

Civic Action Plan- Roadmap to 2020

Alfred State- SUNY College of Technology

Executive Summary

Alfred State students, faculty, and staff generate positive impact in the larger community year after year. This positive impact through civic engagement takes place through live work, internships, practicums, co-curricular activities, international study, capstone courses, clinical placements and other types of applied learning. Our learning community excels at applying knowledge and skills to address challenges and solve problems as productive contributors in the workforce and as active citizens.

The Civic Action Plan Committee developed the following Civic Action Plan (CAP) through a collaborative process of discovery and input. The outcome is twenty-four specific actions that help provide a roadmap to enhancing the impact of our teaching, learning, and institutional practices to advance the public good. The plan envisions high impact community engagement as a core element of the co-curricular and/or curricular student experience and an integral consideration in institutional practices.

Background

Faculty Senate defines civic engagement as “action that identifies or addresses an issue of public concern.” This term speaks to using our skills and knowledge to make a positive difference in the larger community. The action referenced might include a class project, co-curricular program, individual volunteerism, philanthropy, or a college initiative or policy - all enabling student learning while generating community benefit.

The Civic Action Plan complements and enhances Alfred State’s new *Roadmap to 2020* Strategic Plan. The vision, mission, and core values of the two mutually supporting plans are congruent and are as follows:

- **Vision:** Alfred State will be THE premier regional college of technology creating opportunity for our students to achieve successful careers and purposeful lives.
- **Mission:** Alfred State delivers outstanding associate and baccalaureate degree programs through hands-on learning, preparing in-demand and involved students in a caring community.
- **Core Values:** Respect, Integrity, Service, and Dedication

The Civic Action Plan also aligns with the commitments of the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Action Statement summarized below:

- **Prepare** our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.
- **Empower** our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus – nearby and around the world.
- **Embrace** our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities – economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.
- **Harness** the capacity of our institutions – through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice – to challenge social and economic inequalities.
- **Foster** an environment that affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

Context & Process

Alfred State is a member of [Campus Compact](#) - a coalition of nearly 1,100 colleges and universities committed to the public purpose of higher education. Membership has been invaluable for professional development, grant funding, consultation, and our AmeriCorps VISTA initiative.

Campus Compact celebrated its anniversary with the [Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Action Statement](#) - a statement encouraging member higher education institutions to leverage civic engagement infrastructure in the service of public outcomes. A key deliverable is developing a [Civic Action Plan](#) - actions our campus will take as we continue to deepen our community impact.

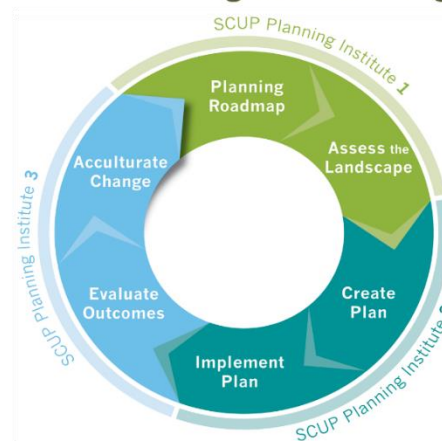
President Sullivan appointed the Civic Action Plan Committee to develop a plan that highlights our ongoing civic engagement efforts and establishes college wide aspirational goals. Committee membership - consisting of faculty, staff, and students - enabled broad input from key stakeholders and facilitated a process cognizant of the big picture of the institution and community. Committee members included:

- Kaitlyn Brown, *Associate Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Relations*
- Jonathan Hilsher, *Chair & Director of Civic Engagement*
- Robert Mahany, *Student, Construction Management Engineering Technology*
- Kathy Markel, *Senior Associate Director of Admissions*
- Peter McClain, *Director of Sponsored Programs and Control Services*
- Ana McClanahan, *Dean, School of Applied Technology*
- Amy Miller, *Residence Director*
- Doug Pierson, *Faculty, Department of Agriculture & Veterinary Technology*
- Jason Stupp, *Faculty, Department of English & Humanities*
- Leah Villagomez, *Student, Accounting*

The Civic Action Plan committee followed the integrated planning approach promoted through the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP). SCUP defines integrated planning as a “sustainable approach to planning that builds relationships, aligns the organization, and emphasizes preparedness for change.” The Strategic Plan Committee recently utilized this approach to maximize input and successfully develop the *Roadmap to 2020* Strategic Plan.

The Civic Action Plan committee developed a roadmap, assessed the landscape, and ultimately created a plan based on substantive and broad input from stakeholders. Below represents an overall timeline of efforts in developing this document.

The SCUP Integrated Planning Model



November 2015	President Sullivan signs the Campus Compact 30 th Anniversary Statement joining nearly 500 other colleges and universities.
Fall 2016	Committee appointed and meets to plan efforts and initiate asset mapping
January-March 2017	<p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicited input from key student organizations including Student Senate, Greek Senate, Leadership Suite organizations, and Kaleidoscope Coalition • Gathered student input over several weekday dinners at the Central Dining Hall • 172 students participated in the campus wide survey <p>Faculty/Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening session held during Professional Development Week • Solicited input at department, program, school, and Faculty Senate meetings as well as individual conversations • 75 faculty/staff participated in the campus wide survey <p>Community Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input from Center for Civic Engagement Community Advisory Board • Local needs and asset data collected
March 2017	Anticipated review by Student Senate & Faculty Senate
March 2017	Anticipated review by President’s Council
April 2017	Anticipated transition to implementation

Value Proposition

This plan will add value to our educational mission and enhance our institutional commitment to applied learning, sustainability, and civic engagement in the following ways:

Student Learning & Retention: Well-designed civic engagement activities contribute to student success. Key findings summarized in this [Association of American Colleges & Universities \(AAC&U\) report](#) include the following:

- Civically engaged students learn more academic content and higher-order skills. There is a consistent relationship between civic engagement and academic engagement.
- Active, community engaged students stay in school, earn their degrees, more frequently pursue higher levels of postsecondary education, and often become future volunteers.

High Impact Practice: AAC&U researcher Dr. George Kuh has identified community based learning as a [high impact practice](#) – a widely tested teaching and learning practice shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: Alfred State completed a year long process to develop a new plan to guide the institution over the next three years. The Civic Action Plan complements this effort and leverages key elements of the plan associated with our public purpose. For example, CAP builds upon our vision of how we help our students achieve purposeful lives, how we articulate our core value of service, and how we integrate a community based perspective in the strategic priorities.

Maximize Our Community Impact: A clear and achievable plan will enable greater coordination and support of existing efforts as well as generate new ideas. It will articulate the value we offer to our region as well as the reciprocal and mutual benefits obtained through intentional collaboration.

Applied Learning: Community engagement facilitates learning as students engage in direct application of skills, theories, and models. Experiential learning that benefits the larger community already

represents a sizeable component of applied learning efforts. This plan directly supports Alfred State’s commitment and leadership within the context of this State University of New York system initiative.

Differentiation: A clearly defined civic action plan will highlight Alfred State’s unique and effective approach to applied learning, illustrate the community impact of campus activities, and demonstrate how this translates into graduates who are effective and engaged citizens.

Institutional Baseline

The Alfred State seal states the following - “Enter to Learn, Go Forth to Serve” - language that accurately reflects over a century of community engagement, outreach, and service. A singular focus on project-based, applied learning has proven to engage students in a deeper knowledge of the subject matter. Real world problem solving is a core theme across the curriculum and fosters an environment conducive to community engagement. Civic engagement represents a type of applied learning that emphasizes problem solving and encourages collaboration to address challenges and opportunities.

Student Power:

Alfred State students contribute 85,000 hours of community service through curricular and co-curricular project-based activities each year. When self-reported faculty/staff hours are included, approximately 100,000 hours of civic investment provides a substantial infusion of skills, effort, and expertise into the community. Over the past five years, there has been an increase of:

- 88 percent in total number of student community service hours
- 20 percent in number of students involved in curricular civic engagement

Service through Applied Learning:

The majority of community engagement hours take place through academic classes and programs. Students engage with their coursework in ways that benefit the larger community. For example, Architecture students develop village plans to enhance local communities, Building Trades students support Habitat for Humanity affiliates, and the Veterinary Technology students engage with community partners from Wellsville, NY, to Haiti. Over the past five years, there has been an increase of:

- 245 percent in faculty who self-report curricular community engagement through projects, class assignments, or other applied learning activities
- 105 percent in reported community service hours by faculty/staff within and beyond the campus community

Center for Civic Engagement:

The Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) provides dedicated infrastructure and leadership to civic initiatives incorporating an active team of student leaders, an AmeriCorps VISTA member, a part-time Residence Director Coordinator, and a Director. The Center supports initiatives and activities that maximize student learning, align with student interests, and make a positive impact in the larger community - often through strong partnerships.

Student Leadership Center:

The Student Leadership Center acts as a major focus for co-curricular leadership and civic engagement programming. A signature program is the Leadership Suite initiative - a nationally recognized program that supports and enhances the most civically active student organizations and provides pathways for engagement to less involved students.



Community Baseline

Alfred State is located in Allegany County - a rural county in the Southern Tier of NY with a rich history, beautiful scenery, and many recreational opportunities. It is also one of the poorer counties in the state. According to the US Census Bureau, the median income for a household is \$42,776, and 16.8 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

Alfred State's geographic location affords a unique opportunity to create positive impacts in Allegany County, neighboring Steuben County, and throughout the region. The college provides an infusion of financial capital, social capital, and expertise that makes a positive difference in local communities. It also delivers an affordable and high quality post-secondary education that contributes high quality, skilled graduates vital to the region's economic and social vitality.

Similar to the many industry advisory boards connected to academic departments, a CCE Community Advisory Board provides important input and feedback into the community engagement efforts of the college. This body has been an important avenue for gaining valuable advice related to capitalizing on community assets, addressing challenges, and leveraging resources to create progress within the region.

The Civic Action Plan seeks to align with Allegany County's comprehensive plan, to incorporate needs assessments from key institutions, and to advance regional efforts in economic development, sustainability, and community engagement.

Leveraging Resources

Alfred State generates community impact and positive educational outcomes through collaboration with external partners. This approach maximizes existing relationships developed through specific disciplines and programs. A broad and diverse number of quality partnerships will continue to be a key strategy to accomplishing action items. A small sampling of strategic partnerships include:

- **Alfred Community Garden Initiative** - Alfred State provides land and resources to enable local production of healthy and affordable foods contributing to food security and nutrition.
- **Allegany County SPCA** - Students and faculty provide medical care to shelter animals, including spaying and neutering, which ultimately makes the animals more adoptable.
- **Celebrate Service Celebrate Allegany** - This day of service mobilizes hundreds of students to connect with neighbors, build relationships, and engage in high impact service projects.
- **Collaborative High School Program** - The Center for Community Education and Training partners with school districts to help students achieve college credit reducing future debt load.
- **Economic Development** - Alfred State partners with county government to provide leadership to economic development efforts focused on retaining and attracting industry and creating jobs.
- **Engineering Week Competition** - Alfred State hosts area secondary schools to participate in a design competition increasing understanding/interest in engineering & technology careers.
- **Semester in the South** - Building Trades students apply their skills to support the work of Habitat for Humanity and to renovate an urban community center along the gulf coast.
- **Southern Tier Architectural Center** - Architecture and design students work with area communities to meet local needs and propose solutions to villages, towns, and municipalities.
- **Special Olympics Track and Field Event** - Athletics Department partners with NY Special Olympics and area schools to provide a premier competition experience to students with intellectual disabilities.

Civic Action Steps to 2020 - Overview

The Civic Action Plan consists of twenty-four specific action steps to enhance the impact of our teaching, learning, and institutional practices to advance the public good. This section is organized as follows:

1. The **Civic Action Steps to 2020 Outline** lists each action and associates each with a specific *Roadmap to 2020* strategic priority.
2. The **Civic Action Steps to 2020 Alignment** lists the exact same actions, but organizes them in a way that aligns with specific *Roadmap to 2020* strategies.

Civic Action Steps to 2020 - Outline

Strategic Priority: Applied Learning

1. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Explore designation of classes as civic engagement intensive at the course level for recognition on student transcripts
2. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Enhance promotion and highlight successes of curricular and co-curricular civic engagement activities on both campuses
3. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Increase availability and diversity of intensive off-campus learning experiences that incorporate community engagement (i.e. Semester in the South, Haiti, Sorrento)

Strategic Priority: Diversity/Inclusion

1. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Facilitate college forums to promote thoughtful and respectful conversation around current issues
2. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Expand opportunities for inter-cultural sharing and education

Strategic Priority: Faculty & Staff Excellence

1. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Enhance professional development opportunities that share civic engagement best practices
2. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Explore developing greater emphasis in the promotion and tenure process to recognize extra effort invested in community engaged activities
3. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Streamline the process to report data and track impact of curricular and co-curricular civic engagement
4. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Expand recognition of faculty/staff involved in civic engagement
5. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Deliver enhanced logistical and financial support to faculty/staff to support creation and organization of community engaged activities in classes and programs
6. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Facilitate recruitment, hiring, and onboarding practices that communicate a culture of civic engagement
7. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Develop greater collaboration with leadership groups in the Southern Tier

Strategic Priority: Local & Regional Impact

1. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Deepen and increase collaboration with K-12 schools
2. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Develop institutional definition and indicators for effective community partnerships
3. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Expand incentives for meaningful student community engagement
4. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Mitigate transportation barriers to student community engagement
5. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Generate effective advertisement around community service opportunities

6. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Create purposeful connections between student clubs and community partners
7. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Enhance sustainability literacy and practices alongside strategic partners
8. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Continue investing in the local economy through procurement and purchasing practices

Strategic Priority: Student Success

1. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Develop robust electronic platform to share and connect civic engagement opportunities with students, faculty, and staff
2. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Increase the quantity and quality of external advisory boards across the institution
3. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Promote incorporation of service, leadership, and campus employment in student co-curricular transcript
4. **CAP Action/Tactic:** Enhance civic service and learning opportunities specifically for ASOP/EOP students

Civic Action Steps to 2020 - Alignment

Strategic Priority: Applied Learning

Goal 1: Through sustaining innovations, Alfred State will expand applied learning opportunities across the student experience.

SP Strategy 1a: Develop, approve, and implement processes to collect, report, and assess student participation and success in defined applied learning activities.

CAP Action/Tactic: Explore designation of classes as civic engagement intensive at the course level for recognition on student transcripts

SP Strategy 1b: Engage, encourage, and promote participation in applied learning.

CAP Action/Tactic: Enhance promotion and highlight successes of curricular and co-curricular civic engagement activities on both campuses

CAP Action/Tactic: Increase availability and diversity of off-campus learning experiences that incorporate community engagement (i.e. Semester in the South, Haiti, Sorrento)

Strategic Priority: Diversity/Inclusion

Goal 2: Alfred State will intensify efforts to recruit, welcome, include, and retain a diverse community that is considered an example of success across the state.

SP Strategy 2a: Broaden recruiting efforts for faculty and staff to increase diversity on Wellsville campus and Alfred Campus.

SP Strategy 2b: Intensify recruiting effort to welcome all students focusing on under-served areas, as defined by SUNY but also including: at-risk and high-needs students, Seneca Nation students, and international students; while focusing retention efforts across campus to increase participation and involvement among all populations to celebrate culture and diversity within the caring community for which Alfred State is known.

SP Strategy 2c: Nurture the existing Alfred State caring community to cultivate greater cultural competency and understanding across the region.

CAP Action/Tactic: Facilitate college forums to promote thoughtful and respectful conversation around current issues

CAP Action/Tactic: Expand opportunities for inter-cultural sharing and education

SP Strategy 2d: Implement universal design principles across new or renovated campus digital and physical environments.

Strategic Priority: Faculty & Staff Excellence

Goal 3: Alfred State will recruit, retain, and professionally develop high quality faculty and staff to support our students.

SP Strategy 3a: Advance professional development in online and e-learning based on best practices.

SP Strategy 3b: Develop a “Center for Faculty Excellence” which will be advised and supported by a Faculty Senate standing committee (with adjunct and student representation) in accordance with best practices in higher education.

CAP Action/Tactic: Enhance professional development opportunities that share civic engagement best practices

CAP Action/Tactic: Explore developing greater emphasis in the promotion and tenure process to recognize extra effort invested in community engaged activities

CAP Action/Tactic: Streamline the process to report data and track impact of curricular and co-curricular civic engagement

CAP Action/Tactic: Expand recognition of faculty/staff involved in civic engagement

CAP Action/Tactic: Deliver enhanced logistical and financial support to faculty/staff to support creation and organization of community engaged activities in classes and programs

CAP Action/Tactic: Develop greater collaboration with leadership groups in the Southern Tier

SP Strategy 3c: Identify and implement best practices for the development of professional staff.

SP Strategy 3d: Recruit faculty and staff using print and electronic advertising, social media and the Alfred State community, in line with discipline-specific timelines.

CAP Action/Tactic: Facilitate recruitment, hiring, and onboarding practices that communicate a culture of civic engagement

SP Strategy 3e: Retain current and future employees by fostering a community atmosphere and by demonstrating appreciation for employees.

Strategic Priority: Local & Regional Impact

SP Goal 5: Alfred State will create local and regional impact with emerging industry partnership, heightened community engagement, sustainability, and new economic development.

SP Strategy 5a: Establish partnerships that enhance student learning while meeting industry demands and economic development goals

CAP Action/Tactic: Deepen and increase collaboration with K-12 schools

CAP Action/Tactic: Develop institutional definition and indicators for effective community partnerships

SP Strategy 5b: Community events to make our region a richer place in culture/wellness/diversity

SP Strategy 5c: Establish & sustain long-term service and outreach projects

CAP Action/Tactic: Expand incentives for meaningful student community engagement

CAP Action/Tactic: Mitigate transportation barriers to student community engagement

CAP Action/Tactic: Generate effective advertisement around community service opportunities

CAP Action/Tactic: Create purposeful connections between student clubs and community partners

SP Strategy 5d: Use AASHE Sustainability, tracking, assessment, & rating system to bolster Alfred State's commitment to sustainability.

SP Strategy 5e: Be one of the SUNY Top 10 green campuses

SP Strategy 5f: Increase student and faculty involvement related to sustainability

CAP Action/Tactic: Enhance sustainability literacy and practices alongside strategic partners

SP Strategy 5g: Partner with one emerging technology company to establish an operational facility

SP Strategy 5h: Increase alumni employment with local and regional companies

SP Strategy 5i: Increase awareness & retention efforts of economic development activity in Allegany County and surrounding region

CAP Action/Tactic: Continue investing in the local economy through procurement and purchasing practices

Strategic Priority: Student Success

Goal 6: Alfred State will optimize its efforts around recruitment, enrollment, retention, graduation, and student success.

SP Strategy 6a: Streamline communications systems and centralize information made available to students and their support networks.

CAP Action/Tactic: Develop robust electronic platform to share and connect civic engagement opportunities with students, faculty, and staff

SP Strategy 6b: Strengthen holistic campus support to improve retention.

SP Strategy 6c: Create and foster an inclusive environment where students feel welcome and connected.

SP Strategy 6d: Identify growth areas and academic opportunities that integrate skills, experiences, and activities to position students for future employment, continuing education, and citizenship.

CAP Action/Tactic: Increase the quantity and quality of external advisory boards across the institution

CAP Action/Tactic: Promote incorporation of service, leadership, and campus employment in student co-curricular transcript

SP Strategy 6e: Enhance academic support and student services available throughout the entire student progression.

CAP Action/Tactic: Enhance civic service and learning opportunities specifically for ASOP/EOP students

Implementation & Communication

The Civic Action Plan will launch as a three-year plan that complements the *Roadmap to 2020* Strategic Plan. Responsibility and monitoring of department level tasks associated with this plan will roll out through the strategic planning implementation process currently under development. This process will create a streamlined approach to accountability, measuring progress, and communicating updates.

The Center for Civic Engagement Community Advisory Board will be a key conduit for communicating progress to the larger community and soliciting external feedback. In addition, the full plan and progress toward implementation and achievement of goals will be posted on the college website to maximize transparency.

Finally, Alfred State will leverage its leadership in local, regional, and national organizations to share successes, best practices, and lessons learned. This includes forums, publications, and presentation opportunities through Campus Compact, NASPA, State University of New York, and other regional and professional organizations.