Enhancing Gains in Civic Engagement for First-Year Students

2010 International First Year Experience Conference

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Why is it important to engage students in social change?
From the Data:

Linking Civic Engagement-Related Activities to Learning Outcomes
Linking civic engagement-related activities to learning outcomes

- Cognitive Complexity
- Knowledge Acquisition and Application
- Humanitarianism
- Interpersonal and intrapersonal competence
- Practical competence
“Teaching for social justice is teaching for the sake of arousing the kinds of vivid, reflective, experiential responses that might move students to come together in serious efforts to understand what social justice actually means and what it might demand.

That means teaching to the end of arousing a consciousness of membership – active and participant membership in a society of unfulfilled promises ....”

(Greene, 1998, pp. xxix-xxx)
“I believe that teaching the skills and perspectives needed for real participation in a democratic society is one of the most revolutionary tasks that an educator ... can undertake. It is only through such education that we can hope to create a truly just society....”

Dr. Lisa D. Delpit, Mays Chair for Urban Educational Leadership, Georgia State University

(Quoted in Teaching for Social Justice, 1998, p. 51)
Civic Engagement
Civic Engagement Defined*

* As defined by CIRCLE, The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement.
What is Civic Engagement?

Civic Involvement*

- Volunteering regularly for a non-political group
  - Working to solve a community problem
  - Active membership of a group
- Raising money for a charitable cause
- Personally running, walking or cycling for charity

* As defined by CIRCLE, The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement
What is Civic Engagement?

Political Voice*

*As defined by CIRCLE, The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement

All should have been within the last 12 months:
- Protested
- Contacted the broadcast or print media
- Contacted an official
- Canvassed
- Boycott
- Signed a paper or e-mail petition
What is Civic Engagement?

Electoral Participation*

- Member of a group involved in politics
- Donated money to a candidate or party
- Displayed a campaign button or sign
- Tried to persuade others in an election
- Regular voter
- Regular volunteer for political candidates or groups

* As defined by CIRCLE, The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement
The American Democracy Project (ADP)

- ADP uses the definition of civic engagement proposed by Thomas Ehrlich and his colleagues in *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*:

> “Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.”
Civic Engagement and ADP in Action

- Kennesaw State University
- Missouri State University
- Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis
KSU: ADP and FYE

- ADP/PEP initiatives infused in first-year seminars
  - Not all civic engagement initiatives within seminars and LCs are hosted or sponsored by ADP, however

- KSU 1111: Tomorrow’s World Today
  - Strong link between engagement and common reader program

- Themed LCs like “Political Speeches of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century,” “Campaign 2008,” and “ONE Voice”
ADP/PEP Projects

- Constitution Week Activities
  - “Super Saturday” political training event

- Co-Sponsored Events
  - Documentary screenings
  - Guest Lectures
  - Mock Elections
  - Dramatic Presentations

- Art Contest / Essay Contest

- New York Times Readership Program & Lectures
KSU 1111: New Seminar

- Globally focused version of the first-year seminar course that uses 7 Revolutions project by Center for Strategic & International Studies (D.C.-based think tank)
  - www.7revs.org
  - www.csis.org

- Anchor for the Presidential Emerging Global Scholars (PEGS) LC

- Global engagement emphasized
KSU’s Common Reader

- Started in 2004 with “Anne Frank’s Diary: The Definitive Edition”
- 2007-08: Not For Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade – And How We Can Fight It
  - Multiple initiatives promoting abolitionist movement
- 2008-09: Three Cups of Tea
  - $16,000+ raised for Central Asia Institute
- 2009-10: Soul of a Citizen
- 2010-11: Outcasts United: An American Town, A Refugee Team, and One Woman’s Quest to Make a Difference
Public Affairs Mission
- Cultural Competence
- Community Engagement
- Ethical Leadership

Publicaffairs.missouristate.edu
Yearly Public Affairs

Theme

- 2006/07  One World: Many Voices
- 2007/08  Seeking Solutions: Conflict, Violence, and the Courage to Change
- 2008/09  Sustainability
- 2009/10  Evolving Economic Realities
- 2010/11  Leadership in a Global Society
- 2011/12  Culture of Connectivity
GEP 101: First Year Foundations

- 2 credit hours
- 1 credit hour dedicated to Public Affairs
- 10 sections of GEP 101 with Integrated Service Learning
- 16 sections in Curricular Learning Communities
- 8 sections college or department specific
- Pilot sections with undergraduate research
Activities across the Year

- Introduce Mission and Theme at SOAR (orientation)
- Freshman Convocation
- GEP 101
  - Common Reader
Activities Continued

- Public Affairs Week (Student Led)
  - Constitution Day
  - African Experience
  - Hunger Banquet

- Public Affairs Distinction (Co-Curricular)
Activities Continued

- Public Affairs Intensive Experience in the Major

- Public Affairs Conference
  - The New Economy: Peril and Promise
    - Paul Solman
    - Bob McTeer
    - Raj Patel
    - Winona LaDuke
    - Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
Enhancing Civic Engagement at IUPUI

- Democracy Plaza
- Collegiate Readership Program
Democracy Plaza

Student-coordinated campus-wide initiative to enhance social change through civic engagement

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iobIrLpCNVQ

Mission: To create a free and open atmosphere for thoughtful academic discourse both written and spoken pertaining to economic, educational, political, social, and religious issues that have an effect on citizens within the community, state, national, and global levels.

Has become hub of campus activity (weekly questions and programming events)
Democracy Plaza
“There is a powerful relationship between following the news and being civically engaged...Those who use news sources regularly are more likely to participate than those who do not.”
CRP Overview: History and Components

- Started by President of Penn State University in 1997
- Over 500 campuses now participating
- Availability of a selection of newspapers each day, M-F
- Web-based resources for use in and out of the classroom
Program Resources: USA TODAY

National and international news, Today’s Debate, The Forum, Across the USA, weather map, Newsline.

Market Trends, stock market coverage, mergers, consumer interest, Ad Track, technology, Executive Suite, Your Money, visual representation of stock market changes.

Sporting events and scores, Keeping Score, special interest stories on topics such as leadership and diversity.

Education news, entertainment and pop culture, health, science, book reviews, travel, A Better Life, All USA Academic all-stars, Teacher All-stars.
Presenters

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