

Campus Compact Planning Institute
St. Louis
October 13-14, 2016



Cultivating Student Democratic Capacity

Nancy Thomas
nancy.thomas@tufts.edu

INSTITUTE FOR
DEMOCRACY &
HIGHER EDUCATION



Jonathan M. Tisch
College of Civic Life

Agenda

- ✓ Review: the nature of the problem
- ✓ The research and Politics 365.
- ✓ Small group discussions:
 - What is my campus already doing well?
 - What needs to change?

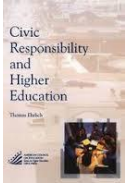
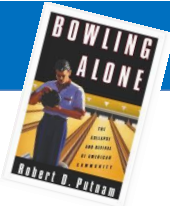


The 1947 Truman Commission

“The principal goals for higher education... are to bring to all people of the Nation... education for a fuller realization of democracy in every phase of living ... and education for the application of **creative imagination and trained intelligence to the solution of social problems and to the administration of public affairs ...**”



The Civic Movement



“... 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.”

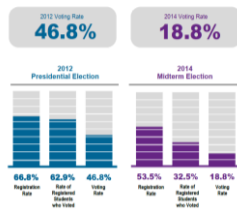
Higher education’s purpose

- ✓ 21st Century careers
- ✓ Personal well-being
- ✓ Social and economic equality
- ✓ Community engagement
- ✓ Civic learning and democratic education

NSLVE NATIONAL STUDY OF LEARNING, VOTING, AND ENGAGEMENT

Your Students' Voting and Registration Rates

- The first objective measure of college student voting
- A service to campuses
- A database for research
- 950 institutions
- All states
- 9 million college student records

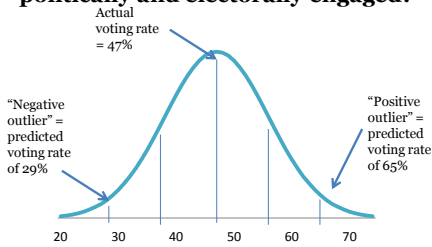


The need to recalibrate... why?

It's political.

Campus Climate Research

What are the attributes of the campus climate at institutions that are more (or less) politically and electorally engaged?



Politics 365

- ✓ Pervasive political discussions, free speech and nondiscriminatory learning environments
- ✓ Collaborative governance and student leadership
- ✓ Social cohesion, relationships and a culture of caring
- ✓ Diversity and equity as deliberative practice
- ✓ Active political engagement



© The Institute for Democracy and Higher Education, 2016

Pervasive political discussions



- ✓ Learning the public relevance of every discipline
- ✓ Engaging in quality conversations around matters of political consequence, particularly in the classroom
- ✓ Respect for free speech and dissenting viewpoints

© The Institute for Democracy and Higher Education, 2016

Balance free speech and inclusion



Strong social cohesion and networks

- ✓ Strong interpersonal relationships, particularly student - faculty
- ✓ A clear commitment to student well-being on the part of the faculty and students toward each other
- ✓ Community ties; collaboration
- ✓ Physical spaces



© The Institute for Democracy and Higher Education, 2016

Collaborative governance and social action



- ✓ Shared responsibility and power, in decision-making *and* learning
- ✓ Collaborative leaders
- ✓ Respect for student voice, leadership, and involvement
- ✓ Real decision making authority
- ✓ Strong SGA

© The Institute for Democracy and Higher Education, 2016

Diversity and equity as deliberate practice

- ✓ Compositional diversity
- ✓ Relational diversity
- ✓ Diversity in perspective



© The Institute for Democracy and Higher Education, 2016

Active political engagement



- ✓ Traditional political participation, election season “buzz”
- ✓ Issue activism and organizing, with or w/o government
- ✓ Nimble institutions

© The Institute for Democracy and Higher Education, 2016

Our Vision: A Democracy that is...

Participatory: people engage in shaping the political and social systems that affect their lives

Equitable and representational: people have an equal opportunity for engagement in social and political systems, with equitable outcomes

Educated and informed: people have equal access to quality public education and information

Effectively governed: government systems are equitable, ethical, transparent, accountable, and collaborative.

Discussion – small groups

- Is your campus facing tensions around this particular presidential election? What are they?
- How engaged are your faculty with students on political issues, in and beyond the classroom?
- How are decisions made on your campus?
- How “connected” (v. fragmented) are your students?
- Are your student “trained” to discuss hot topics?
- What structures are in place year-round for political discussions and public problem solving?

Resources

[Diversity & Democracy: Student and Institutional Engagement in Political Life](#)



[Democracy Matters: Addressing Guide to Non-Statutory Barriers to College Student Voting](#)



[Talking Politics: Guide for Campus Conversations about your Voting Reports](#)



[Network Comparison Report](#)



Where to find...

nancy.thomas@tufts.edu

Is my campus participating in NSLVE? Look [here](#).

How do I obtain my campus report? Go [here](#).

What do we do with our campus reports? Read [this](#).

How do I convince others on my campus to care about elections?
Try [this](#).

Where do I go for other resources? Go [here](#)!



Jonathan M. Tisch
College of Civic Life