

Central Methodist University- Civic Action Plan 2017

Vision/Mission

Central Methodist University envisions a community upholding its mission statement and expectations of civility beyond the borders of our main campus. * We desire the CMU community not be confined to Fayette campus. Instead, we seek to enrich any persons we connect with, demonstrating our personal character goals of developing self-knowledge, confidence, and a sense of honor and commitment by assuming responsibility and leadership in the service of others. Through our annual Service Day and student engaged learning we will strive to obtain this goal. Knowing we have extensions of our campus across the state, we envision positive reflection rooted in our core values emphasizing honesty, integrity, civility, and personal responsibility. Through our plan, we seek to make these visions a reality by instilling these goals in our students, faculty, and staff. With 120 educational sites, we are hoping our Civic Action Plan will effectively help develop engagement across the state of Missouri as well as enrich engagement at our Fayette campus. We seek to improve communication regarding engagement programs and events. We also seek to improve assessment of engagement. By consistently improving our Civic Action and engagement assessment on our main campus, we hope to inspire the same in our 120 educational sites.

***Mission Statement-** Central Methodist University prepares students to make a difference in the world by emphasizing academic and professional excellence, ethical leadership, and social responsibility.

***Creed-**The Central Methodist University community, consistent with its United Methodist heritage, strives for academic excellence, individual achievement, and social responsibility. As members of that community we believe in:

- Seeking knowledge, truth, and wisdom;
- Valuing freedom, honesty, civility, and diversity;
- Living lives of service and leadership; and
- Taking responsibility for ourselves and the communities in which we live.

Approach

Institutional Baseline- Assets

Central Methodist University is located in Fayette, Missouri. Fayette can be described as a quaint town with a population consisting of around 2,750 residents. It can be said that Central and Fayette's town-gown relation is a positive one as we currently have an existing partnership through different service avenues. Central Methodist University supports the Fayette community through programs such as our mentoring program, 2 Birds 1 Nest, annual Service Day, and Civic Engagement Scholars. The 2 Birds 1 Nest mentoring program allows for Central Methodist students to pair with at-risk Fayette Middle School students. Part of the success of the program involves freshmen college students pairing with 6th graders. This allows for the two students to change together whilst creating a connection that we hope will foster growth. Central students are asked to visit their Fayette mentee at least once a week.

Service Day is another way in which Central has created a relationship with Fayette. During Service Day, Central Methodist cancels all classes and labs. Students, faculty, and staff are all offered different local service opportunities as a way to give back to the community. This has been a successful tradition for years and has been a great recruitment effort. It is our goal to grow our community relationship through this program as a way to give back for their everlasting support.

A third program still in the beginning stages is our Civic Engagement scholarship. Civic Engagement Scholars receive an award from Central Methodist to perform an expected amount of service hours. Service opportunities are available through our Civic Engagement office. Students are highly encouraged to not only complete volunteer hours within the Fayette community but are encouraged to continue their service in their own home communities. Throughout the three years since the birth of the Civic Engagement program, there has been a steady growth in student interest. It is the goal of the program to promote leadership not only across the Fayette community, but to provide leadership skills in which students can then foster in their own home environments.

As we write our Civic Action Plan, we see our current and future planning efforts connecting to every aspect of the five commitments;

- **We 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.
- **We prepare** our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.
- **We embrace** our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.
- **We harness** the capacity of our institutions—through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice—to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.

- **We foster** an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

Although our current plans have proven to be successful, there is always room for growth and more refined assessment. Since our programs are fairly new, the Civic Action Plan enhance each program for positive growth.

In the Fayette community, Central Methodist is well known as being a major place of employment. Many of the staff and faculty positions are filled by locals. Local businesses also benefit from the students drawn to Fayette due to Central Methodist. Fayette houses many family owned businesses that enjoy having our students/faculty/staff as patrons. Often times we purchase gift certificates locally to use as prizes for different programs on campus. CMU also offers financial help on city projects. This is our way of supporting our local businesses and community infrastructure. With that being said, our university is serving as an anchor to our community both financially and through our employment opportunities.

The five Action Statement commitments are currently addressed on our campus through our Mission Statement in our student/faculty/staff Character Goals section.

Character Goals:

- continue to develop self-knowledge, confidence, and a sense of honor and commitment by assuming responsibility and leadership in the service of others.
- seek an understanding of ideas, issues, and events within and beyond their immediate community and appreciate the gifts of diversity.
- evaluate their personal strengths and abilities, and explore appropriate career choices in a changing world.
- have the courage to make decisions based on considerations of ethical, aesthetic, economic, and environmental consequences.
- commit themselves to a life exemplifying values in relationships with self, family, church, university, and community.

Currently, we have little existing data as a standard point of reference in relation to the five commitments. Throughout the years, we have collected hours of service performed during our annual Service Day. Being able to calculate the hours versus the amount of participation will allow us to determine the success of the program which reflects how we empower our students, faculty, staff and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships. Our partnerships with local businesses and citizens allows us to embrace our responsibilities as a place-based institution contributing economically, socially, and environmentally. Being that we have staff whom attend city council meetings and are members of the Fayette Ministerial Alliance, Betterment Group, Howard County

Health Council, Main Street Association, Optimist Club, and other Fayette related groups, we have developed relationships encompassing the social and political aspect of our community. Progress in our relationships and involvement allow us to create benchmarks in relation to the five commitments.

Community Baseline- Assets

As mentioned previously, Central Methodist consists of many faculty and staff whom are members of the Fayette community. This allows for our university to have multiple ties within community groups. Membership to these groups is a key asset as we can then evaluate ways in which our university can best assist the local community. Fayette has developed groups that encompass the various needs of the community. Our Civic Action Plan should connect with said groups as well as current on-campus areas of weakness. Being connected with the City Council, Betterment Group, Howard County Health Council, and Main Street Association helps to target key areas of weaknesses in our town-gown relations. Currently, our university is focusing on the betterment of our community through service efforts. Our Center for Faith and Service, along with the Fayette Ministerial Alliance, are currently in effort to collect food or monetary donations to be contributed to the local food pantry. The food and monetary means will then be funneled toward the Buddy Pack Program (provides weekend meals to elementary students without). Another effort being focused on is our annual Service Day. This allows for the development of relationships between students/faculty/staff and local Fayette residents. As this is the longest engagement program offered, previous statistics can allow our institution to create goals for participation rates and leadership capabilities.

Planning Team- Drivers of Change, Connectors

Our institution's team will consist of Dr. Roger Drake (President), Kenneth Oliver (Vice-President), Reverend Molly Moore (Director of Center for Faith and Service), Cassandra Nappier (Coordinator of Civic Engagement), William Rambo (Resident Hall Director, Student Activities), Bradley Dixon (Associate Dean), Joy Flanders (Retention Coordinator), and Cindy Dudenhoffer (Associate Professor of Library Science). As a whole, this group consists of many key players from different departments of the institution. Each has made their own connections allowing for a diverse group who encompasses a wide variety of strengths.

Our connections and common goals will give our team the necessary perspective, persistence, and power to make lasting change. Having a supportive President is extremely beneficial. However, Molly Moore and Cassandra Nappier will be the lead and main contact members of the team. All others will be expected to give occasional input as they help with the factor of overarching engagement seeping into classrooms, extra-curricular groups, and every facet of culture on campus. Voices of those beyond those

included on the team can be heard through the team members themselves. Part of being on the planning team is being able to communicate the ideas and comments of those not particularly listed on the Civic Action Plan.

Central Methodist University holds true to the signature model unique to our institution. Our institution's identity is tied to an overarching engagement commitment. We use forms of service to help enrich our students with engaging volunteer experiences. We believe this model to work because we have already established programs geared toward our institution's identity. Our institution's model is mirrored in our Creed:

- Valuing freedom, honesty, civility, and diversity

For the academic enterprise to be successful there must be the free, open, and civil exchange of diverse ideas, opinions and information. Ideas and opinions must be shared and compared in order for the best to emerge. Learning is the heart of the academic enterprise and it is only possible when all parties assume the responsibilities appropriate to their roles. Academic integrity consists of the accurate depiction of the actual work or performance of any person. Academic integrity and academic honesty require that each person accept the obligation to be truthful in all academic endeavors. Civility is upholding the values of respect, kindness, and diplomacy in our direct and indirect interactions with others. Diversity is recognizing differences between people and perceiving these differences as an asset to the community.

- Living lives of service and leadership and

The uniting of knowledge and active faith is a cornerstone of Wesleyan tradition. Academic excellence coupled with acts of kindness and service to the local and global community are indicators of character development on the CMU campus. There are many styles of leadership. Servant leadership, as exemplified in the life of Jesus, is a model for the CMU community.

- Taking responsibility for ourselves and the communities in which we live.

Being a part of CMU affects not only ourselves, but also the community in which we live. We must all be responsible for our actions and their consequences, but we should also be dedicated to one another. As individuals and as a community we must demonstrate responsible life choices with a deep concern for the common good.

Action Statement- Outcomes

Our institution seeks to improve upon our current town-gown relationship through established engagement programs. We seek outcomes that further empower our student/faculty/staff relationships not only amongst themselves, but also within the community. We hope to ensure that students will graduate from our institution with full hearts in preparation to engage in leadership opportunities in support of the public good. Through our current engagement programs, we hope to instill an all-encompassing capacity of engagement on our Fayette campus as well as the 120 educational sites across Missouri. It is our hope to maintain a student-centered education whilst fostering the concept of community engagement.

Over time, we will develop appropriate assessments by which we can measure our progress towards these outcomes. Programs offered vary in terms of timeframes and expected outcomes. As an institution, we will develop assessments detailed to each program to ensure an accurate measurement. In a broad aspect, progress can be measured via student/faculty/staff participation as well as community satisfaction.

Summary:

Our strengths consist of a supportive President, campus wide enthusiasm, the alignment of the 5 Commitment Statements with our Mission Statement and Values, our established town relationship, that fact that we are culturally diverse and consist of healthy networking, and that we are a small rural university. It is our aspiration to create more service-learning opportunities, better mutual partnerships with faculty, more intensive assessment for engagement activities, an improved line of communication across the campus in terms of civic engagement opportunities, and to foster a form of affirmations for those who achieve engagement expectations in our community. We recognize the opportunity for growth at our current capacity through our teaching, partnerships, and institutional practices.

Action Statement Commitment (one of 5): We 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.

Strength: We are currently connected to 120 educational sites across Missouri.

Strength: We have supportive leadership.

Strength: We currently foster programs in which promote mutually respectful partnerships.

Opportunities for Growth

Goal	Action Steps	Key Players	Timeline	Evidence of Success
1. To nourish our current programs towards high success rates allowing for the development of new community partnerships.	1. Create assessments of current programs allowing for growth and success.	1. Cassandra Nappier (Coordinator of Civic Engagement) 2. Molly Moore (Director of Center for Faith and Service)	1. One year to establish a proper assessment. 2. Five years to examine assessment findings and allow for necessary program changes.	1. Evidence will be determined in assessment.
2. Nourished and successful programs will be promoted towards all educational sites.	1. Publication of findings will allow for connected educational sites to gain foundations of programs in which they may wish to establish at their institutions.	1. Public Relations and Technology Services in the advertisement and publication of successful programs. 2. Civic Engagement office for recording of program assessments.	1. Five years of monitoring programs before publication.	1. The fostering of programs at educational sites outside of Central Methodist University's main campus in Fayette.

Action Statement Commitment (two of 5): We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.

Strength: Central Methodist University offers many engagement opportunities through the Civic Engagement office.

Strength: Our town-gown relations allows for easy access to engagement opportunities and support not only from the institution, but also from the local city services.

Strength: Coaches, faculty, and staff are encouraged and praised for civic engagement.

Opportunities for Growth

Goal	Action Steps	Key Players	Timeline	Evidence of Success
1. To create more thorough communication avenues on planned service activities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate to faculty/staff who to contact for service opportunities via email. 2. Create web-based form for service opportunity submission. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Civic Engagement office 2. Faculty/Staff 3. Web/Graphic Relations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One year to communicate contact information for potential service opportunities. 2. Two years to establish new methods of service planning. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More faculty/staff involvement in service opportunities. 2. Better recording of completed service opportunities.
2. Establish specific opportunities for different athletics/majors allowing for personal and educational growth.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate with coaches/faculty on student needs. 2. Determine best possible service opportunities. 3. Establish community relations toward service opportunities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coaches/ Faculty 2. Civic Engagement Office 3. Local community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One year to communicate with faculty/coaches 2. One year to develop service opportunities. 3. One year to implement opportunities into curriculum and practice schedules. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coaches/Faculty funneling their service opportunities through the Civic Engagement office. 2. Higher rate of service opportunities performed in the community.

Action Statement Commitment (three of 5): We embrace our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities- economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, politically.

Strength: Central Methodist currently has a Student Government Association in which promotes engaged citizenship and leadership.

Strength: Central Methodist fosters programs such as Civic Engagement scholarships, service-learning, and mentoring programs.

Strength: Current faculty and staff members are affiliates of town associations and groups allowing for inside knowledge of community health and needs.

Opportunities for Growth

Goal	Action Steps	Key Players	Timeline	Evidence of Success
1. Establish a system of promoting voting during town, state, and national elections.	1. Connect with local City Council to form committees in which to educate locals and members of Central Methodist of political leaders, their platforms, how to register to vote, and when to vote.	1. Cassandra Nappier (Coordinator of Civic Engagement) 2. Student Government President and Vice-President 3. Local City Council	1. One year to make connections. 2. Follow through every election cycle.	1. Higher voter turnout rate. 2. Amount in attendance of educational programs.
2. Establish relationships with local political offices to allow for the most current information.	1. Attend City Council meetings, explore the local courthouse, and develop relationships with local law enforcement.	1. Local Political offices 2. Student Government Association 3. Civic Engagement Office	1. One year to develop relationships. 1. One year to educate our SGA over local politics.	1. A higher knowledge of local political offices and resources.

Action Statement Commitment (four of 5): We harness the capacity of our institutions- through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice- to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.

Strength: Central Methodist offers a wide variety of diverse groups for student inclusion.

Strength: Central Methodist encompasses the ideology of inclusiveness campus wide in our academics, athletics, and all around moral standing.

Strength: Although a Methodist institution, Central Methodist University accepts all faiths and believe in encouraging self-growth.

Opportunities for Growth

Goal	Action Steps	Key Players	Timeline	Evidence of Success
1. Foster the growth of new groups campus wide to help highlight diversity while encompassing individuality.	1. Develop publication of new group application. 2. Promote new groups via social media. 3. Understand not all new groups are beneficial to campus culture.	1. Student Development (Brad Dixon and Kenneth Oliver)	1. There is no set timeline as we assume this goal to have endless possibilities.	1. Student culture is that of a feeling of inclusiveness and an inviting community.
2. Incorporate events and programs within the campus community educating on different cultures and values.	1. Work with Student Development on new programs. 2. Incorporate current groups to educate others.	1. Student Development 2. Current campus groups	1. One year to develop appropriate events and programs. 2. There is no valid timeline on assessment as this goal should have no ending.	1. Existence of a more informed campus community. 2. Less diversity amongst the campus culture.

Action Statement Commitment (five of 5): We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

Strength: A fair amount of faculty has already established service-learning within their curriculum.

Strength: Central Methodist University promotes service through their mission/creed/values.

Strength: Central dedicates one whole day to serving our community. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to participate.

Opportunities for Growth

Goal	Action Steps	Key Players	Timeline	Evidence of Success
1. Educate faculty on the benefits of service-learning.	1. Research the benefits of service-learning. Publish results to faculty. 2. Develop a system in which faculty can communicate on possible service-learning opportunities.	1. Faculty 2. Civic Engagement Office 3. Campus Compact resources	1. One year for research. 2. Five years for implementation.	1. Assessment of service-learning from the student perspective. 2. Amount of faculty who have adopted service-learning.
3. Develop a system of recording service-learning hours and outcomes.	1. Create an online form for faculty and student to record service-learning opportunity information and hours.	1. Civic Engagement Office 2. Technology Services 3. Public Relations-Web/Graphic Relations	1. One year for development. 2. One year for publication and education.	1. Amount of faculty and students who use the recording system. 2. Amount of service hours recorded. 3. Faculty and student feedback on service opportunity.