

Creating an Institutional Culture to Advance Civic Engagement and Leadership

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References:

2004 Report of the Team on Civic Engagement and Leadership

2004-2005 Midyear Report of the Coalition for Civic Engagement and Leadership

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Working Definition of Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is acting upon a heightened sense of responsibility to one's communities. This includes a wide range of activities, including developing civic sensitivity, participation in building civil society, and benefiting the common good. Civic engagement encompasses the notions of global citizenship and interdependence. Through civic engagement, individuals—as citizens of their communities, their nations, and the world—are empowered as agents of positive social change for a more democratic world. Civic engagement involves one or more of the following:

1. Learning from others, self, and environment to develop informed perspectives on social issues;
2. Recognizing and appreciating human diversity and commonality;
3. Behaving, and working through controversy, with civility;
4. Participating actively in public life, public problem solving, and community service;
5. Assuming leadership and membership roles in organizations;
6. Developing empathy, ethics, values, and sense of social responsibility;
7. Promoting social justice locally and globally.

--Civic Engagement and Leadership Team, 11/03; Steering Committee of the Coalition for Civic Engagement and Leadership, 6/04, updated 4/05.

Working Definition of Leadership

“Leadership is a relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good.”

--Komives, Lucas, and McMahon, *Exploring Leadership*, 1998

Underlying assumptions for civic engagement and leadership:

1. Leadership is a process rather than a position.
2. All students are potential leaders.
3. Leadership occurs at all levels of an organization.
4. Leadership is a discipline that is teachable.
5. There is not one identifiable “right” way to lead an organization or process.

--Civic Engagement and Leadership Team, 11/03

Based on: Komives, Lucas, and McMahon, *Exploring Leadership*, 1998

Higher Education Research Institute, *A Social Change Model of Leadership Development*, 1996

Civic Engagement and Leadership: Theoretical Context and Working Definitions

In order to define the University's mission and desired student learning outcomes for civic engagement and leadership, the team found it helpful to agree on working definitions of the two key concepts and to ground our work in the theoretical context of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development. The Social Change Model fundamentally links the concepts of civic engagement and leadership. According to the model, the purpose of leadership is to facilitate positive social change at the institutional, community, and societal levels.

The Social Change Model of Leadership Development encompasses seven values that are organized within three components of the model. These values are reflected in the mission and learning outcomes for civic engagement and leadership developed by the team.

Individual Values

Consciousness of self means being aware of the beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions that motivate individuals to take action.

Congruence refers to thinking, feeling, and behaving with consistency, authenticity, and honesty.

Commitment is the psychic energy that motivates individuals to serve and that drives collective effort.

Group Values

Collaboration is to work with others in a common effort.

Common purpose means working with shared aims and values.

Controversy with civility recognizes two basic realities of any creative group effort: that differences are inevitable and that differences must be aired openly but with civility.

Societal/Community Values

Citizenship is the process by which the individual and the group become responsibly connected to the community and society.

--Higher Education Research Institute, 1996

10/28/03

Mission for Civic Engagement and Leadership at the University of Maryland

The mission for civic engagement and leadership at the University of Maryland is to develop civically engaged citizens, scholars, and leaders.

As University administrators, faculty, and staff, we strive to enable all students to develop their full potential as citizens with a heightened sense of responsibility to the multiple communities in which they are now and will be involved. We must prepare our students to be intentional, lifelong learners who, through the creation and application of knowledge, will address social issues and pressing community problems as they continue to emerge.

Effectiveness in civic engagement is dependent upon students developing leadership capacities to work well with others to accomplish change that benefits the common good. This socially responsible leadership approach includes being ethical, inclusive, and collaborative; knowing one's self; and recognizing one's interdependence with others.

Students must also have the ability to think in complex ways about moral and ethical issues, to understand and live by their values, and to help society shape its values. It is important that they realize how their choices impact individuals, communities, and social institutions locally and globally.

Students come to the University with different levels of understanding of and involvement in civic engagement and leadership. Thus, we must provide students with the appropriate balance of challenge and support that enables them to move to the next level.

In order to be an environment where student learning around civic engagement and leadership will flourish, the University should encourage the scholarship, teaching, and service of faculty, administrators, and staff whose work is grounded in the civic and social issues of the greater community.

The University of Maryland currently provides a rich array of educational experiences in the areas of civic engagement and leadership. Our mission is to increase, enhance, and integrate these experiences to empower students to be civically engaged citizens, scholars, and leaders in communities on campus and in Maryland, the nation, and the world.

--Report of the Team on Civic Engagement and Leadership, February 2004

COMMITTEE ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP
D R A F T
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
March 16, 2005

INTRODUCTION

The University is committed to preparing our students to address and solve some of society's most pressing problems. Civic engagement and leadership experiences provide pathways for students to make a difference in their communities and in the lives of others. We define communities broadly to include local communities such as residence hall floors, living-learning communities, the College Park community, students' hometowns, as well as global societies with their increasingly seamless borders.

These student learning outcomes are clustered around five major themes: civic engagement, leadership, diversity, cognitive development, and personal development. The outcomes in bold are broad, general learning outcomes and ones that can be applied to most any civic engagement and leadership experience. The individual learning outcomes can be used in a wide range of initiatives such as academic courses, student organizations, service-learning, research and teaching assistantships, internships, employment settings, and study abroad.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students prepared for civic engagement and leadership can...:

- 1) Contribute to their communities in ways that are congruent with their values**
- 2) Apply their leadership with or without a formal position**
- 3) Demonstrate knowledge, awareness, and understanding necessary to contribute to a culturally diverse world**
- 4) Apply academic and disciplinary knowledge and personal experiences to addressing societal problems**
- 5) Identify core personal values and base their actions on those values**

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- 1) contribute to their communities in ways that are congruent with their values**
 - a) identify the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society
 - b) demonstrate a working knowledge of different governance systems (campus, local, national, international)
 - c) recognize their responsibility to participate in their own communities and in the broader society
 - d) compare and contrast information about campus, local, national, and global current events from media sources
 - e) offer possible explanations for and approaches to address social, political, or economic issues

- f) explain the importance of participation in the democratic process
- g) examine civil and social issues using an ethical framework
- h) describe their viewpoints and perspectives respectfully on civic and societal issues
- i) recognize and articulate points of contention in societal issues
- j) apply knowledge from their academic major to civic and societal issues

LEADERSHIP

2) apply their leadership with or without a formal position

- a) articulate a personal philosophy of leadership
- b) recognize their capacity to lead in community or work settings
- c) express the importance of collaboration for facilitating change efforts
- d) recognize other people's talents and utilize them in accomplishing a shared agenda and facilitating change
- e) exercise their leadership to motivate others to become involved in their communities
- f) recognize and articulate where change is needed
- g) work with others to develop a shared vision and agenda regarding issues within their own communities or organizations
- h) identify and manage priorities to accomplish a shared vision and agenda
- i) understand the importance of accountability in the leadership process and intentionally hold themselves and others accountable for their actions

DIVERSITY

3) demonstrate knowledge, awareness, and understanding necessary to contribute to a culturally diverse world

- a) examine their own cultural and social identities and understand how those identities shape their beliefs and attitudes, if they believe that it does
- b) recognize the complexities of diverse world views
- c) identify the roles that diversity plays in a civil society
- d) practice respectful interactions with others different from themselves
- e) work through controversy with civility
- f) reflect on their own positions of power and privilege

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

4) apply academic and disciplinary knowledge and personal experience to addressing societal problems

- a) demonstrate an ability to think in complex ways about civic and societal issues
- b) practice and uphold standards of academic integrity and intellectual honesty
- c) question the dominant assumptions in their learning while examining their own personal viewpoints
- d) define justice in the context of social issues
- e) identify information needs, locate and access information, and critically evaluate sources on societal issues
- f) analyze, interpret, and suggest possible explanations for and means for addressing social, political, and economic issues on campus, local and global levels
- g) respond with openness and civility to others' viewpoints and perspectives
- h) translate leadership and civic engagement concepts, theories, and models into practice in solving problems and facilitating change

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

5) identify core personal values and base their actions on those values

- a) articulate their own personal values and how those differ from the value systems of others
- b) examine cultural, historical, economic, religious, and other factors that provide for the context for their own values and the values of others
- c) apply a personal ethical framework to civic engagement and leadership issues or problems
- d) manage issues and concepts in the absence of immediate solutions or clarity
- e) integrate their civic engagement and leadership responsibilities into the demands of their education and their career settings
- f) identify effective means for lifelong civic engagement and leadership

