

University Learning Goals

Eastern Illinois University Council on Academic Affairs

Responsible Citizenship

On January 16, 2014, the EIU Council on Academic Affairs adopted revised undergraduate University Learning Goals (effective Fall 2014). The revised Responsible Citizenship goal follows:

EIU graduates make informed decisions based on knowledge of the physical and natural world and human history and culture by:

- Engaging with diverse ideas, individuals, groups, and cultures.
- Applying ethical reasoning and standards in personal, professional, disciplinary, and civic contexts.
- Participating formally and informally in civic life to better the public good.
- Applying knowledge and skills to new and changing contexts within and beyond the classroom.

The Revised Goal and Potential for Student Learning

Universities across the country embrace responsible citizenship but realizing the goal's potential at EIU depends on reasonable strategies within the context of EIU's unique heritage as a teacher's college in the rural Midwest. An increasingly diverse student body reflects changing U.S. demographics and global shifts. This goal can provide incentive for students from rural, urban and suburban backgrounds to move beyond their comfort zones, and engage with less familiar and even foreign places.

The stakes are high. Responsible citizenship makes overt the determination required to act in the best interest of human and ecological communities, for social, environmental, and economic sustainability. It includes making ethical decisions that reflect awareness of how one's actions directly and indirectly effect humans and environments, and acting conscientiously to support societal movement toward a viable future (*Learning for a Sustainable Future*, 2012). All disciplines play a role in realizing this goal's potential.



Learning Goals Workshop Series

Introduction

February 20, 10 am-noon
Arcola-Tuscola Room

Writing and Critical Reading

February 25, 2-4 pm
Arcola-Tuscola Room

Speaking and Listening

March 3, 2-4 pm
Arcola-Tuscola Room

Critical Thinking

March 21, 11 am – 1 pm
1103 Buzzard Hall

Responsible Citizenship

March 24, 2-4 pm
Arcola-Tuscola Room

Quantitative Reasoning

April 1, 10 am-noon
Arcola-Tuscola Room

Responsible Citizenship: Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

Responsible Citizenship Overview & Objectives

Knowledge provides the foundation that students use as they practice the skills of responsible citizenship.

Cultural Diversity: The revised goal respects the existing cultural diversity definition and requirement. “Eastern Illinois University seeks to foster cultural understanding to assist its students to become responsible citizens in a diverse world.” (EIU Undergraduate catalog). Eastern’s general education curriculum requires each student to complete one cultural diversity course. Cultural diversity courses must include one of the following: study diverse peoples in the US and abroad; explore the history, language, and/or traditions of other countries and cultures; examine the role of cultural sensitivity in making informed and ethical decisions. These courses must reinforce the importance of attending to a plurality or voices to better understand human history, culture, and decision making. They must also include the goal of enabling students to respect and interact with, live, and work with people who are different from them.

Ethical Reasoning and Standards: The Responsible Citizenship goal makes ethical reasoning explicit and foundational to the process of differentiating between right and wrong. Beyond right and wrong, “ethical reasoning requires students to be able to assess their own ethical values and the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas, and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Students’ ethical self-identity evolves as they practice ethical decision-making skills and learn how to describe and analyze positions on ethical issues.” (Ethical Reasoning Value Rubric, AAC&U)

Civic Life: Civic engagement refers to individual activities, alone or as part of a group, and focuses on:

- Actively participating in and seeking to influence the life of the community,
- Developing informed knowledge about the community,
- Identifying community needs and working constructively to seek solutions
- Pursuing goals to benefit the community, and
- Participating in constructive deliberation among community members about issues, challenges, and solution (McCartney, 2013; AAC&U, 2012)

Integrative/Service/Applied Learning: The revised goal makes the process of knowledge transfer through “coherent learning experiences in the classroom, significant learning and life experiences *outside* the classroom, and ample opportunity for guided reflection.” Instruction will enable “students to tie the disparate parts of their academic, personal, and professional lives into a holistic, transformative university experience. . . . Students will become *intentional* learners who learn more deeply, retain what they learn longer, and continue learning as a lifelong habit” (Integrative Learning at Eastern Illinois University).

Assessment Strategies

Responsible citizenship has been assessed for several years at the University level. Assessment has included a faculty-developed survey administered to incoming freshmen at orientation and to seniors as part of their senior seminar course and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). These are both indirect measures. The data has indicated decreased engagement with the concepts of this goal from freshman to senior year. Many of Eastern’s departments have created rubrics, evaluation sheets, and surveys to assess a variety of student learning outcomes in their fields. These instruments are available on the assessment web site under assessment in the major at: <http://www.eiu.edu/assess/deptinstrmnts.php>.

Teaching Strategies

The Responsible Citizenship (RC) learning goal emphasizes the need for EIU students to transfer knowledge and skills (critical thinking, writing & critical reading; speaking & listening, and quantitative reasoning) to diverse educational, personal, professional and civic contexts.

RC depends on students gaining knowledge from coursework in the physical and natural world and in history and culture. STEM and STEAM have proven effective in gaining popular support for education in science, technology, engineering and math (and the arts). That success prompted the American Historical Association to articulate the “History Discipline Core.” Faculty in any discipline can find useful strategies to teach about the history of their discipline, the diverse perspectives that informed it, the ethical issues it raises and the community context in which it plays out.

Any strategy effective in teaching other learning goals will support RC, but additional strategies have proven effective, too:

Engaging with diverse ideas, individuals, groups, & cultures:

- Role-play/simulation (debates; decision-making activities)
- Inquiry (case studies; research projects)
- Guided discovery (modeling)
- Cooperative learning (service learning projects/community &

campus events)

Develop & evaluate cultural values and respect for diversity:

- write a narrative about experiences with discrimination, then compare and contrast with peers, and determine commonalities or inconsistencies in discrimination (and integration) across cultures.
- read historical literature that narrates issues of race or gender identity at a given time in the past. After practicing critical reading and discussion, students articulate the context of the novel. Only with they depth of knowledge can they compare the historic to current issues.

Develop & evaluate civic values:

- identify and evaluate public policies relevant
- compare civic and/or cultural values to classmates’
- identify and evaluate elected officials
- analyze the impact of a cultural experience, such as study abroad
- understand the role of non-profits and organizations in civic life
- observe community and civic decision-making

Apply ethical standards:

- Employ case studies focusing on ethics in decision-making
- Assign work on professional ethics in the major field
- Provide training for conducting human subjects or animal research

Engage in civic action:

- Incorporate service learning
- Conduct community-based research
- Engage in volunteerism
- Encourage co-curricular activities
- Participate in government simulations
- Participate in government and community internships
- Participate in Alternative Spring Break

Ultimately, higher education prepares students to use knowledge and skills to respond to whatever comes their way. Lifelong learners develop necessary skills and insight to 1) apply skills and knowledge in ever-changing environments, 2) practice critical analysis and evaluation of new information, and 3) do so in a self-directed way, and in ways that further personal and professional growth.

Realizing the potential of RC will take time and effort. It will take informed students and faculty. It will take administrative support in many forms including intentional curricular and co-curricular connections.

Assessment

Departments that adopted the Global Citizenship goal are well positioned to assess RC. For instance, the MBA Program devised an ethical analysis rubric, and Health Studies developed an “Adopt-a-Family” rubric that addresses several RC objectives.

Resources to Support Student Achievement

Printed Resources:

- Bok, Derek. (2008). *Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should Be Learning More*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Angelo, Thomas & Cross, K. Patricia. (1993). *Classroom Assessment Techniques*, 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Andrea Chapdelaine, Ana Ruiz, Judith Warchal, Carole Wells. (2005). *Service-Learning Code of Ethics*. Bolton, Mass.: Anker Publication, Inc.
- Association of American Colleges & Universities. (2012). *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future; The National Taskforce on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement*. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges & Universities.
- McCartney, Alison Rios Millett. (2013). "Teaching Civic Engagement: Debates, Definitions, Benefits, and Challenges," in *Teaching Civic Engagement: From Student to Active Citizen*. Eds. Alison Rios Millett McCartney, Elizabeth Bennion and Dick Simpson. Washington, D.C.: American Political Science Association.
- Eyler, J. & Giles, D.E. (1999). *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

On-line Resources:

- Association of American Colleges & Universities. <http://www.aacu.org/>
Diversity and Inclusive Excellence. <http://www.aacu.org/resources/diversity/index.cfm>
Value Rubrics. <http://www.aacu.org/VALUE/rubrics/>
- American Political Science Association www.apsanet.org
- American Historical Association, History Discipline Core. <http://www.historians.org/tuning>
- Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania
www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org
http://www.aacu.org/civic_learning/crucible/documents/crucible_508f.pdf
- Campus Compact www.compact.org
- PEW Research, Center for People & The Press www.people-press.org

An annotated bibliography is available on the CAA Learning Goals web site.

For More Information



EIU Council on Academic Affairs:

<http://castle.eiu.edu/eiucaa/>

CAA Learning Goals Website:

<http://www.eiu.edu/learninggoals/>

CAA Learning Goals Report:

www.eiu.edu/learninggoals/pdfs/CAA_Learning_Goals_Review_Report_Final.pdf

EIU Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning (CASL):

<http://www.eiu.edu/~assess/caslhome.php>

EIU Office of the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs:

<http://castle.eiu.edu/acaffair/>

EIU Strategic Plan:

<http://www.eiu.edu/strategicsummary/>

EIU NCA Self-Study (Accreditation):

<http://www.eiu.edu/nca2014/>
