

# Civic Competencies

Building the civic capacity of ourselves and others.



Campus Compact

Iowa & Minnesota

## AWARENESS

To be civically aware is to be critically conscious of how our own identities (e.g. race, gender, sexual orientation, ability) interface with societal structures to shape our lived experiences.

**KEY CONCEPTS: SYSTEMS & PERSPECTIVES**

## ACTION

To be civically active is to engage directly with your community by giving your time, resources, and knowledge toward the creation of a more equitable and racially just society.

**KEY CONCEPTS: APPROACHES & POWER**

## AGENCY

To be a civic agent is to utilize your own power and voice to invite and offer opportunities for others to become more critically conscious and actively work towards an antiracist and equitable society.

**KEY CONCEPTS: COMMIT & CHALLENGE**

# Civic Competencies: Summary



Campus Compact  
Iowa & Minnesota

The Civic Competencies framework outlines how we hope students, AmeriCorps members, and interns explore and develop their civic capacity in Iowa & Minnesota Campus Compact programs. This framework pulls from key concepts in the field of higher education and civic engagement, including the Active Citizen Continuum and the Civic Minded Graduate, to provide structure for our programs. The three main concepts are centered on Civic Awareness, Civic Action, and Civic Agency. We view these areas as cyclic, where individuals can simultaneously be in one or the other, can move from Awareness to Agency and back to Action. The main objective in our programs, and in this framework, is to help individuals: 1.) critically evaluate their own identities and lived experiences so that they can more closely examine societal inequities, 2.) take action in meaningful and various ways, and 3.) identify areas where our organization can continue to support their civic awareness and passion for action to invite, engage, and organize others.

This framework is meant to be relatable for anyone, regardless of previous experience in community or civic engagement. Before this framework was finalized, our staff tested various keywords, phrasing, and notions of civic engagement with program participants for one year to determine its usefulness and accessibility. We plan to revisit this framework regularly to continue testing and adapting it to our current program participants' understanding of and interaction with the terms and concepts.

The Civic Competencies framework will be used for all Iowa & Minnesota Campus Compact program participants to help us frame training and events, evaluate what participants are gaining from their experience, and identify areas where our organization can continue to support student learning and development towards active citizenship. Additionally, all program participants will create an Individual Civic Action Plan based on these competencies to understand how they personally can enact social change. We welcome and encourage others to utilize this resource.

## References:

- Active Citizen Continuum, by BreakAway
- Social Change Wheel 2.0, Iowa & Minnesota Campus Compact
- Civic Minded Graduate 2.0: Assessment Toolbox, by Weiss, H.A., Hahn, T., and Norris, K.
- Civic Engagement Quiz, from Tufts University: The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement (CIRCLE)
- How Organizations Develop Activists: Civic Associations & Leadership in the 21st Century, by Hahrie Hahn

# Civic Awareness Learning Outcomes



Campus Compact  
Iowa & Minnesota

The learning outcomes for each area are adapted from the Civic-Minded Graduate 2.0 Rubric.



To be civically aware is to be critically conscious of how our own identities (e.g. race, gender, sexual orientation, ability) interface with societal structures to shape our lived experiences.

**KEY CONCEPTS: SYSTEMS & PERSPECTIVES**

## Learning Outcomes

- Articulate an understanding of systems of oppression(s) across various groups
- Synthesize multiple perspectives to form a complex and critical understanding of a social issue

## Suggested Activities

- Reflective Listening
- Danger of a Single Story
- Where Do You Stand?
- What's Happening Here?

These activities are part of our Civic Agency Workshops, which can be found on our website.

## Reflection Questions

- What values do I hold about myself and my community? What context do those values have related to my personal upbringing and the societal expectations that surround me?
- What is a core issue I want to see changed in society? What is the true history around this? What is currently being done by community leaders and legislators on this, if anything?

# Civic Action Learning Outcomes



Campus Compact  
Iowa & Minnesota

The learning outcomes for each area are adapted from the Civic-Minded Graduate 2.0 Rubric.



## ACTION

To be civically active is to engage directly with your community by giving your time, resources, and knowledge toward the creation of a more equitable and racially just society.

**KEY CONCEPTS: APPROACHES & POWER**

## Learning Outcomes

- Describe the various approaches to address a social issue and analyze their effectiveness in specific situations
- Analyze how actions taken to address social issues are impacted by power structures and systems

## Suggested Activities

- [Social Change Wheel 2.0](#)
- [Power Mapping](#)
- [Assets and Deficits](#)
- [Too Many Balls in the Air: Leadership in Systems](#)
- [Action Star Framework](#)

These activities are part of our Resource Library, which can be found on our website.

## Reflection Questions

- What have been effective strategies for generating positive, more equitable social change?
- How can I become more involved in my community in ways that are non-harmful and reflect the values and authentic needs of my community members?

# Civic Agency Learning Outcomes



Campus Compact  
Iowa & Minnesota

The learning outcomes for each area are adapted from the Civic-Minded Graduate 2.0 Rubric.



## AGENCY

To be a civic agent is to utilize your own power and voice to invite and offer opportunities for others to become more critically conscious and actively work towards an antiracist and equitable society.

**KEY CONCEPTS: COMMIT & CHALLENGE**

## Learning Outcomes

- Articulate a commitment to social change
- Demonstrate the ability to adjust values, attitudes, and beliefs in relation to others, while constructively challenging the attitude, values, and beliefs of others

## Suggested Activities

- Starting with Values
- The Self in Conflict
- Bridging Divides
- Spectrum of Allies
- Individual Civic Action Plan

These activities are part of our Civic Agency Workshops, which can be found on our website.

## Reflection Questions

- How can I more intentionally and inclusively invite others in my community to join me in the work? Who is "at the table" and who isn't?
- In what ways can I draw on the inherent power of others instead of taking on the sole responsibility of the work that needs to be done?

# Civic Competencies: Examples



Campus Compact  
Iowa & Minnesota

All examples are adapted from the *Social Change Wheel 2.0*.

## VOLUNTEERING & DIRECT SERVICE

### AWARENESS

- Research a nonprofit organization's history, vision, and mission.
- Reflect on your own identities and lived experiences and those of the people you will be serving.

### ACTION

- Participate in a day of service event.
- Support a local nonprofit by volunteering weekly.
- Serve as an AmeriCorps member.

### AGENCY

- Organize a day of service event for a nonprofit.
- Create an engagement strategy to recruit more volunteers based on specific needs of organization and/or community.

## FUNDRAISING, GIVING, & PHILANTHROPY

### AWARENESS

- Research a cause to better understand how money is being used at an organization.
- Reflect on your own identities and your positionality to donate time, money, or other resources versus what is most needed in the community.

### ACTION

- Donate cash or in-kind goods (e.g. books for a book drive, food for a food drive).
- Participate in fundraising or phone banking.

### AGENCY

- Organize a fundraiser (e.g. cash, silent auction, material items) for a nonprofit.
- Create a social media campaign to raise funds or goods for a nonprofit or a cause.

## VOTING & FORMAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY

### AWARENESS

- Stay informed about current candidates and their policy stances.
- Reflect on your own identities and experiences to make an informed decision.

### ACTION

- Volunteer for a candidate's campaign.
- Vote (if able).
- Share resources about state voting laws.

### AGENCY

- Organize a voter registration drive.
- Run for public office.

# Civic Competencies: Examples



Campus Compact  
Iowa & Minnesota

All examples are adapted from the *Social Change Wheel 2.0*.

## ADVOCACY

### AWARENESS

- Research a social movement, its histories, and current community action and legislation.
- Reflect on your own identities and experience with the movement.

### ACTION

- Share resources or a video that amplifies the voices of those with marginalized identities.
- Call and/or write letters to elected officials.

### AGENCY

- Organize a campaign to raise awareness about a movement.
- Invite others to join the movement by telling them why an issue matters to you.

## PROTESTS & DEMONSTRATIONS

### AWARENESS

- Listen to stories of those most impacted by an issue to better understand what's happening.
- Reflect on your own identities and lived experiences and actively question your understanding of the injustices being protested.

### ACTION

- Participate in rallies or marches in support of a cause or to bring awareness to injustice.
- Take a knee during the national anthem in solidarity for racial justice.

### AGENCY

- Organize a rally or demonstration to amplify your message and demand action.
- Create a public visual or performance art to invite others to engage with and think differently about an issue.

## SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE DAILY BEHAVIOR

### AWARENESS

- Identify ways to contribute small things on a daily basis that can add to a positive, societal shift.
- Reflect on your own identities and privileges to better understand the impact of your action and/or inaction.

### ACTION

- Wear a mask or facial covering if advised by health officials.
- Ride your bike, walk, or take the bus instead of driving somewhere.

### AGENCY

- Create an educational campaign to raise awareness about socially responsible behaviors.
- Advocate with legislators or administrators to eliminate waste (e.g. plastic straws, single use plastic items).



# Civic Competencies: Examples



Campus Compact  
Iowa & Minnesota

All examples are adapted from the *Social Change Wheel 2.0*.

## SOCIAL INNOVATION & ENTERPRISE

### AWARENESS

- Study sustainable solutions to social issues.
- Reflect on your own identities and cultural practices that may benefit from or be negatively impacted by non-sustainable practices.

### ACTION

- Choose to buy or not buy items based on company policies or industry standards (i.e. boycott, buycott).
- Meet with business leaders to understand their company's impact and stance on social issues.

### AGENCY

- Create a business that focuses on profits, people, and the planet (i.e. triple bottom line).
- Advocate with businesses why certain products and/or political stances are important.

## COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### AWARENESS

- Learn more about community-owned businesses and impacts of big corporations on local economies and community members.
- Reflect on your own identities and consumer habits.

### ACTION

- Support community-owned and local businesses.
- Partner with community business leaders on projects.
- Share your perspective as a community member in city planning and development projects.

### AGENCY

- Develop marketing plans, websites, or other supports to help small businesses or nonprofits grow.
- Offer microloans to aspiring entrepreneurs who would normally not receive them (e.g. those with marginalized identities).

## MUTUAL AID & INFORMAL ASSOCIATION

### AWARENESS

- Research examples of successful crowdfunding campaigns.
- Reflect on your own experiences needing assistance and what positionality you do or don't have.

### ACTION

- Donate to a GoFundMe campaign to help a community member in need.
- Map the skills, interests, relationships, and other assets of residents to inform work on particular issues.

### AGENCY

- Bring people together to act in a shared interest or toward a common goal.
- Create a GoFundMe campaign to support a community member or local group.



# Civic Competencies: Examples



Campus Compact  
Iowa & Minnesota

All examples are adapted from the *Social Change Wheel 2.0*.

## DELIBERATIVE DIALOGUE

### AWARENESS

- Learn more about identities, either those you hold or those you don't.
- Reflect on your own identities and what feelings discussing certain topics (e.g. race) evoke for you. Examine why and how you can move through it.

### ACTION

- Participate in a community dialogue on a topic that you are un/comfortable with.
- Listen to those with marginalized identities, either that you share or don't, and amplify their voice instead of sharing yours.

### AGENCY

- Organize a community dialogue to discuss current issues that community members are facing, locally, nationally, or globally.
- Create an ongoing opportunity to bring people together and engage in conversation.

## COMMUNITY BUILDING

### AWARENESS

- Learn more about your community; talk with others to learn their history and your place in it.
- Reflect on your own identities and experiences in the community.

### ACTION

- Create local history projects profiling both long-time and new residents.
- Identify ways your community can be strengthened, including those voices that are normally left out.

### AGENCY

- Organize neighborhood clean-ups or National Night Out activities.
- Create opportunities for interpersonal connection (e.g. gatherings, events).
- Develop a system for sharing resources and services, such as tools or childcare.