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Jonathan M. Tisch
College of Citizenship
and Public Service

Civic Education of Undergraduates in United States Research Universities

*Findings from a survey of the members of
The Research Universities Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN)*

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EDUCATION FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

In 2005, Campus Compact and Tufts University worked together to organize The Research Universities Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN), a learning community of civic engagement leaders at research universities interested in fostering the civic education of their students. The 30 members of TRUCEN were surveyed regarding their current approaches to providing civic engagement education for undergraduates on research campuses. This work was undertaken to help inform the work of the TRUCEN group, and to illuminate the role of research universities in promoting the civic engagement movement in higher education. This paper is based on the analysis of the 15 institutions responding to the survey.



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The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University is a national leader in civic education, whose model and research are setting the standard for higher education's role in civic engagement. Serving every student at Tufts University, Tisch College prepares young people to be lifelong active citizens and creates an enduring culture of active citizenship.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research-intensive universities have special challenges in providing their students with civic education, particularly education that is rooted in the curriculum, as well as in extra-curricular activities. Their efforts are important to the overall effort to promote education “for the common good” at colleges and universities because of their stature within the higher education community. There are a growing number of both public and private universities who are investing time and interest in preparing their students to make a difference in the larger society.

This report provides a snapshot of how 15 research university campuses approach their goal of educating their students to promote the common good. Based on self-reports in answer to a survey, it documents the progress of their civic education work. The survey confirms that a growing number of research universities are being creative and assertive in expanding their civic education programs. The inquiry also suggests that there is ample room to extend and improve their efforts, and it frames an agenda for continued dialogue and action toward that end.

Study Approach

In the Spring of 2009, the 30 members of The Research Universities Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN) were surveyed regarding their current approaches to providing civic engagement education for undergraduates on research campuses. This work was undertaken to help inform the work of the TRUCEN group, and to illuminate the role of research universities in promoting the civic engagement movement in higher education. This paper is based on the analysis of the 15 institutions responding to the survey.

The survey was designed to discover how this set of universities defines civic education, what approaches they use, and how committed they are to civic education as a university goal. Are they now seeking to provide community-based experiences for students as part of a rigorous undergraduate curricular and co-curricular education? Are they seeking to provide civic engagement experiences for all of their undergraduates, special

opportunities for a few students, or both? How does the research focus of the campus affect the models and strategies used for civic education? Do they measure the impact of these efforts? Do they have a theoretical approach to how students develop civically over their four years in college? Are there sequential programs to deepen civic skills and knowledge? What approaches are being used to integrate curricular and co-curricular experiences? Are there attempts to integrate multi-cultural and civic education? (A full copy of the survey can be found in Appendix 1.)

What Did We Learn?

- **All campuses in this group are committed to civic education**
Universally, the responding campuses in this study expressed a mission to prepare students to improve the quality of life in our society, and to do so by both educating them about their society's problems and giving them the skills to make a difference.
- **Most campuses are committed to curriculum-based civic education**
All but one of those surveyed is committed to some form and level of curriculum-based civic education. Engaged scholarship (community-based research by faculty and/or undergraduates), service learning, and community-based learning are the most common curricular approaches.
- **Domestic and international engagement opportunities are provided at all campuses as part of students' co-curricular options.**
- **In-depth opportunities for select groups of students are widely available (designed to provide increasingly challenging experiences), however, very few of the responding campuses have strategies to engage every student in civic work.**
- **Better integration of curricular and co-curricular experiences is a common concern and goal for future improvement.**

- **These campuses face two major challenges to fostering civic education**

Civic engagement leaders on these campuses face two major challenges as they attempt to introduce civic education and provide common experiences for large numbers of students: generating greater faculty buy-in, and overcoming the difficulties of program development at large, complex, and decentralized institutions.

Opportunities for strengthening research university civic education efforts

We identified the following opportunities for program improvement:

- Better integration of multicultural and civic education initiatives;
- Providing more opportunities for students to participate in the democratic governance of the institution;
- More discussion and articulation of theories about how students develop civically;
- Better developed definition and measurement of student civic education and learning outcomes

We hope this report will be used by the TRUCEN group to reflect on their practice and learn from one another. In addition, the report may inform the continuing discussion within the wider higher education civic engagement community about the role of research campuses in providing leadership for civic education and engagement, as well as the opportunities and constraints they face.

ORIGINS AND PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

In 2005, Campus Compact and Tufts University worked together to organize a learning community of civic engagement leaders at research universities interested in fostering the civic education of their students. This group has grown to 30 universities and is called The Research Universities Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN). The members meet annually and several publications and a tool kit have been produced. Campus Compact now serves as their Secretariat.ⁱ

The rationale for starting the group was to address the particular needs and challenges of research universities in the civic engagement movement and to strengthen their leadership contributions to the movement. These challenges include a need to gain credibility for civic education in a setting that values research as the most powerful measure of faculty quality and success. While some research universities were at the early forefront of the civic engagement movement in higher education, such as Brown and Georgetown universities, both founding members of Campus Compact, their initiatives were generally focused on undergraduate student experiences outside the formal curriculum.

Over the 25 years since the founding of Campus Compact, curricular-based service or community-based learning has grown dramatically across the higher education landscape.ⁱⁱ However, few research universities were in the forefront of that growth. Service learning was greeted with skepticism by many faculties on research-focused campuses because attention to pedagogy was not generally rewarded and some questioned both the rigor of this approach and their knowledge of how to do it well. More recently, many research universities are proclaiming the importance of educating their students to be effective leaders in promoting the common good. Over the past several years this author has witnessed the growing number of research universities that have significantly increased their commitment to civic engagement and civic education. Therefore, now is an especially appropriate and potentially productive time to document, analyze, and disseminate the emerging experience of this segment of higher education.

As former executive director of Campus Compact who has been serving as a Senior Fellow at Tufts University's Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, the author thought a study of the TRUCEN group would be a good way to gain some insight into the current state of civic education at some of the research universities with a stated commitment to the enterprise. A study of this group can also provide an accessible database of current practice at research universities which can be helpful to both members of TRUCEN and other research universities.

In the winter and spring of 2009, an on-line survey of all of the TRUCEN members was undertaken. This author designed the survey with the assistance of a research advisory committee composed of: Amy Driscoll, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; Matthew Hartley, University of Pennsylvania; Barbara Holland of the National Service Learning Clearinghouse and the University of Western Sidney; Robert Hollister, Tufts University; Barbara Jacoby, University of Maryland, College Park; Eric Mlyn, Duke University; and Julie Plaut, Campus Compact. The TRUCEN representative on each campus was contacted by the Dean of Tufts University's Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service in an email asking for their participation (see list of TRUCEN membership in Appendix II). The author then forwarded the PDF survey by email and sent out several email reminders over the next three months. The survey was conducted and analyzed with the invaluable assistance of Shane Dunn, a volunteer graduate student.

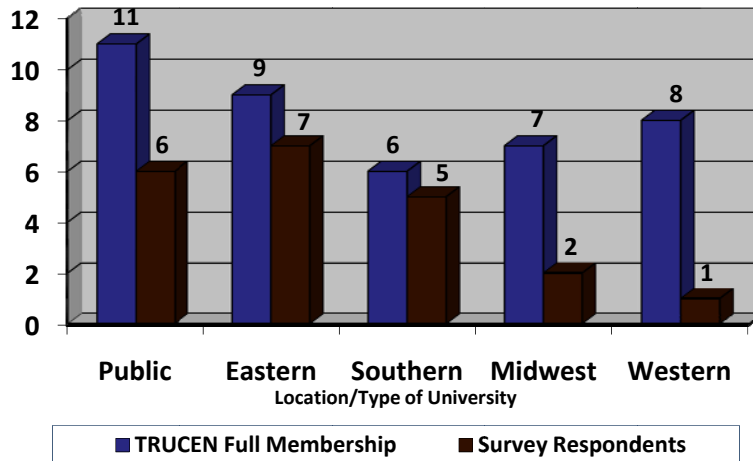
CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Fifty percent of the TRUCEN group responded to the survey. This included the following fifteen universities: Brown University; Duke University; University of Georgia; Georgetown University; Harvard University; University of Maryland, College Park; University of Minnesota, Twin Cities; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; North Carolina State University; University of Oklahoma; University of Pennsylvania; Princeton University; Tufts University; Tulane University; and Washington University in St. Louis.

The responding universities included a larger percentage of private universities than those found in the entire group, as well as more campuses from the East and the South and fewer from the Midwest and West than are in the TRUCEN group.

	TRUCEN Full Membership	Survey Respondents
Total	30/100%	15/50%
Public Members	11/63%	6/42%
Eastern Schools	9/ 30%	7/46%
Southern Schools	6/20%	5/35%
Midwest Schools	7/23%	2/14%
Western Schools	8/ 27%	1/7%

TRUCEN Survey Responses Compared to Full Membership



The following analysis, therefore, does not attempt to generalize for the TRUCEN group but rather to share some of the commonalities and differences among the respondents. The respondents have very different histories and length of experience with their civic education efforts. Some, like Washington University in St. Louis, can be described as in the very early stage of their efforts. Others, like the University of Pennsylvania and Brown, have had nationally known centers for civic education for over 20 years. Others, like Tufts, Tulane, and the University of Oklahoma have university-wide strategies that they have been pursuing for as few as two and as many as ten years. It is fair to say, however, for all of the campuses, the civic education of their students is a constant “work in progress.”

FINDINGS

How do research universities define “civic education”?

- **There is a common understanding of civic education as preparing students to improve the quality of society and giving them both knowledge and skills to do so.**

Every responding campus (public or private) expressed a desire to prepare students to improve the quality of life of the society, or contribute to the common good. It was frequently articulated that to accomplish this aim, students needed to gain both knowledge about their society and its problems, and the skills to “make a difference” (although only one campus used that particular phrase).ⁱⁱⁱ

Here are some examples:

“Civic education aims to develop a life-long ethic of service to society. Our students and alumni should demonstrate active citizenship, advocate for social justice and engage authentically with communities--locally, national and internationally--based on principles of partnership, sustainability, inclusion and impact.”

Washington University in St. Louis

“Civic education aims to provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary for effective citizenship.”

Princeton University

“Education that motivates and prepares students to participate in local, national and global society regardless of occupation or location.”

Harvard University

“Civic education is integral to the undergraduate experience of UNC and encompasses those programs and activities that provide undergraduate students with the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to help understand and study the issues facing society and to develop and support ways of addressing those issues that contribute to the common good.”

UNC Chapel Hill

“Public service is an informed, consensual, and mutually interactive engagement with people, institutions, and the environment, for the purpose of the progressive achievement of civic virtue and the promotion of the public good.”

Tulane University

- **Most respondents describe civic education as: “service-learning or community-based learning and engaged research and/or scholarship.”**

Sixty percent of campuses mentioned these phrases. While it was not at all surprising to see the emphasis on engaged research or scholarship given the research focus of these campuses, it was a little surprising to see how often the term service learning or community-based learning was used. (The research advisory committee to this project did not find this surprising because of the large role that service learning has played in the history of the civic engagement movement in higher education.) It should also be noted that these phrases describe learning methods not learning outcomes.

It is also important to note that some campuses conflated civic *education* with civic *engagement*. This is evident in the civic education definitions from the University of Minnesota and the University of Oklahoma.

“Engagement is defined as the partnership of university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.”

University of Minnesota^{iv}

“Civic engagement to consist of meaningful partnerships with mutually beneficial outcomes that address community identified needs through intellectual activities of importance....A vital component...is reciprocity, which enhances student learning and/or research.”

University of Oklahoma

Other campuses identified community engagement as a powerful civic learning experience.

“As the classroom lessons of citizenship and leadership are applied and tested in real-world environments, students develop the means to use their minds and develop ethical commitments with maximum vigor. These experiences can have a powerful formative impact on students when they venture out of their comfort zones and integrate thought with action.”

Duke University

Brown expresses something similar when they describe community work as a powerful opportunity to advance all three of their curricular philosophy goals of seeking to *“build students’ knowledge of a range of academic disciplines, capacity for self-reflection and*

empathy, and ability to examine and articulate their moral convictions.”^v

What these two examples illustrate is that experiential learning seems to have gained legitimacy at some of these research universities as a powerful way to help students integrate theory and practice, as well as to learn how to make an impact on the world.

- **Respondents also rarely describe their civic education work in terms of “citizenship, civic responsibility, leadership, democratic participation or social entrepreneurship”**

Based on larger observation of high education’s rhetoric around engagement, one might expect that phrases that emphasized students’ individual initiative would be more popular. In fact, more general phrases such as community or public service, or community engagement or outreach were much more common. Only two campuses, one faith-based (Georgetown University), and one public, used the term “social justice.”

- **Defining civic education is definitely still a work in progress for most of these research institutions**, since over two thirds of the campuses are in an ongoing discussion of their definitions of civic education. The participants in these discussions range from university-wide committees (University of Oklahoma) to student driven discussion (Princeton). Maryland, on the other hand, has a definition that is “widely used and cited” (see <http://www.terpimpact.umd.edu/content2asp?cid=7&sid=41>), and was developed by a faculty/staff/student task force appointed by the Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs.

Is civic education a goal of research universities?

- **All but one responding university have formal goals with an explicitly civic emphasis, but they define their civic goals quite differently**

The University of Pennsylvania, University of Oklahoma, and University of Georgia all stressed the commitment of the institution to engage with their community. North Carolina State and University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, hope every student

would have at least one engaged community experience. Tufts seeks to develop “every student as an effective active citizen” before they leave the university. Brown is committed to the “public use of knowledge,” and Maryland wants every student to be exposed to the idea of civic engagement in college. The University of Minnesota has a civic learning goal for every undergraduate (one of seven such goals).^{vi} Georgetown has as part of its mission statement the goal to educate students to become “responsible and active participants in civic life.”

Do campuses articulate the civic learning outcomes they want their students to achieve, and do they assess their success in achieving them?

- **Only two universities have detailed civic learning outcomes for their students**

Only Tufts (http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/downloads/learning_outcomes_13.pdf) and the University of Maryland (<http://www.terpimpact.umd.edu/content2.asp?cid=7&sid=42>) have detailed civic learning goals. The rest have more general outcomes that are part of their mission or general education goals or goals that are very specific to departments or programs.

- **Only one university is conducting a longitudinal survey to measure impact on students**

Only Tufts reported that it has a longitudinal student survey designed to measure the impact of their civic education approaches on students (with comparison groups), though both Duke and the University of Pennsylvania are planning longitudinal studies. Most campuses rely on periodic student surveys, studies of specific programs, and course evaluations for information on impact and outcomes. Some, like Minnesota and Duke, have built civic questions into the National Survey of Student Engagement surveys, and Minnesota is participating in the Student Experience in the Research University survey that includes civic questions. As the Advisory Committee to this project has noted, none of these approaches truly assesses student civic learning.

What are the most common approaches that research universities take to educating their students for civic responsibility?

- **The great majority of campus respondents report that they provide both in-depth civic education programs for a sub set of students and university wide opportunities for all students.**

One example of an in-depth program at a public campus is the Community Engagement Scholars Program at the University of Minnesota. The requirements of this two year program include 400 community engagement hours, 6 reflections on community engagement experiences, 8 credits of service learning course work, an integrative community engagement project and seminar, and meetings with an advisor once per semester. ^{vii}

An example at a private campus is Tufts' Citizenship and Public Service Scholars program which can extend over three or four years. This program involves a required introductory course in freshman or sophomore year, community engagement projects each year that entail 8 hours a week, at least one "active citizenship course," regular meetings with both community and campus mentors, a capstone senior project, and weekly meetings and monthly reflections. ^{viii}

- **Sixty percent of the responding campuses claim a linked set of experiences designed to deepen and challenge students' civic learning over their four years of college.**

These are most often part of in-depth programs for a sub-set of students. Some report that deeper and more sophisticated experiences are available for students who wish to pursue them, including Brown, University of Pennsylvania, and Princeton.

- **All respondents listed independent study options and internships as curricular civic learning experiences.**

The Research Advisory Committee is somewhat skeptical about whether all of the independent study options and internships cited are really civic education opportunities, and they indicated that the survey was not designed to probe the depth or quality of these approaches.

Other very popular curricular civic learning opportunities include service learning, community-based research, and field placements. Many have summer engaged research programs for undergraduates. More than half of the campuses have senior capstone courses, learning communities, and/or freshman required courses that address civic issues.

- **Only four campuses have a minor or major in civic engagement:**
Georgetown's Sociology Social Justice Analysis concentration; Minnesota's Community Leadership Minor; N.C. State's Nonprofit Studies Major; and University of Oklahoma's minor in Nonprofit Organizational Studies. Only a few campuses have developed guides for students to courses with civic or service learning content, and a few more are working on such guides.
- **On the co-curricular side, it is interesting to see how commonly both domestic and international engagement opportunities are provided.**
(Every campus has domestic opportunities and all but one has international opportunities.) Legislative internships were almost universally available. Civic work study, alternative breaks, Greek life and athletic service opportunities, freshman pre-orientation programs with a civic focus, student awards for service, public service job counseling, and job fairs were available at all the universities. University-wide common readings with a civic theme are done by about one half the group.
- **Opportunities for student engagement in institutional governance were limited**
While all the universities provide opportunities in both student government and student clubs, **student participation in other governance opportunities was much more limited.** Nine campuses have students on the board of their civic engagement

center; nine have students on hiring committees; and seven on the board of trustees or academic honors board (more commonly on the public campuses).

- **Residential life programs reflect more concern for multiculturalism than civics**

At these universities, multicultural programs have made more headway into residential life than has civic education, as more campuses have dorms with a multicultural or diversity theme than a civic theme. One example of a residential civic experience can be found at the University of Georgia. The UGA freshman learning community option in global engagement includes a residential component, core courses, and a service learning course.

- **Providing a civic experience for all students is still an uncommon approach, although there are a few campuses working on it.**

Tufts, as mentioned earlier, aims to increase the active citizenship of all of its students. Among their strategies to reach all of their undergraduates are common readings; civic engagement opportunities in all of their dorms (by training residence hall staff); and a new *honos civicus* award.^{ix} Students apply to get the *honos civicus* designation, and if awarded, receive a certificate and a pin at a special ceremony as well as a special recognition at graduation. 2009 was the first year of implementation. Spotlighting and encouraging courses with an active citizenship component is another approach Tufts is taking, leading to a university-wide inventory and designation of “AC” courses.^x

- **Tulane is the only university in the group with university-wide public service requirements for graduation^{xi}**

In the first two years, all students must take a service learning course (100, 200 or 300 level), and in the second two years each student must take a 300 level service learning course or an academic service learning internship, faculty sponsored public service research project, public service honors thesis, public service-based international study abroad, or a capstone experience with a public service component.

At the **University of Maryland**, all English 101 sections are taught using a textbook and curriculum based on civic engagement. All undergraduates must take or place out of this course, and pre- and post-tests of students' thinking and writing about civic engagement are conducted. ^{xiii}(As mentioned earlier, seven campuses reported that they had required freshman courses with civic content.)

The **University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill**, has developed a new undergraduate curriculum that includes an experiential experience for every student. Many students fulfill this requirement through a civic engagement experience. (Undergraduate research, study abroad or a substantive creative process also counts.) North Carolina State also envisions every student and faculty member having the opportunity to “participate in significant high quality collaboration with community members that has meaningful impacts...” Both of these campuses are responding to a UNC Tomorrow Commission's recommendation for “a potential graduation requirement for an out-of-class learning experience focused on leadership development with a community orientation.” ^{xiii}

- **In-depth opportunities for select students are the most common approach, and all but two of the universities provide such experiences**

The details of these programs are too complex to be analyzed here, but would provide the basis for a fruitful future study of what mixture of curricular and co-curricular requirements are involved, what students avail themselves of these opportunities and the like.

- **Theoretical foundations are missing**

In spite of the prevalence of these in-depth programs, few campuses were able to cite theories of how undergraduates develop civic skills. Theories described or mentioned were general learning theory or theory about the impact of experiential learning. For example, Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain^{xiv} was mentioned twice, Kolb's learning theory was mentioned once,^{xv} and Lynn Swaner^{xvi} once on experiential learning. Other theories cited once include Kouzes and Pozner^{xvii} on leadership, Ira

Harkavy on John Dewey^{xviii}, and L. Lee Knepfelkamp^{xix} on civic identity development. A deeper examination of in-depth programs might reveal more of the developmental theories driving program development.

For example, NC State cites an interesting work in progress, “Service Learning as Developmental Journey.” This conceptual journey, developed by advanced students in service learning, invites students to “move from participation in curricular and/or co-curricular service learning opportunities to leadership roles that facilitate other students’ participation and learning and that build the university’s capacity for this work and scholarship roles that position them as co-authors, co-researchers, and co-presenters alongside faculty, staff, and community partners.” The pinnacle of this journey is the ability of students to be co-creators of knowledge.

Integration of curricular and co-curricular experience

- **Better integration of students’ curricular and co-curricular civic experiences is a broad topic of concern**

It is increasingly recognized that students’ experience of their education in and out of the classroom is a holistic one and, if consciously integrated, can deepen their learning. The current strategies used to accomplish this are a combination of institutional collaboration, incentives for students to obtain support for civic research, guidelines for students, and faculty and student advising.

Examples of institutional collaboration are the Coalition for Civic Engagement and Leadership at the University of Maryland; the Community Engagement Committee at the University of Oklahoma; collaboration between deans or other leaders in civic engagement with similar posts on the academic side (University of Minnesota, N.C. State); or university wide planning committees (UNC, Minnesota). Several campuses have virtual guides for students and faculty (Oklahoma, Tufts). Several campuses provide competitive fellowships for students who want to undertake community-based research. (Brown, Duke, UNC). Many campuses use advising, involving faculty advisors, to help students integrate their experience. At a few campuses

students are encouraged to take course work to inform their community activity. The centers for civic engagement generally see this as an important role for themselves, including working with faculty to understand the relationship of course work to community engagement and civic education.

Tulane indicates they have bridged this gap by instituting their service learning requirements for all students and providing ongoing support to faculty teaching the service learning classes.

- **Integration of multicultural and diversity initiatives with civic engagement**

Few campuses are directly addressing the question of integrating multicultural and civic engagement initiatives. This seems a missed opportunity especially at the seven responding campuses that have not started this discussion. At most campuses the discussion is in its early stages. At Minnesota, for instance, the Vice President for Equity and Diversity and Associate Vice President for Public Engagement have initiated a conversation about this concern.

At the University of Maryland, on the other hand, one of the goals of the Coalition for Civic Engagement and Leadership is to achieve this integration. The Coalition is administratively housed within the Adele H. Stamp Student Union, which has established civic engagement, multiculturalism, and leadership as its three priority areas. At Tufts, multiculturalism is built into their civic learning goals. When campuses discuss general educational outcomes they often include material about understanding diversity, eradicating stereotypes, etc. (e.g. Brown, UGA).

What are seen as the greatest opportunities and challenges?

- **The greatest challenge in fostering civic education at these research universities is getting faculty buy-in**

Nine responding campuses mentioned this issue and most cited the lack of faculty incentives, and the absence of promotion and tenure rewards for engaged scholarship and teaching, as well as lack of faculty knowledge of service or community-based

learning. Given the research-focused culture of these universities, the challenge may be greater because of the lesser attention and value placed on teaching in general. The challenge is put this way in the Harvard response: “Faculty think of service learning as anti-intellectual and/or vocational training.”

Opportunities cited to meet this challenge included spotlighting the good engaged scholarship and teaching of faculty in order to encourage others (e.g. Tufts), and faculty development courses provided by civic engagement centers (e.g. UNC).

- **The other most common challenge is the size and complexity of these campuses and the decentralization that characterizes them**

As indicated above, many of the responding campuses, especially public campuses, are addressing this challenge by organizing university-wide committees designed to help learn what is going on, foster collaboration, and provide overall direction. The Community Engagement Committee at the University of Oklahoma, for instance, has over 40 faculty, staff, administrators, and students with a minimum of one representative from each college. The Committee meets once a month with non-profit community leaders to analyze needs and seeks to improve their efforts to be a community engaged institution. The Committee also has a series of subcommittees.

Learning more about in-depth programs

As indicated earlier, the number of in-depth programs for a few students outpaces university-wide approaches. At all of the institutions who responded, entrepreneurial students with a civic interest can put together a very rich mix of curricular and co-curricular programs, often with increasing leadership opportunities. In most cases they can do so under the guidance of very knowledgeable leadership in centers for civic engagement or service learning or leadership.

What cannot be discerned, without further study, is how these programs link students’ curricular and co-curricular experiences. What courses, if any, are required? What is the content and purpose of required courses and who teaches them? Are required courses

designed to prepare students to enter community, to ground students in democratic theory or approaches to community organizing, or to help students understand the domestic or international settings they will be entering?

Further examination of in-depth programs may also reveal the extent to which the universities are structuring the connection between curricular and co-curricular experiences based on a clear concept of how students gain and deepen civic skills over the course of the college experience. Who participates in these in-depth programs? How diverse are the students not only in gender, race and economic status, but also in terms of their civic engagement history? What is known about who is attracted to these programs and how do they learn of them?

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

With such a disparate group, it is hard to generalize. However, it is fair to say that this group of universities is working hard to deepen the student experience by connecting their academic and co-curricular activities. Most are no longer satisfied with an entirely co-curricular approach (although at one campus student-driven volunteerism still provides the most opportunities for student civic engagement). However, they are doing so in the face of faculties with varying degrees of interest in civic education, knowledge of community-based learning methods, and pressures to put their time elsewhere. One result of this is a great stress in the rhetoric on gaining knowledge as important to civic development. For example, N.C. State, as cited above, points to the “co-creation of knowledge” as the pinnacle of the service learning journey. Brown talks about learning different disciplinary approaches that can be helpful in analyzing community problems. At the private universities, student research fellowships for engaged research and faculty development opportunities are used as incentives to draw in faculty.

A number of the private universities have the benefit of significant investments in civic infrastructure (e.g. Tufts’ Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, Duke’s “Duke Engage”, University of Pennsylvania’s endowment of the Netter Center, Brown’s endowed Swearer Center) that help them to provide many opportunities for undergraduate civic engagement.

At the public universities, the use of knowledge to improve civic and community development has had cachet for many years because of the land grant traditions and current university-wide committees are reinforcing this public responsibility of the university. (Four of the six public campuses that responded are land-grant universities.) Four of the six public institutions are supported in their efforts by civic engagement centers (N.C. State’s recently closed) and three with enthusiasm from the president or provost as well as deans and department chairs.

Future challenges and opportunities, a suggested agenda for dialogue and action

In addition to the common challenges of winning over faculty, coordinating across huge, complex campuses, and a widespread concern with integrating student curricular and co-curricular experiences, this survey reveals several areas of continuing challenge for most of these universities:

- **Developing strategies to provide a civic learning opportunity for all students**

Civic education for all undergraduate students is at the early stages in this group of research universities. However, there are interesting approaches that could be considered by others such as service learning requirements, civic engagement as part of a required freshman course, common readings and a special *honos civicus* award available to all students.

- **Increasing opportunities for student engagement in governance of the institutions themselves**

In the spirit of “walking the walk,” research universities could signal their commitment to student civic engagement and reinforce their civic education outcomes by providing more opportunities on their own campuses for student leadership in governing the university itself. In this group, not every campus had student representatives on governing boards of their service or civic engagement centers, much less the university board or hiring committees.

- **Addressing the challenge of integrating the silos of multiculturalism and civic education and community engagement**

The Campus Compact President’s Declaration of the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education includes the following paragraph

“Higher education is uniquely positioned to help Americans understand the histories and contours of our present challenges as a diverse democracy... We know that pluralism is a source of strength and vitality that will enrich our students’ education

and help them learn both to respect difference and to work together for the common good.”^{xx}

This wording is part of the declaration because the Presidents who drafted it recognized the challenges of engaging in a **diverse** democracy. However, on many campuses, including a majority of those surveyed here, efforts to develop multicultural understanding and efforts to develop civic education are happening in different “silos.” Because many civic education experiences challenge students to engage in communities very different from their own, the opportunities for “respecting difference” are manifold. Better collaboration between these efforts seems a fruitful approach.

- **Encouraging deeper discussion and articulation of the developmental theory underlying the reasons for, and approaches to, civic education**

It is striking to this author that these research universities seem to devote little time or effort in examining theories of student ethical, moral, and civic development to both inform the aims of their programs as well as the shape of the programs themselves. There is an increasing body of literature in psychology, especially regarding the changing patterns of adolescence which could inform the civic education work regarding “traditional” age college students, who are still the majority of undergraduate students in research universities. Few citations were made, either, to learning theory. It seems logical that research universities would be the leaders in bringing theory to the practice of civic education.

- **Developing more rigorous approaches to defining and measuring student civic learning outcomes**

Perhaps related to the agenda item above, only a few campuses have made a rigorous attempt to define the civic learning outcomes that they want their students to achieve. Even fewer are attempting to measure their success in achieving these outcomes in a rigorous and sustained way. Again, it seems appropriate for research universities to be leaders in this regard.

This agenda is suggested in the spirit of holding research universities to the standards of rigor in their civic education efforts that they demand of themselves in every other realm as well as in recognition of the great strides they have made in realizing the goal of their campuses providing students with civic skills and knowledge.

ENDNOTES

- ⁱ This report/toolkit can be accessed at: <http://www.compact.org/initiatives/civic-engagement-at-research-universities/rucen-overview/>
- ⁱⁱ Hartley, M, & Hollander E. (2005), The elusive ideal: civic learning and higher education. In S. Fuhrman& M. Lazarson (Eds.) *Institutions of democracy: the public schools*. Oxford University Press
- ⁱⁱⁱ Several questions were designed to get at differing kinds of language being used by campuses. The phrase “civic education” was used so as not to presume the particular phrases most popular on campus such as community service or democratic participation. The quotations, unless otherwise cited are taken from the answers in the survey.
- ^{iv} Andrew Furco, Associate Vice President for Civic Engagement at the University of Minnesota, found the use of the term “civic education” in the survey somewhat problematic because many might think this is just the domain of political scientists.
- ^v See <http://swearercenter.brown.edu/what/students.html>
- ^{vi} This goal is that every student who graduates will “*Have acquired skills for effective citizenship and life-long learning*”. See <http://www.slo.umn.edu/>
- ^{vii} University of Minnesota Community Engagement Scholars Program
<http://www.servicelearning.umn.edu/cesp/programdetails/requirements.html>
- ^{viii} Tufts Citizenship and Public Scholars Program
<http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/?pid=19&c=14>
- ^{ix} Tufts *Honos Civicus* Award: <http://activecitizens.tufts.edu/HonosCivicus>
- ^x Tufts “Active Citizenship” Courses: <http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/?pid=4#Courses>
- ^{xi} Tulane Public Service Graduation Requirement: <http://tulane.edu/cps/about/grduation-requirement.cfm>
- ^{xii} Maryland’s Coalition for Civic Engagement and Leadership partners with the University’s Freshman Writing Program to offer a civic engagement curriculum in all sections of English 101, serving approximately 4, 600 students per year. This initiative involves a proprietary textbook of civic engagement readings and writing assignments, enhanced training of instructors, and assessments of the degree of student achievement of civic engagement learning outcomes.
- ^{xiii} It should be noted, that since the surveys were completed budget cuts in North Carolina have had a significant impact on both participating campuses. At UNC Chapel

Hill, the position of VP for Civic Engagement was eliminated, and at NC State, the Center for Excellence in Curricular Engagement (which included service learning) was disbanded.

^{xiv} Bloom, B.S. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain*. New York: David McKay Co Inc.

^{xv} Kolb, D.A., (1981). Learning styles and disciplinary differences in A. W. Chickering (ed.) *The Modern American College*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

^{xvi} Lynn W. Swaner, “Linking Engaged Learning, Student Mental Health and Well-Being and Civic Development, A Review of the Literature,” Liberal Education, Vol 93, #1 Winter, 2007, AACU p.16-22

^{xvii} Kouzes, J.M. and Pozner, B.Z. (2006). *The leadership challenges: how to keep getting extraordinary things done in organizations*. 4th edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

^{xviii} Benson, L., Harkavy, I., and J. Puckett (2007). *Dewey’s dream: universities and democracies in an age of education reform*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

^{xix} Knefelkamp, L. Lee, “Civic Identity: Locating Self in Community”, *Diversity and Democracy*, Vol 22, No.2, Spring 2008 (AACU).

^{xx} See <http://www.compact.org/resources-for-presidents/presidents-declaration-on-the-civic-responsibility-of-higher-education/>

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY

TRUCEN: Strategies for the Civic Education of Undergraduate Students at American Research Universities

A Survey of Members of The Research Universities Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN)

The purpose of this survey is to obtain an understanding of the approaches TRUCEN members are taking to prepare their **undergraduate students** to assume their future roles as **civically engaged leaders in whatever profession they pursue**. In other words, what **curricular and/or co-curricular strategies are being used to educate undergraduate students in civic knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes?**

The official representative to TRUCEN (in consultation with others, as appropriate) should complete this survey.

Please feel free to use web links or quotes from existing documents in providing answers. If answers have already been supplied as part of the recent TRUCEN update, please make note. There is no need to repeat the answer.

We do not expect every campus to have answers to every question or to have uniformity of understanding across the campus on civic education. It will be most helpful to paint a picture of the actual state of the enterprise on your campus.

You will be able to enter responses and work on the survey over time by saving changes. Once completed, please click the “**Submit by Email**” button at the bottom of the survey, on page 11. Please return by Friday, March 13, 2009. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Contents of Survey – 20 questions

Defining Civic Education: Pages 2 & 3 (Questions 1 through 3)

University Goals: Page 4 (Questions 4 through 6)

Civic Education Approaches: Page 5 (Questions 7 through 9)

In-Depth Civic Education Programs: Page 6 (Question 10)

University-Wide Curricular Civic Opportunities: Page 7 (Questions 11 through 13)

University-Wide Co-Curricular Civic Education Opportunities: Page 8 (Question 14)

Integrating Student Curricular and Co-Curricular Experience: Pages 9 & 10 (Questions 15 through 20)

Additional Information and Submission: Page 11

Name of University:

Name and position of person or persons completing the survey:

DEFINING CIVIC EDUCATION

1. The term civic education is defined somewhat differently in different contexts. If you were speaking with a new faculty or staff member on your campus, how would you define civic education in the context of your university?

2. Does your university have a definition of civic education? Yes No

2a. If yes, what is it? Please summarize and feel free to provide web links to any documents that contain definitions. (It is recognized that each university uses its own vocabulary such as community service, public service, civic leadership, social entrepreneurship, social stewardship, etc.)

2b. If not, how does your university talk about its civic education work? Which words or phrases are most frequently used to describe civic education at your university?

3. Is the definition of civic education being discussed at your university? Yes No

3a. If yes, briefly describe who is involved in these discussions and how they are proceeding?

UNIVERSITY GOALS

4. Does your university have stated goals with an explicitly civic emphasis? Yes No

4a. If yes, describe one curricular or co-curricular manifestation of the university's goals for civic education.

5. Is there a statement(s) of the desired outcomes or learning goals for students regarding civic knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes? Yes No

5a. If yes, please provide web link to such statements.

6. Do you attempt to measure the impact of civic education on students' knowledge, skills, abilities or attitudes? Yes No

6a. If yes, please briefly describe how you do this.

CIVIC EDUCATION APPROACHES

7. Does the civic education strategy of your university include:

In-depth civic education program(s) for selected sub sets of students?

A University wide set of opportunities for all students?

A combination of the above strategies

Other (Please describe)

8. Does your university attempt to provide a series of linked experiences that build on each

other over four (4) years that is designed to deepen and challenge students' civic learning?
Yes No

8a. If yes, briefly describe.

9. Is the design of your university's civic education approach based on explicit or implicit theories of college student civic, moral, learning or human development? Yes No

9a. If yes, have you described these theories in writing? Yes No

9b. Please provide more information on these theories.

IN-DEPTH CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

10. Please name and provide web links to in-depth civic education programs at your university.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE CURRICULAR CIVIC OPPORTUNITIES

11. What curricular experiences are available to undergraduates that include an active civic education component? (check all that apply)

Freshman required courses that address civic issues

Freshman learning communities

Courses with service-learning, community-based research, or field placements

Independent study options

Senior capstone course

Learning communities

Summer engaged research programs:

domestic

international

For-credit certificate programs

Student designed/taught courses (not necessarily for credit)

Internships

Civic engagement minor or major? If so, describe or provide web link:

Other - Please describe:

12. At which level are civic education efforts initiated?

University: presidential or provost level

School: dean level

Department: department chair level

Individual faculty

Civic engagement center

13. Does the university provide students with a guide across the curriculum to courses with a civic engagement component? Yes No Under development

UNIVERSITY-WIDE CO-CURRICULAR CIVIC EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

14. Which of the following co-curricular civic education opportunities are available to your students? (check all that apply)

- Freshman pre-orientation civic program
- First-year orientation that includes civic education
- University wide common readings with civic theme
- Residence halls with civic theme
- Residence hall with multi-cultural, diversity theme
- Alternative breaks
- Domestic civic engagement opportunities
- International civic engagement opportunities
- Legislative internships
- Summer civic engagement options
- Student government
- Student clubs
- Greek life service opportunities
- Athletic service opportunities
- Work Study options for civic engagement
- Service scholarships
- Public service job fairs
- Public service job counseling
- Civic or service transcript
- Civic engagement student awards or recognition programs
- Other forms of recognition for engagement - please describe:
- Not for credit certificate programs
- Service requirements
- Students on hiring committees
- Students on board of trustees
- Students on academic honors board
- Students on board of civic engagement center
- Other (please describe)

INTEGRATING STUDENT CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCES

15. Is there a discussion on your campus about the need for better integration of curricular and co-curricular experiences? Yes No

15a. If yes, who is involved? (staff, faculty, students, top administrators)

16. What current mechanisms do you have for integrating student curricular and co-curricular experiences?

e.g., faculty/staff task forces, advisors, mentors (faculty, staff or student), centers, guides for students, reflection opportunities, etc.

17. Are there efforts to integrate multi-cultural or diversity initiatives and civic education on your campus? Yes No

17a. If yes, briefly describe.

17b. If not, has the question come up?

18. In your experience, what are the two greatest opportunities for civic education of undergraduates in your research university?

19. In your experience, what are the two greatest challenges to civic education of undergraduates in your university?

20. Describe one civic education approach in your university that you find particularly promising.

Please use the space below to offer any additional information or thoughts you were unable to expand on above.

APPENDIX 2: TRUCEN MEMBERS

University Members

Arizona State University
Brown University
Duke University
Georgetown University
Harvard University
Michigan State University
North Carolina State University
The Ohio State University
Penn State University
Princeton University
Stanford University
Tufts University
Tulane University
University of CA, Berkeley
UCLA
University of Georgia
University of Iowa
University of Maryland College Park
University of Massachusetts Amherst
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
University of Oklahoma
University of Pennsylvania
University of Southern California
University of Texas Austin
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin Madison
Vanderbilt University
Washington University in St. Louis

Tufts
UNIVERSITY

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