



Civic Engagement at Wittenberg

Believing students should develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be engaged citizens in their communities, Wittenberg requires completion of a civic engagement experience for graduation.

In one semester before their senior year, students complete one of several designated civic engagement courses. These provide students the opportunity to engage with community organizations, make connections between new knowledge and community experiences, reflect on the value of diversity in communities, and develop a sense of civic identity.

The Hagen Center coordinates the civic engagement requirement at Wittenberg and serves as a liaison between community sites and the faculty and students engaged in civic engagement courses.

There are three options for students to fulfill the civic engagement requirement.

CCUE 100: Civic Engagement through Service (0 credit)

This course introduces students to civic engagement through a semester-long service experience. Offered by the Hagen Center every semester, students will make connections between new knowledge and community experiences, gain an understanding of civic identity, and reflect on the value of diversity in communities. The course is a 30-hour commitment that includes direct service and reflection.

CCUE 150: Civic Engagement across the Curriculum (1 credit)

Some courses provides students the option to enroll in a linked civic engagement experience. While the experience is optional, it provides a meaningful way for students to complete their civic engagement requirement while making connections between the content in a course and engagement in the community. The precise nature of the experience and its connection to the course content is determined in consultation with the faculty member teaching the linked course.

Civic Engagement Designated (CED) Course: (2-4 credits)

Civic engagement designated courses embed a required civic engagement experience within the course. In addition to the learning goals associated with the course, students will make connections between course content and community experiences, gain an understanding of civic identity, and reflect on the value of diversity in communities.

Faculty-directed Civic Engagement Course Details

“The theoretical basis of faculty community engagement efforts is that the learning process is a learner-centered approach that is jointly constructed by students, community members, and faculty members.”

- Tucker et al. (2013). “Principles of Sustained Partnerships between Higher Education and their Larger Communities.” *International Journal for Service Learning in Engineering*. Special Edition, 48-63.

Civic Engagement (CE) courses help students develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be engaged citizens in their communities. They do this by using community-based experiences to connect the academic content and skills to community issues. In this process, they produce reciprocal benefits for students, faculty, and community partners. Reciprocity is important in civic engagement; not only should there be reciprocal benefits, but also equitable voice of all participants and a sensitivity to the history and elements of power and privilege.

There are two types of faculty-directed civic engagement courses.¹ **Civic Engagement Designated (CED)** courses embed the experience into the course as part of the course expectations. The alternative is for a course to provide an optional experience through a linked **CCUE 150** course. In this option, the experience is additional to the course and students earn an extra credit. Think of it like a lab add-on. The experience is graded credit/no-credit by the faculty member of the primary course.

All civic engagement experiences will have at least **12.5 hours devoted to the engagement experience**. This includes in-class or out-of-class time spent on service, support, and/or research associated with the experience. It also includes time spent on reflection and discussion associated with the experience. There are 3 learning goals measured at the end of each CE course. Faculty are encouraged to reflect upon the civic engagement outcomes with students during the semester and provide feedback. At the end of a CE course, students **complete a reflection assignment that assess their proficiency on the civic engagement learning outcomes**. Faculty can create their own reflection assignment that measures the civic engagement learning outcomes or use the example provided.

The civic engagement learning outcomes are:

- Students will make connections between new knowledge and community experiences.
- Students will understand civic identity and commitment.
- Students will reflect on the value of diversity in communities.

The rubric used to assess students on these goals is found below.

¹ There are actually 3 types of civic engagement courses. “Civic Engagement through Service” (CCUE100) is not mentioned because it is run out of the Hagen Center. The two types covered in this document are options for faculty to pursue related to their courses.

Applying for a Civic Engagement Designation

To apply for a civic engagement designation, complete this form: [Civic Engagement Designation Form](#). The Civic Engagement Committee will review the proposal. If you have any questions, contact the Hagen Center (hagen-center@wittenberg.edu).

If you are interested in creating a course with a civic engagement opportunity and need help identifying and connecting with partners, please email the Hagen Center. We are happy to help you think about and build a civic engagement course.

Proposal Details

Before clicking on the form, be ready to answer the following questions.

1. What type of Civic Engagement course do you want to propose?
 - a. Civic Engagement Designated course – Experience is embedded in the course.
 - b. CCUE 150 – Experience is an option for students in my course, but not required.
2. What is the department, number, and title of your proposed course?
3. Is this class being submitted to satisfy another general education requirement? If so, which one?

If course has been previously offered as a Civic Engagement course and there are not any significant changes, you can stop here.

4. What is your plan for a civic engagement experience? We recognize that projects and community partnerships may not be fully determined until closer to the start day of the course. Using your best projections at this time, please discuss how you anticipate students will meet the minimum hour component (12.5 hours) through activities related to the community for the course and/or engagement with a community partner.
5. How will your course and civic engagement experience help students meet the three learning outcomes? What opportunities will students have to receive feedback toward the learning outcomes throughout the semester?
6. How will students be introduced to and learn about the mission and work of the community partner? How will they realize the impact of their work on the community partner's goals?
7. What reflection assignment will you use to assess the civic engagement learning outcomes? You can use the Hagen Center's Sample Reflection Assignment or create your own. If you create your own, describe how this assignment will allow you to assess the learning outcomes.
8. Who is your community partner contact? By including this information, you are verifying that you have had conversations with this partner. If you do not have a contact, the Hagen Center can help make a connection.

Civic Engagement Syllabus Statement

This course satisfies the Civic Engagement requirement as part of Learning Outcome (LO) 1 of the Connections Curriculum. LO 1 states that “students will articulate how their co-curricular experiences and their academic curriculum have shaped their personal, professional, and civic identities.” Civic engagement prepares students to be engaged citizens by connecting academics and community-based learning.

Civic engagement *is working to impact change in “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.” (Ehrlich, T. 2000. “Preface.” Civic Responsibility and Higher Education, page vi.)*

Civic identity *is the integration of civic engagement into a sense of self. Students who have “a mature sense of civic identity” are “both idealistic and realistic, patient and persistent, committed to thoughtful engagement and aware that others may engage differently. They see their role in life as contributing to the long-term greater good. And perhaps most importantly, they have the courage to act.” (Knefelkamp, L.L. 2008. “Civic Identity: Locating Self in Community.” Diversity & Democracy 11(2):1-3.)*

The civic engagement learning outcomes are:

- Students will make connections between new knowledge and community experiences.
- Students will understand civic identity and commitment.
- Students will reflect on the value of diversity in communities

The Hagen Center for Civic and Urban Engagement reviews, approves, and serves as a resource for experiences that satisfy the Civic Engagement requirement. More information about civic engagement can be found at <https://www.wittenberg.edu/hagen-center>

Civic Engagement Competency Rubric

Definitions

Civic engagement is working to impact change in “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.” (Ehrlich, T. 2000. “Preface.” *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, page vi.)

Civic identity is the integration of civic engagement into a sense of self. It is “an identity status in its own right – one that can become as integral to individual identify as race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, or any other deeply claimed aspect of self.” Students who have “a mature sense of civic identity” are “both idealistic and realistic, patient and persistent, committed to thoughtful engagement and aware that others may engage differently. They see their role in life as contributing to the long-term greater good. And perhaps most importantly, they have the courage to act.” (Knefelkamp, L.L. 2008. “[Civic Identity: Locating Self in Community](#).” *Diversity & Democracy* 11(2):1-3.)

Student will be able to...	Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
	4	3	2	1
Value Diversity of Communities	Demonstrates evidence of adjustment in own attitudes and beliefs as a result of working within and learning from diverse communities.	Reflects on how own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other communities.	Demonstrates awareness that own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other communities	Expresses attitudes and beliefs from a one-sided, personal view.
Make Connections Between New Knowledge and Community Experiences	Connects and extends knowledge from co-curricular and curricular experiences to community engagement and to their participation in the community.	Analyzes knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from co-curricular and curricular experiences making relevant connections to community engagement and to their participation in the community.	Begins to connect knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from co-curricular and curricular experiences to community engagement and to their participation in the community.	Begins to identify knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) that is relevant to community engagement and to their participation in the community.
Understand Civic Identity and Commitment	Provides evidence of experience in community engagement activities and describes what they’ve learned about themselves in relation to a reinforced and clarified sense of civic identity and continued commitment to public action (i.e. active citizen).	Provides evidence of experience in community engagement activities and describes what they’ve learned about themselves in relation to a growing sense of civic identity and commitment (i.e. conscientious & committed citizen).	Provides evidence that involvement in community engagement activities is generated from a well-intentioned place, but not a well-informed place. Does not connect experiences to a sense of civic identity (i.e. volunteer type status).	Provides little evidence of experience in community engagement activities and does not connect experiences to civic identity (i.e. a membership status – not concerned with own role in community, social issues).

Hagen Center Sample Reflection Assignment

Throughout this semester, we partnered with [Name of Community Partner] to [brief description of project]. This project benefits our community by [XX].

In this assignment, reflect upon your experience participating in this civic engagement project. Provide a full paragraph (appx. 10 sentences) responding to each of the three questions below.

1. Reflect upon your civic engagement experience. How did the experience shape your understanding of and/or connection to the course material? Provide some specific examples.
2. Read the definitions of Civic Engagement and Civic Identity below. Discuss how your experience has provided an opportunity for civic engagement. Connect your experience with your sense of civic identity. How has your understanding of and/or commitment to civic engagement or civic identity changed as a result of this experience?
3. How have your perspectives of the Springfield community and people who live in the community changed from this civic engagement experience? Provide some specific examples.

The following definitions might be helpful as you reflect on your experience.

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