the crisis to allow institutions to focus their attention where it is most needed. The Virginia Engage Network and Virginia Campus Compact, however, continue to create opportunities for faculty and staff to gather virtually and to share ideas for keeping students engaged in civic and community-based learning despite the ongoing disruption to normal campus operations. The VCU Service-Learning Office, for example, is working directly with faculty instructors scheduled to teach community-engaged classes in fall 2020 to identify opportunities for online service and to help instructors deepen their students' civic learning outcomes even when online service opportunities are not available. The wave of activism that erupted after the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May will likely generate renewed interest in civic issues and community-focused learning experiences, bringing a heightened sense of urgency to the challenge of preparing

students to be successful as members of a diverse, democratic society.

Moving Forward

Virginia has never before been in a position to evaluate where we are as a state with regard to civic engagement efforts at our colleges and universities. Although it may take repeated assessment cycles for us to gauge the impact of the policy and the various activities that have sprung up around it, we are looking forward to the civic engagement assessment reports that will be coming in over the next several years. It bears repeating, however, that this is a long-term effort. Meaningful learning and assessment do not end when a report is submitted. SCHEV

anticipates that the results of institutional civic engagement assessments will answer some questions, of course. More important, we hope these assessments will generate new questions and provide opportunities for even greater conversation and collaboration across Virginia's diverse institutions, benefitting not only our students, faculty, and staff, but also our communities, our state, our nation, and the world. 

REFERENCES

AGB (ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNING BOARDS OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES). 2019. *Reclaiming Higher Education's Leadership in Support of Civil Education*. AGB Advisory Statement. <https://agb.org/reports-and-statements/civil-education/>.

APLU (ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AND LAND GRANT UNIVERSITIES). 2015. *The Centrality of Engagement in Higher Education*. <https://www.aplu.org/library/the-centrality-of-engagement-in-higher-education/file>.

NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON CIVIC LEARNING AND DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT. 2012. *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities. https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/crucible/Crucible_508F.pdf.

SCHEV: STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA. n.d.-a. "Goals of the Virginia Plan for Higher Education."

———. n.d.-b. "Initiatives."

SUTTON, BETHANY ZECHER. 2016. "Higher Education's Public Purpose." *The LEAP Challenge Blog*.

Leveraging the LEAP Framework to Advance Civic Knowledge

■ **C. EDWARD WATSON**, Chief Information Officer and Associate Vice President for Quality, Pedagogy, and LEAP Initiatives in the Office of Quality, Curriculum, and Assessment at the Association of American Colleges and Universities

As institutions and state systems undertake educational reform and renewal activities, they can leverage the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) framework to ensure civic learning and engagement outcomes are embedded into the fabric of the resulting curricular structures and pedagogical practices (see <https://www.aacu.org/leap>).

The LEAP framework begins with a set of essential learning outcomes (ELOs) that provide the foundation for a contemporary liberal education, including knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, intellectual and practical skills, personal and social responsibility (including

civic knowledge and engagement), and integrative and applied learning. Functionally, LEAP's ELOs have served many in higher education as a menu of possible outcomes to consider as they rethink their curriculum. For example, adopting the LEAP framework, including civic knowledge and engagement, in a general education reform effort would connect curricular reform to civic learning goals and would result in the long-term implementation of civic learning at an institution.

LEAP also suggests high-impact educational practices, which have been shown to result in deep learning gains. Several of these practices are well-established civic learning pedagogies such as service learning and community-based learning. In addition,

LEAP encourages practitioners to examine students' work to gauge how well they have developed the capacities the ELOs represent. LEAP provides a set of sixteen Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics to assist in this assessment, including one specifically on civic engagement (see <https://www.aacu.org/civic-engagement-value-rubric>). Practitioners can also use the Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric in faculty development efforts to ensure that pedagogy and assignments align with the specific elements that make up the civic engagement learning outcome.

Those wishing to establish civic learning and engagement as a signature element of their institution or system's educational culture are encouraged to revisit the LEAP framework. To help campuses make successful transitions to LEAP and to leverage VALUE's opportunities, AAC&U offers a range of conferences, institutes, publications, and webinars, many available virtually at <https://www.aacu.org>. 

Civic Engagement, Regional Accreditation, and the Public Good

■ **JEFF ROSEN**, Vice President for Accreditation Relations and Director of Open Pathway at the Higher Learning Commission

“Every educational institution serves a public purpose.”

—The Higher Learning Commission’s Guiding Values

Emphasizing the public role of colleges and universities has long been a key mission of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the largest of the regional accreditors in the United States. In February 2019, the commission made this undertaking an explicit standard of academic quality when we revised and updated the Criteria for Accreditation. The new standard affirms the consent of our 981 member institutions to demonstrate their commitment to civic engagement, not just in theory but also in practice. This broad agreement is expressed in the new Core Component 1.C., which states, “The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves” (Higher Learning Commission 2019).

When this provision takes effect in September 2020, colleges and universities in HLC’s nineteen-state region will be expected to provide material evidence that establishes their commitment to civic learning in accordance with their own articulated missions, student bodies, and communities. However they might choose to prepare students to participate as informed citizens or encourage their engagement in civic projects, member institutions will write narratives that demonstrate how they promote civic participation as a reflection of their commitment to the public good, and how they foster a climate of

respect internally and externally, promoting civic responsibility across their sphere of influence.

As we formulated the new expectations, HLC surveyed member institutions, conducted a rigorous internal analysis of the survey results, and solicited feedback from peer reviewers. The feedback we received from our entire membership helped us clarify our intent and refine our language, reflecting the commission’s commitment to group process, collaboration, and peer review. Members confirmed that the new core component actually reinforces their existing commitments to uphold the diverse public purposes of their enterprises. HLC’s new strategic plan, EVOLVE, underscores the importance of civic engagement to the commission. (For an introduction to EVOLVE, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTu4SRcUPeI>.)

The new expectations will affect all our member institutions, from small independent colleges to the largest state universities. It applies equally to single-focus academies, Bible colleges, public community colleges, and research institutions. Therefore, HLC will encourage institutions to embrace civic projects and opportunities that conform to their own values, needs, and commitments. The core component will be broadly inclusive, recognizing the value of focused seminars and colloquia, projects led by volunteers and interns, and service learning and experiential learning, as well as broadly conceived “town-gown” interactions.

Over the coming months, peer reviewers and HLC’s staff will help colleges and universities identify ways to recognize and document their commitment to civic learning and will provide

training opportunities to facilitate the review process. Some of these opportunities will build upon the existing activities of the Open Pathway (one of the commission’s two principal means for institutions to maintain accreditation), which had already developed partnerships with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), Campus Compact, and the American Political Science Association (APSA) to promote civic engagement. Through these connections, HLC already offers its members access to these organizations’ resources on civic engagement, global learning, and cooperative development.

In a climate where “innovation” in higher education is defined by programs that focus narrowly on skills development or meeting employer needs, HLC’s commitment to civic engagement and democratic processes emerges as broadly applicable to help meet today’s pressing demands to change the social fabric, including recent calls to work for racial justice, to combat economic inequality, and to improve equity and access to higher education. It encourages institutions to engage with their communities rather than retreat into the ivory tower. It inspires them to acquire and cultivate a broad base of employee talent from a wide community base. It empowers faculty experts to work across physical and disciplinary boundaries and apply problem-solving approaches to address social concerns. It helps students learn to connect with others whose backgrounds might be different from their own and to learn the perspectives of others while working in teams. And it provides a model for institutions to embrace diversity and dialogue as priorities in educating students for a globally connected world. 📍

REFERENCE

HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION. 2019. “Criteria for Accreditation.” <https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/criteria-and-core-components.html>.

[CAMPUS PRACTICE]

Global Issues, Local Concerns: A Community College Educates for Democracy

■ **PATTY ROBINSON**, Faculty Director, Civic and Community Engagement Initiatives at College of the Canyons

Although civic engagement is gaining momentum throughout the nation (Scobey 2012), colleges and universities continue to grapple with how to support democracy. This is especially true for the nation's 1,051 community colleges, sometimes known as “democracy's colleges.”

Community colleges serve students who have been the most excluded from participatory democracy and political decision making (American Association of Community Colleges 2020), including first-generation students, students from underserved racial and ethnic groups, and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who experience the “civic empowerment gap” (Levinson 2010) that prevents these groups from engaging in civic learning and investing in change through participatory democracy.

Educators can narrow this gap by bringing together academic departments with civic, community, and political engagement programs to encourage stewardship for the public good. Given the unrest afflicting communities, apathy plaguing politics, and insecurity permeating the economy, community colleges must revitalize their long-standing commitment to aligning citizenship development with workforce readiness. This is even more essential given the changes affecting higher education as a result of COVID-19. It is time for democracy's colleges to reaffirm their role of educating for democracy.

Civic Learning by Design

At College of the Canyons (COC), a community college in Santa Clarita, California, department chairs from

four departments (Anthropology, Communication Studies, Culinary Arts, and Sociology) are incorporating civic design into their programs to foster a civic-minded campus culture and diminish the civic empowerment gap. Supported by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Civic Learning in the Major by Design initiative and guided by recommendations from *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future* (2012) and *Civic Prompts: Making Civic Learning Routine across the Disciplines* (2015), these departments are addressing COC's civic and community engagement theme of “Making the Invisible, Visible.”

Students in these departments, detailed below, confront what Rittel and Webber (1973) call “wicked problems”—issues difficult or impossible to solve. These problems are the basis for the seventeen United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which identify world problems found in all countries (United Nations, n.d.). Many of these issues, like poverty and climate change, resonate with community college students, especially Generation Z students passionate to create social change (Seemiller and Grace 2018).

Integrating Civic Design

Anthropology embeds civic engagement in the department's mission statement, emphasizing local, national, or global problems while recognizing the intersection between species, populations, cultures, and environments. The department addresses each of the SDGs and

incorporates them in classes like Cultural Anthropology Honors and Physical Anthropology. SDGs like “Life on Land” complement the department's commitment to primate conservation. Working with the local Gibbon Conservation Center, students create dialogues to educate the public about gibbons, the world's most endangered primate species. Faculty also highlight SDGs through lectures, assignments, and projects, and they display multicolored icons representing the SDGs in their classrooms.

In the future, faculty will include SDG descriptions in course syllabi and connect SDG topics to faculty specializations. “Anthropology is committed to advancing global stewardship by encouraging students to tackle ‘wicked problems’ while contributing to the public good,” said department chair Lisa Malley. This civic initiative now drives the department.

Communication Studies embeds aspects of civic engagement in its most popular courses, including Introduction to Public Speaking and Small Group Communication. Together, these two courses enroll more than four thousand students per year. Department chair Tammera Stokes Rice believes that “community college students are searching for ways to connect academic knowledge to ‘real world’ situations, including the SDGs.”

Almost every student completing the associate of arts degree at COC must complete a public speaking requirement, and public speaking students are required to attend a civic engagement event and prepare a public policy speech. Events address issues like homelessness, food insecurity, and human trafficking (related to SDGs like “No Poverty,” “Zero Hunger,” “Gender Equality,” and “Decent Work and Economic Growth”) as well as voter education and civic participation.

In the Small Group Communication course, students collaborate with nonprofits to create long-term solutions, not

short-term responses. Rather than volunteer for a “clean-up day,” for example, teams design plans to reduce plastic waste (related to SDGs like “Responsible Consumption and Production.”) They operationalize their plans, analyze their data, and evaluate the benefits.

Culinary Arts infuses food insecurity into two of its most popular classes, Pastry Art and Catering, while addressing SDGs like “Zero Hunger.” Faculty incorporate discussions of food scarcity, food deserts, food sustainability, and healthy eating throughout their courses. Concerned about students who do not have access to nutritious meals, Culinary Arts created a Fuel Station in 2019 to provide COC students with free, healthy snacks. “The department [has worked] with local businesses to secure donations of fresh fruits and vegetables,” said chair Cindy Schwanke. Culinary Arts has also provided low-cost recipes and food preparation tips to students, as well as to community residents who frequent local food pantries.

Sociology promotes a culturally responsible, equity-minded learning perspective, using open educational resources (OER) to provide the highest level of education for the least amount of students’ money. According to department chair Katie Coleman, “Civic design is the first step in creating a long-term sustainable model for faculty . . . to embed specific civic engagement terminology, goals, and assessments into coursework.”

Faculty also address issues of civic engagement and social justice in their classes and incorporate “wicked problems” throughout courses, assignments, and learning outcomes. Criminology students focus on the “Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions” SDG as they propose ideas to decrease rates of recidivism, violence, and addiction among the nation’s incarcerated population. Instructors design and students modify projects to engage the campus community in

understanding the systemic challenges and failures of the justice system, including organizing letter-writing campaigns, fundraising for books for incarcerated individuals, and partnering with nonprofits to raise awareness of the inadequate rehabilitation of nonviolent drug offenders. As one student said, “I am now aware of the true realities that nonviolent drug offenders face in our prison system and will continue to speak out and inform others.”

In addition, students in Introduction to Women’s Studies examine the socially constructed meaning of the term “victim blaming” while researching the personal and societal impact of victim blaming in sexual assault cases. Transdisciplinary teams of students critically examine the laws, norms, and values that contribute to the “Gender Equality” SDG. Advocacy, activism, and social change drive students as they post stories of survival and recovery on their own personal websites.

Civic Design Creates Change

Civic engagement at COC is aligned with project-based learning, which provides students more equitable chances to tackle contemporary issues. Civic design reduces the civic empowerment gap and emphasizes creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration—the “four Cs” of professional skills sought by employers. Within the context of self and society, students participating in Civic Learning in the Major by Design are practicing participatory democracy, building civic agency, and enhancing global citizenship. The time has come to engage a new generation in democracy. This is the moral obligation of “democracy’s

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The seventeen United Nations Sustainable Development Goals icons. (Image courtesy of the United Nations)

colleges” to their students, community, and nation. 

REFERENCES

- AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES.** 2020. “Fast Facts 2020.” https://www.aacc.nche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AACC-2020-Fact-Sheet-Final-1_web.jpg.
- LEVINSON, MEIRA.** 2010. “The Civic Empowerment Gap: Defining the Problem and Locating Solutions.” In *Handbook of Research on Civic Engagement*, edited by Lonnie Sherrod, Judith Torney-Purta, and Constance A. Flanagan, 331–61. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- MUSIL, CARYN McTIGHE.** 2015. *Civic Prompts: Making Civic Learning Routine across the Disciplines*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities. <https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/CLDE/CivicPrompts.pdf>.
- NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON CIVIC LEARNING AND DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT.** 2012. *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities. https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/crucible/Crucible_508F.pdf.
- RITTEL, HORST W. J., and MELVIN M. WEBBER.** 1973. “Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning.” *Policy Sciences* 4: 155–69.
- SCOBAY, DAVID M.** 2012. “A Copernican Moment: On the Revolutions in Higher Education.” In *Transforming Undergraduate Education: Theory That Compels and Practices That Succeed*, edited by Donald W. Harward, 37–50. New York, NY: Rowman and Littlefield.
- SEEMILLER, COREY, and MEGHAN GRACE.** 2018. *Generation Z: A Century in the Making*. New York, NY: Routledge Press.
- UNITED NATIONS.** n.d. “About the Sustainable Development Goals.” <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.

[CAMPUS PRACTICE]

Home and Away: An Engaged Institution's Continuing Commitment to Global Learning

■ **AMY CONRAD WARNER**, Vice Chancellor for Community Engagement at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)

■ **MARY F. PRICE**, Director of Faculty Development at the IUPUI Center for Service and Learning

■ **LESLIE A. BOZEMAN**, Director of Curriculum Internationalization at the IUPUI Office of International Affairs

■ **STEPHANIE LESLIE**, Director of Study Abroad at the IUPUI Office of International Affairs

Even as the COVID-19 pandemic interrupts community-based learning and other programs on campuses around the world, including at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), it is also clearly demonstrating why global and civic learning are fundamentally intertwined and why educators cannot successfully steward the one without conscientiously attending to the other.

In recent years, IUPUI, located in downtown Indianapolis, has integrated civic engagement and internationalization experiences across the curriculum and recommitted to prioritizing global learning as part of its efforts toward comprehensive internationalization. This overarching commitment to an “internationalized stewardship of urban place,” a phrase coined by Latz, Sutton, and Hill (2014), defines the university as a mutual partner in a community ecosystem alongside other institutions and groups, guided by, and in conversation with, community priorities and concerns.

This stewardship mindset extends to lasting relationships with institutional partners both at home and abroad. IUPUI's Global Gateway Network offices in Thailand, China, Europe, India, and Mexico, for example, offer sites for cross-border faculty collaboration and student learning opportunities. The offices also convene partners to provide

strategic direction to each region's global economy. In Indiana, IUPUI collaborates with communities such as the Burmese community on the Southside of Indianapolis, with faculty and students working with local organizations on resettlement, citizenship education, English as a second language tutoring, college preparation, and other issues affecting Burmese residents.

Global Learning for All

One of the engaged campus strategies that Latz and colleagues (2014) recommend is instituting global learning for all, regardless of major, and connecting such learning experiences to professional practice and community development. IUPUI has long committed to offering students educationally meaningful opportunities to become civic-minded professionals by learning with and from local communities to improve our shared quality of life, including through service-based scholarship programs, community-based work study, and service-learning courses. But we still have work to do to support all students in understanding local civic experiences as the interplay of global forces and to pursue that understanding through study abroad participation (IUPUI Study Abroad Advisory Committee 2016; Price et al. 2015). At IUPUI, 41 percent of the student body is eligible for Pell grants, and about 28 percent identify

as first-generation college students. Students in both of these groups often face financial and other obstacles to studying abroad. Additionally, IUPUI's high concentration of professional degree programs, such as nursing and education, have strict requirements that make fitting in international learning experiences challenging.

While the pandemic has interrupted our expansion of access to both study abroad and global learning opportunities at home, it has also provided a shared filter through which to inquire into the integrative complexities of these experiences and to take action. For example, a student service project to sew surgical masks takes on global meaning in light of gaps in the global supply chain for personal protective equipment for medical professionals. Such a project is an opportunity to learn about the policies, practices, and advocacy needed to address the lack of supplies. The pandemic has also illustrated the centrality of ethical practice in human relationships and governance, and IUPUI's toolkit for enhancing ethical community engagement provides educators with a collection of resources to draw on as we ultimately emerge from the pandemic and work to strengthen the intersections between global and civic learning. (Learn more at <http://abroad.iupui.edu>.)

Intentional Global Learning

The IUPUI Dimensions of Global Learning are a tool to develop more intentionally global and intercultural curricular and cocurricular experiences. A full-time director of curriculum internationalization in the Office of International Affairs (OIA) helps faculty and staff incorporate a global perspective into the curriculum and cocurriculum. OIA also contributes resources to promote global and civic engagement, including symposia and faculty retreats like the Plater Institute on the Future of Learning's fall retreat on “Improving

Your Cultural IQ: Ideas and Tools for Engaging the International Student Community.” In addition, OIA offers professional development opportunities on such topics as the basics of curriculum internationalization, the pedagogy of virtual exchange, and the National Survey of Student Engagement’s Global Learning Model. In partnership with the Office of Community Engagement, OIA supports other internationalization activities like engaging with global companies and providing educational support to families through the Mexican Consulate in Indianapolis.

Through OIA, IUPUI participates in the US State Department’s Diplomacy Lab, which challenges faculty and students to address foreign policy issues, such as environmental pollution, counterterrorism, and anticorruption reform. IUPUI faculty and students have tackled challenges posed by the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency to prevent extremism and stop groups from recruiting radicals online. Faculty and students have also studied how the European Union is working to curb the spread of misinformation, with the goal of proposing steps to help people recognize disinformation campaigns.

For the past five years, IUPUI has hosted the IU Leadership in Civic Engagement Institute for the US State Department’s Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. Young leaders from sub-Saharan Africa participate in academic coursework, leadership training, networking, professional opportunities, and local community engagement.

More Inclusive Study Abroad

In response to findings from a campus study on student participation in study abroad (IUPUI Study Abroad Committee 2016), we have made headway in removing barriers such as cost and lack of time in course

schedules. With 640 IUPUI students studying abroad in more than forty countries in 2018–19 (a 10 percent increase in participation over the previous year), the following strategies were bearing fruit up until the pandemic:

1. Alleviating barriers to funding: A Study

Abroad Planning Scholarship allows students with financial need to apply within their first or second semester on campus for study abroad funding before they have identified their desired program, thus allowing for improved planning. The program includes mentorship as students choose an international experience.

2. Using data and building networks to develop culturally responsive strategies: In 2018–19, the Study Abroad for All discussion series began as a way to bring together students, faculty, and university leadership to better understand and support student populations typically underrepresented in study abroad, including African American students, students with disabilities, LGBTQ students, men, first-generation students, Latinx students, and student veterans. The discussion series has allowed us to build deeper relationships with campus support units, such as the LGBTQ Center, Multicultural Center, Greek Life, and Adaptive Educational Services, and has resulted in working groups to implement strategies for increasing study abroad participation. In addition, the Study Abroad Office has started remote advising and information sessions on topics like buying a plane ticket or getting a passport.



In June 2019, IUPUI hosted a community event to share the Mandela Washington Fellows’ community and civic engagement initiatives in Africa and facilitate intercultural engagement. (Photo courtesy of the IUPUI Office of International Affairs)

3. Increasing study abroad offerings in general education: IUPUI has worked to increase the number of faculty-led study abroad programs that include a general education course, including Multicultural and Global Awareness, Beginning Drawing, History of Architecture, and Introduction to Sustainable Principles and Practices.

Deepening Relationships

IUPUI continues to explore ways to support students who want to study abroad. We are also expanding global learning opportunities on campus and in the local communities, which is especially important with the pandemic limiting international travel. By focusing on deepening relationships that have already been built, we are offering virtual exchange opportunities, such as partnering with Moi University in Kenya to improve the health of Kenyans, particularly through the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. Striving for excellence as an internationalized steward of urban place calls us to think imaginatively about how we work together as a campus to integrate, align, and deepen our work in ways that not only support our academic mission but also serve the

(Continued on page 32)

“Mind Your Business”: Educating for a Pluralist, Equitable, Truth-Telling Democracy

(Continued from page 5)

ignoring the significance of some groups while overvaluing others? Who has been shut out or misrepresented in the stories recorded in college libraries and syllabi? Who is not represented among faculty, administrators, campus speakers, or events? By contrast, what policies create inclusive environments that help students learn what it means to live in a campus civitas capable of reflecting each other’s individual and collective magnitude? What academic areas of inquiry illuminate fictions long held, assumptions falsely embraced, or truisms that are only true for some? How can we begin to regard interrogating knowledge as a normative practice? How can we turn intentions into concrete actions?

In our nation today, dangerous, antidemocratic rhetoric screeches over the airwaves, internet, tweets, and ink, stirring fear that divides, demonizing already marginalized groups, spewing bigotry and hate, and lying repeatedly about facts—treacherously and deliberately. Committing to democratic

mind-work in civic-minded institutions requires bravery, determination to discover evidence-based truths, attentiveness to what is happening in the world (and to whom), and a defiant stance that communal compassion and responsibility are foundational components of a democratic nation. This is the business of higher education. “We are each other’s harvest,” and we will reap what we sow. ☐

REFERENCES

- APPELBAUM, YONI.** 2018. “Americans Aren’t Practicing Democracy Anymore.” *Atlantic*, October 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/10/losing-the-democratic-habit/568336/>.
- DEMOCRACY INDEX.** 2017. *Economist*. https://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2017.
- . 2019. *Economist*. <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>.
- KUH, GEORGE D.** 2008. *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT.** 2019. Indiana University. <https://nsse.indiana.edu/research/annual-results/selected-results/closer-look-hip.html>.

Home and Away: An Engaged Institution’s Continuing Commitment to Global Learning

(Continued from page 31)

interests and varied priorities of host communities and partners. ☐

REFERENCES

- IUPUI STUDY ABROAD ADVISORY COMMITTEE.** 2016. *Study Abroad at IUPUI: A White Paper*. <https://international.iupui.edu/doc/partnerships/study-abroad-IUPUI-whitepaper.pdf>.
- LATZ, GIL, SUSAN BUCK SUTTON, and BARBARA HILL.** 2014. “An Internationalized Stewardship of Urban Places.” *Metropolitan Universities* 25 (3): 83–98. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1092782.pdf>.
- PRICE, MARY F., JULIE A. HATCHER, DAWN MICHELE WHITEHEAD, and GIL LATZ.** 2015. “Using a Partnership Approach in Study Abroad: Implications and Strategies for Program Design and Assessment.” In *Assessing Study Abroad: Theory, Tools, and Practice*, edited by Victor Savicki and Elizabeth Brewer, 277–93. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

AAC&U and the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) Action Network

As part of its commitment to preparing all students for civic, ethical, and social responsibility in US and global contexts, AAC&U formed the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) Action Network. The CLDE Action Network builds on the momentum generated by the 2012 White House release of the report *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future*. The network includes twelve leading civic learning organizations that are committed to making civic inquiry and engagement expected rather than elective for all college students. *Diversity & Democracy* regularly features research and exemplary practices developed and advanced by these partner organizations and their members:

- American Association of State Colleges and Universities
- Anchor Institutions Task Force
- Association of American Colleges and Universities
- The Bonner Foundation
- Bringing Theory to Practice
- Campus Compact
- Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement
- Imagining America
- Institute for Democracy and Higher Education
- Interfaith Youth Core
- The Kettering Foundation
- NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

UNITED



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

Destination: together.

We can't wait to welcome you back on board.

fly the friendly skies[®]



Association
of American
Colleges and
Universities

1818 R Street, NW,
Washington, DC 20009

tel 202.387.3760
fax 202.265.9532

US Postage
PAID
Nonprofit
Organization
Permit No. 8410
Washington, DC

Upcoming AAC&U Meetings

MEETING	LOCATION	DATES
AAC&U CONFERENCE 2020 Virtual Conference on Global Learning: Lessons on Global Learning from Higher Education's Response to a Global Crisis	<i>Virtual Learning Experience</i>	OCTOBER 8-10, 2020
AAC&U CONFERENCE 2020 Virtual Conference on Transforming STEM Higher Education: This Changes Everything	<i>Virtual Learning Experience</i>	NOVEMBER 5-7, 2020

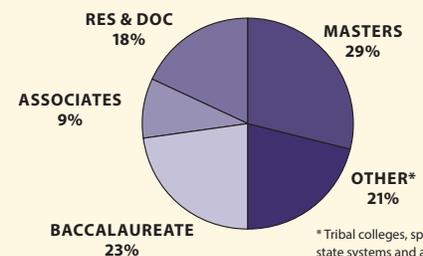
About Diversity & Democracy

Diversity & Democracy supports higher education faculty and leaders as they design and implement programs that advance civic learning and democratic engagement, global learning, and engagement with diversity to prepare students for socially responsible action in today's interdependent but unequal world. According to AAC&U's Statement on Liberal Learning, "By its nature . . . liberal learning is global and pluralistic. It embraces the diversity of ideas and experiences that characterize the social, natural, and intellectual world. To acknowledge such diversity in all its forms is both an intellectual commitment and a social responsibility, for nothing less will equip us to understand our world and to pursue fruitful lives." *Diversity & Democracy* features evidence, research, and exemplary practices to assist practitioners in creating learning opportunities that realize this vision. To access *Diversity & Democracy* online, visit www.aacu.org/diversitydemocracy.

About AAC&U

AAC&U is the leading national association dedicated to advancing the vitality and public standing of liberal education by making quality and equity the foundations for excellence in undergraduate education in service to democracy. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises more than 1,200 member institutions—including accredited public and private colleges, community colleges, research universities, and comprehensive universities of every type and size. AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, faculty, and staff engaged in institutional and curricular planning. Through a broad range of activities, AAC&U reinforces the collective commitment to liberal education at the national, local, and global levels. Its high-quality programs, publications, research, meetings, institutes, public outreach efforts, and campus-based projects help individual institutions ensure that the quality of student learning is central to their work as they evolve to meet new economic and social challenges. Information about AAC&U can be found at www.aacu.org.

AAC&U Membership



* Tribal colleges, specialized schools, state systems and agencies, and international affiliates