

Help your community fly: A civic engagement report

Harold Washington College Assessment Committee

<http://www.ccc.edu/hwcassessment>

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What if Martin didn't stand up?
What if Rosa didn't sit down?
-India Arie



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Introduction

In 2013 the Harold Washington College Assessment Committee (HWCAC) began discussing the possibility of including civic engagement in our list of general education goals. Many of our faculty members had attended SENCER (National Center for Science & Civic Engagement) conferences in recent years and even designed courses with civic engagement emphases. Several faculty-wide meetings raised the possibility of adding it to our general education goals, but no consensus was reached. For several semesters, while considering the possibility of incorporating it into our general education goals, we ended up focusing our energy on other projects, and the idea was temporarily tabled. Five years later, in 2018, we made it a priority to assess students' learning relative to civic engagement.

Methodology

We began in Spring 2018 by looking at already-existing definitions of civic engagement. Our favorite was from the American Psychological Association (APA), shown below. We used this definition as well as our notes from 2013 to write a general education goal, specific student learning outcomes, research questions, and plan of implementation.

APA Definition of Civic Engagement

Individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual voluntarism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem, or interact with the institutions of representative democracy. Civic engagement encompasses a range of specific activities such as working in a soup kitchen, serving on a neighborhood association, writing a letter to an elected official, or voting. Indeed, an underlying principle of our approach is that an engaged citizen should have the ability, agency, and opportunity to move comfortably among these various types of civic acts. ([APA, 2019, para. 2](#)).

General Education Goal

- To demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and values required for civic engagement on a local, national, and global level.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of a certificate or degree, students will:

1. Describe their civic environment in terms of demographics and community.
2. Articulate their position on a pivotal social problem or civic matter.
3. Demonstrate an active role in a community context, such as school, work, service, co-curricular activities, neighborhood, or social group.
4. Examine the civic issues encountered and the insights gained from



community experiences.

5. Articulate multiple positions on society's divisive political issues, past and present.

Research Questions

1. Do experiences at CCC or Harold Washington College influence students' involvement with civic engagement?
2. What kind of external experiences (outside CCC and Harold Washington College) influence students' involvement with civic engagement?

Implementation

Throughout Spring 2018, a subcommittee of Domenico Ferri, Todd Heldt, Carrie Nepstad, Amy Rosenquist, Jeffrey Swigart, and Jacqueline Werner worked to develop a 12-question survey tool (Appendix A). The subcommittee used the [Civic Engagement VALUE rubric](#) developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities as a guide .

Results

As it has been the tradition with our general education assessments, the committee sent out a call to all faculty members to help us administer the Civic Engagement Survey (tool). This resulted in a voluntary response sample. As with all such samples, we recognize that the responses are not random and, consequently, statistical inferences about the whole student population cannot be made with high confidence. Nevertheless, despite the potential biases introduced by the voluntary nature of student responses, we believe that our civic engagement tool would not have achieved the level of participation if we had obtained a random sample of students instead.

Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the analysis presented in this report should not be taken as a basis for general inferences to the student population in the fall of 2018 (or other semesters), but rather as a small “snapshot” of the status of civic engagement in a self-selecting sample of students.

The sample originally consisted of 1,122 student responses. After the data set was preliminarily explored, invalid student IDs (ID numbers that could not be found in CCC's analytics portal OpenBook) and duplicate responses were dropped. Thus, the “true” sample size for our analysis was n=967 unique student responses. The data analysis and results reported below are based on these 967 responses.

Exploratory Analysis of Survey Questions 1-8

Questions 1 through 7 in the tool were structured as Likert-type items, where students were asked to specify their level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric “Strongly Disagree (1) -Strongly Agree (5)” scale (Appendix A). A summary of student responses for these questions is presented in Table 1.



	Relative Frequency (n=967)					
Question	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
1. As a result of my college experiences at City Colleges of Chicago (CCC)/Harold Washington College (HWC), I am more familiar with my home community's unique demographics (demographics are characteristics of people within a population).	3%	5%	32%	30%	29%	0%
2. My experiences at CCC/HWC have led me to participate in advocacy or political action.	14%	19%	35%	17%	13%	1%
3. My education at CCC/HWC has helped me to see specific ways that I can be part of solutions to problems in my home community.	5%	10%	29%	30%	26%	0%
4. My experience at CCC/HWC has helped me to identify and analyze issues within my community.	5%	10%	29%	30%	26%	0%
5. My experiences as a CCC/HWC student have prepared me to advocate to community leaders about a community issue.	8%	15%	35%	25%	16%	1%
6. My experiences as a CCC/HWC student have made it more likely that, if eligible, I will vote in an election	5%	5%	22%	23%	45%	1%
7. My education at CCC/HWC has prepared me to actively listen in order to understand others' perspectives on controversial issues.	3%	3%	18%	31%	45%	0%

Table 1: Summary of responses in questions 1-7

A corresponding graphic for the same questions (1-7) is presented in Figure 1.

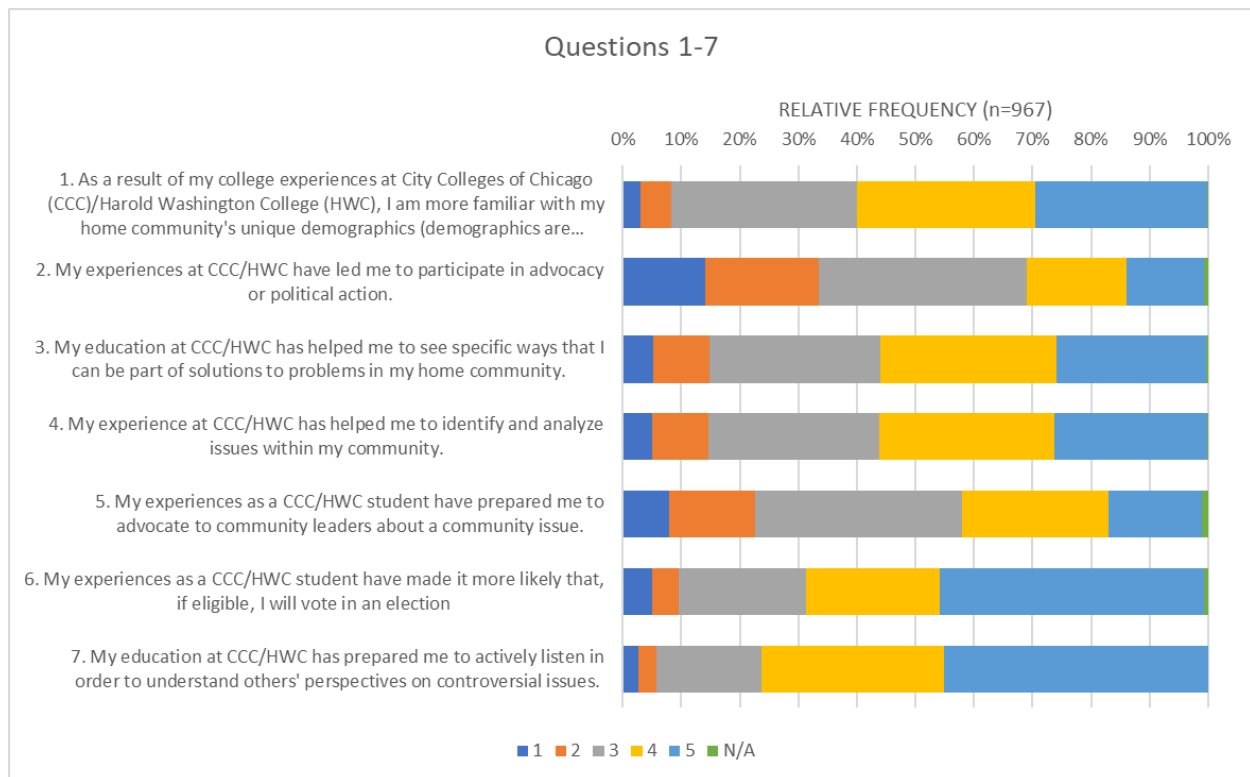


Figure 1: Graphical summary of responses in questions 1-7



Question 8 in the tool asked students to declare their involvement in CCC/HWC student organizations (see Appendix A). The question was structured such that students could select one or more of 14 active (in fall 2018) student organizations, or they could also write in an organization not listed. The vast majority of students (707 out of 967) did not answer this question. Of those responses, we present in Table 2 the top 15 most frequently reported student organizations (other categories had a frequency of two or less).

Question 8: I am involved in the following student organizations at CCC/HWC (check all that apply, or leave blank if not involved in any)	Frequency (Top 15)
PTK - Phi Theta Kappa	55
STEM Club	13
Fitness Club	11
Pride Alliance	8
OLAS - Organization of Latin American Students	7
Art Club	6
Creative Writing Club	6
Student Veteran Association	6
Reach Out	5
SGA - Student Government Association	4
Artistic Chicago Expression	3
Business Club	3
Culture and Language Club	3
OMD	3
United Nations International Club	3

Table 2: Summary of student organizations involvement

A corresponding graphic of these 15 most frequently reported organizations is in Figure 2.

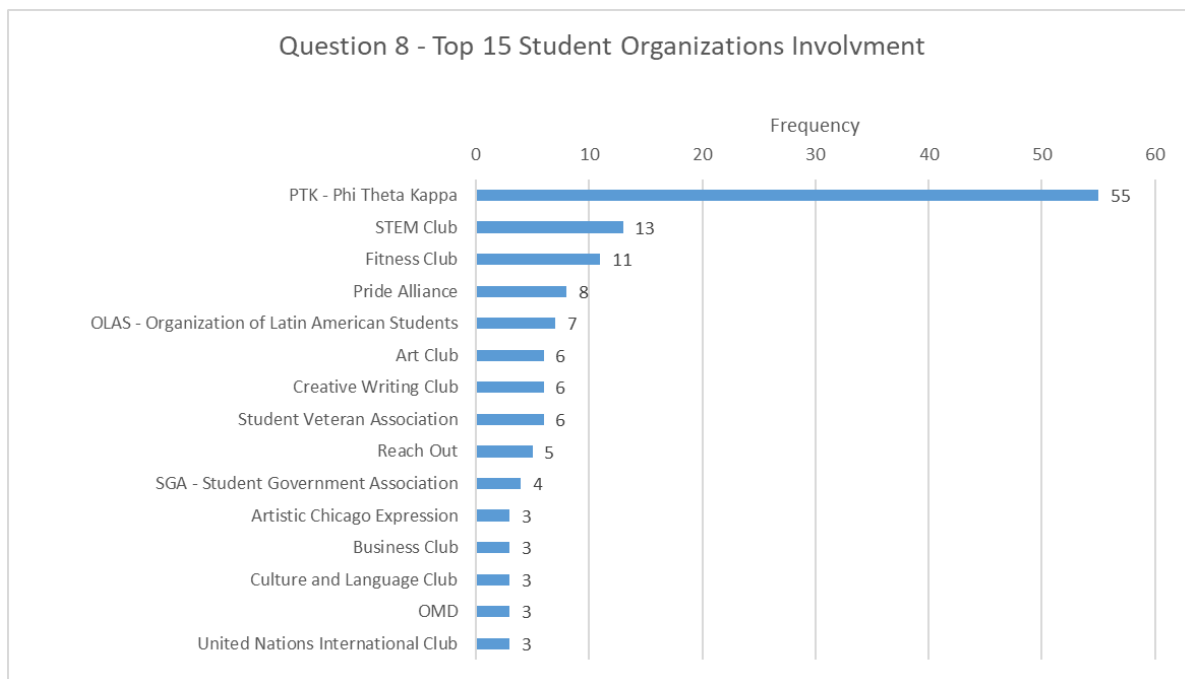


Figure 2: Graphical summary of top 15 student organizations involvement



Analysis of Open-ended Responses for Survey Questions 9-12

The assessment committee had a strong interest in exploring students' free responses and comments to several questions. As a result, the tool included the following open-ended questions (Appendix A):

9. *Please tell us about an experience at CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement.*
10. *Please share an example of an experience outside of CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement.*
11. *What questions do you have about civic engagement?*
12. *What was it like for you to take this survey? What suggestions do you have for the faculty who wrote this survey?*

The analysis of responses to these questions was performed in a new and innovative way. Rather than relying on traditional approaches, such as those that involve several readers who meet to agree on themes/categories of responses before going over the entire data set, we decided to employ a technique inspired by standard methods used to create and tune machine learning models. Our approach consisted in creating two random subsets of responses to the questions above (called the "training sets"). A single reader went over these two training sets to carefully determine themes (if any) and categorize (based on those themes) student responses in each set. Then, a third random subset of responses (called the "validation set") was used to validate the themes/categories discovered in the training sets. This validation set was disjointed from the two training sets (i.e. no students from the validation set were present in the training sets) and served to corroborate themes/categories. This approach allowed us to expedite the production of results and helped us reduce biases introduced by having several human readers (Appendix C).

Based on the analysis outlined above, valid themes/categories for responses to Question 9 (***Please tell us about an experience at CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement***) are presented in Table 3. These representative quotes have been edited for clarity and grammatical correctness.

Theme	Description/ Subtheme(s)	Sample Quotes
General influence	Student mentions something that influenced them, but it is not a specific experience from the college	"I have a passion for law." "I am now more aware of things going on in the world in the current and past." "I've grown to be more responsible and prepared for the world outside these walls"
Class	Anything associated with the course: specific assignments, discussions, class activities such as field trips, specific content, class interactions/discussions	"I have taken criminal justice courses and political science courses that have helped me see that civic engagement is important in order to enact change within communities." "Being involved in classroom discussions about culture, systematic oppression in the United States against POC." "honestly it was my advocacy paper for my sociology class"



Instructor	Interactions/discussions with instructor influence	<p>"My speech class [professor] is always giving examples and teaching us on how change starts with us the people"</p> <p>"Teachers have made me aware of issues going on in the world and in our community. They have also made me a more confident speaker and researcher so that I can get my ideas across credibly"</p> <p>"Art Appreciation Prof. [...] taught me about loads of local artists I wouldn't have known otherwise. Artists working to create a positive impact on underserved communities in Chicago."</p>
Being here	Student describes experiences on campus that influence their CE: other students, flyers, polling place, overhearing conversations, activism/advocacy, clubs	<p>"They post many flyers encouraging students to be involved in important activities."</p> <p>"I used the college as a place to vote. I am signing up for a history class this coming semester to better understand what I am fighting for in this country."</p> <p>"CCC/HWC has helped me become more aware of what I'm doing for others."</p>
Student Services	Financial Aid, tutoring	<p>"SGA involvement; student support services, helping students with FAFSA APPLICATIONS"</p> <p>"Financial aid eligibility and opportunities"</p> <p>"An experience that I had was learning how to manage time and not waste money. This information helped me so I started telling the people around me."</p>
Online or "not my college"	Student describes not being as involved with HWC as an online student or a student from another campus	<p>"Harold Washington was not my main college. I only had an 8:00 am class [there] so I really didn't have a chance to get involved with their civic engagement"</p> <p>"I am an online student so I don't participate in any extracurriculars on campus."</p> <p>"I am an online student and have not had any experiences related to civic engagement. However, If I was not already a registered voter, I would be now as a result of HWC's advocacy for the importance of voting."</p>

Table 3: Themes/Categories for Question 9

Table 4 shows percentages of students in the sample for each theme from Question 9.

Question #9 Theme	Percentage
Class	25%
Being here	16%
General influence	11%
Instructor	6%
Online or "not my college"	3%
Student Services	2%

Table 4: Question 9 Categories Proportions



A corresponding graphical summary of these themes is presented in Figure 3.

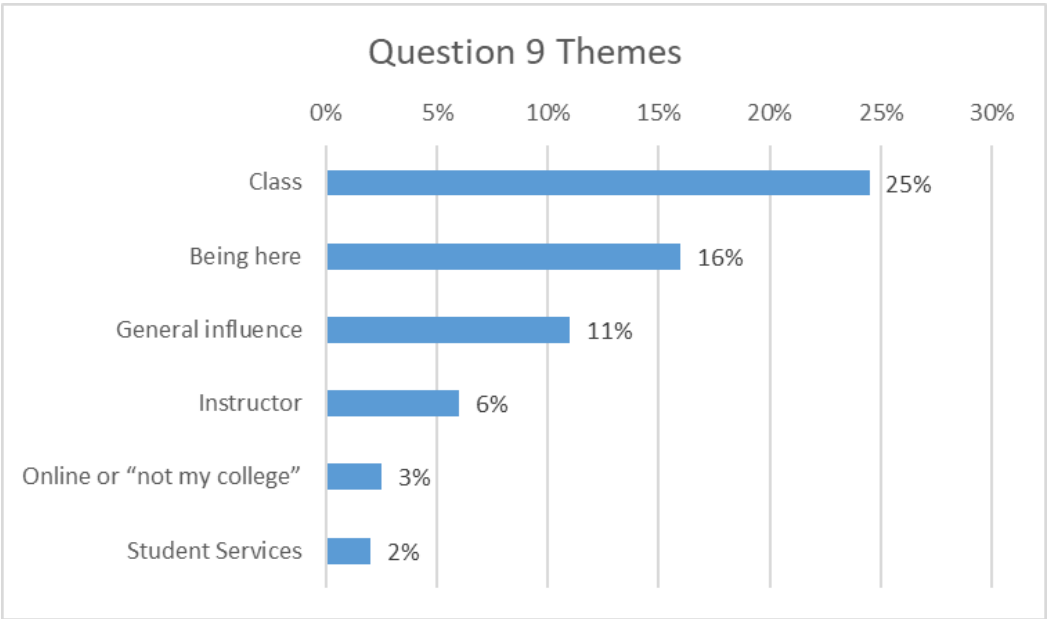


Figure 3: Question 9 Categories Proportions

Valid themes/categories for responses to Question 10 (*Please share an example of an experience outside of CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement*) are presented in Table 5. These representative quotes have been edited for clarity and grammatical correctness.

Theme	Description/ Subtheme(s)	Sample Quotes
Voting/ Elections	Voting, participating in voter registration drives, campaigning for specific candidates, serving as an election judge.	<p>"This past election was my first time voting and I really liked how many other people my age also voted."</p> <p>"The Presidential election of 2016. It disappointed me in more ways that I could count, making me lose hope in our country. I couldn't vote at the time and regret that I couldn't."</p> <p>"A civic engagement that I participated in is voting which I know now that is very important and I take it more seriously than I did before."</p>
Participation in activism, and advocacy	Rallies, marches, protests, strikes.	<p>"I did the Women's March two years in a row so far, once in DC and here in Chicago"</p> <p>"DACA students have influenced me to go out and protest when Trump said "no more DACA"."</p> <p>"I volunteer as a kids' teacher at church, I've learned how to lead a team or group."</p>



Interactions in the community influenced CE	Interactions with classmates outside of class, community members/neighbors, or communicating with people passing out flyers, or an incident or event in the community.	<p>"I have a couple of friends who went around parks and knocking on peoples' doors to help them register to vote. At first I didn't think much of it. One day I joined them and I realize it makes a big difference."</p> <p>"My family member was a victim to police brutality. As a result I'm more interested in local politics."</p> <p>"Moving to the south side of Chicago has had the greatest influence on me. I have met absolutely lovely people in an area where there are very few good resources available and a news system bent on painting a negative picture of the south side which keeps even more investors and opportunities out of the area."</p>
CE in work setting	Helping others at work, customer service role, military.	<p>"At work , I had to speak up for myself and others in a professional way."</p> <p>"Rush Hospital has influenced my civic engagement greatly because they gave me exposure to things that I never would think, to think about. Such as homelessness and the great number of homeless children that we have living in our own communities."</p> <p>"In my job I'm more confident in how I present myself."</p>
Monitoring specific issues/current events	Following the news or social media for specific issues: women's movement, crime watch, concerns about violence in the community, Trump presidency, DACA, undocumented.	<p>"Watching all the politicians on tv who seem to not represent me."</p> <p>"Local gun violence."</p> <p>"Watching the news on the political issues that arose from Mexico's border wall and Trump's presidential election."</p>
Helping others	Helping a stranger/community members, or classmates. Volunteering.	<p>"I've been able to help my family in ways of knowing their rights and how to become a more positive member of society. It also has helped me to become confident in handling situations in an appropriate manner."</p> <p>"Currently volunteer at Chicago Cares to help in impoverished communities. The more I see people in need, the more I am influenced to help in some way"</p> <p>"I was on my way home when I saw an elderly [person] on the ground. I got out of my car and helped him get back up and gave him a ride home. The experience made me want to help out my community more."</p>
Friends and Family influenced CE	Family, relatives, or friends influence.	<p>"My family"</p> <p>"When my friend of a different culture had a different view than me"</p> <p>"Encouragement from friends and family"</p>

Table 5: Themes/Categories for Question 10



Table 6 presents a summary of proportions for each theme that was determined to be present in responses to Question 10.

Question #10 Theme	Percentage
Interactions in the community influenced CE	16%
Helping others	12%
Voting/Elections	12%
Monitoring specific issues/current events	9%
CE in work setting	6%
Participation in activism, and advocacy	4%
Friends and Family influenced CE	2%

Table 6: Question 10 Categories Proportions

A corresponding graphical summary of these themes is presented in Figure 4.

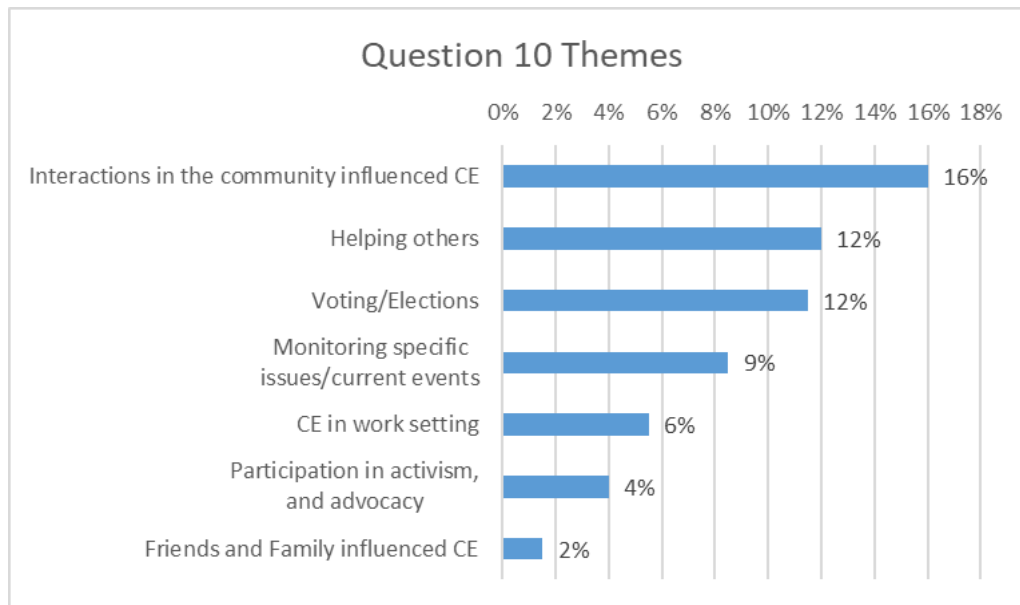


Figure 4: Question 10 Categories Proportions

Valid themes/categories for responses to Question 11 (***What questions do you have about civic engagement?***) are presented in Table 7. These representative quotes have been edited for clarity and grammatical correctness.

Theme	Description/subtheme(s)	Sample Quotes
Defining Civic Engagement	What is it, why is it important, what are the organizations for this?	<p>"How do you categorize civic engagement? Does it include everything involving the community?"</p> <p>"Why is civic engagement so important?"</p> <p>"how can i get more involved"</p>



Educating others and improving CE	How do we educate others, change laws, improve and progress?	<p>"What is being done or what can we do within our community or families to educate our young adults or even children into everything that is happening in our country."</p> <p>"Can the social issues be solved when people participate in civic engagement?"</p> <p>"What is the best way to inspire apathetic people to care?"</p>
What role can CCC or HWC play	What can the college do to educate, inspire, and provide opportunities for online students and f2f students to engage in CE.	<p>"What can HWC provide to students to be more involved in the community."</p> <p>"What more can online students be involved in outside of school to benefit their engagement in civil issues."</p> <p>"How can CCC engage more with students?"</p>

Table 7: Themes/Categories for Question 11

Table 8 shows proportions for each theme present in responses to Question 11.

Question #11 Theme	Percentage
Educating others and improving CE	14%
Defining Civic Engagement	6%
What role can CCC or HWC play	4%

Table 8: Question 11 Categories Proportions

A corresponding graphical summary of these themes is presented in Figure 5.

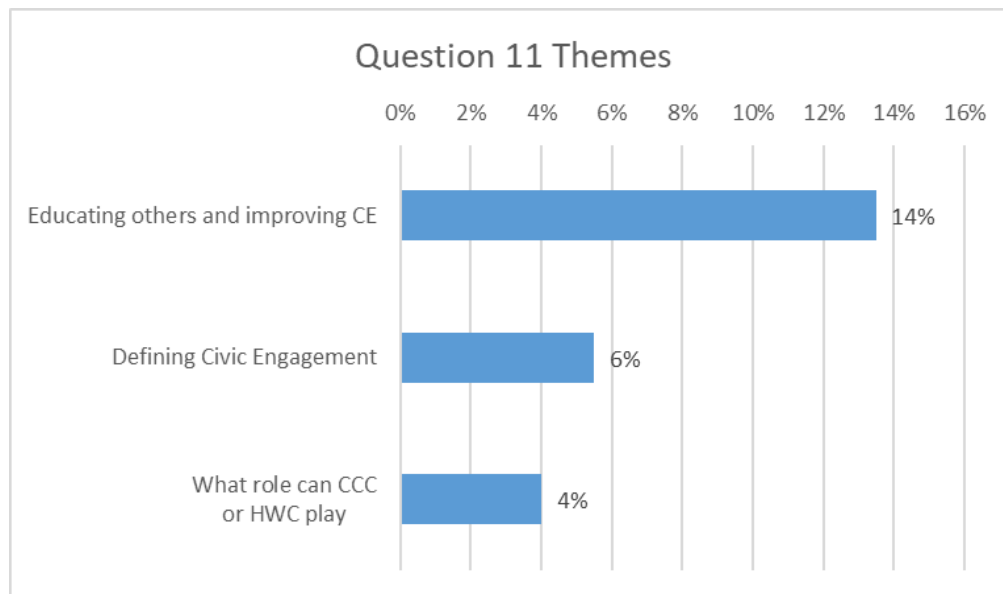


Figure 5: Question 11 Categories Proportions



Valid themes/categories for responses to Question 12 (***What was it like for you to take this survey? What suggestions do you have for the faculty who wrote this survey?***) are presented in Table 9. These representative quotes have been edited for clarity and grammatical correctness.

Theme	Description/ Subtheme(s)	Sample Quotes
Positive input about the survey	Positive comments about the experience of taking the survey or about the content/format of the survey or no suggestions for improvement	<p>"I enjoyed taking the survey and hopefully my input can impact this survey."</p> <p>"It was nice for the faculty to see if any of my peers or myself had any issues in our community and/or around the school area."</p> <p>"It was fun. No suggestions at all."</p>
Suggestions for improving the survey	Suggestions for improving the survey in terms of content/format	<p>"The questions needed to be more specific."</p> <p>"The survey was okay but you do have to take into consideration that there are many different city colleges."</p> <p>"There seems to be little to no ways for mostly online students to be involved. I wish that would change. I would definitely come into the school for events if I was made more aware of them, and with enough notice."</p>
Metacognitive awareness and reflection	How the student experienced the survey as a way of learning about their own engagement with CE or thinking about how their experiences here have supported or not supported CE	<p>"I think it was an eye-opening survey because I hadn't thought about how CCC/HWC has helped me."</p> <p>"I admit I am not civically engaged, and taking this survey made me realize this fact. No suggestions."</p> <p>"It made me realize how much my personal and public environment and attitude has changed for the better since having started school at Harold Washington."</p>

Table 9: Themes/Categories for Question 12

Table 10 presents a summary of proportions for each theme that was determined to be present in responses to Question 12

Question #12 Theme	Percentage
Positive input about the survey	31%
Metacognitive awareness and reflection	21%
Suggestions for improving the survey	12%

Table 8: Question 12 Categories Proportions



A corresponding graphical summary of these themes is presented in Figure 6.

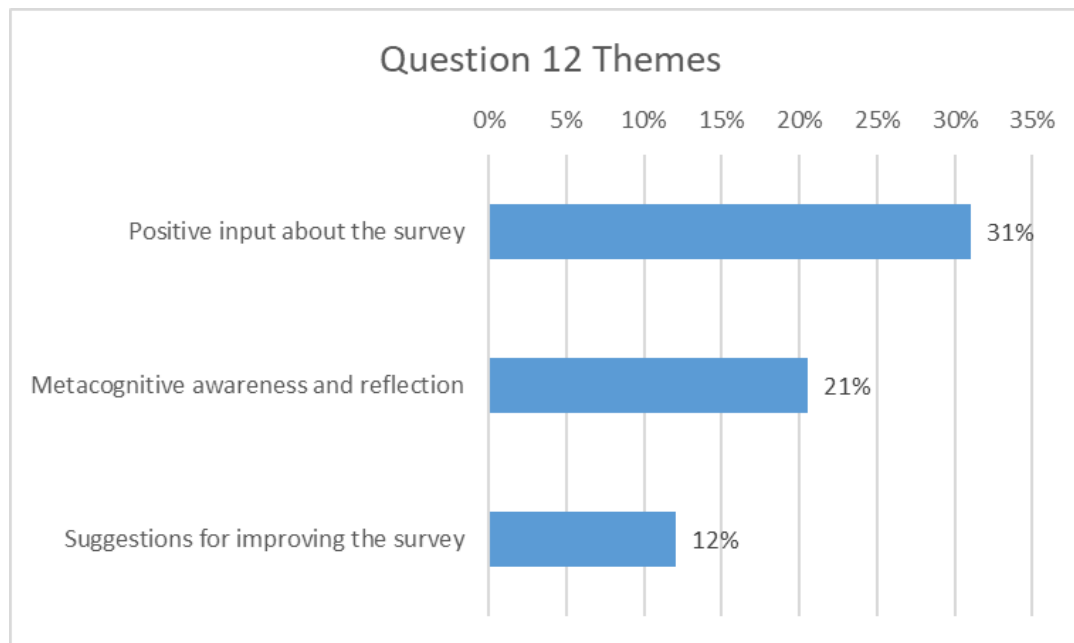


Figure 6: Question 12 Categories Proportions

Discussion of Results

The results presented above indicate that, overall, students report

- their education and experiences at CCC/HWC positively impacted their involvement in civic engagement activities (45% of respondents to Question 7 strongly agreed).
- course-level experiences as leading factors for more involvement (25% of respondents to Question 9).
- experiences at our institution will make them more likely to vote in an election if they are eligible to do so (45% of respondents to Question 6 strongly agreed).
- voting and elections were also cited as examples of experiences outside CCC/HWC that influence students' civic engagement (12% of respondents to Question 10).
- feeling neutral about experiences at CCC/HWC leading them to participate in advocacy or political action (35% of respondents to Question 2 were neutral).

Although Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society was the most reported student organization in which respondents participated, followed by the STEM Club, it appears that increased promotion of student organizations will be needed in the future. Most students (n=707) did not express any involvement in student organizations. A few students expressed that they were not aware of the number and variety of organizations available to them.

There were several inquiries about civic engagement involvement. Several students asked how they can educate others and help improve civic engagement involvement (14% of respondents to Question 11). Just a small proportion of students had questions about the definition of civic engagement (6% of respondents to Question 11).

Overall, students provided positive input about the survey (31% of respondents to Question 12). Also, many of them mentioned that the survey's questions made them reflect on their current and potential future civic engagement involvement (21% of respondents to



Question 12). Some suggestions for improvement included consideration for students with home campuses other than HWC, and more involvement of online students.

Recommendations

Based on the results, we recommend to:

1. Continue emphasizing civic engagement activities and experiences in relevant courses and co-curricular activities.
2. Provide faculty development opportunities that highlight strategies for designing learning opportunities that include civic engagement.
3. Build stronger connections between course activities and student activities particularly in terms of civic engagement.
4. Consider innovative ways of connecting students to various student activities/clubs regardless of whether or not they physically come to campus.
5. Ensure that our college continues providing support to student organizations.
6. Develop additional extracurricular opportunities that are more accessible to students who often feel disconnected from the community aspects of our college, including online students, evening students, and working students.
7. Encourage the promotion of student organizations beyond the HWC campus to involve all students, particularly online students.
8. Reconsider when an open-call voluntary mechanism for participation in an assessment is warranted (despite the response bias likely entailed) and when it may be more important to try to ensure a representative sample through more directed and restricted invitations to participate.

Conclusion

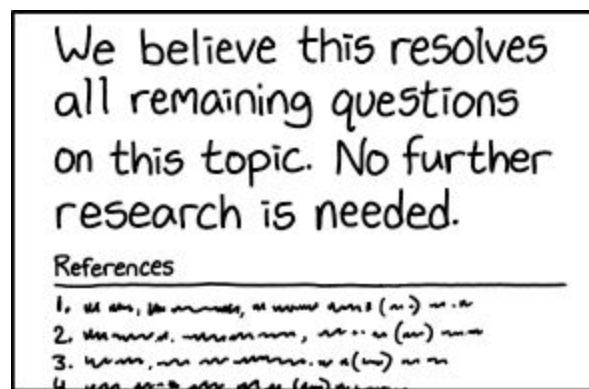
This survey presents many encouraging results. Students report that they are instigated to civic participation by the environment and opportunities they encounter while enrolled at HWC. The most positively-answered question is Question 7: *"My education at CCC/HWC has prepared me to actively listen in order to understand others' perspectives on controversial issues."* 76% of students who responded to this survey agreed or strongly agreed with that statement, while another 18% were neutral. In open-ended questions, students reported that encounters with diverse faculty and classmates helped them hear other sides of an issue and moved them to action. This connects with some of the positive findings from our [Human Diversity](#) general education assessment from 2012, such as "[b]ecoming a student at HWC decreases students' perceptions and experiences of prejudice and discrimination significantly. Through interactions with their fellow students, in their classes and with faculty, in the building and all our support offices, students report feeling accepted, respected and appreciative of this special environment" (32).

The second-most positively answered question was Question 6: *"My experiences as a CCC/HWC student have made it more likely that, if eligible, I will vote in an election"* with 68% agreeing or strongly agreeing and another 22% neutral.



On the other end of the spectrum, Questions 2 and 5 had the least positive findings. In Question 2, 30% of students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “*My experiences at CCC/HWC have led me to participate in advocacy or political action.*” In Question 5, 41% of students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “*My experiences as a CCC/HWC student have prepared me to advocate to community leaders about a community issue.*” These two questions had the lowest rates of positive change tied to HWC experiences. Another 35% of students were neutral in each of those questions’ responses. Some of these students may be engaging in advocacy or political action but not attribute that behavior to what they learned at HWC or CCC. Without a deeper investigation into some of these self-reported behaviors, we won’t be able to address some of those questions.

Another compelling finding that fuelled some of this report’s recommendations was how few students reported having engaged with the available student organizations. Given that HWC is a commuter campus utilized by many students whose extracurriculars are limited due to time and financial constraints, this should not be wholly surprising. But it seems worthwhile for the college to consider ways to enhance the *community* aspects of our community college for all our students, whether in face-to-face or online classes. Clearly, hearing and learning from their classmates has an effect on students’ civic engagement, so we hope to find creative ways to develop and support this outcome in the future.



JUST ONCE, I WANT TO SEE A RESEARCH
PAPER WITH THE GUTS TO END THIS WAY.

<https://www.xkcd.com/2268/>



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Appendix A: Civic Engagement Tool 2018

Introduction

Stop: If you have already taken this survey this semester, please stop, to help us avoid repeated data.

Timing: It should take about 10 to 15 minutes.

Thank you SO MUCH for volunteering to participate in this survey. Your participation will help to inform curriculum development, teaching practices, and policy decisions at Harold Washington College. Your participation is voluntary, and your responses are confidential. You can stop your participation at any time. Whether you participate in the survey or not will have no impact on your grade as we will only analyze the data in the aggregate (the big picture), and not individually.

Please answer the following questions honestly and based on your own knowledge, without any help from other people or resources. We hope you will use your best effort to help us gather valid data, but you have the right to stop answering questions at any time.

If you have questions or concerns about this assessment process, please contact Carrie Nepstad, Chair of the HWC Assessment Committee at cnepstad@ccc.edu or call 312-553-6095.

Throughout the survey, remember to click the NEXT button to continue to each section. Also remember to never click the browser's back or forward buttons, as this may disrupt the survey.

I have read the above statement and consent to continue. (Check here.) _____

Student Identification

Please enter your 9 digit student ID. Providing this information allows us to reduce the time of this survey and improve its reliability. Again, this information is confidential and not linked to individual student performance.

Give ID Number Here: _____

The following section contains the definition of civic engagement and the survey questions. Continue to the next section.

Civic Engagement Definition

Civic Engagement is defined by the American Psychological Association as:

Individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual voluntarism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem, or interact with the institutions of representative democracy. Civic engagement encompasses a range of specific activities such as working in a soup kitchen, serving on a neighborhood association, writing a letter to an elected official, or voting. Indeed, an underlying principle of our approach is that an



engaged citizen should have the ability, agency, and opportunity to move comfortably among these various types of civic acts.

Questions

Please complete the following:

1. As a result of my college experiences at City Colleges of Chicago (CCC)/Harold Washington College (HWC), I am more familiar with my home community's unique demographics (demographics are characteristics of people within a population).
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree
2. My experiences at CCC/HWC have led me to participate in advocacy or political action.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree
3. My education at CCC/HWC has helped me to see specific ways that I can be part of solutions to problems in my home community.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree
4. My experience at CCC/HWC has helped me to identify and analyze issues within my community.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree
5. My experiences as a CCC/HWC student have prepared me to advocate to community leaders about a community issue.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree
6. My experiences as a CCC/HWC student have made it more likely that, if eligible, I will vote in an election
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree
7. My education at CCC/HWC has prepared me to actively listen in order to understand others' perspectives on controversial issues.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree
8. I am involved in the following student organizations at CCC/HWC (check all that apply, or leave blank if not involved in any):
 - a. Artistic Chicago Expression
 - b. Art Club
 - c. Business Club
 - d. Catharsis Yoga Club
 - e. Creative Writing Club
 - f. Fitness Club
 - g. OLAS - Organization of Latin American Students
 - h. Pride Alliance



- i. PTK - Phi Theta Kappa
 - j. Reach Out
 - k. SGA - Student Government Association
 - l. STEM Club
 - m. Student Veteran Association
 - n. United Nations International Club
 - o. Other club/student organization: _____
9. Please tell us about an experience at CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement.
10. Please share an example of an experience outside of CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement.
11. What questions do you have about civic engagement?
12. What was it like for you to take this survey? What suggestions do you have for the faculty who wrote this survey?

Click SUBMIT below to finish the survey. Don't forget to click SUBMIT. Thank you SO much for your time! A confirmation page will be available after you click SUBMIT.



Appendix B: Item Analysis

The following chart shows how the survey items fulfill the five student learning outcomes.

	SLO #1	SLO #2	SLO #3	SLO #4	SLO #5
Survey Item #1	X				
Survey Item #2		X			
Survey Item #3			X		
Survey Item #4			X		
Survey Item #5				X	
Survey Item #6					X
Survey Item #7			X		
Survey Item #8					X
Survey Item #9	X				
Survey Item #10	Informational				
Survey Item #11	Informational				
Survey Item #12	Informational				



Appendix C: Advanced Notes on Methodology

The analysis of responses to open-ended questions (questions 9-12) was performed using a new and innovative way. We avoided the use of traditional approaches, where several human readers meet to agree on themes/categories of responses, hold “norming sessions” to reduce categorization variability, and then go over the entire data set to categorize student responses.

Instead, to reduce potential variability and categorize responses faster, we decided to employ a technique that was inspired by standard methods used in machine learning, where a “training” data set from the sample is used to create a model, and a “validation” data set from the same sample is used to assess the proposed model’s performance. This approach allowed us to expedite the analysis and, we believe, produced consistent results with less of the inherent biases introduced by having several human readers. Also, similar approach have been successfully implemented by other institutional researchers for assessment purposes (see, for example, “Analyzing Open-Ended Survey Responses – Where to start?”, <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/assessment/workshops-events/open-ended-survey-responses/>).

Our approach consisted in creating “balanced random sub-samples” to create a “model” to define categories and provide approximate values for the true proportions of those categories in the full sample of student responses. Our balanced random sub-samples consisted of two random subsets of responses (called the “training sets”) of size 100 and a third disjoint (from the first two) random subset of responses (called the “validation set”), also of size 100. All random subsets were created using random numbers obtained from RANDOM.ORG (<https://www.random.org/>), a random number generator service that produces random numbers from atmospheric noise, “which for many purposes is better than the pseudo-random number algorithms typically used in computer programs.”

A single reader went over the two training sets to carefully determine themes (if any) and categorize (based on those themes) student responses in each set. Then, with the categorization criteria developed from the training sets, a second reader went over the validation set to corroborate the themes/categories discovered in the training sets. As mentioned before, the validation set was disjoint from the two training sets (i.e. no students from the validation set were present in the training sets).

The validation set was also used to determine whether estimates of category’s proportions for each valid category (computed from the training sets) were reasonable approximations of the true proportions in the full sample. Our proposed value for each category’s proportion was the average of relative frequencies from the two validation sets. Then, for each proportion, the standard margin of error for a 95% confidence interval was used as a measure of validity. For a category’s proportion (once again, computed from the training sets) to be considered valid, we required it to satisfy the following two criteria:

1. The category’s proportion must have a value strictly greater than 0% in the validation set
2. The categories proportion must be within the corresponding standard 95% confidence interval.



The following tables summarize each category's computed proportions, margin of error (MOE), corresponding 95% confidence intervals (CI), and whether the estimate (in column 2) is considered valid or not.

Question 9: *Please tell us about an experience at CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement.*

Question #9 Theme	Average of Training Sets Proportions	MOE	CI (95% Level)	Validation Set Proportion	Valid Estimate?
General influence	11.00%	6.13%	(4.87%, 17.13%)	7.00%	Yes
Class	24.50%	8.43%	(16.07%, 32.93%)	18.00%	Yes
Instructor	6.00%	4.65%	(1.35%, 10.65%)	9.00%	Yes
Being here	16.00%	7.19%	(8.81%, 23.19%)	19.00%	Yes
Student Services	2.00%	2.74%	(0%, 4.74%)	2.00%	Yes
Online or "not my college"	2.50%	3.06%	(0%, 5.56%)	1.00%	Yes

Question 10: *Please share an example of an experience outside of CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement.*

Question #10 Theme	Average of Training Sets Proportions	MOE	CI (95% Level)	Validation Set Proportion	Valid Estimate?
Voting/Elections	11.50%	6.25%	(5.25%, 17.75%)	10.00%	Yes
Participation in activism, and advocacy	4.00%	3.84%	(0.16%, 7.84%)	5.00%	Yes
Interactions in the community influenced CE	16.00%	7.19%	(8.81%, 23.19%)	11.00%	Yes
CE in work setting	5.50%	4.47%	(1.03%, 9.97%)	2.00%	Yes
Monitoring specific issues/current events	8.50%	5.47%	(3.03%, 13.97%)	10.00%	Yes
Helping others	12.00%	6.37%	(5.63%, 18.37%)	12.00%	Yes
Friends and Family influenced CE	1.50%	2.38%	(0%, 3.88%)	3.00%	Yes



Question 11: What questions do you have about civic engagement?

Question #11 Theme	Average of Training Sets Proportions	MOE	CI (95% Level)	Validation Set Proportion	Valid Estimate?
Defining Civic Engagement	5.50%	4.47%	(1.03%, 9.97%)	6.00%	Yes
Educating others and improving CE	13.50%	6.70%	(6.80%, 20.20%)	7.00%	Yes
What role can CCC or HWC play	4.00%	3.84%	(0.16%, 7.84%)	3.00%	Yes

Question 12: What was it like for you to take this survey? What suggestions do you have for the faculty who wrote this survey?

Question #12 Theme	Average of Training Sets Proportions	MOE	CI (95% Level)	Validation Set Proportion	Valid Estimate?
Positive input about the survey	31.00%	9.06%	(21.94%, 40.06%)	38.00%	Yes
Suggestions for improving the survey	12.00%	6.37%	(5.63%, 18.37%)	10.00%	Yes
Metacognitive awareness and reflection	20.50%	7.91%	(12.59%, 28.41%)	16.00%	Yes
Suggestions for improving coursework to reflect CE	0.50%	1.38%	(0%, 1.88%)	0.00%	No

As it can be seen above, there was one proposed category that was not considered valid (Suggestions for improving coursework to reflect CE) as it was only present in subset 1 (with just one student response) and it did not arise in either subset 2 or the validation set. Hence, this theme was not considered valid and, consequently, was excluded from the results.

In summary, as mentioned before, all categories' proportions presented in this report are averages of relative frequencies computed from the training sets which were validated by the validation set. We recognize this is not an orthodox approach, but we are confident that it provides some valuable insights into the overall sample of responses (and perhaps the population of students in the fall 2018) which may be as robust as the ones produced with more standard methods.



Appendix D: Invite to Instructors and Students

These are the messages we used to advertise the survey:

Message to Instructors:

Greetings fellow faculty,

So far, we have 296 responses to the student survey on Civic Engagement. Thank you to those that have already sent the link out to your students! Our goal is to have over 1,000 completed student responses so we still have a long way to go. Please consider posting the link to your Blackboard/Brightspace accounts and sending it out to your students via e-mail.

If you like, you can send the sample message below. You can also offer extra credit (your choice) and ask them to send you a screen shot of the thank you page. Let me know if you have any questions and thank you in advance for your participation.

Take care,

Carrie Nepstad, Assessment Committee Chair

Message to students:

Greetings students,

I'm inviting you to complete this short 12-question survey about Civic Engagement. It is voluntary, and not connected to your grade (I will not see your answers) but your participation can be helpful to the college as we are trying to understand more about student learning at Harold Washington College/ City Colleges. If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact Associate Professor Carrie Nepstad at cnepstad@ccc.edu

Link to Survey: <https://goo.gl/forms/VWT5wEvXiKyGmg4H3>

Thank you!