

Introduction

Northeastern State University is proud to submit its Civic Action Plan after President Steve Turner's endorsement of the Campus Compact Civic Action Statement. This plan was prepared by faculty and staff members of the university American Democracy Project Committee. After several months of information gathering, assessing strengths and opportunities to grow, and engaged dialogue, this plan has been created and serves as a summary of the committee members' findings and suggestions for future progress in our work with civic engagement.

Vision/Mission

Northeastern State University has a rich heritage and pride in serving our local, state, tribal, domestic, and international constituencies. Our university mission statement supports commitment #3 of the Compact Civic Action Statement as "We empower students, faculty, staff, and the community to reach their full intellectual and human potential by creating and expanding a culture of learning, discovery, and diversity."¹ Additionally, our vision statement ensures that commitment #3 remains a priority as we move forward: "Northeastern State University shapes the future of its region as the educational partner of choice, setting a standard of excellence by serving the intellectual, cultural, social and economic needs of the University's diverse communities."² We recognize that this is a strength of our institution and when seeking the answer as to how we accomplish our mission and vision the committee members found the opportunity for growth.

We found that in total there is a multitude of projects, courses, partnerships, internships, and levels of participation with our communities. However, there is a disconnect between the work that is happening, reporting structure or assessment of the work, and the sharing of our successes. Recognizing this the committee members have identified commitment #5 of "We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement."³ as our opportunity to grow. Set forth in this multi-phase plan is our recommendations on fostering that environment through focused collection of data, identifying opportunities for further excellence, continual assessment of student learning, and further sharing of successes publicly while utilizing already existing resources within our institution and community to accomplish this work.

Approach

The long term strategic approach for NSU's Civic Action Plan is to facilitate a system in which each student encounters community and civic engagement throughout their experience at NSU. Our approach relies on our existing role in the community and seeks to enhance that role

¹ [Campus Compact Statement](#)

² [NSU Vision Statement](#)

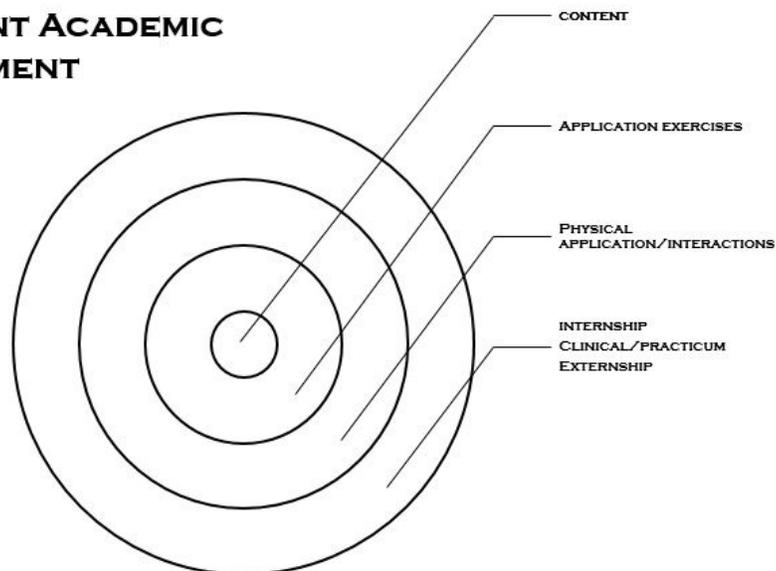
³ [Campus Compact Statement](#)

in coming years. Currently, NSU is heavily engaged through its academic models, external partnerships, faculty research and service, as well through student affairs. Although engagement is pervasive in each of these areas and its assumptions are part of the university's vision statement, it has not been actively assessed in its own right and actively communicated through the institution and community-at-large. This plan introduces a mechanism by which this can be achieved within the existing infrastructure of the university and with minimal additional resources. Essentially, NSU is actively engaged in the community, but we do not adequately measure those activities or their impact. Before we can engage in bettering the assessment efforts of our community engagement we must define what engagement looks like for our institution. The following models serve to bridge that gap.

Existing Engagement

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate engagement experiences for both student and faculty within our current academic structure. Figure 1 demonstrates the student academic experience at NSU. Each concentric circle represents the progression of engagement experience possible within an academic course. The core of each course is the assigned content material (texts, lecture). The next ring consists of application exercises assigned within the course. The third ring represents larger assignments that are a major component of a course designed to directly engage the student in the community, such as a service-learning or field-based final project, site assessment, or brief placement or partnership with an external organization⁴. The outer circle represents courses whose sole purpose is service-learning or field work, such as intern/externships, student teaching, etc. measured through quality of content and contact hours.

FIGURE 1 STUDENT ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT



⁴ Each academic department specifies immersive learning outcomes within its program(s). While not all immersive learning activities reflect civic or community engagement, many of them do.

Figure 2 represents the faculty engagement experience at NSU. Again, the core of the experience is found as course instructor. The second ring demonstrates engagement within the institution itself through service. While this appears to be self-contained, engagement opportunities do exist internally, such as internship coordination, expertise-based service to the institution as it fulfills its external commitments, etc. The third ring represents direct community engagement through volunteerism, civic participation, and expertise-based service or partnerships. The outer ring reflects faculty engagement through expertise-based service to the larger regional, national, or global communities and to the discipline at-large. Academic colleges currently collect data on the community activities and service of faculty through the departmental reporting process to assess the impact their activities have within the community.

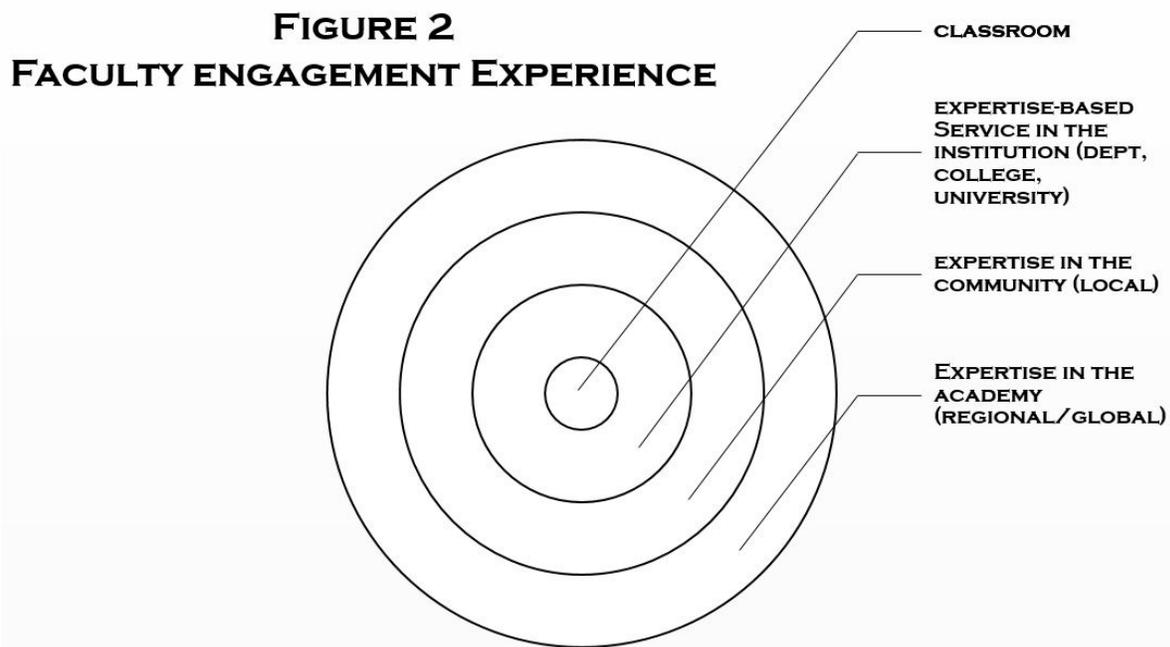


Figure 3 represents the student's engagement experience through the lens of Student Affairs. Each concentric circle represents the progressive engagement experiences possible for the student's personal growth concerning civic engagement through various programs, workshops, events, and opportunities. The innermost circle involves opportunities for the student to discover and understand more about their own identity. After the student has a better understanding of self and their values they then engage in opportunities that allow for exploration and examination of how that identity relates and differs from others through various community and diversity knowledge building activities. The student then progresses in this model to start application of that knowledge in the beginning engagement circle participating in various organizations, service day events, and the voting process. The final circle represents the goal that we strive toward for every student to reach as they leave the university so that their engagement with the community and civics goes beyond their college career and becomes an

integrated piece of their identity. This stage is characterized by activism, continued service to their community, and lifelong engagement in their community in various capacities.

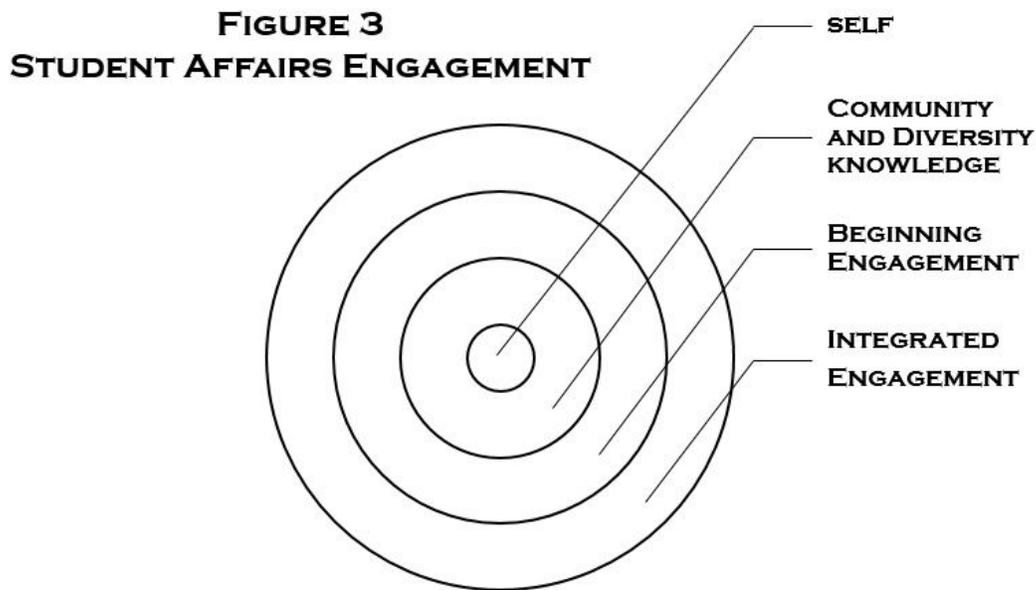
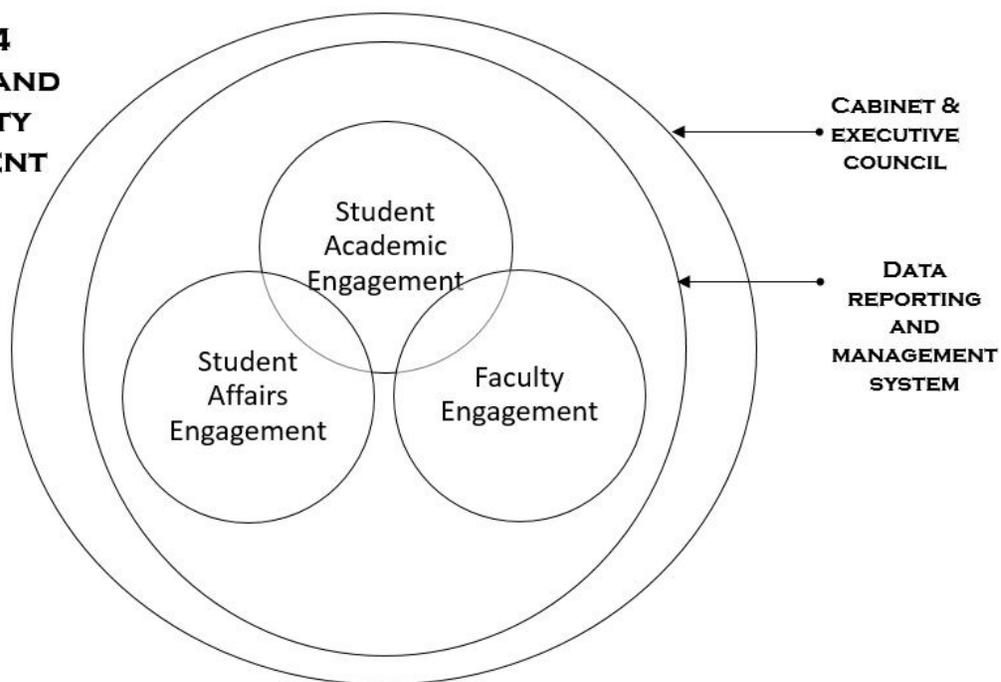


Figure 4 illustrates the existing engagement that permeates most of the current university experience. Faculty engagement heavily overlaps with student course engagement through the class experience, while student course engagement overlaps with their extracurricular student activities within the university experience through various organizations and groups. Faculty engagement may parallel and even connect with student activity engagement as some faculty serve as advisors or assist with specific groups on campus.

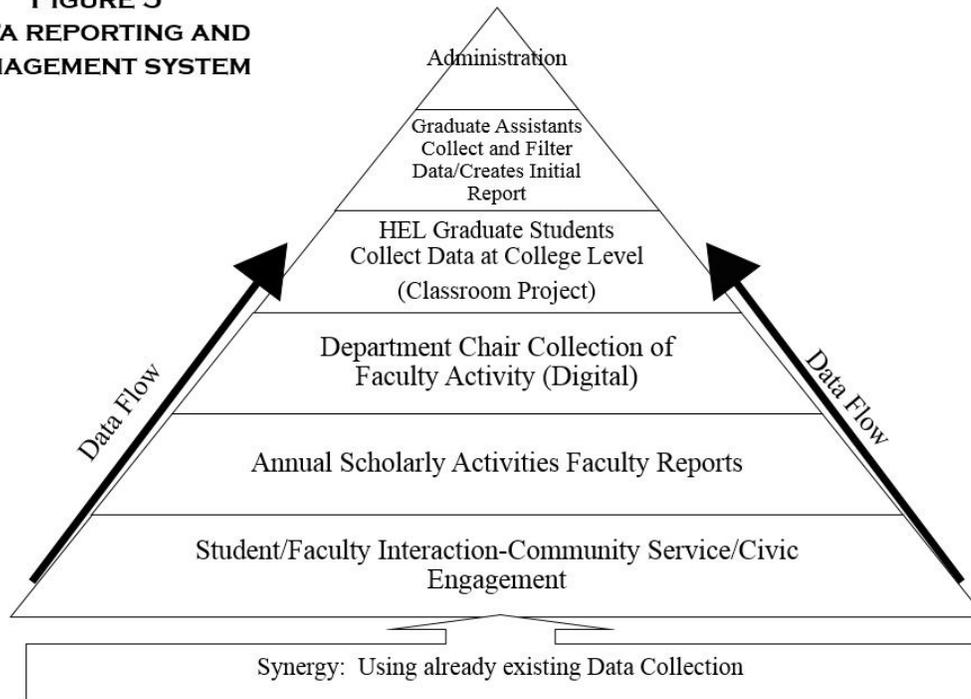
**FIGURE 4
NSU CIVIC AND
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**



Capturing and Communicating Current Engagement

Although individual faculty engagement activities are reported to department chairs and academic colleges access the data for annual reports, there exists no comprehensive data reporting and management system for community and civic engagement. This CAP includes a new system that fits within the model presented in Figure 4. This system easily fits within the existing infrastructure and processes within the university, and the implementation of this system itself is based on a service and immersive learning framework. The new system is presented in Figure 5.

**FIGURE 5
DATA REPORTING AND
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**



This proposed system utilizes existing processes and framework for faculty who annually report scholarly activities to departmental chairs. Departmental chairs currently compile annual reports to college deans on these activities. The proposed system shifts submission from a narrative format to a digital format through an information system such as Digital Measures, which is already in use within the university. This system can be replicated for Student Affairs through the utilization of the Chalk & Wire digital assessment tool. The next step is to partner with the Master of Science in Higher Education Leadership (HiEDL) and engage graduate students in the assessment and reporting of NSU's outcomes. Graduate students may be assigned to a college or student affairs to retrieve data and collaborate with department chairs or designated staff to obtain the broadest possible data. A graduate assistant within the HiEDL would be tasked with compiling the full report and submitting the report to the administration and relevant stakeholders.

The proposed system is desirable in several ways. First, it uses an existing process in terms of data collection and reporting. The change from chair submission of data in a narrative format to a digital method expands the potential for how that data is used. This data, collected and reported by the Graduate Student team, can then be made available as directed by the President's Office throughout the campus for any reporting needs of Foundation, Recruitment, Colleges, Departments, or Faculty groups engaging with the community as representatives of the University. Partnering with the HiEDL graduate program also creates another immersive learning opportunity for the students, as well as centralizes the reporting process. The only direct costs to implementing the plan would be those associated with establishing a graduate assistantship. Finally, because the process is similar to the current system and the reporting

period occurs in the spring semester, this system can be implemented in the upcoming academic year.

Outcomes & Implementation

The following table is presented to illustrate the work that has been completed in drafting this proposal by the American Democracy Project committee, our recommendations for future actions, and the recommended parties responsible for the work going forward. We as a committee recognize that in order to fulfill commitment #5 of “We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement,” that it will require leadership positions and their influence within the university culture to accomplish this work.

Thus we recommend that moving forward a Civic Action Plan Team with a designated chairperson should have primary responsibility for overseeing and facilitating this plan. We specifically recommend a team as it tends to keep the number of participants smaller and more focused in duties and roles instead of a committee which can bring challenges with larger numbers of members and get distracted in accomplishing tasks. Moving forward the American Democracy Project Committee would continue its mission in assisting the Civic Action Plan Team through the functions of “providing advice and input into institutional planning for community engagement and serve as a central communication hub for civic engagement activity occurring throughout campus,⁵” by providing feedback on reports and assisting in publicizing them to campus constituencies.

Outcomes	Implementation	Evidence of Progress	Deadline	Responsibility
Create a Civic Action Plan	Meetings throughout the 2016-2017 year Establish writing sub-committee	Minutes Written Civic Action Plan	May 1, 2017	ADP Committee, Co-Chairs: Dr. Shannon Bridgmon and Jacob Patrick, Writing sub-committee
Communicate with Cabinet	Send the CAP draft to Cabinet	Receive feedback from Cabinet		ADP Committee, Co-Chairs: Dr. Shannon Bridgmon and

⁵ Functions 13 &14 of the American Democracy Project provided by the Office of the President.

				Jacob Patrick, Writing sub-committee
Revised CAP draft	Process feedback from stakeholders and Cabinet	Finalized draft of CAP	June-July, 2017	ADP Committee, Co-Chairs: Dr. Shannon Bridgmon and Jacob Patrick, Writing sub-committee
Civic Action Plan is submitted to Campus Compact	Publish on Campus Compact website and NSU website	NSU's CAP can be viewed on both websites	September 2017	ADP Committee, Co-Chairs: Dr. Shannon Bridgmon and Jacob Patrick, Writing sub-committee
Faculty can indicate Community/ Civic Engagement/ Immersive Learning with a checkbox in Digital Measures	Submit work order request to Digital Measures to add a checkbox for Community/Civic Engagement/ Immersive Learning and add a report for each topic	Checkboxes are available in Digital Measures for Fall 2017, an option for a Community/Civic Engagement Report is available for Spring 2018,an option for an Immersive Learning Report is available for Spring 2018	Summer 2017	Dr. Pam Fly, Center for Teaching and Learning

Create a Civic Action Plan (CAP) Team to monitor progress of the Civic Action Plan comprised of Dr. Renee Cambiano or her designee, Chamber Directors, City Officials, Other designees	(CAP) team is established and begins meeting	Minutes from meetings	Summer 2017	Dr. Jerrid Freeman, Dr. Pam Fly, Dr. Cari Keller
Reorganization of Graduate Assistants	Higher Education Leadership planning	Assignments for Graduate Assistants	Summer 2017	Higher Education Leadership Faculty
Train Campus Community on Engagement Models	Sessions at Community & Collaboration Day Provide Online/workshop opportunities	Training Assessment Results	August 2017	CAP Team and designated collaborators
Civic Action Plan Team works with HEL graduate students and their faculty to plan/implement projects with analysis of data	HEL graduate student projects	Completed Projects	September 2017	Civic Action Plan Chairperson and team
Civic Action Plan Team works with Office of	Plan is shared with NSU news and external media such as press, website, social media, etc.	CAP is communicated to partners	September 2017	Civic Action Plan Chairperson and team

Communication and Marketing				
Electronic documentation of community and civic engagement	Utilize Digital Measures	Documentation is visible electronically in Digital Measures	Fall 2017-Spring 2018 and ongoing	Faculty, Department Chairs, Associate Deans, Assistant Deans
Offer training to Faculty and Student Affairs personnel in using Chalk and Wire Rubrics	Trainings offered 2017-2018	Sign in sheets	Fall 2017-Spring 2018 and ongoing	Center for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Cari Keller
Faculty and Student Affairs personnel complete assessments of Student Learning Outcome #5 in Chalk and Wire	Faculty use Chalk and Wire to assess SLO #5	Completed Rubrics	Fall 2017-Spring 2018 and ongoing	Dr. Cari Keller
Assessment of Civic Engagement becomes more easily measurable	Highlight evidence of Civic Engagement in Annual Reports	Annual Reports	Fall 2017-Spring 2018 and ongoing	Department Chairs, Associate Deans, Assistant Deans, Deans
Civic Action Plan Team reviews and alters plan as needed	CAP Team becomes familiar with plan and makes changes as needed	Civic Action Plan changes (if needed) are reflected on the website	Ongoing	Civic Action Plan Chairperson, CAP Team

Continued communication with Stakeholders	Email any revisions/updates to Faculty, Department Chairs, SALT, Faculty Council, Academic Council	Email requests for feedback and Feedback received	Ongoing	Civic Action Plan Chairperson, CAP Team
Civic Action Plan Team explores how tenure and promotion can be included in the implementation of the CAP	CAP Team makes recommendations	Tenure and Promotion process will reflect CAP Team's findings	Ongoing	Civic Action Plan Chairperson and team
Build upon existing practices, explore additions to the plan as needed to ensure a continued comprehensive evaluation of civic and community engagement	Update CAP	Updated CAP	Ongoing	Civic Action Plan Chairperson and team
Continued electronic documentation of community and civic engagement	Utilize Digital Measures	Documentation is visible electronically in Digital Measures	Ongoing 2017-2018	Faculty, Department Chair, Associate Deans, Assistant Deans