



VIEW TEACHING GUIDES

14. TEAMWORK AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

To teach students about being engaged and collaborative as members of a team or a civic community, refer to:

- Introduction to Civic Engagement
- Introduction to Civic Action
- Why Teamwork Matters

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Civic Engagement

Part of being a responsible, informed citizen is engaging with the goals and challenges of the community. Use this discussion to help students reflect on ways they have been (or could be) involved with civic issues in their community. Begin by asking students the following questions:

- What does it mean to be civically engaged?
- What are the important civic issues in your community?
- How are you involved in your community?
- How do local and national civic issues impact you? What can you do to get involved?

Civic Action

To help students understand the difference between civic engagement and civic action, begin by asking them to come up with a definition for each. Students should be able to provide at least two real-world examples of each.

Once the class has a firm understanding of civic engagement and civic action, they may discuss their experiences. Students should be able to describe their civic experience, how it impacted their community, and speak to the benefits of being civically minded.

Teamwork

Use this discussion to help students think about the application of teamwork. Students should be able to identify the activities that are best completed individually and those that most effectively are tackled as a team. Begin by providing students with a list of activities such as:

- Fundraising for a charity run
- Presenting a business proposal
- Editing a publication
- Designing a website
- Locating an off-campus event

Next, ask students to discuss how they would complete each activity (individually or as a team), and justify their decision. You may ask students to reflect on the types of activities that are most successfully completed using teamwork.

Collaborating

In order to be successful in their academic, personal, and professional lives, students will need to develop strong collaboration skills. Use this discussion to get students thinking about their strengths and weaknesses when working with teams. Begin by asking students to describe a team they belong to, their role in the group, and a detailed example of how they contribute as a team member. Encourage students to discuss their strengths and weaknesses as a member of their team.

ACTIVITIES

Civic Engagement

This activity will help students identify civic initiatives in their local community. Ask students first to evaluate a challenge faced by their community and identify the organizations involved. Students then should be able to outline a detailed plan on how to get involved. This outline may include a review of existing initiatives, the history of the issue, the people involved, and potential opportunities.

For a long-term activity, students may complete their plan to become actively involved with a local cause. This may look like volunteering for a local organization after class or on weekends. Over the course of the class, students should keep a log of their experiences, goals, and frustrations to share with their peers.

Civic Action

In this activity, students will select a local or national issue for which to design a civic action plan. Begin by asking students to complete the following:

- Identify the top sources you will use to inform others to support your cause.
- Outline a communication plan including the target audience, scope, purpose, and delivery method.
- Identify key partners and leaders to contact.
- Detail necessary steps that will help maintain the future successes of the plan.

Students should be able to articulate their civic action plan in writing or as a verbal presentation to the class. To practice business communication skills, encourage students to treat the activity like a project proposal. Students even may choose to create a mock report for a local organization.

Teamwork

As your students complete class projects and group work, they will get firsthand experience as contributing members of a team. Once your students are familiar with the importance of teamwork, ask each student to keep an ongoing log of their academic team experiences. Students should be able to provide details for a culminating discussion or report. Use these questions to encourage analysis:

- What was the purpose or goal of your team?
- What was your role on the team? Did this change over time?
- How did you interact with the members of your team?
- How did your team members interact with each other?
- What types of conflicts arose? How did the team address these issues?

Use the culminating discussion or report to encourage students to consider how teamwork will impact their future success as a working professional.