

2013

Moral Civic Presentation

Jesuit Universities Humanitarian Action Network (JUHAN)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.fairfield.edu/enduringquestions-teachingresources>

Repository Citation

Jesuit Universities Humanitarian Action Network (JUHAN), "Moral Civic Presentation" (2013). *Enduring Questions - Teaching Resources*. 11.

<https://digitalcommons.fairfield.edu/enduringquestions-teachingresources/11>

This item has been accepted for inclusion in DigitalCommons@Fairfield by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Fairfield. It is brought to you by DigitalCommons@Fairfield with permission from the rights-holder(s) and is protected by copyright and/or related rights. **You are free to use this item in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses, you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.** For more information, please contact digitalcommons@fairfield.edu.

“A Crucible Moment: *College Learning and Democracy’s Future*”

- An initiative of the U.S. Department of Education and co-lead by Global Perspective Institute, Inc. (GPI) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)
- To assess the current state of education for democracy in higher education and produce a report with a National Call to Action and specific steps through which multiple stakeholders can make college students’ civic learning and democratic engagement a pervasively embraced educational priority and a resource for democracy.

Context

- Education and democracy are necessarily interconnected: “a socially cohesive and economically vibrant US democracy and a viable, just global community require informed, **engaged, open-minded, and socially responsible people committed to the common good and practiced in ‘doing’ democracy**”
- The U.S. is facing a crisis of civic disengagement

How are we doing?

A study by the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education at the University of Michigan found that, of twenty-four thousand college students surveyed, only one-third felt strongly that

- their civic awareness had expanded in college,
- that the campus had helped them learn the skills needed to effectively change society for the better,
- or that their commitment to improve society had grown.

Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education

Students' level of commitment to socially responsible leadership

- moderate to high growth in 52 percent of students,
- small growth in 13 percent, and
- no growth or decline in 35 percent.

Growth in students' valuation of political and social involvement is lower:

- moderate to high growth posts 35 percent
- small growth at 7 percent and
- no growth or decline at 58 percent.

Openness to diversity and challenge is lower still:

- moderate to high growth is reported in only 31 percent of students,
- small growth in 8 percent, and
- no growth or decline in 61 percent.

Fewer than 40 percent of students engage in any of several key practices correlated with gains on civic learning outcomes



The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)

- 24.9% of seniors reported a “strong increase” in understanding of problems facing their communities
- 27.1% reported “much stronger knowledge” of people from different races/cultures

Definitions

A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future uses the dual terms of “civic learning” and “democratic engagement” to emphasize the civic significance of preparing students with knowledge and for action.

A Framework for Twenty-First-Century Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement

Knowledge

- Familiarity with key democratic texts and universal democratic principles, and with selected debates—in US and other societies—concerning their applications
- Historical and sociological understanding of several democratic movements, both US and abroad
- Understanding one’s sources of identity and their influence on civic values, assumptions, and responsibilities to a wider public
- Knowledge of the diverse cultures, histories, values, and contestations that have shaped US and other world societies
- Exposure to multiple religious traditions and to alternative views about the relation between religion and government
- Knowledge of the political systems that frame constitutional democracies and of political levers for influencing change

Skills

- Critical inquiry, analysis, and reasoning
- Quantitative reasoning
- Gathering and evaluating multiple sources of evidence
- Seeking, engaging, and being informed by multiple perspectives
- Written, oral, and multi-media communication
- Deliberation and bridge building across differences
- Collaborative decision making
- Ability to communicate in multiple languages

Values

- Respect for freedom and human dignity
- Empathy
- Open-mindedness
- Tolerance
- Justice
- Equality
- Ethical integrity
- Responsibility to a larger good

Collective Action

- Integration of knowledge, skills, and examined values to inform actions taken in concert with other people
- Moral discernment and behavior
- Navigation of political systems and processes, both formal and informal
- Public problem solving with diverse partners
- Compromise, civility, and mutual respect

For Democracy's Future: Five Essential Actions

1. Reclaim and reinvest in the fundamental civic and democratic mission
2. Enlarge the current national narrative that erases civic aims and civic literacy
3. Advance a contemporary, comprehensive framework for civic learning—embracing US and global interdependence
4. Capitalize upon the interdependent responsibilities of K-12 and higher education
5. Expand the number of robust, generative civic partnerships and alliances locally, nationally, and globally



Key Recommendations for Higher Education

1. Foster a civic ethos across all parts of campus and educational culture
2. Make civic literacy a core expectation for all students
3. Practice civic inquiry across all fields of study
4. Advance civic action through transformative partnerships, at home and abroad

From Partial to Pervasive

Partial	Pervasive
Civic learning optional for some	Civic learning expected of all
One-time experience	Infused across educational experience
Teaching critical thinking does not consider real-world contexts	Teaching critical thinking occurs in relation to issues of public significance
Civic learning individually oriented	Civic learning fosters collaboration
Community-based scholarship accepted in some depts	Community-based scholarship positively viewed across all departments and considered in P&T
Community engagement is one-directional	Community engagement is reciprocal
	<i>A Crucible Moment, figure 6, pg 43</i>

Implications for our work & Questions for further consideration

- **How do we build our capacity – institutional and individual for civic and morally responsible education?**
 - Development of programs that are pervasive
 - Professional development
 - Institutional policies such as those related to faculty support and rewards
 - Impacting students expectations and understanding of the purpose of education for personal gain rather than public good
- **How does our specific Catholic, Jesuit identity impact our approach to education for civic and moral responsibility?**