

---

# CORE COMPETENCIES IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

---

A Working Paper in the Center for  
Engaged Democracy's Policy Papers Series

***Developed by:***

The Center for Engaged Democracy Core Competencies Committee  
*(In alphabetical order)*

Leila Brammer, *Gustavus Adolphus College*

Rebecca Dumlao, *East Carolina University*

Audrey Falk, *Merrimack College*

Elizabeth Hollander, *Tufts University*

Ellen Knutson, *Northwestern University*

Jeremy Poehnert, *Massachusetts Campus Compact*

Andrea Politano, *Merrimack College*

Valerie Werner, *University of Illinois at Chicago*



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

PREFACE	<b>1</b>
INTRODUCTION	<b>3</b>
REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS	<b>4</b>
<b>A</b> Literature Review	
<b>B</b> National Reports	
<b>C</b> Academic Programs	
CONNECTIONS BETWEEN FINDINGS	<b>29</b>
NEXT STEPS & CONCLUSION	<b>30</b>

# PREFACE

The community engagement field – what I think of as a wide and conceptually interrelated set of practices and philosophies such as service-learning, community based research, participatory action research, and civic engagement – is at a precarious moment.

On the one hand, higher education is seemingly coming apart before our very eyes: technological advances herald the “disruption” of higher education as online computer-automated courses enroll hundreds of thousands of students; public disinvestment has left university systems in shatters as state funding streams disappear; the notion of tenure has collapsed as three in four new faculty today are hired on a contingent or fixed-year contract; student demographic data make clear that just one in four students are “traditional”; and the whole point of the educational enterprise – what our students actually learn in the college classroom – has been found to be “adrift” if not downright inadequate to help students learn the requisite skills and knowledge for the twenty-first century.

And yet, amidst all this turmoil, the signals have never been clearer that higher education must be more than just a delivery platform for a certificate of competence and workforce preparation. The US Department of Education, in collaboration with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), has declared that we are at a “crucible moment” where we must make “democracy and civic responsibility...central, not peripheral” in our institutions of higher learning. The Lumina Foundation is piloting a “degree qualifications profile” where “civic learning” is one of just five key “areas of learning” across all types of postsecondary degree programs. Indeed, students, faculty, and the general public all view community-engaged practices as part and parcel of the mission and vision of the “place-based” campus.

The question, it seems, is how do we do it well? How do we promote and institutionalize academic practices that are meaningful, sustainable, and relevant to the key stakeholders – institutions and communities – that partake in such practices? How do we overcome what I have described as an “engagement ceiling” such that we begin to work with and through new paradigms and new frameworks towards a second wave of theory and practice?

One answer, I believe, is the hundred or so academic programs – majors, minors, and certificates – around the United States. Programs such as Providence College’s major in Public and Community Service Studies, Allegheny College’s minor in Values, Ethics and Social Action, Indiana University’s certificate in Political and Civic Engagement, or Merrimack College’s master’s degree in Community Engagement. Such academic homes provide a safe space where students, faculty, administrators, and community partners can work through the complex and contested issues arising from community-based teaching, learning, and research. This is not to say that such discussions and actions do not occur at the thousands of institutions engaged in such work. Rather, academic programs provide a unique opportunity – much like any disciplinary program – to deeply, critically, and systematically investigate and teach and research and build upon what it means to be an engaged citizen.

It is against this backdrop that I am extremely pleased to introduce this first Working Paper in the Center for Engaged Democracy’s Policy Papers series. It is an important document carefully developed by a national working group of scholars and practitioners over the course of the last year. It is important for three specific reasons.

First, and most obviously, this is the first-ever attempt to examine and document and synthesize what “core competencies” in civic engagement might look like for academic programs. While such discussions have been longstanding at the national level and across general education requirements, no one has yet attempted this work for academic programs. This is thus a “stake in the ground.” It is an attempt to speak cogently, systematically, and clearly about the student outcomes of civic engagement in this moment of accountability in higher education.

Second, the synthesis of reviews of the literature, national reports, and actual academic programs unearth several key results worth pursuing in future research. I am struck, for example, by the finding (easily hypothesized, but, until now, impossible to prove) that the really difficult and volatile and complex issues we grapple with in the day-to-day of civic and community engagement – e.g., racial and ethnic bias, socioeconomic gaps and inequities, gendered and sexual(ized) stereotypes and practices – are notably muted or absent in national reports but front-and-center in specific individual programs. The fact that academic programs focus on the importance of contextualizing particular issues while national reports highlight notions of (universal) ethics allows us to begin to ask sharp questions about our audiences, our communities, and our goals. Similarly, it is intriguing that the actual practices of community and civic engagement are more often than not framed as the means towards specific goals in academic programs, yet as the goals themselves in the national reports. What, again, does this say about why we engage with communities, and for whom?

Finally, I want to suggest that, in its own small way, this Policy Paper attempts to foster an epistemic pluralism as we in higher education attempt to work through and work out the key knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices for programs in civic and community engagement. By this I mean that this Policy Paper has taken on the incredibly difficult task of articulating the multiple means of how we think about the practices and outcomes of civic and community engagement. Exactly because we are speaking about the actions, beliefs, and values of citizens in a pluralistic society, there is no unanimity or uniformity to our expected outcomes, pedagogical methods, or normative standpoints. But this does not mean chaos rules. It simply means that there are frameworks within which contested notions of complex phenomenon can and should be analyzed, engaged, and appropriated. This is exactly what dozens upon dozens of academic programs around the country are doing, and what this Policy Paper attempts to support through such an articulation. It is thus with gratitude that I thank the committee that took on this difficult task and look forward to the discussions that I hope it will foster.

Respectfully,



Dan W. Butin, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor and Dean, School of Education,  
Merrimack College  
Executive Director, Center for Engaged Democracy

# INTRODUCTION

*The Center for Engaged Democracy acts as a central hub for developing, coordinating, and supporting academic programs – majors, minors and certificates – focused on community engagement, broadly construed. The Center, which is housed within Merrimack College’s School of Education under the leadership of Dan W. Butin, brings together faculty, administrators, and community partners to support the institutionalization of such academic programs within higher education.*

In the Fall of 2011, the Center issued a call for a national working group to develop a draft set of “Core Competencies” in civic engagement for academic programs. (We take the phrase of “civic engagement” as a pragmatically necessary compromise to the multiplicity of phrases and terms signaling academic programs engaged in community-based models of teaching, learning and research.) Such a set of competencies was viewed as an important step for fostering dialogue in multiple venues (e.g., academic programs, regional and national conferences, disciplinary associations and national organizations committed to civic engagement) around what constitutes viable and legitimate program and student outcomes. A committee was formed to lead this initiative and has been actively working on this initiative throughout the 2011-12 academic year. Committee members include (in alphabetical order): Leila Brammer, Rebecca Dumlao, Audrey Falk, Elizabeth Hollander, Ellen Knutson, Jeremy Poehnert, Andrea Politano, and Valerie Werner.

We believe that an academic field of study needs to have a clearly defined set of core competencies. We hope that by researching the learning outcomes espoused by individual departments and programs, relevant professional associations, and information gleaned from scholarly literature, we can articulate the common core competencies of the field. These core competencies may be useful to newly developing higher education programs in civic engagement as well as to existing programs with less clearly articulated competencies. We offer our work with the hope that it will be of true value to programs, but not with the expectation that it will become a one-size-fits-all model. We recognize that each major, minor, and certificate program will have its own emphasis. Some programs may have more of a political or philosophical leaning; others may emphasize human and social services, for example. Each program exists within a unique context that will also impact its focus and approach.

A set of clearly articulated core competencies offers all of us a foundation or starting point for identifying those competencies that are most relevant or important to

our particular programs. Additionally, it helps to define civic engagement as a scholarly field of study, and we believe that is a gain for all of us.

We have tried to take a comprehensive approach to identifying core competencies. This multifaceted approach has included syntheses of the following:

1. Search and review of the scholarly literature (Section 1)
2. Review of measurement scales (Section 2)
3. Review of existing academic programs (Section 3)

Additionally, you will also find sidebars of mini-case studies of a few campuses’ approaches to learning outcomes, including information about how the learning outcomes were derived and how they are assessed. The three campuses we looked at were chosen to represent a variety of types of institutions as well as have geographic diversity.

You will see that each section of the report has categorized the core competencies into three or four major areas, including civic knowledge, skills, practice, and disposition. Each section of the report was developed by one or more different researchers from the Core Competencies Committee and thus reflects their own analysis and perspective on the data gathered and reviewed. We have not attempted to remove the differences in categorization from section to section, but we do note the differences and discuss them where appropriate.

In addition to this report, you can find many of the original data sources and syllabi gathered for this study online at [www.merrimack.edu/democracy](http://www.merrimack.edu/democracy). This paper has been developed for dissemination and discussion at the Center for Engaged Democracy’s Third Annual Summer Research Institute (held June 23-24 at Merrimack College). We would like to receive feedback both at the conference and following the conference to strengthen this document and to understand how the Center for Engaged Democracy can continue to be a resource for majors, minors, and certificate programs with respect to core competencies. Please feel free to contact [democracy@merrimack.edu](mailto:democracy@merrimack.edu).

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION A Literature Review

This literature review includes analysis and synthesis of information gleaned from journal articles and texts focused on learning objectives in civic-engaged courses and curricula. It includes information relevant to the areas of learning in civic knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices/action. (See the reference list at the end of this section.) The author of this section of the text focused on a consideration of best practices in civic engagement teaching and learning.

**Chart 1: Summary of Literature Review**

CIVIC KNOWLEDGE	CIVIC SKILLS	EXPERIENCES
Efficiency, equity, social justice Inclusiveness, collaboration, building constituency Value of government, civic institutions, business, community participation, public work Self Identity: Interests or beliefs of the self with active citizenship Responsible citizenship included human rights Political and legal systems and processes Historical review of policy Current Affairs Diversity/Pluralism Globalization and interdependence Multiplicity vs. cosmopolitan citizenship Representative government Accountable government Freedom of speech Equality before the law and social/environmental justice	Critical reasoning about causes and morality Democratic decision making Social organizing – Coordinated interactions- Interactive participation Active citizenship practices Cooperation, Consensus building Policy formation and analysis Inquiry/Research/methods Communication skills: intergroup communication, negotiations Assessing the feasibility of change from social action and commitment Management/Leadership	Community service Social organizing for change Community planning Public management or administration Relationship building across networks Process of engagement Project planning

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION A Literature Review

### Civic Knowledge

In defining citizenship as a practice rather than a status, Dudley, Roison, and Taylor (1999) suggest that educational programs focused on civic engagement should foster knowledge of differences, including, for example, differences in culture, abilities, and religious background. Jansen, Chioncel, and Dekkers (2006) propose that coursework should help students become aware of individuals' multiple political identities based on social constructs (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, religion) especially as these identities are often part of social exclusion. Students may also learn about the historic, socio/political/economic disparities that contribute to marginalization of certain groups. Courses also need to allow for the identification of the 'self' within culture and/or society (Haste, 2004). The range of content of good global citizenship, according to Oxfam, includes knowledge and understanding of inequality and injustice within and between societies (Ibrahim, 2005), so again the focus is on social justice and equality. Hincks (2006) suggests that democratic citizenship requires knowledge of inclusiveness, collaboration, and building constituency.

The work of government, other civic institutions and the policy process are areas that students need to be knowledgeable in because of their importance to effecting change. Understanding political and legal systems, democratic decision making, the institutional responsibility of bodies of government, as well as the work of government agencies, provides students with information on key stakeholders in the process of change (Hincks, 2006). It is important for students to be educated on how policy is created and changed, the stakeholders in the policy process, and the ways social movements and collective action are planned and executed. This knowledge can broaden students' awareness from a focus on change at the individual level to recognition of corporate and collective responsibility (Kahne, Westheimer, & Rogers, 2010).

### Civic Skills

Also identified in this review of the literature are the needs for students to develop research skills and learn critical reasoning about causes of injustice and human morality. Students need to be able to imagine possibilities or alternatives for a different future (Oldenquest, 1980; Jansen, Chioncel, & Dekkers, 2006). Crucial to democratic decision-making and active problem-solving are skills used for inquiry, critical thinking, and the ability to communicate effectively across differences which requires listening and negotiation skills. Such skills include the capacity to explain views that are different from one's own; understanding bias; identifying interdependencies within broader structures and systems; building inclusiveness and collaborative participation on community issues; coalition building on fundamental social values; and identification of critical social issues (Morse, 1998; Jansen et al., 2006; Flanagan & Levin, 2010). In describing specific examples of student engagement, Redlawsk, Rice, and Associates (2009) identify a wide range of specific research skills that students ought to develop, such as designing and implementing surveys and questionnaires, community asset mapping, and impact analysis.

Other citizenship skills discussed in the literature include networking (Flanagan & Levin, 2010), negotiating, and effecting change (Dudley et al., 1999). Redlawsk, Rice, and Associates (2009) discuss learning how to build teams, including resident involvement (neighborhood associations), municipal, county and state government, community agencies, or private sector organizations, such as banks; and creating professional networks. They also mention skills such as project development, professionally presenting findings, and responding to challenging questions. Other civic skills mentioned in their project descriptions include advocacy, leadership, infrastructure planning, resource development, training & development, evaluation, and marketing.

## Disposition

Citizenship is the act of group participation and bridging of differences that allows for new ideas, possibilities and solutions. It is a contextualized social practice and a form of group loyalty built on the principles of social morality (Oldenquist, 1980). The social cohesion required brings into play the tension between individual freedom and social order within the moral perspective. Engaged citizenry that respects ideals such as social justice, equal opportunity, and legal equality recognizes that social cohesion must not be based in the question, “how do we justify us?” but rather, “how do we live with others?” (Jansen et al., 2006). It requires we shift from the concept of ‘deficient groups at risk’ to the quality of the public sphere and need for active citizens re-inventing public places.

The tension between individual freedom and social order participating in civic engaged learning should allow students the opportunity to transcend the notion of ‘individual’ while at the same time giving an identity and meaning to their own being (Dudley et al., 1999). Self identity of this kind fosters a sense of ownership of issues of import, group membership and group beliefs. The development of efficacy and agency within an individual grows out of active participation and responsibility to both the self and others (Haste, 2004).

## Practice/Action

The articles reviewed discussed types of engaged learning experiences, including community service such as working in soup kitchens or homeless shelters; social organizing for change with community groups; community planning that often accompanies social organizing experiences; public management or administration within non-profits or government agencies, especially as it relates to policy work; relationship building across networks; and project planning.

According to Redlawsk, Rice, and Associates (2009), engaged learning in government placements provides students with a greater awareness of application (what is learned and what is experienced) and understanding the role of government in addressing societal issues. It also provides opportunities to participate in network building between government, citizens, community organization and the university, and in gaining an understanding of governmental divides (federalism).

Several examples that they cite are:

- University of Vermont: Students work as policy researchers for state legislatures.
- East Central University: Students working with community residents on projects that include coequal relationship designed to bridge racial differences.
- State University of New York Buffalo: Students and community members collected soil samples for lead testing in an area neglected by the state and were able to expand the original area designated as a Superfund clean-up site.
- Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis: Defining civic engagement as “active collaboration that builds on the resources, skills, expertise, and knowledge of the campus and community to improve the quality of life in communities in a manner that is consistent with the campus mission.” Civic engagement has no geographical boundaries and includes the university working in all sectors of society (non-profit, government, and business), as well as the local, regional, national, and international settings. The primary purpose of service-learning is for students to experience the work/needs of the government body they are working with and evaluate the program itself.
- CommUniverCity San Jose: Based on 3 partnerships between San Jose State University, the City of San Jose and the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace (FWBT) area made up of a community of neighborhoods. This requires interdisciplinary work amongst faculty. Work is driven by government/community need and not faculty-driven interests.

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION A Literature Review

Keckes and Kerrigans (2009) review best practices for enhancing students' civic engagement through capstone experiences. Two examples of educational institutions of capstone courses providing students with engaged learning experiences are:

Wagner College in Staten Island, New York: All graduate degrees require a capstone course. Business students working in partnership with the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation did a community needs assessment by surveying community members, including political figures, property and business owners, school personnel, and residents. Short and long term goals were created, key issues were identified, and specific agencies responsible for implementation of changes were identified. Students held a press conference and presented finding at two professional meetings.

Brown University: The Swearer Center for Public Service provides the administrative leadership for sixty independent study capstone projects. Students apply for fellowships that provide funding for the exploration and implantation of new ideas in the civic sector. Example: Student Jessica Beckerman, class of 2006, used funding to organize and coordinate a team of Brown students, alumni, and Malian students to work on the Mousso Ladamoule Project with a mission to pioneer lasting social change and economic development in resource poor communities in Mali, Africa, by using a women's peer education model.

Musil (2009) discusses the work of Andrea Leskes and Ross Miller on purposeful pathways, helping students achieve key learning outcomes (2006). A model entitled the "Civic Learning Spiral" was created for civic learning that is designed to establish the habit of life-long engagement as an empowered, informed and socially responsible citizen. The spiral highlights the six interactive/integrative principles that co-exist simultaneously: self, communities and culture, knowledge,

skills, values, and public action. Examples provided of educational programs using this model are:

1. Rutgers University: Ethno-autobiographies that emphasize the self and community, and cultures - with students learning about the history of other people's ethnic groups, and an appreciation of other perspectives.
2. University of Delaware: Over the course of four years, a series of developmental outcomes are taught to students in dialogic deliberative skills using engaged methods.

Longo and Shaffer (2009) discuss the importance of positional or technical expertise leadership versus the capacity of ordinary people to define and solve problems collectively. Their mantra is "we are the ones we've been waiting for." Longo and Shaffer propose that educational programs should be based on the concept that all participants could be contributors and leaders. There is an acknowledgement of the potential for leadership in all group endeavors. Key principles in this model include:

- Thinking comprehensively about leadership which involves several related aspects - 1) breaking down the leader-follower dichotomy; 2) strong people do not need strong leaders (Ella Baker); 3) leadership education creates space for all stakeholders in higher education (students, faculty, staff, community partners) who will use their assets toward public problem solving and further development of leadership capacity.
- Relational leadership education which should include - 1) longer commitments from faculty and students to neighboring communities that allows for deeper relationships between all participants and better university/community partnerships; 2) projects should be more involved than just volunteerism.
- Leadership education should be public, meaning students must have opportunity to link theory and practice, and understand that knowledge alone is powerless if people do not act on it.

### References

- Astin, A.W., Vogelgesang, L.J., Ikeda, E.K., & Yee, J.A. (2000). "Executive Summary: How Service Learning Affects Students." *Higher Education Research Institute*, University of California, Los Angeles.
- Annette, J. (2005). Character and civic renewal and service learning for democratic citizenship in higher education. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 53(3), 326 – 340.
- Criddle, E., Vidovich, L., & O'Neill, M. (2004). Discovering democracy: An analysis of curriculum policy for citizenship education. *Westminster Studies in Education*, 27(1).
- Dudley, J., Roison, J., & Taylor, A. (1999). Educating for an inclusive democracy: Critical citizenship Literacy. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 20(3).
- Flanagan, C., & Levin, P. (2010). Civic engagement and the transition to adulthood. *The Future of Children*, 20(1), 159 – 179.
- Haste, H. (2004). Constructing the citizen. *Political Psychology*, 25(3), 413 – 439.
- Hincks, P. (2006). VELS civics and citizenship, update and resources. *Ethos*, 14(1).
- Ibrahim, T. (2005). Global citizenship education: Mainstreaming the curriculum? *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 35(2), 177-194.
- Jacoby, Barbara and Associates. (2009). *Civic Engagement in Higher Education, Concepts and Practices*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Jansen, T., Chioncel, N., & Dekkers, H. (2006). Social cohesion and integration: Learning active citizenship. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 27(2), 189 – 205
- Kahne, J., Westheimer, J., & Rogers, B. (2010). Service learning and citizenship: Directions for research. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*.
- Keckes, K., & Kerrigan, S. (2009). Capstone experiences. In Jacoby, Barbara and Associates. *Civic Engagement in Higher Education, Concepts and Practices*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Longo, N.V., & Shaffer, M.S. (2009). Leadership education and the revitalization of public life. In Jacoby, Barbara and Associates. *Civic Engagement in Higher Education, Concepts and Practices*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Morse, S.W. "Developing the Skills for Citizenship." *About Campus*, May-June 1998.
- Musil, C.M. (2009). Educating students for personal and social responsibility. In Jacoby, Barbara and Associates. *Civic Engagement in Higher Education, Concepts and Practices*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Oldenquist, A. (1980). On the nature of citizenship. *Educational Leadership*.
- Redlawsk, D., Rice, T., & Associates. (2009). *Civic Service, Service-Learning with State and Local Government Partners*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A Wiley Imprint.

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION **B** National Reports

Over the last twenty years, considerable national discussion has centered on what civic competencies students need to acquire as part of their college education. Most recently, the Association of American College and Universities (AAC&U), in concert with other organizations and individuals, and with the United States Department of Education, have articulated student civic engagement competencies in a report entitled *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future* (The National Task Force, 2012). We examined this report, and earlier AAC&U reports and programs such as the Value Rubrics (Rhodes, 2010), *College Learning for the New Global Century* (The National Leadership Council, 2007), the Core Commitments program (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2012), and the Shared Futures Initiative (Musil, 2007). We also reviewed documents obtained from The American Democracy Project (ADP) of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) (American Democracy Project, 2012), the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) (Gottlieb & Robinson, 2002), the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) (Astin et al., 2006), the Bonner Foundation (2011; Meisel, 1996), and the Lumina Foundation (Adelman et al., 2011). We studied select national surveys including the Wabash Studies (Center of Inquiry, 2011), questions about global learning in an AAC&U report, the Shared Futures Survey (Musil, 2007) and civic engagement questions added to the United States Decennial Census (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012). Finally, we examined a chart of civic competencies compiled as part of a broad-based literature review of civic engagement. (See Section 1).

Our purpose for this work was to determine the commonalities and differences among the national reports and programs with regard to four major categories of student civic learning: civic knowledge, skills, dispositions (e.g., values, inclinations), and practice/action. We offer our findings below. In addition, because the Census report (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012), the U.S. Department of Education Shared Futures survey (Musil, 2007), and the Wabash studies (Center of Inquiry, 2011) ask very specific questions about behaviors and attitudes, we detail them in a separate section. Next, we share two charts that compare/contrast the key themes across the majority of these national documents and the national surveys. In the end, we offer our insights about commonalities and differences from the reports and point out the usefulness of the national reports and measures for administrators and educators in varied college and university settings. We recognize that our work is just a first step, but hopefully can provide a useful base for on-going discussion and potentially additional research by other scholars and practitioners interested in ways that college students might learn about and practice civic engagement.

**Chart 2: National Reports of Core Competencies for Civic Engagement**

	<b>CIVIC KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>DISPOSITION</b>	<b>PRACTICE/ACTION</b>
<b>AACC</b>	<p>Understanding issues, history, and contemporary relevance</p> <p>Understanding fundamental laws and the role of decision-making</p> <p>Identifying implications, rights and responsibilities</p> <p>Understanding needs and resources in community where live</p> <p>Recognizing own biases or prejudices</p>	<p>Information gathering, evaluating and presenting skills using library, internet</p> <p>Establishing correlational or cause-and-effect relationships</p> <p>Defending a position or argument</p> <p>Influencing policies</p> <p>Collaborating</p> <p>Listening to others</p> <p>Working with diverse others</p>	<p>Identifying group interests and goals as well as personal interests and goals</p> <p>Responsibility to serve community</p>	<p>Participating in government</p> <p>Writing letters to newspapers and members of government</p> <p>Getting others involved in civic action</p>
<b>ADP</b>	<p>History</p> <p>Government</p> <p>Current Events</p> <p>Elements-Democracy</p>	<p>Oral and written expression of positions</p> <p>Working and listening to others with whom you may disagree</p> <p>Organizing for a goal</p> <p>Social networking for social purposes</p>		<p>Range of civic experiences</p> <p>Local, international, service, internships, service learning, etc.</p> <p>Opportunities for reflection</p>
<b>Bonner</b>	<p>International understanding</p> <p>Systematic insight into social and environmental issues</p>	<p>Community-building</p> <p>Advocate for social justice</p> <p>Active Citizenship/Public Policy and Service</p> <p>Leadership</p>	<p>Diversity</p> <p>Spiritual Exploration</p>	<p>Service</p> <p>Service Leadership</p>
<b>Crucible Moment (AACU)</b>	<p>Familiarity with key democratic texts &amp; universal democratic principles</p> <p>Historical &amp; sociological understanding of democratic movements, U.S. &amp; abroad</p> <p>Understand sources of identity &amp; influence on civic values... and responsibilities to public</p> <p>Diverse cultures, histories, values &amp; contestations that shape U.S. &amp; world societies</p> <p>Multiple religious traditions and alternative views</p> <p>Knowledge of political systems &amp; ways to make change</p>	<p>Critical inquiry, analysis and reasoning</p> <p>Quantitative reasoning</p> <p>Gathering and evaluating multiple forms of evidence</p> <p>Seeking, engaging and being informed by multiple perspectives</p> <p>Written, oral, and multimedia communication</p> <p>Deliberation and bridge building across differences; Collaborative decision making</p> <p>Ability to communicate in multiple languages</p>	<p>Respect for freedom and human dignity</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Open-mindedness</p> <p>Tolerance</p> <p>Justice</p> <p>Equality</p> <p>Ethical integrity</p> <p>Responsibility to a greater good</p>	<p>Integration of knowledge, skills, values to inform actions w/others</p> <p>Moral discernment &amp; behavior</p> <p>Navigation of political systems</p> <p>Public problem solving with diverse partners</p> <p>Compromise, civility, mutual respect</p>
<b>Lumina</b>	<p>Sources of Evidence, both academic &amp; journalistic for positions</p>	<p>Explain diverse positions on contested issue</p> <p>Develop and justify position on public issue, relate alternative choices</p> <p>Collaborate to develop and implement an approach to a civic issue</p>	<p>Develop civic insight</p> <p>Contribute to the Common Good</p> <p>Engage diverse perspectives</p>	<p>Experiential or field based learning</p> <p>Apply skills to public problem solving.</p>

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION B National Reports

### Categories of Student Learning

As we reviewed the documents and programs, four categories of student learning emerged using somewhat different wording but similar conceptualizations. We used these four categories to guide our analysis: civic knowledge, skills, dispositions (values, inclinations), and practice/action.

Interestingly enough, Stokamer's (2011) Epistemological Model of Civic Competence explicates three identical categories: knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Her fourth category, identity, included both "efficacy" and "action." Her conceptualizations were part of a dissertation and were based upon a series of other publications about civic engagement. So there appears to be great consistency in using these four categories of student learning when considering civic engagement competencies.

#### Civic Knowledge

Stokamer (2011) defines knowledge as "awareness and understanding of various subjects, how these topics relate to democratic society and the systems and processes of democratic decision-making and governance." Almost every report we examined pointed out that students should have knowledge of political systems, history, and international understanding to include globalization and interdependence (Adelman et al., 2011; American Democracy Project, 2012; Gottlieb & Robinson, 2002; Meisel, 1996; The National Task Force, 2012).

Knowledge of diverse cultures is a theme in both the literature review and the AAC&U reports (The National Task Force, 2012; Rhodes, 2010; Musil, 2007; The National Leadership Council, 2007) as is self-identity. Two reports stress knowledge of current events: American Democracy Project, (2012) and the literature review. Three reports included knowledge about the sources of evidence: Lumina (Adelman et al., 2011), AACU (The National Task Force, 2012), and AAC&U (Gottlieb & Robinson, 2002). Social/environmental justice is cited in two reports: Bonner, (2011) and the literature review.

The Crucible Moment report (The National Task Force, 2012) explicates knowledge of government by referring to "key democratic texts, universal democratic principles, historical and sociological understanding of democratic movements in the US and abroad." This report also includes knowledge of religious traditions, as well as political systems and ways to make change, understanding sources of identity and their influence on civic values and responsibilities to the public.

The literature review contains more material on specific democratic freedoms such as freedom of speech and equality before the law than the other documents we reviewed. The Census (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012) knowledge questions are focused on the balance of powers (in the US) and votes needed to override a presidential veto. Some of the Wabash scales (Center of Inquiry, 2011) ask students to apply political knowledge in very specific scenarios.

#### Civic Skills

Civic skills refer to the well-honed abilities to do a repeated task or set of tasks well, particularly in ways that influence communities. The reports we reviewed converge on the importance of developing student skills of critical analysis and inquiry/research, in being literate and understanding information, in using oral, written and mediated communication, in building bridges across differences, and in collaborating to achieve public outcomes. In addition, problem-solving and creative thinking skills are mentioned in the AAC&U reports (The National Task Force, 2012; Rhodes, 2010; Musil, 2007; The National Leadership Council, 2007). The AAC&U report (Gottlieb & Robinson, 2002) notes the importance of persuasion skills and related civic actions.

Lumina's document (Adelman et al., 2011) and the literature review cite policy formation and analysis as important for students. Bonner (2011) and the literature review use the term "leadership"; one of the Wabash scales (Center of Inquiry, 2011) measures "socially responsible leadership." The Bonner report (2011) uses the term "advocate for social justice"; only AAC&U (The National Task Force, 2012) calls for know-

ing multiple languages. The American Democracy Project (2012) calls for “social networking for social purposes.” The literature review cites “assessing the feasibility of change from social action and commitment, negotiation, democratic decision making.”

### ■ **Civic Dispositions, Inclinations, and Values**

Civic dispositions can be considered a combination of values, attitudes and preferences that guide thinking and can create the potential for action. Just about every report we examined wants students to come away with a desire to contribute to the common good and to engage diverse perspectives as valuable ways to inform one’s own views. The Crucible Moment document (The Task Force, 2012) and the literature review add language about ethical integrity or morality and the importance of related reasoning. The Crucible Moment (The Task Force, 2012) also stresses respect for freedom and human dignity, empathy, open-mindedness, tolerance, justice, and equality. Bonner (2011) adds spiritual exploration to the list. The Census questions (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012) measure trust in people and in institutions.

### ■ **Practice/Action**

The commonality found in student practice/actions for civic engagement involves applying skills to public problem solving; this is a stated or implied kind of action in every single report. Bonner (2011), ADP (2012), the Census (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012) and the literature review use the terms “service”, “service learning” or “volunteering”. The AAC&U (The Task Force, 2012) adds “compromise, civility, mutual respect, navigation of political systems, integration of knowledge, skills and values to inform actions with others”. The American Democracy Project (2012) adds “opportunities for reflection”, which is an often-touted practice in service learning more generally (National Service Learning Clearinghouse, 2009). The literature review cites community planning and public management or administration as desirable student outcomes.

## **Scales and Measurements for Civic Engagement**

While much of our analysis centered on the national reports listed above, we also determined that it would be useful to look at select surveys that gather national level data about the civic participation and civic learning across the country. Our purpose for looking at these measures- and any available related reports about the gathered data- was to see whether these information sources were consistent with or different than the content found in the national reports.

### ■ **Census Measures**

The United States government regularly collects data regarding the nation’s people and the economy. One part of the Census (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012) is intended to help identify levels of civic responsibility and civic participation by different groups as a potential indicator of the civic health of the nation. The Census (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012) measures action by asking about volunteering, attendance at public meetings, working with neighbors to make improvements, donations, voting, service in civic groups, social networks and reading and use of media to learn news.

### ■ **Wabash Studies**

This longitudinal national study of liberal arts education is intended to discover what teaching practices, programs, and institutional structures support liberal arts education and to develop methods of assessing liberal arts education (Center of Inquiry, 2011). Seven outcomes (e.g. critical thinking, need for cognition, interest in and attitudes about diversity, leadership, moral reasoning, and well-being) guided the initial study, which was conducted on the campuses of forty-nine different educational institutions.

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION B National Reports

The on-going sets of Wabash studies rely on a series of in-depth scales that measure critical thinking, attributes of socially responsible leadership, contributions to arts, humanities, and sciences, involvement in politics and social issues, among other topics. More information about the scales is available at <http://www.liberalarts.wabash.edu/study-instruments>.

### ■ U.S. Department of Education Survey on Shared Futures

A national, collaborative research project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education surveyed college students about their thoughts and experiences on varied civic, social, cultural, and global issues to find ways that colleges can prepare students for citizenship in a world of global change (Musil, 2007). Questions asked students about how they thought about other people, whether they analyze their own reasoning, and about the influence of society on their own behavior. Other questions asked students to assess their skills in communication, culture, cooperative word practices, problem-solving, perspective-taking, and discussing and negotiating controversial issues. Another set of questions asked about the importance of various roles for responsible citizenship and on their own involvement in different types of civic action.

### Analysis of Commonalities and Differences

We found much more consensus than difference across the national reports. Language used in the documents is broad in scope and stated in ways that are carefully apolitical. Words like “advocacy” and “social justice” are mostly eschewed in the national reports. Economic or other inequalities are rarely mentioned in most of the reports. On the other hand, there is a heavy and unapologetic emphasis on diversity and the need to find common ground. The ability to bring people together to make change at any level (e.g. local to global) is a given, as is educating students to have the desire to do so.

Sometimes all these factors are combined. For instance, AAC&U Shared Futures Initiative zeros in on ways to address global learning and assumes “that we live in an interdependent but unequal world and that higher education can prepare students to not only thrive in such a world, but to creatively and responsibly remedy its inequalities and problems.” (See <http://www.aacu.org/SharedFutures/index.cfm>). Understanding of societal issues and the ability to sort out evidence for positions is consistently stressed in the reports, as is the ability to communicate positions both orally and in written forms. In addition, several of the reports, as well as the scales, mention the importance of critical thinking and taking leadership roles. Notably, these skills are commonly associated with a liberal education, whether or not they are acquired through, or applied to, civic engagement.

We found no mention of voting, except in the Census questionnaire (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012), although the literature review has a category for “active citizenship practices”. Only the literature review mentions public management or administration, and no one mentions running for public office. Only Bonner (2011) specifically mentions developing “systemic insight,” but AAC&U’s Crucible Moment (The Task Force, 2012) does identify the importance of knowing about political systems and ways to influence change.

Notably, we found that the national scales and measures were largely consistent with information found in the national reports. Thus, the civic-related questions in the Census (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012), in the Wabash studies (Center of Inquiry, 2011) and in the Shared Futures Survey (Musil, 2007) can help scholars and practitioners further understand different factors that contribute or detract from various aspects of the civic engagement of college students. Consequently, these national measures take us one step toward further identifying which educational practices and programs are connected to civic learning and participation. Such information could be highly valuable both to educators and community practitioners interested in promoting civic learning and community-related action.

**Chart 3: National Measures of Core Competencies for Civic Engagement**

	CIVIC KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	DISPOSITION	PRACTICE/ACTION
<b>Census</b>	Balance of Power Votes needed for an override of Presidential veto	Leadership of organizations	Trust in people  Trust in institutions	Volunteering Public Meetings Work with neighbors to make improvements Donations Voting Service in civic groups Social networks Reading and media re: news
<b>Shared Futures</b>	Implies need to understand diversity as a part of citizenship  Need for cognition	Implies leadership, communication, considering diverse perspectives  Critical thinking	Importance of various issues within government, business, education & society  Beliefs about different perspectives, different kinds of possible actions, and sense of self efficacy	Volunteering Sign petitions Join boycotts Write to government or news Contribute money or organize group to fundraise for cause Write articles or educate others
<b>Wabash</b>	Attributes of socially responsible leadership	Leadership Moral reasoning	Interest in and attitudes about diversity	Contributions to arts, humanities, & sciences Involvement in politics & social issues

**Summary**

In sum, the national reports offer considerable guidance for educators and administrators at both large and small institutions about important foci for engaging students in civic learning and encouraging them to demonstrate greater civic responsibility. The scales and measures available from the United States Census (National Conference on Citizenship, 2012), the Wabash studies (Center of Inquiry, 2011), and through AAC&U’s Shared Futures project (Musil, 2007) offer tools to use to see whether students are actually accomplishing civic learning and applying that learning through their practices in local and global communities.

**References**

Adelman, C., Ewell, P., Gaston, P., & Schneider, C. G. (2011). *The Degree Qualifications Profile*. Indianapolis: Lumina Foundation.

American Democracy Project. (2012). *Creating Civic Outcomes: Designing Signature Pedagogies Selected Examples*. Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Association of American Colleges and Universities. (2012). Core Commitments: Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility. Retrieved from: [http://www.aacu.org/core\\_commitments/index.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/core_commitments/index.cfm)

Astin, A., Vogelgesang, L., Misa, K., Anderson, J., Denson, N., Jayakumar, U., Saenz, V., & Yamamura, E. (2006). Understanding the Effects of Service Learning: A Study of Students and Faculty. Retrieved from: [http://www.heri.ucla.edu/PDFs/pubs/reports/UnderstandingTheEffectsOfServiceLearning\\_FinalReport.pdf](http://www.heri.ucla.edu/PDFs/pubs/reports/UnderstandingTheEffectsOfServiceLearning_FinalReport.pdf)

Bonner Network. (2011). *Four Year Student Development Model*. Retrieved from: <http://bonnernetwork.pbworks.com/w/page/13113175/Student%20Development%20and%20Leadership>

Center of Inquiry. (2011). *Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education: Outcomes and Experience Measures*. Retrieved from: <http://www.liberalarts.wabash.edu/>

Gottlieb, K. & Robinson, G. (Eds.) (2002). *Integrating Civic Responsibility into the Curriculum*. Washington, DC: The American Association of Community Colleges.

Meisel, W. (1996). *The Bonner Scholars Program: A Four Year Community Service Scholarship Program Model*. Princeton, NJ: The Corella and Bertram F. Bonner Foundation.

Musil, C. (2007). *Assessing Global Learning: Matching Good Intentions with Good Practice*. Rubrics. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

National Conference on Citizenship (2012). United States Census: The Civic Health Indicators. Retrieved from: <http://www.ncoc.net/New-CHI-indicators>

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse. (2009). *Americorps and Service-Learning 101*. Retrieved from: [http://www.servicelarning.org/instant\\_info/fact\\_sheets/tribal\\_facts/ Americorps\\_and\\_service-learning\\_101](http://www.servicelarning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/tribal_facts/ Americorps_and_service-learning_101)

Rhodes, T., (Ed.). (2010). *Assessing Outcomes and Improving Achievement: Tips and Tools for Using Rubrics*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Stokamer, S. (2011). Pedagogical Catalysts of Civic Competence. Paper presented at the International Association of Research on Service Learning and Community Engagement, Chicago, IL.

The National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America’s Promise. (2007). *College Learning for the New Global Century*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

The 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.

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION C Academic Programs

### Review of Program Civic Learning Outcomes

As part of the larger project to determine the student core competencies for civic engagement, competencies or student learning outcomes from twenty-nine colleges and universities that offer minors or majors or student affairs programs in community engagement were gathered and analyzed. Of course, each program develops and defines the thematic areas in different ways, and, not surprisingly, many student learning outcomes reflect more than one theme, which will be evident in the following analysis.

In comparison to the national conversations about student civic engagement, many program student learning outcomes clearly reflect themes identified in the literature and the review of the national competencies, but the analysis also reveals themes that diverge from the literature and national reports. The analysis also demonstrates a difference in how concepts are operationalized; for example, some elements that were discussed as knowledge areas in the literature and national reports are developed in the student learning outcomes as skills. The program student learning outcomes vary in the ways they define themes; those variances and commonalities and differences between the themes and the national conversations are identified and discussed in the analysis.

### Methodology

Outreach began with a list of programs compiled by the Center for Engaged Democracy at Merrimack College. The list included 68 major, minor, certificate and other undergraduate programs focused on civic and community engagement, broadly defined. As the process moved forward additional programs were added to the list as they were discovered or suggested. A small number of programs had learning outcomes

or core competencies clearly posted on their websites. In the majority of cases, core competencies were not readily available on-line. Those programs received one or two rounds of emails explaining the project, inviting them to contribute their core competencies if available. Of the programs we reached out to:

- Learning outcomes were collected from 23 programs:
  - 4 of which were majors
  - 10 of which were minors
  - 5 of which were certificates
  - 4 of which were not majors, minors or certificates
- Learning outcomes were not collected from 45 programs:
  - 10 responded that they did not have learning outcomes
  - 31 never responded
  - 2 were suspended or no longer existed
  - 2 were currently developing learning outcomes and offered to provide them when available

Appendix A lists the programs from which we have gathered learning outcomes. In addition to the 23 programs which sent us learning outcomes, six programs had items on-line that seemed similar to core competencies, but weren't labeled as such. None of those programs responded to inquiries for more information. The list in Appendix A only includes programs that either provided core competencies directly, or had their core competencies clearly labeled as such on-line. In the analysis, the learning outcomes were categorized by theme, and a number of themes emerge under the larger categories of civic knowledge, skills, inclinations/values, and practice (see chart 4).

**Chart 4: Summary of Civic Learning Outcomes from 29 Academic Programs**

CIVIC KNOWLEDGE	CIVIC SKILLS	CIVIC VALUES	CIVIC PRACTICE
Issue awareness in context Systemic processes of oppression Community/organizational processes Democratic processes Community-based learning/Service-learning	Intercultural competence Communication Leadership Community building Conflict management/Civility Research/Modes of Inquiry Analysis Critical Thinking Theory into Practice	Social responsibility/Citizenship Action in community Self-reflection Ethics Personal Development	Community-based learning

### Civic Knowledge

The learning outcomes for every program reflected knowledge as a core component of the program. The knowledge area was developed differently than national reports and rubrics; specifically, an understanding of the systemic nature of oppression is a significant theme that is not directly mentioned in the literature or in the national reports or rubrics. The national reports do discuss social and environmental justice, but the program student learning outcomes are far more specific in their development of a particularly consciousness regarding social justice. Further, student learning outcome themes of issue awareness in context and knowledge of organizational processes are far more specifically developed than the national conversation reflects. An understanding of democratic processes is consistent with the literature and national reports and rubrics.

#### Issue awareness in context

Programs commonly focus on increasing student knowledge of issues in local, national, and global contexts. Some of the outcomes are more broadly developed and range from intending to “embed students’ experiences of engagement in a broader social context” (Allegheny College Minor in Values, Ethics, and Social Action), “achieve an understanding of community needs” (University of Wisconsin Parkside Certificate in Community Based Learning), and “demonstrate an understanding of the social, political, and economic contexts of communities of place and interest” (Wartburg Major in Community Sociology). Other programs stressed more specific, local understanding, such as the California State University Monterey Bay Community Participation Learning outcome “demonstrate knowledge of the demographics, socio-cultural dynamics and assets of a specific local community” or

the Metropolitan State University - Twin Cities Minor in Civic Engagement outcome “know and understand at least one specific issue area or context in which civic engagement takes place and/or increase development of at least one set of civic engagement skills.” While the literature and national rubrics stress the need for students to understand current events, issue awareness in context, as one of the most common identified themes, offers much more specificity in focus.

#### Systemic processes of oppression

Another very common theme for many programs that is not reflected in the literature or national standards is a desire for students to understand the systematic processes of oppression, both historically/culturally and the student’s participation in those processes. For some programs, the competencies simply state an understanding of “inequity” or “oppression”, such as “examine and analyze a community issue in the context of systemic inequities” (California State University Community Participation Learning Outcomes), and “aware[ness] of the impact of systemic inequities on her/his own life and opportunities” (California State University Monterey Bay Minor in Service Learning Leadership), and “critical thinking skills that allow students to explore the causes and effects of human suffering” and “[u]nderstand root causes of social problems” (Cabrini College Minor in Social Justice).

Other competencies are more detailed and perhaps could be read as more political in nature; for example, asking students to “Explain and analyze how historical legacies, individuals, structures, and institutions work interactively to distribute material and symbolic advantages and disadvantages based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and physical ability” (Guilford College Major in Public Service). In addition to understanding the theoretical, cultural, and historical roots

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION C Academic Programs

of oppression, programs also ask students to grapple with their own identities and actually witness the inequality in their community work. Specifically, the California State University Monterey Bay's Community Participation Learning Outcomes desire that students "Comprehend own social and cultural group identities and the relative privilege or marginalization of each" and the University of Kansas Certificate in Civic Engagement and Community Service requires that students "expose" themselves to "societal inadequacies and injustices."

### ■ Community/organizational processes

A significant number of programs highlighted a need for students to understand how community and organizational processes work. The Allegheny College Minor in Values, Ethics, and Social Action intends "To equip students for complex thinking about social issues by providing them with theoretical and empirical tools for understanding communities and the dynamics of change within them." Similarly, Alverno College's Major in Community Leadership encourages students to "Apply theories from various social science and professional disciplines to analyze organizational effectiveness and community issues." Other programs focus on specifics, such as "power dynamics" (California State University Monterey Bay Minor in Service Learning Leadership), "processes of decision-making and implementation in governmental and non-govern-

mental organizations" (Indiana University Bloomington Certificate in Political and Civic Engagement), or the "interdependence within communities, societies, and the world" (Illinois State University Minor in Public Service). These student-learning outcomes focus on theory and are process oriented, implying that students will use that theory and process knowledge to enact community change.

### ■ Democratic processes

Consistent with the review of literature and national rubrics and related to the knowledge of the theory and processes of community and organizations, many programs identify the knowledge of specific democratic processes as a core competency. Some program student learning outcomes list both the general organizational processes and the specific democratic processes as discrete competencies. For example, Illinois State University Minor in Public Service intends that a student "grows an understanding of the democratic process," and Indiana University Bloomington Certificate in Political and Civic Engagement intends that students "[u]nderstand the American political process and the operation of American civil society" and be able to "[a]nalyze and use the products of American political and civic life such as legislation, government reports, judicial decisions, non-profit organization website, newspaper stories, and advocacy group manifestoes." In this theme, learning outcomes

#### **GUILFORD COLLEGE:**

#### **COMMUNITY AND JUSTICE STUDIES**

**Interview with: Sherry Giles, Associate Professor of Justice & Policy Studies; Coordinator of the Community and Justice Studies major**

*"The Community and Justice Studies major focuses on policies and strategies of public service organizations. Taking an applied interdisciplinary approach, the department works with other departments and many community groups, to emphasize understanding public service organizations, problem-solving, values in public policies, civic activism and strategies for changing organizations. Graduates of the Community and Justice Studies major have pursued graduate study and careers in urban affairs, public administration, law and related vocations. Graduates also have undertaken careers in community organizing and in nonprofit community service organizations focusing on mediation and conflict resolution, spouse and child abuse and similar issues. Many students look forward to civic activism, influencing policy in their communities, and supporting their communities through service." <http://www.guilford.edu/academics/academic-programs/academic-departments/justice-policy-studies/majors/>*

At Guilford College students can major in Community and Justice Studies or minor in Community Studies within the Department of Justice and Policy Studies. The program was founded in 1998 with a goal of integrating experiential and interdisciplinary education by bringing the community into the classroom and getting students out into the community. In 2008, building on their foundation of community partnerships, they began to focus on strengthening the conceptual and theoretical foundations of the major. Guilford has been an active part of the larger conversation to institutionalize academic study of community engagement. The faculty recently formally adopted nine student learning outcomes: Social Theory and Social Analysis, Community Building, Community Organizing, Community-Based Research, Community-Based Program Development, Public Policy Creation and Implementation (formerly called Political Knowledge), Conflict Resolution, Diversity and Struc-

tural Inequality, and Leadership and Group Facilitation. Previously, the learning outcomes were more malleable because they had not been collectively agreed upon. Each year they will formally assess three of the outcomes using student course work as well as exit interviews from graduating seniors. For each learning outcome that is being assessed, the faculty create a rubric and assess the students as highly-proficient, proficient, or not proficient. If they discover a pattern of weakness in the students they will use this information to amend the teaching in specific courses that focus on the pertinent learning outcome. Faculty members also conduct an overall assessment of the major each year, drawing on exit interviews from graduating seniors. During the 2011-2012 academic year, the program undertook an in-depth review of the major, consisting of a self-study and reports from external reviewers.

implied that the knowledge would be used in effective action in communities; for example, a goal of Tufts University Jonathon M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service is that a student “[r]ecognizes or recalls information, concepts, and theories that are essential to build democratic societies.” Finally, some of the competencies in this theme develop a macro approach, such as “[k]now critical social, cultural, political and historical dynamics that underlie the practice of civic engagement from a US and/or global perspective” (Metropolitan State University - Twin Cities Minor in Civic Engagement) and “[u]nderstand different styles of public leadership and the role of political and civic leaders” (Indiana University Bloomington Certificate in Political and Civic Engagement).

### ■ **Community-based learning/Service-learning knowledge**

Finally, in the knowledge category, a few programs identify in their learning outcomes a need for students to understand the principles of service learning and/or community-based learning. A few examples include, the University of California Los Angeles Minor in Civic Engagement’s “Knowledge of the diverse traditions of service and the history of service movements” and “Familiarity with empirical research addressing cognitive and affective outcomes of service learning and community involvement.” Understandably, the California State University Monterey Bay Minor in Service Learning Leadership has a more developed learning outcome for service learning:

“Service Learning Design and Pedagogy ~ Students know the theoretical roots and various approaches to service learning and experiential education pedagogy; have a working understanding of empirical research in service learning, focusing on cognitive and affective outcomes for student learning and development as well as community development; facilitate service learning and practical experiences, and identify and assess critical components of effective service learning; and assess community service learning as a strategy for (a) creating more just communities, and (b) preparing students for lifelong community participation.”

While only a few programs directly state this theme, the general principles of community-based or service-learning are reflected by other programs in skills outcomes, such as reciprocity.

### **Civic Skills**

Civic skills are a significantly larger category in the analysis of civic learning outcomes. The skills range from those that are more specifically focused on civic engagement to those that are commonly thought of as part of a traditional liberal arts education. However, even for those more general skills of liberal education, the program learning outcomes discuss those skills in the context of civic education.

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION C Academic Programs

Primarily, the program outcomes reflect the skills of leadership, community building, communication, and analysis. The programs develop leadership more than the national conversation reflects. While not directly stated in the literature and national reports, students learning outcomes of conflict management/civility and intercultural competence emerge as distinct strong skill-based themes, while research and translating theory into practice are minor themes.

### ■ Intercultural competence

The most common theme for the program student-learning outcomes is in developing students' capacity for intercultural competence, which is reflected in how diversity and intercultural competence are emphasized as both knowledge and skills in the national reports and rubrics.

Some of the programs used the language of "diversity," "multicultural," or "cultural pluralism," but, in intent, the goal is that students be able to communicate and work with people and communities that reflect a range of cultural diversity. For many schools, the outcomes are more general and focus on an appreciation for diversity—"Recognizing and appreciating human diversity and commonality" (Auburn University Minor in Community and Civic Engagement), "develops an appreciation of diversity" (Illinois State University Minor in Public Service), and "appreciate the roles that diversity and multiculturalism play in human relations, their own identity, and the fundamental way they view the world" (University of Maine at Machias Major in the Behavioral Sciences and Community Studies). Other programs emphasize reflection and respect, such as University of California Los Angeles Minor in Civic En-

### SALT LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE: CIVICALLY ENGAGED SCHOLAR PROGRAM Interview with Lisa Walz, Service learning Coordinator

*"The Civically Engaged Scholar program provides a structure for students to develop knowledge and skills to become active members of their communities. The program enhances both academic learning and volunteer experiences. Personal and academic knowledge deepen as students critically reflect on their civic participation in our community. Civically Engaged Scholars stand out as leaders who strive to impact our communities for the better." <http://www.slcc.edu/thaynecenter/civicallyengagedscholars.asp>*

The mission of the Civically Engaged Scholar (CES) program at Salt Lake Community College is to provide students with a formal education on social justice issues, through both designated service-learning courses and a co-curricular discussion series. CES is an honors program administered by the Thayne Center for Service & Learning, which was established in 1994. There are three tracks open to all students: Academic Service-Learning, Community Building, and Engaged Leadership. Additionally, all students enrolled in an "Engaged Department" graduate automatically with this honor. As of 2012, SLCC's Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is the only full Engaged Department at the college, though others are currently pursuing the designation. Each track includes required and elective coursework within designated service-learning classes, service with a nonprofit community partner, and presentations and written reflections on the student's service experiences. During the 2011-12 academic year, the program coordi-

nator instituted a required monthly meeting for all students in the program, which both helps deepen their understanding and practice of civic engagement, and builds community among the students. Three specific learning outcomes guide the work of the program. These learning outcomes are directly tied to the mission of the program, the mission of the Thayne Center, and in turn, the civic mission of SLCC. The learning outcomes are: 1) Students will be able to identify, understand, and appreciate human differences. 2) Students will be able to list and explain their personal values as they relate to their individual identity, self-esteem, and attitude. 3) Students will be able to define, describe, and analyze five social justice issues effecting college, local, regional, national, and global communities. A mixed-method assessment of these outcomes is conducted annually through an online survey and individual mentoring sessions with program members.

gagement's outcomes "Ability to reflect critically about diversity, commonality, and democracy" and "Respect for cultural pluralism and multiple viewpoints." Other programs were specific about the ability to communicate with intercultural competency, for example "Have knowledge, awareness, and skills in relation to cultural competency as it relates to racial ethnic minorities, research, community leadership, and public service" (University of California Irvine Major in Public and Community Service) and "Intercultural knowledge and competence – a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts" (University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Community Service Learning).

## Communication

Related to intercultural competence is another very common theme—the more general ability to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts (interpersonal, presentational, written). The literature and the national reports and rubrics emphasize the importance of communication, both written and oral, as do the program outcomes.

Communication outcomes tend to be longer and contain more elements than other competencies. The Providence College Major in Public and Community Service Studies identifies six outcomes in significant detail; one of those is the "'Eloquent listening' competency." They define it as follows:

We borrow the term "listen eloquently" from Langston Hughes. This first competency refers not just to what some call "active listening," but to a capacity Nell Morton describes as "hearing people into speech." The ability to listen eloquently allows someone to discern the interests of others in conversation, as well as find common ground in working for community change (see Margaret Wheatley's ideas about "simple conversations [to] change the world").

*Specific skills/experiences:* storytelling, the ability to find common interests in one-to-one conversations, use of "field notes" as practice in observation and as the basis for reflection (ethnography), conflict resolution, stakeholder analysis, community mapping.

Providence College's major in *Public And Community Service* also identifies "Writing and Public Speaking" as a core competency. Their definition of this is:

Communications skills are essential to any undergraduate major, and to citizenship in a democracy more generally. But Public and Community Service Studies majors need to be able to *communicate their thoughts and actions, both vertically to community and world leaders, and horizontally, with fellow students and community members.*

*Specific skills/experience:* Skills here include the ability to write well, which includes editing and proofing skills and the ability to write to specific audiences. "Public" speaking not only involves the capacity to present to different groups, but also the ability to converse one-on-one, and to present visual materials in public.

Tufts University Jonathon M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service also devotes two outcomes to communication with "Communication--Effectively communicates to build democratic societies" and "Develop communication skills to Responding--Builds and maintains interpersonal relationships in order to build democratic societies."

Some programs see communication as a way to engage and share disciplinary and professional knowledge, such as "communication and organizing skills that enable them to act upon that knowledge as members of the campus community and eventually as professionals in their chosen fields" (Cabrini College Minor in Social Justice), "communicate disciplinary ideas for academic and general audiences in oral, written, and visual presentation formats" (University of Maine at Machias Major in the Behavioral Sciences and Community Studies), and "Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills consistent with the professional expectations of the discipline" (Wartburg Major in Community Sociology).

Other programs reflect communication as broad skill set to be utilized in different ways in a variety of contexts. Some examples are "Communication--Courses in this track build effective communication skills, develop problems-solving skills and attain excellence in

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION C Academic Programs

interpersonal communication, writing and public speaking” (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Minor in Leadership and Civic Engagement), and “Effectively writes, reads, views, visualizes, speaks, and listens” (Montclair State University Leadership Development through Civic Engagement Minor Program).

Other programs used a rhetorical definition of communication, such as the Indiana University Bloomington Certificate in Political and Civic Engagement outcome “Communicate in an effective and persuasive manner in a variety of public venues” and the University of Illinois Certificate in Civic Leadership outcome in Rhetoric “Students learn to analyze and create persuasive, issue-oriented arguments, with particular emphasis on the dimensions of language, genre, situation, and consequences, and experiment with presenting arguments in both verbal and visual media. CCLCP’s capstone course in public discourse broadens and deepens students’ understanding of the rhetorical tools used by civic leaders and change agents.”

Writing is often mentioned with other communication skills in the outcomes, but very few programs have outcomes that are solely focused on writing. Two of those programs are the Waynesburg University Minor in Service Leadership outcome “think and write criti-

cally about the complex network out of which substantial American and international social problems arise (such as poverty, homelessness and/or inadequate housing, hunger and illiteracy)” and the University of Illinois Certificate in Civic Leadership outcome:

“Writing--Students hone their skills by working on writing projects with community-based partner organizations. Examples include brochures, fact sheets, news releases and media kits, annual reports, issue overviews, and workshop materials. Students also learn to present their community-based research in thesis-driven, formally documented academic papers. Other written work may include field notes, a community or organization profile, a blog, and ‘cover letters’ explaining and justifying an approach to a writing projects”

In the case of the former outcome, it connects to the understanding of social inequities; the interconnection to other competencies of knowledge or skills is common in the communication theme. The sheer number of learning outcomes that reflect the need for students to develop strong oral and written communication skills reflects the emphasis placed on oral and written communication skills in the literature and national rubrics.

### **INDIANA UNIVERSITY-BLOOMINGTON: POLITICAL AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT (PACE)**

**Interview with Michael Grossberg, Sally M. Reahard Professor, Department of History; Professor, School of Law; Co-Director, Indiana University Center on Law, Society, and Culture; Director, Political and Civic Engagement Program**

*“The PACE program prepares undergraduate students for a lifetime of participation in American political and civic life. Its interdisciplinary courses and activities develop their communication, organization, decision-making, critical thinking, and leadership skills; and PACE motivates them to be knowledgeable, effective, and committed citizens. Through PACE students take part in a wide range of political and civic organizations: advocacy groups, non-profit agencies, political campaigns, branches of local, state, and national government, community organizations, and the media. PACE students are ready to work in political and civic organizations right after graduation and to pursue post-graduate education in law, public policy, education, business, the media, social work, and many other fields. PACE also enhances the education of students headed toward careers in other areas such as health care or the arts who want to be engaged citizens.” <http://pace.indiana.edu/>*

The PACE program is an interdisciplinary undergraduate certificate program that began in 2009 in response to the call from students to have a more organized program in civic and political engagement. It is designed to integrate theory and practice through experiential learning. In addition to core and elective course work, the program includes an annual deliberative issue forum, internships and a capstone. The 2011-2012 academic year was the first year of a full curriculum, meaning that it was the first year to have seniors in the program and thus students in the capstone. From the outset of the program they developed 11 program goals and eight learning objectives.

The learning objectives each include a three level rubric for assessment and are: Acquisition of Knowledge,

Analysis of Knowledge, Leadership Development, Collaborative & Creative Conflict, Effective Communication, Political and Civic Identity, Problem Solving, and Social Awareness & Ethical Responsibility. The development of these learning objectives and program goals was guided by the experience and knowledge of the advisory board about what it takes to be effective in public/political life. The learning outcomes are assessed through course assignments which are collected as a whole through an electronic portfolio. Additionally, they conduct focus groups with each capstone class about what the students have learned through the certificate. They have plans for long-term tracking of the students after they graduate, with a goal of creating a community of which the students want to remain a part.

### Leadership

Civic leadership is a very common theme, both explicitly and implicitly, in the program outcomes. Programs identify a need for students to develop “A vision that can empower and inspire others” (University of California Los Angeles Minor in Civic Engagement) or “Inspires or facilitates others to build democratic societies” (Tufts University Jonathon M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service). Other programs focus on specific leadership skills, including, not surprisingly, the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Minor in Leadership and Civic Engagement’s outcome in “Policy and Decision Making—Courses in this track develop an understanding of how leadership skills are applied and decisions are made in a variety of contexts” and the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Community Service Learning outcome in “Leadership Identity Development—To gain an understanding of one’s own beliefs, values, and responsibilities that will play a role in the leadership positions and styles that one undertakes. To learn about existing leadership models and use them to identify a personal leadership style.”

Leadership skills and principles are apparent or implied in a number of other categories, such as other civic skills and the larger categories of inclinations and practice. Leadership is also reflected as a more minor theme of the literature review and the analysis of national reports; however, programs place a great emphasis on leadership throughout the learning outcomes.

### Community building

Reflected in the national conversations and related to leadership, programs ask students to be able to apply their skills to build communities. Some programs focus on the specific term “community building,” as in the Guilford College Major in Public Service outcome in

“Community Building: Develop and apply the skills used to build a sense of community that enables diverse groups to accomplish social change in contemporary societies where individualism and competition are emphasized” and the Montclair State University Leadership Development through Civic Engagement Minor’s outcome in “Community Building—Demonstrates capacity to bring diverse individuals together to work towards and implement common goals through dialogue.” Other schools have outcomes that specifically attempt to develop knowledge into skills that influence how students work in the community. The California State University Monterey Bay Community Participation Learning Outcomes ask students to “[d]emonstrate reciprocity and responsiveness in service work with community” and the Indiana University Bloomington Certificate in Political and Civic Engagement outcomes require students to “work with those who hold opposing views and devise effective solutions to public problems through democratic decision-making.” Both of the previous outcomes call upon students to use other civic skills and are manifestations of students utilizing their knowledge practically in their communities.

### Conflict management/civility

Closely related to building bridges is the theme of conflict management/civility, which is a significant theme of the program outcomes. As in the Indiana University Bloomington Certificate in Political and Civic Engagement outcome from the above section, other programs also specify conflict management and civility as important skills for students in their work with communities. Some common ways that this theme is manifest in the outcomes are “Behaving, and working through controversy, with civility” (Auburn University Minor in Community and Civic Engagement), “Builds bridges across differences” (California State University Monterey Bay Minor in Service Learning Leadership), and “Finds common ground and respects disagreements with

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION C Academic Programs

civility and diplomacy” (Montclair State University Leadership Development through Civic Engagement Minor). This area of conflict management and civility is closely related to the skill that was most commonly found in the core competencies—Intercultural Competence.

### ■ Research/modes of inquiry

While the national reports discussed knowledge of sources, programs emphasize research as an important skill competency for students. The language surrounding research is simple and usually manifested as a short phrase. Examples are “Research: students learn how to find information in a community” (Allegheny College Minor in Values, Ethics, and Social Action), “be able to locate and evaluate sources of information” (University of Maine at Machias Major in the Behavioral Sciences and Community Studies), and “Conduct financial analysis and social scientific research” (Alverno College Major in Community Leadership). As is evident in these examples and other competencies, the research theme often focuses on disciplinary or specific modes of inquiry that were valued by the program.

### ■ Analysis

Related to research and communication, programs emphasize the need for students to be able to analyze research and their own experience in ways that would be useful for their work in communities. The need for critical analysis is reflected in the literature and the national reports and rubrics.

Some examples of learning outcomes from the program include, “Analysis: students learn to analyze such research as appropriately” (Allegheny College Minor in Values, Ethics, and Social Action), “Assesses value and of civic engagement initiatives” (Tufts University Jonathon M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service), and “the opportunity to develop their analytical skills as they formulate opinions and use reasoned judgment and communication skills to articulate their analyses” (University of San Francisco Minor in Public Service and Community Engagement). Other programs focus on outcomes of the analysis process, such as “Thinks creatively to generate effec-

tive strategies to build democratic societies” (Tufts University Jonathon M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service), “Creative thinking – the capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk-taking” (University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Community Service Learning), “Problem solving – a process to design, evaluate, and implement a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal” (University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Community Service Learning), and “Analyzes and synthesizes information objectively, takes a critical stance –uses signs and logic to be able to see false dichotomy, conflicts and analogues” (Montclair State University Leadership Development through Civic Engagement Minor Program).

### ■ Critical thinking

Related to analysis, a smaller number of programs specifically emphasize critical thinking skills; those that do usually combined those skills with others (communication or analysis) or focused more broadly on critical thinking as a liberal learning objective. Some specific program outcomes are: “Critical Thinking—Distinguishes between fact and opinion; asks questions; makes detailed observations; uncovers assumptions and defines terms; and makes assertions based on sound logic and solid evidence” (Montclair State University Leadership Development through Civic Engagement Minor), “displays critical thinking within the arena of democratic conversations and social issues” (Illinois State University Minor in Public Service), “Applied critical thinking: students learn to think in complex ways about social problems such as poverty” (Allegheny College Minor in Values, Ethics, and Social Action), and “Practices critical thinking as a guide to belief and action in a democratic society” (Tufts University Jonathon M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service).

In the skills category, the learning outcomes imply if not directly state the need for students to be able to use their learning to take action in a community, which is summed up by the next skill-based theme identified in the learning outcomes—Theory into Practice.

### **Theory into practice**

A smaller number of programs directly state student-learning outcomes that require students to put theory into practice. This competency is not specifically mentioned in the literature or the organizational reports, but the ability to put theory or knowledge into practice is implied in the national conversations and throughout the program learning outcomes.

Some of the program outcomes are more general in understanding the relationship of theory and practice, such as “Integrative learning – transferring and relating one learning experience to another experience” (University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Community Service Learning), “Analyze and use the scholarship on American political and civic life and understand the relationship between theory and practice” (Indiana University Bloomington Certificate in Political and Civic Engagement), “Connect course concepts to your experiences for deeper learning” (University of Wisconsin Parkside Certificate in Community Based Learning), and “Be able to integrate theory and experience” (Metropolitan State University - Twin Cities Minor in Civic Engagement). Other programs ask students to put specific knowledge or skills into practice. Some examples are “Know the variety of forms of civic engagement and have the ability to assess the efficacy of different approaches and strategies” (Metropolitan State University - Twin Cities Minor in Civic Engagement), “Ability to apply discipline-specific knowledge to contemporary or anticipated community needs”, (University of California Los Angeles Minor in Civic Engagement), and “Gain specific applied research (both quantitative and qualitative training) and analytical skills (scientific and statistical fundamentals) to address social issues as critical thinkers and problem solvers” (University of California Irvine Major in Public and Community Service). The latter examples of theory into practice imply that students will have practiced bringing theory to bear on community issues during their time in the program.

### **Civic Inclinations**

In addition to knowledge and skills, a number of programs emphasize instilling inclinations or values that will compel students to engage communities in reflective and ethical ways. Some of the inclinations, as

developed in the program student learning outcomes, are discussed in the literature or in the organizational reports and rubrics as knowledge or skills, but the program learning outcomes the following areas were clearly developed as inclinations or values with which the students should leave the program prepared to put into action in their work in the world.

### **Social responsibility/citizenship**

Many student-learning outcomes center on students understanding and acting upon the obligations of citizenship in a socially responsible manner. In the national reports and rubrics, the theme “contribute to the common good” can be seen as a related value, but programs do not use this language and develop it differently in the student learning outcomes.

Some programs again engage citizenship more broadly with outcomes such as “Developing empathy, ethics, values, and sense of social responsibility” (Auburn University Minor in Community and Civic Engagement), “Instill in students the value, appreciation and ethical responsibility of community investment, action research, and civic engagement” (University of California Irvine Major in Public and Community Service), and “Understanding of how civic engagement and participation in public life contribute to overall quality of life in the community” and “A sense of responsibility both to themselves and to the community” (University of California Los Angeles Minor in Civic Engagement). Many programs develop this outcome as personal, such as the Illinois State University Minor in Public Service outcome “A civically educated individual gains a sense of self-awareness as a citizen” and the University of Alaska Anchorage Certificate in Civic Engagement outcome “Articulate public uses of their education and civic engagement.”

### **Action in community**

An inclination to act in the community is not reflected in the literature or national reports, but it certainly is implied in the practice area of the national reports, where service learning and volunteering are emphasized. In the program outcomes, the inclination is clearly for students to have a life-long investment in their communities. This is related to, but different from, the broader ideas of citizenship and volunteering described in the national reports.

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION C Academic Programs

Many programs specifically emphasize student inclinations to take action in the community as a learning outcome, including the University of California Los Angeles Minor in Civic Engagement outcomes “A desire to promote their visions of social justice locally and globally” and “A willingness to participate actively in public life, address public problems, and serve their communities.” Many programs ask students to take specific sorts of action in the community. Examples are: “Promoting social justice locally and globally” and “Taking an active role in the political process,” and “Participating actively in public life, public problem solving, and community service” (Auburn University Minor in Community and Civic Engagement). Others call on students to use other skills (research, communication, or analysis) to effectively take action in the community; an example is “Seek out various perspectives, engage in dialogue, analyze the effectiveness of policies, and take informed and principled stands on vital public issues” (Indiana University Bloomington Certificate in Political and Civic Engagement) and “Students will become familiar with the pressing social issues of the day as they develop the necessary skills and knowledge for working in reciprocal partnerships, participating in diverse democratic societies, and providing thoughtful servant leadership” (University of San Francisco Minor in Public Service and Community Engagement).

### Self-reflection

While the American Democracy Project report is the only national report to mention self-reflection as an inclination, many academic programs focus on students’ self-reflection upon their own experiences and those of others as they move toward acting in the community. Some examples include: “aware of her/his own identities, stereotypes and assumptions” (California State University Monterey Bay Minor in Service Learning Leadership), “Critically assess self and how others see him/her” (Montclair State University Leadership Development through Civic Engagement Minor Program), and “able to personally integrate reflection on service, social issues, and course content” (Illinois State University Minor in Public Service). Finally, the University of Maine at Machias Major in the Behavioral Sciences and Community Studies outcomes encourage students “to self-critique for purposes of ongoing learning, personal and professional development, and ethical decision making.”

### Ethics

The literature and a few national reports and rubrics discuss ethics, but, in the program learning outcomes, ethics as a theme is surprisingly less noticeable. Many programs imply ethical standards in other categories (knowledge or skills), but few programs actually underscore ethics in their student learning outcomes. Those that do have outcomes such as: “Values and ethics: students learn to reason ethically about social issues and to connect them to philosophical or religious models of value” (Allegheny College Minor in Values, Ethics, and Social Action), “Explore moral-ethical dimensions of community issues and apply criteria for evaluating approaches to dealing with them” (Alverno College Major in Community Leadership), “Courses in this track develop integrity and understanding of the values of fairness, responsibility for self and for others, and personal accountability” (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Minor in Leadership and Civic Engagement), and “Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills, professional responsibilities, and ethical sensibilities in research and applied work” (Wartburg Major in Community Sociology).

### Personal development

Finally, in the inclinations or values themes, a few programs emphasize personal gains for students in a number of areas. The examples are wide ranging; a few are “Develop your own social philosophy” (Alverno College Major in Community Leadership), “Recognizes own personal perspective. Understands and appreciates others’ perspectives and interests” (Montclair State University Leadership Development through Civic Engagement Minor Program), “A commitment to a set of personal values” (University of California Los Angeles Minor in Civic Engagement), and “Cultivate your own interests while working with community partners” (University of Wisconsin Parkside Certificate in Community Based Learning).

### Civic Practice

The literature and national reports highlight practice as service-learning or volunteering; in the student learning outcomes, less than one-fourth of the programs have specific practice-oriented outcomes. Apparent in the preceding analysis, all of the programs

imply that students will utilize their knowledge, skills, and inclinations to act in the world, but fewer programs explicitly emphasize the need for students to act in the community as a learning outcome. The difference is understandable, in that for student learning outcomes, the practice in the community is used by academic programs to develop other student outcomes rather than as a learning outcome in and of itself.

Some student learning outcome examples of the specific emphasis on practice are: “have experience working in groups in classes and collaboratively in the community” (University of Maine at Machias Major in the Behavioral Sciences and Community Studies) and “utilize service experiences as laboratories for the learning of courses in their academic major programs” (Waynesburg University Minor in Service Leadership). The University of Kansas Certificate in Civic Engagement and Community Service devotes three learning outcomes to civic practice with “gone beyond the classroom to help your community and to further your own education,” “applied your course content in the context of the real world,” and “assisted community agencies in better serving their clients.”

Finally, a number of outcomes are not readily categorized into civic learning competencies. Those focus on subject matter competencies or very specific disciplinary knowledge (sociology or social science research skills) or on more general concepts of broad thinking and commitments to lifelong learning or results in the community.

## Summary

The learning outcomes of the civic engagement programs generally mirror those identified in the literature and the national rubrics. Differences in how those outcomes are discussed and how central those outcomes are in the programs are apparent in the analysis.

Knowledge of democratic processes is reflected in the national conversation and the outcomes, but many schools also discuss the necessity for students to understand organizational processes to help them understand how change is made in communities. Academic program emphasis on knowledge not specifically men-

tioned or highlighted in the literature or national rubrics is most surprising. Primary among these is knowledge of the systematic processes of oppression. A number of colleges shared the specific focus on this outcome, and the language and tone of the program learning outcomes signal a particular social justice agenda for student work in communities. Also, the program student learning outcomes are definitive about students gaining awareness of specific issues and understanding those issues within a specific context. While the national conversations imply contextual understanding of specific community issues, the program student learning outcomes emphasize it. Further, the program student learning outcomes develop knowledge of sources and diverse cultures as skills rather than knowledge outcomes, as in the national conversations.

In the skills area, written and oral communication, leadership, building bridges, and analysis are consistent with the literature and national reports and rubrics. In the national reports, the ability to put theory into practice is not directly stated but clearly implied, and the ability to research is coded as knowledge. The civic inclinations of social responsibility, obligations of citizenship, and taking action in the community are central in the student learning outcomes, however, in the literature and national reports, “contribute to the common good” emerges as a more vague theme that encapsulates them. Ethics is critical, but, in the program student learning outcomes, ethics did not emerge as a central theme. Ethics is implied in many learning outcomes, but very few programs specifically mention the development or use of ethical standards. A final inclination revealed in the analysis is self-reflection, a disposition to reflect on oneself, one’s position in the world, and one’s actions.

Finally, the national reports focus on engaging students in the community via service or community-based learning to develop and enhance student knowledge and skills. While less than one-fourth of the programs specifically discuss the actual engagement of students in service or community-based learning in their outcomes, the programs as a whole certainly imply that as a pedagogical technique. In some ways, the absence makes sense. Engagement in the community is not an explicit student outcome but is clearly used by programs in the development of student civic knowledge and skills.

# REVIEW OF KEY EVIDENCE STRANDS

## SECTION C Academic Programs

### Appendix A: Programs with Identified Learning Outcomes

College	Location	Program	Type of Program	Web Address
Allegheny College	Meadville, PA	Values, Ethics, and Social Action	Minor	<a href="http://sites.allegheny.edu/vesa/">http://sites.allegheny.edu/vesa/</a>
Alverno College	Milwaukee, WI	Community Leadership	Major	<a href="http://depts.alverno.edu/cld/">http://depts.alverno.edu/cld/</a>
Auburn University	Auburn, AL	Community and Civic Engagement	Minor	<a href="http://www.cla.auburn.edu/cla/cce/resources-for-students/minor/">http://www.cla.auburn.edu/cla/cce/resources-for-students/minor/</a>
Cabrini College	Radnor, PA	Social Justice	Minor	<a href="http://www.cabrini.edu/Academics/Academic-Departments/Social-Justice-Minor.aspx">http://www.cabrini.edu/Academics/Academic-Departments/Social-Justice-Minor.aspx</a>
California State University, Monterey Bay	Seaside, CA	Service Learning Leadership	Minor	<a href="http://service.csumb.edu/">http://service.csumb.edu/</a>
Colorado School of Mines	Golden, CA	Humanitarian Engineering	Minor	<a href="http://humanitarian.mines.edu/">http://humanitarian.mines.edu/</a>
Guilford College	Greensboro, NC	Community and Justice Studies	Major	<a href="http://www.guilford.edu/academics/academic-programs/academic-departments/justice-policy-studies/">http://www.guilford.edu/academics/academic-programs/academic-departments/justice-policy-studies/</a>
Illinois State University	Normal, IL	Civic Engagement and Responsibility	Minor	<a href="http://americandemocracy.illinoisstate.edu/">http://americandemocracy.illinoisstate.edu/</a>
Indiana University	Bloomington, IN	Political and Civic Engagement	Certificate	<a href="http://pace.indiana.edu/">http://pace.indiana.edu/</a>
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health	Baltimore, MD	Community-Based Public Health	Certificate	<a href="http://www.jhsph.edu/academics/programs/certificates/program/44">http://www.jhsph.edu/academics/programs/certificates/program/44</a>
Metropolitan State University, Twin Cities	Saint Paul, MD	Civic engagement	Minor	<a href="http://www.metrostate.edu/msweb/explore/catalog/undergrad/index.cfm?lvl=U&amp;section=3&amp;page_name=civic_engagement.html">http://www.metrostate.edu/msweb/explore/catalog/undergrad/index.cfm?lvl=U&amp;section=3&amp;page_name=civic_engagement.html</a>
Montclair State University	Montclair, NJ	Civic Engagement	Minor	<a href="http://www.montclair.edu/catalog/view_requirements.php?CurriculumID=627">http://www.montclair.edu/catalog/view_requirements.php?CurriculumID=627</a>
Providence College	Providence, RI	Public and Community Service Studies	Major	<a href="http://www.providence.edu/academics/Pages/public-community-service-studies.aspx">http://www.providence.edu/academics/Pages/public-community-service-studies.aspx</a>
Salt Lake Community College	Salt Lake City, UT	Civically Engaged Scholar Program	Scholar program	<a href="http://www.slcc.edu/thaynecenter/civicallyengagedscholars.asp">http://www.slcc.edu/thaynecenter/civicallyengagedscholars.asp</a>

College	Location	Program	Type of Program	Web Address
Tufts University	Medford, MA	NA	NA	
University of Alaska Anchorage	Anchorage, AK	Civic Engagement	Certificate	<a href="http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/engage/civic/index.cfm">http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/engage/civic/index.cfm</a>
University of California, Irvine	Irvine, CA	Public and Community Service	Major	<a href="http://www.socsci.uci.edu/ssarc/pcs/index.html">http://www.socsci.uci.edu/ssarc/pcs/index.html</a>
University of California Los Angeles	Los Angeles, CA	Civic Engagement	Minor	<a href="http://www.communitylearning.ucla.edu/civic-engagement-minor.html">http://www.communitylearning.ucla.edu/civic-engagement-minor.html</a>
University of Georgia	Athens-Clarke County, GA	Civic Engagement	Certificate	<a href="http://www.caes.uga.edu/academics/leadership/">http://www.caes.uga.edu/academics/leadership/</a>
University of Illinois	Urbana, IL	Civic Leadership	Certificate	<a href="http://www.uic.edu/depts/oaa/CCLCP/index.html">http://www.uic.edu/depts/oaa/CCLCP/index.html</a>
University of Kansas	Lawrence, KS	Service Learning	Certificate	<a href="http://www.servicelearning.ku.edu/certification.shtml">http://www.servicelearning.ku.edu/certification.shtml</a>
University of Maine at Machias	Machias, ME	Behavioral Sciences and Community Studies	Major	<a href="http://www.umm.maine.edu/behavsci.html">http://www.umm.maine.edu/behavsci.html</a>
University of Massachusetts Amherst	Amherst, MA	Citizen Scholars Program	2 year academic service learning program	<a href="http://www.honors.umass.edu/about-citizen-scholars">http://www.honors.umass.edu/about-citizen-scholars</a>
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth	Dartmouth, MA	Leadership and Civic Engagement	Minor	<a href="http://www.umassd.edu/seppce/centers/centers/cce/leadershipcivicengagementminor/">http://www.umassd.edu/seppce/centers/centers/cce/leadershipcivicengagementminor/</a>
University of San Francisco	San Francisco, CA	Public Service and Community Engagement	Minor	<a href="http://www.usfca.edu/mccarthycenter/programs/PSCP.html">http://www.usfca.edu/mccarthycenter/programs/PSCP.html</a>
University of Wisconsin Milwaukee	Milwaukee, WI	Community Leadership Living Learning Community	Service Learning program	<a href="http://www4.uwm.edu/soe/academics/ed_policy/comm_leadership/">http://www4.uwm.edu/soe/academics/ed_policy/comm_leadership/</a>
University of Wisconsin Parkside	Kenosha, WI	Community Based Learning	Certificate	<a href="http://www.uwp.edu/departments/community.partnerships/cbl/certificate.cfm">http://www.uwp.edu/departments/community.partnerships/cbl/certificate.cfm</a>
Wartburg College	Waverly, IA	Community Sociology	Major	<a href="http://www.wartburg.edu/socsci/soc.html">http://www.wartburg.edu/socsci/soc.html</a>
Waynesburg University	Waynesburg, PA	Service Leadership	Minor	<a href="http://www.waynesburg.edu/web/serveleadershipstudies">http://www.waynesburg.edu/web/serveleadershipstudies</a>

# CONNECTIONS BETWEEN FINDINGS

*As has been shown throughout this paper, there are many themes that emerge consistently from the literature review, the review of national records, and the specific academic programs. There are also several differences among the three.*

## ■ Knowledge

All three reviews identify civic knowledge as a critical core competency area. The literature review identifies knowledge of government processes, citizens' rights and responsibilities, political and legal systems, diversity and pluralism, and current affairs as some of the major content knowledge areas. These same areas are identified and expanded upon through the examination of national rubrics. AAC&U's Civic Engagement Values Rubric also identifies making connections between one's own scholarly discipline and civic engagement as a core competency. LEAP identifies knowledge of the physical and natural world as core competencies for civic engagement. Unlike the literature review and the national rubric review, the analysis of campus themes identifies knowledge of the systemic nature of oppression as a key knowledge area. The campuses also tend to highlight social justice knowledge as a critical competency. Finally, the campus analysis identifies core competencies relevant to knowledge of community/societal issues in local, national, and global contexts.

## ■ Skills

All three reviews identify core competencies that can be categorized as civic engagement skills. The literature review identifies critical reasoning about morality and causes, democratic decision-making, social organizing, consensus building, policy formation and analysis, communication and research skills; leadership and management skills; and assessing feasibility of change. The national report review identifies several of these same themes. It also identifies communication in multiple languages and teamwork. The campus analysis finds a greater emphasis on intercultural competence, leadership, and conflict management, and less emphasis on research and translating theory into practice.

## ■ Practice

The literature review identifies experiences as the third and final core competency category. This area includes community services, social organizing, project planning, community planning, and other real-world experiences. Similarly, the national report review identifies civic engagement practice, including students' integration of knowledge, skills, and values to inform actions with others, moral behavior, navigation of political systems, civility, communication strategies, leadership, commitment to collaboration, and application of learning to new and complex contexts. The program review does not identify a practice category. This may be because some of these same concepts are included in the other major core competency areas. It may be because of the different authors' interpretations of the data, as each section of this report was developed and written by different researchers. It could also be that campuses do not view the practice of civic engagement as a core competency area – practice would be for the purpose of gaining knowledge and skills and not a competency in and of itself.

## ■ Inclinations

A fourth and final general category of core competencies identified in this review is civic inclinations. This category does not emerge in the literature review. However, it is identified in both the review of national reports and academic programs and the review of local campuses. In the analysis of national rubrics, civic inclinations identified include, for example, respect for human dignity, empathy, open-mindedness, tolerance, ethical integrity, sense of responsibility. Similar to the review of national rubrics, the review of campuses also finds core competencies centered on facilitating students' sense of responsibility to society or sense of citizenship. The campus review also identifies inclination to act in one's community, to become a part of the civic life of one's community and/or the broader community, as a civic inclinations core competency. Ethics comes up in both the national rubrics review and the campus review. Other core competencies raised by the campus review include self-reflection and personal development. Finally, civic practice, which is a separate category in the literature review and the national report review, is subsumed under civic inclinations in the campus review.

## NEXT STEPS & CONCLUSION

We view this document as the initiation of a national dialogue on core competencies in civic engagement which will help to define and legitimate this emerging scholarly field. We also believe it will help to delineate the learning outcomes appropriate for civic engagement majors, minors, and certificate programs, and that it will raise questions that demand further exploration. As each section of this report was developed and written by different committee members, through conference calls and virtual communication, several of whom have never met face-to-face, we as the writers of this text are still processing the work that we have done and considering its implications and appropriate next steps. We are extremely excited about the opportunity to have these conversations face-to-face at the Center for an Engaged Democracy 3rd Annual Research Institute, to share our findings with conference participants, and to benefit from your feedback.

We are pleased that we are not only able to present this synthesis of our findings, but that we are also able to provide you with links to many of the sources used for this analysis online. We encourage you to review these sources for additional ideas and inspiration as you are developing or refining the core competencies for your program. We also believe that much of the value in this initial research review lies in the ability to identify both commonalities and differences among the core competencies noted in the scholarly literature, espoused by national professional associations, and utilized by community engagement majors, minors, certificate programs, and extracurricular programs across the country.

# CORE COMPETENCIES IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

**Chart 5: Core Competencies, Synthesis Across Key Evidence Strands**

	CIVIC KNOWLEDGE	CIVIC SKILLS	CIVIC PRACTICE	CIVIC INCLINATIONS
<b>Literature Review</b>	<p>Government processes</p> <p>Citizens' rights and responsibilities</p> <p>Political and legal systems</p> <p>Diversity and pluralism</p> <p>Current affairs</p>	<p>Critical reasoning about morality and causes</p> <p>Democratic decision-making</p> <p>Social organizing</p> <p>Consensus building</p> <p>Policy formation and analysis</p> <p>Communication and research skills</p> <p>Leadership and management skills</p> <p>Assessing feasibility of change</p>	<p>Community services</p> <p>Social organizing</p> <p>Project planning</p> <p>Community planning</p> <p>Other real-world experiences</p>	NA
<b>National Reports</b>	<p>Democratic texts, movements, and principles</p> <p>Diverse cultures and histories of US and global societies</p> <p>Knowledge of political systems</p> <p>Connections between one's own scholarly discipline and civic engagement</p> <p>Knowledge of the physical and natural world</p>	<p>Critical inquiry and reasoning</p> <p>Gathering and evaluating evidence</p> <p>Being informed by multiple perspectives</p> <p>Communication skills</p> <p>Bridge building across differences</p> <p>Communication in multiple languages and teamwork</p>	<p>Integration of knowledge, skills, and values to inform actions with others</p> <p>Moral behavior</p> <p>Navigation of political systems</p> <p>Civility</p> <p>Communication strategies</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>Commitment to collaboration</p> <p>Application of learning to new and complex contexts</p>	<p>Respect for human dignity</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Open-mindedness</p> <p>Tolerance</p> <p>Ethical integrity</p> <p>Sense of responsibility</p>
<b>Academic Programs</b>	<p>Knowledge of community and democratic processes</p> <p>Knowledge of the systemic nature of oppression &amp; focus on social justice</p> <p>Emphasis on understanding current affairs and societal issues in local, national, and global contexts</p> <p>Knowledge of principles of service learning/ community-based learning</p>	<p>Intercultural competence</p> <p>Communication skills</p> <p>Leadership skills</p> <p>Conflict management/ civility</p> <p>Research</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>Critical Thinking</p> <p>Theory to Practice</p>	NA	<p>Sense of responsibility to society</p> <p>Sense of citizenship</p> <p>Inclination to act in one's community</p> <p>Become a part of the civic life of one's community and/or the broader community</p> <p>Ethics</p> <p>Self-reflection</p> <p>Personal development</p> <p>Civic Practice</p>



## Center for Engaged Democracy, Merrimack College

The Center for Engaged Democracy acts as a central hub for developing, coordinating, and supporting academic programs—majors, minors, and certificates—focused on community engagement, broadly defined. The Center, which is housed within Merrimack College’s School of Education, brings together faculty, administrators, and community partners to support the institutionalization of such academic programs within higher education through a variety of strategies: compiling existing research and documentation to support new and developing programs; sponsoring symposia, conferences, and research opportunities to build a vibrant research base and academic community; and providing a voice for the value of such academic programs across higher education.



School of Education  
315 Turnpike Street  
North Andover, MA 01845

**Visit:** [www.merrimack.edu/democracy](http://www.merrimack.edu/democracy)

**Email:** [democracy@merrimack.edu](mailto:democracy@merrimack.edu)