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Civic Incomes Assessment: First Lessons

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The Team



- Chapman Rackaway, Professor and Chair of Political Science
- Jean Mistele, Professor of Mathematics and Director of Citizen Leader Program
- Melanie Fox, Assistant Director of Institutional Research
- Heather Keith, Director of Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Jason Lucas, Director of student orientation programming
- David Beach, Director of Undergraduate Curriculum

Background



- Civic engagement programming assumes all students are well-prepared to conduct acts of informed civic leadership from their first day
 - But students come in with varying levels of civic knowledge
- How to better tailor civic engagement to students' abilities?
- Adapted the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research's Political Engagement Project
 - Originally a 118-question assessment of a variety of civic knowledge, orientations, and skills
 - Adapted to 51 questions and shortened
 - 1 (minimum)-5 (maximum) scale of incoming civic capacity based on scores from the assessment
 - Reporting the incomes to the campus will help faculty adjust curricular and co-curricular strategies

Fall 2024 Deployment



- 684 Students in UNIV 100 completed the assessment
- Goal is a study given three times over the course of a student's college experience
 - First administration
 - During UNIV 100
 - Second administration
 - End of sophomore year
 - Third and final administration
 - Prior to graduation
- Where to administer subsequent assessments is a challenge

Organizing Responses



Civic engagement team divided the questions into four general categories

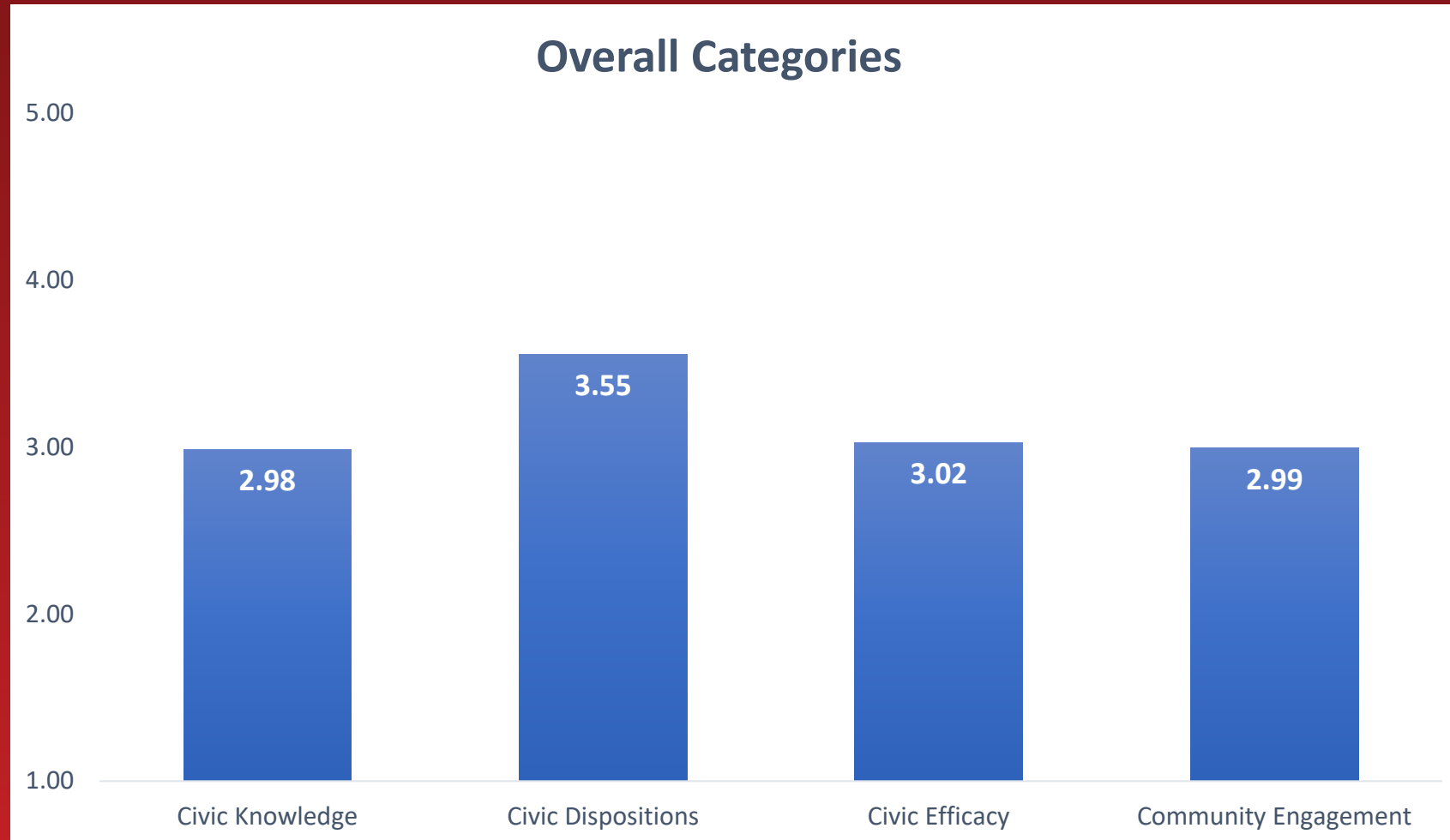
- 1) Civic Knowledge (Basic understanding of political rules, norms, and current information)
 - Do you read about political events in news sources?
 - Discussing current events with friends
- 2) Civic Dispositions (Attitudes and orientations towards politics)
 - Ability to take leadership
 - Fairness
 - Conflict resolution
- 3) Civic Efficacy (Belief that one can make change through legitimate political participation)
 - Respect for political norms
 - Patriotism and loyalty to the nation
- 4) Civic Engagement (Acts of citizen leadership)
 - Volunteering for campaigns
 - Attending local government meetings

Aggregated



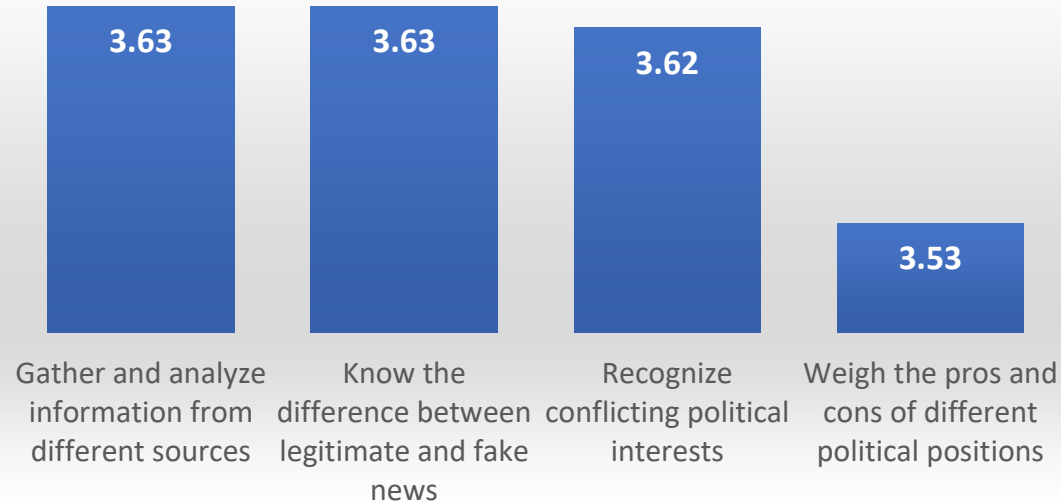
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Civic Knowledge

Knowledge Highest Scores



Knowledge Lowest Scores

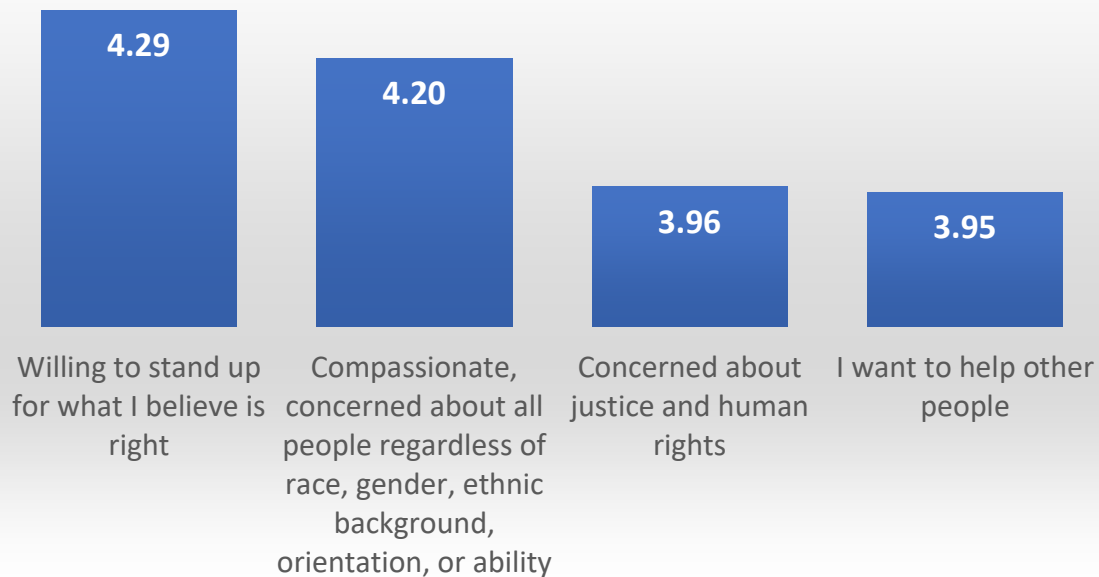


- Students believe they have good tools to identify useful information and evaluate events accordingly
 - Strongest scores were on differentiating sources of information and discerning fact from disinformation
- Students do not consume a significant amount of news media
 - Lowest scores on TV, podcast, and newspaper usage

Civic Dispositions

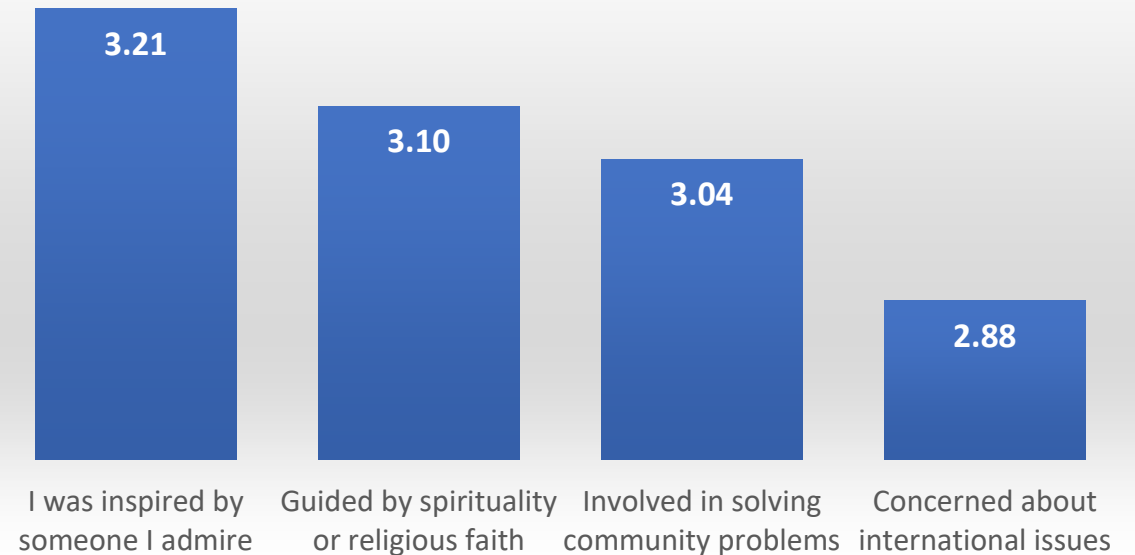


Dispositions Highest Scores



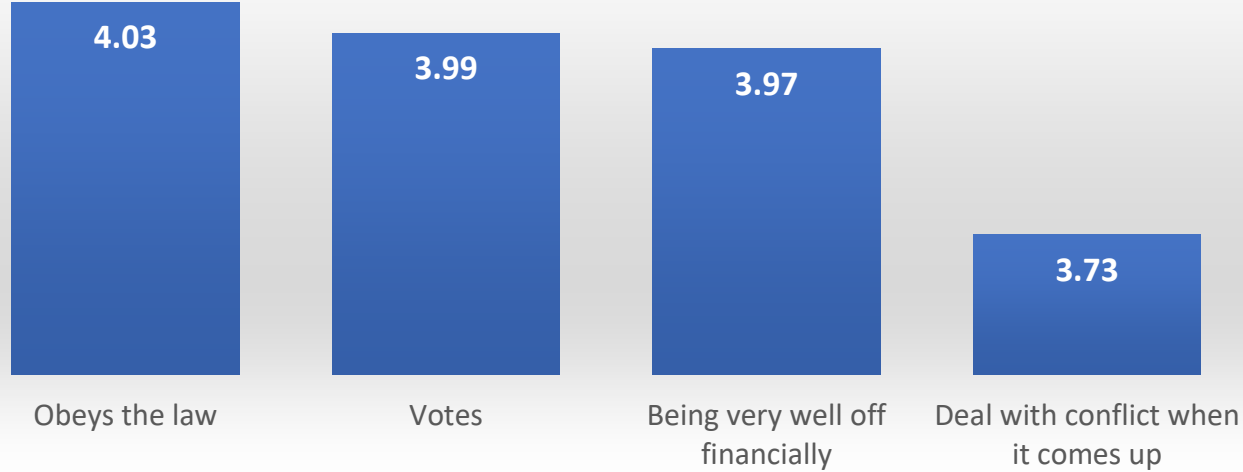
- Students have strongly developed beliefs about connecting with and supporting others

Dispositions Lowest Scores

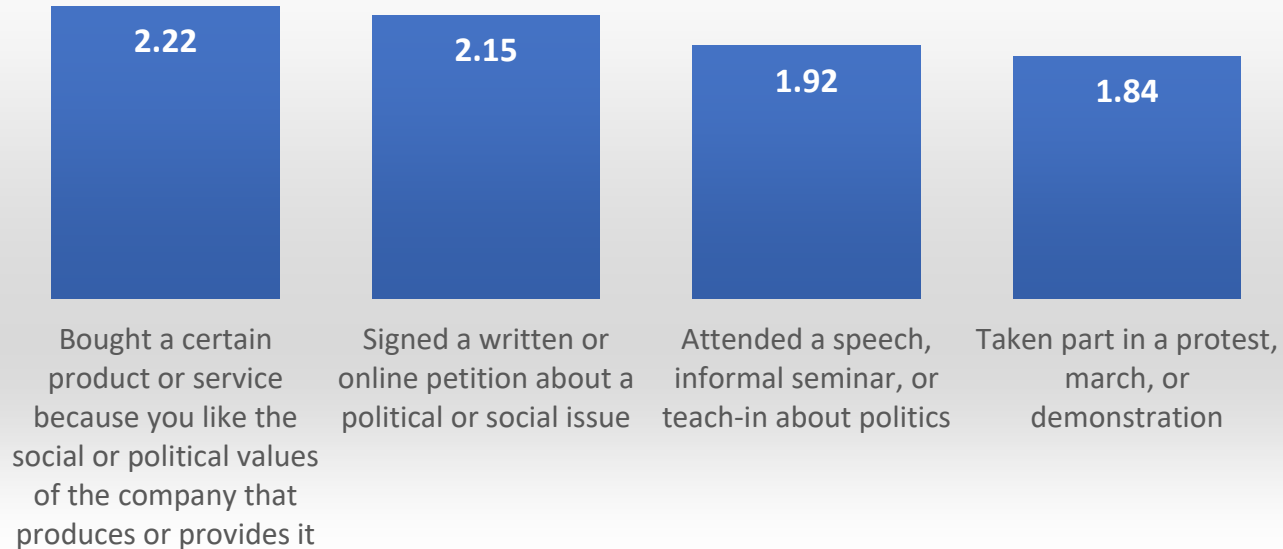


- Most interest is local
- Few role models or guides

Efficacy Highest Scores



Efficacy Lowest Scores



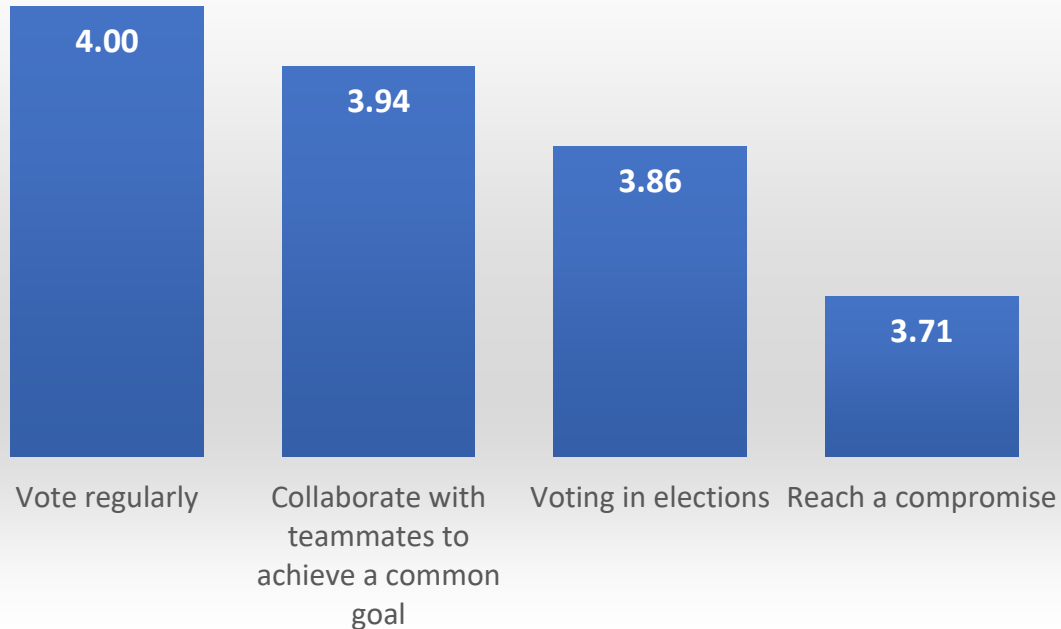
Civic Efficacy

- Students have good bases of efficacy
- Clear value statements in support of
 - Traditional forms of participation
 - Rule of law
- Little participation in organized activities
 - Partly a function of youth
 - Also related to participation values
 - Students value voting more than protest, for example

Civic Engagement

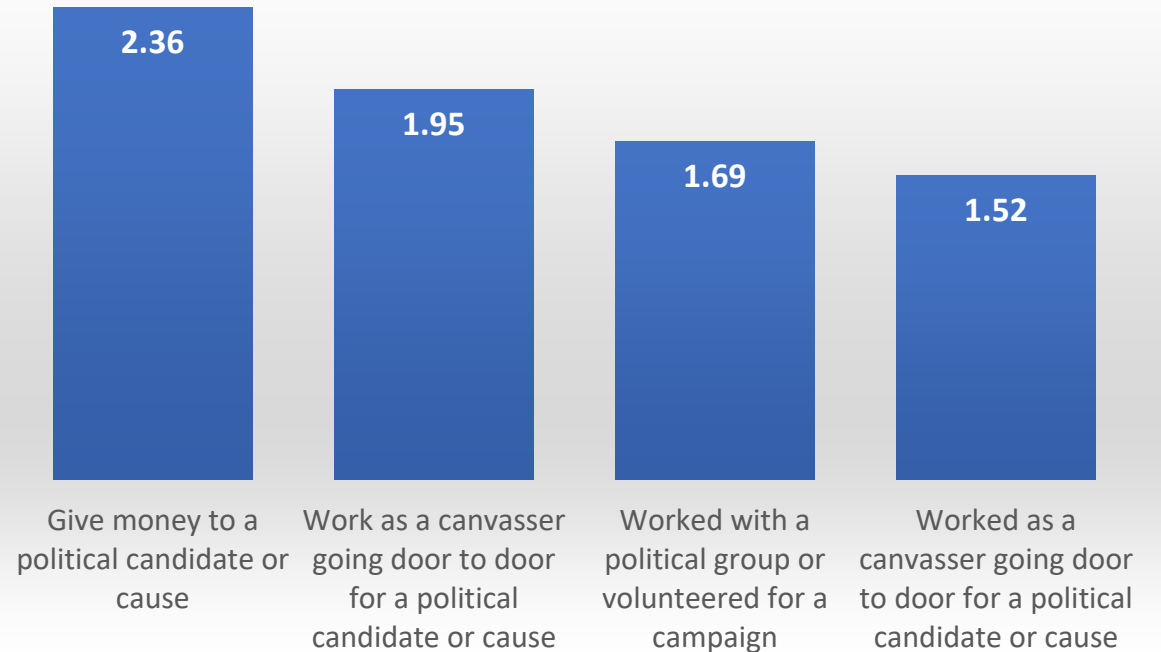


Engagement Highest Scores



- Students value voting but NSLVE data has not consistently shown that students do vote in such numbers

Engagement Lowest Scores



- Opportunity is present for more hands-on engagement activities for our students

Planned Interventions



- Encouragement of media literacy at Radford
 - Advocated for inclusion in new general education model
- Expanded connections with local governments in the New River Valley
 - Students strongly focus on local problems and connections
- Providing more organized opportunities to participate
 - City commission and school board meeting shuttles
 - Connecting students to candidates and electeds
- Promotion of registration and voting
 - Radford recognized by two voting advocacy organizations for our efforts

Reporting



- Report developed and presented to
 - Provost's Academic Affairs Leadership Team
 - UNIV 100 Instructors and Students
- Curricular Integration
 - Working with General Education Reform Team on scheduling second administration
 - Identifying majors with capstones to plan near-graduation administration
- SCHEV
 - Retooling civic engagement assessment plan to include CI data

Questions?



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