

# PS 108: ESSENTIALS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh

Fall Semester 2017

Class meets 3:00-4:30, T/TH, Sage 1239

**3 CREDITS**

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**Course Description:** This course introduces the student to the obligations and benefits of active citizenship and participation in their communities. Theories of citizenship and citizen activity, policy analysis, and the challenges of the practice of democracy at governing levels from local to global will be explored. Students will also learn how to influence government through lobbying public officials, creating issue groups, and influencing public opinion. Since this is a Quest III course, there is also an experiential component, in which students will work with one of several community partners in Oshkosh. This semester our course will work with the UW Oshkosh Women's Center. This also serves as a gateway course to the Civic Engagement Minor.

## **Student Learning Outcomes:**

- Connect knowledge to civic engagement and participation in civic life
- Identify and evaluate theories and assumptions relating to civic engagement and activism
- Learn how to effectively influence local, state, national, and international public policy processes
- Familiarity with the individual and societal causes and consequences of sexual assault and domestic violence
- Improve written and oral communication skills
- Participate in community life through co-curricular activities with a community partner

**Liberal Education** is an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings. (AAC&U; [http://www.aacu.org/leap/What\\_is\\_liberal\\_education.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/leap/What_is_liberal_education.cfm)) Our approach to liberal education is articulated through the University Studies Program, but is similar to the general education programs of all other four year universities.

**The University Studies Program:** The University Studies Program (USP) is your gateway to a 21st century college education at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. This Quest III course is the last in a series of courses you will take to introduce you to the campus and all it has to offer, the vibrant Oshkosh community, and the challenges and opportunities of academic life as you pursue a liberal education.

In this course, you are addressing your third Signature Question: **How do people understand and engage in community life?**

Upon completion of Quest III, you will be ready to enroll in Connect, in which you will synthesize the three Signature Questions.

**What is Civic Learning?** Civic knowledge consists of an awareness and understanding of the various political and social processes that impact the nature and quality of life in local, state, national, or global communities. It also encompasses the cultivation of skills which may be useful in public life, like effective communication and ethical reasoning. Civic engagement means having an appreciation for and applying the values gained from civic knowledge in real world settings, directed at improving the quality of life in the communities of which one is a part. Civic knowledge and civic engagement emphasize learning, reflection, and action in order to create better communities.

**Course Readings:** There is no textbook for this class. Instead your readings will be found on D2L's content tab. These are some of the "greatest hits" of civic engagement, which offer theories or advice on citizenship and civic engagement. They don't necessarily agree with each other and you need not agree with them either, but you do need to understand their arguments and be prepared to respond thoughtfully to them. Course readings will also include scholarly and personal stories about engagement, activism, and public policy concerning campus sexual assault.

**Experiential Activities and Assignments:**

**Exams: (36%)** Students will have two exams, each worth 18% of their course grade. Exams will occur at midsemester and on the last day of class, and will consist of multiple choice and essay questions. The exam dates will be **October 12<sup>th</sup>** and **December 7<sup>th</sup>**.

**Women's Center Orientation and Scavenger Hunt: (2%)** Students will visit the UW Oshkosh Women's Center (location and hours are listed on page 5 of this document) and complete their orientation scavenger hunt before **September 21<sup>st</sup>**. This assignment will help you become familiar with our campus partner, and give you a sense of resources available to you for your Group Paper Assignment (below).

**Community-Based Learning: (12%)** Students will complete **12 hours** of community-based learning with a community partner. Hours will be managed through a Google spreadsheet. Students will have several options to choose from, including a range of opportunities to fit their schedules and interests.

In order to ensure you complete your hours successfully, each month will have a separate hours goal. Students should achieve these milestones to complete their hours successfully:

September: 3 hours  
October: 4-5 hours  
November: 4-5 hours

Students who choose to volunteer for more than their monthly goal will receive extra credit for the course, 1% per hour volunteered, to a maximum of an additional 3% of their total course grade.

**Vision Wall Reflection Essay: (4%)** The Vision Wall will be displayed at several places around campus during the month of September. Students can visit the wall at their convenience, or plan to volunteer as a wall ‘host’ and view the wall while completing their September hours.

Students will then attend the “Take Back The Night” rally on Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00pm (starting in the AWCC Ballroom)

The event raises awareness of the problem of sexual violence and supports those who have been victimized. More information on the Fox Valley Take Back The Night Facebook event.

Following the event, students will complete a short 2 page reflection essay which answers these questions:

- 1) What was your reaction to the Vision Wall when you first experienced it?
- 2) Based on your experience at Take Back The Night, has your understanding of the Vision Wall, its purpose, or its message changed? In what ways?
- 3) What do you feel is your role or responsibility to create world without sexual violence?

This essay (12 point Times New Roman or Garamond font, 1 inch margins, single-spaced) will be **due** on D2L by class time on **October 26<sup>th</sup>**.

**Titans Take Action (3%): Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>, 5-8pm.** We are calling Titans to action to #SetTheExpectation that sexual assault and physical violence are NEVER okay. This call-to-action will begin with Brenda Tracey’s inspirational story of resilience and recovery as a survivor of gang rape and sexual abuse and her subsequent activism. Participants will then engage in roundtable discussions about masculinity and its connection to sexual violence. Discussants will be male-identified members of UWO. Participants will identify and take with them an action plan for creating a community that Voices of Men envisions, one where the expectation of Titan culture is marked by healthy manhood and treating all people with dignity.

**Please speak with the instructor as soon as possible if you have a conflict with these events—they are required for course completion!**

**Quest Talks Event and Reflection Essay (3%):** All students will watch at least 1 Quest Talk from Fall 2015. These talks will form the basis of your final reflection essay, and give you some material to react to when thinking about what you have (or haven’t) gotten out of this community engagement experience.

Following the event, students will complete a short 2 page reflection essay which answers these questions:

- 1) What have you gotten (or not gotten but would have liked to) from this class? Answers can include thoughts on skills, knowledge, and/or perspectives.
- 2) How has your understanding of sexual violence changed (or not changed) over the course of the semester?
- 3) What do you feel is your role or responsibility to continue your engagement with issues of community engagement following the course?

This essay (12 point Times New Roman or Garamond font, 1 inch margins, single-spaced) will be **due** on D2L by class time on **December 5<sup>th</sup>**.

**Group Paper Assignment and Presentation: (30%)** All students will work in groups of 4-5 to create an outreach campaign to inform a specific campus population about the UW Oshkosh Women's Center and its services. Your campus population for the project will be chosen in the second week of class.

Groups will begin by learning about the UW Oshkosh Women's Center (the orientation and scavenger hunt as well as additional individual research) and details about the size, interests, and ways to reach their campus population of interest. Further information about the campaign will be provided in a separate handout. Initial research findings, questions from the group, and ideas for the campaign will be submitted in a group paper **due on November 9<sup>th</sup> on D2L by class time**. It is worth 5% of your course grade.

Your final paper will detail a strategy for advocating for a policy change beneficial to achieving your organization's mission. In that sense it will build on your first paper. It is **due on December 11<sup>th</sup> on D2L by Noon**. It is worth 15% of your course grade.

Students will present their advocacy plans to the class on **December 12<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup>**. Presentations will be approximately 8 minutes in length. Each student in the group must participate in the presentation, it is worth 10% of your course grade.

**Attendance and participation: (10%)** The final portion of your grade in this class is your attendance and participation. Attendance is required for all classes. For each class that you miss, you will lose one percent of your total course grade. You are considered absent to class **if you show up after I have finished taking the attendance for the day**.

Please note that excused absences are three things: severe (i.e. hospitalized) illness, death in the family, and required school activities. With proof of this absence (for example, an obituary, note from a coach, etc.), I am happy to work with you to cover missed material and make up assignments. Common illnesses (colds, sinus infections, flu), personal travel, etc. are not excused absences.

For participation, I expect you to come to class having completed all assigned readings, prepared to speak up and answer questions, and contribute substantively to class discussions. There is no specific number of times you should talk, but you should make a concerted effort to be active and involved in the class. Failure to do so will negatively impact your participation grade.

**Early Alert:** Early Alert is a program that provides you with an Early Grade Report from faculty. Early Grade Reports will indicate if you have academic performance or attendance issues and specific steps you can take and resources available to help you improve. It is common for students to be unaware of or over-estimate their academic performance in classes so this will help you be aware early on of your progress and provide strategies for success in the classroom. You will receive an email during the 5th week of classes. It is important to read the entire email carefully. Your early alert assignment for this class will be your Vision Wall reflection essay.

**Your ePortfolio:** As you are moving through your courses at UW Oshkosh, you can archive your learning in your ePortfolio. The ePortfolio helps you keep track of papers, speeches, reports, projects, and other assignments in your Quest and Explore courses, so that you can see your

progress and connect ideas across different classes. In this Quest III course, your group paper assignment and presentation which proposes an outreach campaign for the UW Oshkosh Women's Center will be your ePortfolio artifact. Further information about this assignment will be provided in class.

**Community-Based Learning:** “In these programs, field-based “experiential learning” with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both *apply* what they are learning in real-world settings and *reflect* in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.” (High-Impact Practice, AACU, 2011)

You will be working with the UW Oshkosh Women's Center for your community-based learning experience. Students will have the option of completing their hours through multiple hour special events. Additional opportunities will be available from Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services as well.

The **UW Oshkosh Women's Center** is located at 717 W. Irving Avenue in Oshkosh (across from Horizon Village and Fletcher at the end of Diversity and Inclusion Center). The entrance is across from Fletcher on the Irving Ave. side of the building. The Women's Center Fall hours are:

Monday 10:00am-8:00pm

Tuesday 11:00am-6:00pm

Wednesday 10:00am-8:00pm

Thursday 11:00am-6:00pm

Friday 10:00am-4:00pm

**Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services** is located at 206 Algoma Blvd. in Oshkosh. This site is half a mile from campus (from Reeve Union, walk toward Main Street on Algoma Blvd., the Center is three blocks down on your left). In the event of bad weather, the bus may be a better option. The “5” bus picks students up at four locations on High Ave. between Axletech and Gruenhagen and will reach the Center after a stop at the transit station. Students can return from the Center using the same bus (which picks up in front of City Hall, adjacent to the Center). Students may also drive. Street parking is available on the 100 and 200 blocks of Algoma as well as the Christine Ann parking lot.

**Campus Resources:** In the University Studies Program, we want you to be successful. Below is a list of campus services available to support your success. More information about these resources is available at: <http://www.uwosh.edu/home/resources>

**Center for Academic Resources:** The Center for Academic Resources (CAR) provides free, confidential tutoring for students in most undergraduate classes on campus. CAR is located in the Student Success Center, Suite 102. Check the Tutor List page on CAR's website ([www.uwosh.edu/car](http://www.uwosh.edu/car)) for a list of tutors. If your course is not listed, click on a link to request one,

stop by SSC 102 or call 424-2290. To schedule a tutoring session, simply email the tutor, let him/her know what class you are seeking assistance in, and schedule a time to meet.

**Writing Center:** The Writing Center helps students of all ability levels improve their writing. Trained peer consultants help writers understand an assignment, envision possibilities for a draft, and improve their writing process. They even help writers learn to identify their own proofreading errors. Students can make a free appointment or stop by to see whether a consultant is available. For more information, view their website (<http://www.uwosh.edu/wcenter>), call 920-424-1152, email [wcenter@uwosh.edu](mailto:wcenter@uwosh.edu), or visit them in Suite 102 of the Student Success Center.

**Reading Study Center:** The Reading Study Center is an all-university service whose mission is to facilitate the development of efficient college-level learning strategies in students of all abilities. The center offers strategies for improved textbook study, time management, note-taking, test preparation, and test-taking. For more information, email [readingstudy@uwosh.edu](mailto:readingstudy@uwosh.edu), view the website (<http://www.uwosh.edu/readingstudycenter>), visit them in Nursing Ed Room 201, or call 424-1031.

**Polk Library/Information Literacy:** You have been introduced to Information Literacy in your Quest Speaking and Writing courses. As a reminder, Polk Library offers many professional librarians who can help you find library resources for your research. Specifically, Ted Mulvey, the Information Literacy Librarian, is available to assist you as you access, evaluate, and use information in University Studies Program classes. Phone: 920-424-7329; email: [mulveyt@uwosh.edu](mailto:mulveyt@uwosh.edu). You may also set up a research advisory session with a librarian at: [rap@uwosh.edu](mailto:rap@uwosh.edu).

**A note for Political Science majors:** You should take Political Methodology (245) in either their sophomore or first semester of their junior year. PS245 is a prerequisite for the senior capstone, Political Analysis (401), and cannot be taken concurrently.

**Late Papers and Make-Up Exams:** You have several papers due in this class. No extensions will be given on this assignment unless you are subject to one of the three excused absence instances above (hospitalization, death in the family, and required school activities) and can give me proof of this absence. All papers are subject to a penalty of one letter grade for each day they are late. You are welcome to turn the project in early if you are unable to on the day the assignment is due.

Please note that computer problems and printer problems are not accepted excuses for late papers. You should always, always, always back up your work and allow plenty of time for printing, and so computer problems and printer problems should not be an issue in handing in your project on time.

I will give a make-up exam in one of the excused absence circumstances above, but also with good reason if you know beforehand, provided you tell me you need a make-up exam *at least one week* in advance of the test. For instance, if you know at the beginning of class you must be out of town for a family event, I will give you a make-up if you tell me a week or more before the test date. The make-up test will contain different questions than the test given in class.

**Reading Assignments:** Reading assignments are given in the course calendar in this syllabus (below). Assigned reading for a class day is given as the “Reading Assignment” below each entry. I expect you to have done the reading for each class ahead of time, and I reserve the right to quiz you

if I feel you are not doing the reading ahead of time. Reading assignments are subject to change, and any change will be announced in class.

**Regrading:** I will be glad to take another look at a paper or test you feel is not graded fairly, with the following conditions: you must speak to me about it during my office hours or by appointment, you must wait 24 hours after the paper or exam is handed back, and you must tell me in writing why you think you deserved more points. The reason for this is that I would like for you to take the paper/exam home and carefully read and think over comments before we talk. If I feel your paper was graded unfairly, I'll change the grade in your favor, but I also reserve the right to lower your grade upon rereading the paper if, after reevaluation, I think you received too high a grade.

**Other policies:** Please turn your cell phone off or onto silent mode before you enter the classroom. If I see you using your cell phone during class time I will warn you the first time, and mark you as absent after that.

Laptops are welcome for note taking in the classroom. However, I expect that if your laptop is out during class, you will be taking notes rather than checking your email, etc. These activities are distracting to those around you and can interfere with the learning of other students. If I notice that things other than note-taking are going on, you will be marked absent. Tests and other in-class assignments will be written in longhand.

Please do not pack up before I say that class is over. If this becomes a problem, pop quizzes or similar will be your new end of class activity.

I check my email often, and I am happy to answer questions via email. However, please use proper grammar, punctuation, and communication when emailing your professor. If you fail to do so, I will ask you to try again. Also, I am not able to answer questions about grades unless you are using your Oshkosh email address. All class announcements will be sent to your Oshkosh address.

### **Course Calendar:**

*Section 1: Who is an activist? Why are they needed?*

Week 1: TH, Sept 7: Class introduction and syllabus

- Reading assignment: course syllabus
- **Campus Partner Visit: Dr. Alicia Johnson**

Week 2: T, Sept 12: Citizenship and Democratic Inputs

- Reading assignment: U.S. Constitution and Hudson, *American Democracy in Peril*, Chapter 1

TH, Sept 14: Our Citizenship and Political Context Today

- Reading assignment: Fox and Lawless, *Running from Office*, "Introduction" and "Socialization"

Week 3: T, Sept 19: What exactly is political behavior? What does it look like?

- Reading assignment: Verba, et al. *Voice and Equality* Chapter 2 and Skocpol and Williamson "The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism" Chapter 1

TH, Sept 21: When and Why do Political Activism Occur?

- Reading Assignment: Rosenstone and Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America* chapter 2
- **RAINN Day Popular Culture Panel 6-7:30pm, Sage 1210**
- <https://www.uwosh.edu/womenscenter/programs>

- Week 4: T, Sept 26: Is Citizenship also Civic Engagement?
- Reading assignment: Theiss-Morse and Hibbing “Citizenship and Civic Engagement”
- TH, Sept 28: Too much of a good thing? What are the effects of Civic Engagement?
- Reading Assignment: Berman “Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic”

*Section 2: Creating Effective Outreach Campaigns*

- Week 5: T, Oct 3: Group Project Discussion producing
- Reading assignment: Libby “Ten Common Elements of Successful Advocacy Campaigns” and Group Project Assignment
- TH, Oct 5: Issue Definition and Effective Framing
- Reading Assignment: Alinsky *Rules for Radicals* “Communication”

*Section 3: Sexual Violence Awareness and Bystander Intervention*

- Week 6: T, Oct 10: Sexual Assault on College Campuses
- Reading Assignment: Muehlenhard et al 2017 “Evaluating the One in Five Statistic: Women’s Risk of Sexual Assault While in College” and Abbey “Alcohol-related Sexual Assault: A Common Problem among College Students”
- TH, Oct 12: Exam 1**
- Reading assignment: prepare for the exam

- Week 7: T, Oct 17: Bystander Intervention
- Reading assignment: McMahon et al “Predicting Bystander Intervention to Prevent Sexual Assault on College Campuses: The Role of Self-Efficacy and Intent” and Orchowski, et al “Bystander Intervention Among College Men the Role of Alcohol and Correlates of Sexual Aggression.”
- W, Oct 18: Take Back The Night Event, AWCC 5:30**
- TH, Oct 19: No Class

- Week 8: T, Oct 24: Engaging male allies
- Reading assignment: Robertson, “Interrupting Violence on Campus: Engaging Men as Allies” and Berkowitz “Working with Men to Prevent Violence Against Woman An Overview”
- TH, Oct 26: Understanding resistance to awareness and intervention
- **First Reflection Essays Due By Class Time**
  - Reading assignment: Rich, et al “I’d Rather Be doing Something Else: Male Resistance to Rape Prevention Programs.”

- Week 9: T, Oct 31: Violence Against Women Act: Perspectives on Legislative Solutions

- Reading assignment: Sacco “VAWA: Overview”: <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42499.pdf> and “Opposing Viewpoints – VAWA”

TH, Nov 2: Sexual Violence Effects on Survivors and the Campus Community

- Reading assignment: Eisenberg, et al. “Campus Sexual Violence Resources and Emotional Health of College Women Who Have Experienced Sexual Assault” and “Sexual assault victimization disproportionately affects certain minority college students”

Week 10: T, Nov 7: Agenda Denial and Case Studies

- Reading assignment: Anderson 107-114, Berns “Degendering the Problem and Blame”

**W, Nov. 8: Titans Take Action, 5pm AWCC**

TH, Nov 9: No Class

*Section 4: Strategies for effective activism and case studies*

Week 11: T, Nov 14: Studying and Framing Your Issue

- Reading assignment: Graham chapters 1 and 2

TH, Nov 16: Defining and Reaching Your Audience

- Reading assignment: Graham chapters 3 and 5

Week 12: T, Nov 21: Strategies of Effective Activism

- Reading assignment: Alinsky *Rules for Radicals* “Tactics” Keck and Sikkink *Activists Beyond Borders* excerpt

TH, Nov 23: **Thanksgiving Break**

Week 13: T, Nov 28: Should national service be mandatory?

- Reading assignment: Moskos “A Call to Civic Service” chapter 10

TH, Nov 30: Reflecting on volunteerism and this course

- Reading assignment: Wilson and Musick “The Effects of Volunteering on the Volunteer”

Week 14: T, Dec 5: Creating Effective Presentations and Test Preparation

- Reading assignment: none
- **Quest Talks Reflection Due**

TH, Dec 7: **Second Exam**

- Reading assignment: none

Week 15: **M, Dec 11: Group Papers Due**

T, Dec 12: Class Presentations

- Reading assignment: none

TH, Dec 14: Class Presentations

- Reading assignment: none