

**White House Summit on Civic Learning and National Service  
SUMMIT PROCEEDINGS**

**Tisch College for Citizenship and Public Service  
Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts  
October 16, 2014**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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On October 16, 2014, the White House, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University hosted a *Summit on Civic Learning and National Service*. This invitational Summit brought together 75 higher education leaders, government officials, representatives of civic organizations, and researchers studying civic learning and engagement. The rich conversation brought many themes and disagreements.

The following Summit Proceedings are based on a review of the notes from the Summit, compiled and summarized by representatives from Tisch College.<sup>1</sup> In our reflection on the discussion, seven themes emerged:

- 1. Colleges and universities must support *democracy*.** Educating for democracy and generating knowledge to serve democracy were central purposes of the Morrill Land Grant Act, the GI Bill, and the creation of community colleges. The 1947 Truman Commission on Higher Education for Democracy stated that educating for democracy "should come first . . . among the principal goals for higher education." But this heritage has largely been forgotten. The public, policymakers, and leaders of higher education now appear to focus primarily on preparing students for a competitive labor market.
- 2. Democratic education means engagement with politics, institutions, and contentious issues—by students, faculty, and staff in their capacity as teachers, learners, researchers, and civic actors.** Serving democracy means more than service, although service-learning programs contribute to that mission. Colleges and universities should be places of courageous conversations and action, where the most pressing social, economic, and political needs the nation and world are identified, studied, and debated, and where students develop the skills and sense of agency to act on those needs.
- 3. Civic learning must move from elective and available to pervasive and expected.** Since the 1980s, many colleges and universities have created impressive centers and programs for civic engagement, community service, community partnerships, and related topics. These special programs represent a valuable network, distributed across the country and connecting higher education to other sectors. However, they remain fairly marginal in academia itself, enlisting especially interested students and faculty. Some of the institutions represented at the Summit have taken the next step by making civic learning pervasive or even required on their campuses.
- 4. Colleges and universities should be partners in local problem solving and anchors in democratic communities.** Campuses can support reciprocal faculty-community collaborative research, open their doors to the community, and serve as conveners to identify and facilitate change about local challenges.
- 5. Civic learning must be measured and assessed.** Unless colleges and universities collect data and use it to improve programs and hold themselves accountable for results, civic learning will not be pervasively effective. Better measurement systems would also demonstrate the value of civic learning for employment and thus mitigate the tradeoff between education for democracy and education for work.

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<sup>1</sup> Copies of transcribed notes from the Summit are available upon request. Send request to [nancy.thomas@tufts.edu](mailto:nancy.thomas@tufts.edu).

6. **Higher education should tackle growing economic and social inequality based on class and social identity.** Many students face economic barriers to civic engagement. At a time of rapidly rising college costs, students may have to work at least one job, may have children of their own, and may hold substantial debt. Some possible solutions to those barriers are course credit for public service experiences, loan forgiveness, and connecting civic and career skills.
7. **Leadership must come from many places,** including federal and state policymakers, college administrators, academic departments, students, and also from community-based organizations and business. Many positive steps were proposed at the Summit, from raising the proportion of work-study funds available for community work to changing state or even federal measurement systems to include civic outcomes. Above all, the stakeholders must return the civic and democratic mission of higher education to its traditional high status in American life.

Based on the Summit discussions, we would suggest both an interest in and a need for continued work in two areas:

- Collective work among scholars and practitioners on what the research shows regarding the nature, scope, and effectiveness of civic learning and engagement in democracy; and
- Further, focused discussion among educators and policy makers to prioritize specific actions at the campus, collaborative, state, and federal, levels to advance civic learning and engagement in democracy.

Community partners/representatives should be key participants in both sets of discussions.

## GOALS AND AGENDA REVIEW

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On October 16, 2014, the White House, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University hosted a *Summit on Civic Learning and National Service* to strengthen the connection between civics and service in higher education. This Summit was part of a series of White House initiatives promoting community service, civic engagement, and active citizenship as one of a series of celebrations and gatherings marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AmeriCorps and in celebration of the 900,000 Americans who have served through AmeriCorps over the past two decades. This invitational Summit brought together 75 higher education leaders, government officials, representatives of civic organizations, and researchers studying civic learning and engagement. The goals of the Summit were to:

- Highlight the importance of civic learning and national service as a central component of both student learning and active citizenship;
- Advance practices in the field by sharing best practices in measurement, communication, and pervasiveness of civic learning in higher education;

- Reinvigorate this work nationally by identifying high priority actions and next steps for participants and for the field; and,
- Issue a call to action for leadership to accelerate work on measurement and pervasiveness.

The Summit began at 10:00 AM and adjourned at 4:00 PM. The agenda included opening remarks, a panel discussion of *Opportunities and Key Challenges*, two mid-day break-out groups, small working groups in the mid-afternoon, and a closing plenary. The two breakout groups worked on these questions:

*Group A: How do we embed civic learning in the education of all college students, making it pervasive, not elective, for students and institutions alike?*

*Group B: How do we define goals, measure, and communicate civic learning and engagement goals and the value and outcomes of this work?*

The late-afternoon working groups were charged with identifying “next steps” for the following stakeholders and domains:

- Federal policy makers
- State systems of higher education and policy makers
- Campus Leaders
- Departments on campuses
- Higher education associations
- Researchers
- Civic Leaders and Service Organizations/Innovators

Each group reported consensus steps in the final, closing plenary.

This document tracks the groups’ conversations, drawn from notes taken by professional note-takers and newsprint from each group. The Appendices contain the following:

- A - White House Invitation
- B - List of Attendees
- C - Summit Agenda
- D - *Setting the Stage* framing paper

## **OPENING REMARKS**

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### **Alan Solomont, Dean, Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service**

Dean Solomont acknowledged and thanked the many partners who made this conference possible, including The White House, the U.S. Department of Education, the Corporation for

National and Community Service, and the Association of American Colleges and Universities. He particularly noted Tufts alumnus Jonathan Greenblatt, Special Assistant to the President, who made the original suggestion for this conference; Nancy Thomas, Director of Tisch College's National Study on Learning, Voting, and Engagement; and Peter Levine, Associate Dean for Research, one of the nation's leading voices for civic renewal.

Tisch College grew out of a long tradition of civic engagement at Tufts, starting in 1954 with the creation of the Civic Education Foundation and later the Lincoln Filene Center. Tisch College is a national leader in civic education and is setting the standard for higher education's role in civic renewal. Serving every student at Tufts University, Tisch College prepares young people for a lifetime of civic engagement and creates an enduring culture of active citizenship. Next fall, Tisch College will launch the Tufts 1+4 Bridge-Year Service Learning Program, which offers accepted students a full year of community service in the U.S. or abroad before enrolling at Tufts.

**Roberto Rodriguez, Special Assistant to the President for Education Policy  
White House Domestic Policy Council**

Because Tisch College is a beacon of civic learning, Mr. Rodriguez noted, it is fitting that this conference should be held at Tufts. He described working to coordinate and execute the President's policy objectives and priorities with colleagues Jonathan Greenblatt, Special Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation, Jamienne Studley, Deputy Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, and Roger Nozaki, Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Department of Education.

Much progress has been made in both access and attainment in education. For example, we are experiencing the highest graduation rate in our history; reading and math attainment are at an all-time high; college affordability is growing; and Pell grants have increased 50% since President Obama assumed office. We should celebrate this progress, while realizing that there is more work to be done.

Mr. Rodriguez added that today we acknowledge the importance of civic learning and service alongside access and attainment as major goals. He challenged the "false dichotomy" between the goals of workforce preparation and preparation for democracy. We are here today to validate, elevate, and integrate the concept of civic learning across the spectrum of higher education.

**Jonathan Greenblatt, Special Assistant to the President and Director, White House  
Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation**

A 1992 Tufts graduate, Mr. Greenblatt expressed pride that Tufts has a long history of sponsoring national conferences on citizen participation. He praised Dean Solomont for his lifetime of public service and thanked many others for their contributions. A strong believer in the power of human capital, Mr. Greenblatt defined "social innovation" as driving innovation for public gain and for the public good. In his view, civic participation is the strategy to tap our most valuable resource, the energy of the American people. Harnessing this human capital can boost

job creation. For example, he noted that 60 million Americans are involved in some form of volunteerism. Data shows that long term unemployed workers have a greater chance of finding employment when they volunteer in their communities. Volunteering is connected to national recovery and economic renewal. College campuses are a remarkable platform for nurturing and developing the spirit of volunteerism.

Mr. Greenblatt introduced the members of the panel for the next part of the program and asked how we can:

1. Validate civic learning: Summarize and assess everything we've learned about various models of civic education happening around the country?
2. Elevate civic learning: Convert those insights into institutional practices and implemented policy?
3. Integrate civic learning: Ensure that civic learning is pervasive and seen as deeply integral to the role of higher education?

## **PANEL DISCUSSION: WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE NEED TO GO**

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**Moderator:** Jamiene Studley, Deputy Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education

**Panelists:**

- Carol Schneider, President, Association of American Colleges & Universities
- Richard Freeland, Commissioner of Higher Education, State of Massachusetts
- Lauren Begham, Student, Brown University

**Lauren Begham**, a senior Environmental Studies major, is deeply committed to reducing food waste (40% of our food is wasted, she explained). Working in this area also gives her an opportunity to address other social issues such as poverty and homelessness. Lauren explores her passion both inside and outside of class, which makes her much more engaged in learning. "When the connection is clear, I am invigorated and pushed to work harder." Her goal in doing this work is to become a good problem solver.

**Carol Schneider** feels that this kind of learning should be an expectation for everyone but it is not. It should be "pervasive and expected, not just elective and available." In 1947, the principal aim of education, as stated by the Truman Commission, was a fuller realization of democracy and the intelligence to solve social problems. We have lost that. Today we're asked to show that an education will get you a job.

**Richard Freeland**, whose Higher Education Commission sets goals for 29 public institutions in Massachusetts, feels that active citizenship is in the DNA of public higher education. Last spring, the statewide board adopted a policy stating that civic learning should be a "pervasive and expected" part of the curriculum of each institution. The policy includes four learning goals:

- 1) General educational competence;
- 2) Knowledge of American history and government in a global context;

- 3) Applied competencies, i.e. the ability to take civic learning and apply it in a practical way;
- 4) Awareness of the values that underlie democracy and how they are expressed in our institutions.

The Commission gave the institutions broad latitude in how to meet these goals, with a focus on learning outcomes.

Mr. Freeland offered two contributing factors to the decline in interest in civic learning from the high point of the post WWII era. First is the general disintegration of the undergraduate curriculum, i.e., the absence of structural requirements and the growth of options and electives. Second is the legacy of Vietnam. Students used oppositional methods of engagement, and colleges and universities now avoid student participation in government. In its place, students are taught civic (and job) skills. The academic major is a pathway to a career, not civic work.

In Massachusetts, the public is concerned with K-12 education but complacent about higher education. Any urgency about higher education level is coming from within the institutions themselves. So another challenge before us is to educate the public. Although he is enormously impressed with the growing youth interest in civic engagement, Mr. Freeland reminded the group that civic engagement is not a substitute for civic learning.

**Carol Schneider:** How can we change students' fixed idea that the only thing that matters is their major field of study, because that's their pathway to a career? Students buy in to the notion that real-world problem solving is a skill desired by employers. Problem solving skills are also needed in the civic arena. That should be a helpful link.

**Lauren Begham:** If we can give class credits for out of the classroom civic work, it would be much more popular with students.

**Comments:** About 50% of graduating seniors have had service learning courses, and 70% are actually volunteering in some way. Why aren't we capturing a larger percentage of this group and offering class credit? How have others done it? Perhaps it should be a graduation requirement. We need policy encouragement.

**Richard Freeland:** Looking across the country, many institutions offer service learning as an option, very few are requiring it. In his opinion, random learning passes for a liberal education today: "just pick what you want to study from a list." Are we serving our young people well? We need some profound self-reflection on this subject.

**Carol Schneider:** Mexico requires 480 hours of public service in relation to one's major as a graduation requirement. We need to find ways to align service experiences with academic majors.

**Comments:** Student access to civic experiences is uneven, particularly at the K-12 level. We need to connect Pre-K through college to fill gaps in civic learning and engagement. One way to

increase access to public problem solving might be discussions of policy issues/social problems in courses and across campus.

## CONCURRENT MODERATED DISCUSSIONS

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***Group A: How do we embed civic learning in the education of all college students, making it pervasive, not elective, for students and institutions alike?***

**Facilitator: Peter Levine, Associate Dean for Research, Tisch College, and Roger Nozaki, Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Department of Education**

**Participants:**

Carolyne Abdullah, Director of Programs, Everyday Democracy

Kevan Barton, Program Director, LIFT-Boston

Benjamin Berman, Student and Tisch Scholar, Tufts University

Harry Boyte, Coordinator, American Commonwealth Partnership

Margaret Brower, Program Administrator, National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, Tisch College

Daniella Burgi-Palomino, Graduate Student, the Fletcher School and Tisch College, Tufts University

Mary Ellen Carroll, Dean of Experiential Learning, Loras College

Amy Cohen, Executive Director, George Washington University

Mal Coles, Atlantic Area Manager, Corporation for National and Community Service

Reza Fakhari, Associate Provost, Kingsborough Community College

Tia Fay, Break Away Fellow, Alternative Breaks

Max Finberg, Director of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Fagan Forhan, Director, Center for Civic Learning and Community Engagement, Mt. Wachusett Community College

Stephanie Gordon, Vice President for Professional Development, NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

Nicole Hurd, Founder and CEO, National College Advising Corps

Deb Jospin, Chair Tisch Board of Advisors and Trustee, Tufts University

Hannah Holley, Student, Sustained Campus Dialogues

Myung Lee, Executive Director, Cities of Service

Adrienne Lever, Senior Director for Strategic Partnerships, Democracy Works

Michael Maskin, Student, Tisch Scholar, Tufts University

Carlos Santiago, Senior Deputy Commissioner Academic Affairs, Mass. Dept. of Higher Education



John Saltmarsh, Co-Director, New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) at the University of Massachusetts, Boston  
Carol Schneider, President, Association of American Colleges and Universities  
Phyllis Segal, Encore Higher Education Initiative  
Andrew Seligsohn, President, Campus Compact  
Kim Schmidt-Gagne, Program Coordinator, Keene State College  
Stephanie South, National Coordinator, The Democracy Commitment  
Robin Stevens, Assistant Professor of Childhood Studies, Rutgers University Camden  
Susan Stroud, founder and Executive Director, Innovations in Civic Participation  
Jessica Swenson, Graduate Student, Tufts University  
Simon Thompson, Staff, Foundation for Civic Leadership  
Barbara Vacarr, Encore Higher Education Initiative  
Miriam Villanueva, Student, Scottsdale Community College  
Scott Warren, co-founder and Executive Director, Generation Citizen  
Crystal Williams, Student, Mt Wachusett Community College

**Harry Boyte** started the discussion by offering four suggestions:

- The public needs to be involved in a deliberation about the purposes of higher education and the value of higher education as a resource in the world. Having engaged in these conversations over the past two years, he has observed that the focus shifts from “I” to “We” and the public becomes more engaged.
- The value of higher education to democracy is not understood well, much less assumed. We need to bring democracy into the role of higher education.
- Civic professionals need to feel empowered and able to practice their professions in an empowering way.
- Work sites need to be perceived as civic sites or empowering spaces so that, while in them, people feel like they are shaping the world.

**Reza Fakhari** described an exciting new approach to civic learning at Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn, with a widely diverse student population of 15,000. Every student is required to have at least two civic engagement experiences. Students have the options of a course or a certified off-campus experience. The program was originally designed for honors students, but it worked so well it was extended to all students. With a student age range of 18 to 60, fitting service opportunities into work and family life is challenging. Faculty buy-in is critical, and Reza has worked hard to engage them. He has instituted a system for rewarding faculty for their engaged scholarship, as well as grants to faculty interested in learning to bridge cultures. Because this is a brand new program, measurements of success can only be done when this year’s senior class graduates. Reza is determined, however, that students will come to regard civic learning not as an add-on but as something absolutely essential to their future development and success.

**Carolyn Abdullah**, Director of Community Assistance for Everyday Democracy, a national nonprofit that supports civic and community building efforts that engages multiple diverse audiences to address public problems suggested that civic learning experiences should be substantive and “real” for both students and the community. She spoke about the need for higher

education to engage “authentically” with community. Noting the present of institutional power within higher education, she discussed partnering with the local community in ways that allows the community to see the real value of those partnerships so that the community does not see itself as a one-stop, one-dimensional learning experiences for students only, but that the community brings its own learnings and experiences to bear on university-community partnerships. This partnership also involves having an engaged faculty who embed themes of social justice in their teaching, yet who are also engaged themselves and leading by example. In commemoration of Freedom Summer 1964, she reminded everyone of the Freedom Summer schools that emerged in churches, under trees, and on back porches during the 1960s and the role of students in teaching in those schools, which were vehicles for social change. The message being that the Freedom Summer curriculum put students at the center because their “field/personal” experience was integral to learning and not separate from it. Higher education today must recapture a similar pedagogy.

A discussion followed on overcoming faculty resistance to civic learning and helping faculty recognize civic learning as a legitimate scholarly endeavor. There needs to be a partnership between faculty and administration. One suggestion was to make it mandatory for faculty to facilitate service opportunities for students. A junior faculty member at a research university spoke frankly of the pressure to publish: “We are rewarded for scholarship. If faculty are to be involved [in civic learning courses], this time investment can be counted against them when tenure and promotion review come up.”

When faculty are engaged, however, they can make a tremendous impact inside the classroom in terms of recognizing different voices, managing discussion, assigning thought-provoking readings, and highlighting varying perspectives on an issue. Faculty must have a passion for doing this because they serve as role models and students emulate them. They are agents of social change. We cannot make the faculty do it – it strips them of their academic freedom. They must want to do it, and be rewarded for it as well.

Another participant reminded the group of the strides that have been made. Tufts University supports the Tisch College, and Brown University has a similar entity. Today it is highly unusual to visit a college campus and not find a center for public service. In other words, we have been very successful in stimulating civic engagement. Our next step is to educate our communities to recognize the difference between civic *engagement* and civic *learning*. Deb Jospin, Chair of the Tisch College Advisory Board, commented that a large part of the Board’s success over its 12 year-history was due to continually selecting members with a passion for civic engagement.

The next area of discussion involved the challenge of meeting the needs of busy, highly focused students of modest means who, although drawn to the idea of taking on a civic engagement project, face barriers to engagement. Many work multiple jobs and have a family. Others simply cannot afford to do an unpaid internship. Most attend college for career development, and many have significant debt to repay. Some possible solutions to those barriers are course credit for public service experiences, loan forgiveness, and connecting civic and career skills.

Alan Solomont cautioned against inadvertently positioning civic learning courses as preparation only for students who plan to enter a career in public service. He made the point that making

money is not inconsistent with being a good citizen. We still can instill the value of being an active citizen working for a more just society in someone who is working in the private sector. Academia should be introducing these students to a whole range of ways to incorporate civic learning principles into anything they choose to do. We need to send the message that they can be active, engaged citizens in all aspects of their lives.

The final discussion point centered on the erosion of the public mission of the historic land grant colleges, which were once a great meeting ground between the community and higher education. Several others commented about the importance of community relationships. One framed it a “passionate pipeline” and felt that the community must be central to how we design our programs and how we interact with each other.

***Group B: How do we define goals, measure, and communicate civic learning and engagement goals and the value of outcomes of this work?***

**Facilitators: Nancy Thomas, Tufts University and Jonathan Zaff, America’s Promise  
Participants:**

Julie Ajinkya, Director of Community Partnerships, Institute for Higher Education Policy

Seth Andrew, Founder, Democracy Prep Charter School

Lawrence Bailis, Associate Professor, Brandeis University

Lauren Behgam, Student, Brown University

Jodi Benenson, Researcher, Tisch College

Robert G. Bringle, Kulynych/Cline Visiting Distinguished Professor, Appalachian State University

Barbara Canyes, Executive Director, Massachusetts Campus Compact

Patricia Crosson, Senior Advisor for Academic Policy, State of Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

Jennifer Domagal-Goldman, National Manager, American Democracy Project

Jonny Dorsey, White House Fellow, Aspen Institute

Cris Ros Dukler, Chief Operating Officer, Public Allies

Emily Haber, Executive Director, Massachusetts Commission for Volunteering and Community Service

Alan Harlam, Director of Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship, Swearer Center, Brown University

Ariana Hoy, Vice President, The Bonner Foundation

Joseph E. Kahne, Senior Advisor, Spencer Foundation New Civics Initiative

Jillian Kinzie, Associate Director, Center for Postsecondary Research and NSSE Institute

Noemie Levy, Policy Assistant, The White House

Helen-Margaret Nasser, Executive Assistant to the Associate Provost, Kingsborough Community College (CUNY)

Shelley Nicolson, Director for Community Learning, Mount Wachusett Community College

Robert Reason, Research Associate, The Center for the Study of Higher Education

Roberto Rodríguez, Special Assistant to the President, The White House

Ian Simmons, President, Foundation for Civic Leadership

Jamienne Studley, Deputy Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education  
Nyeema Watson, Acting Associate Chancellor for Civic Engagement, Rutgers University - Camden  
Joshua Winters, Director, New Voters Project

**Robert Bringle** of Appalachian State University launched the discussion by talking about the complexity of measuring civic learning and engagement. First, at what level do we measure (e.g., program, course, student, institutional)? Second, the audience matters. We would use different analyses for different audiences. Third, what evidence do we gather? Some options include: increased knowledge, special skill development, cultural competency and an ability to identify inequality, attainment levels, success in employment after graduation, and/or attitudes and values.

**Jonny Dorsey**, White House Fellow, said that the challenge is the general public – when you tell people you do civic or community-based work, the response is, “That’s nice.” We need to gather evidence that civic work is a career pathway for all students. He suggested using Linked-In as a tool because it has data on the employment trajectory of students.

**Julie Ajinkya** from the Institute for Higher Education Policy noted that the Lumina Foundation is convening stakeholders to improve student attainment. We need to be able to provide data that demonstrates post-graduation outcomes – this is the primary area for data development. What’s needed is a simple infographic showing the attainment pipeline, from civic experience to employment. This is particularly acute for community colleges where, if the experience is not facilitating completion, it need not be supported.

By always focusing on attainment, what are we missing? If students do not reach educational goals, where do they end up? Other valuable outcomes of civic learning and engagement also matter.

The group captured on newsprint (and in subsequent conversations) some of the promising research tools to measure civic learning and engagement:

- The National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) civic engagement model
- The Personal and Social Responsibility Index (PSRI)
- Democracy-Civic Outcomes Assessment
- Values Rubric, AACU’s LEAP initiative
- Design Qualification Profile
- The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) and related research
- National Student Clearinghouse enrollment data
- Civic Attitudes and Skills questions
- Measuring Citizenship Scale (Rutgers)
- Global Perspective Inventory
- Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)
- The Civic-Minded Professional Scale
- Ash and Clayton’s (2009) DEAL model for critical reflection
- Harvard Institute of Politics Survey

- E-portfolios
- The Franklin Project
- The Collaboratory at UNC-Greensboro
- Research partnerships with the National Student Clearinghouse

We then broke into three groups, on Goals, on Communication, and on Measurement. The groups reported their top-line ideas in the first part of the afternoon plenary.

## **AFTERNOON PLENARY: REPORTS FROM THE MID-DAY SUBGROUPS**

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***Group A: How do we embed civic learning in the education of all college students, making it pervasive, not elective, for students and institutions alike?***

### **Group A-1: Disciplines and Departments**

**Reporter: Margaret Brower**

- 1) Invest in the next generation of faculty: they are newer, younger, and more open to these concepts. Help them to be the productive scholars they want to be, help them to *thrive*, not just get by.
- 2) Tailor the rewards by department and institution: grants, tenure and promotion, research awards.
- 3) Search for ways to open up blocked pathways to tenured faculty
  - Issues to deal with: Non-tenured, contingent faculty; taking care of older faculty; giving established faculty a chance to find renewal and excitement in doing community-based teaching and learning initiatives; faculty who consider scholarship and research their primary occupation and who are less interested in teaching.

### **Group A-2: Institutions**

**Reporter: Amy Cohen**

- 1) Develop initiatives at the campus level to promote cultural change around the democratic purpose of higher education.
  - Commit to and understand what it would mean
  - Shift from identity to activity
  - Move from being victims to being agents of change
- 2) Convene a series of national conferences of leaders in higher education to discuss the purpose of an education.

### **Group A-3: Local and State Levels**

**Reporter: Max Finberg**

- 1) Create the business case: presidents, students, industries, government officials all need to be convinced that this works.
- 2) Let's be more creative about funding, i.e., how can we look at the 7% of work study funds that go to this effort, as federal and state funding shrink.
- 3) Leadership matters. It can come from the president, deans, a state rep, or the local mayor.

***Group B: How do we define goals, measure, and communicate civic learning and engagement goals and the value of outcomes of this work?***

**Group B-1: Goals**

**Reporter: Joshua Winters**

- 1) To set goals, we need to engage the campus community and local civic organizations (such as Public Allies and Everyday Democracy – both in attendance at this conference) in a genuine debate about higher education's goals. Individual colleges and universities, as well as higher education more broadly, need to hear what organizations in public life are doing. The goals should complement the work of civic organizations and not simply reflect an agenda set by local institutions or higher education more broadly.
- 2) One goal should be student agency in political change and policy making, so that the next generation has the capacity to reshape how a democratic government and society work.
- 3) The conversation that attendees at this conference are having today should be replicated on campuses and in communities.

**Group B-2: Measurement**

**Reporter: Ian Simmons**

- 1) We want to measure on several dimensions: civic knowledge, ability to demonstrate civic behavior, the belief that one can actually change anything.
- 2) The ability to measure campus-by-campus voting rates (e.g., Tisch/CIRCLE college student voting study) can help effect innovation and change.
- 3) Try to measure alumni voting rates.

**Group B-3: Communication**

**Reporter: Amy Lazarus**

- 1) It is critically important that graduates can articulate their world view. Make civics sexy again. What's something bigger that we can all do?
- 2) Indiana University has a civic-minded graduate essay: *What is the ethic of caring that you will bring to your respective discipline?* A winner is announced for each discipline, with recognition for the faculty member who provided help and support. Such an essay (or video or piece of art) is a valuable aid in a job search, a resume, and in explaining what matters to the individual.

## LATE AFTERNOON WORKING GROUP DISCUSSIONS

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After the Plenary, the large group self-selected working groups broken down by stakeholders and domains. The guiding question for each stakeholder group was, “What should [this stakeholder] (e.g., institutions, researchers) do?”

**Federal policy makers** can provide incentives for, and even require, specific actions on the part of college and universities to increase service and engagement in democracy. Some suggestions include providing more funding for service; expanding the spectrum of service to include political engagement, advocacy and organizing; in any higher education rating systems, measuring and including measures such as student voting, advocacy for policy change, and community organizing; requiring that college students pass a citizenship test; and supporting unpaid student internships. The federal government should stop promoting reductionist education – report cards, etc. and think more broadly about the communities that need higher education and the role of institutions in local communities. Policy makers should also fund all mandates.

**State systems of higher education and policy makers** can provide levers for measuring civic learning outcomes and connecting k-12 learning with higher education. They can require that each campus include in its strategic plan a strategy for civic learning and engagement in democracy. State systems can also help campuses make the case for this work, particularly the educational and business cases.

**Campus Leaders** can make civic learning and service an institutional priority – a default learning experience for all students. Students should be developing social agency and political efficacy. Bring back conversations about democracy and politics. To accomplish these objectives, institutional leaders need to view the challenge as one of shifting institutional culture. This charge would include faculty and staff development, new language, and new expectations of students reflected in institution-wide civic learning goals. Campus leaders should convene to discuss these recommendations and develop a strategy to move to action.

**Departments on campuses** can provide faculty incentives. Incentives might include recognizing engaged scholarship in promotion and tenure processes, professional development, travel money, and seed money for community-based research. Departments should encourage “next generation engagement,” reflected in the work of newer, more diverse, more interdisciplinary, and more digital faculty.

**Higher education associations** can, in partnership with the White House and U.S. Department of Education, play a convening role, hosting high level conversations on higher education’s role in democracy, civic learning, reimagining the role of the college president as an agent of change rather than a “manager,” and community needs. Associations can communicate the results of research in clear ways (e.g., infographics) and can showcase promising community-civic organizations-campus collaboration. They can create repositories for assessment tools and rubrics. Associations should take a united front and agree to one set of indicators to measure

success. Associations can also shed light on higher education as a driver of inequality through its norms and attitudes toward individualism.

**Researchers** can study and document promising, successful practices, establishing a link between civic and educational learning goals. Researchers need clarity on what they are measuring, moving beyond narrow definitions of politics or civics. Then they can work together to develop a matrix connecting civic learning with, for example, educational attainment or increased equal opportunity. Many institutional researchers are examining student citizen development internally – collectively, what do these internal research projects tell us? They can consider objective evidence, such as high voting rates, and study student learning experiences on those campuses that seem to foster political engagement. The most immediate next step is to find funding to support convening researchers again to map out a strategy for achieving these goals.

**Civic Leaders and Service Organizations/Innovators** can expand the scope of “service” to include participation in government, engagement in democracy, and explore new ways that students can engage in communities. They can work with college students and promote the ideal that participation in democracy is a “responsibility.” They can work with students to promote the ideal that service is not something that is turned on at age 18 and off at graduation – it’s a lifetime commitment. They can increase and improve “real life” experiences for students. The practitioners urged colleges and universities to treat them as co-creators of student engagement experiences and not simply “want” something from them. Institutions and communities/civic organizations should be reciprocal partners in this work.

## FINAL PLENARY

**Facilitators: Jamiene Studley, Peter Levine**

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**Affordability:** Several attendees expressed the view that service experiences, as currently constructed, are not financially feasible for too many students. Speaking as a single mother and college student working three jobs to pay her tuition, one attendee noted that she is simply unable to take on any community service activities. A discussion followed about the possibilities of subsidizing paid civic internship programs, matching VISTA experiences with scholarships, and forgiving student loans for service. One institution has reallocated their student employment funds to go to students with the greatest need; in effect, it has become a financial aid program. The federal government should introduce a program subsidizing service experiences.

**Motivations:** Motivating students to engage in service, beyond providing financial incentives, was also identified as a priority. We can build on substantial existing interest and demand. It’s important to engage students as first-years, early in their higher education. As one person stated, “To make change, you must care about the situation, be involved.” Others suggested integrating vocational and service experiences, and connecting civic skills with the skills needed for employment. One participant suggested we look at *Teach for America* as a model for engaging college students.



**Language and Scope:** Participants also revisited the language and the scope of the work. “Educate for active citizenship” has no universal meaning, nor does “educating for democracy.” Our democracy requires a range of citizen commitment, from service to activism and political engagement. Millennials are cynical about politics and government, yet they want to lead purposeful lives. Students, faculty, and institutional leaders all see themselves as agents of change, yet they may lack the skills to influence political systems and facilitate social change effectively.

Participants were enthusiastic about a range of follow-up convenings on topics identified at this Summit, and several individuals offered to serve as conveners. There seemed to be energy around ideas to:

- **Convene presidents and other institutional leaders** to share practices and foster renewed enthusiasm and new approaches.
- **Convene researchers** to share research findings and develop tools for measuring the effectiveness of civic learning and service experiences. Include research on the range of experiences, from service to activism and engagement in democracy.
- **Offer faculty development opportunities** to recognize civic learning as an academic outcome. Civic learning should be part of the first-year academic experience and faculty need to be rewarded for doing this work. Researchers should study how civic learning can be embedded effectively across the curriculum.
- **Collaborate with national civic organizations** to determine how higher education can be a strong institutional and structural partner in civic renewal and in addressing the challenges of democracy.
- **Host community-university conversations** about community needs and interests and the role of institutions as agents for change in local communities. There needs to be more community voice. Campuses can host community events, offer community meeting space, invite the community to attend classes, and develop reciprocal partnerships.

## CLOSING REMARKS

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**Alan Solomont** introduced **Tufts Provost David Harris** and saluted him for his contributions in moving the University forward. **Jonathan Greenblatt** acknowledged the challenges faced by enthusiastic student affairs professionals who are ready, willing and able to implement civic engagement programs but have no mandate from above to do so. He thanked all participants for a highly successful conference and declared the session adjourned.

## **Civic Learning and National Service Summit**

October 16, 2014

Tufts University

### **Meeting Goals**

- Spotlight the importance of civic learning and national service for all students – as a central component of students’ learning, a means to increase student learning and attainment, and as an expectation for all Americans.
- Advance practice in the field by sharing existing best practices in measurement, communication, and pervasiveness of civic learning
- Reinvigorate this work nationally by identifying high priority actions and next steps in these areas – for participants and for the field
- Issue a call to action for leadership to accelerate work on measurement and pervasiveness

### ***Agenda***

10:00 am

Welcome

Ambassador Alan Solomont, Pierre and Pamela Omidyar Dean

Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts University

10:10

Opening Remarks

Roberto Rodriguez, Special Assistant to the President for Education Policy

White House Domestic Policy Council

Jonathan Greenblatt, Special Assistant to the President and Director

White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation

10:25

Where We Are and Where We Need to Go – Opportunities and Key Challenges

- Carol Schneider, President, Association of American Colleges & Universities
- Richard Freeland, Commission of Higher Education, State of Massachusetts
- Lauren Begham, Brown University
- Moderator: Jamiene Studley, Deputy Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education

11:15

Break & move to working sessions

11:30 – 2:00

Concurrent moderated discussions, including lunch

*Group A: How do we embed civic learning in the education of all college students, making it pervasive, not elective, for students and institutions alike?*

*Group B: How do we define goals, measure, and communicate civic learning and engagement goals and the value and outcomes of this work?*

2:00 pm

Break and reconvene as full group

2:10

Reports from the small group discussions and Q&A

Facilitator: Amy Cohen, George Washington University

2:40

Smaller working groups on next steps, organized by stakeholder and domain

Moving Forward: Plenary Discussion

3:50

Closing Acknowledgments

4:00

Adjourn for reception

## ***Invitation***



Dear Colleague,

On September 12, President Obama hosted a ceremony at the White House to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AmeriCorps and recognize the 900,000 Americans who have served through AmeriCorps over the last two decades. The President also announced [new efforts](#) to expand national service and a desire to encourage civic learning and national service on the college campus.

Together with the U.S. Department of Education, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University, the White House Office of Innovation and Civic Participation invites you to attend a Civic Learning and National Service Summit on **Thursday, October 16 from 10am-4pm.**

The Summit will bring together leaders in education, civic learning, national service and civic engagement. We will explore how an increased emphasis on civic learning and expanded focus on service can play a central role in educating young people and to tackling today's pressing national and educational challenges. Hosted on the Tufts University campus, this summit will address two key topics facing higher education- the value of civic engagement and how to measure and communicate civic engagement commitment and outcomes.

The summit will take place in the Coolidge Room in [Ballou Hall](#) located at 1 The Green, Medford, Massachusetts on the Tufts University main campus. The summit will be immediately followed by a reception.

**Please RSVP by Thursday, October 2, 2014** to [innovation@who.eop.gov](mailto:innovation@who.eop.gov). You will receive a confirmation email following your RSVP.

Sincerely,  
The White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation