Association of American Colleges and Universities

This rubric is the first step in a rubric development process that will produce additional drafts, each responsive to the feedback received. Feedback deadline is February 15, 2009. The next draft of this rubric will be available in May 2009. For more information or to give feedback, please email Wende Morgaine at wendemm@gmail.com. Thank you!

Created by a team of faculty from higher education institutions across the United States.

Preparing graduates for their public lives as citizens, members of communities, and professionals in society has historically been a responsibility of higher education. Yet the outcome of a civic-minded graduate is a complex concept. Civic learning outcomes are framed by personal values and commitments, disciplinary frameworks and traditions, pre-professional norms and practice, and the mission and value of colleges and universities. This rubric is designed to make the civic learning outcomes more explicit. The goal of this rubric is to identify representative domains in terms of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of civic-minded graduates. However, depending on the use and context, it may be most beneficial to the purposes of local institutions to delete certain goals or modify language to better fit local context.

For this set of learning outcomes, you the reviewer are looking for evidence that the student possesses an understanding of, commitment to, and ability to live in communal contexts and take action within them. These contexts may include local communities (such as school, campus, or city), as well as broader contexts that define a community (such as a state or nation). The student has demonstrated an ability to create and participate in the governance structures of the college, community, state, or nation, (or even an international context). S/he can talk or write about civic practices that lead to constructive participation in the communities in which one lives and works (such as approaches to leadership, how to engage others, or facilitate participation). S/he can demonstrate skills in working effectively with others (especially diverse others, be they individuals, organizations, or groups) as well as communicating in a way that fosters equitable participation by other members of that community. At the highest levels of development, the student can articulate how she or he formulated a strategy for action that may include multiple public actions, such as community service, advocacy or public education, and policy research or formulation. The student writes about her/his role in planning, carrying out, and reflecting upon civic actions, with increasing evidence of leadership. Through these examples, the student seems to demonstrate moral and political courage to take risks to achieve the public good, as well as the ability to raise ethical issues and questions about public life, including understanding the successes and drawbacks of a particular strategy. While the ethical and moral dimensions are subjective, and hence not part of the rubric itself, a student involved in civic engagement grows in tangible ways in their knowledge, skills, and habits for participating in and positively influencing communities. Multiple artifacts may be utilized to assess this, including portfolio artifacts that document the student's work in a variety of civic engagement avenues, such as:

◆ The student creates and manages a service program that engages others (such as youth or members of a neighborhood) in learning about and taking action on an issue they care about. In the process, the student also teaches and models processes that engage others in deliberative democracy, in having a voice, participating in democratic processes, and taking specific actions to affect an issue.

◆ The student researches, organizes, and carries out a deliberative democracy forum on a particular issue, one that includes multiple perspectives on that issue and how best to make positive change through various courses of public action. As a result, other students, faculty, and community members are engaged to take action on an issue.

◆ The student works on and takes a leadership role in a complex campaign to bring about tangible changes in the public's awareness or education on a particular issue, or even a change in public policy. Through this process, the student demonstrates multiple types of civic action and skills.

◆ The student integrates their academic work with community engagement, producing a tangible product (piece of legislation or policy, a business, building or civic infrastructure, water quality or scientific assessment, needs survey, research paper, service program, or organization) that has engaged community constituents and responded to community needs and assets through the process.

In addition, the nature of this work lends itself to opening up the review process to include community constituents that may be a part of the work, such as teammates, colleagues, community/agency members, and those served or collaborating in the process.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any performance that doesn't meet level one performance.

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Diversity of Communities and Cultures	Consistently identifies personal transformation in attitudes and beliefs about diverse communities. Uses curiosity about communities to often explore and challenge multiple viewpoints	Frequently shows awareness of direct and indirect attitudes about cultures and communities. Exhibits a sincere curiosity about diverse communities.	Sometimes will express and idea or personal attitude that will challenge views. Shows some understanding of exclusion and restriction between communities but can not identify long-term effects of those actions.	Rarely expresses ideas or personal attitudes beyond a one-sided view. Shows little or no curiosity about or experience in diverse communities.
Knowledge	Demonstrates a fully developed understanding of 1) how the dominant perspective shapes social authority and patterns of power, 2) of the central principles of American democratic government and its historical development, and 3) of American democracy in a comparative perspective relative to the expressions of ideals and practices in other countries.	Demonstrates adequately developed understanding of 1) how the dominant perspective shapes social authority and patterns of power, 2) of the central principles of American democratic government and its historical development, and 3) of American democracy in a comparative perspective relative to the expressions of ideals and practices in other countries.	Demonstrates partially developed understanding of 1) how the dominant perspective shapes social authority and patterns of power, 2) of the central principles of American democratic government and its historical development, and 3) of American democracy in a comparative perspective relative to the expressions of ideals and practices in other countries.	Demonstrates a minimally developed, understanding of 1) how the dominant perspective shapes social authority and patterns of power, 2) of the central principles of American democratic government and its historical development, and 3) of American democracy in a comparative perspective relative to the expressions ideals and practices in other countries.
Personal Values and Commitment to Engagement	Articulates a personal philosophy and reflects upon their personal commitment to community or pubic domain.	States personal values and explains reasons for their involvement in the community or public domain.	Expresses personal opinions about participation in the community or public domain.	Clarifies personal values through participation in classroom or community-based activities.
Civic Communication	Demonstrates capacity to exchange ideas about civic engagement in ways that draws on others' viewpoints. Demonstrates skills in listening, and articulating one's own ideas (e.g., through deliberation, negotiation, conflict resolution, building agreement) in inclusive ways.	Demonstrates understanding of the importance of collaboration yet expresses ideas as individually constructed. Moderate skills in listening to and limited skill at drawing out others' viewpoints (e.g., through deliberation, negotiation, conflict resolution, building agreement) in inclusive ways.	Demonstrates some interest in exchanging ideas about civic engagement. Demonstrates emerging skills in explaining one's own ideas but little understanding of listening as an important communication tool. Does not use inclusive language.	Demonstrates little interest in exchanging ideas about civic engagement. Demonstrates limited skill in explaining one's own ideas with little evidence of drawing out or considering others' viewpoints (other than when led to do so).
Public Action	Demonstrates clear commitment to participate and lead in community contexts as a way to constructively influence the public good. Clearly demonstrates capacity to carry out and reflect on, public efforts that involve service, public education, and/or policy formulation as a means to influence the public good.	Demonstrates high levels of participation (and some leadership) in community contexts as a way to constructively influence the public good. Demonstrates moderate capacity to carry out and reflect on multiple civic strategies to influence the public good but not able to which strategy is best for any individual setting.	Demonstrates some civic participation (but little leadership) in community contexts as a way to constructively influence public good. Demonstrates emerging capacity to find, carry out, and reflect on at least one form of civic action to influence the public good (but with limited awareness of multiple strategies for civic action).	Demonstrates emerging or experimental civic participation in community contexts, with some awareness of how these actions constructively influence the community or public good. Does not yet clearly articulate, carry out, or reflect an understanding of how (one's) multiple actions could influence the public good.
Negotiating Civic Contexts / Structures	Successfully negotiates (or manages) complex civic contexts (e.g., organizations, movements, collective action) to achieve a civic aim.	Negotiates and works within several civic contexts (e.g., organizations, causes, collective action) to achieve a civic aim.	Emerging capacity to negotiate and shape one or a few civic contexts (e.g., a service site, a club, an initiative).	Experiments as a member or actor in one or a few civic contexts (e.g., a service site, a club).