



Civic Engagement Initiatives

Definition: Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. (Thomas Ehrlich (Ed.) *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*. Phoenix: Oryx Press, 2000)

Outcomes:

1. Increase student awareness of community needs through exchange of views, open forums such as deliberative dialogues, workshops, and speakers
2. Educate students on societal impacts on community issues such as importance of recycling, hunger among students/children, college readiness for middle/high school students, etc as well as political processes
3. Develop motivation and skills to make positive difference in communities such as planning, implementing, and evaluating community service and political action events; cultural competence; leadership development; ethical reasoning
4. Provide opportunities for students to take civic action such as community service projects, planning projects, voter registration, Engaged Citizens Program, etc.

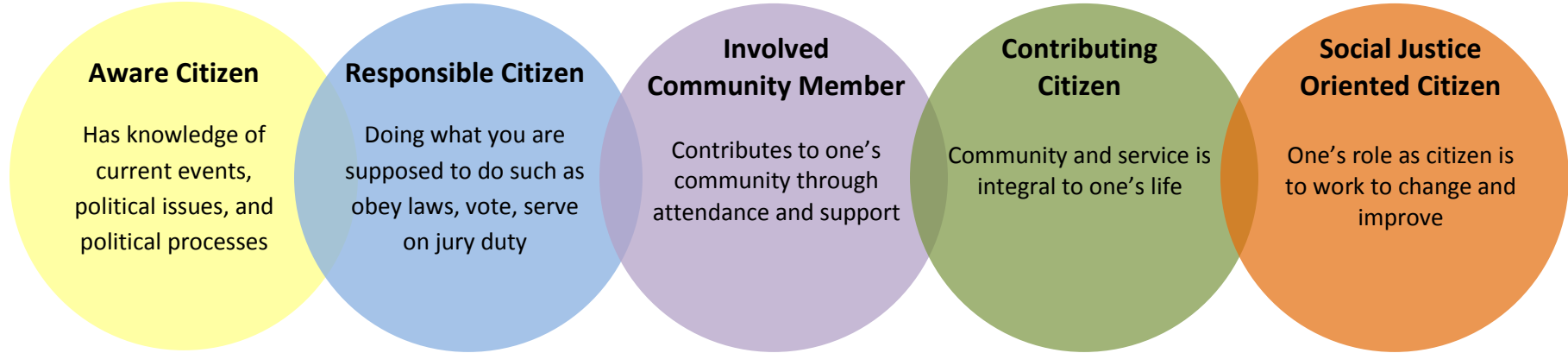
Current Strategies

- Hold student open forums to discuss current issues
- Host exchange of views between senior administration and students to discuss current issues
- Improve SGA elections to increase voter participation
- Leadership development programs – L.E.A.D. (Leadership Education And Development) Conference (current student leaders) and Leadership Retreat (new leaders conference)
- Involve students in decision making (CAC, SGA)
- Coordinate volunteer opportunities for students
- Host student diversity workshops
- Constitution Day
- Develop annual report focusing on civic engagement initiatives including community service, public dialogues, political engagement, and multicultural competence.

New Strategies

- Host deliberative dialogues to discuss issue-specific topics (i.e. domestic violence, teen pregnancy)
- Invite local political representatives to campus (commissioners, mayor, etc)
- Voter registration drives
- Coordinate community service learning opportunities for students
- Recognize student service
- Note student service hours on co-curricular transcript
- Engaged Citizens Program

Civic Engagement Continuum



- Aware of current events and political issues
- Aware of SSC community issues

- Votes in SGA and local, state, and national elections
- Obeys code of conduct
- Be a positive role model

- Performs community service
- Attends campus political events
- Attends diversity workshops
- Attends leadership training
- Participates in service learning projects

- Coordinates community service projects
- Coordinates civic engagement events
- Serves as student leader on campus
- Politics viewed as important components of service
- Selected for Engaged Citizen Program

- Takes action to address inequality
- Lobbies politicians for change
- Advocates to improve community



Civic Minded Graduate

Outcomes assessed through the Civic Minded Scale Instrument*

Knowledge

- Volunteer Opportunities: Describe ways in which a person can become involved in the community, such as through community organizations and volunteer opportunities.
- Contemporary Social Issues: Identify community or social issues that need to be addressed.
- Academic Knowledge and Skills: Apply academic knowledge and technical skills to help address community or social issues.

Skills

- Listening/Communication Skills: Display effective listening as well as other oral and written communication skills to help understand others' opinions and ideas.
- Diversity: Give examples of how they are able to work in settings with a diversity of people (culture, ethnicity, religion, social and economic background).
- Consensus Building: Give examples of how they have used consensus-building skills to resolve problems or controversial issues.

Dispositions

- Valuing Community Engagement: Explain the value of being involved in service or other forms of community engagement.
- Self-Efficacy: Articulate an optimistic yet realistic assessment of the personal impact they can have on social issues.
- Social Trustee of Knowledge: Integrate the connection between their education and their responsibility to help address social issues.
 - Display a commitment to service that is well-integrated with his/her self-identity as a result of his/her education.

Behavioral Intentions

- Future intentions: Articulate intentions to remain involved in service or community engagement after graduation from college.

*Used with permission from K. Norris at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

Resources

American Democracy Project - <http://www.aascu.org/programs/ADP/> (state universities)

The Democracy Commitment <http://thedemocracycommitment.org/> (community colleges initiative)

Florida College System Civic Literacy Initiative <http://www.spcollege.edu/solutions/CivicLiteracy.html>

Campus Compact - <http://www.compact.org/>

Florida Campus Compact - <http://www.floridacompact.org/>

National Service Learning Clearinghouse - <http://www.servicelearning.org/>

Learn and Service America - <http://www.learnandserve.gov/>

Corporation for National and Community Service - <http://www.nationalservice.gov/>

Youth Service Day - <http://www.ysa.org/>

Association of American Colleges and Universities Civic Learning -

<http://www.aacu.org/resources/civicengagement/index.cfm>

Crucible Moment - http://www.aacu.org/civic_learning/crucible/documents/crucible_508F.pdf

Model UN - <http://www.unausa.org/global-classrooms-model-un>

Global Issues - <http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/>

Education Commission of States www.ecs.org

iCivics – <http://icivics.org> (free online teacher resource on civic topics)

<http://www.democracy.floridacompact.org/>