

**DRAFT (3/6/17)**  
**Civic Action Plan**

**Mission and Vision**

Building on Illinois State University's commitment to civic and political engagement, global citizenship, and community engagement as articulated in *Educating Illinois*, the University's strategic plan, and leveraging the long-standing and successful partnership between the Division of Student Affairs and the Division of Academic Affairs in promoting civic engagement on the ISU campus, Illinois State University seeks to infuse the five commitments made in the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Action Statement into the curriculum, co-curriculum, research, and institutional practice. Our goal is to make Illinois State University a steward of place and an institution that educates students for social and global justice, democratic participation, and leadership.

We plan to achieve these goals by integrating the five 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Action Statement commitments into existing curricular and co-curricular programs, by fostering a campus culture that embraces the five commitments and recognizes and rewards excellence in translating them into practice, by providing more resources to support faculty, staff and students who work to implement these commitments, and by enhancing the university's capacity to track community engagement activities.

**Terminology**, such as inequality, social responsibility, social justice, civic engagement, etc. will be defined by the program sponsor, course instructor or the implementation team.

**Indicators** listed reflect the direction of change (increase or decrease). The implementation team will determine measurable targets once baseline data is known/available.

**Approach**

*Institutional Baseline*

Illinois State University has long had a strong commitment to civic engagement, which is one of the university's five core values articulated in *Educating Illinois*. In addition to Illinois State's longstanding partnership between the Division of Academic Affairs/Provost's Office and the Division of Student Affairs, the Civic Action Plan seeks greater involvement of the other university divisions. A number of initiatives and programs that currently exist or are underway provide a very strong foundation on which the university can build in its effort to translate the five 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Action Statement commitments into practice. These initiatives and programs include:

1. The American Democracy Project (ADP), a campus wide civic engagement initiative that sponsors a variety of programs, such as the Political Engagement Project (PEP); the Civic Engagement and Responsibility minor; global engagement events; a week-long annual summer trip to Washington, D.C.; as well as "Redesign Your Course for Civic Engagement", an annual series of

- professional development workshops for faculty seeking to reinvent one of their courses to incorporate civic engagement more strongly
2. The Division of Student Affairs is a NASPA Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) Institution since the inception of the initiative. Staff track CLDE activities occurring in the division and also create civic engagement programming or services to students while building civic learning into division goals and outcomes.
  3. A variety of curricular and co-curricular programs offered by different units of the University:
    - a. Leadership and Community Connections, a unit within the Dean of Students Office, offers a variety of alternative breaks trips in the United States and abroad, leadership development opportunities, local community service opportunities, as well as other programs
    - b. Diversity Advocacy, a unit within the Dean of Students Office that “works to foster civility and raising cultural awareness in students, faculty and staff”  
<http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/involvement/diversity/>
    - c. Academic majors, minors, and certificates
    - d. Registered Student Organizations
    - e. Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development, which is “is dedicated to public service and global understanding”  
<http://stevensoncenter.org/about/>
    - f. The Office of Sustainability “directs Illinois State University’s sustainability efforts on and off campus through collaboration with faculty, staff, and students, and serves as a centralized portal for all related information. The Office provides guidance on incorporating environmental, economic, and social responsibility into the University's operations, outreach, and academic programming”  
[http://sustainability.illinoisstate.edu/about/office\\_of\\_sustainability.php](http://sustainability.illinoisstate.edu/about/office_of_sustainability.php)
    - g. The Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline “is grounded in social justice and works to cultivate and sustain innovative, resilient, and effective educators for urban schools and their communities.”  
<http://teacherpipeline.illinoisstate.edu/about/mission.php>
  4. The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology provides support to “educators in their pursuit of excellence and innovation in teaching, student learning, and the effective use of technology,” including professional development opportunities and other resources for faculty who have an interest in incorporating civic and community engagement into their teaching  
<http://ctlt.illinoisstate.edu/about/mission/>
  5. The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CESL), which opened in spring 2017, focuses on civic education, political engagement, and service learning. It serves as a central clearinghouse to facilitate community partnerships and as a steward of the institutional value of civic engagement and by extension the Civic Action Plan. CESL’s staff includes an Assistant Director for Assessment, Data Management, and Grant Writing, whose work will address a

significant gap in institutional data related to community engagement activities and impact as well as be responsible for grant writing and gift development to fund new initiatives. <http://CommunityEngagement.IllinoisState.edu>

The Civic Action Plan is designed to build on and connect with these programs and initiatives, leveraging the expertise, passion, and commitment to civic engagement that they bring to the campus community to translate the five commitments into practice, and broadening and deepening the work that they already do to foster political engagement and active citizenship, educate students about social justice issues, hone student leadership skills, and build long-term campus-community partnerships.

### *Community Baseline*

Illinois State University is located in McLean County (population 174,500), IL, and the Town of Normal (population 52,500) which is a twin city to the City of Bloomington (population 79,000). Bloomington is the county seat for McLean County and home to all county social service agencies. Forty-three percent of McLean County residents have at least a bachelor's degree. The median household income is \$61,955. Bloomington's median home value is \$153,500 and \$160,000 in Normal. Fifty-seven percent of Bloomington housing is single family and 30% of all housing is rental. In Normal, 53% of housing units are family households, with 45% identified as rental. McLean County's racial makeup is: 5.5% Asian, 7.7% Black, 4.8% Hispanic, 82.1% white. The median age is 33, but there is an anticipated 40% increase in the 65-74 age group by 2020. (See appendix for sources)

Bloomington-Normal has a solid transportation infrastructure. Connect Transit is the primary public transit system with 17 fixed routes. An Amtrak station is located in Uptown Normal providing travel service between Chicago, IL, and St. Louis, MO. The Central Illinois Regional Airport is located in Bloomington and hosts three airlines – American, Delta, and Allegiant.

Bloomington-Normal has a diverse and stable economic base comprised of agriculture, business, and higher education. There are two K-12 public school districts and multiple private schools. Bloomington-Normal is home to OSF St. Joseph Medical Center, a level 2 trauma hospital, and Advocate BroMenn Medical Center, a 221 bed acute care hospital. Both hospitals are not-for-profit and have a community focused mission. There are several large national corporations headquartered in the community that have a history of supporting civic engagement efforts at ISU and also host initiatives that directly serve the community. In addition, Illinois Wesleyan University and Heartland Community College, also located in Bloomington-Normal, have articulated their commitment to civic engagement.

In 2014 The United Way of McLean County conducted a community needs assessment <http://www.uwaymc.org/sites/uwaymc.org/files/UW%202014%20Community%20Assesment%20FINAL.pdf> that identified funding priorities related to education, income, health and community strengthening. These priorities could serve as primacy issues to

address in developing future partnerships. A number of other community based studies, reports, and plans exist that also identify community needs and are listed in the appendix.

For the purposes of the Civic Action Plan outcomes, the word “community” primarily, but not exclusively, refers to Bloomington-Normal, IL. There are current existing campus-community partnerships outside of Bloomington-Normal in Chicago, Decatur, and Champaign, IL. There is the likelihood that additional partnerships will emerge in Illinois, in the United States, and internationally. Going forward, “community” will be defined by a project’s or partnership’s needs.

### *Planning Team*

The core planning team consisted of three individuals: Janet Paterson, Interim Director of the newly founded Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning; Harriett Steinbach, Coordinator of the Leadership and Community Connections (LCC) unit in the Dean of Students Office; and Noha Shawki, Associate Professor in the Department of Politics and Government and Faculty Co-Chair of the American Democracy Project. Jointly, these three individuals brought a diversity of perspectives and professional experiences to the task of developing the Civic Action Plan. All three of these individuals attended the Civic Action Planning Institute in St Louis, MO, in October of 2016. Paterson, Steinbach and Shawki were responsible for communicating and consulting with campus and community stakeholders, campus administrative groups, as well as content experts at every stage of the process of developing a Civic Action Plan.

Administrative groups and governing bodies included:

1. Academic Deans
2. Department Chairs and School Directors
3. Academic Senate
4. Student Government Association (SGA)
5. The Student Affairs Council
6. The Division of Finance and Planning
7. The Division of University Advancement
8. Senior Staff in the Office of the Provost

Campus major stakeholders included:

1. The Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development
2. The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology
3. The Dean of Students Office Leadership Team and Coordinators
4. The Office of Sustainability
5. Illinois State Athletics
6. The Civic Engagement and Responsibility Minor
7. School of Communication Director
8. Innovation Consulting Community Program
9. Campus Climate Committee

Community resources and stakeholders included:

1. United Way of McLean County
2. Not in Our Town
3. Advocate BroMenn Medical Center and OSF St Joseph Medical Center (two local hospitals)
4. City of Bloomington
5. Town of Normal
6. Illinois Wesleyan University
7. Heartland Community College
8. McLean County Regional Planning

### **Implementation**

Once the Civic Action Plan is finalized and approved by the University President (March 2017), the core planning team will publicly present the plan at the annual Civic Engagement Day celebration (May 2017). In fall semester 2017 an implementation team comprised of faculty, staff, and students will be created and be responsible for the implementation of the plan. Staff will advocate for the adoption of the Civic Action Plan outcomes into the next iteration of *Educating Illinois* Strategies and monitor progress through *Educating Illinois* annual progress reports. The implementation team will also consider and may utilize other progress report mechanisms to monitor achievement of Civic Action Plan outcomes. Administrative groups, major stakeholders, and community partners will be updated on progress three times per year.

### **Communication**

We plan to share ideas, experiences, lessons learned, and best practices about civic engagement work at ISU through different outlets and venues:

1. ISU students, staff, and faculty regularly attend the American Democracy Project/Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (ADP/CLDE) conference. ISU has recently rejoined Illinois Campus Compact, and participates in state, regional, and national Campus Compact meetings and workshops.
2. Throughout the Civic Action Plan implementation process ISU faculty, staff and administrators will request stories and interviews in local media outlets, including WGLT, the local NPR member station, local television networks, as well the Pantagraph, the local daily newspaper. Both WGLT and the Pantagraph feature local news and stories. The focus of these interviews and stories will vary and may include introducing the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning to the broader community, launching ISU's Civic Action Plan, and highlighting specific programs, projects, and campus-community partnerships that are developed as part of Civic Action Plan implementation.
3. Staff and administrators will request stories and interviews in student media outlets, including WZND, TV-10, and *The Vidette*.
4. The American Democracy Project, an initiative of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, hosts a blog. ISU faculty and staff intend to author short pieces for the ADP blog to share information and perspectives about the development and implementation of the Civic Action Plan as well as

overviews of specific curricular and co-curricular programs and projects that contribute to meeting the five commitments made in the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Action Statement.

5. ISU faculty and staff involved in civic engagement work hope to contribute to a variety of institutional publications at the university. ISU's University Marketing and Communications (UMC) publishes print and online versions of Redbird Scholar, a research-focused publication and Illinois State, a magazine for alumni and friends of the University. ISU's Media Relations publishes the ISU Report, a weekly online newsletter for faculty and staff, and Identity, a campus diversity online newsletter. Athletics publishes the Redbird Magazine in print. Communications specialists throughout the University contribute news stories to News.IllinoisState.edu, the University online news hub as well as institution-wide social media accounts including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat.
6. The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning recently launched its new website and social media accounts and is planning an electronic and print magazine and a campus newsletter in the future. These are all new avenues for communicating with campus and community stakeholders about the Civic Action Plan and its implementation.
7. Faculty and staff plan to invite community partners to an event during 2017 at which the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning will be highlighted and the Civic Action Plan introduced and discussed. Subsequently, community partners will be updated several times a year via an e-newsletter about Civic Action Plan implementation and about new projects, partnerships, and initiatives.

All of the above avenues of sharing ISU's institutional commitment to civic engagement, its Civic Action Plan, and examples of civic engagement activities involving students, staff, and faculty will be important in making ISU part of a broader conversation about the place of civic engagement in higher education and about the public purpose of higher education. Within the ISU community of students, staff, faculty, and alums, communication initiatives can help foster an institutional culture that values and rewards civic engagement and facilitates gift development for civic engagement efforts. Locally, communication efforts can help facilitate campus-community partnerships by providing potential partners with information, new ideas for collaboration, and innovative partnership models. Nationally, communication efforts can make ISU an active participant in the collective efforts by staff, students, and faculty at colleges and universities around the country to advance the five commitments of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Action Statement.

INSERT **OUTCOMES TABLE** HERE

## Appendix

### *Cited:*

McLean County Economic Development Council <https://www.bnbiz.org/>  
<https://www.bnbiz.org/data/>

The United Way of McLean County reports - <http://www.uwaymc.org/community-assessments>

- Community Health Improvement Plan 2017-19
- Community Needs Health Assessment (united way)
- The 2014 Community Assessment

### *Additional resources:*

Town of Normal 2040 Vision <http://www.normal.org/DocumentCenter/View/10980>

City of Bloomington 2010-2025 Strategic Plan  
<http://www.cityblm.org/home/showdocument?id=191>