



Fort Hays State University

CIVIC INVESTMENT PLAN

Civic Learning and Engagement as an Institutional Priority

2014



Submitted By:

The Civic Learning and Engagement Task Force

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OVERVIEW

Fort Hays State University has built an impressive civic learning and engagement foundation. Our work of preparing students to be active and engaged citizens has been recognized both regionally and nationally. Despite these successes, our civic education initiative faces substantial challenges. Much of our civic learning and engagement work remains on the margins of the institution and most of our programming has yet to be institutionalized on campus. Therefore, this plan calls on a series of recommendations and changes to university programs, policies, processes and structures that will improve existing activities, expand our efforts to reach all students and institutionalize this important work throughout the entire academy.

Recommendations presented in this plan are the result of an internal audit and assessment of current activities and external review of the literature and best practices in the field of civic engagement. Recommendations include:

1. Promote the development of the “engaged scholar”
2. Promote an academic focus for civic learning and engagement
3. Promote institutional intentionality
4. Promote a comprehensive and cohesive approach to civic learning and engagement
5. Promote a reciprocal partnership with our various communities
6. Promote a framework for civic learning and engagement that educates for full citizenship
7. Promote a campus structure and culture that models civic learning and engagement
8. Promote civic learning and engagement strategies that address our diverse student population

In addition to these eight recommendations, it is our hope that the Civic Investment Plan will encourage a wider conversation and promote additional deliberations among university personnel on the issues of civic learning and engagement.

The Civic Learning and Engagement Task Force is confident that with the adoption of this plan, Fort Hays State will become a premier “engaged campus” and be a leader among American colleges and universities working to prepare the next generation of active and engaged citizens.

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Purpose of the Proposal..... | 3 |
| Description of the Process | 5 |
| Higher Education and the Civic Engagement Movement | 6 |
| <i>A Crucible Moment</i> | 8 |
| Civic Engagement and Fort Hays State University | 10 |
| Civic Investment Plan: Recommendations for Change | 12 |
| 1. Promote the development of the “engaged scholar” | 13 |
| 2. Promote an academic focus for civic learning and engagement | 14 |
| 3. Promote institutional intentionality | 15 |
| 4. Promote a comprehensive and cohesive approach to civic learning and engagement | 16 |
| 5. Promote a reciprocal partnership with our various communities | 17 |
| 6. Promote a framework for civic learning and engagement that educates for full citizenship | 18 |
| 7. Promote a campus structure and culture that models civic learning and engagement | 19 |
| 8. Promote civic learning and engagement strategies that address our diverse student population | 20 |
| What Does Success Look Like? | 22 |
| References | 23 |
| Attachments | |

CIVIC INVESTMENT PLAN

A Proposal by and for the University and the Greater Community

A. Purpose of the Proposal

The purpose of this document is to provide the Fort Hays State University (FHSU) community with an outline and plan to enhance our mission of preparing students to be active and engaged citizens. Nearly three years in the making, the Civic Investment Plan was developed by a multi-disciplinary team of faculty, staff, students and community members with the support of the FHSU divisions of academic and student affairs. Beginning in the fall of 2011, assigned staff and this task force participated in a continuous improvement exercise and comprehensive review of the university's civic engagement learning activities. The guiding principle and purpose of this effort is to improve, expand and institutionalize civic learning and engagement at Fort Hays State University. This plan is the results of both internal assessment and evaluation activities and the external review of concepts and best practices in the field of civic engagement.

We define the term "civic learning and engagement" as curricular and co-curricular activities that are designed to develop civic knowledge, skills and values resulting in action that has a direct impact on the quality of life in a community. First, this definition promotes student learning objectives that are consistent with the knowledge, skills and values to be successful in public life. Active and engaged citizens must have an understanding of social and political issues in the context of history, be knowledgeable about public structures and processes and have the skills and motivation to put that knowledge into action. Second, the results of this engagement work must have the intentional purpose of improving the greater community. We define community as either local, state, national and/or global. This public work must be designed for the purpose of addressing and solving societal problems with the ultimate goal of improving the human condition. Participating in community service, attending a public forum on a social, community or political issue, involvement in a service-learning course, discussing social and political issues with colleagues, researching solutions to complex community problems and voting in local and national elections are all examples of civic learning and engagement activities.

Over the last decade, Fort Hays State University has built and implemented a strong civic learning and engagement foundation. These educational activities are wide-spread throughout campus and the resulting impact has been felt throughout the world. We are recognized

regionally and nationally by the Kansas Campus Compact, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the Carnegie Foundation as a leader in the national civic engagement movement. Despite our strengths however, Fort Hays State University faces many challenges to growing and even maintaining our civic learning and engagement efforts. Much of our work remains on the margins of the institution, and most of our programming has yet to be institutionalized in the campus culture. Therefore, this plan calls on a series of recommendations and changes to university programs, policies, processes and structures that will improve existing activities, expand our efforts to reach all students and institutionalize this important work throughout the entire academy.

The Civic Investment Plan seeks to help the university in fulfilling its mission statement “...to develop engaged global citizen-leaders”. It is also critically important that this document and its recommendations should not be viewed at the expense of the other university needs, but rather, in concert and support of other institutional priorities. For example, research shows that students involved in civic engagement activities are more likely to be retained and graduate at a greater rate. Knowledge and skills learned in civic engagement are easily transferable to career preparation and support workforce readiness (Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich & Corngold, 2007). Furthermore, enhanced civic learning and engagement provides opportunities for collaboration and the development of new interdisciplinary initiatives supported by the university’s strategic plan. These align with both the FHSU strategic plan and Board of Regents Foresight 2020 goals, including the higher education attainment and university excellence goals.

Recommendations for change provided in this report include both short term, micro-level suggestions, as well as long term, macro-level cultural alterations. Some will require little to no financial resources, while others will need major investments of university assets. Most importantly however, we hope this plan will encourage a wider conversation among all university stakeholders about the public purpose of higher education.

Research and national civic indexes show that university students and recent graduates have little interest and lack the knowledge and skills to be successful in the public domain (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont and Stephens, 2003). The Civic Learning and Engagement Task Force endorses the view that higher education has the responsibility to prepare students to be active and engaged citizens. We further believe that colleges and universities have a responsibility to have a positive and direct impact in the communities in which they reside. With the adoption of the Civic Investment Plan, we are confident that Fort Hays State University will be among the “top tier” American colleges and universities working to prepare the next generation of engaged global citizen-leaders.

B. Description of the Process

The process of assessing and evaluating FHSU's civic engagement activities and the development of this Civic Investment Plan has been three years in the making. Multiple methods were used to conduct research, collect data, and formulate conclusions that have led to the framework that seeks to improve, expand, and institutionalize civic learning and engagement at FHSU.

During year one of this process (2011-12), the FHSU American Democracy Project (ADP) Vision Team was tasked with evaluating and reprioritizing activities as they related to civic engagement. The vision team deemed this project, ADP 2.0, with the hope of spending the year assessing current activities and using data to streamline and improve civic engagement at FHSU. The team quickly realized that this assessment process should be much more robust and comprehensive, thus concluding a second year should be spent on assessment activities. Also during this academic year, *A Crucible Moment* (2012), was released by a national task force sponsored by the US Department of Education and Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). This call to action outlined a plan to strengthen students' civic learning and democratic engagement as a central component to one's study in college. Along with an assessment of the current state of education for democracy in higher education, *A Crucible Moment* provided action steps for colleges and universities wanting to embrace civic engagement as a core educational activity. This report changed the focus of the ADP 2.0 working group to include much more data collection and intentional conversation around the central theme of expanding, improving, and institutionalizing civic learning and engagement at FHSU. *A Crucible Moment* then became the framework for the second and third years of our work.

The second year of this process (2012-13), served as a year of both assessment and data collection and a review of best practices. During the fall 2012 semester, two faculty members co-facilitated a seminar class that conducted an expansive literature review on the state of higher education and the civic engagement movement. Much of this literature is included in the attached reference list. One graduate and two undergraduate seniors participated in this semester long class and assisted in the development of the FHSU Civic Engagement Audit listing all FHSU civic engagement during the three semester time-frame (see Attachment Five). Over 100 activities were reported along with the number of students involved, community partners, community impact, and intended learning objectives. Upon conclusion of this seminar course, a comprehensive task force was created to further analyze data and assist with the development of the Civic Investment Plan. The task force members represent all areas of the FHSU campus, as well as the local community (see Attachment One). The first task force

meeting was held in March 2013 with the major task of planning and developing the faculty survey. (Results from this survey are described in this report on page 11 and can be seen in Attachment Three.) Along with survey data, multiple focus groups and interviews were conducted across campus and in the community. Among those interviewed on campus were Dr. Paul Faber, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Dr. Larry Gould, former Provost; Student Affairs Division Leaders; Provost's Council; and the University Service-Learning Committee. Community agency and representatives also participated in a focus group in the spring of 2013 at the Hays Public Library. (For a list of outcomes from these focus groups please see Attachment Four.) As a result of this data and our literature review, a preliminary list of eight recommendations for improving, expanding, and institutionalizing civic learning and engagement was developed. During this academic year, FHSU was also chosen to be one of 50 NASPA's LEAD Institutions in the nation for their work on improving civic engagement.

Year three of the process began in the fall of 2013 with a student attitudinal survey and various student focus groups, including international and virtual study populations. Along with this data are results from the FHSU Senior Survey and the National Survey for Student Engagement. (Results from these assessments can be viewed in Attachment Two.) The Civic Learning and Engagement Task Force then met to further analyze and evaluate all of the data sets and revise the list of recommendations initially made in the spring of 2013. Following this meeting and subsequent data analysis, work was completed on developing the final draft of the FHSU Civic Investment Plan.

C. Higher Education and the Civic Engagement Movement

The earliest colleges in America were developed for the primary purpose of preparing young people for citizenship. Colleges like Harvard, Yale, William & Mary and Princeton were designed to prepare future clergy and civic leaders for the colonies and, most importantly, educate for citizenship. Soon after the Revolutionary War and the formation of the United States, these early colleges recognized their role as providing active citizen leaders for the struggling new democracy. In developing this new form of government, our founding fathers further recognized that its foundation rests on an informed electorate.

Throughout much of the 19th and 20th centuries, higher education in America experienced transformational changes. First and foremost, there was a proliferation of colleges throughout the United States, providing millions of people access to a college education. Secondly, there was an explosion of disciplines and specialized educational and training programs. Colleges and universities were providing the needed preparation for specialized careers in the growing

national economy. However, with the exception of a handful of institutions such as the University of Chicago and the University of Wisconsin, higher education lost its focus on civic education.

In the early 1980s, this trend began to reverse itself. While higher education institutions were still providing the important and vital role of career and specialized education, they are also providing educational experiences that promote civic learning and engagement. Over the last 30 years, national, statewide and institutional level programming to promote citizenship education has resurfaced across America. It's widely accepted today that higher education must play an active role in educating each generation for our democracy.

Not only is higher education now being called on to renew its public purposes, it is also being asked to respond to society's most pressing issues. Today, civic engagement educational activities can be found on almost every campus of American colleges and universities (Jacoby, 2009). The pedagogy of service-learning, the development of campus-based service programs and the expansion of the civic learning mission of general education programs have led this effort at the campus level. System wide, national organizations and associations have emerged to support this civic renewal. Campus Compact, Association of American Colleges and Universities, American Association of State Colleges and Universities and even disciplinary associations have promoted and supported the call to prepare graduates for responsible citizenship. Boyer (1990), Boyte (1999), Ehrlich (2000) and many other scholars have also reinforced this effort and encourage the "scholarship of engagement" and the use of higher education's resources to address community problems.

Despite these successes, however, most experts in the field believe that the civic engagement movement has failed to reach its full potential and promise. "While the civic reform movement in higher education has affected almost all campuses, its influence is partial rather than pervasive. Civic learning and democratic engagement remains optional rather than expected for almost all students" (*A Crucible Moment*, p. 8). Proponents believe that in recent years this movement has plateaued and most activities still remain outside the core of the institution. "If civic engagement is to gain real traction in today's higher education, it must be clearly defined, and civic learning outcomes must be established. Opportunities to learn about and practice civic engagement must be embedded throughout the curriculum and co-curriculum" (Jacoby, 2009, p. 2).

D. *A Crucible Moment*

In January of 2012, The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement released its comprehensive report- *A Crucible Moment: College learning and Democracy's Future*. Produced by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and under direction and support of the U.S. Department of Education, the report calls on American higher education to make civic learning and engagement an “undisputed educational priority” (p.2).

“A socially cohesive and economically vibrant US democracy... require[s] informed, engaged, open-minded, and socially responsible people committed in the common good and practiced in ‘doing’ democracy...Civic learning needs to be an integral component of every level of educational, from grade school through graduate school, across all fields of study”(p. v).

The National Task Force assessed higher education’s state of civic education and developed this report as a national call to action with specific recommendations and to serve as a catalyst for change. At the forefront, *A Crucible Moment* calls on postsecondary education to significantly contribute to preparing college students to be informed, engaged and globally knowledgeable citizens.

Over the last two decades, it has been well documented that more and more Americans are separating themselves from civic duties or responsibilities. This “civic recession” has led to a substantial decline in our social capital. The National Commission on Civic Renewal (1998) asserts “In a time that cries out for civic action, we are in danger of becoming a nation of spectators” (p. 12). Despite the recent proliferation of civic engagement activities on college campuses, programming efforts have had limited impact on American public life (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011). The National Task Force research shows that most civic education and engagement has been limited to only a minority of students and most educational activities are considered to be on the margins and not at the core of the college experience. “Civic learning and democratic engagement remains optional rather than expected for almost all students” (p. 8).

A Crucible Moment provides colleges and universities with a guide to evaluate and strengthen campus civic learning and engagement. First, the report provides us with a roadmap for developing a “civic-minded campus” (see Table 1). A civic-minded campus exhibits four civic dimensions: a civic ethos governing campus life, civic literacy as a goal for every student, civic inquiry integrated within the major and general education and civic action as a lifelong practice.

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| CIVIC ETHOS governing campus life | The infusion of democratic values into everyday practices, structures and interaction; an emphasis on open-mindedness that influences the institutions goals and its engagement with local and global communities. |
| CIVIC LITERACY as a goal for every student | The cultivation of knowledge of fundamental principles and debates about democracy; familiarity with key historical struggles, campaigns, and social movements undertaken to achieve democracy’s full promise; the ability to think critically about complex issues that have public consequences. |
| CIVIC INQUIRY integrated within the majors and general education | The practice of inquiring about the civic dimensions of a subject; exploration of the personal, social and environmental impact of choices; consideration of differing views; the ability to analyze civic intellectual debates within one’s major areas of study. |
| CIVIC ACTION as lifelong practice | The capacity and commitment to work collectively to address common problems; the practice of working to improve the quality of people’s lives and the sustainability of the planet; the ability to analyze systems to plan and engage in public action; the moral and political courage to take risks for the greater public good. |

(A Crucible Moment, p. 15)

Secondly, *A Crucible Moment* provides us with an educational framework for civic learning and engagement which emphasizes “preparing students with knowledge and for action” (p.3). This framework includes four objectives: civic knowledge, civic engagement skills, civic values and collective action.

Finally, the National Task Force strongly suggests that promoting civic learning and engagement is complimentary, rather than competitive, with other core institutional priorities. “College students who participate in civic engagement learning activities not only earn higher grade point averages, but also have higher retention rates and are more likely to complete their college degree (Cress et al. 2010, p. 1). Beyond the priorities of career preparation and increased access and completion rates. *A Crucible Moment* calls on a “third national priority: fostering informed, engaged, responsible citizens “(p. 13).

E. Civic Engagement and Fort Hays State University

Fort Hays State University has a long and rich history of developing citizens and civic leaders for our state, nation and world. Additionally, the university's outreach activities have had a dramatic impact on the Hays area, Kansas and the region. More recently, FHSU has endorsed and participated in the modern civic engagement movement. In the 1980s and 1990s, our general education program was revised with the goal of producing civic-minded graduates and the Docking Institute of Public Affairs expanded its programming to engage student and faculty in civic and public issues. Through AmeriCorps and VISTA (Volunteer in Service to America) programs and grants, both academic and student affairs were active in community service and citizenship development during this time. From 2001-2003, FHSU established the Center for Civic Leadership (CCL), joined the national American Democracy Project movement and created the Service-Learning Faculty Committee with the goal of encouraging community-based and service pedagogies. FHSU's community service program, Tigers In Service, was also created and funded by the Student Government Association in 2003. A few years later, the Office of Student Affairs established the successful Center for Student Involvement, to enhance the university's engagement efforts. Currently, FHSU has expanded all these efforts, as well as created new initiatives around the issues of addressing world-wide hunger, working collaboratively with AASCU schools to incorporate the Global Challenges initiatives, and has established a service-learning fellows program. We have been recognized both regionally and nationally as a leader in the field of civic engagement.

As a result of this extensive engagement work, FHSU has been recognized as both a regional and national leader in the field of civic engagement with a well-rounded portfolio of activities. Despite these successes however, FHSU's civic learning and engagement initiative face substantial challenges. When reviewing our assessment data (Table 2), recognizing institutional policies and constraints and when examining national best practices, the Civic Learning and Engagement Task Force make the following six evaluation statements:

(1) Both students and faculty/staff alike agree that FHSU should place a high priority and provide support to increase civic learning and engagement activities.

(2) Although there are many civic learning and engagement activities on campus, most of the work is concentrated in a few isolated pockets and in most cases with little coordination and collaboration.

(3) While the assessment data recognizes the volume of engagement activities, it also illustrates only a minority of FHSU students participating in these activities.

| Table 2: Evaluation of FHSU's Assessment Data | |
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| Civic Engagement Audit (2012) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The amount of work is impressive in the field of civic learning and action in the community ○ Evident that we are not telling the story both internally and externally ○ Multiple areas in University that are clearly missing from the audit ○ Involvement and buy-in must occur from all major units at the University ○ Clearly much of this work is being done with several groups of students and faculty; hence, the work needs to be much more widespread ○ Both co-curricular and curricular activities are occurring with little involvement with virtual and international students both at the undergraduate and graduate levels |
| Student Affairs Focus Group (2013) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limited resources may hinder progress in this area ○ Opportunities exist for collaboration across the campus community to eliminate duplication and give students richer experiences |
| Community Focus Group (2013) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of master list of community and campus organizations for volunteer contacts is a barrier to progress ○ Must have a FHSU dedicated contact for community service and civic engagement projects ○ Students and faculty may not really feel like a part of the Ellis County community |
| Student Survey (2013) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students perceive a lack of time, location, and lack of knowledge as barriers to participation ○ Students need advanced notification/reminders about civic learning and engagement events ○ Generally virtual and international students have not participated in civic learning and engagement activities at FHSU ○ Students believe that emphasis should be placed on civic learning and engagement activities at FHSU ○ Students see co-curricular programs and student organizations as being responsible for this work |
| Faculty/ Staff Survey (2012) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Faculty/staff strongly agree that higher education must play a role in preparing students for citizenship and that civic learning and engagement activities should be expanded ○ Most faculty/staff participate at least once a year in FHSU civic engagement activities and events ○ Lack of department/university recognition, resources and knowledge are cited as barriers to participation ○ Lack of incentive for civic engagement work through merit, tenure, and promotion processes ○ The University may not model the civic learning and civic engagement theme ○ Students may not understand the relevance of civic engagement and develop options for action through their experiences ○ According to faculty/staff, co-curricular programming and student organizations should be primarily responsible for civic engagement activities. Academic major coursework and general education program have the secondary responsibility. ○ Faculty/staff believe that students are genuinely interested in civic learning and engagement activities |

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| Senior Student Impressions Survey (averaged results from 2010-2013) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When asked if general education courses gave a broader grasp of issues involved in citizenship, an average of 13.8% of students strongly agreed, 42.7% agreed ○ When asked if students were satisfied with the availability of service learning opportunities, an average of 24.7% strongly agreed and 38.8% agreed ○ When asked if the availability of civic engagement programming met their needs, an average of 50.5% of students responded Not Applicable |
| NSSE (2004-2012) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FHSU seniors reported higher levels of participation in a community-based project as part of a regular course (service-learning) than Carnegie/NSSE peers ○ Seniors reported less co-curricular community service or volunteer work than Carnegie/NSSE peers |

(4) FHSU has failed to develop and adopt a comprehensive, cohesive and unifying philosophy and approach to guide its citizenship development work.

(5) While the university mission statement clearly calls for the development of citizens as a goal, the university's current strategic planning documents fail to acknowledge civic learning and engagement as an institutional priority.

(6) Over the last two decades, FHSU has built a strong civic engagement foundation and we believe the conditions (both internally and externally) are right for us to move to the next level to be a premier "engaged campus".

F. Civic Investment Plan: Recommendations for Change

The following recommendations for change come directly from the results of the internal FHSU assessment and evaluation processes, an external review of the literature and best practices in the field of civic engagement and the work of the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. The recommendations are organized in what we describe as the "list of eight," first developed in the fall of 2012. Then in 2013, our task force revised the list and provided the action steps to complete the Civic Investment Plan. As mentioned earlier, these recommendations include everything from short-term, micro-level suggestions that can be implemented immediately, to long-term, macro-level revisions that will require much more planning and resources. Implementation of the components of the plan will require action by nearly all university divisions. While some recommendations will require action by a particular department, college or division, others will require action by the university as a whole. Most importantly, we view this list of recommendations, not as a complete and exhaustive list of ideas, but rather only a starting point. We want the Civic Investment Plan and its recommendations to encourage a wider conversation and promote additional deliberations among university personnel on the issues of civic learning and engagement.

(1) *Promote the development of the “engaged scholar”*

Central to the university, faculty and staff members must be the architects of an engaged campus culture and must serve as role models in transforming our students into civically engaged citizens. Therefore, the university must accept and promote a broader definition of teaching, research and service in the annual merit review, tenure and promotion processes. Here, scholarship encourages academic and disciplinary work that simultaneously addresses public issues and community needs. Key to the development of engaged scholarship is the expansion of faculty and staff development opportunities and training in the field of civic learning and engagement. Recommended action steps include the following:

- (1-a) The development of a structure and process that will bring together key campus stakeholders (including-faculty, chairs, deans, Faculty Senate representatives and AAUP representatives) for the purpose of enhancing ‘engaged scholarship’ language in the tenure, promotion and merit guidelines for all teaching faculty. While acknowledging that progress has been made, we believe additional action is required to expand the scope and scale of this recommendation. We further recommend that civic learning and engagement objectives be included in teaching, research and service assignments. Finally, we suggest that each department have the freedom to customize their own criteria consistent with departmental goals.
- (1-b) Yearly statements of responsibility and merit criteria for non-teaching faculty, administrators and staff directly involved in student development should reflect civic learning and engagement as an institutional priority. Again, different offices, departments and divisions should have the flexibility to promote this objective in the context of their own mission and purpose.
- (1-c) Faculty and staff development funds should be enhanced and made available to educate and train faculty and staff on both the theory and practice of civic learning and engagement. This should include resources to send faculty and staff to regional and national conferences as well as to bring experts to campus for university-wide workshops. Departments should seek out specific educational opportunities to help tailor their civic work to their discipline.
- (1-d) The development of a ‘resource center’ at Forsyth Library would assist faculty and staff in their pursuit of this civic objective. In addition to this comprehensive repository of civic learning and engagement material, the library should assign a ‘civic engagement specialist’ librarian to funnel appropriate resources to faculty, staff and students.
- (1-e) The creation of a ‘public scholarship grants’ program that support faculty and staff interested in conducting applied research that has a direct community impact. Grant

resources should be made available to assist with the financial costs of the research projects. The Research and Grants Office should administer the program under the university's research initiative.

- (1-f) The development of a university-wide faculty and staff awards program that recognizes outstanding university employees who have illustrated exemplary work in support of the university public service mission. This may include activities like the development of an outstanding service-learning course, public scholarship, developing and participating in a community service activity and/or the development of a new student learning activity that supports this civic mission.

(2) Promote an academic focus for civic learning and engagement

For FHSU to be a top-tier engaged campus, and be fully committed to developing civically responsible citizens, educational activities must move from the margins to the core of the institution. Civic learning and engagement must be found throughout the academic division of the university. This includes a strong, well-funded and robust service-learning initiative institutionalized in all academic colleges. Civic literacy must be a core expectation for all students in the general education program. Equally important, civic inquiry should be integrated into all academic majors. Beyond service-learning courses, every major should use its disciplinary lens to examine civic questions, dilemmas and public issues. These outcomes can assist students in transferring learned knowledge, skills, and attitudes to their respective careers and communities beyond their collegiate experience. Recommended action steps include the following:

- (2-a) Encourage the current General Education Revision Planning Team to protect the 'civic mission' theme as a top priority in the new general education program. The challenge is to ensure that general education coursework focuses on this priority. This may include adding learning objective that are consistent with civic knowledge, skills, values and collective action for all university students. We further recommend that service-learning pedagogies be included into any new general education program.
- (2-b) Encourage all academic departments to identify places in their curriculum where civic questions and issues can be discussed in the context of disciplinary inquiry. This also includes providing support, assistance and resources to faculty who develop learning objective that help students see the linkage between their academic field of study and public issues.

- (2-c) Provide additional resources to recruit, train and assist faculty interested in delivering service-learning coursework. This includes financial assets to assist faculty in the transition from traditional coursework to service-learning pedagogies, faculty education and training and to assist departments with the additional expense of service-learning projects. It is further recommended that each academic department have at least one service-learning course for their departmental majors.
- (2-d) Add a 'service-learning course designation' to the university's academic records. This includes both the university's class schedule and student academic transcripts. This designation will provide knowledge and recognition, both internally and externally, on the priority we place on service-learning coursework and the development of civic-minded graduates.
- (2-e) Revise the Freshman Seminar course (UNIV 101) to include a major focus on the theory and practice of citizenship development. This action will ensure that all incoming freshman will be exposed earlier in their academic career to our expectations of them becoming knowledgeable and engaged citizens. Additionally, student will learn and recognize the vast array of curricular and co-curricular opportunities available to them throughout their studies at FHSU.
- (2-f) Utilize existing FHSU e-systems (TigerLINK, Tiger Tracks, etc.), to document students' academic civic learning and engagement experiences. This tracking should include the use of central reflection questions to assist our assessment work.

(3) *Promote institutional intentionality*

Through language and symbols, FHSU needs to make a public declaration and show evidence that civic learning and engagement is a priority. To both our internal and external audiences, we need to illustrate our commitment to serving the public good. University documents like the mission statement, catalog, strategic plan, view book, university slogans and other organizational symbols must illustrate to all that we are an engaged campus. Recommended action steps include the following:

- (3-a) Add 'civic learning and engagement' as a strategic goal to the university's strategic plan. First, this would illustrate to all university stakeholders and the general public that citizenship development and public work is an institutional priority. Second, as a strategic goal, university assets and resources can be obtained and structured to implement much of the Civic Investment Plan.

(3-b) The university's public image should illustrate and represent our commitment to being an 'engaged campus'. FHSU's publications, recruitment activities, social media, marketing materials, slogans and overall public relations strategies should reflect to the general public our regional and national leadership role in the field of civic engagement.

(3-c) Student recruitment materials, activities and strategies should also reflect FHSU's commitment to citizenship development. In addition to the Admission's Office, all departments involved in the student recruitment effort should illustrate this strategic theme. All incoming students should have an understanding of our institutional expectations and the priority we place on civic learning and engagement.

(3-d) Alumni Award programs should be developed that recognize outstanding university alums who have made a positive impact in the civic life of their communities. This recognition is a powerful way for the university to tell its civic mission story to both internal and external audiences.

(4) Promote a comprehensive and cohesive approach to civic learning and engagement

Over the past decade, there has been a proliferation of curricular and co-curricular civic engagement activities at FHSU. Despite these actions, much of FHSU's civic engagement work can be found in a few select pockets scattered around the university. Typically driven by a "civic engagement champion" these faculty and staff members usually operate in isolation and with little collaboration with others. System-wide structures and processes should be developed to promote collaboration and better coordination between curricular and co-curricular activities. Both academic and student affairs should develop a series of consistent learning outcomes to civic learning and engagement. Recommended action steps include the following:

(4-a) Bring together a core group of university faculty and staff with expertise in civic engagement to develop and draft university-wide student civic learning and engagement outcomes and desired competencies. Serving as a guide for both curricular and co-curricular educational activities, this document should clarify key definitions, FHSU's civic philosophy and establish student learning objectives. It is also recommended that this core group utilize national experts and best practices when developing the desired outcomes in the four dimensions of civic knowledge, skills, values and actions.

(4-b) The development of a university-wide standing committee for the purpose of improving collaboration and coordination and to serve as the leading advisor group on all related issues of civic learning and engagement. We propose that the 'University Council on Civic Learning and Engagement' be comprised of representative from all university divisions

and include those responsible for civic education and community engagement. The ultimate goal of this group is to oversee the university's efforts to develop a comprehensive and cohesive approach to civic learning and engagement, including common learning outcomes to inform both academic and student affairs programming. A monthly report of this standing committee should be shared at Faculty Senate, Student Government Association, Provost's Council, and Student Affairs meetings.

- (4-c) Improve collaboration and the development of partnerships between academic and co-curricular programming for the purpose of deepening the learning experience. We believe there is great potential for linking various curricular activities together, co-curricular coordination and curricular and co-curricular partnerships.
- (4-d) Promote the development of a comprehensive assessment system to monitor the university's civic learning and engagement efforts. The primary purpose of these evaluation activities will be to provide feedback for future alterations and improvements. Currently there are several national programs, instruments and processes that can be obtained to help with this action step.
- (4-e) Create a full-time faculty/administrative position that will coordinate and oversee all civic learning and engagement activities on the FHSU campus. This position would be modeled after the Director of Persistence and Retention and will serve a critical role in improving collaboration and partnerships across all campus factions.
- (4-f) Create a campus-wide civic engagement calendar for students, faculty, staff, and the community. This calendar will improve communication and collaboration opportunities both campus and community wide. From this calendar, a weekly civic e-bulletin could be sent to the FHSU campus and greater community.
- (4-g) Promote the development of a civic learning and engagement grants program where faculty and staff can apply for funds designated for classroom and co-curricular engagement projects. In conjunction with this grant program, implement a yearly campus-wide faculty/staff civic engagement award. This grant and award program would be coordinated by the university-wide advisory group.

(5) *Promote a reciprocal partnership with our various communities*

Community partnerships are necessary to civic learning and engagement. A key component of the literature states that a university must work with and not for our community partners. This includes both the faculty and students working and serving in the community. FHSU partners

with a number of community organizations and entities, but should think about community at local, state, and global level as well. This reciprocal partnership will help to expand and sustain civic engagement by collaborating with the local and global community to address public issues. Recommended action steps include the following:

- (5-a) Ensure that the university-wide advisory group has ample community representation from local communities. These community representatives would rotate on a three-year basis and should represent partnerships in both academic and student affairs.
- (5-b) Host an annual community service and civic engagement fair which would be co-sponsored by the University Service-Learning Committee and newly formed university-wide advisory group. This fair would give opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and community to further enhance partnership development.
- (5-c) FHSU faculty and staff should participate in 'listening sessions' throughout our various communities to ensure that community issues and needs are being "heard" and incorporated into learning outcomes and the planning of curricular and co-curricular programming.
- (5-d) Encourage local community organizations to include FHSU students in their advisory and governing boards. This will promote and encourage better collaboration and the development of a reciprocal partnership.

(6) Promote a framework for civic learning and engagement that educates for full citizenship

Rather than relying on one class or one program to engage students, FHSU should provide a framework that includes civic knowledge, skills, values, and collective action outcomes. This includes curricular and co-curricular elements that assist students in development along a citizenship continuum. Community service and volunteerism alone does not lead to a stronger ability to discover the issues and root causes underscoring a community problem. The immediate call for faculty and staff to educate their students and to foster this interest in discovering the "why" behind problems is necessary in order to move students along a continuum to become active participatory citizens in our society. Recommended action steps include the following:

- (6-a) Promote the development of civic learning and engagement outcomes that promote higher levels of citizenship. In the process of creating university-wide civic learning and engagement outcomes and desired competencies under action step (4-a), faculty

architects should ensure that learning objectives also strive to produce “participative, electoral and social justice citizenship.”

- (6-b) The creation of an interdisciplinary “certificate in civic learning and engagement” at the undergraduate level. Multiple academic departments should develop a 12 credit hour program for students interested in deeper levels of engaged citizenship. Collaboration with other co-curricular program is highly recommended for key experiential learning experiences.
- (6-c) Utilize CTELT, faculty and staff with specific expertise to develop a catalog of sub-specific resources (i.e. voter registration, media literacy, information literacy, blogging) that could be added to existing courses and programming. These could be developed as reusable learning objects (RLOs) to be shared with all faculty and staff at FHSU.
- (6-d) Introduction of the citizenship continuum should be provided in the curriculum of the UNIV 101 Freshmen Seminar and the various student orientation programs. Further suggestions should also include having interested student’s sign a campus pledge that support civic learning and action. Students who had carried out this pledge would be recognized at commencement exercises with a special designation.

(7) Promote a campus structure and culture that models civic learning and engagement

In order to create and sustain an institution focused on civic learning and engagement as a strategic priority, students, faculty, and staff have to play a role in the institutional decision making processes. The civic learning literature tells us that institutions must model civility and civil discourse. The experience of being actively engaged in university decision making will encourage students to be more involved in their communities beyond FHSU, in turn creating responsible, engaged citizens. Recommended action steps include the following:

- (7-a) Beyond Student Government Association nominating students for various university committees, this action step recommends that departments, offices and divisions nominate and place both quality undergraduate and graduate students in active roles within the universities decision making and advisory structures. Furthermore, faculty and staff should create a campus culture that welcomes and encourages active student involvement at all levels of the institution.
- (7-b) Faculty and staff should develop and provide internal processes and methods that help train and mentor interested and engaged students to be active and successful

organizational players. These educational experiences should be conducted both at the university wide and departmental level to provide the best possible learning.

- (7-c) Develop specialized programming and training that promotes civility and civil discourse as part of our civic learning and engagement work. This should include training for Student Government Association, University Activities Board, Residence Hall Association, as well as Faculty Senate, Classified Senate, and academic units. From these trainings a series of discussions could be held to model respectful disagreement through dialogues.

(8) Promote civic learning and engagement strategies that address our diverse student population

It is critical that all FHSU students have opportunities to be involved in civic learning and engagement. To accomplish this for our increasingly diverse student body, faculty, staff and administrators must create more intentionality in efforts to expand the civic learning and engagement movement into the international and virtual student factions. As the university expands, making civic engagement opportunities available to all students will be a critical step in sustaining and institutionalizing civic learning and engagement at FHSU. Recommended action steps include the following:

- (8-a) Encourage faculty and staff who represent the virtual college, on campus international student populations and our international university partners, to participate on the University Council on Civic Learning and Engagement, the University Service-Learning Committee and other civic engagement related working groups and committees. Additionally, we should reserve faculty and staff development resources for personnel who work directly with these diverse student populations.
- (8-b) Encourage Virtual College instructors to adopt online service-learning pedagogies when possible and appropriate. The new and growing literature in the field of service-learning provides great examples of online service-learning for most disciplines.
- (8-c) On campus civic learning and engagement programming should make every effort to adapt its offerings to allow off campus students to participate. Additionally, we should integrate learning approaches that encourage our off campus students to participate in civic affairs in their own communities.
- (8-d) Work with the Virtual College Advisory Board, SEAC advisors, and the civic engagement advisory group to develop a virtual student outreach plan. This should include the

availability of synchronous or asynchronous civic learning and engagement opportunities for virtual students.

- (8-e) Curricular and co-curricular planners should encourage international student involvement by insuring that events and activities provide an international perspective and relevance for global citizenship. Program recruitment and marketing should intentionally seek involvement of all university students.
- (8-f) Conduct yearly focus groups with international and virtual students to learn about the key issues that are important to them. This information can then be given to faculty teaching and working with these students to inform best practices and the generation of learning modules.
- (8-g) Work with international program coordinators to incorporate components of the civic investment plan into international faculty/staff training throughout the year. This could foster the development of unique pedagogies that introduce civic literacy and engagement to international students through our partnerships.

G. What Does Success Look Like?

As evidenced by this plan, success will be created by using a multi-faceted approach to improve, expand and institutionalize civic learning and engagement at Fort Hays State University. An engaged campus will focus on producing graduates, faculty and staff who are driven to make a positive impact. Our goal is to move students along a continuum of citizenship development, from active volunteers to fully engaged and active citizens. Measurement of our efforts is two-fold. First, success will be determined by producing students and university personnel with the civic knowledge, skills and values, which result in civic action. Second, our citizenship development activities will result in FHSU students and employees improving the public life and communities in which they reside. Their civic work will address community issues and problems with the direct goal of improving the human condition.

With the adoption of this plan, the Civic Learning and Engagement Task Force is confident that Fort Hays State University will join our colleagues at Portland State University, IUPUI and several other campuses in becoming a premier “engaged campus”. We call on the university community to act and implement this plan and endorse higher education’s mission of preparing the next generation of active and engaged citizens.

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