

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN OUR TIME

HWC Assessment Committee
Professional Development Series
Presented HWCFDW 08/11/2020
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TODAY'S SESSION

The process

1. Civic Engagement - what is it, and why is it important?
2. Student Learning Outcomes
3. Developing and administering a survey
4. A different way of analyzing the open-ended data
5. From the students
6. Recommendations
7. Discussion

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN OUR CURRENT CLIMATE? WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY? WHAT WILL EACH OF US COMMIT TO DOING NOW?

Your Own Civic Engagement

- Which aspects of civic engagement [*e.g.: individual voluntarism, organizational involvement, electoral participation; efforts to directly address an issue, working with others in a community to solve a problem, interacting with the institutions of representative democracy*] are within your current comfort zone, and how do you already demonstrate civic engagement in those ways?
- What commitment can you make to stretch beyond that comfort zone and deepen your own commitment to civic engagement?
- What might help motivate and empower you to do that?
- What strategies or encouragement would you offer colleagues working to deepen their own civic engagement?
- How do considerations of equity play into your commitment to civic engagement?

Our Students' Civic Engagement

- What will you do within the remote learning environment on Brightspace to encourage civic engagement?
- What learning opportunities can you design and incorporate into your courses this semester to support civic engagement?
- Which aspects of civic engagement [*e.g.: individual voluntarism, organizational involvement, electoral participation; efforts to directly address an issue, working with others in a community to solve a problem, interacting with the institutions of representative democracy*] will those learning opportunities support?
- How do considerations of equity play into your plan to engage students in discussion about and participation in civic engagement?

LONG AGO, BEFORE
COVID...

WE BEGAN TO THINK MORE
ABOUT CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: APA DEFINITION

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).

VALUE RUBRIC

AAC&U

Review of tools

 Association of American Colleges & Universities
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Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric

The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 16 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Preview the Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric: [click to expand](#)

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CIVIC ENGAGEMENT VALUE RUBRIC

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ue-rubric

<https://www.aacu.org/civic-engagement-value-rubric>

AAC&U DEFINITION OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Civic engagement is "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."

(Excerpted from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000, Preface, page vi.)

In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community.

<https://www.aacu.org/civic-engagement-value-rubric>

DEVELOPING THE ASSESSMENT

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:

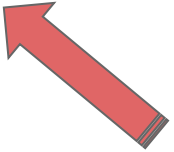
1. Describe their civic environment in terms of demographics and community.
2. Articulate their position on a pivotal social problem or civic matter.
3. Demonstrate an active role in a community context, such as school, work, service, co-curricular activities, neighborhood, or social group.
4. Examine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



STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

(GENERAL EDUCATION: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT)

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

OUR REPORT

Help your community fly: A civic engagement report

Harold Washington College Assessment Committee

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

April 2020

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



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<https://www.ccc.edu/colleges/washington/departments/Documents/hwcac/gen-ed/hwcac-gen-ed-2018ce-civic-engagement-report.pdf>

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

Do experiences at CCC or Harold Washington College influence students' involvement with civic engagement?

What kind of external experiences (outside CCC and Harold Washington College) influence students' involvement with civic engagement?

967

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Responses

FINDINGS

The results 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](#)--*"My education at CCC/HWC has prepared me to actively listen in order to understand others' perspectives on controversial issues"*--strongly agreed).
- course-level experiences as leading factors for more involvement (25% of respondents to [Question 9](#)--*"Please tell us about an experience at CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement."*).
- 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](#)--*"My experiences as a CCC/HWC student have made it more likely that, if eligible, I will vote in an election"*--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](#)--*"Please share an example of an experience outside of CCC/HWC that has influenced your civic engagement."*).
- feeling neutral about whether experiences at CCC/HWC led them to participate in advocacy or political action (35% of respondents to [Question 2](#)--*"My experiences at CCC/HWC have led me to participate in advocacy or political action."*--were neutral).

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FROM THE SURVEY

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?
13. What suggestions do you have for the faculty who wrote this survey?

"WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT CIVIC ENGAGEMENT?" (QUESTION 11)

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).

Theme	Description/ subtheme(s)	Sample Quotes
Defining Civic Engagement	What is it, why is it important, what are the organizations for this?	"How do you categorize civic engagement? Does it include everything involving the community?" "Why is civic engagement so important?" "how can i get more involved" "civic engagement" "What is the best way to inspire apathetic people to care?"
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.	"What can HWC provide to students to be more involved in the community." "What more can online students be involved in outside of school to benefit their engagement in civil issues." "How can CCC engage more with students?"

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

“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	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	"I enjoyed taking the survey and hopefully my input can impact this survey." "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." "It was fun. No suggestions at all."
Suggestions for improving the survey	Suggestions for improving the survey in terms of content/format	"The questions needed to be more specific." "The survey was okay but you do have to take into consideration that there are many different city colleges." "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."
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	"I think it was an eye-opening survey because I hadn't thought about how CCC/HWC has helped me." "I admit I am not civically engaged, and taking this survey made me realize this fact. No suggestions." "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."

Table 9: Themes/Categories for Question 12

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.

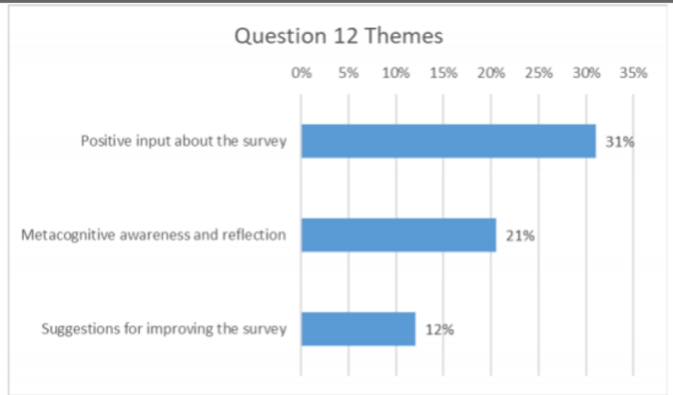


Figure 6: Question 12 Categories Proportions

"I AM INVOLVED IN THE FOLLOWING STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AT CCC/HWC
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, OR LEAVE BLANK IF NOT INVOLVED IN ANY)" (QUESTION 8)

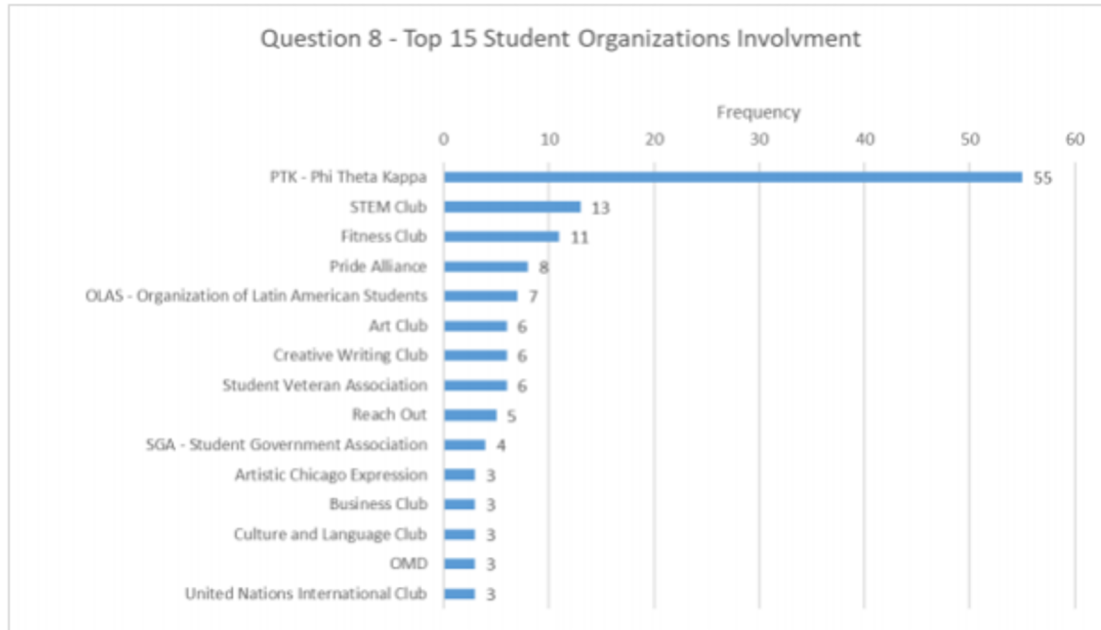


Figure 2: Graphical summary of top 15 student organizations involvement

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.

FROM THE STUDENTS

“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”

“They post many flyers encouraging students to be involved in important activities.”

My family member was a victim to police brutality. As a result I'm more interested in local politics.”

“Being involved in classroom discussions about culture, systematic oppression in the United States against POC.”

“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.”

FROM THE STUDENTS, CONT.

"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."

"What more can online students be involved in outside of school to benefit their engagement in civil issues."

"How can CCC engage more with students?"

"Why is civic engagement so important?"

"how can i get more involved"

"Can the social issues be solved when people participate in civic engagement?"

"What is the best way to inspire apathetic people to care?"

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue emphasizing civic engagement activities and experiences in relevant courses and co-curricular activities.
- Provide faculty development opportunities that highlight strategies for designing learning opportunities that include civic engagement.
- Build stronger connections between course activities and student activities particularly in terms of civic engagement.
- Consider innovative ways of connecting students to various student activities/clubs regardless of whether or not they physically come to campus.
- Ensure that our college continues providing support to student organizations.
- 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.

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN OUR CURRENT CLIMATE?

WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY? WHAT WILL EACH OF US COMMIT TO DOING NOW?

Your Own Civic Engagement

- Which aspects of civic engagement [*e.g.: individual voluntarism, organizational involvement, electoral participation; efforts to directly address an issue, working with others in a community to solve a problem, interacting with the institutions of representative democracy*] are within your current comfort zone, and how do you already demonstrate civic engagement in those ways?
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DISCUSSION

What do you think?

How are you planning to engage students this semester?
