Suggested Text to Include in Syllabi for Academic Civic Engagement (ACE) Classes[1]

The purpose of this document is to suggest text for syllabi of classes with an academic civic engagement (ACE) component. The definition of ACE that St. Olaf uses is included, as well as other supporting definitions and a template for adding details about the particular ACE project. Explicitly contextualizing the course as ACE is critically important in ensuring that ACE is as high-impact as possible and is a best practice in the field. Including this text in ACE course syllabi will help students engage more effectively with off-campus and on-campus entities by raising their awareness of academic civic engagement terminology, aims, learning objectives and best practices.

***Note:** Beginning in the 2018-19 Academic Year, all courses receiving implementation funding will be required to include the ACE definition and the ACE Student Learning Outcomes in their syllabi or course materials, in addition to meeting other requirements.

St. Olaf Definition of Academic Civic Engagement

Academic Civic Engagement (ACE) is a high-impact educational practice through a for-credit course or mentored public scholarship that enables students to apply academic knowledge and skills within a real-world context to address community issues and build the civic identity of all participants.

Other Supporting Definitions

Community: may be a place-based community (campus, local/city, regional/state, national, and global) or identity-based community (race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, ability, etc.). A community encompasses both organizations (for-profit and non-profit) and individuals.

Community Issues: opportunities, priorities, and needs that can be addressed using locally available skills, technology, and knowledge. Addressing community issues starts with a) identifying where they exist, b) listening to those who are affected, c) developing collaborative solutions tailored to community strengths, integrity, history, and assets.[2]

Civic Identity: When one sees her or himself as an active participant in society with a strong commitment and responsibility to work with others towards public purposes.[3]

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[1] The Academic Civic Engagement (ACE) Advisory Committee and the former Academic Civic Engagement Coordinator, Tonja Kjerland, created this resource.

[2] Adapted from "Community-Engaged Learning Student Experiences." Furman University.

[3] Adapted from: Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research, Duquesne University. "Community Engaged Learning Model, Approved 9/28/15."

OTHER COMPONENTS TO INCLUDE ON YOUR SYLLABUS

Include one or all of the following three components, if desired, to provide greater detail about the type of ACE project, student learning outcomes, and instructions for working with off-campus constituents.

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1. **Definition of specific type of activity.** *The following two examples are common types of ACE activities. For definitions of other types, consult with the ACE Office.*

   Community-Based Research – Community-based research is collaborative inquiry that is dedicated primarily to serving the research or information needs of community organizations. The community-campus partnership includes representatives of the community organization, students, and faculty. These partners work together to address a community organization's needs and aims[4].

   Service learning - Service learning is a methodology that combines academic instruction, meaningful service, and critical reflective thinking to enhance student learning and social responsibility. Service learning involves students in organized community service that addresses local needs, and builds on local community knowledge and assets, while developing students' academic skills, sense of civic responsibility and commitment to the community. It recognizes that we have much to learn and much to share.

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2. **ACE Student Learning Outcomes**
   The learning opportunities offered by the academic civic engagement part of this course are intended to enhance your ability to: (list specific ACE Learning Outcomes addressed in this class; all ACE courses should address at least 2 out of the 7 outcomes)

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3. **Guidelines for Public Interactions**
   You need to be respectful and polite when dealing with the people you will meet and work with during our academic civic engagement project. Always identify yourself clearly as a member of this class when contacting people for the first time. Be sure any email you send has a clear subject header and proper, polite greetings, and includes a "cc" to your professor. Dress neatly and with proper attire for the audience when you meet someone or participate in an activity; be on time. When working with minors, be aware that the St. Olaf Protection of Minors Policy advises students to avoid one-on-one situations behind closed doors whenever possible. Send thank you notes promptly. Never forget you represent St. Olaf College during your work on this project.

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[4] Paul, E.L. (2006). Community-based research as scientific and civic pedagogy. Peer Review, 8(1), 12-15.