

2017

CIVIC ACTION PLAN

Sonoma State University



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VISION AND MISSION

Sonoma State University's overarching values as expressed in the 2014-19 strategic plan include intellectual curiosity, diversity and inclusiveness, sustainability, globalization, and community involvement and civic engagement. Sonoma State's Center for Community Engagement (CCE) is charged with cultivating community involvement and civic engagement on the SSU campus and through its community partnerships. The CCE supports faculty in developing community-based teaching that integrates academic theory with community service and scholarship that is inclusive of community partners and students to address local problems. As these projects are incorporated into the curriculum, students experience being active citizens and they learn that the theories taught in the classroom apply to real world issues.

The CCE has responsibility to manifest the university's civic action plan and promote civic engagement for university and community stakeholders.

APPROACH

SSU and the CCE have adopted these five Campus Compact statements committing the university to the ideals of higher education for the public good.



■ **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.

ONGOING EFFORTS

The CCE's ongoing responsibilities are designed to promote greater civic engagement. These include supporting new and existing activities that engage students in active involvement with their community, developing faculty capacity and opportunities, and cultivating community partnerships.

- The CCE is the primary office for service-learning initiatives at SSU. When SSU signed on to the Campus Compact, the CCE developed a civic action emphasis for service-learning courses and community-based research.
- The CCE supports faculty and students with community-engaged scholarship including community-based participatory research, action research, public scholarship, and creative activity for the common good. It supports faculty as they develop a community service practice as part of retention, tenure and promotion requirements.
- The CCE promotes, manages and documents student engagement in the Community Involvement Program (up to 6 academic credits) and work-study opportunities at the CCE.
- The CCE works to establish and strengthen partnerships in the community and helps faculty members integrate learning pedagogies for the common good into their curricula. This includes service learning, community-based participatory and action research, public service, civic engagement, problem-based learning, and activism.
- The CCE provides faculty training opportunities through on-campus workshops and information and support for off-campus conferences and publishing opportunities. It coordinates efforts to procure support and funds for all faculty community engagement activities. It provides direct support for on-campus service-learning projects. It links the university into its local and regional social context by providing opportunities for faculty and community partners to meet and develop relationships.



- The CCE assists faculty and staff in connecting with leadership positions such as pro bono consulting, boards of directors, and committees, and supports students in connecting with careers for the common good.
- The CCE helps nonprofit and governmental organizations working on diverse issues – such as poverty, education, the environment, the arts, the elderly, domestic violence, historical preservation, health, sexual assault, disabilities, and community organizing – to access the resources of the university.
- The CCE works closely with community partners to ensure that they are involved in the development and implementation of projects. The CCE conducts training for community agencies on service-learning pedagogy and provides all community partners with resources for building strong and productive relationships with the university. The CCE also conducts visits and ongoing conversations with community agencies to ensure service experiences are successful.
- The CCE documents faculty and community involvement with community-based activities and provides a mechanism for stakeholders to have input into the development process. It is a resource center, serving the university and community as a clearinghouse for community-engaged resources. Its physical library supports faculty, students, and the community with information and models to assist them in developing community-based learning programs. The library houses the latest research as well as sample syllabi and effective program models.

COMMITMENT TO ACTION

To maximize the impact of engagement for students, communities and our shared world, the CCE will:

- Foster an academic environment that furthers democracy and civic action.
- Increase community outreach, and strengthen community-university partnerships.
- Foster collaborative relationships within the University, and between the University and the community.
- Promote an inclusive approach that addresses the distinctive values, beliefs and cultures of the students and community partners.
- Build a campus environment that focuses on the environmental, economic, and social justice implications of sustainability.
- Integrate community work into the curriculum to provide learning opportunities that are relevant and impactful.
- Provide coordination and resource development services across disciplines.
- Create awareness and enable the process of developing a civic perspective.

Strengthen Ongoing Activities

The CCE will continue to strengthen its support for ongoing community service and civic engagement projects, partnerships and opportunities. The CCE currently has a coordinator, a faculty director of the SAGA Sustainable Cities program, two AmeriCorps VISTA members who are on campus one day a week and at community partner sites four days per week, and five student workers. To meet its commitment to ongoing activities and to build new opportunities, the CCE will fill a newly created half-time staff support position. It will phase in appropriate staffing to include a full-time director, part-time faculty fellows from each of the five schools, a full-time community partnership coordinator, and full-time clerical support. Future growth plans include several other staff members such as other coordinator positions and a grant writer.

Strategic Action Committee

The CCE will develop a strategic action committee consisting of faculty, students, and community members. This committee will serve as the advisory group to the CCE, and with the CCE it will provide leadership in the university's civic action and community engagement initiatives. It will focus on developing the university's institutional learning outcomes for civic engagement and will promote and make visible civically engaged academic work on campus. It will also ensure the CCE's effectiveness in managing its own strategic plan.

Information Access

The CCE's documentation of partnerships and activities is currently a mix of hard and digital media, available in the office. All non-copyright-restricted resources will be digitized and available online through the CCE website, and copyrighted material will be fully digitally catalogued and continue to be available for checkout. These resources often give faculty members the jump-start they need to build community partnerships, and the CCE library serves as a clearinghouse for community partners and peer community engagement centers at other universities. As the CCE continues cultivating new relationships with community partners, it will develop a database of community agencies interested in partnering with the university. The database will support CCE staff in providing assistance to those members of the campus community interested in identifying and developing relationships with community partners and help community partners to identify partnering faculty and recruit students. It will also support all co-curricular community involvement, internships and the risk management process.

OUTCOMES

In Fall 2016, the CCE worked with Susan Larson-Bouwer and Vic Liptak to administer an online survey for students, faculty, staff and community partners and to conduct a series of targeted interviews ([see appendices 1 and 2](#)). In February 2017, the CCE engaged university faculty, staff and students and community stakeholders in a strategic civic engagement planning meeting ([see appendix 3](#)). Meeting participants, facilitated by eight graduate students in Organizational Development led by Susan Larson-Bouwer ([see appendix 4](#)), identified specific outcomes from SSU civic action initiatives. These outcomes are organized into the five thematic categories below, and further detailed in the table that follows. Data collection and analysis were completed independently of CCE coordinator Merith Weisman to maintain validity and reliability of the process.



THEMATIC CATEGORIES

Collaborative Relationships

The workshop participants identified the outcome of a cultural change toward establishing and sustaining collaborative relationships with local communities in the surrounding region to foster educational, social, cultural, and economic development.

University-Wide Engagement Opportunities

The participants supported the outcome of a policy change that provides strong community involvement and civic engagement opportunities for students and faculty in the curriculum and across all university programs.

University Leadership Role in Regional Collaboration

Participants endorsed the outcome of an institutional cultural change toward strong leadership in developing, strengthening, and coordinating partnerships and collaborations across the six county service areas, its municipalities, and among the range of stakeholder groups in the university's service area.

Commitment to Mission-Driven Partnership Development

Participants advanced the outcome of a policy change supporting facilitation and coordination of outreach to P-12 school systems and community colleges; and reciprocal partnership development with governmental, nonprofit, and other stakeholding organizations that serve underrepresented populations.

Civic and Community Engagement Requirement

Participants recommended the outcome of a policy change supporting a civic engagement graduation requirement, starting with the creation of Institutional Learning Outcomes that include civic engagement.

OUTCOMES TABLE

	OUTCOME <i>(Change type)</i>	COMMITMENT	MEASURES (M)	INDICATORS (I)
A	COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS <i>(cultural change)</i>	<i>We empower our students, faculty, staff, & community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, & sustainable future for communities beyond the campus— nearby and around the world.</i>	A1M – Number of students engaged in community projects. A2M – Number of faculty participating in civic engagement.	A1I – Increase of service-learning opportunities. A2I – Increased student participation in community engagement activities. A3I – Students know how public good impacts their lives.
B	UNIVERSITY-WIDE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES <i>(policy change)</i>	<i>We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation & capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.</i>	B1M – Number of service-learning classes taught. B2M – Number of students who actively participate in civic engagement activities.	B1I – Increase in service-learning classes across all disciplines. B2I – Increase the number of students in service-learning classes and other civic engagement activities.
C	UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP ROLE IN REGIONAL COLLABORATION <i>(cultural change)</i>	<i>We embrace our responsibilities as a place-based institution, contributing to the health and strength of our communities socially, economically, environmentally, educationally, and politically.</i>	C1M – Faculty, student, and community partnerships built.	C1I – Community partnerships are tracked for their success.
D	COMMITMENT TO MISSION-DRIVEN PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT <i>(policy change)</i>	<i>We harness the capacity of our institution through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.</i>	D1M – Graduates who are committed to social justice, career ready and engaged with the community. D2M – Number of service-learning courses initiated by community partners. D3M – Number of students participating in social justice activities.	D1I – Measure of alumni impact in their communities. D2I – Increased presence of community partners on campus. D3I – Students protected from anti-immigration actions.
E	CIVIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENT <i>(policy change)</i>	<i>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.</i>	E1M – Support students in community-engaged research for a lasting change. E2M – Develop ILOs to include civic engagement. E3M – Develop civic engagement graduation requirement.	E1I – Increase in number of students doing community-engaged research. E2I – Adoption of ILOs including civic engagement. E3I – Adoption of civic engagement graduation requirement.

IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION TABLE

STEP	TASKS	WHO	WHEN	COMMUNICATION
STRENGTHEN ONGOING ACTIVITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately staff the CCE. • Build awareness of current opportunities. • Share expertise/knowledge throughout staff. • Build valued faculty opportunities. (e.g. fellowships in CCE.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCE, AA • CCE • CCE coordinator/director • AA, RTP groups, CCE leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring 2017 start • Ongoing • Ongoing • Fall 2017 start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCE website. • CCE website, student advising, faculty development. • CCE website, CCE internal documents. • CCE website, faculty RTP materials.
STRATEGIC ACTION COMMITTEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprise committee. • Develop responsibilities, process, evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder reps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Sum17 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus email SSU online, external. • Publish at CCE website.
INFORMATION ACCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitize/post CCE resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCE staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sum17 and on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus email, SSU & CCE websites, external.
COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ↑ faculty participation. • ↑ student participation in community projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCE, AA • CCE faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall 2017 start • AY 17-18 start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email, faculty development workshop, Senate. • Social media, academic advising.
UNIVERSITY-WIDE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number service-learning classes. • ↑ student participation in civic engagement activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty, CCE, student government • Faculty, CCE, student government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AY 17-18 start • AY 17-18 start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSU and CCE websites, department/school meetings. • Social media, academic advising.
UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP ROLE IN REGIONAL COLLABORATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make policy to encourage/reward this. • ↑ partnerships, track them, publicize them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President, cabinet, senate • CCE, all SSU divisions/departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sum/Fall 2017 • Fall 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSU online, external. • SSU online, external.



STEP	TASKS	WHO	WHEN	COMMUNICATION
COMMITMENT TO MISSION-DRIVEN OUTREACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies that support institutional culture shift. • Graduate students with civic/community commitment. • Protect students from anti-immigration actions. • ↑ action/theory-oriented service-learning classes. • ↑ community partner presence on campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President, Cabinet, Senate • AA & schools, SA, CCE, faculty, partners • Chancellor, President • CCE, faculty • Deans, faculty, CCE, partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AY 17-18 • AY 17-18 start • Ongoing • AY 17-18 start • Sum17 start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSU online, external. • SSU online, external. • SSU online, social media. • SSU and CCE websites, department meetings. • SSU and CCE websites, social media.
CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy change proposals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Action Com, all campus constituencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall 2017 start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSU and CCE websites, social media, meetings at all levels.





NOTE: “external” in Communication column indicates opportunity for public relations media campaign.

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