Assessing Student Civic-Mindedness

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Instructional Technology Specialist

Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action

“The return on the hundreds of billions of dollars invested in education each year must be measured not just in terms of individual success in educational attainment and in the job market or even national economic growth. It also must be gauged by how well the next generation of Americans is prepared to solve collective problems creatively and collaboratively.” (p. 2)

U.S. Department of Education (January, 2012)
A Crucible Moment

• “it is unclear whether the civic opportunities for students in schools and on college campuses lead to an increase in most students’ civic readiness” (p.13)

Center for Inquiry in the Liberal Arts

• “more than half of students show no growth or a decline in valuing political and social involvement and in valuing diversity during their four years in college” (p.13)
What we can expect...

• “US Department of education officials will encourage states, schools, and postsecondary institutions to conduct civic audits and develop and publish on their websites their plans and outcomes for educating students for informed engagement in civic life” (p.22)

Association of American Colleges & Universities

“only a third of students felt strongly that:
  • faculty publicly advocated the need for students to become active and involved citizens,
  • their civic awareness had expanded,
  • their college experiences had helped them learn the skills needed to effectively change society for the better,
  • their commitment to change society for the better had grown.” (p.13)
What is IUPUI doing?

How can we help each other?
Civic-Mindedness Defined

“a person’s inclination or disposition to be knowledgeable of and involved in the community, and to have a commitment to act upon a sense of responsibility as a member of that community”.

(Steinberg, Hatcher, & Bringle, 2011)
Domains

- **Knowledge**
  - Volunteer Opportunities
  - Academic knowledge and technical skills
  - Contemporary social issues
- **Skills**
  - Communication and listening
  - Diversity
  - Consensus-building
- **Dispositions**
  - Valuing community engagement
  - Self-efficacy
  - Social trustee of knowledge
- **Behavioral Intentions**

Civic-Minded Graduate Defined

“A person that has **completed a course of study** (e.g., bachelor’s degree), and has the **capacity and desire to work with others** to achieve the **common good**. It refers to a person’s inclination or disposition to be **knowledgeable of and involved in the community**, and **to have a commitment to act** upon a sense of responsibility as a member of that community”

(Steinberg, Hatcher & Bringle, 2011)
Methodology

Sample Population

- Sam H. Jones Community Service Scholars
  - N=183
  - Class
    - Freshman (22)
    - Sophomore (18)
    - Junior (38)
    - Senior (55)
    - Graduate (47)
    - Non-degree (2)
  - Scholarship Type
    - Service Learning Assistant (92)***
    - Non-Service Learning Assistant (99 total students in 8 programs)
Sam H. Jones Community Service Scholarship Program

• Established to recognize students who have a desire to be involved in the community in order to advocate for social change, assure equal access to education, housing, healthcare, and contribute to improving the quality of life for people in Central Indiana.
  – Qualifications
  – 9 programs
  • Largest program is the Service Learning Assistant program

Service Learning Assistants

• Selected by a member of the faculty or staff to support community engaged work in teaching, research, and service:
  – In the design/implementation of a service learning class
  – Conducting a community engaged research project
  – Supporting capacity building for the expansion of service learning with a campus unit or department
  – Implement a professional service project in and with the community
Civic Mentoring Relationship

“a partnership with a professional who has the public interest at the forefront of their professional work and a sense of civic responsibility to conduct their work to advance the social good and works to intentionally develop similar attributes in you by sharing knowledge, skills, information, and perspectives”

(Norris, forthcoming)

Data Collection

• Retrospective test (Howard & Dailey, 1979)
• Survey
  – CMG Scale (30 items)
  – Confounding variables
    • Prior experiences
    • Dialogue across perceived difference
    • Service learning & reflection
    • Civic Mentoring Relationship (student-faculty interactions)
      – Civic-Minded Professional Scale (Hatcher, 2008)
Closeness of Relationships

- Types of interactions
- Diversity of interactions
- Frequency of interactions

Relationship Closeness Inventory (RCI)
(Berscheid, Snyder, Omoto, 2004)
Topics of discussion

- Research
- Teaching
- Purpose in life
- Personal values
- Stance on political issues
- Passion for their work
- Relationship(s) with community partners
- Campus culture for civic engagement
- Opportunities to get involved
- Issues in society

Results
### Topics Discussed with Civic Mentor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Their research</td>
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<td>Their teaching</td>
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<td>Their purpose in life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Their personal values</td>
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<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Their stance on political issues</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>Their passion for their work</td>
<td>87</td>
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<td>Their relationship(s) with community partners</td>
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<td>68</td>
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<td>The campus or school culture for civic</td>
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<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunities to get involved</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>74</td>
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<td>Issues in society</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>74</td>
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### Mode of Communication/Interactions with Civic Mentor

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>Formal and regularly scheduled meetings where there was a structure agenda</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>53</td>
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<td>Regularly scheduled meetings with no preset agenda</td>
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<td>49</td>
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<td>Informal conversations (in the classroom, in the office, walking in the hallway)</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>Email communications</td>
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<td>Phone calls</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>Meetings when others were present (community partners, students, faculty)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>67</td>
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Conclusions & Implications

Here’s what we know?

• Pre-post-then (Retrospective testing) is necessary
• Students in our programs tend to be highly civic-minded and show growth as a result of participation in our programs
• There is a difference between students in the SLA program compared to all other programs
• Program design does influence certain aspects of the CMG in different ways
• Need to focus on Democracy Plaza
  – Voting and political involvement is the only item we see no statistical significance across the board and often a decrease between post-then scores
What do we still want to know?

• How do the SHJ scholars compare to the rest of the campus?
• How does the civic-mindedness of the faculty/staff mentor influence student civic growth?
• How do our programs impact the general student population?
• How can we maximize our efforts to increase civic engagement across campus?

Next Steps

• Identify & assess civic learning outcomes specific to each program to better understand how program design influences development of civic-mindedness
• Assess civic learning as a result of participation in campus service events
• Assess the impact of innovative reflection strategies (Digital Storytelling)
• More research on student-faculty interactions and how they influence student development of civic mindedness
Discussion points...

- How does CMG relate to you and your unit?
- How is CSL using this data in our work with faculty and units?
- How is civic-mindedness related to civic learning? How can you use this to think about assessing civic learning?
- Where would you begin to look for evidence of civic learning within your degree/program?
Budget = $2,500
January 2013 report due to Trudy Banta

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Total Actual Expenses $ 1,063.50 $ 696.00 $ 480.00 $ 74.45 $ 186.05 $ 2,500.00

Budget $ 2,200.00

Assessment Cong K

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