

Liberal Education Institute: "Civic Engagement and Higher Education," May 9, 16, & 23, 2008

Civic Engagement Resources

A wealth of scholarly resources exists on this topic. The following list is offered merely as a general starting point. If you have additional titles or websites to contribute, please send them to Meg Mulrooney at mulroomm@jmu.edu.

THE SAGUARO SEMINAR: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN AMERICA is an ongoing initiative of Robert D. Putnam, Professor of Public Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The project focuses on expanding what we know about our levels of trust and community engagement and on developing strategies and efforts to increase this engagement. Putnam is perhaps best known for his book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of an American Community* (Simon and Shuster, 2001), which shows how changes in work, family structure, age, suburban life, television, computers, women's roles and other factors have contributed to a general decline in civic engagement and suggests how Americans can reconnect. <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/saguaro/index.htm>

Tom Erlich. "Service Learning in Undergraduate Education: Where is it Going?" *Carnegie Perspectives* (2007). Erlich offers a brief overview of recent SL trends, including efforts to promote more explicitly civic engagement outcomes. Citing findings from his co-authored book, *Educating Citizens* (Jossey-Bass, 2003), he argues that "the focus on community engagement [in service learning courses and programs] is insufficient preparation for active citizenship if it is not accompanied by experiences that support more systemic political or policy-related understanding and engagement." <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/perspectives/sub.asp?key=245&subkey=1251>

Anne Colby, Elizabeth Beaumont, Thomas Ehrlich, and Josh Corngold. *Educating for Democracy: Preparing Undergraduates for Responsible Political Engagement* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008). According to its abstract, the book reports the results of the Political Engagement Project, a study of educational practices at the college level that prepare students for responsible democratic participation. For more on the Political Engagement Project, an initiative of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, visit the website at <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/programs/index.asp?key=25>

Campus Compact is a coalition of nearly 1,100 college and university presidents — including JMU's own Dr. Linwood Rose — who are committed to fulfilling the public purposes of higher education. As the only national association dedicated to this mission, Campus Compact is a leader in building civic engagement into campus and academic life. <http://www.compact.org/about/>

Millennials Talk Politics http://www.civicyouth.org/?page_id=250

This is a 2007 study based on interviews with undergraduates at twelve campuses and conducted by the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement (CIRCLE) and the Charles Kettering Foundation. An executive summary is available, too.

Terp Impact Web site (site for the University of Maryland's Coalition for Civic Engagement) <http://www.terpimpact.umd.edu/>

Please look over the site in general and for specifics, the About Us link on the top tool bar, left side.

Based on work of the Bonner Foundation and authored by Ariane Hoy and Wayne Meisel, *Civic Engagement at the Center* (Washington DC: AAC&U, 2008) highlights developmental models for students' civic learning and socially responsible leadership implemented at 77 campuses. The monograph describes key elements of the co-curricular model, research on its impact on students, and emerging civic engagement minors created to complement decades of work in student affairs.

Barbara Jacoby, *Civic Engagement in Higher Education* (working title) forthcoming from Jossey-Bass.

Susan A. Ostrander, "Democracy, Civic Participation, and the University: A Comparative Study of Civic Engagement on Five Campuses," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 33, no. 1 (March 2004): 74-93. The research resulted in four key findings: 1. The main components of engagement (student learning, curriculum transformation, community-defined priorities, and knowledge production) vary and change in emphasis as the work develops and as circumstances change; 2. Local community factors and conditions present both facilitators and barriers that need to be identified, understood, and taken into account; 3. An intellectual rationale and a set of intellectual projects are important to involving faculty; and 4. New organizational structures appear necessary to develop and sustain campus-community partnerships that share power and resources.

W. Morgan and M. Streb, "Building Citizenship: How Student Voice in Service-Learning Develops Civic Values. *Social Science Quarterly*, V.82, No. 1 (March 2001): 154-169. Abstract: Though many decry the decline in political participation and interest, few academic studies present a clear approach to help reverse these trends. This paper examines the impact of service-learning programs on students' self-concept, political engagement, and attitudes toward out-groups. The data come from a pre and post survey given to more than 200 high school students in 10 different schools. We show that if students are involved in service-learning projects in which they have a high degree of voice and ownership, their self-concept and political engagement will improve, and they become more tolerant toward out-groups.

Through the auspices of the Virginia Leadership Council, JMU is one of two states to partner with the AAC&U in Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP). LEAP is a nationwide initiative that "champions the value of a liberal education—for individual students and for a nation dependent on economic creativity and democratic vitality. The initiative focuses campus practice on fostering essential learning outcomes for all students, whatever their chosen field of study." One of these essential outcomes is personal and social responsibility, which encompasses civic knowledge and engagement, both local and global. For more information on LEAP and its learning outcomes, see:

<http://www.aacu.org/advocacy/leap/vision.cfm>

On April 17, AAC&U's Core Commitments initiative released a new report titled, "[Should Colleges Focus More on Personal and Social Responsibility?](#)" The report, drawing preliminary findings from the Personal and Social Responsibility Institutional Inventory, reveals that students, faculty, academic administrators, and student affairs personnel all believe these issues should be a major focus of campus attention. However, it also suggests a gap between aspirations and the climate actually experienced on campus.

http://www.aacu.org/core_commitments/documents/PSRII_Findings_April2008.pdf

See also the Civic Engagement Resources webpage maintained by the AAC&U.

<http://www.aacu.org/resources/civicengagement/index.cfm>