

## Objective

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). Civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of persona and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community. (*Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric*) The objective of Civic Learning and Engagement is to engage “students in the knowledge, skills, and values they need to contribute as active and informed members of a democratic society in order to promote the growth of healthy communities, global economic vitality, social justice and the common good.” (*MA Civic Learning and Engagement Assessment Framework*)

## Using the Rubric

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 and involves the demonstration of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. This rubric reflects this complexity. It focuses on assessing students' abilities to

- evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues and events of human interest
- understand and respect the diversity of human experience and perspectives
- articulate and reflect on her/his own perspective
- participate in civic life and interact with others to promote the common good

The rubric focuses on six criteria:

### *Knowledge, Skills*

1. Demonstration of Civic Knowledge
2. Analysis of civic issue or event

### *Values, Motivation*

3. Diversity of Communities and Cultures
4. Civic Identity and Reflection
5. Involvement in Community Contexts
6. Civic Action and Commitment

Not all criteria may be appropriate for any given instance of student work.

## Definitions

- Civic identity: When one sees her or himself as an active participant in society with a strong commitment and responsibility to work with others towards public purposes.
- Civic/community contexts: Organizations, movements, campaigns, a place or locus where people and/or living creatures inhabit, which may be defined by a locality (school, national park, non-profit organization, town, state, nation) or defined by shared identity (i.e., African-Americans, North Carolinians, Americans, the Republican or Democratic Party, refugees, etc.). In addition, contexts for civic engagement may be defined by a variety of approaches intended to benefit a person, group, or community, including community service or volunteer work, academic work.
- “Subject” could include a position, a civic engagement experience, an historical event, democratic texts, debates, movements for change, or political systems.
- “Diversity” could include, gender, gender identity, ability, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, color, creed, age, religion, social economic status

## MWCC/Fitchburg State CIVIC LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT RUBRIC

Modified from the Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric and MA Civic Learning and Engagement Assessment Framework

|  | <b>Mastery</b><br>4  | <b>Proficient</b><br>3   | <b>Emerging</b><br>2   | <b>Foundation</b><br>1  | <b>No Demonstration</b><br>0   |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Demonstration of Civic Knowledge</b>      | Subject <sup>1</sup> is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.  | Subject <sup>1</sup> is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions or inaccuracies.  | Subject <sup>1</sup> is stated but not clearly described; understanding is impeded by omissions or inaccuracies.   | Subject <sup>1</sup> is stated without clarification or description or with serious inaccuracies.   | Subject <sup>1</sup> is not stated.  |
| <b>Analysis of Civic Issue or Event</b>      | Synthesizes knowledge from relevant sources or experiences with comprehensive interpretation and evaluation. Uses detailed critical inquiry and reasoning to evaluate social issues.   | Analyzes knowledge from relevant sources or experiences with some interpretation and evaluation. Uses some critical inquiry and reasoning to evaluate social issues.                           | Begins to connect knowledge from relevant sources or experiences but with limited interpretation and evaluation. Uses limited reasoning to evaluate social issues.   | Begins to identify knowledge from relevant sources or experiences but without interpretation and evaluation.  | There is no analysis of the issue/event.   |
| <b>Diversity of Communities and Cultures</b> | Demonstrates evidence of adjustment in own attitudes and beliefs because of working within and learning from diversity of communities and cultures. Promotes others' engagement with diversity.  | Reflects on how own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures. | Has awareness that own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits some curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.                 | Expresses attitudes and beliefs as an individual, from a one-sided view. Has minimal awareness of what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures. | There is no statement of attitudes or beliefs; there is no awareness of diversity of communities and cultures. |
| <b>Civic Identity and Reflection</b>         | Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities, accompanied by reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's actions. Describes what s/he has learned about her/himself as it relates to a reinforced and clarified sense of civic identity. | Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities. Describes what s/he has learned about her/himself as it relates to a growing sense of civic identity.                          | Involvement in civic-engagement activities is generated from expectations or requirements rather than from a sense of civic identity. Begins to reflect on how these actions may benefit individual(s) or communities. | Little evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities. Limited reflection on how experience relates to civic identity.                                     | There is no evidence of civic engagement activity or does not connect experience to civic identity.            |
| <b>Involvement in community contexts</b>     | Demonstrates ability and commitment to collaboratively work across and within community contexts and structures to achieve a civic aim.  | Demonstrates ability and commitment to work actively within community contexts and structures to achieve a civic aim.  | Demonstrates experience identifying intentional ways to participate in civic contexts and structures.  | Experiments with civic contexts and structures, tries out a few to see what fits.   | Does not participate in civic contexts and structures.   |
| <b>Civic Action and Commitment</b>           | Demonstrates independent experience and shows initiative in team leadership of complex or multiple civic engagement activities. Demonstrates continued commitment to public action.  | Demonstrates independent experience and leadership qualities when it comes to civic action. Evidence suggests continued commitment to public action.   | Has clearly participated in civically focused actions but is tentative on commitment to future action.   | Has experimented with some civic activities but shows little commitment to future action.   | Does not participate in civic action; shows no commitment to future action.                                    |

### COVER SHEET

This cover sheet should accompany a single submitted assignment and resulting student work.

(Optional) Faculty member or department name: \_\_\_\_\_

Course level (etc. 100, 200, 300): \_\_\_\_\_ Course number \_\_\_\_\_

Course name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students in the course: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

|   | This criterion is.....               |                                |                            |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>CIVIC LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT RUBRIC</b> | Taught as part of course instruction | Addressed in assignment prompt | Appropriate to be assessed |
| Demonstration of Civic Knowledge            |                                      |                                |                            |
| Analysis of Civic Issue or Event            |                                      |                                |                            |
| Diversity of Communities and Cultures       |                                      |                                |                            |
| Civic Identity and Reflection               |                                      |                                |                            |
| Involvement in community contexts           |                                      |                                |                            |
| Civic Action and Commitment                 |                                      |                                |                            |