



Gephardt Institute *for* Civic and Community Engagement Strategic Plan

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Engaged Citizens, Thriving Communities





LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

I graduated from college in 1962 at a time of profound change in our country. It was in this moment that President Kennedy issued a call to civic action that moved me and countless others on college campuses across the country to find a purpose in the struggle for a more perfect union.

Every generation of Americans before and since has grappled with the reality of our United States and the American Dream of *what should be*. At present, amid the global pandemic, swell of misinformation and distrust in our institutions and leaders, and persistent inequities in our society that undermine the potential of all Americans, there could be cause among some to say *enough*.

Yet, despite all that may weigh on us and challenge our faith in the progress of our nation, I have reason to hope. Not all such moments that require action carry with them the grace of an invitation like the one I heard more than half a century ago, but young Americans today are not waiting for an invitation. Instead, they have led us into the streets in protest and demonstration, to the ballot box to vote in record numbers, and in community dialogues and collaboration for the causes that matter to us most.

Founded in 2005 with the intention to create an “action tank” within Washington University, the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement *harnesses* this passion and prepares the next generation of citizens and civic leaders to engage in the progress and vitality of their communities. Undeniably, the Gephardt Institute is fulfilling this vision and much more.

I am immensely proud of what the Gephardt Institute and Washington University have achieved. With this strategic plan as our compass, I am inspired by what we can achieve, and *will* achieve, with your continued commitment to this essential cause of civic engagement.

I was moved by President Kennedy’s words more than half a century ago, and I am moved by the countless examples of young Americans committed to preserving and strengthening our democracy today. We have it in us to be a better and more perfect union for all. Now, let’s get to work.

Dick Gephardt

Richard A. Gephardt

Founder, Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement



LETTER FROM OUR CHANCELLOR

The role of higher education institutions in our civic life is unique and significant: we share in the incredible responsibility to educate our citizenry to participate and lead in our democracy. The challenge is daunting, yet more necessary than ever as we seek to counter further erosions of trust in our democracy and in one another, and to counter unrelenting racial and socioeconomic inequities that continue to haunt our nation. To meet this challenge, we must fervently educate new generations of knowledgeable, inspired, and engaged citizens.

The Gephardt Institute is essential to Washington University's mission to educate and equip our students to be productive members of our global society. Through this bold strategic plan, the Gephardt Institute is moving civic and community engagement further into the center of the Washington University experience.

Over the past 15 years, the Gephardt Institute has developed an impressive array of programs and services that instill an ethos of civic engagement into all aspects of life at Washington University. The institute is an important leader, convener, and intermediary for all of us as we seek to coordinate our efforts across the university in our aspiration to be consequential partners in St. Louis, *for* St. Louis, and *with* St. Louis.

Civic engagement is vital to a thriving democracy. Engaged citizens—every single one of us—must actively participate in the progress and vitality of our communities if we are to both preserve our democracy and realize its full promise of equity and justice for all. This is the Gephardt Institute's vision for civic health. It matters for St. Louis, and for all of the places, professions, and issues on which our students will have an impact, both while they are here and beyond graduation.

Our university motto, *Per Veritatem Vis*, "Strength through Truth," speaks to this vision. When our entire community is equipped with the knowledge and skills to engage and lead in our democracy, then we can honestly reckon with our past and present, and build the just and equitable future we seek.

Andrew D. Martin
Chancellor



LETTER FROM OUR CHAIR

When Chancellor Martin conveyed his commitment to be Washington University in, for and with St. Louis, I was at once energized by the alignment with the Gephardt Institute's mission and struck by the profound potential of what we could accomplish together. The Gephardt Institute is an integral leader in this vision, and provides a necessary bridge between campus and community that creates dialogue, partnerships, and opportunity for innovative and meaningful civic engagement.

St. Louis is a proud city, and there is much that we can celebrate over the course of more than 170 years that Washington University and St. Louis have shared together.

Yet, we cannot ignore the divides that create increasingly disparate experiences in our city and region based on one's zip code, skin color, profession, or education. As an anchor institution whose fate is tied to that of St. Louis, questions bear to be asked: What is the responsibility of Washington University to the communities that surround, support, and resource the university? How can mutually beneficial university-community partnerships augment our respective strengths? How can Washington University be an active participant and regional leader in the renewal of St. Louis to ensure a thriving and equitable future for all its citizens? How can we best educate our future leaders who will inherit the immense challenges facing our region, nation, and world?

The Gephardt Institute empowers the Washington University community to not just examine these questions—and many more—but to act on them. St. Louis is resilient, and Washington University is a better university because of St. Louis. To quote Chancellor Martin's inaugural vision, we are Washington University "because of St. Louis," from the Missouri Red Granite that scaffolds our Danforth Campus, to the people who live, teach and learn through the university and call St. Louis home. And when our students graduate, they will carry the lessons of St. Louis, of Washington University, and of the Gephardt Institute with them to continue effecting positive change in our region, nation, and world.

As Chair of the Gephardt Institute National Advisory Council, I am humbled by the excellence and impact that the Gephardt Institute inspires throughout Washington University and the greater St. Louis region, and we're grateful for your continued support to advance this important work.

John D. Beuerlein
Chair, National Advisory Council



LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

It is with both excitement and a deep sense of urgency that we share the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement Strategic Plan. We are grateful to the more than 300 students, faculty, staff, alumni, community partners and trusted friends of the institute who helped in the creation of this strategic plan. Their input and wisdom shaped this vision and will undoubtedly guide our future for years to come.

The terrain of civic and community engagement is complex and unceasing; the strategic plan that you will read about in the pages that follow provides a map, compass, and key for the Washington University community to engage the profound civic challenges and opportunities before us. On any great journey, it's necessary to ask "where will we arrive at the end of this journey?"

Here are highlights that will result from our strategic plan:

- An expansive Engage Democracy initiative encompassing voter engagement, civic education, and civic skills development for all students
- A signature St. Louis fellowship program for students to contribute substantially to regional progress while honing their civic leadership knowledge and skills
- A robust Civic Engagement Fund grants program to catalyze university-community partnerships and Community Engaged Courses that advance St. Louis priorities
- Clear pathways for students to build core civic competencies through both new and existing opportunities in academic and co-curricular life
- Sustainable infrastructure to support effective university-community partnerships, including navigation tools, training, coordination, and collaborative networks
- An extensive spectrum of Civic and Community Engaged Courses, with substantial faculty resources and structures to ensure student learning and positive community impact

The Gephardt Institute is for *you*. Even in this tumultuous time we are living in, I have hope for our shared future because of the passion, empathy, resolve, courage, and capability of our Washington University community, our St. Louis community, and all who share in our vision of civic health: *All people actively engage in the progress and vitality of their communities*. We invite you to be part of our vision for the future and the exciting steps we will take in the years ahead.

Stephanie N. Kurtzman
Peter G. Sortino Director

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement is at a watershed moment. We face a national civic crisis and urgent challenges locally, nationally, and globally. We embrace a resurgence of civic engagement, particularly among youth, and burgeoning interest in St. Louis community engagement among our students, faculty, and staff. We are challenged to reinvigorate the public relevance of higher education and to deepen the St. Louis community's trust in Washington University as a substantial partner for regional progress.

As an “action tank” grounded in the education and skills necessary for effective civic engagement, the Gephardt Institute has laid a strong foundation in our first 15 years. We will build on this success through our **mission to foster a thriving culture of civic engagement throughout Washington University, realized by engaged citizens, scholarship, and partnerships that advance the collective good.**

To achieve this bold mission, we will:

EDUCATE STUDENTS FOR LIFELONG ENGAGED CITIZENSHIP

We envision that Washington University students will become alumni who apply a civic lens to their professional, academic, and personal lives, actively engaging in the progress and vitality of their communities.

CATALYZE THE UNIVERSITY AS AN ENGAGED CITIZEN IN ST. LOUIS

We envision that Washington University—through our students, faculty, staff, and alumni—will play an active and substantial role as a partner with St. Louis community organizations, addressing regional priorities to advance a thriving St. Louis.

Through this strategic plan, the Gephardt Institute will provide coordination, infrastructure, and support to our students, faculty, staff, community partners, and alumni through partnership, course, and program development. We envision that civic engagement will be found “in place” at Washington University: in majors, departments, and schools; in faculty teaching and research; and in the co-curricular life of students. Our goal is not simply the addition of new initiatives. Rather, we are intently focused on high quality initiatives, measurable impact, coordinated and community-driven efforts, seamless civic education, and focused attention on the greatest challenges facing St. Louis.

We will accomplish this through the following priorities:

- **Student Pathways:** Develop and foster pathways for civic engagement education and involvement for all Washington University students.
- **Community Partnerships:** Build the infrastructure to support university and regional organizations in developing and advancing mutually beneficial community partnerships.
- **Academic Integration:** Bolster resources for faculty and departments to integrate civic and community engagement into teaching.
- **Investment in Current Initiatives:** Solidify and advance current initiatives within three categories: Engage Democracy, St. Louis Engagement, and Civic Agency.

We will measure our success by:

- **Broad student engagement in civic life,** defined by metrics of students' civic knowledge and skills, participation levels in academic and co-curricular opportunities, and commitment to civic engagement post-graduation.
- **Cultivation of substantial university–community partnerships,** defined by metrics of quality and quantity of partnerships, sustained positive impact on consequential St. Louis community priorities, and community organizations' satisfaction and trust in Washington University partnerships.
- **Growth of civic and community engaged courses,** defined by metrics of quality, quantity, and diversity of courses; student learning; advancement of community partner missions; and faculty scholarship.

To achieve our aspirations, we will need to both enhance and secure our resources. This will include an expanded staff and operating budget, substantial Civic Engagement Fund, sophisticated technology infrastructure, continued investment in Stix House, and robust endowment to sustain our efforts.

The opportunity is before us to elevate the Gephardt Institute's role as a vital engine for civic engagement throughout Washington University, resulting in consequential impact on the civic health of our communities—starting in St. Louis and extending into the world.



“Congressman Gephardt’s vision was for the institute to serve as an incubator for engaged, empathic, and humble citizens who are convinced that the best path to progress for all people is the path where they walk together with respect for each other and in good spirited collaboration to arrive at the best possible solution for all. We share that same vision.”

—John Beuerlein, MBA ’77,
Gephardt Institute National Advisory
Council Chair, and Crystal Beuerlein

ABOUT THE GEPHARDT INSTITUTE

Our founder, Congressman Richard A. Gephardt, envisioned an “action tank” for engaged citizenship. In contrast to the numerous “think tanks” addressing public challenges, our “action tank” serves two core functions: to prepare the next generation of civic leaders, and to equip people and organizations to engage in the progress and vitality of their communities. From our nascent beginning in 2005, the Gephardt Institute has become Washington University’s standard-bearer for civic engagement.

Civic engagement is a life skill that extends beyond the confines of students’ education at Washington University. We focus not only on what students do during their time at the university, but also on what they *learn* and how they carry that civic learning into their lives as alumni. A holistic approach to civic engagement integrates learning and action, spans the academic and co-curricular spheres, and equips students with the capacity and commitment for lifelong engagement with the complex and deep-seated challenges of our time.

Since our founding, the Gephardt Institute has evolved significantly as we have broadened from specialty programs to initiatives that span the university and the St. Louis region. In the last five years, major changes have laid the groundwork for the vision we articulate in this strategic plan. The 2015 integration of the Gephardt Institute for Public Service with the Community Service Office resulted in the renamed Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement. This change spurred an expansive responsibility and increased capacity to serve as an action tank for civic engagement at Washington University.

OUR GOALS:

- Educate students for lifelong engaged citizenship
- Catalyze partnerships that respond to community needs and priorities
- Infuse civic engagement throughout the Washington University experience

“The challenge for academic institutions is to get students to see reality, to see the world outside the buildings...to give students the real-life experience of being a citizen.”¹

—Former Congressman
Richard Gephardt

Coincidentally, at the same time we were preparing for this organizational change, St. Louis rose to national attention through the Ferguson Uprising.² This critical flashpoint and community response that followed illuminated entrenched regional challenges, including long-standing inequities that have led to vastly disparate health, educational, and economic outcomes across communities in St. Louis. Just as the Ferguson Uprising and the civic crises of 2020

have called the region to deep introspection and renewed action, they call Washington University to examine and recommit to our role as a neighbor in St. Louis and as an active partner in addressing these regional challenges. This sense of urgency informs the Gephardt Institute's vision.

Washington University is anchored in St. Louis; we are here to stay. Who we are as a university—and who we are as an institute—is intertwined with St. Louis. We cannot operate in a vacuum. Our work must be informed by and responsive to the needs and priorities of the St. Louis community. This necessitates a continued culture shift for how we, as a higher education institution, approach civic engagement—a different way of planning, thinking, and functioning that works with local communities and responds to the pressing challenges that affect people's lives. Our strategic plan outlines the Gephardt Institute's opportunity and responsibility to guide how Washington University students, faculty, and staff integrate civic and community engagement into the fabric of their learning, teaching, and work.

“Regardless of one's view of what happened that day in Ferguson, the events of August 9, 2014 revealed deep and divisive problems in our region. While not unique to our region, this is our reality ... Now we have the opportunity to do something with these events, to do something with this moment in our history.”³

—Ferguson Commission Co-Chairs
Rich McClure and Rev. Starsky D. Wilson

A note on language: You will notice throughout our strategic plan that we use the terms *citizen* and *citizenship*. We recognize that these terms have many connotations, some of which are contested or narrowly defined by legal status. We have chosen to embrace this powerful language in its more expansive meaning to convey people who actively participate in a democracy.

citizen: Adapted from the conceptual framework of participatory democracy, a citizen is an active participant in public life.⁴

OUR ROLE AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

The Gephardt Institute was founded to uplift Washington University's commitment to the civic mission of higher education. Over the course of our history, the institute has aligned with the national movement in higher education toward a more holistic approach to *civic engagement* and a partnership-based approach to *community engagement*. As a result:

1. We educate students for lifelong engaged citizenship, aligned with the civic engagement part of our name. We envision that Washington University students will become alumni who apply a civic lens to their professional, academic, and personal lives, regardless of their career or location, actively engaging in the progress and vitality of their communities.

2. We catalyze the university as an engaged citizen in St. Louis, aligned with the community engagement part of our name. We envision that Washington University—through our students, faculty, staff, and alumni—will play an active and substantial role as partners with St. Louis community organizations, addressing regional priorities to advance a thriving St. Louis.

Mirroring the civic engagement movement in higher education, the Gephardt Institute has evolved from a volunteerism model, which addressed immediate needs without investigating underlying challenges that created the needs. We have also shifted from a public service context that implied a focus on

OUR SCOPE

The Gephardt Institute works with students, faculty, and staff across all seven academic schools—at both the graduate and undergraduate levels—to ensure robust and high-quality civic engagement opportunities on campus and in St. Louis.

We work closely with community organizations in the St. Louis region to facilitate effective partnerships with WashU departments and organizations to address community needs and priorities.

We also support alumni-led efforts to foster a lifetime of civic engagement in St. Louis, the nation, and the world.

government careers, and toward engagement of the broader citizenry through multiple forms of civic engagement. The complexity and severity of public challenges necessitate an expansive approach: we equip our students to examine why needs exist, and to advance public dialogue, problem-solving, and policy that ameliorates underlying systemic issues.

Over the years, engagement efforts have proliferated across campus on the unspoken assumption that more is better. Washington University reports 600 community partnerships, contributing nearly one million volunteer hours annually to initiatives in the St. Louis region.⁵ A benefit of this proliferation is that much work is being done and there are numerous success stories, generating both energy and positive impact. The challenge of this proliferation is that it has revealed a lack of coordination, diluted efforts, unclear outcomes, and person-dependent programs.

AN ENGINE FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

The Gephardt Institute serves as an engine to power civic engagement at Washington University. Applying a vehicle metaphor, we are most often fuel or a motor, not the driver. New community partnerships can stem from many sources, such as academic departments, Student Affairs units, and student-led organizations. We provide infrastructure and support throughout the partnership development process, including conceptualization, planning, implementation, evaluation, and sustaining or concluding partnerships.

Although it might appear simpler to centralize all civic engagement activity under the roof of the Gephardt Institute, this approach would not fundamentally weave civic engagement into the fabric of the university. It also might appear logical for the Gephardt Institute to proliferate as much civic and community engagement activity as possible throughout Washington University. This approach may yield high numbers but would risk countering our values for effective civic and community engagement. The Gephardt Institute is committed to high quality, measurable impact, coordinated and community-driven efforts, seamless civic education, and focused attention on the greatest challenges facing St. Louis.

While many Washington University community engagement initiatives are rooted in mutually beneficial partnerships, others have been critiqued by the St. Louis community for taking a paternalistic approach that delivers service to St. Louis and implies that “WashU knows best.” Community service and outreach were once considered models for university engagement with local communities and continue to be important. Building from this foundation, both universities and communities now embrace a more complex partnership-based approach to community engagement—a “two-way street.”⁶

The Gephardt Institute builds coalitions to harness the vast civic motivation, knowledge, and talent at Washington University, combined with community assets and expertise, to focus on the greatest priorities in St. Louis—with the right supports in place to ensure quality partnerships and positive, mutually beneficial outcomes.

The institute underscores our commitment to measurable impact through the development and implementation of an evaluation infrastructure that serves a dual role:

1. Measuring student learning, development, and transformation, and
2. Measuring community impact of community partnership initiatives.

To do this, we have created a theory of change for civic engagement at the university and are testing measures that help us know the impact we are having through civic and community engagement initiatives. This information guides a cycle of data-informed practice to continuously improve and modify programs to ensure the intended impact.

OUR UNIVERSITY-WIDE APPROACH

We are uniquely positioned as a university-wide interdisciplinary institute to educate the student body for engaged citizenship. As a nonpartisan institute, we serve all students across ideologies, disciplines, and backgrounds.

The Gephardt Institute reports to both the Executive Vice Chancellor for Civic Affairs and Strategic Planning, and to the Provost’s Office. Both of these roles have university-wide leadership responsibilities and report to the Chancellor. Given this positioning, the Gephardt Institute has broad reach to serve the full university, including each academic school and co-curricular life on the Danforth and Medical Campuses. Because we operate alongside the schools and do not have formal oversight of other units, **we lead through influence by serving as a connector and offering vital resources and infrastructure to help students, faculty, staff and community partners advance their civic and community engagement goals.**

The institute’s goals work in tandem with key university goals to be a higher education institution committed to:

- Academic distinction
- Educational access
- Regional, national, and global impact
- Cultivation of purposeful careers and lives⁷
- Preparing students to engage in the progress and vitality of their communities

These commitments start in the St. Louis community: the place where our students most often live and learn, where our faculty most often teach and conduct research, and where Washington University has an inherent responsibility to be not just in St. Louis, but also for St. Louis, and with St. Louis.

CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DEFINED

Civic engagement and community engagement are related but distinct terms, and both are central to the Gephardt Institute's mission. Generally speaking, civic engagement is an overarching term that encompasses a broad range of civic activities. Community engagement is one form of civic engagement that focuses on purposeful mutually developed partnerships that address community needs and priorities. The institute has adopted the following definitions:



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

“Any act intended to improve or influence a community. Often, the phrase has positive connotations, so that engagement is viewed as ‘civic’ to the extent that it meets such criteria as responsibility, thoughtfulness, respect for evidence, and concern for other people and the environment.”⁸

“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 nonpolitical processes.”⁹



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement describes collaborations and partnerships within a context, spanning from the local to the global, with shared goals, planning, and outcomes. These collaborations and/or partnerships should be purposeful with articulated lifecycles, benefits, utility, and actions for all parties involved.

Engagement should also contain one or more of the following elements:

- Focus on mutually articulated needs and/or priorities within the community
- Equity, inclusion, and human rights lens
- Include elements of assessment, evaluation, and/or tracking to document outcomes and impact¹⁰

This definition for community engagement was written and adopted by the Community Engagement Task Force at Washington University in April 2019.

EXAMPLES OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT¹¹

- Advocating for or against policies
- Attending candidate forums or debates
- Attending public meetings
- Collaborating with neighbors to solve community challenges
- Communicating with elected officials
- Creating public art
- Discussing news, politics, and current events
- Donating goods
- Donating money
- Evaluating information for credibility
- Giving blood
- Participating in protests
- Running for elected office
- Serving in the government or armed forces
- Serving on a board
- Spending at local businesses or social enterprises
- Volunteering
- Voting

WHAT IS CIVIC ENGAGEMENT?

Civic engagement encompasses multiple civic activities, including community engagement, civic dialogue, public problem-solving, deliberation, volunteerism, philanthropy, advocacy, and political engagement. The commonality across these various forms of civic engagement is the *active participation* of citizens committed to affecting change in their communities.

A healthy democracy depends on engaged citizens who actively participate in the “public square” of community life and civic life, working together to realize solutions to public challenges. Whether we envision a public square, town hall, commons, or community meeting, the essence is people coming together in the public sphere to debate, deliberate, and take action to move a community forward. Citizen participation alone is not the goal. When all citizens participate in a process that is collaborative and inclusive, with clear purpose and impact, the full promise of democracy is realized.¹² Civic engagement is the vehicle for how individuals contribute to a thriving democracy, working *with* others to find solutions to public problems. Engaged citizens are critical for creating sustainable, equitable change in communities, ranging from neighborhoods to nations.

Civic engagement is critical not just for social cohesion, but also for personal fulfillment. Engaging in civic life is associated with a higher sense of purpose, well-being, and lifelong engaged citizenship.¹³ Given higher education’s pivotal role in transitioning students into adulthood, civic engagement is a core function of colleges and universities to foster civic participation, societal progress, and individual well-being.

“Higher education’s goals should be aspirational, not for the democracy we *have* but for the democracy we *need*.”¹⁴

—Nancy Thomas,
Director, Institute for Democracy &
Higher Education, Tisch College of
Civic Life, Tufts University



EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

- **CITYSTUDIOSTL** in the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts is a fund dedicated for faculty and students who partner with community organizations on community-based projects. One of many funding recipients is associate professor Catalina Freixas. She and the students in the Inclusion and Neighborhood studio partnered with DeSales Community Housing Corporation to develop proposals for Fox Park in South St. Louis.
- The **CLINICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM** at WashULaw administers 12 clinics, partnering with local communities, primarily in St. Louis, to provide approximately 100,000 hours of legal assistance a year.
- **GATEWAY CURRICULUM** reimagines medical education to prepare medical students with a community engaged education. Local health organizations will partner with Washington University School of Medicine to provide practical education for students, and to receive additional support to accomplish their mission.
- **HOMEGROWN STL** is an initiative through the Brown School's Race and Opportunity Lab. The initiative partners with the United Way of Greater St. Louis and other local organizations to coordinate initiatives that improve the livelihoods and upward mobility of Black boys and men in the region.
- **LAUNCHCODE**, a St. Louis-based nonprofit, partners with McKelvey School of Engineering to offer introductory computer science courses to community members. Undergraduate computer science students serve as teaching assistants.
- The **PROGRAM FOR THE ELIMINATION OF CANCER DISPARITIES** at Siteman Cancer Center collaborates with community organizations to facilitate outreach, trainings, and partnerships that “foster healthy communities and environments that reduce cancer disparities.”
- The **SUSTAINABILITY EXCHANGE** is a collaboration of the Sam Fox School, Arts & Sciences, and McKelvey School of Engineering. The course partners with community organizations, and students work in interdisciplinary teams to tackle real-world challenges in energy, the environment, and sustainability.
- The **TAYLOR COMMUNITY CONSULTING PROGRAM** at Olin Business School's Center for Experiential Learning partners with local nonprofits to provide student consulting teams who offer actionable recommendations on organizational needs and challenges.
- The **YOUNG SCIENTIST PROGRAM** partners students in The Graduate School with high schools in the St. Louis region to implement the Summer Focus research experience, science educational programs, teaching demonstrations, teaching kits, and science field trips.

IMAGINE THE FUTURE WITH US

IMAGINE *the future of civic health.*

Communities organize to define and address public problems. All people have the will and the skills to engage in public life¹⁵ through civic dialogue, community service, collective action, and philanthropy. People engage with their governments as voters; interact with elected officials; and participate in public dialogue, processes, and decision-making. Strong social ties and networks connect people. We see high confidence in institutions, trust in neighbors, expression of political opinion, and interactions among neighbors and groups.

The Gephardt Institute envisions civic health: All people actively engage in the progress and vitality of their communities.

IMAGINE *the future of St. Louis.*

St. Louis is a thriving metropolitan region redefined by its assets, progress, and vitality, and its reputation has advanced beyond a deficit-based mindset. Education, health, safety, and economic outcomes are equitable across race, culture, zip codes, city/county lines, and other social categories. Nonprofit and community leaders rely on Washington University as a trusted and reliable partner to advance regional priorities. Community-university partnerships are proactive, robust, sustainable, and focused on consequential initiatives aligned with regional priorities and data-informed practice. These partnerships are based in shared planning, decision-making, and expertise—resulting in measurable positive community outcomes centered on regional priorities.

IMAGINE *the future of Washington University.*

Civic engagement is found everywhere—in classes and research, in academic schools and departments, in co-curricular life and in residence halls, in the spirit of civic dialogue among people with divergent perspectives. Just as we are known and respected for our excellence in teaching, research, and patient care, we are known and respected in higher education as a leader in civic engagement, and in the St. Louis region as an institution that effectively and reliably partners with the community for sustained and mutually desired positive change. Our success is measured not just by our quantity and breadth of opportunities, but more critically by the quality of our impact in the following areas:

- Student civic learning, inside and outside the classroom—and the lifelong commitment to engaged citizenship
- St. Louis community impact that is positive, consequential, and sustained
- The integration of civic and community engagement into the very fabric of Washington University

civic health: The degree to which a whole community involves its people and organizations in addressing its problems.¹⁶

OUR MISSION

The Gephardt Institute fosters a vibrant culture of civic engagement throughout Washington University, realized by engaged citizens, scholarship, and partnerships that advance the collective good.

OUR VISION

We envision civic health.

All people actively engage in the progress and vitality of their communities.

OUR GOALS

Educate students for lifelong engaged citizenship

Catalyze partnerships that respond to community needs and priorities

Infuse civic engagement throughout the Washington University experience

OUR CONTEXT

Because Washington University is located in and responsible to St. Louis, the Gephardt Institute focuses on the St. Louis region. And, as the university's reach spans from local to global, it is vital that we equip the Washington University community for lifelong engagement at local, national, and international levels.

OUR VALUES

The following values will guide the Gephardt Institute as an organization and will serve as a shared compass for civic and community engagement at Washington University. Although each value can function independently, they are intentionally organized as a continuous cycle that starts with inquiry and empathy before ultimately arriving at action—mirroring the process of engagement.

These values will be applied and detailed in contexts such as staff recruitment and training, curriculum development, practical guidelines for effective community engagement, and program selection criteria.

Inquiry

We believe that humility, intellectual curiosity, and reasoning form the foundation of informed and responsible civic engagement.

Empathy

We believe that seeking and considering multiple perspectives transforms how individuals and communities engage with one another.

Collaboration

We believe that partnerships are most impactful when rooted in shared goals and decision-making.

Integrity

We believe that upholding ethical behavior, respecting others, and honoring commitments are cornerstones of trusting and reciprocal partnerships.

Equity

We believe that effective civic engagement fosters access, opportunity, and dignity for all, and addresses structural and power imbalances.

Action

We believe that effective civic engagement is an active process requiring courage, dedication, and participation.

OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Gephardt Institute’s strategic plan lays the foundation to engage with the profound opportunities and challenges that were elevated through our strategic planning process. Through dialogue with over 300 students, faculty, staff, alumni, community partners, and advisors of the Gephardt Institute, we refined our mission, vision, values, context, and goals; determined our strategic direction for current initiatives; and formulated three strategic priorities to guide the institute: *Pathways for All Students, Effective Community Partnerships, and Academic Integration.*

As a dynamic strategic plan, we view these strategic priorities as our first three strategic priorities, which may be complemented by new priorities in the future. Particularly in the context of the forthcoming university strategic planning process and the constantly evolving civic landscapes in St. Louis, Missouri, the nation, and the world, this approach will enable the Gephardt Institute to proceed strategically in the near term while remaining flexible to adopt new strategic priorities in the long term.

SPRING 2018

Facilitated 9 feedback sessions with over 50 faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community partners to gather input on the institute’s draft strategic framework

OUTCOME: *Strategic framework that includes our mission, vision, context, goals, and values*

FALL 2018

Gephardt Institute senior leadership team met regularly to develop the strategic priorities that emerged from the framework and related planning processes

OUTCOME: *Three strategic priorities were identified as most critical out of 15 possible priorities that surfaced*

SPRING 2019

Shared the strategic blueprint with nearly 200 students, faculty, staff, administrators, community partners, alumni, and advisors to gather feedback on how the institute’s framework and priorities were received by each constituent audience

OUTCOME: *Finalized strategic blueprint that includes our strategic framework and strategic priorities*

FALL 2019

Convened our National Advisory Council and 3 task forces with over 70 students, faculty, community partners, staff, and alumni across 10 meetings to discuss proposed strategies, objectives, and tactics to advance each strategic priority; drafted the strategic plan

OUTCOME: *Integrated feedback and considerations into our draft strategic plan*

2020

Shared the draft strategic plan with over 300 students, faculty, staff, administrators, community partners, alumni, and advisors to gather feedback; reviewed and revised the draft strategic plan in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the expanding movement for racial justice, and new Gephardt Institute reporting lines; identified resource implications

OUTCOME: *Finalized strategic plan*

STRATEGIC PLAN INTRODUCTION

In the pages that follow, we outline strategic directions for our current initiatives and three strategic priorities. Our strategic priorities are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. As you read more about them, you will notice repetition of some themes and that many objectives apply to more than one strategic priority. While we articulate three distinct priorities that align with three primary stakeholder groups (students, community organizations, and faculty), we understand our work as a constellation of initiatives and resources that uplift the learning, engagement, and impact of the entire Washington University community.

THE NEED FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

The need for infrastructure emerged as a consistent theme throughout our strategic planning process, in order to sustain the growth, scope, and depth of our work now and in the future. As an intermediary, consultant, convener, and capacity builder, our work is often to support programs and partnerships that develop on campus and in the community. In this support role, we will further develop the systems, structures, and resources available to our partners to ensure coordinated and high-quality efforts, provide technical assistance, reduce barriers, and track and evaluate impact. In short, **infrastructure development is essential to sustaining and advancing the Gephardt Institute's progress. Infrastructure is the foundation that makes impactful programs and partnerships successful.**

Given the importance of infrastructure at this juncture of the Gephardt Institute's growth, the objectives and tactics outlined to advance each strategic priority include both programmatic objectives that will be seen and felt in the foreground, and operational objectives that serve as scaffolding, or infrastructure, in the background.

CYCLE OF PROGRESS AND REPORTING

We have been intentional about creating a *living* plan that guides our work, including our planning, decision-making, priorities, and measures of success.¹⁷ We will use it as our roadmap and will report on our progress and outcomes on an annual basis—including observations, changes, and enhancements to the strategic plan based on emergent opportunities and challenges.

Our strategic priorities include indicators of success but do not outline specific implementation timelines. We have taken this approach for two reasons. First, as a collaborative organization in service to the university and the St. Louis community, we will develop operational plans for our objectives in partnership with our stakeholders. Second, as was the case in the Gephardt Institute's first 15 years, our ability to realize our aspirations will depend on the growth of our financial and human resources. Because the process of securing these resources is not always linear, we will progress through our objectives in the most logical order within the context of available resources to develop and sustain new endeavors.

TWO KEY FACILITATORS TO ADVANCE OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Two key facilitators for advancing our current initiatives and our strategic priorities are our Advisory Councils and Stix House.

Advisory Councils

To complement our National Advisory Council and Community Advisory Council, we will develop new councils that will provide essential guidance and diverse perspectives in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of our strategic plan. We will:

1. Formalize an Academic Engagement Advisory Council comprised of faculty with varied appointment types and staff with academic community engagement responsibilities.
2. Develop a Student Advisory Council comprised of undergraduate and graduate students representing diverse identities, ideologies, and academic and career interests.
3. Develop an Alumni Council comprised of alumni with professional and/or personal commitments to civic engagement.

Stix House

Our new location in Stix House has the capacity to serve as a vibrant and welcoming space for convening, teaching, training, dialogue, and special events. We will:

1. Develop strategies for increasing usage of Stix House to advance civic engagement at Washington University and foster community partner engagement with members of the university community.
2. Identify outlets for revenue generation to support building operations, staff, and continued improvements.
3. Honor the legacy of Stix House by fostering international student engagement and examination of global civic issues.
4. Envision substantive renovations to enhance functionality and accessibility.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

INVESTMENT IN CURRENT INITIATIVES

Solidify and advance current initiatives through strategic growth, development, and continuous assessment for measurable impact.

PATHWAYS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Develop and foster pathways for civic engagement education and involvement for all Washington University students.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Build the infrastructure to support university and regional organizations in developing and advancing mutually beneficial community partnerships.

ACADEMIC INTEGRATION

Bolster resources for faculty and departments to integrate civic and community engagement into teaching and scholarship.

Engage Democracy:

Students will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and commitment to actively engage in the process of democracy through political participation, public problem-solving, and civic dialogue.

St. Louis Engagement:

Students will embrace St. Louis as a vital part of their education and apply their talents to affect positive change in St. Louis.

Civic Agency:

Students will have robust opportunities to develop the capacity to act on their civic responsibility and integrate it into their lives as alumni.

Establish a student pathways working group to identify core civic competencies, outline the key civic engagement pathways that meet those competencies, and create a pathway navigation structure.

Build and sustain campus partnerships that foster student engagement in key pathways.

Strengthen capacity building role to support growth of current St. Louis partnerships and establishment of new St. Louis partnerships that are stewarded by faculty, staff, departments, and student organizations.

Expand the Civic Engagement Fund to support development, operations, and evaluation of Community Engaged Courses and community partnerships in the St. Louis region.

Increase faculty interest, ease, and knowledge to design and implement Community Engaged Courses.

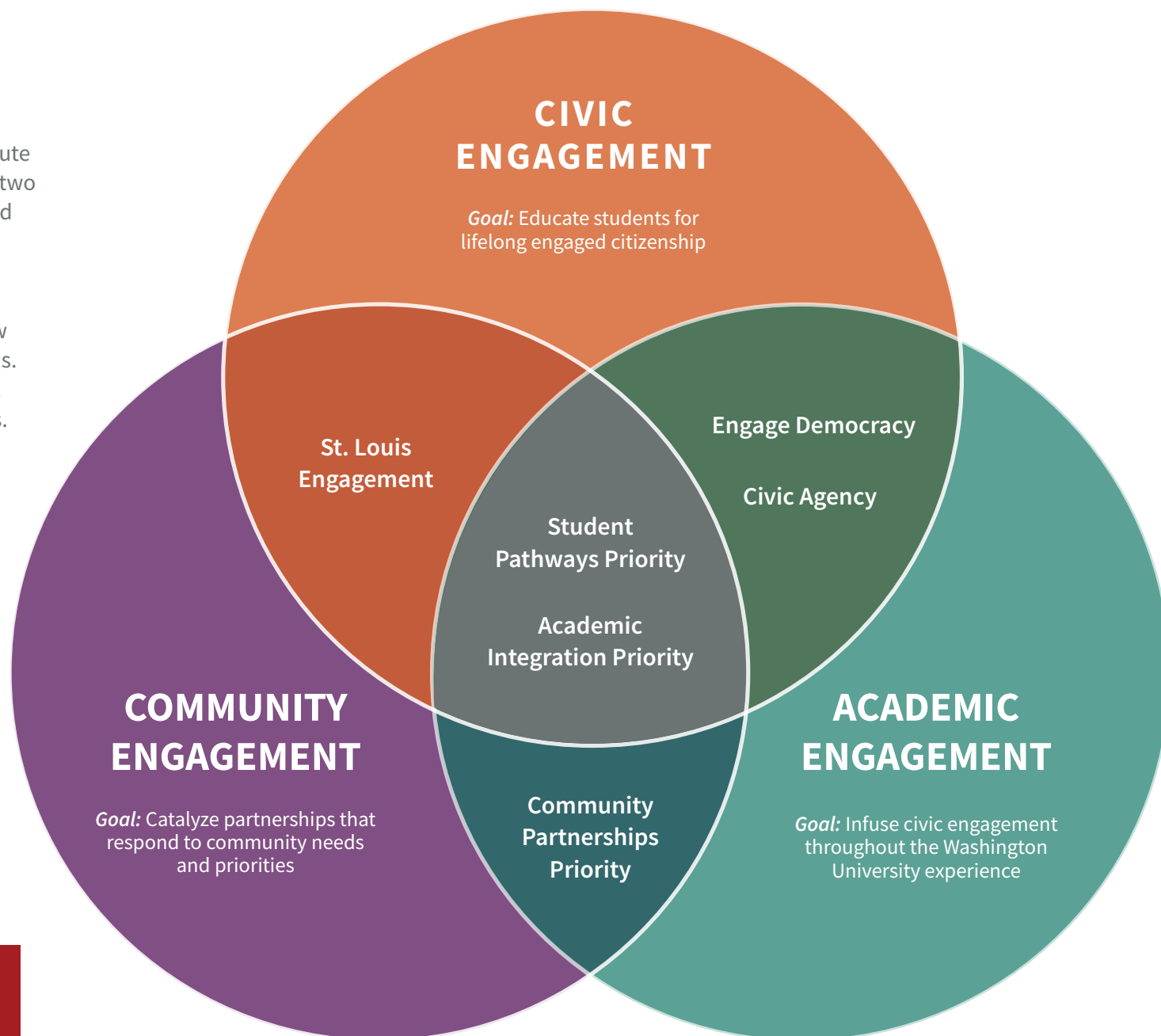
Create and implement infrastructure for Community Engaged Course designation and evaluation.

Establish the Gephardt Institute as a nexus to activate and coordinate civic and community engagement among students, faculty, staff, community partners, and alumni.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER: CURRENT INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Gephardt Institute is organized by three core functions (civic engagement, community engagement, and academic engagement), which align with our institute goals. These functions are supported by two key facilitators: our Advisory Councils and institute home, Stix House.

This diagram synthesizes our current initiatives and strategic priorities to show their relationship to these three functions. We believe that our most impactful work occurs at the intersections of these goals.



KEY FACILITATORS

Advisory Councils | Stix House

Strategic Directions for Current Initiatives



“

The task of an education allied to democracy is not simply to help students gain knowledge and skills. It is to also assist students in forming the habits of heart and mind that liberate their thinking and equip them for, and dispose them to, the creation of a more just, equitable, and inclusive society through civic involvement.”¹⁸

—Association of American Colleges & Universities,
Statement on the Attack on the US Capitol

In our first 15 years, the Gephardt Institute has made notable progress in establishing robust programs and initiatives. Through our strategic plan, a critical priority will be continued attention and investment in these initiatives. Each of them presents opportunities for strategic growth and development, continuous assessment for measurable impact, and measures to enhance sustained financial and staff resources that are the bedrock of effective programs. They are essential components of our strategic plan.

In this section, we describe strategic directions for current initiatives, which fall into three categories: Engage Democracy, St. Louis Engagement, and Civic Agency.

ENGAGE DEMOCRACY

We envision that Washington University students will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and commitment to actively engage in the process of democracy through political participation, public problem-solving, and civic dialogue.

ST. LOUIS ENGAGEMENT

We envision that Washington University students will embrace St. Louis as a vital part of their education and apply their talents to affect positive change in St. Louis.

CIVIC AGENCY

We envision that Washington University students will have robust opportunities to develop the capacity to act on their civic responsibility and integrate it into their lives as alumni.

“

We call upon our students and alumni to listen to the lessons of history and the voices of people who suffer; to be informed consumers of the barrage of news and opinions that saturate our lives; to dialogue, learn, and collaborate across ideological lines; to find their agency in a world crying for their leadership and their sustained commitment; to apply their education to the deep challenges facing communities around the globe.”¹⁹

—Stephanie N. Kurtzman,
Peter G. Sortino Director,
Gephardt Institute

ENGAGE DEMOCRACY

Engage Democracy equips students for lifelong engagement in the pursuit of a thriving democracy. **The Gephardt Institute envisions that Washington University students will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and commitment to actively engage in the process of democracy through political participation, public problem-solving, and civic dialogue.** The initiative includes robust voter engagement in all election cycles, civic education, and civic skills development aimed at advancing the ideals of American democracy. Engage Democracy is nonpartisan, ideologically inclusive, and serves all undergraduate and graduate students on the Danforth Campus and Medical Campus.

CURRENT INITIATIVES

VOTER ENGAGEMENT

Through WashU Votes, the Gephardt Institute coordinates robust student voter registration, education, and turnout through all local and national election cycles. This includes removing technical barriers to voting, hosting the on-campus polling place, and leading university-wide planning and coordination for pre- and post-election programs and resources. As a result of these efforts, Washington University has been recognized nationally as a Voter Friendly Campus, and increased the student voting rate in midterm elections from 15.9% to 41.8% in 2018, exceeding the national average of colleges and universities by 2%.

CIVIC EDUCATION

The Gephardt Institute partners with academic and administrative units to cultivate civic education across all undergraduate schools. Partnerships include two political science courses (Running for Elected Office and Turning Passion into Policy); a sociology course (Philanthropy Lab); and a transdisciplinary Information Literacy Learning Community for Faculty and Librarians, offered in partnership with University Libraries, Arts & Sciences, and the Center for Teaching and Learning to embed information literacy learning into preexisting courses.

CIVIC SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The Gephardt Institute offers a series of customizable workshops to deepen students' understanding of democracy and their resolve to take action at local, state, and federal levels. Citizen Foundation workshops instill a fundamental understanding of American democracy, its founding principles, the values that guide it, and how it functions in 21st-century America. Citizen Tools workshops equip participants with skills such as engaging elected officials, deliberative dialogue, and analyzing political news. Citizen Action workshops provide a platform for students to put knowledge and skills into practice for collective action, community problem-solving, and creating positive change. Our Common Ground Grants are an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to implement projects that seek to address the ideological divide and contribute to a campus climate of robust civic engagement.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR ENGAGE DEMOCRACY

1. Refine voter engagement strategy by applying a data-informed approach and an equity lens to reach all student voters.
2. Stabilize staffing structure to lead all aspects of Engage Democracy and provide continuity between all levels of elections.
3. Strengthen engagement strategy and university coordination by creating a standing university committee on election engagement and expanding WashU Votes student initiative.
4. Assess assets and gaps in civic learning course offerings, stabilize funding structure for existing courses, and identify opportunities for expansion to address additional topics and reach more students. (See *Student Pathways* priority)
5. Evaluate student learning outcomes in civic learning courses.
6. Expand information literacy curriculum into new courses each year.
7. Develop educational resources for students seeking to engage in policy advocacy.
8. Enhance campus partnerships to foster civic skills development among more students, including international students and those ineligible to vote.
9. Contribute to civic education scholarship and professional development among other colleges and universities, starting with foci on voter engagement and information literacy.



“

Call your elected representatives, participate in a protest, canvass for an initiative or a candidate. And take the time to educate yourself and others on the issues that matter to you. Being an engaged individual isn't about what you do on Election Day, it's how you live your life.”

—Lindsay Gassman, AB '20

Learn more about our vision for educating students in the **STUDENT PATHWAYS** and **ACADEMIC INTEGRATION** sections.

ST. LOUIS ENGAGEMENT

An invaluable component of a Washington University education is the opportunity to both learn from and contribute to the St. Louis region. Students can immerse themselves in a region with rich cultural assets and a vibrant and complex history. They can also participate in addressing the vexing public challenges facing St. Louis and the nation. **The Gephardt Institute envisions that Washington University students will embrace St. Louis as a vital part of their education and apply their talents to affect positive change in St. Louis.**

CURRENT INITIATIVES

GOLDMAN FELLOWS PROGRAM

Since 2008, the Gephardt Institute has supported 135 Goldman Fellows who dedicate their summer to immersing themselves in St. Louis. In this competitive eight-month fellowship program, undergraduate students contribute substantially to St. Louis through full-time nonprofit internships and engage in an experiential curriculum to understand St. Louis' culture, history, politics, and challenges. They also receive professional development, structured supervision and mentoring, and \$5,000 summer stipends in lieu of summer earnings. To date, Goldman Fellows have contributed approximately 39,000 hours to St. Louis nonprofit and governmental organizations.

ARTS AS CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The Gephardt Institute partners with St. Louis arts-based organizations to offer residencies for students to focus on the role of the arts in advancing civic engagement and social change. In this competitive five-month fellowship program, undergraduate students contribute substantially to the missions of their partner organizations and engage in an experiential curriculum to examine the intersections of the arts and civic engagement. They also receive professional development, structured supervision and mentoring, and \$5,000 summer stipends in lieu of summer earnings. In its first two years, Arts as Civic Engagement residents contributed over 2,600 hours to St. Louis organizations.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FUND

The Gephardt Institute offers the Civic Engagement Fund to catalyze community-university partnerships that advance St. Louis priorities. The Civic Engagement Fund provides financial support for students, faculty, and staff who seek to launch, expand, or sustain community partnerships. To foster positive impact and effective partnerships, the Gephardt Institute also provides consultation on project planning, implementation, and evaluation. To date, the Civic Engagement Fund has awarded over \$250,000 in grants of up to \$5,000.

“

[Our Goldman Fellow] has definitely helped me clarify how we as an organization communicate our work to others. I am impressed with the intention she put in, in really understanding the ethos of what I was communicating. I really appreciated the thought she put into the media pieces she created for us...[her] ability to grasp ideas and then execute them is great and it was a gift.”

—Shannon Dickerson, Investment Program Officer, InvestSTL



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR ST. LOUIS ENGAGEMENT

1. Develop a scalable St. Louis fellowship program to cultivate civic leaders and contribute substantially to regional progress, building on the success of the Goldman Fellows Program and Arts as Civic Engagement.
2. Expand the Civic Engagement Fund to support development, operations, and evaluation of impactful community partnerships and Community Engaged Courses in the St. Louis region. (See *Community Partnership* and *Academic Integration* priorities)
3. Expand strategies for introducing new students to St. Louis.
4. Create a peer education model to foster student learning and engagement with St. Louis. (See *Student Pathways* priority)
5. Design a sustainable model for offering experiential and immersive opportunities in St. Louis through campus and community partnerships.
6. Create guidelines for community partner honoraria to recognize their time and expertise in educating students.
7. Enhance opportunities for students to present on their St. Louis engagement work.
8. Sustain the Community Engagement Opportunity Fund to remove financial barriers for students engaging in the St. Louis community.

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES IN ST. LOUIS INTERNSHIPS

- Analyze data
- Assess gaps in client services
- Create communication materials
- Engage in client outreach
- Foster organizational partnerships
- Inform policy recommendations
- Research best practices
- Support grant-making procedures



Learn more about our vision for engaging students in St. Louis in the **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS** and **ACADEMIC INTEGRATION** sections.

CIVIC AGENCY

Across students' academic disciplines and career goals, one vital outcome for their Washington University education is that they graduate with a deep sense of civic responsibility. Civic agency is the capacity to act on this responsibility and affect positive change on community challenges.

The Gephardt Institute envisions that Washington University students will have robust opportunities to develop their civic agency and integrate it into their lives as alumni.

CURRENT INITIATIVES

CIVIC SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Since 2011, the Gephardt Institute has supported 121 Civic Scholars who exemplify potential for civic leadership. In this competitive two-year academic program, undergraduates from all majors complete six course credits that ground students in theoretical frameworks for civic engagement and democracy. The curriculum is designed to deepen student knowledge, awareness, and skills in civic identity and community commitment; civic context and structures; leadership, networks and organization; equity and inclusion; communications and responses to conflict; and defining one's own positions while being open to different perspectives. Coursework is enhanced by a substantive full-time Civic Summer project or experience of their own design. Civic Scholars also participate in multi-day immersions in Washington DC, Baltimore, and St. Louis. They receive \$5,000 stipends in lieu of summer earnings. To date, Civic Summer projects have spanned 14 countries and 27 U.S. cities.

GEPHARDT STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Undergraduate interns and graduate fellows at the Gephardt Institute benefit from professional and civic learning while extending the institute's capacity to advance our mission. Through competitive paid internships of two or more semesters, 10–25 students annually function as a paraprofessional staff with substantive responsibilities. Students advance their civic engagement knowledge while developing professional competencies such as program design and management, research, assessment, marketing, and communications.

GERRY AND BOB VIRGIL ETHIC OF SERVICE AWARD

Annually since 2003, the Gerry and Bob Virgil Ethic of Service Award has recognized a select group of Washington University community members who exemplify a character of service and engagement with the St. Louis region. This award and annual ceremony inspires St. Louis engagement within the Washington University community and uplifts the needs, priorities, and opportunities for partnering with St. Louis organizations to advance positive change in the region. One hundred and four students, faculty, staff, alumni, retirees, and university volunteers have been recognized to date.

WASHU ENGAGE

The Gephardt Institute partners with the Washington University Alumni Association to offer WashU Engage to university alumni across the nation. This volunteer-led alumni civic engagement initiative underscores the importance of lifelong engaged citizenship and supports the student to alumni transition to civic life. In the first five years, 157 WashU Engage events have been held across 21 different cities and engaged almost 2,000 alumni, parents, and friends. Most cities support one to two programs per year such as community service projects, educational events, and Common Reading Program book discussions, and Chicago offers extensive year-round programming.

A note on language: We use the language of *civic agency* here because it centers community and collaboration, while civic leadership is more narrowly understood as centered on an individual's skills and dispositions. Both are vital to civic engagement.

*civic agency: "Civic agency is the capacity of human communities and groups to act cooperatively and collectively on common problems across their differences of view. It involves questions of institutional design (that is, how to constitute groups, institutions, and societies for effective and sustainable collective action) as well as individual civic skills."*²⁰

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR CIVIC AGENCY

1. Stabilize staffing structure for Civic Scholars Program to support teaching, coaching, curriculum development, and program administration.
2. Extend Civic Scholars curriculum to examine civic issues in rural contexts and identify opportunities to integrate rural civic engagement in other Gephardt Institute programs.
3. Enhance the Civic Scholars Opportunity Fund to ensure that low-income students have full ability to participate in the program.
4. Design an assessment strategy to measure civic knowledge and skill development among Civic Scholars and student interns.
5. Identify strategies for cultivating student awareness and participation in St. Louis issues addressed by Gerry & Bob Virgil Ethic of Service Award honorees.
6. Increase the number of WashU Engage network cities, including St. Louis, led by alumni volunteer leaders and modeled after Chicago.
7. Develop a communication plan and strategy to connect graduating students with WashU Engage programs in their new cities.
8. Expand post-graduate and post-doctoral opportunities for embedded staff roles to advance strategic priorities.

EXAMPLES OF CIVIC SCHOLAR SUMMER PROJECTS

- Conduct research to support legal teams
- Facilitate youth development opportunities
- Establish nonprofits to fill service gaps
- Build coalitions to address an issue of shared concern
- Support international diplomacy efforts
- Design culturally relevant curriculum overseas
- Create art to facilitate social awareness
- Collect oral histories and narratives
- Develop tools and reports for city governments
- Establish start-ups for social impact



Learn more about our vision for cultivating students' civic agency in the **STUDENT PATHWAYS** and **ACADEMIC INTEGRATION** sections.

Pathways for all Students

DEVELOP AND FOSTER
PATHWAYS FOR CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT EDUCATION
AND INVOLVEMENT FOR ALL
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS.



Following the release of *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) built upon the report to outline an emergent theory of change for higher education. The report and theory of change “argue that higher education must cultivate campus environments as well as individual and collective capacities to advance civic learning and democratic engagement.”²¹ One of the major recommendations for accomplishing this is to embed civic literacy and civic inquiry “within curricular pathways in both general education and specialized fields of study, with the aim of creating a developmental arc mapped in designs for students’ cumulative civic learning over time.”²² Civic Engagement is uniquely situated across the university to play a key role in bridging and fostering collaboration across academic and student affairs. In doing so, we advance the university’s academic mission and contributions to the public good.

Through this strategic plan, **pathways will serve as roadmaps to travel from one origin (the beginning of undergraduate students’ WashU experience) to a common destination (civic engagement competency at graduation), on a variety of routes that suit students’ interests.** Pathways will attend to students’ preferred mode(s) of civic engagement and the issues or public challenges they find most compelling. Just as there are many ways to travel from Missouri to California via different vehicles, highways, and paces, students may select the civic “travel plan” that is right for them. An online navigation tool, advisors, and peer educators will be in place to help them navigate and access their options, based on key competencies of civic engagement. The pathways strategic priority will focus on the development of undergraduate pathways that include curricular and co-curricular experiences as a first step for building necessary infrastructure, with an eye toward future graduate and professional student pathway development.

PATHWAYS AS “CIVIC ROADMAPS”

From the moment they are admitted to Washington University, students have access to supports and structures that can help determine clear academic pathways to commencement. They have a curricular map that guides them toward particular competencies required of any given discipline. This curricular map aids students in constructing the sequence and elements to develop a thorough knowledge set within their discipline.

Imagine if students had access to “civic roadmaps” as clearly constructed and sequenced as their curricular maps.

These civic roadmaps, or pathways, help students identify access points to develop a comprehensive set of civic knowledge, skills, and commitments over the course of their WashU education. The pathways guide students to sequence their civic learning and experience to build from introductory to intensive engagement opportunities, no matter when they decide to start on their pathway during their time at WashU. Engagement opportunities are available across both academic and co-curricular experiences and are logically stitched together to form a coherent civic education. Students graduate armed with their academic degrees as well as a thorough civic engagement education. They are equipped for a lifetime of actively engaged citizenship to contribute to the collective good.

WHY PATHWAYS?

Washington University offers a wide range of programs, services, and initiatives that engage students in civic and community engagement. These opportunities include required courses within academic departments; elective courses and academic programs; student-led initiatives; cohort-based, internship, and scholarship programs; and other co-curricular initiatives. **When woven together with intention, these opportunities can offer a coherent and comprehensive education for lifelong civic engagement.**

Alternatively, when not woven together with intention, students’ civic learning is at risk of being piecemeal; they may miss valuable connections between learning experiences and they may graduate with critical gaps in knowledge and experience. They may find themselves unprepared for intensive civic and community engagement without the proper introductory foundation. The risk: graduates who are not fully prepared for civic life. They may lack essential knowledge and skills to effect change. They may also do harm to communities or causes that could have been averted through a more well-rounded civic education.

pathways: roadmaps for students to access and sequence curricular and co-curricular opportunities to build a complete set of civic knowledge and skills over the course of their education.

Despite the range of civic and community engagement opportunities available to Washington University students, they are not currently organized or communicated in a way that would allow for thoughtfully constructed civic pathways. Students who see the public relevance of their education and are committed to the public good typically come across opportunities and stitch them across their academic and co-curricular experiences. They “choose their own adventure” and may or may not succeed. Even as students do locate opportunities, their engagement may not follow a logical succession from emerging to advancing experiences, and they may be left to do their own meaning-making to integrate their learning.

Washington University does not yet have a centralized clearinghouse of both courses and co-curricular opportunities that build the civic competencies required of an engaged citizen. We have no guide for students to connect their academic and co-curricular experiences into a coherent civic pathway. Moreover, even where civic learning opportunities do exist, they likely do not reach all subpopulations of students, such as various academic schools and disciplines, and students from various identity groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, and ideologies.

PATHWAYS TO MEET A RANGE OF STUDENT NEEDS AND INTERESTS

There is a clear need to identify all of the offerings, both academic and co-curricular, that support a student’s progression toward core civic competencies. **This is where the Gephardt Institute has identified a critical gap as it relates to preparing Washington University students for lifelong engaged citizenship.** Once those offerings are identified, we can use that information to create a tool that articulates the various and comprehensive pathways a student can take. We can also begin to identify and address any inequitable barriers that may inhibit a student’s engagement in these offerings. The purpose of the tool is to illuminate potential pathways, not prescribe a single pathway. The pathways will be expansive enough to give students plenty of choices even within a given pathway. We recognize that each unique student will acquire core civic competencies driven by their own curiosity or passion for a particular cause, skills developed from their academic discipline, or identification with a particular community.

A student’s pathway may involve:

- Civic Learning, Community Connected, and Community Engaged Courses
- Participation in community engagement programs
- New student engagement experiences in the St. Louis region
- Interning with a civic and/or community organization in St. Louis
- Leadership or design of community partnerships
- Training in civic skills and civic literacy
- Civic dialogue
- Study abroad with civic learning outcomes

PEER EDUCATION TO FACILITATE STUDENT NAVIGATION AND LEARNING

As student interest in civic and community engagement continues to rise through the development and promotion of the pathways, the Gephardt Institute has identified the need to scale up our consultation, training, and engagement strategies. **Expanding our capacity will enable us to meet current student demand and also promote and cultivate new levels of student engagement, particularly in student populations that may be currently underrepresented in civic engagement programs.**

Our Goldman Fellows Program, for example, is uniquely equipped to prepare a team of peer educators to serve as Gephardt Institute ambassadors and educators as their peers navigate civic pathways. Following their eight-month intensive community engagement curriculum and immersive learning in the St. Louis context that is already in place, Goldman Fellows may further their applied civic leadership experience by extending their learning to their peers in the semester or year following their St. Louis summer.

Peer navigators and educators will support students through roles such as:

- Discussing options for getting involved with civic and community engagement
- Advising students seeking to learn and engage with the St. Louis region
- Promoting Civic Learning, Community Connected, and Community Engaged Courses
- Facilitating civic dialogue and reflective discussions
- Connecting students to Engage Democracy resources

ENSURING ROBUST CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Through the mapping process to identify pathways, we anticipate identifying gaps where new programs could be offered to meet the needs of specific student populations, or to uplift a particular civic engagement competency. Imagine a heat map that identifies “cold spots” where limited opportunities are available. At times, the Gephardt Institute may be best positioned to fill those gaps with new civic engagement programs. More often, the Gephardt Institute anticipates working closely with campus partners to catalyze and facilitate the development of new initiatives that are sponsored or co-sponsored by their departments.

One goal of the Gephardt Institute is to infuse civic engagement throughout the Washington University experience—so that students find civic learning in place through their academic programs, co-curricular experience, residence halls, and other pivotal Washington University experiences. The pathways priority does not intend to centralize civic engagement activity at the Gephardt Institute. Rather, **civic learning should permeate throughout Washington University in a coordinated fashion, so that students can navigate, access, and engage with synergistic opportunities that advance their civic engagement education. The Gephardt Institute will serve as a nexus of information, resources, coordination, and effective practices for these civic engagement initiatives.**

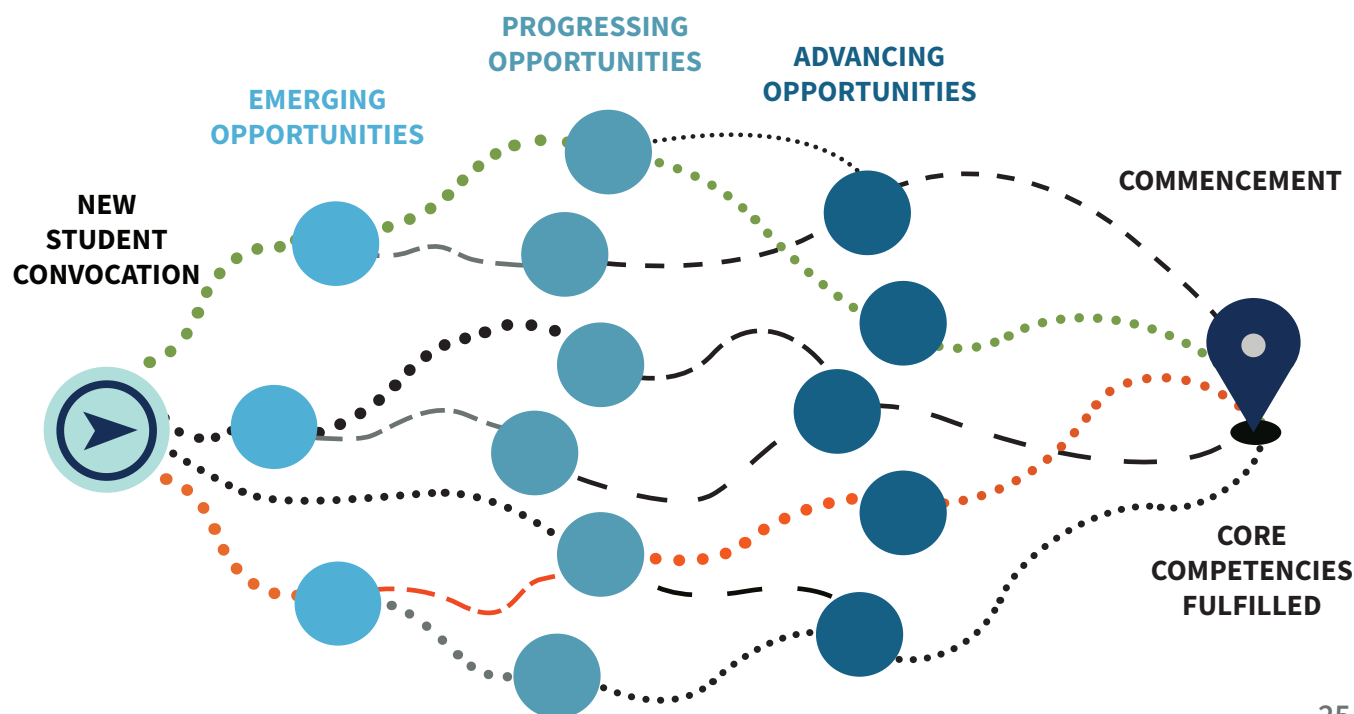
RECOGNITION IN CORE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMPETENCIES

The Student Pathways priority will build on the Gephardt Institute’s rubric for civic engagement competencies, which is currently in testing stage. This values-based rubric identifies and assesses core civic competencies, and is based on the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ VALUE rubrics (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education).²³ The Student Pathways priority and resulting resources will illuminate and promote pathways students may

take to fulfill these core competencies along a spectrum from emerging, through progressing, to advancing opportunities. Upon graduation, the Gephardt Institute will recognize students (starting with undergraduates) who have fulfilled core competencies. This recognition will signify alumni who are equipped with civic engagement knowledge and skills that they can apply to their professional, academic, and personal pursuits.

WHAT WILL A STUDENT PATHWAY LOOK LIKE?

This graphic depiction conveys the multiple options and decision points students will find as they proceed on their pathway. The varied formatting applied to journeys is intended to represent the unique path each student can take. Students will be guided to move sequentially through emerging, progressing, and advancing opportunities that call for increasingly complex knowledge and skills. Regardless of how they navigate their route to commencement, they will have fulfilled core competencies for civic engagement.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY: *Student Pathways*

STRATEGY: Develop and foster pathways for civic engagement education and involvement for all Washington University students.

CORE QUESTION: How can the Gephardt Institute direct all Washington University students to offerings and activities that prepare them for lifelong engaged citizenship?

OBJECTIVE: Establish a student pathways working group to identify core civic competencies, outline the key civic engagement pathways that meet those competencies, and create a pathway navigation structure.

TACTICS

1.1 Create a student pathways working group to review the institute's rubric of civic competencies, identify all of the curricular and co-curricular opportunities that support undergraduate students in meeting those competencies, organize the offerings into key pathways for student civic engagement, and assess gaps in the landscape.

1.2 Create and implement infrastructure that serves as a clearinghouse of curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students with focus on the identified key pathways.

1.3 Create a pathway navigation system for students to use; for faculty, staff, and peer leaders to guide students; and to assess engagement levels and outcomes.

1.4 Assess assets and gaps in the landscape of current curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students. Gaps will inform key campus partnerships to cultivate or adapt civic engagement opportunities that align to the pathways (Tactic 3.2).

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

1.1 A rubric outlining core competencies for undergraduate civic engagement is finalized and 3–5 comprehensive key pathways are identified.

1.2 A database or clearinghouse system of curricular and co-curricular opportunities and a mechanism for annual updating are established.

1.3 A pathway navigation system is created for use by academic advisors, campus partners, and peer leaders.

1.4 A visual heat map identifies assets and major gaps, addressing what civic engagement activities are offered and which students are accessing them.

Student Pathways

CORE QUESTION: How do we ensure that pathways are utilized to the benefit of students?

OBJECTIVE: Build and sustain campus partnerships that foster student engagement in key pathways.

TACTICS

2.1 Integrate civic pathways into existing student curricular, co-curricular, and advising programs, and student-facing communications to ensure that students utilize the pathways.

2.2 Identify and foster partnerships with key units to build their capacity to create new initiatives or enhance existing initiatives, in order to address gaps and opportunities observed through the pathways assessment process (Tactic 1.4).

2.3 Partner strategically with academic departments to assess assets and gaps in course and academic program offerings, and further develop and promote Community Connected Courses, Community Engaged Courses, and Civic Learning Courses; invest in and ensure sustained resources for these courses.

2.4 Integrate civic pathways into campus milestones, including but not limited to transition in and out of the university, awards, and recognition, to promote a culture of lifelong civic engagement.

2.5 Develop a Gephardt Institute recognition and portfolio program to honor graduating students who have successfully completed a pathway to fulfill core competencies for civic engagement.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

2.1 The pathway navigation system is adopted by academic advisors and five campus partners in the first year of development.

2.1 Civic pathways are included in major first year communications.

2.1, 2.2 Sustained partnerships with curricular and co-curricular areas are built to develop a strategy for civic engagement integration.

2.1, 2.3 Resources are secured to develop new courses and sustain existing courses.

2.4, 2.5 Civic engagement is recognized throughout campus as part of the accomplishments of students.

2.5 Students are recognized by the Gephardt Institute for fulfilling civic engagement core competencies.

Student Pathways

CORE QUESTION: How can the Gephardt Institute spark civic literacy, inquiry, and action among students throughout the university?

OBJECTIVE: Establish the Gephardt Institute as a nexus to activate and coordinate civic engagement at Washington University.

TACTICS

3.1 Foster the visibility and impact of other civic engagement hubs on campus; convene them to coordinate efforts and align them with core competencies.

3.2 Develop a peer educator program to promote civic and community engagement within the student body.

3.3 Offer training and consultation to student-facing civic and community engagement initiatives to ensure effective practices that drive toward the outcomes for established civic engagement competencies. This includes both civic initiatives such as election programming, civic dialogue, and civic education, as well as community service groups and community partnerships.

3.4 Create a communication plan that highlights the Gephardt Institute's role as a nexus, activator, and coordinator of civic engagement.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

3.1, 3.2, 3.3 A civic pathways steering committee meets regularly for professional development and acts as champions for civic engagement throughout Washington University.

3.1 There is increased knowledge, coordination, and collaboration across civic engagement opportunities, greater clarity and increased usage among students navigating opportunities, and positive metrics on student engagement within partnering organizations.

3.2 Trained peer educators are utilized by student groups and student-facing initiatives. There is increased student awareness, preparation, and participation in St. Louis community engagement.

3.3 Students and departments integrate civic and community engagement principles into the development, implementation, and evaluation of their initiatives and partnerships.

3.3 Students report the institute as a valuable source to prepare them for effectiveness in civic engagement and community engagement.

3.4 There is an increased utilization of Gephardt Institute consultation and resources by students. The institute can demonstrate impact on student learning and their commitment to civic engagement.

Effective Community Partnerships

Build the infrastructure to support university and regional organizations in developing and advancing effective community partnerships



The St. Louis region has both a rich and vibrant heritage and a long history of entrenched inequities. Particularly since the Ferguson Uprising prompted by Michael Brown's death in 2014, the depth of systemic inequities, discontent, and urgency for change is palpable across the St. Louis region. These challenges were elevated to a new level of awareness and public dialogue following the Ferguson Uprising, and again in 2020 following George Floyd's death, the burgeoning Movement for Black Lives, and stark inequities illuminated by the COVID-19 pandemic. **Washington University, like other institutions, is challenged to consider how we can be a substantial and committed partner in moving the region toward equity while examining ways we may have perpetuated inequities. We are challenged to not just do good work, but to be more deeply involved in necessary work.**

WHAT ARE ST. LOUIS' REGIONAL PRIORITIES?

Two recent regional reports offer insights on priorities for the St. Louis region. These reports are not exhaustive but provide valuable direction to students, faculty, and staff seeking to align their interests with community needs and priorities.

The Ferguson Commission convened regional leaders, subject matter experts, and community members to produce **Forward Through Ferguson: A Path Toward Racial Equity** in 2015. The report identified 189 calls to action, and uplifted three signature priorities based on the criteria that they are transformative, urgent, and unflinching: **Justice for All, Youth at the Center, and Opportunity to Thrive.**²⁴ Each of these priorities are meant to address the systemic issues that led to Michael Brown's death and the Ferguson Uprisings, including "racially segregated neighborhoods with high poverty and unemployment, poor student

achievement in overwhelmingly black schools, oppressive policing, abandoned homes, and community powerlessness."²⁵

More recently, the **United Way of Greater St. Louis** released the **Community Needs Assessment 2020** that identified 24 topics representing the most needed services and resources in the St. Louis region. **Jobs** and **Transportation** were the most commonly identified needs across each of the 16 counties of the St. Louis region. **Housing Security, Access to Healthcare, Community Building, Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse, Child Welfare, and Disaster Preparedness and Response** "were identified as the highest priority need in at least one county."²⁶

In response to these persistent civic challenges, we have experienced a rising tide of students, faculty, and staff who understand our obligations to step further out of the "WashU Bubble" and actively engage in the progress and vitality of the St. Louis region. Building on a strong foundation of community engagement and commitment to the public good, our campus community is energized by Chancellor Martin's vision "to strengthen our community partnerships and impact 'In St. Louis and For St. Louis.'" ²⁷

The Gephardt Institute seeks to channel this energy toward the greatest needs and the greatest impact in St. Louis. **When people want to be involved, faculty seek to partner on Community Engaged Courses, new project ideas are proposed, or organizations or departments want to establish new community partnerships, the Gephardt Institute is in place to ensure that those civic impulses develop into effective community partnerships for the greatest positive impact.**

THE COMPLEXITY OF "TOWN-GOWN" RELATIONSHIPS

Higher education institutions are inextricably tied to their local contexts and their civic health. Yet "town-gown" relationships between universities and their local communities are often strained and fluctuating.²⁸ In addition to broader university impacts as an employer, purchaser, and property owner, community members and leaders often express concern that universities impose their values, assumptions, agendas, and priorities on local communities – without acknowledging or incorporating the community's vast knowledge, assets, and priorities. Rather than a two-way street in which priorities are mutually developed and shared, universities are often perceived as driving on a one-way street and not listening to what the community has to say. Washington University's relationship with St. Louis is no exception to this town-gown dynamic.

Universities are continuously challenged to be intentional about how their engagement in their local communities is experienced. Improving the historic town-gown dynamic requires a deep understanding of the community context and necessitates intentional feedback loops for engaging community voice while demonstrating the incorporation of community input into university decision-making.²⁹ It is also important for institutions to evaluate and align all efforts between university constituents and community organizations to ensure that quality, preparation, and accountability measures are in place.³⁰ To do this, universities have expanded beyond the concepts of service and outreach as the sole mechanisms for engagement with local communities. Community engagement focuses on partnerships based in shared purpose, goals, planning, and outcomes to address community priorities. This is the collaborative problem-solving that is critical to democracy.



WHAT IS AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP?

As the bedrock of community engagement, effective community partnerships are a two-way street. Partnerships are built together. Together, the university partner(s) and community organization(s) plan, make decisions, problem-solve, define what success will look like, and determine how to sustain or conclude their partnership. University partners ask questions and listen for the priorities of the community partner, adapting their original ideas when needed to ensure that time and energy spent is on mission critical efforts, rather than incidental projects that are helpful but not the highest priority for the community partner. Partners define the desired outcomes together and both benefit from the partnership. The university partner, for example, might be a faculty member seeking to deepen students' learning through active engagement in a St. Louis neighborhood or challenge. The community partner in this case should benefit from tangible work produced by the students based on a strategic question, challenge, or opportunity prescribed by the organization.

Community partnerships are complex, nuanced, political, and time intensive. Along with the opportunity for community impact and student learning, they can pose significant risk to both the community and the university when not done well. Washington University can point to many examples of successful and enduring community partnerships that create real impact in St. Louis. We can also point to partnerships that have faced challenges. These challenges include unclear roles, duration, or purpose; projects that are driven by the needs and interests of university partners over the priorities or capacity of the community partners; inaccurate assumptions in defining problems or solutions; and lack of follow-through on commitments.

To effectively serve faculty, staff, and students seeking to partner with the St. Louis region, as well as community organizations seeking to partner with the university, there is opportunity to create, refine, expand, and institutionalize resources to facilitate effective partnerships and ensure their positive impact. **Effective partnerships are carefully and ethically constructed, focused on the greatest needs and priorities of the St. Louis region, and are capable of producing positive, measurable, and consequential impact.**

EDUCATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Although it may seem that anyone with good intentions can launch a community partnership, **community engagement is a learned skill that is fraught with risk and sensitivities when not done well.** In recent years, the level of interest in developing partnerships has risen dramatically among both community partners and campus partners, ahead of systems, procedures, and

human resources to most appropriately and efficiently offer assistance. This strategic plan outlines the infrastructure necessary to meet this rapidly growing interest and the opportunity it presents to maximize positive outcomes through partnerships based in shared ownership.

Currently, the Gephardt Institute guides quality partnerships through individual consultation. It is a meaningful process, but it has been challenging to sustain this level of attention due to the scope and pace of interest in community engagement among students, faculty, and staff, as well as community partners. Our strategies focus on structuring the learning and consultation process for greater efficacy and with more built resources. This will range from partnership planning tools to formal trainings. It will also elevate the voices and expertise of community partners forward as co-educators of our students.

We will also create a recognition process to certify those individuals, departments, and organizations that have received training on effectively partnering with community organizations. Imagine a Washington University student organization proposing a new idea to a local nonprofit. The Gephardt Institute will be able to provide assurance, through the community engagement certification, that the student group has received core training and preparation to be an effective partner.

co-educator: The role often ascribed to community partners when centering their expertise and knowledge as part of mutually beneficial relationships.³¹

OUR ROLE IN FACILITATING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The Gephardt Institute serves as an intermediary between university organizations and St. Louis community organizations to facilitate community partnerships by fostering the skills, relationships, and commitment necessary for positive impact. **We support partnerships that simultaneously advance regional priorities and enhance the university's academic mission, but we do not define the specific issues they address.** Most often, we do not hold the partnership. Rather, we seek to catalyze partnerships that are rooted in academic departments or schools, student-facing departments, and student organizations. In addition to facilitating connections, we assist with problem-solving, evaluation, long-term planning for promising initiatives, and relationship development throughout the lifecycle of the partnership.



THE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FUND AS A CATALYST FOR SUBSTANTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Gephardt Institute's Civic Engagement Fund has served as a successful lever to catalyze community partnerships since the earliest days of the institute. In recent years, we have evolved our grants program from small grants of \$500 to more substantive grants of \$5,000, and we have focused the grants on projects and courses in the St. Louis region. **The Civic Engagement Fund provides necessary financial support to launch, expand, or at times sustain community partnerships, where other funding is often not available.** While financial support is key, the Civic Engagement Fund also serves as a call to action to compel the university community to develop consequential community initiatives through partnerships with community organizations. To date, we have awarded over \$250,000 in grants through the fund. We provide examples of funded projects on the next page.

Through the attractive and vital resource of funding, the Civic Engagement Fund enables the Gephardt Institute to serve as consultants, guides, and guardrails in the development and implementation of project plans. The application and selection process is competitive, allowing us to decline projects that are not ready, are ill-defined, or have not adequately addressed the potential for community harm. We think of the Civic Engagement Fund as a sieve: good ideas and intentions pour in; we filter out underdeveloped proposals and, whenever possible, coach them toward future success; and we work with the promising proposals that ultimately come through the sieve and move toward project implementation.

Currently, grant applicants identify the local issue they seek to address. Through our consultation and application review process, we ensure that proposals meet a real community priority and that a solid community partnership is in place, but we do not steer applicants toward specific community issues.

Expanding the Civic Engagement Fund is a vital strategy to fuel far more significant community partnerships and Community Engaged Courses through larger grants, multi-year and sustaining grants, and a robust grants program to support training, site visits, evaluation, and more.

With significant funding, we can compel the university community to focus energy on key challenges facing the St. Louis region. Imagine if our new Civic Engagement Fund Steering Committee conducted a process to identify one regional priority and called for grant proposals focusing on that priority. Imagine, for example, if we offered a total of \$100,000 in grants for university-community partnerships that focus on gun violence and public safety. Imagine if we offered three \$50,000 grants for initiatives that address the root causes or effects of health disparities based on St. Louis zip codes. Imagine if we dedicated \$200,000 for multi-year initiatives that address the root causes or effects of racial inequities in education. An infusion of funding combined with the active collaboration of community and university members could focus the energy of the university community and steer partnerships that increasingly respond to specific regional priorities.



“When the Gephardt Institute works well, my vision for effective partnerships builds on shared accountability, collective direction and amplified impact. These partnerships allow both parties to reach new milestones. They inspire people to take root and grow in the St. Louis region. They’ve fostered a trust that emphasizes learning together over harm. And they create a capacity to move the needle on realizing an equitable (and even thriving!) St. Louis for all.”

—Jessi Wilcox,
Director of Candidate Engagement,
LaunchCode



Being a good neighbor and being one of the world's great research universities are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they amplify each other. By the same token, when all individuals have the same opportunities to thrive and flourish, all of us serve to benefit.

I want to eradicate any kind of perception that St. Louis is merely WashU's side gig. Rather, St. Louis should become one of our primary foci as we think through the lens: 'In St. Louis. For St. Louis.' ”³²

—Chancellor Andrew D. Martin

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FUND APPLICANTS

- How has your partner defined the community need?
- What are the expectations you and your partner have for the project? Have you discussed what each partner will bring to the table?
- What roles and duties are each of you going to hold? Have you discussed drafting a partnership plan?
- What are your limitations? What can you do and what can't you do?
- Have you checked in on your assumptions with your partner?
- What is your timeline? How will you know you are reaching your mutually defined goals?
- Is this a sustainable project? Will it live beyond this grant?
- How will you end or close your project?

EXAMPLES OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FUND PROJECTS

STOP THE BLEED is a program of Power4STL, which developed a protocol as a response to the severe lack of bleeding control trainings in marginalized communities. Two undergraduate students from Arts & Sciences partnered with LJ Punch, former associate director of surgery, and their team at Power4STL. They focused on building the evaluation of the revised bleeding protocol to further identify communities most impacted by gun violence. The Civic Engagement Fund's Community Partnership Grant supported costs for additional training supplies, transportation, and increased access to and frequency of Stop The Bleed trainings.

EVALUATING BIOCHAR FOR COST-EFFECTIVE REMEDIATION OF HEAVY METALS CONTAMINATION IN SOIL AT URBAN AGRICULTURE SITES FOR THE ST. LOUIS REFUGEE COMMUNITY. Jeff Catalano, professor of earth and planetary sciences in Arts & Sciences, collaborated with the International Institute of St. Louis to evaluate methods to treat heavy metals contamination in urban gardens. Several of these garden sites in St. Louis City are farmed by refugees who have resettled in the area. The Civic Engagement Fund's Community Partnership Grant supported site remediation and education of community members.

HEARTS FOR HOMELESSNESS is an undergraduate student group that aims to improve the health of the St. Louis homeless community through medical education and connection to primary care. Through partnerships with organizations such as Peter and Paul Community Services, Covenant House, and Garfield Transition Center, several health fairs are scheduled each semester. The Civic Engagement Fund's Community Partnership Grant offset costs related to supplies and transportation and increased the number of fairs offered. These fairs offer opportunities for basic health screenings and one-on-one consultations and referrals to the nearest Federally Qualified Health Center for primary care services on a sliding scale relative to income.

EQUITY THROUGH POLICY is an initiative of the Roosevelt Institute, an undergraduate student group that partnered with the Urban Land Institute, Ferguson-Florissant School District, McCluer North High School, McCluer South High School, and Office of Senator-elect Brian Williams. Funding through the Civic Engagement Fund's Community Planning Grant provided transportation and resources to teach St. Louis area students the importance of local policies and how to write policy.

COORDINATION ACROSS A COMPLEX UNIVERSITY

Universities are complex organizations and are notoriously confusing to navigate, particularly for community organizations seeking to explore options, access resources, or pursue partnerships.

The Gephardt Institute serves as a front porch for the university, a go-to resource for St. Louis community organizations. As an intermediary, we:

- Refer organizations to campus resources to help them achieve their goals
- Assist in navigating the culture, structure, and resources of the university
- Identify and convene possible university partners to further explore needs and opportunities for partnership
- Problem-solve and assist when partnerships face challenges
- Receive and follow-up on feedback from partners

Currently, we handle requests for assistance on a case-by-case basis, and individual staff hold the knowledge of campus resources and the history and needs of community organizations. To more effectively serve as navigators and connectors, we envision building programs and systems to support connections between campus organizations and community partners whose needs and priorities are in alignment. We will create clearer navigation tools for community organizations to understand and access university resources available to them, working in close synergy with other community-facing units such as the Brown School, Medical School Community Partnerships Focus Group, Olin Business School's Center for Experiential Learning, WashU Law Clinics, Institute for Public Health, Institute for School Partnership, and the new Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Civic Affairs and Strategic Planning.

We also see an opportunity for greater coordination within Washington University to reduce the negative consequences of our complexity. As many have said, “the left hand should know what the right hand is doing.” Often, multiple university departments partner with a single nonprofit; they do not realize their overlap, and they do not maximize the opportunity for collaboration and collective impact. We plan to create a collaborative network to support relationship building, knowledge and skill development, shared planning, and collaboration among community partners and university faculty, staff, and students who have community-facing roles. To complement this network, we will implement a system for partnership tracking, communication, and evaluation that will allow us to have a landscape view of university-community partnerships, coordinate across units, and evaluate outcomes. The result of these coordination efforts will be greater opportunities for collaboration, reduced confusion and time expenditure, and a clearer path toward assessing and assuring positive community outcomes.

BUILDING THE UNIVERSITY'S CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Many of the university's current community engagement efforts rely on relationships between individuals at Washington University and their connections with community organizations, which are often not institutionalized nor supported with secure and consistent resources.

Too often, community partnerships are built on the vision and tenacity of a few individuals. When those individuals move on, circumstances change, or funding runs out, the partnerships are at risk of faltering.

We envision that enduring community partnerships will take root in academic schools, departments, and student organizations throughout the university. Our local alumni will also enhance their community engagement efforts through expansion of the WashU Engage model to St. Louis. We view our role as capacity builders and consultants to our campus partners. We will expand our own capacity to offer financial and human resources for departments to build initiatives that are grounded in strong logic models and evaluation plans to ensure intended impact and make continuous improvements, with multi-year pilot funding to gain proof of concept and pursue long-term funding. We see this as a significant investment of time and resources in promising partnerships that will create new avenues for the university community to contribute to meaningful change in the St. Louis community.

capacity building: For individuals, it is an increase in a person's ability to achieve their desired goals and outcomes. For organizations, it is an enhanced ability to advance the mission of the organization and create positive impact.³³

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: *Community Partnerships*

STRATEGY: Build the infrastructure to support university and regional organizations in developing and advancing mutually beneficial community partnerships.

CORE QUESTION: How can we catalyze substantial university-community partnerships to create measurable impact on key challenges facing the St. Louis region?

OBJECTIVE: Expand the Civic Engagement Fund to support development, operations, and evaluation of impactful community partnerships in the St. Louis region.

TACTICS

1.1 Expand the scope of grants and funding resources for St. Louis community partnerships to include, but not be limited to: an increase in available funding and grant sizes, multi-year grants, sustaining grants, and associated expenses incurred by students, faculty, and staff.

1.2 Create a comprehensive program for the Civic Engagement Fund, managed by a full-time grant manager in the Gephardt Institute, to steer training, orientation, site visits, check-ins, evaluation, communications, and program enhancement for all stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, community partners).

1.3 Establish a Civic Engagement Fund steering committee to advise the grant manager on topics including but not limited to: leveraging the program to catalyze impact on key regional challenges; convening grant recipients and community partners to support collaboration and collective impact; measuring and communicating outcomes; and identification of internal and external funding resources.

1.4 Utilize the Civic Engagement Fund as a lever for connecting community partners with additional university networks and resources based on their interests and priorities.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

1.1 Expansion of the Civic Engagement Fund reduces barriers for the university community to develop and sustain projects in partnership with St. Louis community organizations.

1.1, 1.2 A robust, streamlined, and efficient grants program results in proposals and initiatives of greater impact that focus on key regional challenges, and community partner reports of positive impact and satisfaction.

1.3 Civic Engagement Fund grant recipients and partners address regional challenges directly, informed by the guidance and leadership of the steering committee, as well as the institute's Community Advisory Council. Funded projects define and measure impact on target populations. This increases the capacity of the Civic Engagement Fund to continuously replenish and grow its funds.

1.4 Community partners report increased knowledge and ease of navigating campus resources, and increased utilization of a broad range of resources.

Community Partnerships

CORE QUESTION: How can we spark learning and connections to foster effective community engagement?

OBJECTIVE: Establish the Gephardt Institute as a nexus to activate and coordinate community engagement among students, faculty, staff, and community partners.

TACTICS

2.1 Offer workshops, training, discussions, consultation, and immersive experiences to equip students, faculty, staff, and community partners with the knowledge and skills for effective community engagement. Examples include inviting community partners, visiting experts, faculty, staff, alumni, and students as co-educators and collaborators.

2.2 Develop a Gephardt Institute recognition program to certify university individuals, departments and organizations that are trained and equipped to effectively partner with St. Louis organizations.

2.3 Create programs and systems for identifying and connecting campus partners with community partners in alignment with each partners' needs and priorities.

2.4 Foster the visibility and impact of other community-facing hubs and champions on campus; convene them to coordinate efforts and increase access and navigation for community partners.

2.5 Create a communication plan that highlights the Gephardt Institute's role as a nexus, activator, and coordinator for St. Louis community engagement.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

2.1 Campus and community partners report increased readiness for community partnerships that lead to measurable impact.

2.1 Community partners report satisfaction with campus partner preparation, skills, and commitment.

2.1 An increased number and diversity of individuals attend sessions and are trained in best practices for community engagement.

2.2 Campus partners integrate community engagement principles into the development, implementation, and evaluation of their initiatives and partnerships.

2.2 Community partners report satisfaction with partnerships and demonstrated impact on organizational missions and on regional priorities.

2.3 New programs and systems are created and utilized to foster connections, leading to an increase in mutually beneficial partnerships and measurable community impact.

2.4 There is increased knowledge, coordination, and collaboration among campus departments and organizations, leading to efficiencies, greater impact, and greater clarity for community partners navigating university resources.

2.5 There is increased utilization of Gephardt Institute consultation and resources by students, faculty, staff, and community partners. The institution demonstrates impact on university goals and within the community.

Community Partnerships

CORE QUESTION: How can we cultivate strong university-community partnerships throughout Washington University?

OBJECTIVE: Strengthen capacity building role to support growth of current St. Louis partnerships and establishment of new St. Louis partnerships that are stewarded by faculty, staff, departments, and student organizations.

TACTICS

3.1 Create infrastructure and resources to support university departments and organizations in developing and sustaining community partnerships. Examples include: multi-year pilot funding, planning tools and guidelines, professional development and training, ongoing consultation, technical support with evaluation, and communications.

3.2 Create a collaborative network among community partners, faculty, staff, students, and local alumni to support relationship building, knowledge and skill development, shared planning, and collaboration.

3.3 Develop and implement a system for measurement of partnership involvement, communication, and evaluation that can be used to monitor university partnerships, coordinate across related efforts, and contain and share information about partnership history, context, and outcomes.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

3.1 New infrastructure and resources lead to an increase in mutually beneficial partnerships, measurable community impact, and sustained initiatives. New community partnerships form and are sustained through robust evaluation and quality improvement mechanisms.

3.2 Increased knowledge, coordination, and collaboration among campus departments and organizations leads to efficiencies, greater impact, and greater clarity for community partners navigating university resources.

3.3 Community partnerships have defined measures for success, lifecycles, and quality improvement processes that show impact and continuous improvement. There is increased institutional knowledge and coordination of university community engagement.



Academic Integration

BOLSTER RESOURCES FOR FACULTY
AND DEPARTMENTS TO INTEGRATE
CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
INTO TEACHING

Educating students to be principled participants and contributors in society has long been central to the mission of Higher Education in the United States.³⁴ This mission is as important now as it has ever been. Amidst the vast challenges facing our country and world, it is vital that students' academic education prepare them to contribute to the progress and vitality of our communities and U.S. democracy. The Gephardt Institute supports three key approaches for integrating this educational mission into courses: Civic Learning Courses, Community Connected Courses, and Community Engaged Courses support student learning along a spectrum of engagement.

Our primary focus in the Academic Integration priority is on Community Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) because Community Engaged Courses require additional resources and teaching skill sets. By bolstering resources for faculty and departments to effectively develop and sustain Community Engaged Courses, the resources needed for Community Connected Courses will follow suit. Finally, cultivation of Civic Learning Courses is embedded in the Student Pathways priority.

“

[K]nowledge is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice, and through teaching.”³⁵

—Ernest Boyer,
Scholarship Reconsidered

SPECTRUM OF CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGED COURSES

From campus to community

CIVIC LEARNING COURSES

Learning knowledge and skill sets to contribute to a thriving democracy.

Current examples include:

- Information Literacy
- Philanthropy
- Policy and Governance (turning passion into policy, running for elected office, engaging in elections)

COMMUNITY CONNECTED COURSES

Learning from the St. Louis community through:

- Guest speakers
- Site visits and tours
- Community generated readings, viewings, trainings, events, etc.

COMMUNITY ENGAGED COURSES

Collaborating with community partners to:

Advance student learning and community organization objectives through projects such as:

- Direct engagement with client populations
- Proposal development
- Communications
- Curriculum development

A note on language:

We use the language of Community Engaged Teaching and Learning rather than the more commonly known language of service-learning because service can convey a one-way relationship. Community Engaged Teaching and Learning guides partnership-based values and mutually beneficial outcomes for students and for community partners.

To integrate civic engagement throughout Washington University, it must become embedded in the heart of the institution – the academic core. Faculty build community engagement into their scholarly work in a range of ways. We draw from the work of Ernest Boyer,³⁶ who explained that scholarly work includes the scholarship of discovery (research), teaching, engagement, and integration.³⁷ Community Engaged Teaching and Learning sits at the intersection of the scholarship of teaching and the scholarship of

ADVANCING THE SCHOLARSHIP OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED TEACHING AND LEARNING

To advance CETL, we will put in place the necessary structures and resources that will allow faculty to advance this work to the level of a scholarly pursuit recognized by department chairs and deans. To do this, we will:

- Support faculty to develop their expertise in these areas through faculty training and professional development.
- Bolster planning and logistical resources such as teaching assistants, course planning tools, and literature summaries of foundational and cutting-edge work being done in CETL.
- Expand funding resources to remove financial barriers associated with CETL.
- Identify, evaluate, and assess Community Engaged Courses to ensure their intended outcomes.
- Create Faculty Fellowships to extend the Gephardt Institute's scope of services and reach among faculty.
- Support faculty to conduct public-facing research that is connected to their Community Engaged Courses, and publish the results in public-facing outlets in addition to academic journals.

BOLSTERING RESOURCES FOR FACULTY

In 2005 with the establishment of the Gephardt Institute, Washington University began the process of cultivating and supporting faculty to teach Community Engaged Courses. The early resources and consultation offered to faculty provided a foundation for faculty to build their courses, yet there is broader need to build resources to incentivize, support, and evaluate courses, and attend to their impact on both students and the community. In addition to individual faculty, it is important that we support departments, academic centers, and schools seeking to integrate community engagement into their curriculum.

Although the university boasts many Community Engaged Courses, most of these courses were developed through the will and creativity of individual faculty members who worked to bring their courses to fruition. Often, faculty develop their community partnerships, piece together funding sources to cover course expenses, navigate logistical questions independently, and apply good instincts to build their course plans into a syllabus. There are several limitations to this approach. If the individual faculty member leaves WashU or changes teaching duties, the Community Engaged Course may be discontinued and the partnership work with the community organization may be lost. Additionally, faculty are devoting even more time to fact-finding and problem-solving than would be necessary if centralized resources were available to them. **Time is a prized commodity for faculty members, and when we can reduce this barrier through available and efficient resources, it will be easier for them to say “yes” to Community Engaged Teaching.**

WHAT IS SCHOLARSHIP?

SCHOLARSHIP is broadly defined as the processes of research, teaching and learning engagement, and integration within higher education.³⁸ Boyer describes four forms of scholarship:

SCHOLARSHIP OF DISCOVERY:

“what academics speak of [as] ‘research’... disciplined, investigative efforts...the pursuit of [new] knowledge...”

SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING:

“not only transmitting knowledge, but transforming and extending it as well.” “As a scholarly enterprise...those who teach must, above all, be well informed, and steeped in the knowledge of their fields...pedagogical procedures must be carefully planned, continuously examined, and relate directly to the subject taught.”

SCHOLARSHIP OF ENGAGEMENT:

“means connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems, to our children, to our schools, to our teachers, and to our cities—just to name the ones I am personally in touch with most frequently; you could name others. Campuses would be viewed by both students and professors not as isolated islands, but as staging grounds for action.”

SCHOLARSHIP OF INTEGRATION:

“By integration, we mean making connections making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating nonspecialists too...what we mean is serious, disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research.”³⁹

WHAT ARE COMMUNITY ENGAGED COURSES, AND WHY ARE THEY BENEFICIAL?

Community Engaged Courses are experiential courses that integrate community engagement with the university's academic mission. They are designed collaboratively with community organizations and balance the contributions and priorities of all involved stakeholders (community partners, community members, students, and faculty).

In their ideal form, Community Engaged Courses achieve three outcomes:

- Enhance student learning of academic disciplines
- Bring substantial benefit to the community organizations that partner with the course
- Offer real-world experience that equips students for future civic contributions

BENEFITS TO FACULTY

Faculty often choose to teach Community Engaged Courses because they want their teaching to have meaningful impacts in their communities and for their students. Faculty may also benefit from these outcomes:

- Improves the quality of faculty/student interaction⁴⁰
- Sparks new ideas leading to new questions and research ideas⁴¹
- Creates additional publishing opportunities in peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, and policy publications⁴²
- Serves as a medium for addressing broader impacts for grant applications⁴³

BENEFITS TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS

While students benefit from Community Engaged Courses, community organizations are able to advance their missions through added human capacity to move projects forward. Projects are designed collaboratively between faculty and their community partners, and the course material supports the learning that students need to successfully meet the project goals.

Some ways that community organizations advance their missions include:

- Promoting their work by educating and training students on the importance of the issues they advance
- Utilizing student work to address community identified priorities
- Using collaboration outcomes for fundraising and development purposes

BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

When community engagement is integrated with students' courses and majors, students have the opportunity to see how their academic learning can productively contribute to real-world challenges. Academic community engagement also requires students to critically engage with complex and contested issues, exposing the assumptions and limitations of our current theories and practices. Additionally, by centering courses on community-identified objectives, this teaching method allows students to learn with more purpose and, as a consequence, to learn more deeply.

Through Community Engaged Courses, students gain practical skills valued by employers such as critical thinking and problem solving, teamwork, communication, leadership, and intercultural fluency.⁴⁴ Community Engaged Teaching and Learning has been identified as a High-Impact Educational Practice that:⁴⁵

- Deepens student learning
- Increases the level of academic challenge
- Facilitates active and collaborative learning
- Increases student retention

Community Engaged Courses have also shown to be “beneficial for college students from many backgrounds, especially historically underserved students, who often do not have equitable access to high-impact learning.”⁴⁶

THE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FUND AS A CATALYST FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGED COURSES

As a nontraditional, experiential model of teaching, Community Engaged Courses incur financial expenses. Continuous funds are necessary for transportation, project, and incidental expenses associated with courses. Community Engaged Courses also require extensive time to plan and communicate with community partners, arrange and manage logistics, and address unexpected changes and challenges in real time. Faculty frequently express the challenge of sustaining this time commitment alongside their research and teaching responsibilities.

Identifying ways to offset their time and financial costs will increase the likelihood that faculty will pursue and sustain Community Engaged Courses.

The Gephardt Institute currently offers course development grants to faculty through the Civic Engagement Fund. These grants address some financial needs of the courses, though they are not yet substantial enough to sustain the courses year to year. **The Civic Engagement Fund is a powerful lever to reduce barriers to Community Engaged Teaching, and to incentivize faculty to create, evaluate, and sustain Community Engaged Courses.** Through the grant process, faculty work closely with Gephardt Institute staff to strategize on course and curriculum development, community partnership development, logistics, and evaluation

of impact on both students and community partners. While the Gephardt Institute provides guidance and funding, all university course approval policies are followed.

A robust Civic Engagement Fund has the power to inspire and fuel Community Engaged Teaching and Learning, through:

- New Community Engaged Courses
- Curriculum redesign to integrate CETL into majors
- Sustaining and/or expanding successful courses
- Funding course expenses incurred by students and faculty
- Evaluation of course impact on community partner goals and student learning
- Support faculty in identifying sustained funding sources

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED COURSES SUPPORTED BY THE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FUND

TO SUSTAINABILITY AND BEYOND: PEOPLE, PLANET, PROSPERITY

Avni Solanki, lecturer in energy, environmental, and chemical engineering, McKelvey School of Engineering; David Webb, lecturer in environmental studies, Arts & Sciences

This course is designed for first-year undergraduate students and combines interdisciplinary instruction with applied project work. Students are introduced to foundational concepts in sustainability and examine how they relate to specific issues in the St. Louis community, learning what it means to be civic-minded stewards of social and ecological systems. The course partners with Bi-State Development Enterprise, Metro Transit, where students analyze the sustainability of MetroLink stations near WashU's campus and produce an "ideabook" for the partner that includes research, data, assessment of current status quo operation, and ideas for improvements. This project dovetails with Metro efforts already underway to assess the design of stations.

SEXUAL HEALTH AND THE CITY

Shanti Parikh, associate professor of sociocultural anthropology and African and African-American studies, Arts & Sciences

In this course, students gain a richer understanding of the complexity of issues related to gender, sexuality, and sexual health by applying academic theories and concepts to projects that fulfill the core mission of partnering community agencies. Students learn about and participate in the legislative process when they go to Jefferson City for Lobby Day with one partner organization. They also learn about community partnership and possible careers in racial equity, health, policy, and advocacy through their semester-long projects. Projects have included being trained as an HIV counselor and tester for Williams & Associates, and developing content for stories of women who have survived domestic violence for Safe Connections.

CIVIL RIGHTS, COMMUNITY JUSTICE, & MEDIATION CLINIC: ST. LOUIS MEDIATION PROJECT

Karen Tokarz, Charles Nagel Professor of Public Interest Law & Policy; Director, Negotiation & Dispute Resolution Program, School of Law; professor of African & African-American Studies, Arts & Sciences (courtesy)

This Law School clinical course is a joint endeavor with the St. Louis Equal Housing & Opportunity Council and United States Arbitration & Mediation. Students are introduced to civil rights practice and dispute resolution from a community-based perspective. Specifically, students are trained to mediate landlord-tenant cases in the St. Louis City and County *pro se* housing courts (parties are without legal representation). By settling cases through mediation, the project helps decrease the destructive impact evictions have on families and neighborhoods, reduce homelessness, increase housing stability, improve the health and welfare of the region, and contribute to public trust in the courts.

FACULTY TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Faculty typically have not had access to extensive pedagogical training (training in the theory and practice of teaching) generally, let alone in the pedagogy of Community Engaged Teaching and Learning.

This form of teaching requires additional skillsets such as:

- Building effective partnerships
- Managing multiple relationships steeped in power imbalances, including student, faculty, community partner, community member relationships
- Contributing to community capacity development
- Administrative and project management skills

Through our strategic plan, we will create a professional development strategy for faculty to further advance their community engaged teaching theory, knowledge, and practice skills. Resources will be available on a spectrum to support those who are new to CETL and those with prior experience.

Because scholarly work is not developed in isolation, but through communities of scholars, our strategy will bring faculty together across disciplines to create community engaged collaborative learning networks.

IDENTIFY, EVALUATE, ASSESS, AND COMMUNICATE OUTCOMES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED COURSES

Another challenge to the current landscape is that we do not have a way to identify Community Engaged Courses, follow their progression, or gauge their impact. The courses are loosely defined, and there is no documentation of what faculty are doing and how they are doing it (the methods of CETL), nor documentation of whether the community identified outcomes or student learning outcomes are being achieved (results of CETL). Further, we do not have mechanisms in place to support faculty to systematically research their contributions or communicate these advances through scholarly publications.

It is important for us to define, identify, and evaluate and assess Community Engaged Courses, and to communicate findings with our stakeholder audiences. By creating a course designation system, students will be able to locate Community Engaged Courses when they are registering each semester, and CETL faculty will be able to locate one another and build a network to further their shared goals. Finally, systematic evaluations of Community Engaged Courses will enable us to share outcomes with our community partners and our academic communities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGED TEACHING AND LEARNING AT THE DEPARTMENTAL AND SCHOOL LEVEL

In addition to supporting individual faculty members to advance CETL, we must also attend to the location of their work: academic departments and schools. There are several reasons to look to departments as an important unit of change, which can build momentum for integrating CETL into the curriculum of departments, academic programs, and schools.

If we are to adequately prepare students for the complexities of civic and community engagement, we cannot expect one course to provide students with the entire knowledge base and practice skills they will need to do so. If departments think holistically about how to “harness the power of their discipline for public purposes and democratic ends of justice, equity, and responsibility,”⁴⁷

then they can create a curriculum that provides scaffolding across courses in their major that is developmentally coherent for students, preparing them for complex community engagement knowledge and skills.

By embedding civic and community engagement into departmental curriculum and across disciplines and schools, we can best ensure that Community Engaged Courses will continue regardless of faculty changes.

COMMUNITY CONNECTED COURSES

While we focus on Community Engaged Courses, we also recognize the value of Community *Connected* Courses as another way for faculty to connect their academic teaching with what is happening on the ground in the community.

Broadly defined, **Community Connected Courses connect students with people and places in the local community to enhance their learning of course material.** Students step out of traditional classrooms and textbooks through site visits, tours, community events, and community speakers, crafted in partnership with community organizations who share in our goal to enhance students' understanding of pivotal

social, economic, and environmental issues. These courses can contribute to a larger goal: challenging our campus community to learn about and value knowledge that is both held and created outside of the university, through a recognition that the legitimate perspectives of marginalized individuals or groups have often been ignored in academia.⁴⁸

Community Connected Courses can offer students an important window into the St. Louis community to complement their course learning. They can also serve as a meaningful preparation for taking a Community Engaged Course that will involve more intensive engagement with and contribution to the community. Additionally, Community Connected Courses can be an entry point for faculty as they

begin their community engagement professional development. Faculty who find success with Community Connected Courses may increase their interest in developing that course or another one into Community Engaged Courses.

One goal for the *Academic Integration* priority is to increase and formalize support for Community Connected Courses. Once these courses are defined and identified, we will create a funding stream to support their development and continuation. This will include transportation expenses, materials, and community speaker honoraria to compensate for their time and expertise.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY: *Academic Integration*

STRATEGY: Bolster resources for faculty and departments to integrate civic and community engagement into teaching.

CORE QUESTION: How can we support the growth of Community Engaged Courses at Washington University to maximize the benefits for students, community organizations, and faculty?

OBJECTIVE: Increase faculty interest, ease, and knowledge to design and implement Community Engaged Courses and curricula.

TACTICS

1.1: Create professional development opportunities that support faculty in cultivating Community Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) knowledge and skill sets. Examples include faculty learning communities on CETL course design, evaluating CETL courses, and preparing Community Engaged materials for promotion dossiers.

1.2: Create a Faculty Fellowship program to fund projects and leadership roles for faculty that advance the Gephardt Institute's academic engagement work. Examples include faculty fellows creating and offering workshops, conducting research with the Gephardt Institute, developing conferences, and advancing CETL in their schools and disciplines.

1.3: Develop and implement structural supports to recruit and retain faculty to teach Community Engaged Courses. This includes an incentive and funding structure to offset course expenses and faculty time, course development consultation and technical assistance, and recognition.

1.4: Partner with academic departments and centers seeking to offer coherent community engaged curricula for majors, minors, master's degree programs, and/or other graduate degrees.

1.5: Establish a professional development fund that supports initiatives such as bringing experts, trainers, consultants to campus; sending faculty and academic partners to workshops, institutes, conferences, and site visits for professional learning; and supporting faculty to make scholarly contributions through publishing and presenting.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

1.1: Faculty integrate CETL principles, theories, and teaching strategies into their courses, evidenced in syllabi and other teaching documents, course assessments created by faculty, and descriptions of courses in promotional materials.

1.2 & 1.3: Faculty leaders move CETL theory, practice, and research forward in departments, schools, Washington University, and the field, evidenced through an increase of Community Engaged Courses, departmental support for courses, conference presentations on CETL, and publications on CETL.

1.4: Academic departments will offer opportunities that align with developmentally coherent pathways that result in students developing successively complex civic engagement knowledge and skill sets. These curricular changes will be maintained over changes in departmental faculty.

1.5: Faculty seek out and participate in opportunities to continue their professional development within and in addition to the Gephardt Institute offerings. Faculty are sought out for their expertise on CETL by other universities, professional conferences, and publication outlets.

Academic Integration

CORE QUESTION: How do we define Community Engaged Courses so we can point students toward them, and track and ensure that student learning outcomes and community goals are met?

OBJECTIVE: Create and implement infrastructure for Community Engaged Course designation and evaluation.

TACTICS

2.1 Create Community Engaged Course (CEC) designation process with academic partners to establish definition, criteria, designation, and syllabus repository for courses.

2.2 Based on Objective 1 of the Student Pathways priority, align current courses into curricular pathways for students.

2.3 Create an evaluation system that faculty can use to ensure effective CETL and continuous improvement over time, with inputs from students and community partners and aligned with institute values, community partner mission and priorities, and course learning goals.

2.4 Create metrics system to measure impact of students, community partners, and faculty who participate in Community Engaged Courses.

- Student metrics should include but are not limited to: enrollment and social demographics, and student learning outcomes of courses.
- Community partner metrics should include but are not limited to: community organization name and type, cross reference information for other partnerships throughout campus, organizational mission advancement as a result of being part of course, and other impact measures.
- Faculty metrics should include but are not limited to: the number of courses faculty teach, faculty level, faculty promotion and/or tenure process, any internal or external recognitions for teaching.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

2.1 Creation and implementation of clear CEC criteria grounded in research on principles of good practice for different levels of course engagement (from Community Connected Courses through Community Engaged Courses).

2.1 Creation and implementation of course designation process, repository, and platform for communicating the designated courses to students, faculty, and community partners.

2.2 Increase in number of students opting into pathways and corresponding Community Engaged Courses that align with their interests, academic plans, and/or career plans.

2.3 Data collected over a series of courses leads to quality and strategic improvements to community partner relationships and alignment of course outcomes.

2.4 Data is collected by faculty in a series of courses to make strategic improvement to community partner objectives and relationships, student learning outcomes, and for academic and public facing publications.

Academic Integration

CORE QUESTION: How can we reduce the financial barriers associated with creating and sustaining Community Engaged Courses?

OBJECTIVE: Expand the Civic Engagement Fund to support development, operations, and evaluation of Community Engaged Courses.

TACTICS

3.1 Expand the scope of grants and funding resources tied to teaching to include, but not be limited to: an increase in available funding and grant sizes, multi-year grants, sustaining grants, transportation funds, materials, associated course expenses incurred by students, and funding to hire teaching assistants.

3.2 Expand Course Development Grants to support curriculum development, and require courses/curriculum to incorporate quality indicators in their course proposals.

3.3 Create a funding structure to support expenses associated with Community Connected Courses, such as off-campus transportation and community speaker honoraria.

3.4 Partner with relevant campus units to create recommended protocols for Community Connected Courses, such as guidelines for levels of community speaker honoraria and preferred methods of accessing transportation.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

3.1, 3.2, 3.3 The expanded Civic Engagement Fund reduces barriers for faculty to develop CETL curricula, leading to impact on student learning and the ability of community partners to advance their missions. As a result, courses will be sustained over time, and the number of courses will increase as will the number of students who enroll in courses.

Academic Integration

CORE QUESTION: How can the Gephardt Institute spark engagement with Community Engaged Courses among faculty, students, and community partners?

OBJECTIVE: Establish the Gephardt Institute as a nexus to activate and coordinate academic community engagement at Washington University.

TACTICS

4.1 Create programs and platforms for identifying and connecting faculty with community partners, in alignment with each partners' needs and priorities.

4.2 Foster the visibility and impact of other academic community engagement hubs and champions on campus; convene them to coordinate efforts and increase access and navigation for community partners.

4.3 Create a communication plan that highlights the Gephardt Institute's role as a nexus, activator, and coordinator for academic community engagement.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

4.1 Faculty and community partners connect and create mutually beneficial partnerships for student learning and community impact.

4.2 There is increased knowledge, coordination, and collaboration among academic departments, leading to efficiencies, greater impact, and greater clarity for community partners navigating university resources.

4.3 There is an increased utilization of Gephardt Institute consultation and resources by faculty and community partners. The institution can demonstrate impact across academic schools and within the community. Community partners are better able to navigate the institution for resources and partnerships.

CONCLUSION

The Gephardt Institute has grown from a nascent organization into a trusted leader of civic and community engagement. We have numerous partners and stakeholders, each looking to the institute with a vision for advancing civic health: All people actively engage in the progress and vitality of their communities.

Our students seek to gain the civic knowledge and skills they need to enact change that will improve the quality of life for all people. Our local community partners and neighbors look to the Gephardt Institute to facilitate effective university-community partnerships that advance regional priorities and a thriving St. Louis region. Our faculty seek our support with courses that enhance student learning and yield measurable benefits for local community organizations. Our colleagues are heeding the Chancellor's call that we be "Washington University for St. Louis" and seek our assistance with community partnerships that lead to measurable change for people and communities in St. Louis. Our alumni and advisors share our belief that citizens enliven democracy through their informed and active participation.

Across all of our partners and stakeholders, we share the vision that **Washington University can and should play a vital role in educating students for engaged citizenship and contributing to the progress and vitality of St. Louis—both of which will extend beyond our region to impact change in the nation and world.** Central to this vision is the Gephardt Institute's role in fostering a thriving culture of civic engagement throughout Washington University.

These aspirations, coupled with the urgent challenges facing our communities and stressing our democracy, demand the Gephardt Institute's strategic attention to take our work to a new level. Through this strategic plan, we will build the programs, resources, and evaluation mechanisms that ultimately result in engaged citizens and an engaged university. We will accomplish this through broad student and alumni engagement in civic life, cultivation of substantial university-community partnerships, growth of civic and community engaged courses, and investment in our current initiatives.

As we embark on this strategic plan, we extend our gratitude to the hundreds of people who contributed to our planning process and animated our vision for the future. We are also grateful to countless individuals who have participated in, partnered with, or invested in the Gephardt Institute, making our growth and impact possible. They have challenged and inspired us with their vision for democracy: to make "an America as good as its promise."⁴⁹

It is often said that "democracy is not a spectator sport."⁵⁰ It will take all of us to create the kind of communities we want for all people: Thriving communities that offer equitable opportunities for education, participation, health, safety, and prosperity. It will take informed citizens and engaged institutions to reverse the entrenched challenges facing our communities and the fault lines in our democracy.

The opportunity is before us to elevate the Gephardt Institute's role as a vital engine for civic engagement throughout Washington University, resulting in consequential impact on the civic health of our communities—starting in St. Louis and extending into the world.

“

What is at the core of why our democracy functions as well as it does? In the end, it is because of the presence of our citizens, engaged in our governance, in the communities they live in, helping people who need help, being involved in the dialogue that has to go on in a democracy.”⁵¹

—Former Congressman
Richard Gephardt

Glossary of Terms

capacity building

For individuals, it is an increase in a person's ability to achieve their desired goals and outcomes. For organizations, it is an enhanced ability to advance the mission of the organization and create positive impact.⁵²

citizen

Adapted from the conceptual framework of participatory democracy, a citizen is an active participant in public life.⁵³

civic agency

“Civic agency is the capacity of human communities and groups to act cooperatively and collectively on common problems across their differences of view. It involves questions of institutional design (that is, how to constitute groups, institutions, and societies for effective and sustainable collective action) as well as individual civic skills.”⁵⁴

civic engagement

Any act intended to improve or influence a community. Often, the phrase has positive connotations, so that engagement is viewed as “civic” to the extent that it meets such criteria as responsibility, thoughtfulness, respect for evidence, and concern for other people and the environment.⁵⁵

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.⁵⁶

civic health

The degree to which a whole community involves its people and organizations in addressing its problems.⁵⁷

civic learning courses

Civic Learning Courses educate students on knowledge and/or skillsets for active participation in a democracy combining academic learning with civic action (advocacy, outreach, policy development, awareness raising, public dialogue, information literacy, philanthropy).

co-educator

The role often ascribed to community partners when centering their expertise and knowledge as part of mutually beneficial relationships.⁵⁸

community connected course

Community Connected Courses connect students with people and places in the local community to enhance their learning of course material.

community engaged course

Community Engaged Courses integrate “academic work with community-based engagement within a framework of respect, reciprocity, relevance and reflection.”⁵⁹

community engagement

Community engagement describes collaborations and partnerships within a context, spanning from the local to the global, with shared goals, planning and outcomes. These collaborations and/or partnerships should be purposeful with articulated lifecycles, benefits, utility and actions for all parties involved.

Engagement should also contain one or more of the following elements:

- Focus on mutually articulated needs and/or priorities within the community
- Equity, inclusion, and human rights lens
- Include elements of assessment, evaluation and/or tracking to document outcomes and impact⁶⁰

pathways

Roadmaps for students to access and sequence curricular and co-curricular opportunities to build a complete set of civic knowledge and skills over the course of their education.

scholarship

Broadly defined as the processes of research, teaching/learning, engagement, and integration within higher education.⁶¹

Our Civic and Community Engagement Contexts

To ensure that the Gephardt Institute's strategic plan is relevant, consequential, and impactful, we developed it with close attention to four key contexts in which both the Gephardt Institute and Washington University sit. We were informed by the contexts of the nation's civic landscape, the St. Louis community, the higher education landscape, and faculty scholarship.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

In recent decades, numerous societal forces have ignited a national call to action: the polarized political climate; persistent income, health, and education disparities; heightened awareness of inequities and injustice prompted by events across the nation, including in neighboring Ferguson, Missouri; rising concerns about climate change; declining civility and civics education; and more. Collectively, these public challenges call for people to actively engage in the issues affecting their communities.

A steady decline of public trust in democracy as a political structure and a declining rate of participation in civic life compound these civic tensions.⁶² Declining trust has implications for collaborative problem solving, efficacy of leadership, and interpersonal relationships.⁶³ Without trust in democracy and the institutions that comprise democracy, citizens are less likely to participate in civic life.

This decline is not isolated to the United States (the Gephardt Institute's primary context); globally, individuals are calling into question how democracy functions in their countries. According to the Pew Research Center, the declining public trust in democracy is tied to how people feel about the economic conditions in their countries as well as the elected officials, political corruption, personal rights, and justice systems in their countries. People are questioning whether democracy is working for their communities and their nations, and they are increasingly neutral about the value of living in a democracy.⁶⁴

The Gephardt Institute believes that it is people, actively engaged in the progress and vitality of their communities, who restore the public trust in democracy: they enact change, rather than change being acted upon them. Civic engagement calls individuals to collective action to change systems and structures that historically have not served, or no longer serve, the needs of the people and their communities.

Our framework for civic engagement is built on the fundamental value of democracy in which everyone can participate, and the imperative that citizens and civic leaders actively work to live into democracy's full promise. As former Congresswoman Barbara Jordan said, "What the people want is very simple—they want an America as good as its promise."⁶⁵ **Alongside urgent public challenges and declining public trust in democracy, a rising tide of civic engagement reflects widespread aspiration for "a more perfect union."**⁶⁶ We are seeing an increase in youth participation in political movements, voting, and community service as the next generation of civic leaders commit to realizing the promises of democracy.⁶⁷ Initiatives to uplift civic and civil dialogue are widespread across communities.⁶⁸ Citizens are stepping forward to run for elected office at the local, state, and federal level.⁶⁹

The preservation of democracy requires intention, action and repetition. As Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said, **"The practice of democracy is not passed down through the gene pool. It must be taught and learned anew by each generation of citizens."**⁷⁰ This cycle of civic teaching and learning is a moral imperative for our educational system, from early childhood education through higher education. Our democracy depends on engaged citizens who are informed, equipped with civic knowledge and skills, and compelled to action.

“As an institution founded with the very intent to provide increased educational access at the local level, we are Washington University because of St. Louis. We're proud to be Washington University in St. Louis. And today, I'm calling us to be Washington University for St. Louis. I see it as our 'WashU Compact'—a commitment between us and the greater St. Louis region as we look to strengthen our community partnerships and impact 'In St. Louis and For St. Louis.' ”⁷¹

—Chancellor Andrew D. Martin

ST. LOUIS CONTEXT

The St. Louis region is distinctly situated as an epicenter of our nation and at the confluence of rivers and cultures. Its unique placement as the “Gateway to the West” was central to the Lewis and Clark expedition that eventually led to westward expansion of the United States and the forced removal of the indigenous population, the Osage, from the region.⁷² Our assets, history, challenges, and opportunities are distinct, yet they are also reflected throughout the nation. The Gephardt Institute immerses students in the richness of the St. Louis region, a site of historic legal precedents, cultural institutions, and economic development that reflect a region brimming with potential and moving toward resurgence.⁷³

At the same time, we recognize the urgency of challenges facing people and communities in St. Louis, and seek to complicate students’ understanding of both the promises and challenges facing St. Louis. These challenges mirror the challenges facing our nation described in the previous section. They surface locally as challenges commonly referenced as the Delmar Divide, the city/county divide, and Ferguson.

Numerous regional reports highlight the need for intentional, coordinated, intersectional, and holistic approaches to addressing the pressing concerns of the St. Louis region.⁷⁴ Increasingly, these calls for action revolve around the Ferguson Uprising, but upon closer examination, many of the policies and processes that led to the uprising are part of the history of the region.⁷⁵

It is the intentional investment in the civic health of communities that enlivens democracy. Civic health indicates the degree to which a community engages all of its resources—social, civic, political, and organizational—in order to improve the community.⁷⁶ The National Conference on Citizenship (NCOC) works with local, state, and national partners to develop tools that measure civic health across the United States.⁷⁷ In Missouri, the Gephardt Institute partnered in 2014 with other higher education institutions to examine the civic health index for the state. This report showed that Missouri had significant achievements including voting rates, volunteering, and associational membership, and it outlined opportunities for improvement, including the need for higher education to play a role in the civic health of the state.⁷⁸

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY’S RELATIONSHIP WITH ST. LOUIS

The founding of Washington University and its call to civic engagement are deeply rooted in the St. Louis context. In an 1854 address, the university’s co-founder William Greenleaf Eliot Jr. called upon the board of directors “to found an institution for the public benefit.”⁷⁹

Washington University and St. Louis are deeply intertwined. As a midwestern post-industrial region at the crossroads of east and west, and north and south, St. Louis has served as fertile ground for students from diverse identities and cultures to learn and broaden their perspectives; engage with the region’s rich history and culture; and participate in regional progress. Washington University is an anchor institution as one of the region’s largest employers, and is physically grounded in St. Louis. The university’s alumni, research, and medical contributions draw attention toward St. Louis, and simultaneously, St. Louis features many assets that draw national acclaim. **The success of the university is linked to vitality of the region, and the vitality of the region is linked to the strength of St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and surrounding counties.**

For its first 50 years, the university was located in downtown St. Louis before moving to the “hilltop” west of the city, a streetcar ride away. This distance from the heart of the city and the location on the top of a hill would in later years come to symbolize the university’s disconnect from the city. In his inaugural address in October 2019, Chancellor Martin renewed the university’s commitment to restoring connections to the community, saying “At Washington University, we are a bridge between the past, present, and future; a bridge between the academy and the community.”⁸⁰

The university rose to national and international distinction under the leadership of Chancellor Emeritus William H. Danforth and Chancellor Emeritus Mark S. Wrighton. Our alumni live and work around the globe, and the impact of faculty reach is also at the global scale. From our roots as a “streetcar campus” serving St. Louisans who most often remained in St. Louis after graduation, our entering undergraduate class in 2020 included 63% from over 500 miles away, 70% from outside the Midwest, and 7% from other countries and territories.⁸¹ As a university, we are challenged to carefully consider the balance between our national and international scope, and our roots in—and responsibilities to—our home community.

HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

From its inception, one focus of higher education has been the public purpose of colleges and universities to engage with their broader communities.⁸² This engagement has taken many forms—community service and service-learning, public outreach and engagement, and civic and community engagement. Beyond changes in language, higher education has experienced a continuous cycle of reinvigoration and plateaus in responding to the pressing challenges of society.⁸³ The most recent call for reinvigoration came through the report *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*.

A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future

A decade ago, the U.S. Department of Education invited the Global Perspective Institute and the Association of American Colleges and Universities to convene leaders committed to civic renewal and education into a National Taskforce on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. In 2012, the taskforce released the pivotal publication *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*, which outlines the responsibility of all educational institutions, including higher education, to educate students for civic engagement.⁸⁴

A Crucible Moment reinforces the public purpose of higher education that had been articulated in numerous prior publications, and outlines the urgency of its call to action. Colleges and universities are in a unique and critical position to educate students for active participation in democracy. The report highlighted that civic learning, and learning in traditional academic disciplines, should be complementary rather than competitive. It points to research findings suggesting that **students who participate in civic learning opportunities are more likely to:**

- **Persist in college and complete their degrees**
- **Obtain skills prized by employers**
- **Develop habits of social responsibility and civic participation⁸⁵**

Civic learning is a consequential responsibility of higher education and should be integrated throughout higher education. Rather than relegating this responsibility to a single unit or section of campus, civic learning in its ideal form should be infused into all parts of the university experience—both academic and co-curricular.



A socially cohesive and economically vibrant U.S. democracy...require[s] informed, engaged, open-minded, and socially responsible people committed to the common good and practiced in 'doing' democracy... Civic learning needs to be an integral component of every level of education, from grade school through graduate school, across all fields of study.”⁸⁷

— A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future

FIVE ESSENTIAL ACTIONS FOR DEMOCRACY'S FUTURE⁸⁶

1. Reclaim and reinvest in the fundamental civic and democratic mission of schools and of all sectors within higher education.
2. Enlarge the current national narrative that erases civic aims and civic literacy as educational priorities contributing to social, intellectual, and economic capital.
3. Advance a contemporary, comprehensive framework for civic learning—embracing U.S. and global interdependence—that includes historic and modern understandings of democratic values, capacities to engage diverse perspectives and people, and commitment to collective civic problem solving.
4. Capitalize upon the interdependent responsibilities of K–12 and higher education to foster progressively higher levels of civic knowledge, skills, examined values, and action as expectations for every student.
5. Expand the number of robust, generative civic partnerships and alliances, locally, nationally, and globally to address common problems, empower people to act, strengthen communities and nations, and generate new frontiers of knowledge.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a pivotal strategy within civic engagement that intentionally connects universities with their local communities to fulfill the public mission of higher education, enhance student learning and faculty research, and infuse community expertise into the university.⁸⁸ The public mission of higher education was long enacted by preparing students to contribute to communities through public outreach and service initiatives to benefit community members. Many of these initiatives took on a “community as client” model in which students, faculty, and staff applied their knowledge in community settings. Although well-intended, this model was often experienced by the community as imposing and dismissive of community expertise. Rather than working with the community, many of these initiatives worked on the community and prioritized student learning and faculty research over community needs and priorities.

Beginning in the 1970s, several reports called for higher education to reaffirm and enact equitable, mutually beneficial, and shared decision-making between universities and local communities.⁸⁹ In 2006, the Carnegie Foundation created the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement to outline standards for community engagement in higher education. The classification defines community engagement “as the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.”⁹⁰ The classification is meant to propel higher education institutions to become engaged universities, committed to partnering with their local communities and reframing success for higher education institutions in terms of the depth and pervasiveness of their engagement.⁹¹ **Community engagement is an intentional strategy for transforming universities to become true partners with their local communities.**

“

St. Louis should continue to be a central aspect of who we are as we make good on our founding principles.”⁹⁴

—Chancellor Andrew D. Martin

FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP CONTEXT

In American higher education today, the word scholarship is often used interchangeably with the word research, though historically scholarship has referred to a much broader range of academic work. While research is most definitely scholarship, we agree with Ernest Boyer that **“the time has come to move beyond the tired old ‘teaching versus research’ debate and give the familiar and honorable term ‘scholarship’ a broader, more capacious meaning, one that brings legitimacy to the full scope of academic work,”**⁹² including the scholarship of discovery (research), integration, engagement, and teaching.

Just as there are standards by which research is measured for its scholarly contributions, Boyer notes that there also need to be standards for measuring the scholarly contributions of teaching, engagement, and integration.⁹³ Excellence must be the criterion by which all scholarly pursuits are measured. Faculty need to stay in touch with developments in their fields as it relates to their scholarship, and they must be held to the highest standards of integrity.

Promoting Community Engaged Teaching and Learning among Faculty

For Community Engaged Courses to “do no harm” and maximize positive outcomes, **faculty must be able to devote the time and energy to building mutually beneficial relationships that meet community identified objectives and student learning outcomes.**

Several challenges must be addressed to most effectively promote Community Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) as a scholarly endeavor. While teaching is an essential component of the Washington University mission, as a research-intensive university, teaching is not the most valued professional responsibility of faculty and thus is not always developed or understood as scholarly. Faculty are also not formally evaluated nor rewarded for their community engagement.

Because there is always more work that faculty could be doing than there is time for them to do it, they make choices about how to invest their time to meet the expectations of our university and their fields of study. To address these challenges, we must work to ensure that teaching generally, and Community Engaged Teaching specifically, comes to be recognized at Washington University as a rigorous form of scholarship by working within the existing expectations, reward structures, and constraints that faculty experience.

Task Force Membership

STUDENT PATHWAYS TASK FORCE

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James Parker, former Chief of Staff & Associate Dean for Strategic Initiatives, Division of Student Affairs

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Colleen Smyth, Student Engagement Coordinator, Gephardt Institute

Rob Wild, Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

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Cynthia Williams, Assistant Dean for Community Partnerships, Brown School

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Jay Turner, Vice Dean for Education and Professor, McKelvey School of Engineering

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Assistant Director,
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Citations & Recommended Reading

Please visit gephardt.institute.wustl.edu/vision-and-impact/strategic-plan for a downloadable citation list and links to recommended reading.

Recommended Reading

A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future

The National Taskforce on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement

Civic Health Initiative (2019)

National Conference on Citizenship

Civic Responsibility and Higher Education (2000)

Thomas Ehrlich

Election Imperatives 2020: A Time of Physical Distancing and Social Action (2020)

Nancy Thomas, Adam Gismondi, & Kyle Upchurch

Election Imperatives Version 2.0 (2019)

Nancy Thomas, Margaret Brower, Ishara Casellas Connors, Adam Gismondi, & Kyle Upchurch

For the Sake of All (2015)

Health Equity Works

Forward Through Ferguson: A Path Toward Racial Equity (2015)

Ferguson Commission Report

Higher Education's Role in Enacting a Thriving Democracy (2018)

American Democracy Project, NASPA Lead Initiative, The Democracy Commitment

Next Generation Engagement and the Future of Higher Education: Publicly Engaged Scholars (2016)

Margaret A. Post, Elaine Ward, Nicholas V. Longo, & John Saltmarsh

Research on Student Civic Outcomes in Service Learning (2017)

Julie A. Hatcher, Robert G. Bringle, & Thomas W. Hahn

Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate (2015)

Ernest L. Boyer, Drew Moser, Todd C. Ream, & John M. Braxton.

The Broken Heart of America: St. Louis and the Violent History of the United States (2020)

Walter Johnson

The Politics of Learning for Democracy (2015)

Nancy L. Thomas



Biographies: Richard A. Gephardt and Peter G. Sortino

The Gephardt Institute is named in honor of our founder, Richard A. Gephardt, and our endowed directorship is named in honor of the late Peter G. Sortino. Both are exemplars of civic engagement whose leadership inform the values of the Gephardt Institute.



Richard A. Gephardt

Richard Gephardt is President and CEO of Gephardt Government Affairs.

Mr. Gephardt served for 28 years in the United States House of Representatives (from 1977 to 2005), representing Missouri's 3rd Congressional District, home to his birthplace St. Louis. In his first year in Congress, he was appointed to both the House Ways and Means and Budget Committees.

He was elected to serve as House Democratic Leader for more than 14 years, as House Majority Leader from 1989 to 1995, and Minority Leader from 1995 to 2003. In his role as Leader, Mr. Gephardt emerged as one of the leading strategists of the Democratic Party's platform and chief architect to landmark reforms in healthcare, pensions, education, energy independence, and trade policy.

Mr. Gephardt began his career in public service in 1968 as a precinct captain for St. Louis' 14th Ward, and from 1971 to 1976, served as its Alderman. In 1976, he was elected to the Congress, succeeding 24-year incumbent Leonor Sullivan. Mr. Gephardt earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Northwestern University in 1962 and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Michigan Law School in 1965.

Mr. Gephardt established an endowment for the Gephardt Institute for Public Service (now the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement) in 2005. He provides ongoing support and vision for its future.



Peter G. Sortino

Peter G. Sortino was assistant vice chancellor at Washington University in St. Louis and a longtime St. Louis civic leader. Before joining the university administration in 2011, Mr. Sortino played a key role in much of St. Louis' progress during the last 30 years, including the renovation of Forest Park, the redevelopment of Washington Avenue, the construction of Scottrade Center and the establishment of the network of parks and trails built across the bi-state area. In 2013, he was inducted into the Missouri Recreation and Parks Hall of Fame for his leadership of the metropolitan-wide campaign securing voter approval of a sales tax increase that funded the establishment of this network. He was named as St. Louis' 2016 Citizen of the Year and recognized with this high honor posthumously.

Mr. Sortino came to the university after serving as president of the Danforth Foundation from 2005-2011, during which time he oversaw the administration of all grants and related activities of the foundation. He also helped lay the groundwork for CityArchRiver, the project transforming the Gateway Arch grounds.

Mr. Sortino worked closely with Chancellor Mark Wrigton and other administrative and academic leaders to develop specific plans for Washington University to become an even stronger contributor to the well-being of the St. Louis area. Working with colleagues in the Office of Government and Community Relations, Mr. Sortino helped produce the university's Economic Impact on the St. Louis Region brochure and online resource.

“I see all of you as the future
of this country and world,
and it really is in your hands.”

—*Former Congressman Richard Gephardt*

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