

Civically Engaged Leadership for a Better World

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Leadership for what?

**“Events are moving us towards
what cannot be, a citizenless
democracy.”**

—AAC&U, A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy’s Future, 2012

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.

—B. Jacoby, *Civic Engagement in Higher Education*, 2009

Civic Engagement involves one or more:

- Learning from others, self, and environment to develop informed perspectives on social issues;
- Recognizing and appreciating human diversity and commonality;
- Behaving, and working through controversy, with civility;
- Taking an active role in the political process;

- Participating actively in public life, public problem solving, and community service;
- Assuming leadership and membership roles in organizations;
- Developing empathy, ethics, values, and sense of social responsibility;
- Promoting social justice locally and globally.

—B. Jacoby, *Civic Engagement in Higher Education*, 2009

Framework for Civic Engagement Learning Outcomes

- **Values** “I ought to do.”
- **Knowledge** “I know what I ought to do and why.”
- **Skills** “I know how to do.”
- **Efficacy** “I can do, and it makes a difference.”
- **Commitment** “I must and will do.”

—Eyler and Giles, *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?*, Jossey-Bass, 1999.

Reflection Question

How might civic engagement help you achieve your desired outcomes for a leadership initiative that you work with?

Leadership for Social Change

“Leadership is ultimately about change, and ... effective leaders are those who are able to effect positive change on behalf of others and society.”

—HERI, 1996 , cited in Komives & Wagner, p. 10

Social Change is:

- Collaborative
- Involves working with those most affected
- Multifaceted and complex

Levers of Social Change

- **Artistic expression**
- **Service/philanthropy**
- **Civic professionalism**
- **Community economic development**
- **Community building/organizing**
- **Confrontational strategies**

Levers of Social Change

- **Grass-roots political activity/public policy work**
- **Social entrepreneurship**
- **Social media**
- **Social value creation**
- **Voting/formal political activities**

Transformative Learning

“... is predicated on the idea that students are seriously challenged to assess their value system and worldview and are subsequently changed by the experience.”

—Mezirow & Taylor, 2009

Critical Reflection

- The powerful process of making meaning
- Avoids simplistic conclusions
- Examines causality
- Challenges a priori assumptions

What kind of citizen?

- Personally responsible
- Participatory
- Social-justice oriented

—Westheimer & Kahne, 2004

Why does it matter to know why?

Reflection Question

How might you integrate critical reflection about civically engaged leadership into your work?

Strategies

- Add a civic dimension to student group activities.
- Engage students in immersion experiences.
- Focus on group collaboration.

Higher education is “one of the few public spaces left where students can learn the power of questioning authority, recover the ideals of engaged citizenship, reaffirm the importance of the public good, and expand their capacities to make a difference.”

—H. Giroux, cited in Jacoby, 2009

“Never let the things that matter most
suffer from the things that matter least.”

—Goethe

References and Resources

- Association of American Colleges & Universities, *A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy's Future*, 2012.
- Jacoby, B. (Ed.), *Civic Engagement in Higher Education*, Jossey-Bass, 2009.
- Komives, S., Wagner, W. (Eds.), *Leadership for a Better World: Understanding the Social Change Model of Leadership Development*, Jossey-Bass, 2009.
- Mezirow, J. & Taylor, E. *Transformative Learning in Practice*, Jossey-Bass, 2009.
- Westheimer, J. & Kahne, J. "What Kind of Citizen?" *American Educational Research Journal*, 2004.

Questions?

Thanks for participating

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