

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & SERVICE LEARNING  
SURVEY RESULTS  
June 2, 2006**

**Executive Summary**

The Eastern Kentucky University Office of Institutional Research administered a survey designed to assess the extent to which faculty use civic engagement and service learning as a tool in their course curriculum. Administered in spring 2006, the survey aimed at gaining knowledge of the ways, if any, faculty embrace civic engagement and service learning in their classroom curriculum. The survey was administered via e-mail to 592 faculty members, with a response rate of 24.0%. Responses came from faculty members from 29 of 36 departments, representing a cross-section of all educational disciplines at EKU. The departments having the largest number of faculty members incorporating *both* civic engagement and service learning in their courses are Government, Anthropology, Sociology, & Social Work, Curriculum and Instruction, English and Theater, Communication, Baccalaureate and Graduate Degree Nursing, and Occupational Therapy.

The survey instrument was divided into two categories addressing the aspects of civic engagement and service learning. The findings are grouped by these two categories which are defined below.

**Civic Engagement** - Working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. (from Ehrlich and colleagues in *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*)

A morally and civically responsible individual recognizes himself or herself as a member of a larger social fabric and therefore considers social problems to be at least partly his or her own; such an individual is willing to see the moral and civic dimensions of issues, to make and justify informed moral and civic judgments, and to take action when appropriate.

**Service Learning** - An academic experiential educational method in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflects on the service activity in such a way as to: gain further understanding of course content, develop critical thinking skills, and develop an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

**Civic Engagement**

Forty-five percent of respondents indicate they *teach courses that involve civic engagement* at EKU. The departments having the largest number of faculty members incorporating civic engagement in their courses are Curriculum and Instruction, Baccalaureate and Graduate Degree Nursing, Communication, Occupational Therapy, English and Theatre, and Government; and courses are offered in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. Table 1 (below) lists several examples of courses cited as containing civic engagement as a part of the course curriculum.

**Table 1: Examples of courses cited as containing *civic engagement* as a part of the course curriculum.**

COM 301: Writing and Reporting News II	NSC 836: Health Promotion for Advances Nursing Practice
EDF 413: Assessment in Education	OTS 821: Occupational Therapy Practice Seminar
EDF 807: Citizenship Education	POL 101: Intro to American Government
ENG 211: World Masterpieces I	POL 347: Politics in Religion
ENG 805: Writing Project	PSY 497: Political Psychology
JOU 425: Community Journalism	SWK 360: Community Practice
NSC 486: Public Health Nursing	SWK 410: Policy Practice

*Note: Not all courses using civic engagement as a part of the course curriculum are listed above.*

One-half (52%) of respondents indicate they do teach courses that currently *do not* contain civic engagement activities, but this type of activity could be added with further development. Sixty-seven percent of all respondents indicate that they would be interested in professional development opportunities to assist with the inclusion of civic engagement in their curriculum. Forty-eight percent report they *could not* incorporate civic engagement activities in their courses.

According to the definition above, civic engagement can encompass many different activities. Many faculty members effectively incorporate civic engagement activities into their courses. The results indicate faculty include as civic engagement both active and passive activities. Faculty report providing students a means to actively work to help solve a problem within a community, offer a service to the community, or participate in the civic process. However, faculty also describe using discussion to educate students and create a knowledge base about community and social issues through which students gain knowledge of issues affecting a community; leaving absent active participation in the civic life of a community outside the classroom. Listed below are several descriptions of civic engagement activities taking place in classrooms at EKU. Sixty-three percent of activities contain volunteerism, 39% contain some type of political participation, and 60% include some other activity such as activism, observations, critical thinking, and the development of ideas about community living.

### ***Civic Engagement Activities***

- **Discussion Based Education** – providing discussion for students to learn about political and governmental processes within their own community. Discussions are used for students to gain a greater understanding of what impacts individuals of a community. Discussions can also provide a framework in which students gain an understanding of the need to become civically engaged in their community.

*“Guided discussions relative to civic education within the social studies P-12 curriculum—what that means and how one attempts to do that and social issues relative to public education.”*

*“Reading works that deal with humanistic issues...in discussing these readings at all levels, I attempt to get students to focus on how what we read, discuss, and write about can be applied to socio-political, economic, philosophical issues faces by students today. These ‘activities’ are surely more abstract than are suggested by the definition of ‘civic engagement’ above, but they are clearly and unquestionably related, relevant.”*

- **Current Events** – the use of current events in the news to begin conversations about social issues relevant to current society helps students to see how their community is shaping around them. It allows them to form well informed opinions and possible inform decisions they may make in their own life.

*“In most of my courses, I require newspaper reading. We also discuss politics in all my courses. That, according to the literature, is a part of civic engagement.”*

*“Critical reading, critical thinking, and engagement with the current events affecting the issues we’re studying at the moment.”*

- **Policy Analysis** – investigate current policy concerning community issues and gain an understanding of the complex nature needed to address all issues that may impact a community, state, or country. This gives students the ability to analyze local policy and see how it affects them both directly and indirectly.

*“Letter writing to local, state, or national officials about health related policies and legislation.”*

*“We teach our students the development, interpretation, and implementation of public laws and policy.”*

- **Service Learning** – participating in a service learning project gives students the ability to actively seek an important issue in their community and strive to make a personal and active difference. This not only builds up a community, but also provides continued personal growth for the students

who participate. Service learning is reported as an effective way to incorporate civic engagement into the classroom.

*“Through a team-oriented service learning project, our learners come to understand the complex social causes that can be advocated for, and this advocacy is in the form of contacting their state and federal representatives.”*

*“Volunteering on campaigns, working registering to vote and voting, education on ballot initiatives...working with government agencies to produce ethics handbooks and trainings, activism on women’s issues, etc.”*

- **Awareness of Diversity** – providing a way for students to experience a culture unlike their own and gaining the ability to have an appreciation for differences between each other. This can be accomplished by having students actively interact with members of different racial/ethnic backgrounds or even members of different groups within their local community.

*“Both classes are expected to engage in participant observation and interviews with other cultural groups to gain a better understanding of cultural diversity and other groups/cultures norms, values, and beliefs.”*

*“All courses require students to explore the meanings of being a citizen in a different time and place, reflect on issues that they would share with those people whom they study.”*

- **Community Development** – identifying an important problem or an issue within a community and providing assistance to members of the community to benefit all of its members. Community development is similar to work done as a service learning project, but focuses on the needs of the community as a whole. It can both benefit the individual and the entire community.

*“Identifying and addressing a community concern. Engaging in community research, analysis of state and federal policies, plans for influencing policy. Visits Frankfort, meetings with legislators...research and presentations.”*

*“Students work with community newspaper to determine how the newspaper relates to its community and what it could do better to serve the needs of its community.”*

### Service Learning

Thirty-eight percent of respondents indicate they *teach courses that involve service learning* at ECU. The departments having the largest number of faculty incorporating service learning in their courses are Baccalaureate and Graduate Degree Nursing, Occupational therapy, Curriculum and Instruction, and Exercise and Sport Science; and courses are offered in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. Table 2 (below) lists several examples of courses cited as containing service learning as a part of the course curriculum.

**Table 2: Examples of courses cited as containing *service learning* as a part of the course curriculum.**

POL 342: American Chief Executive	MKT 320: Advertising
EHS 349: Enviro Health Coop. Education	EHS 463: Enviro Health Field Experience
NUR Clinical Courses	REC 280: Programming Special Events
REC 825: Philosophy of Rec. and Leisure	NSC 486: Public Health Nursing
OTS 890: Therapeutic Horseback Riding	CDS 874: Speech-Language Pathology

*Note: Not all courses using service learning as a part of the course curriculum are listed above.*

Service learning can encompass a variety of activities. One goal for the use of service learning is to meet an identified community need through the work of students. Eighty-seven percent of respondents indicate that their courses which contain service learning projects are in fact aimed to meet the needs of a community problem. Eight-eight percent of courses involving service learning directly *links the course content to the service activity* and 81% of faculty include *reflection as an educational method to promote*

learning. Listed below are some examples of service learning projects being conducted in courses at EKU.

### **Service Learning Activities**

- **Community Support** – activities including volunteering to work with children, providing education to individuals or a group of students, community clean-ups, awareness programs, and working with non-profit organizations to complete their mission.

*“There were 12 team projects where they identified beneficiaries of service (like the homeless, cancer victims, animals without shelters) and they provided service. The teams then reflected on the service and how it has impacted their professional and personal development.”*

*“Community education for children and families, we participate in the Feed The Children health fairs, etc. The students must develop what they will be teaching or develop methods for screening common health problems in the population they will be serving that day.”*

*“We control environmental health hazards that are physical, chemical radiological and biological in nature that can impact individuals and communities health and well being...”*

*“Ghost Out program is a drug and alcohol awareness program for teens to educate them about the dangers and consequences of driving impaired or riding with someone impaired Battle of the Belts is a high school program which through competition amongst the 4 local high schools is aimed at improving the seatbelt usage rate through interventions & pre/post intervention surveys Diabetes Day Madison County- a day long health fair for people with diabetes, including interventions, screenings, and education.”*

- **Professional Services** – services directly relating to the field of study of participants. One example would be providing nursing care to hospitals for nursing majors or help with political campaigns for political science majors.

*“Students apply course content in the clinical area, providing professional nursing care to patients in various health care settings under the direction of nursing faculty and in collaboration with members of the health care team.”*

*“Students explore the roles of professional Counselors and look at the impact they have on their clients/students. They do mentoring projects with practicing professionals in the field that allows them to discuss and observe these issues.”*

*“Researching, planning and executing PR campaign/funding drive for local Red Cross”*

*“Take nursing students in order to provide nursing care to underserved populations in countries such as Haiti, Honduras, and El Salvador. Madeline Leninger's Cultural Care Theory and nursing theory are the framework for this class' organization...Students learn much about the culture and health care issues...”*

One-half (53%) of respondents indicate they would be able to incorporate service learning activities with further course development. Sixty-four percent of all respondents are interested in professional development opportunities leading to the inclusion of service learning activities into their courses.

### **Community Partners**

Faculty indicate a variety of both local and regional community partners that are willing to enhance EKU student learning through civic engagement and service learning activities. Many of these partners include local schools, assisted living homes, local and state government agencies, churches, Habitat for Humanity, animal shelters, and local area businesses and governmental agencies. University departments/areas even are offered as opportunities for civic engagement and service learning. Appendix A and B is a complete list of identified community partners from responding faculty. Appendix C contains all additional comments provided by those who responded to the survey.

## APPENDIX A – Civic Engagement Identified Community Partners

Adelphia Cable	Letcher county Action Team: Tracy Frazier
American Cancer Society	Letcher County Government
American Heart Association	LexLink
Bluegrass Rape Crisis Center	Madison County Health Department
Cabinet for Health and Families	Madison County Public Schools
CEDET	Madison Towers
Central Kentucky Riding for Hope	Migrant Health Clinic
Clinics	Nursing Home Reform
Community Mental Health Agencies	Office of Student Affairs
Coroners Office	Red Cross
County Judge Executive Carroll Smith	Richmond Arts Council
Cowan Community Center: Nell Fields	Richmond Parks and Recreation
Cub Scouts	School Nurse Clinics
EKU Chamber of Commerce	Schools
Family Resource Centers in Madison County	St. Andrews Retirement Community
GRACE, Inc.	The Bluegrass Farmworker Health Center
Habitat for Humanity	The Lexington Hispanic Association
Health, NOW!, Clinic	The Salvation Army
Home Health agencies	The State Department for Local Government
Hospitals	The State Health Department
Justice Kentucky Fairness Alliance	UK Children's Hospital
Kentucky Council for Community	Wal-Mart
Kenwood Nursing Home	WHAS Crusade for Children
League of Women's voters	YMCA

## APPENDIX B – Service Learning Identified Community Partners

Adult Day Care	Kenwood Nursing Home
American Cancer Society	Learning Resources Centers
American Heart Association	Letcher County Action Team
Berea Independent Schools	Letcher County Government
Big Brother/Big Sisters	Lexington Parks and Recreation
Big T's Lawn and Landscaping	Local Grocery Stores
Bluegrass Farmworker Health Center	Madison Central High School
Central Kentucky Riding for Hope	Madison County Diabetes
Chamber of Commerce	Madison County Dry Dock
City of Richmond	Madison County Schools
Coast Guard	Madison Southern High School
Cochran and Anderson Estate Sales and Appraisals	Migrant Workers Office
Community Mental Health	Model Laboratory School
Community Partnership Area Substance Abuse	Northwest Haiti Christian Mission
County Attorney	Pepsi Cola Co,
County Coroner	Police
County Health Departments	Political Campaigns
County Safety Coalition	Project Read
Cowan Community Center	Public Health Departments
DeSloover Realty Company	Relay for Life
Drive Smart Program	Rental City
DUI Coordinator	Richmond Parks and Recreation
EKU faculty and staff	Save the Children
EKU Health Fair	School Nurse Clinics
EKU Speech and Hearing Center	Sheriff's Department
Emergency Response, Environmental Protection Agencies	St Andrew's
Fayette County Middle School	State Governments
Federal food and Drug	Telford YMCA
Feed the Children	The Red Cross
Fire Departments	The Salvation Army
Florence Crittedon Home	United States Department of Energy
Global Health Outreach of the Christian Medical and Dental Assoc.	United States Military
Hall's on the River Restaurant	United States Public Health Service
Health, NOW!, Clinic	United States Treasury Department
Home Health Agencies	USCDC
Hospice Agencies	Wal-Mart
Interstate Equipment Sales	Water and Waste Water Treatment Facilities
Kentucky Department of Transportation	YMCA

## APPENDIX C – Additional Comments

- I am a strong advocate of service learning and have incorporated it into my classes for many years. I would love to be involved in the service learning committee or any activities that you may have.
- I have taught a course with a service learning component in the past, while at another institution. It would be possible for some of the courses in Physics and Astronomy to incorporate a service learning component. However, a quality service learning activity is extremely time intensive in my experience, and I simply am not sure if our faculty have the time to undertake such an additional load. I am interested in discussing the broader issues of service learning at ECU.
- At my previous institution (University of Texas at El Paso), I frequently offered students extra-credit or alternative assignments through the Praxis Program. This was a program that connected students to service-learning opportunities in the community. I believe the key to its success is that the administration of the program was centralized in one office, the director of the program did all the leg work, which all made it very easy for faculty to incorporate it in their courses. I would use such a program were it available at ECU.
- I am considering submitting a QEP proposal that would involve an expanded version of CAPER (I am tentatively calling it CACTUS--Citizens' Assembly for Critical Thinking about the United States. It would be a 3-hour gen. ed. course under "breadth of knowledge" and the topic would not always have to be electoral reform.
- pay me
- Although my classes in art do not specifically deal with civic learning, the underlying message in art is; acceptance through a greater understanding of all people via learning about and making art.
- For #16, I said yes, but if the opportunity came up now I wouldn't have time because I'm buried in work.
- Opportunities to incorporate Civic Engagement and Service Learning experiences in my studio classes (Three-Dimensional Design - Sculpture) are just about nonexistent. These studio classes center around each student's personal/unique work. Thus, these classes focus on development of the student's individual rather than communal sensibilities.
- Looking forward to the feedback.
- I view civic engagement as critical to a well-rounded education, and service learning as a vital link between textbook material and applications of learning. While I would like to incorporate it into every course, it is very time consuming to implement and to do well.
- I can elaborate more on these two topics. I'm having a difficult time separating the two since music is academic and service oriented at the same time. Please let me know if you need better clarification.
- I am currently not teaching in classes. I do believe that many of the courses offered by the department do involve civic engagement and may offer opportunities for service learning.
- Any discussion of policy in an economics class builds knowledge for Civic Engagement, but that doesn't seem to be what you are getting at.
- I have done much "service" in the past. Worked with two Habitat for Humanity's for a summer and a year. Did an Appalachian program for 6 months. Volunteered at Homeless shelter for about 7 years while in grad school. Played with confined kids for 2 or 3 years. I also did a number of volunteer activities for much shorter times. I often feel that the amount I "learned" was more related to the amount of time I spent. Not that I totally oppose service learning, but I think it is of very limited value when the service time is very limited. I also think that often the service learning

I saw was tilted towards group attributions and "giving more material things" than looking at many of the underlying issues I saw over a longer period of time - aka. lack of fathers - current boyfriend beats mom in front of kids - drugs - employee tells off employer and is left with no job - student goes out drinking instead of going to class and has no job, etc.

- This is an important piece of developing future therapists.
- While I support civic engagement and service learning, I encourage and develop these values in students through extra-curricular activities such as advising service-based honor societies. Our department likewise prefers to encourage these values and skills through enrichment activities rather than within the curriculum itself.
- Although I do not teach a course that provides Civic Engagement or Service Learning, as the advisor for the Student Paralegal Association, I can tell you that our members are often involved in community service projects - everything from conducting title searches for Habitat for Humanity, under the Direction of the Kentucky Bar Association attorneys, to providing assistance to members of the armed forces in the "Wills for Heroes" project of the Fayette County Bar Association. So, our students are already somewhat familiar with these concepts, although they do not get college credit for taking part in them. (And, we are certainly not the only campus organization that participates in such activities.)
- Civic engagement and service learning are both very worthwhile pedagogies. The problem is lack of resources (faculty time and institutional support) to design and implement them.
- While I am concerned about some of the issues involved, the technical nature of the courses I teach do not lend themselves involvement in these issues.
- The activities are part of the public health nursing students' clinical experience and has been extremely effective in their education concerning community partnerships and collaborative relationships and initiatives.
- I've been doing this as an independent study for interested students. Given the focus on FTEs I can't offer it as an on-load course, which I'm sure will be a problem for many departments that choose to go this route.
- I have given numerous presentations on service learning and nursing at the local, state, national, and international level.
- I am not currently teaching courses but would use both issues above in a variety of courses taught through OT (the current instructors use service learning extensively)
- Our Criminal Justice and Police studies ethics classes provide an opportunity to engage in either civic engagement or service learning...but they have to be rather specific time sensitive activities
- Most programs provided through our division are non-credit (topic specific) CE programs, thus limited amount of time to incorporate service learning.
- While I am interested in civic engagement, the classes I teach are on specific teaching methodologies, so they don't really have room for civic engagement activities, per say, although the end result of my coursework specifically contributes to communities by providing quality teachers for public and private schools.
- In all my classes, I emphasize civic responsibility (the "social contract" of organizations). The other courses I teach lead up to the PUB 490 capstone course, so the hands-on activities are deferred to the final course, however, there is a possibility of having the PUB 475 PR Cases course actually engage in some civic work, but on a much more limited scale. Currently, they look specifically at case studies involving civic organizations.
- I have been a participant in the civic engagement learning community and summer institute and diversity learning community in the past. I have presented and published nationally and

internationally on some of these endeavors. My discipline and my department are very oriented to these areas; it would need to be an advanced service learning offering for me for further professional development.

- I am very interested in trying to incorporate service learning into our program's orientation course.
- I'm interested in the concept addressed in this survey and would like to know ways in which the library might assist in this effort.
- I would like to know how to incorporate the service learning and civic engagement into my responsibilities as a university librarian.
- To incorporate these additional activities other areas would have to be cut, eliminating critical components of the course content. For these areas, laboratory type learning is better provided in a course that can concentrate on a narrower aspect of the material covered.