



Civic Action Plan

Planning Team

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Civic Action Plan



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Vision/Mission

The Owens Community College Civic Action Plan aligns with the vision/mission of the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Action Statement of Presidents and Chancellors. "In the mid-1980's, a group of higher education leaders came together based on a shared concern about the future of American Democracy. Motivated by their conviction that amidst pressures toward personal acquisition and personal advancement, their students were not learning to think, speak and act in the service of the public good, they resolved that higher education must reclaim its historic mission of preparing the next generation of citizens to achieve public goals and solve public problems.

This group – a handful at first, and more than one hundred within a year – decided to take action. They became the founders of Campus Compact. Their chosen language – a compact – signified a commitment to each other to work together to advance the public purposes of higher education on their campuses, in their communities, and across the country. It also signified a commitment to honor the longstanding compact between higher education and the public." (*Creating a Great civic Action Plan – Campus Compact*)

Owens Community College is ideally poised to present a public proclamation of commitment to community service. As our campus changes, enrollment changes, political and economic climates change and governments change, we remain a steadfast asset to Northwest Ohio and to helping individuals become active, engaged and employed citizens of this community.

The Owens Community College Mission States:

We believe in serving our students and our communities. Your success is our mission

Our Vision:

Owens Faculty and staff are committed to strengthening the community by providing a superior educational experience through excellent, innovation and collaboration.

President Mike Bower took a very positive step in supporting our work in civic engagement by signing the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Action Statement and committing to put principles of civic learning into action. Dr. Bower has solicited a Civic Action planning team consisting of administration, faculty, staff and student representation to put forth an attainable and beneficial plan, for student, faculty, community partners, et al.

Our Civic Action plan seeks to highlight an emphasis on citizenship and community building, pulling from multiple campus and community partnerships to develop mutually beneficial experiential learning opportunities for students that include: career development, cultural fluency, critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communication, teamwork/collaboration, digital technology, leadership and professionalism. A campus of engaged faculty and staff focus on producing students that advance the public purpose and are well prepared to address the challenges of society post-graduation. We aim to have stellar communication to increase morale and impact as well as create an atmosphere with an impenetrable influence on community.

Our campus is in a state of transition, shifting financial resources and re-defining program boundaries to be able to best serve our students and therefore the communities they serve and build. We have recently been released from a state of Ohio fiscal watch and we remain conservative and vigilant about spending and financial stability. This plan will outline and define plans for increased collaboration, institutional outcomes, assessment strategies and professional development planning that support our goal of active citizenship both prior to graduation and beyond.

Approach

Through our Center for Experiential and Community Engaged Learning, we work with faculty to connect student with community experiences that can be brought back to the classroom for discussion. The experience is supplemental to, yet still relevant to the course subject matter. Afterwards, student determine the impact that their service had on the organization as well as on themselves. The Center operates a Career Closet and Food Pantry, both maintained by students and stocked with donations from community partners. Additionally, the Center houses the Civic Ambassador, Connect2Complete program which offers peer to peer support for first year students with an embedded component of service as an empowering tool for retention of our highest risk students.

Students are engaged in multiple projects through connections with Connect2Complete, Student Activities, Student Government, the Office of Student Conduct, retirees of the college as well as a variety of departmental partners and sponsors. We use a commitment to civic action that begins on our campus. We educate ourselves on the issues that matter most to or impede our students and then design interventions to support those issues. Once adequately informed on these

Civic Action Plan



students on campus has a root off campus and a community organization or activist supporting that issue. By building our commitment to civic action in this way, we teach our students to grow from student citizens to employed, tax paying, entrepreneurial citizens.

Our downtown Toledo campus, located within the Ohio Means Jobs Lucas County building, allows for collaborations with central city community partners and an exchange of useful ideas, information and services. We are one of two community colleges located in Northwest Ohio and only one situated in our metropolitan area. Our office of Workforce and Community Services acts as the sole facility with a police and fire academy in the area. It also offers a great deal of training sessions (both academic and leisure) for the community. In turn, participants take the skills they learn back into our community for its betterment.

Our campus is committed to developing processes for career planning and preparation. We no longer house a Career Services office. Instead, we have developed a decentralized network of support for career and professional engagement. With representation from different areas on campus, we still share a centralized goal of building opportunities for students to gain employment that includes: internship availability, resume development, professional etiquette and experiential learning.

Existing Data

In 2015, Owens Community College received the Carnegie re-Classification for Community Engagement. This classification, which is valid until renewal in 2025 represents the Owens Community College commitment to engagement practices that are already in place but also those that are in development.

The Carnegie Foundation's Classification for Community Engagement is an elective classification, meaning that it is based on voluntary participation by institutions. The elective classification involves data collection and documentation of important aspects of institutional mission, identity and commitments, and requires substantial effort invested by participating institutions. It is an institutional classification; it is not for systems of multiple campuses or for part of an individual campus.

The classification is not an award. It is an evidence-based documentation of institutional practice to be used in a process of self-assessment and quality improvement. The documentation is reviewed to determine whether the institution qualifies for recognition as a community engaged

institution. (www.nerche.edu)

Through the Center for Experiential and Community Engaged Learning (CECEL), we support approximately 15-20 faculty members each semester in offering relevant community engagement activities. We build and develop opportunities for students to connect civic learning to the curriculum. Our team of Civic Ambassadors, also housed within the CECEL arranges community partnerships for these activities, facilitates risk management procedures, arranges transportation and chaperones students and faculty to community sites. Civic ambassadors also model civic action on a daily basis, modeling community involvement as a tool for student success.

The Ohio Campus Compact Connect2Complete program also allowed our office (CECEL) to fully institutionalize a connection between community service and peer mentoring, allowing student mentors/leaders to encourage retention and success through community engagement, advocacy and activism.

Community Baseline

Owens Community College offers affordable community college education that leads to employment for many members of the communities where our students live and serve. Being the only community college in the Central Toledo area affords a responsibility for partnership and collaboration. These relationships are vital to our students, offering employment, volunteer and networking options as students become working, philanthropic citizens.

*Describe the existing engagement infrastructure in the community. What are the key assets in the community?

Some key assets in our community include the United Way of Toledo, who works in partnerships with all institutions of higher education in our area. The Toledo Seagate Food Bank also exists a connector to over 200 local agencies that offer support for food insecure families and individuals. Toledo, Ohio is a small town big city, where most organizational leaders know one another and have an interest in collaboration and resource sharing. Owens Community College sends regular student, faculty and staff volunteers to work with both of these agencies and in doing, has build a reputation for engagement and a commitment to building systems for social change. There is always more room for partnerships as agencies, grow and change. Similarly, funding streams change and shift with local, state and federal government changes.

Civic Action Plan



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Each of the five commitments/community identified priorities are supported by activities on the Owens Community College campus.

#1 - 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.

- Service learning faculty work with the Center for Experiential and Community Engaged Learning to match student projects with existing community partnerships. CECEL staff maintain involvement in community activities that give a first hand view of community needs and how Owens Community College student expertise can assist in successful community building.
- Community partner luncheons, roundtables, volunteer fairs and enrollment fairs allow Owens Community College and community partner agencies to collaborate on community projects, leveraging resources for both.

#2 - We prepare our student for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.

- Engaged citizenship and community action is embedded into our campus culture. An expectation exists and will continue to exist that insists that Owens Community College students recognize the value of community action post graduation.
- The Campus Engagement Election Project (CEEP) participates in on-campus voter registration efforts annually. With this program, we ensure our students are voting, active citizens.
- Owens Community College also participates in NSELV, the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement. Data from this study, published annually, gives Owens Community College useful information to strategize voter engagement efforts on campus.

#3 - We embrace our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities – economically, socially, environmentally, educationally and politically.

- Students and Faculty from Owens Community College's Dental Hygiene program offer free dental care and oral cancer screening to members of the community at the annual Toledo Tent City event in October.
- Students and Faculty from the Occupational Therapy Assistant program work with adults with disabilities at

Camp Courageous in Whitehouse, Ohio, increasing the number of clients served while developing much needed professional skills.

- As a campus we are committed to an ongoing partnership with Toledo Area Metroparks, working to plant trees, assist with trail maintenance and offer educational support for youth. Students, Faculty, Staff, alumni and Workforce program participants all participate in activities that support the environmental and conservation work of the Toledo Area Metroparks, a network of 16 area parks consisting of over 10,000 acres of land.

#4 - 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.

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#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.

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Our team is a cross section of faculty, staff and students that can provide the perspective needed to affect lasting change. They can also provide the necessary reach into circles in order to communicate the plan. The team is expected to speak up in our sessions, speak out to those in their respective circles and speak back to the group as a whole to ensure all voices are heard.

Civic Action Plan



OWENS
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We are pursuing the signature model approach. It will work because our campus is in transition stage, rebuilding from a challenging past few years of low enrollment, staff reductions and financial instability. The model will act as a catalyst to engage the entire campus community to focus on our students' success. The signature model will connect to our financial recovery plan because it will be focused, provide updates and have targeted outcomes as do other priorities.

Civic Action Plan



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Outcomes

Outcome	Type of change	Commitment	Measure(s)	Indicator(s)
Common hour on campus where no classes take place	Capacity	#2. We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivations and capacity to deliberate, act and lead in pursuit of the public good.	Number of students participating in student activities and other collaborative events on campus.	Increased number of students engaged in workshops and events on campus. Increased collaboration between organizations
Faculty understanding how to incorporate engaged teaching and research into their work	Culture	#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.	Number of faculty attending workshops focused on engagement. Survey of department chairs	Increased number of community-engaged courses offered Increased number of community-based research projects underway
All departments speak with uniform terminology regarding the plan	Culture	#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.	Number of faculty/staff that attend informational sessions Campus survey	Increased engagement
All departments speak with uniform terminology regarding the plan	Culture	#5. We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectation for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.	Number of faculty/staff that attend informational sessions. Campus Survey.	Increased engagement and communication across campus and larger community.
Partnerships showcased and communicated to campus and beyond.	Capacity	#3. We embrace our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities - economically, socially, environmentally, educationally and politically. #4. 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.	Number of partnerships on record with the Office of Workforce and Community Services and Academic Affairs Number of inquiries regarding opportunities	Increased student, faculty and community engagement and morale. Increased enrollment.
Faculty are rewarded for incorporating engagement opportunities for students outside of the classroom.	Policy/System	#1. 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.	Data from Center for Experiential and Community Engaged Learning	Baseline established for the number of faculty awards provided. Increased partnerships. Increased opportunity for students to engaged in community.
Recognitions of new/introductory students for campus engagement	Policy/system	#2. We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act and lead in the pursuit of the public good.	Data from the Center for Experiential and Community Engaged Learning	Increased student participation in engagement opportunities.

Civic Action Plan



Timeline and Accountability

The overall timeline for the plan is 2-4 years, with 2017 being a planning year to include initial rollout.

Outcome	Type of change	Commitment	Measure(s)
Activity	Date	Responsible	Status
Slide preparation for campus presentations	February 2017	Krista Kiessling/Erica Parish	In Process
Meeting with president/senior administration/AQIP	March 2017	Planning Team	Scheduled
Rollout to faculty/staff/campus	April/May 2017	President Bower/Planning team	Scheduled
Prep for communication of partners, faculty based on engagement	Spring 2018	Academic Affairs	Scheduled
Implement Common Hour	Fall 2018	Academic Affairs	Scheduled
Check in/progress monitoring	Quarterly (Mar/Jun/Sept/Dec)	Planning Team	Scheduled

Communication

The Owens Community College Civic Action plan includes strategies for systemic efforts toward institutional change. Efforts include:

- Identification of coursework that utilizes community and civic engagement as tools for academic success.
- Identification, recognition and reward for faculty incorporating community and civic engagement as tools to meet course and disciplinary outcomes.
- Identification, recognition and reward for students participating in community and civic activities that support the course, major, certificate or program (Service Scholar recognition)
- Participation in Pre-K-20 partnerships
- Institutionalization of programs that increase access, success and completion through community engagement.
- A commitment to developing strong citizen graduates.

At Owens we continue to build partnerships with mutually beneficial opportunities for service and learning. The success of our students will drive institutional, cultural change.

The process of developing the civic action plan contributes to dialogue about the public value and purpose of Owens Community College as an institution. Locally, we are responsible for the education and potential employments of graduates who primarily live and work in this community. Institutions of higher education, either at the 2 or 4 year level are responsible for educating, informing and inspiring students to invest in the community.