Thanks to my JMU Colleagues

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Overview

• Conceptualizing civic engagement
• Prominent civic engagement assessment strategies across the United States
• JMU’s approach
• Sharing assessment practices
How are These Competencies Different?

- Writing
- Critical thinking
- Quantitative reasoning

VS

- Civic engagement
### Conceptualizations of Civic Engagement

**There are a LOT of terms...**

- active citizenship
- citizenship
- civic achievement
- civic action
- civic attitudes
- civic behavior
- civic capacity
- civic commitment
- civic communication
- civic competency
- civic covfefe
- civic dispositions
- civic education
- civic efficacy
- civic engagement
- civic identity
- civic inclination
- civic inquiry
- civic knowledge
- civic learning
- civic learning spiral
- civic literacy
- civic mindedness
- civic motivation
- civic motives
- civic participation
- civic reflection
- civic responsibility
- civic skills
- collective action
- community involvement
- democratic engagement
- democratic participation
- democratic skill building
- engaged sociology
- socially just citizenship
- global citizenship
- political activism
- political behavior
- political efficacy
- political engagement
- political involvement
- political participation
- political knowledge
- service learning
- social action
- social agency
- social involvement
- social justice
- social responsibility
- social trustee
- voluntary action

### Jingle/Jangle Problems?

**Jingle:** same term for different things  
**Jangle:** different terms for the same things

• What’s the distinction between “Civic” and “Community” engagement?
Non-political Community Engagement & Political Engagement

• Desired outcomes are likely to differ for these two initiatives, necessitating different approaches to assessment.

From an assessment perspective, might be useful to change JMU’s conceptualization from this…

Do we want to assess civic engagement at the broader level or assess each subarea separately?

Separate assessment may be preferable since outcomes are likely to differ.
Helpful Resources for Synthesizing Terms

- AASCU’s Educating Students for Political Engagement: A Guide to Implementation and Assessment for Colleges and Universities.
Measures for Assessing Civic Engagement

• Knowledge and skills
• Attitudes
• Behavior
• Participation in activities
Knowledge and Skills

- ETS’ HEIghten test on Civic Competency & Engagement (Piloting)
- AAC&U Value Rubric on Civic Engagement
- Madison Assessment’s US Society and Politics Test
Attitudes

• There are many....Here are a few:
  – 1) Civic-Minded Professional Scale by Hatcher (2008)
  – 2) Student service-learning course survey by Wang, Ye, Jackson, Rodgers & Jones (2005)
Behavior & Participation

• Actual voter turnout

• Involvement in civic related activities
Recent Civic Engagement Goals at JMU

- Launch James Madison Center for Civic Engagement
- Develop civic competency framework

I am Madison’s legacy
I learn from and with others.
I foster collaboration.
I embrace complexity.
I value pragmatism.
I advance the public good.
I lead.

www.jmu.edu/universitystudies/civicengagement/projects.shtml

I advance the public good…
By preferring the common good over my own private interests.
By recognizing my obligation to participate in civic life.
By persevering to advance a just society.
Our initial goals for civic engagement assessment:

- Identify existing assessments at JMU related to civic engagement
- Consider existing conceptualizations of civic engagement and approaches to its assessment in the literature
General Education’s Cluster 4: Social & Cultural Processes

Students completing an American Experience course will be able to identify, conceptualize and evaluate:

– Social and political processes and structures
– Key primary sources relating to... American history, political institutions and society
– The nature /development of the intellectual concepts that structure American political activity
– The history and development of: 1) American society and culture and 2) American involvement in world affairs, 3) American democratic institutions

Students completing a Global Experience course will be able to identify, conceptualize and evaluate:

– Basic global problems and global political, social, cultural and economic systems that shape societies
– The issues involved in analyzing societies different from one's own and the theoretical models used in studying global problems
– The strengths and limitations of solutions to global problems across and within cultures

All students at JMU required to complete one American Experience course and one Global Experience course.

Faculty developed instruments have been used to assess the learning objectives.
Assessment Days at JMU

- Assessment data collected during two annual Assessment Days yielding a pretest/posttest design
  - **Pretest**: Incoming freshmen in August & **Posttest**: Students with 45-70 credit hours in February

Pretest and Posttest means on AMEX (and Cohen’s d) across 6 cohorts by American History experience completion status

Existing Assessments at JMU

• Cluster 4 assessments
• Voting participation rates
• Civic engagement items added to our continuing students survey
• NSSE
• Self-report scales
  1. 25-item Civic-Mindedness Scale
  2. 7-item Social Justice Responsibility subscale
  3. 8-item Civic Action subscale

We’ve administered these instruments for other purposes.
Should they be used for the assessment of civic engagement?

1) Adapted from the Civic-Minded Professional Scale by Hatcher (2008)
2) From Student service-learning course survey by Wang, Ye, Jackson, Rodgers & Jones (2005)
3) From Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire by Moely, Mercer, Ilustre, Miron, & McFarland (2002)
Enough about JMU, how about you?

• Think, Pair, Share
Thank You!

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