Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement: Results from the Longitudinal Assessment of Three Student Cohorts
Presenters

**Dena Pastor**
Professor of Graduate Psychology, Associate Director of Assessment Operations - Center for Assessment and Research Studies at James Madison University
pastorda@jmu.edu

**Chris Patterson**
Doctoral student in the Assessment & Measurement Ph.D. program at James Madison University
patte3cr@jmu.edu

**Abe Goldberg**
Executive Director of the James Madison Center for Civic Engagement (JMUCivic), Associate Professor of Political Science at James Madison University
goldbeax@jmu.edu
Our Purpose

The purpose of our session is to:

1) help participants understand the distinction between political and apolitical civic engagement

2) provide resources for the assessment of civic learning and democratic engagement

3) share a selection of results from our longitudinal administration of the Political Engagement Survey across 3 student cohorts
Conceptualizations
What is Civic Engagement?

“Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.”

(Ehrlich, 2000, vi)

Two lenses through which to view civic engagement

non-political lens  political lens
Our mission is to educate and inspire people to address public issues and cultivate a just and inclusive democracy.

We are a nonpartisan Academic Affairs entity emphasizing the acquisition of knowledge to make one a more informed participant in our democracy, skills to make one a more effective participant, and values that embrace learning, pluralism, open-mindedness, empathy, respect, diversity and inclusion.
What JMU Civic Does

- Build year-round voter education and engagement initiatives with students, faculty and staff.

- Integrate civic learning opportunities in courses and academic programs with faculty and departments across campus.

- Provide resources for students to learn about and discuss public issues in an academic environment, and to develop and implement plans for informed participation in civic life.
Assessments
Good resources for learning about civic engagement assessment

- Provides background for developments of the HElighten Civic Competency & Engagement, commercially available from ETS
- Good resource for learning about civic engagement conceptualizations and assessments
Examples of JMU’s Civic Engagement Outcomes

**Participation** includes:
- Joining or originating petitions
- Protesting, marching, demonstrating
- Contacting public officials
- Voting

Is enhanced by **knowledge** of:
- how democracy developed and why
- diverse cultures, histories, and values that have shaped the American experience

Is enhanced by **skills**:
- capacity to read, write, and speak effectively and persuasively in forums appropriate to civic life and public affairs
- ability to distinguish reliable and valid evidence and facts from unsubstantiated claims

Is characterized by **values & dispositions**:
- appreciation of empathy, open-mindedness, and diversity
- sense of civic responsibility; commitment to the public good over private interests

[11]

Assessing participation

• Vote
• Contact public officials
• Attend meetings of town or city government
• Protest/demonstration/march
• Write editorial/blog
• Sign or originate a petition
• Boycott products
• Promote campaign with button, sticker, sign
• Donate $ to political candidate/cause
• Work with a political group or volunteer for a campaign

Obtain voting rates for your institutions for free through the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement idhe.tufts.edu/nslve

Assess expectations for future participation or current participation?
Assessing values, dispositions, attitudes

• **Internal efficacy**: confidence in one’s ability to comprehend political and individually or collectively influence politics

• **Politically engaged identity**: seeing as central to one’s self being politically involved and concerned about political and societal issues

• **External political efficacy**: perceptions of the effectiveness of various political strategies; perceptions of how responsive the government would be to one’s concerns

• **Civic responsibility/civic-mindedness**: concern for societal problems and a sense of responsibility to address them

• **Commitment to universal democratic principles**: e.g., popular sovereignty, individual rights and freedoms, responsibilities, rule of law, and justice

• Appreciation of **diversity/pluralistic orientation**
Assessing knowledge

- **Possession of:**
  - Foundational and conceptual knowledge of government structures and processes enabling attentive and effective civic/political participation
  - Factual information about and understanding of institutions and processes of government, major political, economic, and social conditions or issues, stands of political parties

- **Ability to:**
  - Relate national practices and events to a global or international perspective
  - Relate historical events to the current political scene, such as major social and political movements and conflicts

- **Understanding of:**
  - Fundamental principles of democratic processes, human and civil rights, and rule of law
  - Legal aspects of citizenship, voting, and representation

Assessing skills

- Effective communication/dialogue across difference
- Organizational skills – ability to organize tasks and people
- Teamwork/interpersonal skills/collective problem solving and decision making
- Leadership skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Information literacy skills
- Ethical reasoning skills

Skills are needed not only for effective democratic participation, but also for workplace readiness*

Political Engagement Project Survey (PEPS)

- The PEPS was created for use in the Political Engagement Project, a 2007 multi-institutional study of the effectiveness of 21 higher education programs

- Non-commercially available, 90 Likert items

- Handout provides further information
PEPS was administered to a random sample of students twice across multiple cohorts: once as incoming first-year students during Assessment Day in August (Pre) and again as students with 45-70 credit hours during Assessment Day in February (Post).
Students were asked how frequently, on average, during the past year they stayed informed with what is going on in public and government affairs.
Students were asked how frequently, on average, during the past year they discussed with others what is going on in public and government affairs.
Students were asked to rate how central various characteristics were to their sense of self on a scale of 1=Not central to my sense of self to 6=Very central to my sense of self. These characteristics included being politically involved and concerned about international issues, government decisions, and policies.

Although all cohorts begin JMU considering political involvement as somewhat central to their sense of self, only the FA19/SP21 cohort considers political involvement to be more central to their sense of self over time.
INTERNAL POLITICAL EFFICACY

To measure internal political efficacy students were given a series of statements (“I believe I have a role to play in the political process.”, “I consider myself well qualified to participate in the political process”, “I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the political issues facing our country.”) and asked to indicate their agreement on a scale of 1=Very strongly disagree to 6=Very strongly agree.

Although both the FA17/SP19 and the FA19/SP21 cohort begin JMU feeling moderately confident in their ability to comprehend and influence politics, only the FA19/SP21 cohort feels more confident over time.
CURRENT POLITICAL PARTICIPATION. Students were asked how often during the past 12 months they had participated in 21 political activities. The average scores for 17 activities across cohorts and time points indicated that students, on average, had either not participated in these activities or had participated, but not within the past 12 months. The four activities on the scale with the highest means are shown below.
### Civic Engagement Programs at JMU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>American Experience Domain of General Education</strong></td>
<td>All students are required to complete a 4-credit hour American Experience course (HIST225, POSC225, or JUST225), which provides students with an understanding of the major themes and concepts that structure American life today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus-wide Voter Engagement Action Plan</strong></td>
<td>Plan consists of several strategies to prepare students to participate in elections, including our voter registration initiatives, opportunities for students to learn about public issues in an academic environment, and plans to facilitate participation in elections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Policy Summit</strong></td>
<td>Students receive information about a health care issue (e.g., opioid epidemic), 15 days prior to the summit and then during the summit, work in interdisciplinary small groups to brainstorm solutions and developing detailed legislative proposals to amend current legislation. They design posters to share their ideas, review other teams’ recommendations, and vote for the top three teams who present their proposals in full.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Debate Across the Curriculum</strong></td>
<td>An initiative to assist faculty and staff in incorporating debate pedagogy and techniques into the classroom and other on-campus activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deliberative Dialogue Coursework</strong></td>
<td>Students learn theories /tools that help others think through difficult issues in ways that are productive. Students learn how to help others promote understanding of multiple viewpoints, engage in processes to facilitate choice-making and ways to act together to implement these decisions. Students participate in these types of discussions and lead them on campus and in the community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ideas to take back with you...

- If your institution doesn’t have a clear definition of civic engagement, start the conversation
- Use existing resources to develop student learning and developmental outcomes in civic engagement
Dena Pastor
Professor of Graduate Psychology, Associate Director of Assessment Operations - Center for Assessment and Research Studies at James Madison University
pastorda@jmu.edu

Chris Patterson
Doctoral student in the Assessment & Measurement Ph.D. program at James Madison University
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Abe Goldberg
Executive Director of the James Madison Center for Civic Engagement (JMUCivic), Associate Professor of Political Science at James Madison University
goldbeax@jmu.edu
DEFINING CIVIC LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT
IUPUI Assessment Institute October 2021
HANDOUT CREATED BY DENA PASTOR (pastorda@jmu.edu)

Considerations:
- Definition needs to be broad to capture many different activities, but not so vague that it communicates nothing.
- Should definition contain non-political activities (which might be thought of as community engagement), political activities (which might be thought of democratic or political engagement), or both?
- Goals/outcomes might help inform definition (so perhaps develop goals/outcomes first and definition second).
- Definitions to get the conversation started are below.

Table 1:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>JMU definition:</th>
<th>State Council of Higher Education in Virginia definition:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civic Engagement</strong></td>
<td>Civic engagement [is] an array of knowledge, abilities, values, attitudes, and behaviors that in combination allow individuals to contribute to the civic life of their communities. It may include, among other things, exploration of one’s role and responsibilities in society; knowledge of and ability to engage with political systems and processes; and/or course-based or extra-curricular efforts to identify and address issues of public or community concern.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ehrlich (2000) definition:
“Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.”

“A morally and civically responsible person recognizes himself or herself as a member of a larger social fabric and therefore believes he or she has a role to play in addressing social problems; such an individual is willing to see the moral and civic dimensions of issues, to make and justify informed moral and civic judgments, and to take action to make a difference in our communities and broader society (Colby et al., vi, xxvi).” Beaumont, E. (2005). The challenge of assessing civic engagement: What we know and what we still need to know about civic education in college. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 11*(4), 287-303.


Elon University defines civic engagement as the process of learning about the assets, needs, and concerns of the larger communities of which we are a part and the willingness to collaborate with others to help define and achieve the common good. https://www.elon.edu/u/civic-engagement/


Resources for considering the balance between the political and non-political in a definition:


  Quote from p. 1: “What civic engagement is, how students should go about it, and what it should do for them after the fact is both a philosophical debate and a research divide. Even a cursory review of the literature would demonstrate that we know the most about the empirical effects of civic engagement through the lens of service-learning. Moreover, this research has produced a convincing amount of evidence on the positive effects of service-learning across a range of student-centered outcomes, including gains in learning, and aspects of personal and social development. But is service-learning really civic engagement? A number of scholars have argued that most forms of service-learning (or other forms of apolitical community engagement) fail to intentionally engage students in the activities and processes central to democratic-building (i.e. deliberative dialogue, collaborative work, problem-solving within diverse groups). In essence, these scholars argue it is not enough for students to engage in the community; they must also engage in the skills, values, and knowledge development that educate them to be better citizens.”


  Quote from p.4: “The relative lack of attention to college students’ political learning becomes apparent only if we distinguish between political and apolitical civic engagement. In the past couple of decades, both secondary and higher education have done a remarkable job of encouraging and supporting young people’s involvement with their communities through programs of extracurricular volunteer work and service learning, in which volunteer service activities are integrally connected with the substance of academic courses. This community service is often a valuable resource for nonprofit organizations, local communities, and the disadvantaged people these organizations serve. Volunteer experience helps establish a philanthropic mindset and habit in those who take part. Properly scaffolded, it can widen students’ circle of identification, helping them see the disadvantaged as less alien than they otherwise would, and inspiring a desire to contribute to purposes beyond the self. But this kind of voluntarism is inadequate preparation for democratic citizenship. For that, we need explicit attention to political learning.

  What counts as “political” learning? In a study of programs that support students’ political development, my colleagues and I defined political engagement broadly enough to include the wide range of ways that people, especially young people, participate in American democracy, without making the definition so broad that it includes all of civic voluntarism. Political engagement, therefore, includes community and civic involvement that has a systemic dimension and various forms of engagement with public policy issues, as well as electoral politics at all levels. A key criterion is that political activities are driven by systemic-level goals, a desire to affect the shared values, practices, and policies that shape collective life.

  But does this distinction between political and apolitical civic engagement make any real difference developmentally or educationally? Many educators assume that voluntarism of a nonpolitical kind will lead eventually to political engagement. In fact, civic participation can contribute to students’ political learning, but there is no guarantee that this will happen.”


  Quote from p. 24: “Efforts that actively seek to teach civic competency, promising though they are, are still outnumbered by programmes that are content to emphasise community involvement (Colby et al. 2003). There is great value in having students work in their communities. It enables them to witness societal challenges firsthand. It fosters in participants a sense of responsibility to community (Astin and Sax 1998). But all too often what is missing are systematic instructional efforts aimed at helping students understand the complex socio-political factors that perpetuate the status quo. Students are rarely given the opportunity (or encouragement) to develop the acumen to challenge it and seek to change it. What has emerged is a strikingly apolitical ‘civic’ engagement.”
Quote from pgs. 1-2: “One comment about language: I intentionally use the term “democratic” rather than “civic,” not to suggest that one is more desirable than the other but as a way to clarify the scope of this volume. Democratic education is designed with an end in mind: a free society in which all citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in the social, political, and economic systems that affect their lives. Although civic engagement is undoubtedly designed toward the same end, it is broader because it can include apolitical learning and experiences. Democratic education is inherently political. It includes the study of systemic problems and contemporary controversies in society, their underlying values tensions, and possible solutions, as well as practical skill development and social agency—all connecting knowledge about and action to strengthen democracy.”


Quote from p.5: “The terms ‘political participation’ and ‘civic participation’ had specific meanings within the context of the project. ‘Political participation’ was used to refer to activity that has the intent or effect of influencing either regional, national or supranational governance, either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of individuals who make that policy (definition adapted from Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995). Political participation can take a number of different forms, including both conventional forms which involve electoral processes (e.g., voting, election campaigning, etc.) and non-conventional forms which occur outside electoral processes (e.g., signing petitions, participating in political demonstrations, etc.). By contrast, the term ‘civic participation’ was used in the project to refer to activity which is focused on helping others, achieving a public good, solving a community problem, or participating in the life of a community, including work undertaken either alone or in cooperation with others in order to effect change (definition adapted from Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins and Delli Carpini, 2006). Civic participation can also take a number of different forms, including working collectively to solve a community problem, belonging to community organisations, attending meetings about issues of concern, and consumer activism (Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Brady, 1999; Putnam, 2000; Verba and Nie, 1972; Zukin et al., 2006).”


Quote from p. 263:

The movement has largely sidestepped the political dimension of civic engagement.

With only a few exceptions (the AASCU’s American Democracy Project is a good example), institutional (and national) efforts do not explicitly link the work of engagement to our democracy. What has emerged is a remarkably apolitical “civic” engagement. As one participant put it, “We need a movement that puts the question of the democratic purpose of higher education on the table.” There are pressures in certain sectors (e.g., some public institutions) against doing anything that is seen as “political”—partisan activities and political awareness and agency are being confounded. A few individuals raised questions about the extent to which colleges and universities could meaningfully play such a role: Can our institutions of higher learning fulfill their various purposes (job preparation, economic development, knowledge creation, cultural resource provision) and also act to promote a strong democracy?
At JMU, we define civic engagement as advancing the legacy of James Madison, the Father of the Constitution, by preparing individuals to be active and responsible participants in a representative democracy dedicated to the common good.

**Participation includes, but is not limited to:**

- campaigning – volunteering for a political campaign
- being a member of a political party or organization devoted to a political cause or societal issue
- financially contributing to a campaign or cause
- running for or holding public office
- contacting public officials
- attending meetings of town or city government
- following politics/staying informed
- discussing political issues with others
- making voice heard or voicing an opinion through blog, social media, newspaper, magazine, talk show, political buttons/bumper stickers
- protesting, boycotting, buycotting, marching, demonstrating
- civil disobedience
- joining or originating petitions
- participating in community service/volunteer activities as a mechanism for political action
- participating in deliberative and collaborative groups with friends and community members
- analyzing and navigating systems (political, social, economic) in order to plan and engage in public action
- voting (or deliberate acts of non-voting or blank voting)

**Participation is enhanced by knowledge of:**

- political levers for influencing change
- universal democratic principles - popular sovereignty, individual rights and freedoms, responsibilities, rule of law, and the common good
- purpose and power of political institutions
- the legal aspects of citizenship, voting, and representation
- how democracy developed and why
- how historical events, social and political movements, conflicts and debates relate to the development of the American state
- how key primary sources (e.g., the Constitution, the Federalist papers, Emancipation Proclamation, the Seneca Falls Declaration, Letter from a Birmingham Jail) relate to development of American democracy
- the sources of individual identity and the influence of these sources on civic values and behaviors
- diverse cultures, histories, and values that have shaped the American experience
- basic global values, traditions, and problems
- the interrelationship between domestic and global practices, events, and values
- how the world is organized politically, including the role of governmental and non-governmental organizations
- political issues at local, state, national, and international level

**Participation is enhanced by skills:**

- capacity to read, write, and speak effectively and persuasively in forums appropriate to civic life and public affairs
- ability to explain diverse positions on democratic values and practices; take a position and defend it
- ability to apply ethical reasoning skills (e.g., 8KQs) to evaluate public policies and guide civic behaviors
- ability to apply ethical reasoning skills (e.g., 8KQs) to evaluate and guide political decision-making and principled dissent
- ability to distinguish reliable and valid evidence and facts from unsubstantiated claims
- recognize the impact all forms of media have on personal attitudes and political beliefs
- ability to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of potential approaches to civic and political problems and be reflective about decisions and actions
- ability to use critical inquiry, analysis, and reasoning to identify a contemporary problem, research solutions, analyze results, evaluate choices, and make decisions
- ability to effectively work across differences in order to reach collaborative decisions that best support democracy and civic life
- ability to listen to a variety of perspectives on political issues

**Participation is characterized by values and dispositions:**

- appreciation of empathy, open-mindedness, and diversity
- positive attitudes toward pluralism and diverse perspectives
- commitment to universal democratic principles – e.g., popular sovereignty, individual rights and freedoms, responsibilities, rule of law, and justice
- sense of civic responsibility and commitment to the public good over private interests
- development of a civic identity, where addressing public issues is considered central to one’s sense of self
- development of confidence in individual and collective ability to address political/civic/social issue
Outcomes were created by the Civic Engagement Assessment Committee at James Madison University in Spring 2018 and informed by the following resources. Some outcomes were directly or partially adopted from these resources.


3) Civiced.org’s outline of essential elements of constitutional democracy  
   [http://www.civiced.org/component/content/article/12-publications/390-constitutional-democracy](http://www.civiced.org/component/content/article/12-publications/390-constitutional-democracy)

4) Massachusetts Board of Higher Education’s student civic learning and engagement assessment framework  

5) JMU’s Cluster 4 learning outcomes  
   [https://www.jmu.edu/gened/about/Cluster%20Four%20Requirements.shtml](https://www.jmu.edu/gened/about/Cluster%20Four%20Requirements.shtml)

6) JMU’s I am Madison’s Legacy
Resources for assessment of civic learning and democratic engagement


The PEPS was created by Beaumont et al. (2006) for use in the Political Engagement Project, a 2007 multi-institutional study of the effectiveness of 21 higher education programs.

See section VII item 52 on this website: [http://archive.carnegiefoundation.org/educating_for_democracy/docs/index.html](http://archive.carnegiefoundation.org/educating_for_democracy/docs/index.html)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th># items</th>
<th>Response scale</th>
<th>Omega</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</td>
<td>Current Events Knowledge</td>
<td>Self-report of the level of one’s knowledge about current local, state, national, and international issues, political leaders and their roles, and current economic issues.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 - No knowledge to 6 - In-depth knowledge</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foundational Knowledge</td>
<td>Self-report of the level of one’s knowledge about organizations that work on political/social issues, political/democratic theories, and political institutions.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 - No knowledge to 6 - In-depth knowledge</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity, Values &amp; Norms</td>
<td>Politically Engaged Identity</td>
<td>Students receiving high scores on the politically engaged identity subscale consider the following characteristics central to their sense of self: politically involved and concerned about international issues, government decisions, and policies.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 – Not central to my sense of self to 6 – Very central to my sense of self</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moral Identity</td>
<td>Students receiving high scores on the moral identity subscale consider the following characteristics central to their sense of self: fair, unbiased, compassionate, honest, and responsible.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 – Not central to my sense of self to 6 – Very central to my sense of self</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Political Efficacy</td>
<td>Public &amp; Institutional Attention</td>
<td>Perceptions of the effectiveness of political strategies used to bring public or institutional attention to issues.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 – Not effective at all to 6 – Very effective</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informing &amp; Collaborating</td>
<td>Perceptions of the effectiveness of political strategies used to inform others or collaborate with other people.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 – Not effective at all to 6 – Very effective</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Political Efficacy</td>
<td>Internal Efficacy</td>
<td>Confidence in ability to comprehend and influence politics. Example statements include: “I believe I have a role to play in the political process.”, “I consider myself well qualified to participate in the political process”, “I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the political issues facing our country.”</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 – Very strong disagree to 6 – Very strongly agree</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Political Skills</td>
<td>General skills of teamwork and collaboration</td>
<td>Reach a compromise, help diverse groups work together, deal with conflict, talk about social barriers (e.g., race).</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 – Not effective at all to 6 – Very effective</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General leadership &amp; communication skills</td>
<td>Articulate one’s own idea and beliefs to others, make a statement at a public meeting, assume leadership of a group.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 – Not effective at all to 6 – Very effective</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills of political analysis and judgment</td>
<td>Recognize competing political interests, write well about political topics, weigh pros/cons of different political positions.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 – Not effective at all to 6 – Very effective</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills of Political Influence and Action</td>
<td>Know whom to contact to get something done about a social or political problem, develop strategies for political action, organize people for political action.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 – Not effective at all to 6 – Very effective</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action &amp; Involvement</td>
<td>Expectation for future electoral action</td>
<td>Likelihood of engaging in electoral activities (e.g., voting, supporting political campaigns/causes) in the future.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 – Will certainly not do this to 6 – Will certainly do this</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expectation for political voice</td>
<td>Likelihood of using one’s political voice (e.g., contacting representatives, news outlets, protesting, marching, demonstrating, boycotting) in the future.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 – Will certainly not do this to 6 – Will certainly do this</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest &amp; Motivation</td>
<td>Motivated by Passion and Perceived Political Impact</td>
<td>Extent to which participation in political and social action is motivated by passion and perceived political impact.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 – Not an important influence to 6 – A very important influence</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivated by Personal Goals and Satisfaction</td>
<td>Extent to which participation in political and social action is motivated by personal goals and satisfaction.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 – Not an important influence to 6 – A very important influence</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Political Efficacy: Government Responsiveness</td>
<td>Government Responsiveness</td>
<td>Beliefs about how responsive government is to the demands of its citizens are an important aspect of external political efficacy. Students were asked, “If you or someone like you had a complaint about a local or national government activity and presented that complaint to a member of the local or national government, how much attention do you think he or she would pay to the complaint?”</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 – No attention at all to 6 – A lot of attention</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Interest &amp; Motivation</td>
<td>Attention to government &amp; public affairs</td>
<td>“Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. How often would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs?”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 – Never to 6 – Most of the time.</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political Information Seeking</td>
<td>Students were asked how often in a typical week they obtain news and information from various sources.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0 days a week to 7 days a week</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Ideology</td>
<td>Extent to which students are liberal or conservative in their political views.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 – Extremely liberal to 6 – Extremely conservative</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action &amp; Involvement</td>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>Students were asked how often they volunteered over the past year and for which kinds of organizations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 – Never to 6 – Very often: Once a week or more</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Omega is an index of internal consistency reliability that ranges from 0 to 1 with higher values indicating more favorable internal consistency. Omega is only reported for items averaged together to create subscale scores.

References


Prepared by:
Dena Pastor, James Madison University
pastorda@jmu.edu